

PRESERVING THE SACRAL LANDSCAPE: PATERNAL AND MATERNAL ROLES IN INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION AND THE CHANGING INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN. THE CASE OF KŁODZKO LAND

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Abstract: Small sacral objects such as roadside crosses and shrines are a persistent feature of the cultural landscape in Central and Eastern Europe. While typically interpreted in terms of religiosity, this paper approaches them as spatial practices that reproduce and transform the sacral landscape. It addresses the underexplored link between intergenerational transmission of practices and landscape maintenance, focusing on gendered roles. The research applies a mixed-methods approach in Kłodzko Land (Poland), a region with a complex and unique cultural heritage. Qualitative data come from 24 semi-structured interviews with local opinion leaders, while quantitative data derive from a survey of 300 secondary school students. The results show that everyday acts of care are central to sustaining the sacral landscape. Women play a key role in daily maintenance and transmission of practices, while men influence norms and engage in more visible tasks. Intergenerational transmission is strongly linked to observation within the family. At the same time, women's growing public engagement contributes to a shift from private to more organised, supra-local forms of landscape preservation, including activities related to cultural heritage and tourism.

Keywords: sacral landscape, intergenerational transmission, rural communities, gender roles

1 INTRODUCTION

Roadside crosses, shrines and monuments can be found in many regions of Europe. Researchers interpret them primarily in the context of the Christian faith, of

which they are expressions (Tóth et al., 2019; Matáková, 2012; Kopeček et al., 2015; Sikora and Wartecka-Ważyńska, 2011). Yet their relevance goes far beyond religion. They are also parts of the socio-cultural fabric and the landscape (Kulesza and Lubiarsz, 2013; Żak-Kulesza et al., 2022). In the first sense, they commemorate events important to the region and its inhabitants (Gorączkowski and Bykowska, 2018; Aufderheide, 2021; Tóth et al., 2019). In the second, they serve as landmarks (Kulesza and Lubiarsz, 2013), decorations, or reflections of local creativity (Sikora and Wartecka-Ważyńska, 2011; Fortuna-Antoszkiewicz and Kimic, 2007). Shrines, saint monuments, and roadside or backyard crosses remain indelible features of countries historically tied to Christian culture, including Poland. They have long been erected for various reasons in locations important to individuals, groups, or whole communities.

These small sacral objects are tied not only to religious practices of local populations but also to everyday acts of care and maintenance, not always motivated by faith. Their role is noted mainly in rural religiosity, as rural areas hold most of them and have preserved them longest. Some still keep their original function. Rural religiosity differs from urban in consciousness and specific practices (Wierzbicki, 1979; Chlewiński, 1982). Rural populations are generally more religious (Jelonek, 2020: 69). Compared to cities, “rural communities make more of an effort to observe Christian traditions, religious ceremonies, the cult of saints, and national or regional patrons” (Wilkosz-Mamcarczyk and Różycka-Czas, 2017: 77). Such objects remain indispensable to religious practices (Jelonek, 2020: 69-70), mostly attended by women, who also tend to their surroundings, for example by planting flowers (Brzozowska, 2020).

Despite extensive research on sacral objects and religiosity, less attention has been paid to the role of everyday practices in reproducing the sacral landscape and their intergenerational transmission. This study addresses this gap by combining a landscape perspective with an analysis of gendered social practices. To fill this gap, the primary aim of the study is to determine whether and in what ways these practices are transmitted to subsequent generations. Thus the research reported here focused not on individuals preserving religious traditions, but on those who maintain small sacral architecture daily. This group includes people living nearby, families of founders, local history enthusiasts, and community leaders. Their efforts involve preserving a certain aesthetic which often, though in good faith, inadvertently harms historic value (see: Brzozowska, 2020: 253). Such practices stem from the belief that these objects form both the material and intangible heritage of the region. Thus, caring for them is perceived as a duty of the local population (Rogowski, 2012: 127-128).

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – INTERGENERATIONAL PRACTICES OF VALUES AND PRACTICES

Provided that “the original set of values is determined (...) by one’s parental heritage” (Piecuch, 2015: 14), the above research goal naturally directs attention toward the family as the primary environment of intergenerational transmission. Research conducted over the years consistently underscores the central role of parents in the intergenerational transmission of cultural values and practices, including those of a religious nature (Bengston, 2013; Copen and Silverstein, 2008; Vollebergh et al., 2001). Transmission of values may occur through observation, as a child naturally absorbs values, norms, and behaviours, or through conscious parental effort, via incentives and punishments (De Houwer et al., 2001 as cited in: Min et al., 2012). Yet the phenomenon extends beyond two generations and often involves other relatives, especially grandparents (Beck and Jennings, 1975: 83). Grandparents may act as primary transmitters of religious values and practices, reinforce the religious influence of parents, and actively participate in their grandchildren’s religious education and sacramental life. In some cases, their role is so significant that it compensates for, or even challenges, the religious orientations promoted by parents (Bengston, 2013: 104-111). Grandparents’ influence depends on their ability to forge strong emotional ties to their grandchildren (Bengston and Silverstein, 2019: 225).

A crucial factor conditioning the effectiveness of this process is the quality of family relationships (McPhail, 2019; Smith, 2021). Within the parental dyad, mothers are generally assigned a central role, although paternal religious involvement is also significant – its absence weakens transmission, while its presence strengthens children’s religious identity (Gemar, 2023). Academic literature links the transmission of values, especially religious ones, to mothers or, more broadly, to women (e.g., Brzozowski, 1988), whose influence stems from their household position – as wives, mothers, and carers (Kwak, 2019: 5–8) – but also as guardians of traditions. They preserve the practices and symbolism of family and religious celebrations (Guzy-Steinke, 2010: 278; Owerczuk, 2007: 99), thereby playing a key role in the transmission of cultural heritage. Moreover, mothers are responsible not only for conveying personal values but also for transmitting those endorsed by the broader national community (Tam, 2015: 1261). This pronounced maternal role corresponds with the generally higher level of religious engagement among women, particularly within Christian denominations (Pew Research Center, 2016). In this context, it is hardly surprising that activities related to the care of local small sacral architecture objects (e.g., decorating them, or the custom known in Polish as *majenie*) are predominantly carried out by women. However, tasks that require greater resources, involve men as well, although such projects are often initiated and financed by “local female leaders or their families” (Rancew-Sikora, 2013: 15; Brzozowska, 2020).

Research questions

Rancew-Sikora (2013: 10-11) analysing religiosity and practices of caring for shrines notice that “the quality and form of the decorative elements symbolises socially marginalised groups. Flowers and garlands, artificial plastic plants, jars with water, ribbons, doilies – such objects are associated primarily with old women living in villages”. Following M. Douglas (2004), this may be seen as a symbolic replication of social reality, as observed by Rancew-Sikora (2013: 11): rural women, often relegated to secondary roles in public life. This traditional and stereotypical image of roadside shrines caretakers appears to be undergoing change. Currently, more women choose to be active participants in social life, consciously shaping their roles, though still facing difficulties in overcoming male dominance. They seek space for involvement outside the home: in non-governmental organisations or informal groups united by a goal, since such engagement does not conflict with traditional household roles. One may thus ask whether this influences their motivations and ways of caring for sacral monuments. Studies confirm women’s growing presence in NGOs, both as members and as board representatives (Ryłko, 2020: 383). While retaining their place in the traditional model, they assume new roles reflecting expectations and aspirations regarding education, work, or activities beyond family (Michalska, 2013; Biejat and Wójcikowska, 2015; Szczepańska and Szczepański, 2019; Zajda, 2021). This process clearly marks progress towards overcoming the marginalisation described above. At the same time, scholars link women’s community service to their traditional roles, noting that pro bono work for a school, parish, or local community (village, housing estate, district) may be seen as an extension of the carer’s role (Markocka, 2020: 140). As Zbieranek (2020) observes, an internalised stereotype of their social role makes women more likely than men to undertake activities tied to ‘female’ values such as social care, community, or the common good. This accounts for their leading position in organisations and groups active in culture and heritage.

In this context, it is worth reflecting on whether the changing role and position of women have also influenced practices related to the care of small sacral architecture and the transmission of these practices to subsequent generations. Moreover, the role of men in this process remains an intriguing issue – one that has been insufficiently studied (Baker-Sperry, 2012). Hence, the first research question:

1. *What are the respective paternal and maternal roles in transmitting practices related to looking after sacral landscape to the younger generation?*

To address this, we considered the experiences of young people, conducting surveys among local students.

At the same time, emancipation and women’s efforts to overcome marginalisation raise another issue: do these processes bring changes in practices preserving sacral landscape? As women step beyond traditional roles and rituals around small sacral architecture, their awareness and attitudes may also shift. Hence the second question:

2. *What new practices and meanings of caring for small sacral architecture have emerged as a result of the evolving role of women?*

This required examining the opinions of women who care for these places while also engaging in social life beyond traditional roles.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN: A MIXED-METHODS FIELD STUDY IN THE KŁODZKO LAND

As part of material cultural heritage, the sacral landscape of any territory reflects the practices and beliefs of its inhabitants. Thus, demographic, ethnic, and religious shifts leave a strong imprint on sacral architecture, especially in areas successively inhabited by culturally distinct, often conflicting communities. In this sense, Kłodzko Land is an excellent laboratory for the evolution of sacral landscape, which is why it was chosen for our research.

The history of Kłodzko Land is tied to the Czech Republic, Germany, and Poland, as over the centuries it belonged to all three states. Despite political changes, its boundaries remained relatively constant thanks to topography and overlapping geographic and administrative borders (Herzog and Ruchniewicz, 2008). Thus, Kłodzko Land may be seen as a relatively uniform region (Sikorski, 2021), at the intersection of several cultural influences.

The region's cultural landscape encompasses elements of religious heritage that have been shaped by the evolution of the local community's religious make-up over the centuries (Łach and Marek, 2024). Much of that heritage is comprised of sacral architecture that was developed through the work of local sculpture workshops, such as in Łądek (ran by M. Klahr Sr.), Radków (J. Heinisch), or Nowa Ruda (C. Scholz). Kłodzko Land is also characterized by the presence of monuments and paintings dedicated to Saint John of Nepomuk – a legacy of the impact of the Czech culture (Marek, 2023). In the 19th century, the cult of Saint John of Nepomuk played an important part in shaping the Czech national identity and spurring the Czech National Revival.

After 1945, Kłodzko Land, like the rest of Lower Silesia, experienced a near-total population turnover. The newcomers entered a cultural reality foreign to them. Yet some elements felt familiar, notably roadside shrines, crosses, and saintly monuments (Oleszek, 2015). Lands formerly inhabited by German Protestants largely lacked such forms – the main other region where they were common was Catholic Warmia (Zduniak, 2023). Small sacral architecture turned out to be the one element of material heritage which the newcomers found relatively familiar and did not need to adjust to – a fact that may be one of the reasons behind why many of these objects have survived in Kłodzko Land until today.

Verbal and visual qualitative data was collected during field trips in 2022–2023, using semi-structured, non-scheduled interviews. Topics included: 1) women's roots in their place of residence; 2) knowledge of historical figures and events important to Kłodzko Land; 3) perceptions of the sacral landscape; 4) features of local small architecture; 5) functions and importance of these objects for the community, past and present. Interviewees were local leaders and individuals recognised as sources

of knowledge, selected through purposive sampling, with criteria of interest in regional history, especially small sacral architecture, and engagement in communal activities. Data was used to build deeper insight into the subject. In total, 24 interviews were conducted in towns and villages of Kłodzko Land: eight in Kłodzko, five in Międzyzlesie, four in Kudowa-Zdrój, three in Radków, three in Stronie Śląskie, and one in Łądek Zdrój. Most respondents were working individuals with higher education, many employed in cultural institutions or as guides. Respondents often combine their professional work with social activities in NGOs. Of the 24 interviewees, 13 were women. Interviews lasted 40–90 minutes.

The decision to focus on women who are also opinion leaders followed directly from the research objective. Evaluating practices of preserving small sacral architecture required interviews with women leaders – individuals with knowledge, skills, and the ability to organise others around shared interests. At the local level, such leaders coordinate group activities,

Primary quantitative data was collected through an online survey among secondary school students in Kłodzko county. Including youth allowed us to obtain information about a group whose choices will shape the future of local cultural heritage. Youth is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, involving dynamic physical, mental, and psychological change. It is linked to shaping personal and social identity and selecting interests aligned with values. Youth is regarded as a barometer of social change – an early warning system (Szafraniec, 2019). It is thus crucial to ask: are practices related to preserving small sacral architecture transmitted to the younger generation and, if so, how? Data from youth informs not only about intergenerational transmission within families but also about knowledge and messages on regional heritage passed on through the education system.

The survey sample comprised secondary school students of age in Kłodzko county. According to the county’s Education Department, in 2023/2024 there were 1008 such students. Surveys were conducted between 15 November and 15 December 2023. We received 343 responses, of which 300 complete ones were used for analysis. Table 1 presents the structure of the general population and of the research sample. Based on the number of valid surveys, the response rate was about 30%.

Table 1 The number of secondary school students of age in the Kłodzko county, and the number of survey responses according to the type of school

Type of school	Kłodzko country	%	Number of responses	%
General high schools	202	20,0	94	31,1
Vocational schools (VET)	734	72,8	196	65,3
Trade schools (VET)	72	7,1	10	3,3
Total	1008	100	300	100

Source: own elaboration, based on data from original research

The PS Imago software was used to process survey data. The statistical significance level for the analysis was set at $\alpha = 0.05$. To address the research question, we employed Spearman's rank correlation, the Mann–Whitney U test, and the Kruskal–Wallis H test. The use of non-parametric methods resulted from group size disparities and the frequent reliance on non-quantitative measurement scales.

Kłodzko Land's sacral architecture with complex cultural-historical heritage – an inventory

As part of field research in 2022–2023, we inventoried 2689 objects (Marek and Łach, 2024: 239-240), including:

- 136 churches
- 908 shrines in alcoves or on pillars and chapels (most in Bystrzyca Kłodzka, Radków, and rural Kłodzko)
- 1026 crosses (mainly in Bystrzyca Kłodzka and rural Kłodzko)
- 359 saint figures, most often Saint John of Nepomuk
- 260 cemeteries and other objects of unspecified character

Women's reflections on changes in Kłodzko Land's sacral landscape

The interviewed women opinion leaders view sacral architecture as a key feature of the area, yet they stress the uniqueness of their own boroughs rather than the county or region. This suggests a strong attachment to their residence, but an incomplete regional identity. The trend is visible in their responses about organisations preserving sacral landscape. The county has several entities working to protect this heritage, notably NGOs devoted to its preservation and to spreading knowledge of its history. While respondents value such efforts, they are most aware of organisations active locally. Most frequently mentioned were the Society of Friends of the Biała Łądecka Valley (“Kruszynka”, named after its first president, Father Stefan Witezak; Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Doliny Białej Łądeckiej “Kruszynka”), the Association for the Preservation of the Międzyzylesie Land Cultural Heritage (Stowarzyszenie Ochrony Zabytków i Dziedzictwa Kulturowego Ziemi Międzyzyleskiej), and the Society of Friends of Polanica (Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Polanicy).

Respondents noted that only a few such objects are protected by the regional Preservation Officer and that available funds are limited. Our research indicates that, overall, these efforts attract moderate interest from local populations. Individuals most often described as “guardians” of small sacral architecture are referred to as “aficionados”, “local patriots”, “activists”, or “deeply religious people” (R_5_k). The interviewed women knew of organisations' local activities, but not of their regional work.

Respondents' knowledge of local history centred on three elements: the Piast dynasty in the Middle Ages (seen in street names and school patrons), the Hussite Wars (1419–1436), and post-1945 changes. Older respondents stressed the Piast myth, while middle-aged ones focused on Czech and German heritage. Yet such knowledge stemmed from personal interest and research driven by regional attachment, not from school education.

Our interviewees were well aware of why small sacral objects were erected – whether for religious, votive, or commemorative reasons. Especially restored ones (R_16_k, R_17_k) are treated as showpieces of households, villages, or towns. Some shrines stand directly on respondents’ premises (R_5_k, R_16_k); in such cases, women take pride in being custodians and actively preserve and decorate them. Interestingly, only few interviewees knew the political context of Saint John of Nepomuk, chosen by the Habsburg dynasty as a Counter-Reformation symbol (R_17_k) (Marek, 2023). Today, most recognise only religious motives.

After John Paul II’s death in 2005, many monuments in his memory were erected, mostly through parish initiatives. Interviewees also noted new sacral objects built on private premises (R_7_k), typically by newcomers owning second homes in Kłodzko Land. Their stronger economic position allows them to pursue ideas regardless of grassroots opinions. Recently erected objects differ in style, with universal European motifs prevailing, while locally significant ones are rare. Figures often depict the Black Madonna of Częstochowa or Our Lady of Fatima, rather than Our Lady of Wambierzyce (Queen of Families, patron saint of Kłodzko Land) or Mary of the Snow (see Figures 1 and 2).



Figure 1 A shrine of an angel, Stary Gieraltów (photo by BS)



Figure 2 A shrine commemorating the Fatima apparitions, Stary Gieraltów (photo by BS)

Literature notes various functions of crosses and shrines for local communities: sacral, magical, commemorative, integrating, representative, aesthetic, and as landmarks (Białczak, 2002). Our research verified this typology. All interviewees stressed the sacral function, though today such objects are more often used individually than collectively. Women also highlighted the integrating role, especially among those preserving sacral architecture (R_20_k). Usually, an object is cared for by several people through complementary tasks: women focus on decoration and aesthetics, men on technical aspects (R_7_k). Women thus handle daily maintenance, while men are only occasionally engaged. They also involve children, though many younger people live away from their families – a result of Kłodzko Land’s depopulation (Heffner and Latocha, 2021; Kajdanek et al., 2022).

One function of small sacral architecture not previously noted in the literature is its link to tourism. Middle-aged respondents, many working as guides or in cultural institutions, saw these objects as valuable for both religion and tourism, and as an underused – though increasingly recognised by local guides and organisations – resource for the region (R_3_k, R_4_k, R_7_k, R_12_k, R_17_k, R_20_k). This recurring in the respondents statements aspect of small sacral architecture, together with their engagement in promoting its significance and knowledge about it, in an organised and institutionalised, semi-professional way (e.g. within NGO’s) constitutes a new quality. They move beyond the realm of private, personal and/or family-based practices, and become forms of public engagement. As a result they gain supralocal relevance, transcending the sphere of family circle and neighbourhood relations.

4 STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION OF SMALL SACRAL ARCHITECTURE

Students of secondary schools in Kłodzko Land are aware of only some sacral objects from our inventory (Table 2). Asked about types present in their boroughs, they most often named roadside crosses (68.3%), alcove shrines (64.0%), and chapels (62.7%). About one-third of respondents had no knowledge of such places, not noticing any small sacral architecture nearby.

Answers showed no statistically significant differences by respondents’ socio-demographic characteristics. More pertinent is whether youth, besides awareness of small sacral architecture, engage in practices similar to the older generation. Results indicate (Table 3) they do, especially in religious terms: 61.3% reported making the sign of the cross when visiting or passing such objects. Other common practices were lighting candles (59.0%), bowing heads (51.7%), and praying (49%). Only 9% declared helping with construction, which is rare today since most new objects are privately built on newcomers’ premises, often “holiday” homes.

Table 2 Students' knowledge of selected types of small sacral architecture in their boroughs

		Yes	No	I don't know of any	In total
Chapels	n	188	8	104	300
	%	62,7%	2,7%	34,7%	100,0%
Alcove shrines	n	192	13	95	300
	%	64,0%	4,3%	31,7%	100,0%
Shrines in roofed casings	n	158	15	127	300
	%	52,7%	5,0%	42,3%	100,0%
Roadside crosses	n	205	13	82	300
	%	68,3%	4,3%	27,3%	100,0%
Conciliation crosses (14th-16th century	n	129	21	150	300
	%	43,0%	7,0%	50,0%	100,0%
Pillars with figures of saints	n	182	17	101	300
	%	60,7%	5,7%	33,7%	100,0%

Source: own elaboration, based on data from original research

Table 3 Declared activities performed in relation to small sacral objects

		Yes	No	In total
1. Lighting a candle	n	177	123	300
	%	59,0%	41,0%	100,0%
2. Placing flowers	n	121	179	300
	%	40,3%	59,7%	100,0%
3. Praying	n	147	153	300
	%	49,0%	51,0%	100,0%
4. Making the sign of the cross	n	184	116	300
	%	61,3%	38,7%	100,0%
5. Bowing one's head	n	155	145	300
	%	51,7%	48,3%	100,0%
6. Helping with painting	n	45	255	300
	%	15,0%	85,0%	100,0%
7. Participating in the construction of a new object	n	27	273	300
	%	9,0%	91,0%	100,0%

Note: multiple choice question.

Source: own elaboration, based on data from original research

Declared activities did not differ by respondents' gender, which is unsurprising given the youth sample. Since the 1980s, scholars have noted both the feminisation of religious life and a mechanism whereby women emulate male behaviours, especially visible among young women in religious practices (Mariański, 2010).

Some behavioural differences appear when considering residence and type of school (Table 4). Painting, placing flowers, or praying are more common among rural inhabitants. Other categories show minor gaps between rural and urban populations, under 4%. Despite changes, rural religiosity remains richer and more visible in public religious practices (Piwowarski, 1990; Mariański, 2010). Small sacral objects are also more exposed in rural landscapes, while in urban areas they fade into the background among street lamps, signs, or billboards (Różańska-Mazurkiewicz and Kaczyńska, 2013).

Table 4 Activities performed in relation to small sacral objects, depending on place of residence

		Place of residence		In total
		Rural areas	Urban areas	
1. Lighting a candle	N	79	98	177
	%	58,5%	59,4%	59,0%
2. Placing flowers	N	60	61	121
	%	44,4%	37,0%	44,3%
3. Praying	N	70	77	147
	%	51,9%	46,7%	49,0%
4. Making the sign of the cross	N	80	104	184
	%	59,3%	63,0%	61,3%
5. Bowing one's head	N	67	88	155
	%	49,6%	53,3%	51,7%
6. Helping with painting	N	25	20	45
	%	18,5%	12,1%	15,0%
7. Participating in the construction of a new object	N	12	15	27
	%	8,9%	9,1%	9,0%
In total	N	135	165	300
	%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Note: multiple choice question.

Source: own elaboration, based on data from original research

Attitudes and behaviours of young people are strongly shaped by their immediate social environment (Table 5). When youth activities around small sacral architecture are compared with awareness of community engagement, a link is evident. Observing a practice increases the chance of repeating it. In other words, young people who see someone in their circle light a candle by a roadside cross are likely to do the same.

Table 5 Activities performed by respondents as compared to those performed by other members of their local community

		Yes – respondents' actions	Yes – actions by other members of community	In total
1. Lighting a candle	N	177	198	300
	%	59,0%	66,0%	100,0%
2. Placing flowers	N	121	175	300
	%	40,3%	58,3%	100,0%
3. Praying	N	147	89	300
	%	49,0%	29,7%	100,0%
4. Making the sign of the cross	N	184	177	300
	%	61,3%	59,6%	100,0%
5. Bowing one's head	N	155	169	300
	%	51,7%	56,3%	100,0%
6. Helping with painting	N	45	82	300
	%	15,0%	27,3%	100,0%
7. Participating in the construction of a new object	N	27	40	300
	%	9,0%	13,3%	100,0%

Note: multiple choice question.

Source: own elaboration, based on data from original research

When shaping attitudes, young people compare their observations with previously held values, most internalised in family life, even if later verified externally (Bartkowiak and Karmolińska-Jagodzik, 2021). Family remains a key institution of upbringing and socialisation, transmitting knowledge, values, and aspirations (Mariani, 2021). It is therefore worth examining the role of specific individuals in one's closest circles in developing attitudes towards sacral objects (Table 6). This helps identify who in respondents' environment is involved in caring for sacral architecture.

Table 6 Differences in the extent of engagement with small sacral objects, depending on the declared engagement of respondents' family members and local community members

Person involved in looking after an object	Not involved			Involved			z	p	r _g
	N	M _{rang}	Me	N	M _{rang}	Me			
Mother	189	105,05	2,00	49	175,23	5,00	-6,358	<0,001	0,59
Father	195	104,22	2,00	38	182,59	5,00	-6,556	<0,001	0,67
Grandmother	161	97,62	2,00	70	158,26	5,00	-6,337	<0,001	0,53
Grandfather	186	102,16	2,00	50	179,30	5,00	-7,092	<0,001	0,65
Neighbour	95	66,95	2,00	60	95,49	4,00	-3,854	<0,001	0,37
Parishioner	32	69,52	2,50	146	93,88	4,00	-2,421	0,015	0,27

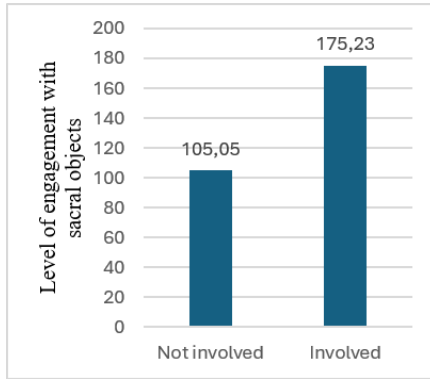
N – number of instances, Mrang – average ranking, Me – median, z – Mann-Whitney test value, p – significance, rg – effect value

Source: own elaboration, based on data from original research

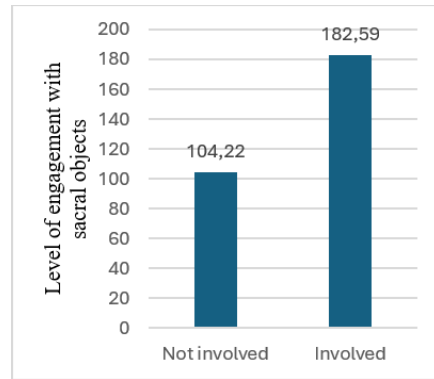
Results show that students who observe people in their immediate surroundings caring for sacral architecture are themselves notably more active. The influence of parents and grandparents proved stronger than that of neighbours or parishioners. Specific values from the analysis are presented in Chart 1.

Moreover, male family members (father, grandfather) appeared to have a greater influence than female ones (mother, grandmother). This finding is consistent with research (Bengston, 2013: 104) suggesting that grandfathers may exert a particularly strong influence on the transmission of religious commitment and values, even though grandmothers and grandfathers contribute similarly to religious participation. is noteworthy since young people usually feel closer to mothers than fathers (Marianiński, 2021). In traditional families, children were more emotionally distant from their fathers: women were primarily responsible for households management and childcare, while men held economic and emotional power, enforcing discipline and rules. Thus, fathers introduced children to values and social norms (Lewicka, 2020). Although children were emotionally closer to mothers, the norm-setting function belonged to fathers. In our results, another factor may be the nature of activities: women care for sacral architecture through minor works, while men, though rarely engaged, take on larger, more visible tasks. This reflects the traditional family division of labour, especially in rural areas.

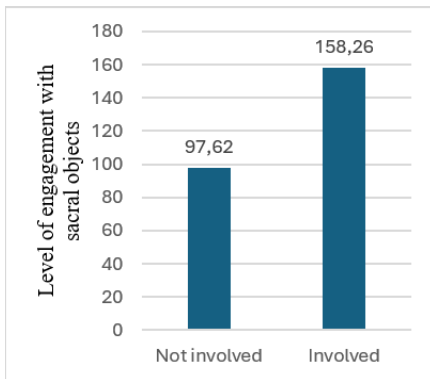
Socio-cultural changes have shifted society from the traditional family model. Yet even in modern templates, fatherhood is perceived as ensuring children's cognitive, emotional, axiological, and religious development (Ibidem). Almost as many young people declare worldview alignment with fathers as with mothers, though it is more common among rural youth (Marianiński, 2021). The traditional model of paternal influence, where fathers pass on norms and behaviours, still appears prevalent.



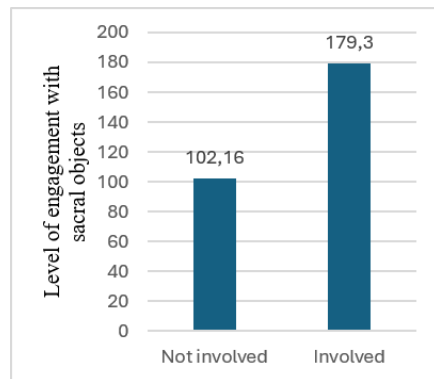
A. Mother.



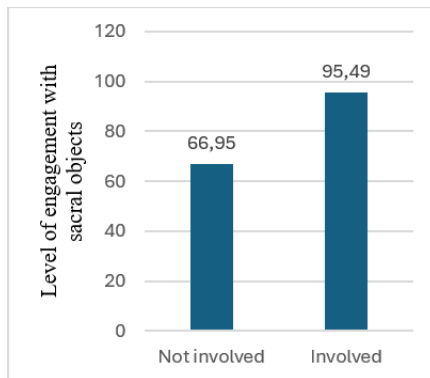
B. Father.



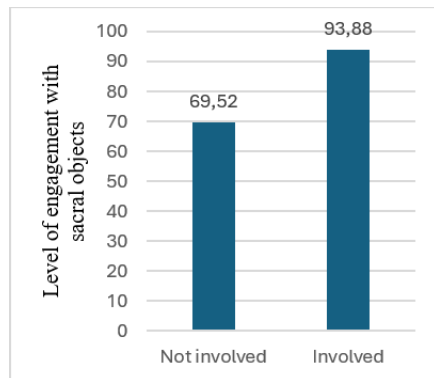
C. Grandmother.



D. Grandfather.



E. Neighbour.



F. Parishioner.

Chart 1 Average rankings of results showing levels of engagement with sacral objects, divided according to community member involved in looking after such objects (A-F).
Source: own elaboration

5 SUMMARY

At the beginning of this article, we asked about women's role in transgenerational transmission of practices related to small sacral architecture. Quantitative data suggest this role is crucial. Through frequent actions and by involving younger generations, women act as key transmitters of such practices, socialising the youth to continue them.

Research also highlights the norm-setting role of men. Literature links this to the evolution of family roles and fathers' greater involvement in raising children. Another interpretation is that men's and women's impact depends on the nature of their engagement with sacral architecture. In the religious sphere, women dominate, while in repairs or tasks traditionally male, men exert stronger influence – echoing traditional value transmission. Class differences may also matter (see: Domański et al., 2021). To draw firm conclusions, further research is required.

The second research question asked about new meanings and practices women related to caring for small sacral objects. Qualitative data suggest that nowadays women's efforts to preserve small sacral object goes beyond activities traditionally assigned to their gender in this sphere.

Despite natural sampling limitations, the research allows conclusions on the evolution of women's roles. Their decision-making space has expanded with emancipation, though traditional roles remain. In this context, women – mothers and grandmothers – more often engage in unspectacular tasks related to small sacral architecture. This reflects the carer's function, extending family care into the religious dimension. Attention and care act as community-building elements for families and parishes. One respondent tended a shrine on her property, stressing its importance to her faith. Another, the youngest interviewee, expressed pride in her husband building a wooden shrine. Women not only maintain small architecture daily but also work in NGOs, organising activities beyond households. This shows that as emancipation advances, their involvement in preserving sacral objects grows more diverse and shifts from private and practices local towards public and supra-local. Often semi-professional activity. They educate themselves, spread knowledge – three respondents co-authored publications on local history and tourist attractions – and cooperate with institutions such as Preservation Officers to secure public funding.

Besides daily care for sacral architecture, women hold knowledge of cultural heritage that often exceeds school curricula or typical socialisation. They learn autonomously, though their knowledge is sometimes fragmentary and centred on facts or periods most rooted in public historical awareness.

It is difficult to predict how preservation of Kłodzko Land's sacral landscape will develop, or to what extent younger generations will follow parents and grandparents. Our data confirm transmission of practices, yet not enough to conclude whether it is sustainable across generations. Thus, these results provide recommendations for further research on factors sustaining socialisation in shaping attitudes and behaviours toward preserving small sacral architecture. This seems partly tied to the importance of such heritage for the local economy, especially tourism. While

schools and regional education play a role, the crucial element is value transmission within families, by both women and men. Further research is needed to confirm these preliminary findings.

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Ochrona sakralnej krajiny: Otcovské a materské úlohy v medzigeneračnom prenose a meniace sa zapojenie žien. Prípád Kladska (Poľsko)

Súhrn

Na začiatku tohto článku sme sa pýtali na úlohu žien v medzigeneračnom prenose praktík súvisiacich s malou sakrálnou architektúrou. Kvantitatívne údaje naznačujú, že táto úloha je kľúčová. Prostredníctvom častých aktivít a zapojením mladších generácií ženy pôsobia ako kľúčové prenášačky takýchto praktík a socializujú mládež, aby v nich pokračovala.

Výskum tiež zdôrazňuje úlohu mužov pri stanovovaní noriem. Literatúra to spája s vývojom rodinných rolí a väčším zapojením otcov do výchovy detí. Ďalšia interpretácia je, že vplyv mužov a žien závisí od povahy ich zapojenia do sakralnej architektúry. V náboženskej sfére dominujú ženy, zatiaľ čo pri opravách alebo úlohách tradične mužských majú muži silnejší vplyv – čo odráža tradičný prenos hodnôt. Dôležité môžu byť aj triedne rozdiely (pozri: Domański et al., 2021). Na vyvodenie pevných záverov je potrebný ďalší výskum.

Druhá výskumná otázka sa týkala nových významov a praktík žien súvisiacich so starostlivosťou o malé sakrálne objekty. Kvalitatívne údaje naznačujú, že v súčasnosti úsilie žien o zachovanie malých sakrálnych objektov presahuje aktivity tradične pripisované ich pohlaviu v tejto sfére.

Napriek prirodzeným obmedzeniam výberu vzorky výskum umožňuje vyvodiť závery o vývoji úloh žien. Ich priestor na rozhodovanie sa s emancipáciou rozšíril, hoci tradičné úlohy zostávajú. V tomto kontexte sa ženy – matky a staré mamy – častejšie venujú nenápadným úlohám súvisiacim s malou sakrálnou architektúrou. To odráža funkciu opatrovateľky, ktorá rozširuje starostlivosť o rodinu do náboženského rozmeru. Pozornosť a starostlivosť pôsobia ako prvky budovania komunity

pre rodiny a farnosti. Jedna respondentka sa starala o svätyňu na svojom pozemku a zdôrazňovala jej význam pre svoju vieru. Ďalšia, najmladšia respondentka, vyjadrila hrdosť na to, že jej manžel postavil drevenú svätyňu. Ženy nielenže denne udržiavajú malú architektúru, ale pracujú aj v mimovládnych organizáciách, kde organizujú aktivity aj mimo domácností. To ukazuje, že s postupujúcou emancipáciou sa ich zapojenie do ochrany sakrálnych objektov stáva rozmanitejším a posúva sa od súkromných a lokálnych praktík k verejným a nadlokálnym. Často ide o poloprofesionálnu činnosť. Vzdelávajú sa, šíria vedomosti – tri respondentky sú spoluautorkami publikácií o miestnej histórii a turistických atrakciách – a spolupracujú s inštitúciami, ako sú úradníci pre ochranu pamiatok, aby zabezpečili verejné financovanie. Okrem každodennej starostlivosti o sakrálnu architektúru majú ženy vedomosti o kultúrnom dedičstve, ktoré často presahujú školské osnovy alebo typickú socializáciu. Učia sa autonómne, hoci ich vedomosti sú niekedy fragmentárne a sústredujú sa na fakty alebo obdobia, ktoré sú najviac zakorenené vo verejnom historickom povedomí.

Je ťažké predpovedať, ako sa bude vyvíjať ochrana sakrálnej krajiny Kladska alebo do akej miery budú mladšie generácie nasledovať rodičov a starých rodičov. Naše údaje potvrdzujú prenos praktík, ale nestačia na to, aby sme dospeli k záveru, či je udržateľný naprieč generáciami. Tieto výsledky preto poskytujú odporúčania pre ďalší výskum faktorov podporujúcich socializáciu pri formovaní postojov a správania k ochrane malej sakrálnej architektúry. Zdá sa, že to čiastočne súvisí s významom takéhoto dedičstva pre miestnu ekonomiku, najmä cestovný ruch. Hoci školy a regionálne vzdelávanie zohrávajú úlohu, kľúčovým prvkom je prenos hodnôt v rámci rodín, a to tak ženami, ako aj mužmi. Na potvrdenie týchto predbežných zistení je potrebný ďalší výskum.