

PEOPLE, SPACE AND CULTURE – DIMENSIONS OF INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS. INTRODUCTION

**LUBICA VOĽANSKÁ, MARCELA KÁČEROVÁ,
JURAJ MAJO**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2478/se-2019-0007>

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Mgr. Lubica Voľanská, PhD, Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Klemensova 19, 813 64, Bratislava, Slovakia; e-mail: lubica.volanska@savba.sk;

Mgr. Marcela Káčerová, PhD, Department of Economic and Social Geography, Demography and Territorial Development, Comenius University, Mlynská dolina, Ilkovičova 6, 842 15 Bratislava, Slovakia; e-mail: marcela.kacerova@uniba.sk;

Mgr. Juraj Majo, PhD, Department of Economic and Social Geography, Demography and Territorial Development, Comenius University, Mlynská dolina, Ilkovičova 6, 842 15 Bratislava, Slovakia; e-mail: juraj.majo@uniba.sk.

How to cite: Voľanská, L., Káčerová, M., Majo, J. (2019). People, Space and Culture – Dimensions of Intergenerational Relationships. Introduction.

Slovenský národopis, 67(2), 122–144, <https://doi.org/10.2478/se-2019-0007>

In everyday language, the notion of generation is used to try to explain the differences between groups of people of similar age and to place individual selves on a historical timeline. However, the concepts of “generation” used by various disciplines are very varied. The most widespread is the concept inspired by demography describing the average period during which children are born, grow up, become adults, and begin to have children of their own, generally considered to be about twenty or thirty years. In the Mannheimian tradition (Mannheim, 1952) generations can be understood as large social groups that as subjects were formed both by a significant social event and by a combination of changed social conditions that create a specific generational social climate.

Generations are structured by individual preconditions as well as social and family background intertwined with the realms of ethnicity, religion, education, profession and political attitudes. However, generational competence is just one of the foundations of one’s life orientation. Although the same event is experienced by a particular generational group, it can be internalized differently and therefore creates the basis of intra-generational contradictions. In this manner, it constructs the source of generational and social development.

According to Sarah Lamb: “The concept of generation has been used by anthropologists to explain social change over time, to examine the ways people organize and envision intergenerational ties within the family, to explore principles of social organization beyond the family, and to identify differences among members of a society” (Lamb, 2015: 853). However, the neglect of this topic parallels the lack of attention paid to the social significance of age in the ethnological/social anthropological research more generally.

This issue of Slovenský národopis/Slovak Ethnology is supported by the project STARCI – *Intergenerational social networks in an ageing city, continuity and innovation*, APVV-15-0184, 2016 – 2020. The project in the context of the changing age structure of cities focuses on the aspects of the growth of this population and its living conditions. In our neighbourhoods, these citizens live their daily lives, often overcoming physical and mental barriers that members of other generations often do not see. In addition to focusing on the specifics of the urban environment, the originality of the proposed project resides in the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods in the context of interdisciplinary research that is still a unique approach in our country. Its outcome will be a thorough analysis of this subject on several levels: society – community – individual.

The editors of this issue are all members of the project team. Related to their background in demography, human geography and ethnology they present perspectives of various disciplines on the following pages focusing on different age groups and intergenerational relationships in the area of population, space and culture.

PEOPLE, GENERATIONS AND INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The intensity of demographic research on intergenerational relationships is growing as population ageing increases. Demography explains population ageing by describing changes in fertility, mortality and migration rates. Life course research argues that these rates are interconnected because they are embedded in the life courses of individuals (Komp, Johansson, 2014). It must nevertheless be borne in mind that although each life's cycle and course are specific to the individual concerned, they also reflect the institutional structure of the society, the legal system and normative concepts about the good life and the timing and sequence of life events over the course of a life (Hamplová, Šalamounová, Šamanová, 2006; Bužeková, 2018).

From the perspective of demography, a generation is an analytical category. It represents a set of people with the same birth year. At the same time, generational data provides an exceptional means of observing demographic processes and phenomena because it can be used to derive a unique form of information – intergenerational change. A similar term also used in demographic analyses is cohort, which refers to a group of persons who experienced a certain demographic event in the same time period. This creates an imaginary generation who experienced the same demographic event in the same year. The generational perspective is a method in demography, but it can also perform a function on the level of analysis and interpretation. Roubíček (1997: 128) highlights another meaning of generation in terms of genealogical succession, as a group of descendants with the same antecedents. The Czech multilingual demographic dictionary (Pavlík, Kalibová, 2005:19) includes many phrases that incorporate the term

“generation”. These include terms such as older and younger generations, the generations of parents and children, the generation of fathers and mothers (Stašová, 2018).

White (2013: 13) defines a generation “as an historical explanation; as a way to catalogue time; as a source of community; as a way to identify injustice; and as an axis of conflict and impending crisis”. The authors (Keating, Kwan, Hillcoat, Nalletamby, Burholt, 2015) emphasise the importance of clarifying the use of the term because generational understanding influences and reflects societal attitudes while at the same time informing both practice and policy related to population ageing. In his view, there are four main assumptions about generations that are particularly important in analysing challenges and opportunities that emerge from changing intergenerational relations:

- Generations exist at both societal and family levels and are intersecting.
- Generation is both objective and subjective; it can be determined by birth year or kinship relationship; equally generation is the social construction of a set of shared characteristics or familial obligations.
- Generation is related, but not equivalent to, age.
- Generations are not static but change and evolve over time.

Generational analysis in demography encourages not only an analytical approach based on the available statistical data and specific methods, but also reflection on the socio-cultural contexts that influence and drive the demographic behaviour of generations (Stašová, 2018). Demography must also be understood as a discipline that seeks to “recognise objective reality in its differentiation, i.e. its developmental complexity and qualitative diversity (Pavlík, Rychtaříková, Šubrtová, 1986: 14 in Stašová, 2018).

The theoretical foundations of population ageing, the regional analysis of Slovakia and several types of perspective on ageing in Europe from a demographic perspective have a central position in the work of human geographers such as Marcela Káčerová and her co-authors (Káčerová, Bleha, 2007; Káčerová, Ondačková, Mládek, 2014; Káčerová, Ondačková 2015a; Káčerová, Nováková, 2016), and others (Potančoková, 2003, 2005), and new methods have been developed for analysing age structure (Káčerová, Mládek, 2011; Káčerová, Ondačková, 2013; Šprocha, Ďurček, 2018) and the effect of generational change on the social economy (Bleha, Ďurček, 2017). The main issues in which intergenerational change has been analysed in Slovak demography is change in women’s fertility on the generation or cohort level (Šprocha, 2018; Šprocha, 2019) and changes in marital behaviour and family structure.

Population ageing has been a major factor influencing changes in intergenerational relationships (Izuhara, 2010). Although intergenerational relationships are an inherent part of human nature, we are witnessing growing generational divides and the age structure of our society is becoming more and more fragmented. Generational distance is a reality in present-day society despite the fact that population ageing should motivate us more than ever to create new forms of solidarity and cooperation between generations (Jedličková, 2017). Research on generational conflict, generational renewal and intergenerational relations concerned with seniors has focussed mainly on questions of family, generational solidarity and grandparenthood. Generational renewal is an integral part of the life cycle. Current forecasts for the development of European populations point to enormous expansion in the generation of grandparents and small numbers in the generation of children. For this reason, the importance of intergenerational relationships is growing on the social, economic, family and individual levels. Solidarity is more important than ever before because individualism, in the context of the second

demographic transition, is a strong factor in the present population trend. These are issues within the scope of demographic research. At the same time, it must be noted that research of generational issues including intergenerational relationships does not occupy a significant place in Slovak demography.

In Czechia, historical demographers have contributed to the study of old age, though it must be stressed that this has mainly been in the context of studies of multiple age groups. Two publications stand out in this area: *Dětství, rodina a stáří v dějinách Evropy* [Children, Family and Old People in European History] (1990) by Pavla Horská, Milan Kučera, Eduard Maur and Milan Stloukal and *Rodina našich předků* [Our Ancestors' Families] (1996) by Jan Horský and Markéta Seligová.

There is growing interest in the study of the family and intergenerational relationships in Czech sociology, with the whole first issue of the journal *Sociální studia* being dedicated to the topic in 2007. Most of this research comes from sociologists, from whom we would like to highlight the work of Ladislav Rabušic in *Čeští seniři včera dnes a zítra* [The Czech elderly yesterday, today and tomorrow] (2004) and on the issue of education for old people (Rabušic, 2006), and the book *Sociologie stáří a seniorů* [The sociology of old people and senior citizens] (2012) by Petr Sak and Karolína Kolesárová, which criticise the state's lack of preparation for population ageing and the positive benefits that the transition to a long-lived society can bring.

Other notable works include Dana Sýkorová's *Autonomie ve stáří. Kapitoly z gerontologie* [Autonomy in old age. Gerontological chapters] (2007) and her collaborative work with other colleagues including *Stáří ve městě, město v životě seniorů* [Old people in the city, the city in the life of seniors] (Sýkorová, Vidovičová, Petrová Kafková, Galčanová, 2013; Sýkorová, 2014) on the phenomenon of old age in the urban environment (which is a contrast to Slovak research, which tends to focus on the countryside). Another focus of research is the difficult issue of old age combined with poverty (Sýkorová, Tichá, Nytra, 2014). Sociologist Lucie Vidovičová studies very diverse issues including the media portrayal of the oldest generation in popular-educational literature (2002) and the audio-visual media (Vidovičová, Sedláková, 2007), ageism – discrimination against old people in society (2004, 2008) and specifically at work (2006). She has also conducted research based on quantitative data from international surveys on active ageing (2005), qualitative research based on interviews on various issues related to life in old age (Vidovičová, Gregorová, 2007).

In Slovakia, the issues of old age and the lives of old people in relation to social structures have been studied mainly in the domain of sociology, especially in the work of Magdalena Piscová (2007, 2011). Her research began with the study of social care and the transformation of the family and intergenerational relationships. It concerns mainly ageing from the perspective of demography and the demographic situation in Slovakia. The use of international research data allows a comparative perspective on certain issues related to ageing and life in old age. Miloslav Bahna touched on these issues in his studies of carers from Slovakia who look after old people in Austria (2014, 2015, 2016). He also looked at the situation in the transnational families of migrant women. Martina Sekulová (2013) covers the same subject-matter as Bahna – Slovak carers for elderly Austrians – but from a qualitative ethnological perspective. A review of their latest book *Cross border Care: Lessons from Central Europe* (2019) can be found in the present issue. The Institute for Sociology carried out a project under the HELPS Programme (Housing and Home-care for the Elderly and vulnerable people and Local Partnership Strategies in Central European cities), which ran from 2011 to 2014. It generated

several publications, action plans and working papers (Piscová 2014, http://www.sociologia.sav.sk/vyskumne_projekty.php?id=1456).

In 2015, Magdalena Piscová, Robert Klobucký and Miloslav Bahna published the results of a survey of international quantitative data on the perception of old people in society in the journal *Slovenská štatistika a demografia*, in an issue that was entirely dedicated to the question of population ageing in Slovak and international contexts. Their words then remain true in the present situation: “The phenomenon of ageing continues to be more the domain of demographers than sociologists and it is demographers who are calling for broader multidisciplinary cooperation” (Piscová, Klobucký, Bahna, 2015).

The first partial attempts to present an emic perspective on ageing and intergenerational relationships can be found in the sociological research of the IVO published in the book *Štvrtý rozmer tretieho veku. Desať kapitol o aktívnom starnutí* [The Fourth Dimension of the Third Age. Ten Chapters on Active Ageing] edited by Zora Bútorová (2013). The main topic of the book was active ageing in Slovakia. Although the book's main focus was the presentation of quantitative research, the project also included research based on a narrative interview about active ageing in selected regions of Slovakia, in which interviewees described their experience of ageing and being active in old age. In the foreword, Zora Bútorová writes about Slovakia's delayed response to the problem of active ageing (Bútorová, 2013: 13) and the need to hold a mirror up to society to make it aware of the complexity and the generationally determined character of the behaviour of members of the so-called “third age” in Slovakia.

Modernisation is shaking both the traditional dependency of relationships and traditional experience and authority in the family (Chorvát, 2006 in Hamplová, Šalamounová, Šamanová, 2006). It is weakening the strength of the family and its role in intergenerational relationships, not necessarily of itself but as a result of structural changes in household size and composition (Pilinská, 2005; Šprocha, Vaňo, Bleha, 2014). The traditional contract between the generations is based on a system of intergenerational reciprocity (Harper, Hamblin, 2014). Intergenerational relationships are mainly about reciprocity. In ancient times what each generation received and gave was simple: being cared for when small and taking care of their own children until they could rely on themselves (Soler, 2012). Important factors that assist the provision of assistance to old people are geographical proximity and the quality of relationships between parents and children. On the other hand, Hrozenská (2013) claim that intergenerational relationships can be maintained at a distance and usually keep working until grandparents require intensive assistance. Jarmila Mezsarošová and her co-authors (Mezsarošová, Wsólówá, Bachratá, Stuchlíková, Gazdíková, 2018) found that men were statistically significantly more likely to want to improve relationships with their family (16%) than women (5.8%). The available statistics indicate that there is only a minimal number of multigenerational families in Slovakia and only a minority of older people over 65 live in a shared household with their children and grandchildren. Census data from 2011 show that a quarter of all households have just one member, of whom 52% were persons over the age of 60.

A special theme of intergenerational relationships in research is the relationship of grandparents and their grandchildren. The whole monothematic issue of the journal *Sociologický časopis* (2015) was dedicated to the topic of grandparenthood.

Grandparenthood opens new perspectives for the future and is a rich source of varied activities for a new level of life with broader horizons for older people (Lenhardtová,

2010). The topic of grandparenthood became part of mainstream sociology in the second half of the 20th century. It is a relatively new field in Czechia and Slovakia compared to the UK and USA, where the first publications on this issue appeared in the 1960s. Furthermore, research has focused mostly on grandmothers, with the first research projects and publications overlooking grandfathers both in Czechia and in other countries (Mann, 2007; Sedláková, Galčanová, Bělehradová, 2018). As with every social role, grandparenthood is associated with various norms and expectations. Tatiana Sedláková, Lucie Galčanová and Andrea Bělehradová (2018) capture their respondents' impressions of their own grandparents and their parents in the role of grandparents to present a variety of images of these roles. Some of the most important norms relate to participation in care for grandchildren, which families most often see as the duty of grandmothers while it is something optional for grandfathers (Hasmanová Marhánková, 2015). Lucie Vidovičová, Lucie Galčanová and Marcela Petrová Kafková (2015) present several images of the Czech grandmothers in the past and present.

SPACE, GENERATIONS AND INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

One of the most challenging issues in human geography is its changing perception of space. The attitudes and opinions on what space actually represents, and what it means for the research, have always been an issue of many discussions with the outlook of very dynamic approaches. Moreover, we are always learning to see the re-definitions and deconstructions as a regular and inevitable process. In a scientific discipline which grew up among natural sciences, these are not very trustworthy processes and it still provides arguments for challenging and distrust. We simply like to see issues as stable with a solid positivist background. Words on hidden structures, constructivism and de-essentialism many times sound like spells from the unknown world. Similarly, space is only rarely seen as a product of social interactions and can be very dynamic with the possibility of fast erasure of previous states. Its dynamics also mean that structures and context beyond the construction are not always easy to deconstruct and explain.

Space and social structures are undoubtedly intertwined. However, many times they are seen in terms of one (space) being a setting, scene, or arena, where social structures are analysed, and we perceive and try to scientifically describe their behaviour and possible future evolution. But it is not always taken for granted, that space is a product of interrelations between several social structures and identities, and as Doreen Massey states, space does not exist prior to these identities and their interrelations (Massey, 2005: 10). It is then important to realize, that space itself is not just an area on a map, but represents an articulation of social relationships with their shifting and dynamic characters, where places are bound up with histories which are told and with how they are told, and which turns out to be dominant (Massey, 1995: 186, 188). Dynamics of dominance in space, and their variability across time helped to form specific approaches in human (cultural, social) geography, that were focussed on groups (in this case groups that are bound to human age and generations) that might feel the aftermaths of dominance somehow more sensitively (seniors, children). In this respect, the intergenerational space has been conceptualized to facilitate and promote interaction between members of different generational groups (Vanderbeck, Worth, 2015: 2), to promote age integration, intergenerational transmission of values and experience

through interaction and learning with the aim of constructing generational status and identity (*ibid.*).

Intergenerational understanding of urban space especially sees space as more than an interaction between work, consumption and domesticity just like they are more than places for active aged to relax and socialize (Biggs, Carr, 2015: 109). The practical aspect of inter-generationality resides in making ties to a certain place – there are certain locations that build attachments and a sense of belonging and not belonging. These traces in our identity help to form borders – within geographical border there is always a cultural border (see more Anderson, 2010: 42–44). It is also important to conceptualize space as a representational space, as space lived through associated images and symbols, which overlays physical space making symbolic use of its objects (Lefebvre, 1991: 39). Intergenerational space is then a snapshot of such constructed space where many generations could and many times also actually meet and interact, and they are perceiving space differently reflecting various forms of life experience, worldviews, political situations and so on.

Social space contains various social identities. The variability within, and between identities form social differences. As Ruth Panelli states, social differences have been at different times and in different ways conceptualized and investigated in forms of categories, relations, spatial patterns and struggles (Panelli, 2004: 37). According to Panelli these social differences are class, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. However, we can update the social differences with age as well. One of the very dynamic approaches in current social and cultural geographies focused on age and generations are geographies of childhood. Children, just like many other “less strong” social groups are a quite new object of geographical research. Fiona Smith and Nicola Ansell (2009: 58) within a theoretical shift towards social constructivism state: social constructivists highlight the plurality of childhoods, contextualized by social, historical, political, economic, and geographic processes. Geographers utilizing this theoretical perspective explore the material and corporeal experiences that embody children’s everyday lives and consider the ways children’s social identities are gendered, classed, racialized, etc. within particular spatial contexts. As identities are in constant change and interaction, children and childhood interact with others in family and community settings are more than children alone, studying them in context adds a new layer of their understanding (Hopkins, Pain, 2007: 289). Moreover, there are various spaces, where this generation can gain different experience (home, public space, cyberspace). The intergenerational aspect in geographies of childhood is present in various socially topical issues – such as cultures of poverty, where there is a strong influence of previous generations and their functions (see for example Jackson, 2003: 30–33). Analysis of children’s friendship formation in a specific neighbourhood underlines the importance of their social settings, family ties and responsibility among siblings, or gender roles (Blazek, 2011). It can gain importance in planning activities where children can help to find barriers and facilitators of physical activity (Christensen, Mygind, Bentsen, 2015: 1) just like in different perspectives of different age groups – one group can use and appropriate the place, while the other can feel alienated, or feel possible intergenerational conflict, where, for example children would like to play ball games, but “old ladies” redefined the rules of the place (*ibid.*, 597). In older age, the presence of the groups of teenagers merely hanging around in public space (many times being the only autonomous space outside of surveillance of parents, teachers, etc.) can cause fears and feeling of threat to public order, despite their innocent intentions (Valentine, 2004). The perception by

this generation of its own neighbourhood completes the information on a certain place. For example, in an analysis of Danielle van der Burgt (2008), children have a strong attachment to a certain neighbourhood, and they defend it in confrontation with children from other neighbourhoods. As already mentioned, the space in an intergenerational perspective with the focus on the adolescent children can have a crucially different comprehension. On one side there is a space of restriction at home, and outer space, which is a promise of freedom, although parents try to portray a risky picture of it and have control on outdoor activities and peer interactions (Xu, 2015: 190).

Similarly, like in the case of geographies of children, geographies of the home represent another emerging discipline within human geography with a promise of intergenerational interaction in specific space. The interest of geographers in homes resides not just in rematerializing attempts and interest in material cultures of objects and their use, display, and meaning, but also in examining the use of space such as separation of men, women, and children, and discussing the implications of gendered spaces (such as the kitchen) (Peil, 2009: 181). Home is a very specific and intimate dimension of space, it reflects our closest and not just consanguineous relationships. Its construction is perpetual, although the changes in it might be very disturbing and emotionally burdening. Usually home has positive connotations, a setting that represents a certain form of refuge, but it can also turn into jail where relationships in it degrade human existence. The emotional aspect, both in positive and negative meaning, is in the case of home a very important essence and cement as well. The emotional aspect is sustained by a temporal aspect when space encompasses various family processes such as the birth of children, marriage, growing old, and especially deceasing of a partner. For such bereaved individuals, the space of home and objects in it simultaneously evoke presence as well as the absence of a partner with whom the space was shared (Hockey, Penhale, Sibley, 2001: 755).

Homes in terms of crossing generational lines can transform into co-housing forms of living (Blunt, Dowling, 2006: 263–265). It transforms the meaning of home not in terms of a new way of life, but as a new approach, they do not target specific age or family type but encompass a diverse variation of these concepts to address different types of households (McCamant, Durrett, 1994: 9–10) and some are designed to provide possibilities of shared childcare beyond nuclear families, some are cross-generational, some are designed for certain age groups and gender (Blunt, Dowling, 2006: 265). Certain attempts were described to introduce and sustain such forms to build bridges across generations (esp. for children to see ageing as active and functional (Neshama, Delagrang, Lagrang, 2006)). Child care is embedded in a similar network of extended family not just in terms of the older generation, but also in terms of peers (McCamant, Durrett, 1994: 16) and although the outcomes of such housing in communities have positive results in terms of support and social cohesion, the task is in sustainability in terms of financing (Kehl, Then, 2013).

One of the most salient outcomes that should be always in the scope of space construction research is the aspect of power relations. Not always have the groups in society equal opportunities to construct space and take all possible social advantage of it. If the discrepancy is too unequal, then the process of spatial segregation appears. It becomes the verge stage of pushing somebody out of the space due to various reasons of unacceptability. Particularly the aged, being a very vulnerable part of society, are many times even unintentionally put aside in the processes of space construction. One process that is evident in this case is a process of diminishing of public space, especially

in cities which opens up a salient argument that public space is not an emptiness which enables free and equal speech as space and place are products of social relations which are most likely conflicting and unequal (Massey, 2005: 152).

Place-based exclusion is a result of essentialization of cultural differences based on ascribed and permanent characteristics and within dominant discourse; they form specific images (Růžička, 2006: 121–122) and can have several dimensions. Kieran Walsh (2018: 255–257) identifies five of them, which can include services, amenities, built environment, socio-economic aspects, social and relational aspects, socio-political aspects and place-based policies. These are a condensation of various factors on various levels and their mutual relation and interaction. Transformation of the environment can be hostile to the aged, especially in dynamic urban areas which are re-designed according to the needs and perception of the active population (especially shops and services). These processes are sensitively perceived by the aged (see for example study of Dana Sýkorová 2012, where the transformation of former shops into kitchen studios, boutiques, appliance stores, offices etc. seems useless, occupying more public space and against public interests).

TRADITIONAL CULTURE, GENERATIONS AND INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Sarah Lamb offered an overview of anthropological interest in generation. It has focused on four main topics: “pertaining to understandings of social change, of family moral systems and elder care, of social organization beyond the family, and of forms of identity and inequality” (Lamb, 2015: 853). However, she also admits, “despite the enormous explanatory power given to generational change by both local people themselves and in classic social science texts, the concept of generation has never taken centre stage in anthropological ethnography or theory” (ibid). Still, there are many studies dealing with generations and intergenerational relationships in an inspirational way that do not explicitly focus on the theme of generation as the central motive for their research.

In this part, we would like to offer an overview of various approaches to the subject of generations and intergenerational relationships in the area of ethnological research in Slovakia, not differing so much from the above mentioned topics. We do not seek to present a full list of works dealing with generations and intergenerational relationships. We rather tend to highlight some directions in research that we found inspiring, which are related to the development of the topic within the Slovak academic production. The topic of age and intergenerational relationships presents a new theme in ethnological research not only in Slovakia, where topics such as old age and ageing have been covered by ethnologists only marginally. Within ethnological research, elderly people were mostly perceived as eyewitnesses or those who remembered – a source of information about the past.

There are two main areas in the ethnological research of generations and intergenerational relationships in Slovakia: The first is the communication between the generations and intergenerational transmission – starting with the transmission of folklore expressions and encompassing also the important area of collective memory and transmission of values, the second one focuses on members of various generations in a particular context: family, community, village, ergo mostly generations in rural setting.

The first group is represented by the studies dealing with the problems of inter-generational transmission of various folklore genres (Kiliánová, 1983; Krekovičová, 1983; Vanovičová, 1981), generation as a determinant in the transmission and tradition of the folklore genre was in the focus of the work of Zuzana Profantová (1990).

Dušan Ratica problematized the relationship between the family upbringing and morals in the rural environment (1983a) as well as family education as a form of intergenerational transfer of ethno-cultural information (1983b).

The topic was related also to the study of transmission of values, for example Viera Feglová's work on changes in collective norms in the Christmas ceremony based on the analysis of the middle-generations attitudes (1982).

A big area for research presents the communication of the representation of the past between generations or within the same generation of a social group (family). Individuals or group members identify themselves with the events, phenomena, processes and personalities that the group considers important. Through (inter-generational) communication they actively and jointly shape the past in the communication. The book by Hana Hlôšková, *Tradičná kultúra a generácie* [The Traditional Culture and Generations] (2000), focuses on the transmission of values (continuity and conflict of values) from the older generation to the younger.

Monika Vrzgulová (née Kardošová) (1991) focused on the impact of political changes in the first half of the 20th century in relation to the value orientation of the inhabitants of the city of Trenčín. Among other topics she also worked on the relationship between the family identity and various objects with different meanings (2017). The latest example of this area of interest is presented by the book co-authored by Monika Vrzgulová, Ľubica Voľanská and Peter Salner: *Rozprávanie a mlčanie. Medzigeneračná komunikácia v rodine* [Talking and Silence. Intergenerational Communication in Family] (2017), which offers a theoretical and methodological study on the anthropological research of the present-day family in Slovakia and on the transmission of various forms of information between generations related to the identity of their members.

In the second group we can find studies related to age and social differentiation in various contexts – e. g. Margita Méryová used the dance opportunities in a local setting (1990a).

Similar to the situation in other countries where since 1970s, “the majority of work of intergenerational ties has come out of the subfield of anthropology of ageing” (Lamb, 2015), since the 1980s in Slovakia, the research has primarily focused on the position of elderly people in the family in rural settings. Even though the researchers “jumped on the runaway train” of events in the field of ethnology in the surrounding countries, none of them mentions explicitly the influence of any foreign literature or incorporation into the wider international context. Basic background information for the research of old age and elderly people was published by Dušan Ratica (1990). He presented the trends in the research on the integration of the elderly in society in domestic and foreign science and set out the baselines for the study of old age and the elderly; however, his research did not continue.

The interest in the study of generations from the ethnological perspective was manifested by the publishing of several small studies that represent an exploration of the rural and small-town environment. Nobody has conducted consistent, comprehensive research in the urban environment on a long-term basis. The articles by Peter Salner (1983, 1987) or Magdaléna Rychlíková (1983) are inspiring mainly from the point of

view of the possibility to compare the urban environment with the rural one and, in case repeated research is conducted in the future, to compare the current situation with the situation a few of years ago.

In her article *Pracovné aktivity starého človeka na dedine a jeho postoje k súčasnosti očami psychológa* (The Work Activities of Old People in Villages and Their Attitudes to the Present through the Eyes of a Psychologist) Elena Neumanová criticises the retirement age as the boundary of the post-productive age, and affirms that “there is no objective boundary that could be the benchmark for the time and age in which values are no longer created” (Neumanová, 1979: 273). She then notes that around a quarter of people over 70 years are still able to work. It is again work that represents a value. The results of the research conducted in Sebechleby suggested that the elderly consider “co-existence with second- and third-generation family members obvious” and, from the point of view of the future perspective, they expect from the younger generation to provide for “all necessities of life at the time they would no longer be able to care for themselves on their own”, which Neumanová considers natural (1979: 276). She finally refers to some previous research on the urban population according to which “they often faced a strong emotional charge in connection with the perspective of a solitary old age”, which she contrasts with the situation in the countryside where the researchers observed “peaceful, serene attitude towards their age and natural trust in the members of their family who would provide for all their necessities for a satisfied end to life” (1979: 277). Respecting the small contract between generations indeed seems to be considered obvious and natural within the expert discourse of the end of the 1980s.

In her thesis *Postavenie starých ľudí v rodine a spoločnosti* [The Position of Elderly People in Family and Society] (1987) and related article *Spoločenské kontakty starých ľudí v súčasnosti* [The Social Contacts of Elderly People at Present] (1990), Andrea Onderčaninová focused on work (employment) and its importance in the lives of the elderly. She chose the retirement age to limit the sample.

Ethnologists seldom focused on intergenerational relationships in connection to childhood, even less than old age in their research. However, there were a few exceptions, especially in the area of study of the youngest generation's ethnic identity in the work of Andrea Kadlecová Onderčaninová (1991) or Margita Méryová (1990b), or in comparing the situation of children in urban and rural settings (Salner, 1979).

Based on their research in Western Slovakia, Jan Rychlík and Magdaléna Rychlíková compare the situation in a small town and in a village in their article *Duchovní kultura osôb v dôchodovom veku na malom meste v 80. rokoch 20. storočia* [The Spiritual Culture of People in Their Retirement Age in a Small Town in the 1980s] (Rychlík, Rychlíková, 1985). They again chose the retirement age as the boundary of “old age”. They found out that when pensioners live together with their children and grandchildren, their relationship to traditional spiritual culture is much more intensive than in if they live alone or only with their spouse. “In such case, they hand over what they know to the youngest generation.” With this, the authors explain why the elements of traditional spiritual culture are better preserved in the countryside (1985: 86–87). Their other finding related to work and spare time is that pensioners do not distinguish between “time dedicated to work activities and time dedicated to entertainment, regardless of their previous occupation” (1985: 87).

In her article *Slovesná komunikácia skupiny starých ľudí v meste* [Verbal Communication of Old People in the City] Hana Hlôšková (1990) outlines the future research of a special sample of the oldest generation in the city – people living in lodging houses. She showed

the possible direction of research based on a questionnaire and biographical interviews; unfortunately, her research did not continue.

In the overview publication *Tradičie slovenskej rodiny* [The Traditions of Slovak Family] (Botiková, Švecová, Jakubíková, 1997) a lot of information is provided on intergenerational relationships within families in a rural environment in various chapters.

The recent research on intergenerational relationships within the ethnological environment in Slovakia has the form of partial studies – a kind of exploration or case studies – mainly from the point of view of the actors themselves. For example, Viera Feglová and Magdaléna Paríková deal with intergenerational relationships in family in connection with grandparenthood (Feglová, 2002; Paríková, 2007) and the second career of women through autobiographical narrations (Feglová, 2004). Marta Botiková (2006, 2008, 2017) writes about her research on the life cycle, culture and the way of life mainly from the female perspective. Similarly, the research by Tatiana Bužeková in the rural environment explores the aspects of relationships between generations (Bužeková, 2018).

New ethnological research in the rural environment has recently been conducted in Slovakia and Moravia – in the form of doctoral theses by, for example, Lenka Bieliková (2014), or master's thesis, like the one by Eva Šipöczová (2014), or published research results (Botiková, Brezovská, 2017).

Lubica Herzánová-Voľanská (Herzánová, 2002, 2005, 2007; Voľanská, 2016, 2018) has long been studying the forms of life in old age within the urban environment.

Last but not least, it is necessary to mention last-year's volume of the journal *Slovenský národopis* on Ageism (Slovenský národopis/Slovak Ethnology, vol. 66, issue 2). The contributions in the issue present examples of multidisciplinary research dealing with the cultural dimension of old age, ageing and ageism, they concentrate on how representations of this particular part of the human life course are created and used within various cultural contexts. The four articles have backgrounds in social anthropology, sociology, psychology, and communication studies; and come from four different countries (the Czech Republic, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia). All of the articles concentrate on old age, mirroring the academic production's clear perception of ageism perceived as being connected to old age (Petrović, Čizmić, Vukelić, 2018; Vidovičová, Honelová, 2018; Ivan, Schiau, Buzoianu, 2018; Sekeráková Búriková, 2018).

With this issue of Slovenský národopis/Slovak Ethnology, we would like to contribute to the understanding of key anthropological issues as the interplay between the social and the biological, the intersection of the personal and social realm as well as the relationship between the history and individual life course.

Are we right when we say we perceive something or someone older than we as being closer to represent tradition? Simply said – older means for us more traditional, somehow more connected and bridging our pasts. Older houses in rural areas are seen as traditional, folk music and folk dances must certainly be very old and traditional and so on. Even older members of our families, if they are still with us, we see as guards of traditions, strong chains of our pedigrees and representatives of older worlds that many times seem better, kinder and safer than the one we live now. On the other hand, young people are many times seen as those who do not respect traditions, new buildings as representatives of modernity, and new ideas and movements as those that want to destroy our society, family values and faith.

Luckily, life is not black and white and the old – young (new) dichotomy cannot be seen as counterparts of traditional (good, conservative) and modern (obscure, liberal). However, there are certain differences reflecting life experience, ideological background, and political constitutions and so on, but two banks of the same river have bridges that are not always easily seen and acceptable. Most of the articles handle the topic of bridges between generations, not just in terms of emotions, mutual help and assistance, but in changing values and tradition maintenance and transmission as well.

One of the most interesting and complicated aspects of relationships between generations are ways of dealing with and solving problems due to different worldviews and experience each generation has. Particularly, the conflict may gain salient dimensions when more generations live under one roof. Authors **Simona Hortová** and **Adéla Souralová** in their article “*I am not alone*”: *Intergenerational solidarity in three-generation households from the perspective of the older generation* deal with options and challenges that the cohabitation of more generations in one household brings. Based on in-depth interviews with seven members of the oldest of three generations living in three-generation households, the article studies the aspects, perception and significance of intergenerational solidarity. The article is based primarily on the theory of intergenerational solidarity developed by Alice S. Rossi and Peter H. Rossi (1990) and Robert E. L. Bengtson and Vern L. Roberts (1991). It is inspired by the classification of solidarity into seven dimensions – associational solidarity, affectual solidarity, consensual solidarity, functional solidarity, normative solidarity and the intergenerational structure of the family – and the observation of these dimensions in the context of three-generational co-existence. By employing a qualitative approach, the authors were able to capture the respondents’ emic perspective in their perception of intergenerational relationships and their status within the three-generation household.

Jana Nosková and **Sandra Kreisslová**’s contribution “*Family silver*” or *Artefacts (in) Memories of Forcibly Displaced Germans* is based on narrative and oral-historical interviews with representatives of three generations in three families. The authors ask the question, what importance and function do the almost sacred objects fulfil? The objects either come from the “old homeland” or refer to it in some way or remind of it, in the context of family remembrance, respectively forgetting. Three families cannot serve as a basis for generating generalizations about the families of “forcibly displaced Germans”, but the authors successfully pointed out some congruencies or differences that have emerged. They are focusing on the motivations of the “generation of experience” defined by Karl Mannheim and to gather, store and honour and commemorate the artefacts full of stories – mostly their own stories. The transmission of the stories and motivations to the next generation of children and grandchildren may vary in particular families. Using the metaphor of Elisabeth Fendl they discuss the ambivalence of the “luggage” the members of the oldest generation brought with them to Germany in displacement: the luggage contains everything they needed for travelling, what is necessary, but the luggage is also a thing that makes the journey more difficult, because you have to carry it with you.

Several problematic issues that we see and experience today were not very publicly discussed when the members of the oldest generations were young and their worldviews were formed by previous generations and different social and political settings. Two of the topics – environmental issues and sexuality seem to be very current in their subject and impacts on an individual’s life. More complex, yet very topical seems to be the issue of sexuality and intergenerational transmission. Sexuality and sexual behaviour norms

belong to the societal issues that underwent a broad change in the 20th century, not just in terms of ethical and religious views, but in terms of practice as well. **Kris A. Bulcroft** deals in her contribution *Love and Sexuality in Later Life: What Your Grandparents Are Not Telling You* with norms and their validity in older generations such as relationships outside marriage. The study was conducted in the Midwest in the United States, in which a sample of people age 60+ was interviewed regarding their dating behaviours and perceived functions of dating at this stage in the life course. This paper explored the adult child-older parent relationship in which the older person is dating or cohabitating and posits hypotheses based on three bodies of existing literature and theory – stereotyping of older people, the transmission of values across generations, and social exchange theory – on which to build future studies of intergenerational relationships.

Marcela Petrová Kafková conveys in her article *Environmental behaviour in an intergenerational perspective* a closer look at the perception and relationship of very topical issues connected to consumption habits of (not just) members of older generations. The author highlights climate change and attitudes to the environment as a source of intergenerational tensions or agreement. The effect of age on environmental values is analysed using data from the European Values Study covering six European countries during the period 1991–2017, focussing on two survey questions: Specifically, the statement: ‘I would give part of my income if I were certain that the money would be used to prevent environmental pollution.’ Secondly, ‘Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say which, if any, do you belong to?’ With the possible categories: Conservation, the environment, ecology, animal rights. The effect of cohort (age) is compared between countries, age groups and other groupings. The results show that differences in attitudes to the environment are not influenced by a cohort effect and age has only a weak effect. Social change is the main explanatory factor. The survey results show major differences between European countries and this diversity has a much stronger effect than age.

Finally, analysis of cultural changes and generation change in the local community of Nungon ethnic group in the state Papua New Guinea is the subject of the study of authors **Martin Soukup** and **Jan D. Bláha** *Exogenous Cultural change in the Background of the Generational Change: the Case from Papua New Guinea*. The authors consider Papua New Guinea societies, in some respects, to be natural “laboratories” ideal for studying cultural and social changes. Based on field research, the study investigates that the main causes of generational gaps are exogenous cultural changes, introduced into the community as an impetus. The first exogenous cultural change was implemented to the community through colonial authorities and missionaries. In the next stage, some members left the geographically defined community for a certain period. Upon returning, a handful of individuals brought change in the form of information and mastery of new technologies.

This paper was supported by Slovak Research and Development Agency Grant – Intergenerational social networks in an ageing city, continuity and innovation 2016-2020, APVV-15-0184.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

LUBICA VOLANSKÁ – is a research fellow at the Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava. She studied ethnology and history at Comenius University in Bratislava, the University of Regensburg and Vienna University. In a long term perspective, she is dealing with the ethnological research of kinship and family, old age, intergenerational relations, (auto)biographical research and historical anthropology. Her latest book „*V hlave tridsať, v krížoch sto*“. *Starnutie v autobiografiách v Bratislave a Viedni* (“Young minds, old bodies.” Ageing in autobiographies from Bratislava and Vienna) (2016) focuses on the old age and ageing in both cities. More information about project participation and the list of publications on <http://www.uet.sav.sk/?q=en/lubica-volanska-herzanova-mgr-phd>.

MARCELA KÁČEROVÁ – works as assistant professor at the Department of Economic and Social Geography, Demography and Territorial Development of Faculty of Natural Sciences of Comenius University in Bratislava. In 2009 she received a PhD degree. She was co-worker in several scientific projects and co-authored several maps in *Population Atlas of Slovakia*. She focuses on the study of demographic processes and structures with special emphasis on population ageing. Selected publications see on http://www.humannageografia.sk/zam_detail_publikacie.php?id=25.

JURAJ MAJO – has a PhD. in human geography and demography, and currently works as an assistant professor at the Comenius University in Bratislava, Department of Economic and Social Geography, Demography and Territorial Development of Faculty of Natural Sciences. His research profile includes topics from geography and demography of religious and ethnic communities, identity and diversity studies. He also co-authored several thematic atlases in the field of ethnic and religious geography and demography and historical demography. To see more of his publications see http://www.humannageografia.sk/zam_detail_publikacie.php?id=26.