

Krzysztof Brózda

AXIOLOGY OF HOMELAND AND PATRIOTISM,
IN THE CONTEXT OF DIDACTIC MATERIALS FOR THE PRIMARY
SCHOOL

Regardless of the historical context, patriotism remains constantly the main „part” of the identity of individuals and nations. It is necessary in building the attitude of responsibility for the nation and the country, and in preserving and developing the national culture. In the political or medial area, the terms like: „patriotism”, „homeland”, „nation” or „national culture” are not often used. When finally references to the homeland or patriotism occur, they rather seem to be the tool of the political fight between the parties and they don't have a lot in common with the patriotism. Even if patriotism seem to be the fundamental value for the big part of society, the supporters of different political options define it extremely variously.

The forming of patriotic axiology isn't simplified by functioning of the modern societies in the conditions of quickly changing circumstances, cosmopolitan mass models, consumerism, unification of lifestyles or finally banalization of experiencing the sacrum. Constantly preferred traditional patriotism in the abstract, historical, ritual or occasional version isn't favourable for intensifying the emotional human relationships, especially among the young ones, with their region, country, nation, homeland. It's visible that a lot of Poles distance themselves from the patriotism, which is considered in a traditional way and which is expressed by the love declarations for homeland and willingness for the devotion for its good, including the sacrifice of their life. In the daily social feeling there appears distinctive incompetence in touching the issues, connected with the patriotism.

In this context the patriotic education is getting more and more important, which essence should be defined by the intentional creating of some kinds of the acts, behaviours and conducts. By educating we have to understand the process of intentional transfer of the scope of knowledge, customs, ideas and the values for the next generations, which contribute to the lifestyle of some communities. The patriotic education is not an isolated issue, but it combines all of the aspects of the educational activity: mental, moral, esthetic, ethic, social and civil education.

The obvious connection between the patriotism and the education builds a significant impulse to write this thesis. As it seems, the school education still remains one not only extremely important, but also not completely used factor in educating the next generations of Polish towards the patriotic attitudes. The thought focused on the content of the textbooks for the primary schools, in reference to the axiology of the homeland and patriotism, which is included in this content, is reflected in the title of the thesis: „Axiology of patriotism and homeland in the context of didactic materials for the primary school”. The point of reference is here the Core curriculum from the 1999, which was slightly modified in reference to the primary school in the year 2009, 2012 and lately in 2014, and it is in force until today. Nowadays the new authorities of the Ministry have started consultations regarding the essential change of this most important document for the education.

The basic sources of the thesis are numerous didactic materials, assigned for the education in the primary school, which carry out the mentioned above Core curriculum. In case of the first stage of education, where after 1999 the integrated education was suggested, there was reached for the most popular textbooks of this particular type, including the last of them: „Nasz elementarz”, which was offered by MEN (Ministry of Education) in 2014 and stirred much controversy. In case of the second stage of education, for the obvious reasons there were used mostly textbooks for history, Polish, the fine arts (music and art) as well as natural science. Besides the numerous source materials, also the number of studies was in use, within the scope of

defining the patriotism and patriotic education. They were helpful by preparing the introductions to the particular paragraphs of the thesis and they allow the better appraising of the content of the didactic materials for the primary school, considering their usefulness in creating the patriotism. The numerous sources and studies, which were used in this thesis, determined in some measure its method. After carrying out the analysis of the sources, there was made a synthesis on the background of the collected material.

As in case of each question, also in the area of the homeland and the patriotism axiology issue, we have to refer to the conditions, in which the modern human exists and considers this issue. The life of the particular individuals, as well as of the various communities including the nation, doesn't go along in the emptiness. The social, political and economic processes make constantly a serious influence on its shape, the way of human thinking and acting. In the context of such essential and arousing strong emotions issue like comprehension of the homeland and the way of expressing the patriotism, the important role play also the ideological-world view or religious considerations. Exactly the serious polarizations in these last dimensions seem to imply so heated disputes, in the area of axiology of homeland as well as of the patriotism. The unique inertia of modern societies, in reference to the values connected with homeland, are accompanied by the attempts of expressing and classifying them, which are not infrequently extremely different. In the first paragraph of this thesis there was made an attempt of outlining some specific conditions of the modern patriotic discourse. Especially of those, which seem to suggest almost dichotomous view over the axiology of patriotism and homeland. The aim of the second paragraph is outlining some of the interpretations of the axiology of the patriotism and the homeland, as well as referring to these elements, which determine the essence of the discussion in this area. Due to the fact, that the reference point for the subject of the thesis is determined by didactic materials for the primary school, the last paragraph will bring closer the general assumptions of the school education, especially in the area of the patriotic one.

Without any doubt they determine in great measure the character of the patriotic education and finally condition the transmission and affirmation of values, which are carried by the homeland.

The determinant of the closer exploration of some reality, state or event is undoubtedly the possibility of indicating the factors, which constitute them. It's hard not to notice, that we not infrequently meet in this area some serious problems. The degree of their complication increases especially then, when we have to deal with the phenomenon, which even the contours are practically impossible to express. Without any doubt everyone meet such troubles, who try even with limited accuracy to indicate the factors, which determine the homeland. We enter in this issue the area of these values, which to some extent, because of the nature of the things regarding the richness of the contents, which fill it up, undergo the classification with a great difficulty. Nevertheless we can or even we should, by using - as it were - the *via negativa* way, look for these factors, without which there's no way to imagine the homeland. Among the constitutive factors, which establish it, it's mostly impossible to fail the community of people, so the nation. The thing, that unites the nation is culture, which may be considered as the next element, which co-creates the homeland. The community combined by a certain culture, which acquires specific features for the particular nation, inhabits the most frequently a certain territory, which determines the places of its living. That's why the land is the next important factor, which constitutes the homeland, although in some sense, even if it's deprived of the territory, it mostly doesn't cease to exist.

Being the social individual, for fulfillment of own vocation and sense of accomplishment, each human being needs another person, community, society, where he could develop and realize himself. The person not only doesn't ever exist outside the society, but this way of lifestyle creates to some extent the requirement of its nature. For this type of demand we need also to recognise the following the principle of solidarity by people, who build the society. Exemplifications of this principle should be

such social norms, like: occurrence of stronger in defence of the weaker, the cleverer in the name of the clever or the cooperation, not only in reference to the relations between the individuals, but also the nations. This value allows to exceed the individualism, the mutual mistrust or an objectification of the human. The exceeding of the „mine-yours”, „ours-foreign” border, as well as search for the points of agreement are crucial. It leads to discovering of the human value and to the consideration over that, what connects, in order to pursue the common good. Location of the human as an individual, who has a personal dignity, but is practically unable to exist without other people, will make up the subject of the first paragraph of the third chapter. The second one will refer to these contents from the interesting for us materials, which bring closer to children the Polish society and country, both in the historical dimension and in the present day. In the paragraph, which crowns the chapter, there will be presented those factors, which in a special way determine the solidarity of the participants of this nation.

Since the Homeland remains for the human the axiological category, he has not only an inalienable right to his own homeland, but also to the whole sphere of duties towards the good, which is the homeland. The sphere of these duties is determined as patriotism, which is expressed perfectly by love to the homeland, and more specifically love to different determinants, which constitute the term of homeland. Among the various ways of expressing by human his rationality and emotionality, one of the most important places takes undoubtedly the respect. With this attitude we express the thoughts and feelings towards somebody or something, which are especially important and valuable for us. There is no doubt, that also in the context of homeland and patriotism, this term has by all means its own justification. We are facing the value, marked with special amounts of the content, which require the respect. In this chapter, there were indicated the elements connected with homeland, which besides the community of people, who constitute the nation, what was the subject of the previous part of the thesis, define the forms of expressing our patriotism. In the first paragraph there will be presented the close connection of the respect for the homeland with the

concern for the native history. The second paragraph displays huge amounts of possibilities of expressing the respect towards the homeland by discovering, respecting and passing on the national culture. The paragraph, which crowns this chapter, increases extremely suggestive in its expression the dimension of the patriotism, which appears in the attitude of respect for the native land.

The patriotism in the constantly changing, also Polish reality, occurs today also as a challenge and requires shaping the new education. This education should extract the actual axiology of homeland, as a carrier of multiple values, those verified by a tradition of many centuries, but also those, which fulfil their role in the context of contemporary life. There is no doubt, that both look at the homeland and the patriotism require today a fresh angle, new forming of self-identity, other forms of activity in our own environment and understanding for the changing social-cultural realities. We need to remember, that the patriotic education not only doesn't have to be in conflict with the European education, renewal of the regionality or ecology, but these elements should constitute it. Over ten centuries of the history of our nation, depending on the situation, in which it occurred, the patriotism was differently comprehended and adopted various forms. However, it always had to meet the basic conditions: all of the taken actions should result from love and care for the fortune of the country, nation, society, they couldn't aim at the sovereignty and dignity of other nations. Besides the defined since ancient times forms: love to the homeland, unity, solidarity with the own nation, feeling of the social bond and the cultural community with other participants of the nations, each age also looks for the new ways of expressing the patriotism. Because one of the essential factors, which create the human thinking at the beginning of the 21. century, is the awareness of the increasing ecological crisis, each education adequately to the standing behind it philosophical assumptions, must also today take into consideration these contents. The care for well-balanced eco-development, which is directly connected with the forming of civil and patriotic awareness, defines the interest of the first paragraph of the fifth chapter of this thesis. The second paragraph,

which refers to the new perspective of patriotism in the context of dynamically forming regional education today, makes up to some extent the challenge for the rediscovery by Polish people of their own small homelands. The paragraph, which crowns this thesis, indicates the necessity of correlating the patriotism with the European education, by referring to the one more challenge for modern Poland, Europe and the world. The correlation of the axiology of the homeland and patriotism, with the functioning of the country and nation in the European and world structures, becomes today a challenge and necessity. Without undertaking this issue it will be hard for the Polish people to find their appropriate place among other nations.

By noticing the foundation of human rooting in the homeland, the precious treasure, which goes beyond the everyday life, marked strongly with the axiology, John Paul II posed the question, which can be considered as elementary one in this dimension of human existence: „how to multiply it, how to broaden this space, which it fills up”. The necessity of rooting the individual in the homeland, strictly correlated with the care for its future, can be considered as two fundamental factors of the patriotism. The respect for the past of the homeland and obligation of the constant filling of the widely understood native space by the next generations of the Poles determine to some extent the prospects of the axiology of the homeland and the patriotism. After all it will never stop to be valid, also in the beginning of the 21. century the care for that will remain following: this native treasure not to lose, not to diminish, but to take over and to multiply. The homeland is the country, with which we are on many surfaces deeply connected, of which we feel as a part. However, the rooting in the homeland isn't and can't be in any case something based on the model of the vegetable or thoughtless immobility, but it by its nature requires from the identities and the whole nations taking into consideration the new contexts and searching for the new areas, which constitute the patriotic attitude.