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THE MOTTO GOD HONOR HOMELAND AND ITS MEANING FOR MODERN YOUNG LEARNERS

*It is not only about the very recent past,
but also the one from a hundred or a thousand years ago.
Lack of knowledge about the past
makes us helpless in the face of the present*
Nowak, 2015, p. 30

INTRODUCTION

The destiny of man, society or nation is changeable, because nothing is given once, unconditionally and forever. Our lives and behavior are determined by many factors but values are dominant. "Man lives in a world of values that have a signifi-

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cant impact on him. Values always exist in their certain complexity. They occur in the form of a hierarchy or system, creating a kind of a group. They are subjected to temporal changes and they are adapted to the age and lifestyle. They appear together, but every value is uniquely significant. Values are what man lives for, what man fights for, what man suffers for and sometimes even dies for. They help percept personal identity. They explain the existence of certain phenomena occurring at various levels of life, e.g. political, social, cultural or economic” (Nowak, 2018, pp. 97-98). Therefore, they constitute the inherent component of people’s lives. They are constant and unchanging, although their meaning (importance) may change in different periods of life. As A. Krajewska notes, “the crisis of valuation consists of three, quite complex processes. These are primarily as follows: rapid development, dissemination of knowledge, prosperity and the sense of real freedom. Every factor carries a certain positive value, which is useful in improving the standard of living, but, on the other hand, it also causes undesirable side effects. Dissemination of knowledge has increased the curiosity of the world, scientific and economic awareness, but, at the same time, it has weakened mythical and religious thinking. The expansion of historical knowledge has broadened the horizons concerning other religions, moral and ethical systems, which are distant from the time and geography perspective. It has also weakened the original faith in the importance of the values system, religion and admired ideals. The authority of institutions, considered as historically important, has been relativized” (Krajewska, 2018, p. 31).

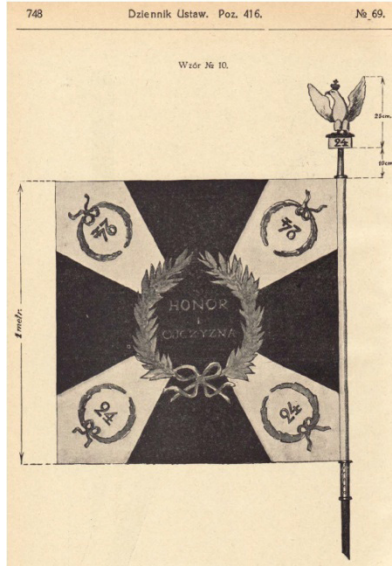
In the paper, it has been tried to find an answer to the question: How do contemporary young learners² perceive the values expressed in the triad: “God Honor Homeland?” These three categories have been deeply embedded in the consciousness of the Polish people. This is a message from the military service, which is socially accepted. This is because of the fact that every citizen, not only a soldier, is obliged to protect their country in time of a threat” (Furmanek, 2021, p. 247). For the generations of the 1950s and 1970s, these three words have become the determinant and guide in their efforts to regain full sovereignty. The motto “God Honor Homeland” was accompanying Polish statehood (with interruptions) for only a few decades. “God Honor Homeland” was the part of Poland’s moral and spiritual triad. “The dominant canon of this motto interpretation was as follows: “All for the Homeland, except the love of God and Honor” (Bączek, 2013, p. 4). This canon precisely established the axiological order of the motto, which was appreciated by ordinary soldiers, their commanders and Polish patriots. Before the word “God”

² By young learners (adolescence period) we understand: “the transition period from reaching biological and mental maturity to obtaining the status of an adult; it starts at 17-18 years of age and lasts until 25 years of age; so it basically covers the last years of secondary school and the years of higher education or starting professional career; it ends with taking up professional work and getting married (...)” – W. Okoń, *Nowy słownik pedagogiczny*, Pub. Żak, Warszawa 1998, p. 434.

was formally and legally introduced onto the military banners, two banners from the occupied Poland were conspiratorially brought abroad: one banner for Polish Air Forces handed to the pilots on July 16, 1941 in Swinderby – Great Britain, consecrated in May 1940 at the Gate of Dawn in Vilnius, and the second banner for the 1st Independent Parachute Brigade, handed on June 15, 1944 in Cupar – Great Britain, consecrated in November 1942 in the Church of the Canonesses in Warsaw. At the time of consecration, these two banners were formally illegal in Poland. It was suggested to introduce the word “God” onto these two military banners. The motto on the first one was supposed to read: “God Honor Homeland”, and on the second one: “God Homeland” (Kunert, 2021, p. 293). The order of the commander of the Polish Corps, General Władysław Anders, was very significant. In the evening of May 11, 1944, this commander’s order was read in front of the Polish troops. It read: “Soldiers – for the bandit attack of the Germans on Poland, for the partition of Poland executed by the Germans together with the Bolsheviks, for thousands of ruined towns and villages, for murders and torture of hundreds of thousands of our sisters and brothers, for millions of Poles transported as slaves to Germany, for the misery and misfortune of the country, for our suffering and wandering – with faith in the justice of the Divine Providence, we move forward with the holy motto in our hearts: “God Honor Homeland” (in: Zabierowski, 2016, p. 182). Therefore, the particular meaning of the quoted words should have been observed in the reference to the justice of the Divine Providence, because it was God that the hope for justice, protection and ultimately victory was placed in.

Recalling the interwar period, the invocation: “Honor Homeland” was allowed onto banners. This was specified by the Act of August 1, 1919 *on the emblems and colors of the Republic of Poland*, according to which in the Article 1 we read: “Until the borders of the Polish State have not been established and until the constitution has not determined the emblems, state colors, as well as the titles of state offices and institutions”, the offices of the Republic of Poland should use emblems and colors according to the attached patterns” (Act of August 1, 1919 *on the emblems and colors of the Republic of Poland* (Journal of Laws No 69, item 416). However, point 6 of the same article read: “The regimental banner of the infantry is considered to be the white banner, almost entirely filled with the Polish red cavalry cross, in the center of which, surrounded by laurel leaves, there is the inscription “Honor Homeland” (...). The Regiment’s number is placed in the laurel wreaths at the corners of the banner. The banner has the square shape. One side of the banner is 1 meter long (Pattern No 10)”. According to the mentioned above Journal of Laws, the banner pattern is shown in Fig. 1.

Figure 1. Patter of the banner specified by the Act on the emblems and colors of the Republic of Poland



Source: Journal of Laws No 69, item 416.

The existing motto: “Honor Homeland” was changed³ only in 1943. It happened thanks to the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, General Kazimierz Sosnkowski. The change was made by the decree of the President of the Republic of Poland, Władysław Raczkiewicz of October 15, 1943, *amending the decree of the President of the Republic of Poland of November 24, 1937, on the insignia of the army and navy*. In the Article 1 of the above-mentioned decree, the following entry can be found: “In the Article 10.3 of the decree of the President of the Republic of Poland of November 24, 1937 *on the signs of the army and navy* (Journal of Laws of 1938, No 5, item 32), before the word “God” the word: “Honor” is added (Decree of the President of the Republic of Poland of October 15, 1943 amending the decree of the President of the Republic of Poland of November 24, 1937 *on the insignia of the army and navy*, (Journal of Laws No 10, Part I, item 27).

Six days later, the Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, issued the Order No 17 for the army: “At my request, the Government has adopted and the President of the Republic of Poland has approved the inscription by his decree: “God Honor Homeland” onto the banners of the Armed Forces”. This motto corresponded to the deepest historical content and tradition. Since the dawn of its history, the Polish Nation has been faithful to the profound idea con-

³ Due to the limited size of the paper, I have provided only two key documents and border dates referring to the motto: God Honor Homeland, although, in fact, legal documents were not existent that time.

tained in these three significant words. I know how vivacious the motto “God, Honor Homeland” is today, especially among fighting soldiers”.

This was proven by the banners of the Polish Underground, such as the banner sent from Vilnius across seven borders to brave pilots in England; [...] the same motto was proclaimed by your soldiers’ hearts, when, on the first anniversary of the war in Scotland, you spontaneously placed the words “God Honor Homeland” onto the new banner.

“For the eternal ideals passed on to us by history, we will fight until the victory. I believe that we, who want to restore the honor to the Polish Majesty – God will bless our fathers” (Kunert, 2021, pp. 289-290).

In the period of the People’s Republic of Poland, the motto appearing on military banners completely changed its meaning. In the Decree of November 9, 1955 *on the symbols of the Armed Forces*, in the Art. 10, point 4, it can be read: “On the left side of the banner, in the middle, on a red background surrounded by two laurel branches arranged in the shape of a wreath, embroidered with gold, there is a five-line gold inscription: “For Our Homeland, the People’s Republic of Poland” (...)” (Decree of November 9, 1955 *on the symbols of the Armed Forces*, Journal of Laws of 1955, No 47, item 315). The next amendment was implemented in 1993 “After Poland regained sovereignty, the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Wałęsa, by the Act of February 19, 1993 (entering into force on April 30), restored the motto “God Honor Homeland” onto the military banners” (Kunert, 2021, p. 293).

In various dimensions, the 20th century Poland’s history was a tragic period. On one hand, it was the fight for independence, and, on the other, it was the struggle for freedom, honor and dignity of the Polish nation and its citizens. At that time, the motto: “God Honor Homeland” had a special meaning for the Polish people. It was giving confidence in regaining victory, mobilized and raised morale. Although, the motto disappeared from the banners in the period of the People’s Republic of Poland, it always remained in people’s hearts and minds. Perhaps thanks to these three words, the year 1989 was commemorated in the Polish history. The year 1989 brought huge transformations, not only in Poland but also throughout Europe. Have the ideals expressed by this motto survived to our time? What is the attitude of the contemporary young generation of Poles born in free Poland, towards these values? Is it only an empty slogan decorating only military banners or maybe these words still bear their values, which the society identifies with in the third decade of the 21st century? The answers for these questions were searched for in the pilot studies.

RESEARCH AREA AND RESEARCH METHOD

The survey was conducted in 2022 among students of the University of Rzeszów and students of the College of Social Sciences. It is worth noting that the research was carried out during the ongoing armed conflict in Ukraine. According to the research

author, it could (and even should) have influenced the assessment of the geopolitical situation. 236 people took part in the research, including 155 women, who constituted 65.7% of all respondents, and 81 men, who constituted 34.3% of all respondents. The average age of the respondents was 20.2 years old. In order to determine what significance did the word triad have for the contemporary young learners, it was necessary to describe these three motto elements by means of commonly recognized values. It was assumed that these values were included in M. Scheler's objective values hierarchy. On the basis of this assumption, the values characterizing the motto: "God Honor Homeland" were selected from among all values. The selected values are summarized in Table 1. The respondents used the 100 points⁴ scale to determine their individual hierarchy of values. For the purpose of the study, the questionnaire reliability coefficient, which was understood as the research tool internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha), was applied. It amounted to 0.91.

Table 1. Values characterizing the categories: God Honor Homeland

| No | God | Honor | Homeland |
|----|-----------|----------------|--------------|
| 1 | God | Honor | Country |
| 2 | Faith | Patriotism | Nation |
| 3 | Salvation | Helping others | Independence |
| 4 | Eternity | Truthfulness | Homeland |
| 5 | – | Reliability | State |
| 6 | – | Sincerity | Patriotism |
| 7 | – | Honesty | Peace |

Source: own study.

VALUE CATEGORY – GOD

"When the questions about the cultural foundations of Europe and about the common denominator are asked, the Greek, Roman and Judeo-Christian heritage, Athens, Rome and Jerusalem are always mentioned. P. Valéry expressed this clearly in one of his lectures saying: "There, where the names of Caesar, Trajan and Virgil, where the names of Moses and St. Paul, where the names of Aristotle, Plato and Euclid are authoritatively meaningful, there Europe is. Every human race and every land that were Romanized, Christianized and subjected to the Greek discipline in the field of intellectuality, is fully European" (Woźniakowski, 2004).

Summarizing Paul Valéry's idea, it is necessary to point out three pillars of the Latin civilization. They are as follows: Roman law, Greek philosophy and Christian

⁴ Further considerations are carried out without any connections with Scheler's hierarchy of values.

ethics. It is worth recalling that the Polish history of Christianity has over a thousand-year-old tradition. So, it is impossible not to mention the Lviv vows of the King Jan Kazimierz, taken on April 1, 1656 and the act of giving Poland under the rule of Saint Mary. Three centuries after this event, on August 26, 1956, the Jasna Góra Vows of the Nation were taken at Jasna Góra. The Primate of Poland, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, who was interned at that time, was the author of the vows formula. On behalf of the Cardinal, the Bishop Michał Klepacz delivered this formula. It is not possible to forget about the manifestation of faith and patriotism of the 1980s, when thousands of church believers participated in masses for the homeland, internees or on the occasions of national anniversaries. The above-mentioned facts have already made people be aware of the coherence and unity of the motto "God Honor Homeland". What value does the category of God represent for today's young learners? The answers are provided by the research results collected in Table 2.

Table 2. Hierarchy of values in the category of God (N=236)

| Parametr | Women (W) | | | | Men (M) | | | | Man & Women (M+W) | | | |
|------------|-----------|-------|-----------|----------|---------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|-------|-----------|----------|
| | God | Faith | Salvation | Eternity | God | Faith | Salvation | Eternity | God | Faith | Salvation | Eternity |
| Average | 59,0 | 59,0 | 58,7 | 58,5 | 67,5 | 63,8 | 63,3 | 61,8 | 62,1 | 60,7 | 60,3 | 59,7 |
| SD | 37,4 | 35,6 | 39,0 | 39,1 | 32,4 | 31,6 | 33,8 | 35,5 | 35,8 | 34,3 | 37,2 | 37,8 |
| Me | 70,0 | 70,0 | 70,0 | 70,0 | 75,0 | 70,0 | 75,0 | 70,0 | 71,5 | 70,0 | 70,0 | 70,0 |
| Do | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |
| Min. value | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Max. value | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

SD – standard deviation; Me – median; Do – dominant

Source: own study.

The results in the category of God summarized in Table 2 place this value at an average level. There is also a relatively large difference between women and men. In the hierarchy of values among men, the category of God occupies a much higher position than among women. The standard deviation (SD) also indicates much greater dispersion in the assessment of the hierarchy in women than in men. It is worth adding that in the entire group of respondents, the lowest rating (0 points) in the hierarchy of values for the category of God is provided by 9% of respondents. The highest score (100 points) is declared by 22.5% of respondents. For the values characterizing the category of God, the mutual correlation of individual values is determined – Table 3. All the obtained indicators are positive and they indicate a strong and very strong correlation.

Table 3. Mutual correlation of values in the category of God (N=236)

| VALUE | God | Faith | Salvation | Eternity |
|-----------|--------|-------|-----------|----------|
| God | – | 0,816 | 0,809 | 0,687 |
| Faith | 0,816, | – | 0,809 | 0,680 |
| Salvation | 0,809 | 0,809 | – | 0,766 |
| Eternity | 0,687 | 0,680 | 0,766 | – |

Source: own study.

According to E. Wysocka, young learners in their 20s are in the period of life, “in which their social roles are consolidated and lifestyle choices are made. The sense of power, which allows them to implement future plans and fulfill personal aspirations, emerge. It causes the stabilization of an attitude towards themselves, the sense of personal dignity and respect” (Wysocka, 2010a, p. 66). To illustrate the trends in changes that have occurred in the society over the years, statistical studies should be referred to. The comparison of the number of marriages can be treated as one if the criteria. The Institute of the Catholic Church Statistics (ISKK) also announces as follows: “Entering into marriage in a church requires a conscious decision and therefore the wedding certificate is one of the most important indicators of the religious faith” (Central Statistical Office 1991, p. 171). An appropriate comparison is provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Church weddings in 1980-2020 (<https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ludnosc/ludnosc/struktura-ludnosci,16,1.html>)

| No | Year | Total number of marriages according to the Central Statistical Office - GUS | Total number of church weddings according to Institute of the Catholic Church Statistics -ISKK | [%] indicator of church weddings |
|----|------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 | 1980 | 307 373 | 299 073 | 97,30% |
| 2 | 1990 | 255 369 | ~ 170 000* | ~ 66,57% |
| 3 | 2000 | 211 150 | ~ 170 000* | ~ 80,51% |
| 4 | 2010 | 228 337 | ~ 170 000* | ~ 74,45% |
| 5 | 2019 | 183 371 | 125 032 | 68,18% |
| 6 | 2020 | 145 045 | 91 468 | 63,06% |

*statistical yearbooks of ISKK indicate the stable number of church weddings in years 1990-2010, their number was estimated approximately as 170,000. The detailed data was not published (ISKK, GUS 2014, p. 166).

Source: own study.

Summary of data included in Table 4 provides the significant 30% decline in the number of church weddings. This proves the reorganization of the hierarchy of values involving the generations of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.

According to the Center of Public Opinion Research – CBOS research: “In the analyzed period and in the 18-24 age category, the percentage of church believers was decreasing – from 93% in 1992 to 71% in the first eight months of 2021. The percentage of non-believers was increasing – from 6.7% in 1992 to 28, 6% currently. (...) Participation in religious practices depended on the age. This dependence was stronger - the process was faster, but less even. In the youngest age group, the percentage of regularly practicing church believers was decreasing - from 69% to 23%, and the percentage of non-practicing church believers was increasing - from 7.9% to 36% (CBOS 2021, p. 10).

The quoted data obtained from ISKK and CBOS indicate the next issue concerning the causes of such a rapidly progressing crisis of religious faith. However, the statement that “the time people live in is different” is trivial but not without its meaning. There is no doubt, this time is different. It is not the wartime, it is not the time of fear for life, it is not the Occupation time, it is not the time of hunger and illnesses etc. In the past, facing the sense of helplessness and appealing to the Divine Providence were something natural. It was something that gave hope and conviction that the nightmare of the wartime would end soon and better time would come.

However, for widely known reasons, the post-war period did not bring the expected changes. In churches all over Poland, the religious and patriotic song “God, save Poland” was heard with slightly changed lyrics: (...) *To Your altars we bring our prayer: the free Homeland (bless) **return to us**, Lord (...)*. The geopolitical situation was changed only after 1989. Together with geopolitical transformations, the dynamic development of science and technology appeared. For the young generation born in the 21st century, the wartime and the post-war period are only historical events. They learn about it with greater or lesser interest from stories of grandparents, parents or from book publications. Therefore, these young people are not emotionally related with the struggle for: homeland, freedom, personal (national) dignity or survival. Recalling the paper introduction thesis written by A. Krajewska about the rapid development and dissemination of knowledge, prosperity and the sense of real freedom, seems to be appropriate. The contemporary youth lives in conditions that are completely different from those known to them from the history of the 20th century. Today the world is open. It offers numerous opportunities for individual development, provides countless possibilities of entertainment and material goods. It offers freedom in every dimension. Young people benefit from these resources that are within their reach. Societies, including the Polish society, “switched” to the *fast* mode: fast food, fast communication, fast bank loans, fast sex, fast car or fast life. The present reality does not provide threats (internal

and external), does not limit human freedom and dignity and does not reduce the access to any material goods. This means that young people do not feel the need or sense in seeking the help and support of the Providence of God. Simplifying the issue, young people believe in themselves and their unlimited possibilities. Their future is in their own hands. The crisis of faith is a trend observed not only in Poland, but in Europe and all around the world. The result is connected with the progressive secularization of societies.

VALUE CATEGORY – HONOR

Honor in the Polish language has various connotations. It is often heard/said that someone has or has not behaved honorably. Someone has a debt of honor and someone has just paid off such a debt. Someone has pledged his word of honor and someone is an honored guest or has taken honorary patronage over some important community events. No matter how this term is perceived, it is associated with values. Historically, “honor was highly valued in the ancient Greece and Rome. Honor gained its highest position in medieval knightly culture. It was one of the most important qualities of a knight and its essential component was connected with nobility expressed by principles of honesty and humanitarianism in a battle. Self-respect, courage, fun and respect for the opponent obliged the knight to provide equal chances in the fight. Taking advantage of someone’s weakness, lack of armament or unfavorable status were considered as shameful acts (Gajda, 2003, p. 249). “The symbol of integrity and honor was Zawisza Czarny, the medieval ‘spotless knight’. Relying on someone like on Zawisza means “trusting someone implicitly; being able to count on someone’s help; supporting someone in every situation; being sure of someone’s skills and qualifications.” In our culture “Zawisza Czarny is still a role model for the scouts. The scouting law contains the imperative that reads: ‘Rely on a scout’s word as you would on Zawisza!’” (quoted in: Szumska, 2023, pp. 298-299).

Referring to modern definitions, the concept of honor is specified as follows:

- “sense of personal dignity, good reputation; paying tribute to somebody: questioning somebody’s authority. The word of honor is included in the “formula delivered on somebody’s good behalf – good name” [...] To take offence a) “to feel dignity offense “b) “to act nobly, to do somebody a favor but with inconvenience or harm”.

To withdraw, to leave with honor “to deal with a troublesome matter without jeopardizing somebody’s good name or reputation” [...] Give military honors “to present weapons, salute, firing salvos to honor a personage”. To escort, to receive someone with honors “to see someone off, to receive someone with respect” (Szymczak, 1978, p. 753).

- Honor can be characterized as: dignity, nobility, honesty, courage, patriotism, helpfulness or reliability, etc. (cf. Grzeszczak, 2013).

The first definitional approach does not seem to cover all possibilities of understanding this term. How to understand the motto “God Honor Homeland” placed on military banners? Doesn’t the word honor also express the foundation of the nation, whose military formation is its direct representative? If we look at the issue of honor this way, the state and the nation are also identified with honor. Is it not possible to violate the honor of the state or nation by attributing the unworthy acts to its citizens? There can only be one answer and it is affirmative. The evidence for this issue is provided by the press, radio and television, but the “most perfect” medium is the Internet. In the era of the universal access to information and the easiness of the information distribution on a global scale, including the content violating the nation’s good name and reputation, there are not any restrictions limiting these practices. Nowadays, *the fake news*⁵, which is common and disseminated in the country and abroad, is the perfect example.

Although, the notion of honor is defined in various types of studies, in fact, it is a broad concept describing many qualities. M. Ossowska points out two of them in particular:

1. reputation – somebody who is broadly recognized, who has creditable opinion, who is respected and admired, who is famous, is honorable;
2. honor – it is something that a person is entitled to, it is not provided to a person from outside, it is a set of character traits that authorize a person to be respected, it is the spiritual nobility (Ossowska, 2011, p. 133).

How valuable the honor was in the interwar Poland might be proved by the words of Józef Piłsudski: *Honor of the military service is like a banner, with which a soldier departs his life from* as well as Józef Beck’s, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Second Republic of Poland, delivered on May 5, 1939 in the Polish Parliament, in which he rejected Hitler’s demands concerning Poland: *“Peace is a valuable and desirable thing. Our generation, bloodied in wars, certainly deserves peace. But peace, like almost all things in this world, has its price, high but measurable. We in Poland do not know the concept of peace at any cost. There is only one thing in the lives of people, nations and states that is priceless: that thing is Honor”* (Korkuć, 2019, p. 14).

Modern reference to honor can be found in the military oath, the wording of which we quote: *“I, a soldier of the Polish Army, solemnly swear to faithfully serve the*

⁵ The main sources of *fake news* are social media and the Internet. The reason for the creation of fake news is: tabloidization of the media, the need to obtain information, lack of time to verify it. In addition, the lack of competence of the text creators, the desire to achieve political goals and to manipulate public opinion are common. Fake news usually describes a specific event that is controversial or political. There are distinguished the following: 1) Complete untruth - the information provided is fabricated, contradictory, untrue; 2) The truth is disputed - the facts are presented selectively or in the appropriate context, as a result of which the recipient is misled; 3) Quotation manipulation - the statement is placed in an appropriate context and sentences or their fragments are removed, which changes the meaning of the original statement and, consequently, it supports a specific thesis, source: <https://www.gov.pl/web/baza-wiedzy/rozpoznanie-nieprawdziwych-informacji>, access: 9.11.2022.

Republic of Poland, defend its independence and borders. To guard the Constitution, to guard the honor of the Polish soldier, to defend the military banner. For my Homeland in need, I do not spare my own blood or my life. So help me God" (Journal of Laws 2022, item 655). As a comment, it should be added that in the section 2, there is the following entry: A soldier taking the military oath, referred to in Art. 12, section 1, may refrain from saying the last sentence of the oath at their own discretion.

The research indicated that this multidimensional nature of the concept of honor was attributed the following values: patriotism, helping others, truthfulness, reliability, sincerity and honesty. For the young generation born in the era of peace and prosperity, honor is a vague concept. Intuitively it seems clear what honor is. But as the research results indicated, honor is understood rather as an isolated concept that has no significant connection with other values that can be strictly attributed to honor. This is evidenced by low correlation indicators (weak or moderate relationship) – Table 5.

Table 5. Mutual correlation of values in the category of HONOR (N=236)

| VALUE | Honor | Patriotism | Helping others | Truthfulness | Reliability | Sincerity | Honesty |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| Honor | – | 0,324 | 0,164 | 0,153 | 0,292 | 0,209 | 0,213 |
| Patriotism | 0,324 | – | 0,223 | 0,144 | 0,226 | 0,120 | 0,092 |
| Helping others | 0,164 | 0,223 | – | 0,396 | 0,336 | 0,357 | 0,393 |
| Truthfulness | 0,153 | 0,144 | 0,396 | – | 0,325 | 0,660 | 0,571 |
| Reliability | 0,292 | 0,226 | 0,336 | 0,325 | – | 0,355 | 0,347 |
| Sincerity | 0,209 | 0,120 | 0,357 | 0,660 | 0,355 | – | 0,548 |
| Honesty | 0,213 | 0,092 | 0,393 | 0,571 | 0,347 | 0,548 | – |

Source: own study.

Summary of data included in Table 6 provides more information. Unfortunately, honor, is not in the leading position. If we rank values according to the average number of points – Table 6, it turns out that honor occupies the fifth position. This proves that honor is an extremely difficult concept in contemporary social understanding.

Table 6. Hierarchy of values in the category of HONOR (N=236)

| Gender | No | Value name | Parameter | | | | | |
|---------------------|----|----------------|-----------|------|------|-------|-------------|------------|
| | | | Average | SD | Me | Do | Min. value. | Max. value |
| Women (W) | 1 | Honor | 74,7 | 26,0 | 80,2 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 2 | Patriotism | 57,5 | 30,1 | 60,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 3 | Helping others | 72,9 | 23,9 | 80,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 4 | Truthfulness | 82,7 | 21,2 | 90,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 5 | Reliability | 71,8 | 24,7 | 79,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 6 | Sincerity | 86,2 | 20,4 | 92,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 7 | Honesty | 85,2 | 21,1 | 91,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| Men (M) | 1 | Honor | 67,5 | 23,7 | 75,0 | 50,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 2 | Patriotism | 56,6 | 28,9 | 60,0 | 80,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 3 | Helping others | 78,7 | 19,1 | 80,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 4 | Truthfulness | 86,2 | 14,3 | 90,0 | 100,0 | 39,0 | 100,0 |
| | 5 | Reliability | 69,8 | 22,3 | 75,0 | 80,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 6 | Sincerity | 86,7 | 16,1 | 90,0 | 100,0 | 20,0 | 100,0 |
| | 7 | Honesty | 88,6 | 13,5 | 92,0 | 100,0 | 30,0 | 100,0 |
| Man & Women (M + W) | 1 | Honor | 72,8 | 25,2 | 80,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 2 | Patriotism | 57,2 | 29,6 | 60,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 3 | Helping others | 75,0 | 22,4 | 80,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 4 | Truthfulness | 84,0 | 19,1 | 90,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 5 | Reliability | 71,1 | 23,8 | 76,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 6 | Sincerity | 86,3 | 19,0 | 91,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 7 | Honesty | 86,4 | 18,8 | 91,5 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |

Source: own study.

The dominating position is taken by: honesty - 1, sincerity - 2, truthfulness - 3, helping others - 4. They are followed by: honor - 5, reliability - 6 and patriotism - 7. The difference between the highest and lowest scoring value is as much as 29.2 points. This proves the respondents' lack of a holistic approach to the above-mentioned values. Respondents treat every value as isolated from the whole set. They consider values as those which have nothing in common with the other ones. Similarly to the previously discussed category, differences between women and men are visible. In the literal understanding of the concept of honor, it is valued more by women than by men, which is also a kind of surprise if referring to historical time, when women's honor was defended by men. Considering the standard deviation

(SD) parameter, a greater dispersion is clearly visible in the group of women. It proves a greater diversity of values in a group of men.

No less surprising is the fact that patriotism ranks last with an average score of 57.2 points. Patriotism has always been associated with honor⁶. “In the Polish history and literature, honor has been associated with patriotism and heroism” ([https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honor_\(etyka\)](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honor_(etyka))). For this reason, honor is mentioned again when discussing the category related to homeland. K. Chałas claims that “The connections between human dignity (...) and patriotism are clear and have the cause-and-effect nature. The connection between personal dignity and patriotism has the nature of the commitment. Personal dignity obliges people to create mature patriotism. Patriotism as a value obliges people to behave in accord with human dignity” (Chałas, 2019, p. 74).

It seems that honor has become relativized in the approach of young learners. It can be said that they keep up with the present time. This statement is supported by the revaluations taking place in the Polish Army. Before the specific details are provided, the concept of honor defined by M. Grzeszczak has been analyzed. The author identifies honor with the sense of personal dignity, something that has currently been decreed in many legal acts: international, EU and national. Without developing the topic of personal dignity, the divagations have been limited to the following statements:

J. Mariański (2020) claims that: “Personal dignity is a certain internal experience that could be described as a specific element of self-knowledge. Such a sense of dignity is shaped and revealed in interpersonal relationships. It is associated with the boundaries that a person sets himself in the self-interaction and in the interaction with a partner (p. 28).

Returning to the issue of the Polish Army, shifting emphasis from honor to dignity is clearly visible. As J. Świniarski notes, “In the transition of the army from an institution to an organization, which is typical for the societies of developed liberal democracy, there occurs the change in meaning of Homeric, traditionally soldier-like and knight-like value called honor, always embedded in the tradition of masculinity and bravery. The author lists two reasons for this state of affairs:

⁶ It is worth mentioning the film of Polish production from 2008 “Time of Honor”, “a story about the occupation reality and paratroopers who were transferred to Poland. In Warsaw, the underground soldiers lived with a false identity and were in constant danger. Every day they risked their lives and betrayal”. The war brutally tested their characters. It is the epic story about the fortune of young saboteurs - Bronek, Janek, Michał, Władek and their loved ones. They were young, full of energy, enthusiasm and faith. They lived beautifully and died beautifully, proudly, with dignity. For 7 seasons, we learned about their war and post-war destiny, when they became “cursed soldiers”; <https://vod.tvp.pl/seriale,18/czas-honoru-odcinki,292065> (20.01.2023).

- people in the liberal Western civilization “have no time for considering the issue of honor,
- insignia on the “citizen’s military uniform” are associated “more with inalienable human dignity, self-care and care for other people, rather than with narrowly understood honor, faithfulness, obedience and implacability” (cited in: Marcinkowski, 2014, p. 84).

These theses about axiological revaluation should be supported by the Code of Honor of the Polish Army Professional Soldier of 2018, which in its main part begins with the following phrases:

1. Dignity of a professional soldier is considered as a value resulting from self-respect, the sense of pride connected with belonging to the military community and special obligations for the sake of the homeland.
2. Honor of a professional soldier is connected with attitudes and actions that characterize honest and upright man. It is the source of honor and moral values of the professional community.

Reading the code, the conclusions are obvious. Dignity “is” before honor. If the point 2 lacked the words “professional soldier”, this provision could be successfully applied not only to every professional group, but also to every single man who should be righteous and honest. Concluding, the ethos of the soldier, famous for the interwar and war periods, is disappearing. For today’s young people, honor is important, but not the most important one.

VALUE CATEGORY – HOMELAND

“However, homeland is not only associated with the past. It is also connected with the present and the future. Then, homeland refers to people, whom we live together with, and the reality, in which people participate” (Mróz, 2010, p. 109). It is difficult to characterize and analyze this category in isolation from such values such as *honor and patriotism*. John Paul II stated briefly and specifically: “*The homeland is the common good of all citizens and it is also a great obligation*” (John Paul II, 2005, p. 72). E. Wysocka refers more broadly to the concept of homeland in the following words: “The concept of homeland is usually associated with four circles or elements of reality: state, nation, history (tradition) and land. The declared love for the homeland and duties towards it refers to these four elements. Considering the Polish conditions, the factor that strengthened and dynamized the attitude towards the homeland was undoubtedly the fight to regain lost independence. This struggle was interwoven with the vision of new Poland. That time the attitudes of Polish people towards their homeland and independence aspirations, were marked by strong and positive bonds, strong patriotism and homeland glorification” (Wysocka, 2010b, p. 120).

Values that characterize the homeland category are more clear to young learners than in the case of honor. This is generally evidenced by moderate and strong relationships between values that are expressed by correlation indicators – Table 7.

Table 7. Mutual correlation of values in the category of HOMELAND (N=236)

| VALUE | Country | Nation | Independence | Homeland | State | Patriotism | Peace |
|--------------|---------|--------|--------------|----------|-------|------------|-------|
| Country | – | 0,306 | 0,478 | 0,609 | 0,642 | 0,664 | 0,288 |
| Nation | 0,306 | – | 0,245 | 0,279 | 0,262 | 0,333 | 0,108 |
| Independence | 0,478 | 0,245 | – | 0,575 | 0,496 | 0,498 | 0,388 |
| Homeland | 0,609 | 0,279 | 0,575 | – | 0,725 | 0,744 | 0,178 |
| State | 0,642 | 0,262 | 0,496 | 0,725 | – | 0,731 | 0,225 |
| Patriotism | 0,664 | 0,333 | 0,498 | 0,744 | 0,731 | – | 0,180 |
| Peace | 0,288 | 0,108 | 0,388 | 0,178 | 0,225 | 0,180 | – |

Source: own study.

What does homeland mean to the contemporary youth and what value does it represent today – the world whose image is shaped primarily by the mass media? M. Hłowiecki (2003) interprets it as follows: “Many factors influence the content of convictions that constitute the public opinion. Among them, of course, a special place is occupied by the historical experiences of a given society and its traditions – the past of a given community. This is related to the general condition of culture, the level of education and the generally understood attitude to values. Of course, the specific economic and political situation of the society – the present state of a given community”, cannot be omitted (p. 56).

E. Wysocka has characterized the problem of attitudes of the contemporary youth using the following words: “Young people do not have positive models of love for the homeland and they do not know how to implement it in a world that is deprived of elements connected with the fight for sovereignty and independence” (Wysocka 2010b, p. 131). May the time not come when we will have to paraphrase the invocation from Adam Mickiewicz’s literary work titled: *Pan Tadeusz*: “*Poland! My homeland! you are like health; Only the one who have lost you will know how much valued you should be [...]*”. The lack of experiences, mentioned by E. Wysocka, “dooms” the young generation to assimilate values that are passed down primarily in the family environment and shaped by the media. It is no doubt, as M. Hłowiecki points out, that the economic and political situation has a significant impact on the formation of pro-homeland values. Global world, open borders, freedom, freedom in information exchange, etc. cause that

the concept of homeland gains a completely different new dimension. Young people consider completely different categories, different from the ones important for previous generations. K.R. Łozowska (2009) defines this state as follows: “Young people want to live on their own, in their own present and in the future reality, they do not want to experience present and future of the community” (p. 88). This is confirmed by the conducted research – Table 8.

Table 8. Hierarchy of values in the category of HOMELAND (N=236)

| gender | No | Value name | Parameter | | | | | |
|-----------|----|--------------|-----------|------|------|-------|------------|------------|
| | | | Average | SD | Me | Do | Min. value | Max. value |
| Women (W) | 1 | Country | 55,7 | 29,2 | 58,0 | 50,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 2 | Nation | 55,1 | 28,6 | 55,0 | 50,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 3 | Independence | 75,4 | 27,6 | 85,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 4 | Homeland | 60,1 | 28,4 | 60,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 5 | State | 52,6 | 27,4 | 50,0 | 50,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 6 | Patriotism | 57,5 | 30,1 | 60,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 7 | Peace | 83,0 | 23,1 | 92,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| Men (M) | 1 | Country | 51,3 | 30,1 | 51,0 | 50,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 2 | Nation | 55,8 | 28,3 | 60,0 | 50,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 3 | Independence | 76,5 | 22,8 | 80,0 | 100,0 | 20,0 | 100,0 |
| | 4 | Homeland | 61,8 | 26,5 | 70,0 | 80,0 | 5,0 | 100,0 |
| | 5 | State | 51,0 | 24,5 | 59,0 | 60,0 | 2,0 | 100,0 |
| | 6 | Patriotism | 56,6 | 28,9 | 60,0 | 80,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 7 | Peace | 85,9 | 19,4 | 93,0 | 100,0 | 15,0 | 100,0 |
| W&M | 1 | Country | 54,1 | 29,5 | 55,5 | 50,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 2 | Nation | 55,4 | 28,4 | 60,0 | 50,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 3 | Independence | 75,8 | 25,9 | 84,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 4 | Homeland | 60,7 | 27,7 | 61,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 5 | State | 52,1 | 26,4 | 50,0 | 60,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 6 | Patriotism | 57,2 | 29,6 | 60,0 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |
| | 7 | Peace | 84,1 | 21,9 | 92,5 | 100,0 | 0,0 | 100,0 |

Source: own study.

Although it has been mentioned before, values describing the category of homeland are more clear but not so interesting to respondents. The point index is slightly above 50 points. Among young people, peace is highly appreciated (84.1 points) and there are no significant differences between women and men. The values of peace correlates with the rest of values at the low level. Otherwise, it would be a very good result – Table 7. How should the meaning of peace be interpreted having in mind such a discrepancy? Without risk, the following thesis can be put forward – some young learners have a moderate commitment to their country/homeland, nation, etc. This is indicated by the dominant (Do): country and nation - 50 points; state – 60 points, median (Me) – 55.5 and 60 points, respectively. Although, the dominant value for the homeland is 100 points, half of the respondents appreciate this value below 61 points (Me index). It is important for them that there is peace, because it creates opportunities for the self-realization at various levels. The question how, when and at what cost, seems to be of the secondary importance.

Independence occupies the second place with a score of 75.8 points. Independence is understood as the state's internal and external autonomy. Therefore, it involves the state's independent policy of internal and international relations. Independence is a value that must be protected, but it must be remembered that it can also be lost, because it was not given unconditionally. Considering the above, there is a certain dissonance between independence and other values. Everything that is constituted by citizens like: country, nation, homeland, state, patriotism is the values that is less appreciated. It can be assumed that independence has been understood only in historical terms and is related to the stability of the state's borders. Analyzing the list of values (Table 8), mentioned in the category of homeland, not so strong differences (SD) between women and men can be noticed. However, only in the group of men, values such as: independence, homeland, state, peace obtained a number of points bigger than zero. A relatively high SD index indicates extreme attitudes towards the homeland, which is also confirmed by the minimum and maximum number of points awarded to individual values.

The approximate reference point for attitudes towards the homeland should be the records of the number of non-professional soldiers of the Territorial Defense Forces - WOT. The summary is presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Membership of non-professional soldiers in WOT (https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/1421,dane-statystyczne-dot-zonierzy-wojsk-obrony-terytorialnej/resource/41697/table?page=1&per_page=20&q=&sort= ; modyfikacja AP)

| Registration status | Age – years old | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|
| | Do 25 | | 26-30 | | 31-35 | | 36-40 | | 41-45 | | 46-63 | | |
| N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 31484 | 100 | 9133 | 29,01 | 4091 | 12,99 | 4466 | 14,18 | 4816 | 15,30 | 4802 | 15,25 | 4176 | 13,27 |

Source: as of April 3, 2023.

WOT is the fifth type of armed forces and it consists of volunteer soldiers. One of the conditions for joining WOT is to be 18 years old. Almost 30% of WOT volunteer soldiers aged up to 25 join. According to the data of the Central Statistical Office of 2021, the age group (20-24 years) numbered 1,883,461 people (as of December 31, 2021). Making appropriate estimated calculations, it turns out that less than 0.5% of young people belong to this military formation. On one hand, in the current geopolitical situation, greater interest is expected but, on the other hand, these are only statistical indicators that ultimately do not determine the real data. Collected results in the category of homeland do not differ from the previously analyzed categories. The study shows moderate commitment of young people to the value of homeland. Nevertheless, it must be taken into account that the values currently appreciated are considered according to a specific geopolitical situation. They are only declarative in their nature. Their stability and strength can only be verified in a specific place, time and life situation when they are put to the test.

SUMMARY

Since the 1990s, the period of radical socio-political-economic transformations have begun in Europe. The changes taking place in the society were a natural consequence of these processes. New problems, completely different needs and social expectations have emerged. All these circumstances must have influenced, to a greater or lesser extent, the reorganization of the axiological sphere of man. What was once a priority – a value – became a secondary issue, and its place was taken by other, new values. There is nothing surprising about it, because functioning in the new reality forced people to reorganize their lives (sometimes radically). It would seem that certain values are constant – univer-

sal and, despite various socio-historical turbulences, they should remain as they have always been. In the author's opinion, such values should be the following: "God Honor Homeland".

Research related to the above-mentioned categories and conducted among the young generation of Poles verifies the way these values are currently perceived. Young people demonstrate average commitment to their homeland and the values associated with it. Of course, values are important, but they are only slightly above the average on a hundred-point scale and they refer to all categories to the same extent. How would the contemporary youth behave in the face of a direct threat? It is hard to answer such a question. The young generation is not burdened (fortunately) with bad experiences, which were hard past episodes for many generations of Polish citizens. Hence young people perceive the categories discussed through the prism of the present.

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THE MOTTO: GOD HONOR HOMELAND AND ITS MEANING FOR MODERN YOUNG LEARNERS

Abstract: Values are largely determined by the man's current life situation. Therefore, in the course of life, the importance of individual values may lose or gain their stature. In the article, it has been tried to answer the question: How contemporary young learners perceive the values expressed by the motto God Honor Homeland. For the war period young generation and for the generation of the 1950s and 1970s, these three words were a determinant and guide in their efforts to regain full sovereignty. And how is it now? This question is answered in the framework of the research. The statistical analysis of the data obtained in the study reveals the changes in the perception of the discussed values by the young generation. They are no longer so important for today's young learners

Keywords: God, honor, homeland, patriotism, independence, young people

DEWIZA BÓG, HONOR, OJCZYZNA I JEJ ZNACZENIE DLA WSPÓŁCZESNEJ MŁODZIEŻY STUDIUJĄCEJ

Streszczenie: Wartości w dużej mierze determinuje aktualna sytuacja życiowa człowieka, stąd też w biegu życia znaczenie poszczególnych wartości może tracić lub zyskiwać na randze. W artykule staramy się odpowiedzieć na pytanie, jak współczesna studiująca młodzież postrzega wartości wyrażone dewizą Bóg, Honor, Ojczyzna. Dla młodych pokoleń

czasów wojny i lat 50-70 te trzy słowa były wyznacznikiem i drogowskazem w staraniach o odzyskanie pełnej suwerenności. A jak jest obecnie? Na to pytanie odpowiadamy w ramach przeprowadzonych badań ankietowych. Analiza statystyczna pozyskanych w badaniu danych ujawnia zmiany zachodzące w postrzeganiu omawianych wartości przez młode pokolenie. Nie są one już tak ważne dla współcześnie studiującej młodzieży.

Słowa kluczowe: Bóg, honor, ojczyzna, patriotyzm, niepodległość, młodzież