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Religious and cultural patriotism of the 60-year-olds in Podkarpacie

Patriotyzm religijno-kulturowy pokolenia 60-latków na Podkarpaciu

*The Nation is indeed the great community of men
who are united by various of ties, but above all, precisely, by culture.¹*

Abstract

Attachment, social bond and sacrifice for the nation are elements of patriotism, manifesting in many dimensions. One of them is religious and cultural patriotism, illustrating people's emotions to national culture, tradition, identity, language and religion. The article presents its components, typical for the generation of 60-year-olds from Podkarpacie, focused on historical memory, values and ideals, national culture and faith heritage. Seniors' patriotism reveals homeland and parish attitudes towards the home country, regardless of gender.

Female seniors turn to traditions and customs, language and actions for the good of the community (axiological and educational component), male seniors, to historical truth about the family, place and nation, and sacrifice for the homeland (historical and action component).

Keywords: religious and cultural patriotism, Podkarpacie, generation of 60-year-olds

Streszczenie

Jednym z wymiarów patriotyzmu jest emocjonalny stosunek jednostek i grup do kultury narodowej, tradycji, poczucia tożsamości, języka oraz religii. W artykule przedstawiono typowe dla pokolenia 60-latków, mieszkańców Podkarpacia, komponenty patriotyzmu religijno-kulturowego skoncentrowane wokół pamięci historycznej, wartości i ideałów, kultury narodowej oraz dziedzictwa wiary. Zaprezentowano wyniki badań ilościowych, w świetle których patriotyzm religijno-kulturowy ankietowanych seniorów z Podkarpacia bez względu na płeć odnosi się do ojczyniano-parafialnego stosunku do ojczyzny.

Slowa kluczowe: patriotyzm religijno-kulturowy, Podkarpacie, pokolenie 60-latków

¹ Jan Paweł II, *Przemówienie w UNESCO*, 2 czerwca 1980 [in:] *Dokumenty nauki społecznej kościoła*, Part II, eds. M. Radwan i in., Rzym–Lublin 1987, p. 123. English translation from: <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/address-to-unesco-2-june-1980-25569> (12.08.2025).

W przypadku badanych seniorek wiąże się z tradycjami i zwyczajami, językiem i działaniem dla dobra wspólnoty (komponent aksjologiczno-edukacyjny), a seniorów – prawdą historyczną o rodzinie, miejscu i narodzie oraz gotowością do poświęcenia dla ojczyzny (komponent historyczno-działaniowy).

Introduction

Patriotism as a pedagogical category has been present in the scientific discourse of theoreticians and researchers for a long time. It is a multidimensional concept, approached through the prism of patriotic self-identification, ways of understanding and types of patriotism – often typologised on a scale from ethnocentrism to cosmopolitanism and national identity.²

Historically, patriotism has been understood on many levels, including defensive and military, cultural and humanistic, libertarian, or moral and spiritual. Early medieval, Renaissance, noble, romantic, and positivist patriotism³ as well as legionary, endec, home army, and solidarity patriotism⁴ were distinguished. It was pointed out, how significant fidelity is to the national will, the national idea as well as realistically understood national interest.⁵ Emphasizing the importance of the nation's fate continuity, past, present and the patriotism designing of future were distinguished.⁶

In every historical period, however, it has been emphasized that patriotism means love for the country and attachment to it, being ready to sacrifice yourself for the fellow citizens, and even to give your life for the homeland, it also means to respect other nationalities.⁷ Patriotism allows you to go beyond your own individuality and place yourself in a wider community,⁸ in the circle of social and cultural ties with fellow citizens.⁹ A component of love for the country and the nation is material and mental-axiological culture, including values, language, traditions as

² R. Marzec, *Obywatel patriota? Patriotyzm jako czynnik determinujący aktywność obywatelską młodych Polaków*, „Przegląd Politologiczny” 2019, No. 1, p. 10, <https://doi.org/10.14746/pp.2019.24.1.1>.

³ J. Gajda, *Racjonalny patriotyzm jako antidotum skrajnego nacjonalizmu* [in:] *Patriotyzm i nacjonalizm. Ku jakiej tożsamości kulturowej?*, ed. J. Nikitorowicz, Kraków 2013, p. 50.

⁴ K. Chałas, S. Kowalczyk, *Wychowanie ku wartościom narodowo-patriotycznym. Elementy teorii i praktyki*, Vol. II: *Naród, ojczyzna, patriotyzm, państwo, pokój*, Lublin–Kielce 2006, pp. 41–47.

⁵ A. Walicki, *Trzy patriotyzmy*, Warszawa 1991, p. 7.

⁶ E. Szweda, *Patriotyzm jako projektowanie przyszłości* [in:] *Patriotyzm współczesnych Polaków*, ed. A. Skrabacz, Warszawa 2012, pp. 47–48.

⁷ A. J. Sowiński, *Ojczyzna w refleksji pedagogicznej*, Kraków 2020, p. 23.

⁸ J. Nikitorowicz, *Tożsamość – wielki wysiłek ku patriotyzmowi* [in:] *Patriotyzm i nacjonalizm. Ku jakiej tożsamości kulturowej?*, ed. J. Nikitorowicz, Kraków 2013, p. 34.

⁹ J. Gajda, *Racjonalny patriotyzm...*, p. 51.

well as life and thinking demeanour of individuals and social groups.¹⁰ Patriotism results from the conviction that society has internal moral strength and is guided by such values as social justice, interpersonal solidarity, responsibility for the course of events, humanitarianism and respect for human rights.¹¹

A wise care for your homeland¹² refers to knowledge and views as well as showing interest in history, national heritage, culture and traditions. It includes subjective experiences and preferences, based on feelings such as pride, respect, love, attachment and loyalty to the nation. It is associated with a tendency to act for the benefit of the homeland, even if such activities require sacrifice and resignation from the personal gain. Patriotism means being involved in social and civic life of the family, local environment, workplace, region and the country, as well as showing respect to other nations.¹³ Love for the homeland manifests in various areas of individuals and social groups' activities and their acting for the benefit of the homeland nature,¹⁴ economy,¹⁵ religion and culture.¹⁶

Due to the considered subject in this study, further attention will focus on the ways individuals and groups create a lasting bond with religion and traditions in the context of the values and heritage of previous generations.

Components of religious and cultural patriotism

In the religious dimension, patriotism is usually understood in two basic aspects. The first, is connected with a clear indication of the ultimate homeland in heaven. The second, emphasizes how important is the earthly homeland, man's contentment, improvement and fulfilling duties.¹⁷ The latter aspect will be presented in detail.

¹⁰ K. Chałas, W. Furmanek, K. Ożóg, *Niepodległość. Implikacje pedagogiczne i edukacyjne*, Rzeszów 2019, p. 67; K. Nycz, *Patriotyzm w katolickiej nauce społecznej*, Kraków 2014, p. 6; M. Czerniawska, *Patriotyzm jak znaleźć mu miejsce w mentalności społeczeństwa?* [in:] *Patriotyzm i nacjonalizm. Ku jakiej tożsamości kulturowej?*, ed. J. Nikitorowicz, Kraków 2013, pp. 77–78.

¹¹ J. Szczurkowska, J. Szczurkowska, *Ja patriota. Psychologia patriotyzmu*, Warszawa 2016, p. 69; E. Staub, *Blind versus Constructive Patriotism. Moving from Embeddedness in the Group to Critical Loyalty and Action* [in:] *Patriotism in the Lives of Individuals and Nations*, eds. D. Bar-Tal, E. Staub, Chicago 1997.

¹² R. Kuraszkiewicz, *Polityka nowoczesnego patriotyzmu*, Dębogóra 2010, p. 204.

¹³ K. Ostrowska, *Patriotyzm w rozwoju osobowym człowieka* [in:] *Patriotyzm polski. Jaki jest? Jaki powinien być?*, ed. A. Kozłowska, Warszawa 2001, pp. 35–36.

¹⁴ G. Grochowski, *Miłość do ojczyzny według Jana Pawła II*, Szczecinek 2011, pp. 131–132; A. Wiłkomirska, A. Fijałkowski, *Jaki patriotyzm?*, Warszawa 2016, p. 183.

¹⁵ E. Łon, *Patriotyzm gospodarczy*, Poznań 2018, p. 3.

¹⁶ K. Ziołowicz, *Edukacja regionalna jako element edukacji patriotycznej, „Nauczanie Początkowe. Kształcenie Zintegrowane” 2007–2008*, No. 1, p. 42.

¹⁷ H. Czuma, *Kościół – patriotyzm – młodzież* [in:] *Patriotyzm polski. Jaki jest? Jaki winien być?*, ed. A. Kozłowska, Warszawa 2001, p. 76.

The Catholic Church values and favors patriotic attitudes,¹⁸ which imply a whole range of activities including participating in political life, respecting institutions, civic awareness and being ready for self-sacrifice in the event that the homeland is in danger. Christianity depicts love for homeland as a set of virtues and a strict moral duty,¹⁹ as well as an emotional bond with the nation and its history, and spiritual belonging to the community which creates the Homeland in the future and present but also in the past.²⁰ Religious patriotism calls for unconditional love for your homeland (its history, tradition, language and landscape²¹) being ready to offer it all, including your strength, abilities, self-sacrifice and even life.²² This term is defined in the plane of fathers' land, fatherhood and motherhood, and love for parents.²³ These terms in turn connect a person with the closest people and places (mother, father, land, home, school and the closest environment) constituting a kind of homeland's prototype. Love for the country refers to the native land, town and region,²⁴ the nation and its history, language, spiritual wealth as well as ancestral material heritage and generations' fate.²⁵ It manifests itself in a sense of a strong emotional, social, cultural and religious bond with the nation, history and tradition, with its values often contained in the phrase God – honor – homeland.²⁶ It is the profound love that embraces God, man and the nation in the spatial, communal and cultural dimensions. A Christian citizen, nurtures true and active love for the country, skilfully combines religious and national values, is responsible for the homeland,²⁷ attentively fulfills duties²⁸ and shows respect to other nations. According to this concept, one man's freedom does not restrict another person's freedom. The

¹⁸ P. Przesmycki, *Patriotyzm w nauczaniu Kościoła katolickiego*, „Annales. Etyka w Życiu Gospodarczym” 2008, No. 11(2), p. 195, <https://doi.org/10.18778/1899-2226.11.2.20>.

¹⁹ A. Proniewski, *Patriotyzm w świadomości chrześcijanina* [in:] *Patriotyzm a wychowanie*, eds. E. J. Kryńska, J. Dąbrowska, A. Szarkowska, U. Wróblewska, Białystok 2009, p. 502.

²⁰ A. Rynio, *Wychowanie patriotyczne w nauczaniu Ślugi Bożego Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego* [in:] *Prymas Wyszyński a Niepodległa. Naród – patriotyzm – państwo w nauczaniu Prymasa Tysiąclecia*, eds. E.K. Czaczkowska, R. Łatki, Warszawa 2019, p. 106.

²¹ S. Gądecki, *Homilia wygłoszona na Jasnej Górze podczas uroczystości ku czci NMP Królowej Polski połączonej z Aktem Oddania Narodu Polskiego Matce Bożej (3 maja 2016 r.)* [in:] *Kościół a naród i państwo w perspektywie 1050. rocznicy chrztu Polski*, eds. J. Krukowski, M. Sitarz, I. Dosz, Lublin 2017, p. 23.

²² M. Plaskacz, A. Rastawicka, *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński. Jedna jest Polska. Wybór z przemówień i kazan*, Warszawa 2000, p. 28.

²³ H. Czuma, *Kościół – Patriotyzm...*, p. 75.

²⁴ J. Bartmiński, *Jak biegą drogi ojczyzny?* [in:] *Z Karolem Wojtyłą myśląc ojczynę*, ed. W. Chudy, Lublin 2002, p. 44.

²⁵ A. Proniewski, *Patriotyzm w świadomości...*, p. 503.

²⁶ M. Dziewiecki, *Wychowanie patriotyczne dzisiaj. Jak kochać ojczyznę?*, „Zeszyty Formacji Katechetów” 2002, No. 2, p. 10.

²⁷ J. Mariański, *Patriotyzm i religia jako wartości podstawowe w świadomości polskich maturzystów*, „*Studia Płockie*” 1997, Vol. 25, p. 175.

²⁸ M. Plaskacz, A. Rastawicka, *Stefan Kardynał...*, p. 33.

homeland is built in the moral union of people²⁹ as well as responsible self-care and concern for others.³⁰

A religious attitude towards the homeland is a kind of service for the common good,³¹ seen as a concern for the nation and its heritage,³² manifesting in the moral community of the people.³³ Patriotism contains several elements, such as a strong sense of community, national culture, national history, heritage of faith (religiosity), ethos of the nation and territory.³⁴ In addition, the historical memory weight is emphasized³⁵ self-respect³⁶ as well as solidarity, common good affirmation and respect for the law.

To sum up, religious patriotism is understood in terms of the nation and the state, but more specifically in terms of activity and work for the good of the country and a strong connection with the historical, religious and cultural heritage. It arises in agreement with the world, it creates unity with the world based on human community, resulting from the church community.³⁷

For the Polish nation, a community that is connected by blood ties, common residence, awareness of the common good, conviction of common origin, native culture is extremely important.³⁸ Thus, the homeland is a cultural space,³⁹ preserved in various fields of human activity (tradition, literature, customs, spirituality and religion⁴⁰), material and spiritual achievements of members from the same nation, illustrating the ideals, values and symbols of subsequent generations. Culture reflects indigenous values, which include: family, home, sense of community, child, religiosity, sensitivity, honesty, hospitality, willingness to sacrifice, love of freedom, tolerance, criticism towards the authorities.⁴¹ Participation in culture integrates and strengthens social cohesion, fosters cooperation with other nation members as a great community of people.⁴² It strengthens the sense of belonging, identity, mobilises group members to act and stimulates responsibility.

²⁹ S. Grygiel, *Ojczyzna jest zawsze trochę dalej...*, Kielce 1998, p. 24.

³⁰ R. Kuraszkiewicz, *Polityka nowoczesnego...*, p. 208.

³¹ *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego*, Poznań 2012.

³² T. Guz, *O pojęciu ojczyzny w nauczaniu błogosławionego Prymasa Tysiąclecia Stefana Wyszyńskiego* [in:] *Geniusz patriotyzmu jako koniecznej cnoty społecznej*, eds. T. Guz, S. Zawiślak, Lublin 2022, p. 154.

³³ J. Mariański, *Patriotyzm i religia...*, p. 178.

³⁴ P. Przesmycki, *Patriotyzm w nauczaniu...*, pp. 198–199.

³⁵ R. Zenderowski, *Religia a tożsamość narodowa i nacjonalizm w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej. Między etnicyzacją religii a sakralizacją etnosu (narodu)*, Wrocław 2011, p. 29.

³⁶ E. Sakowicz, *Wychowanie do polskości* [in:] *Literatura, kultura religijna, polskość*, eds. K. Koehler, W. Kudyba, J. Sikora, Warszawa 2015, p. 569.

³⁷ M. Brzozowska, *Kłopotliwa miłość. Patriotyzm w polskich dyskursach publicystycznych*, Lublin 2014, pp. 130–131.

³⁸ M. Plaskacz, A. Rastawicka, *Stefan Kardynał...*, p. 43.

³⁹ S. Grygiel, *Ojczyzna jest zawsze...*, p. 57.

⁴⁰ J. Mariański *Patriotyzm i religia...*, p. 176.

⁴¹ K. Bełch, *Polak – patriota, „Premislia Christiana” 2018–2019, No. 18*, p. 11.

⁴² K. Bełch, *Naród i patriotyzm. Katolicka Nauka Społeczna. Podręcznik dla studentów teologii i nauk społecznych*, Sandomierz 2020, p. 225.

One of the important levels of Polish culture is the Catholic religion, referring to such values as unity, solidarity, love, which has strongly merged with national values owing to historical and political changes. As St. John Paul II indicates, the church has been the nation's mother throughout its thousand-year history, it has continuously shared the Polish fate, it has cared for man and defended his dignity, and it has supported the independence aspirations of compatriots. Religion plays an extremely important role in the process of creating citizens' loyalty to the national community.⁴³ Pilgrimages uniting Poles, religious education, charitable organizations, various patriotic stagings organized in churches, referring to national symbols and references, masses for the fallen heroes associated with national anniversaries were and are extremely important for maintaining Polishness. A national community lives by religion and at the same time expresses culture through faith and religious practices. Religion, as a nationwide value, is an important factor in identity, the communal bond and cultural self-identification. Historically, the Catholic religion as the basic value of Polish society has been conducive to overcoming oppression, harm, suffering and has raised hope for improving human fate in the homeland. This value has a profound impact on Polish independence and Polish democracy, fosters community building and service to other people,⁴⁴ being an important element of national identity. Religion's significance as a nation-building factor lies in the fact that it is a recognizable sign of identity and refers to issues fundamental to human existence, the issues of life and death.⁴⁵

Methodology of my own research

Guided by these premises, in the years 2023–2025, research was undertaken as part of the ongoing project *Why Do You Need Homeland? – about models of patriotism and biographical experiences of seniors*.⁴⁶ This study presents a fragment of research on the attitude of seniors to religious and cultural patriotism, aiming to capture its components.⁴⁷ In the conducted research, one of the research problems was contained in the question: What are the dominant features of religious and cultural patriotism in Podkarpacie from the perspective of 60-year-olds?

⁴³ R. Zenderowski *Religia a tożsamość...*, p. 10.

⁴⁴ J. Mariański, *Patriotyzm i religia...*, p. 183.

⁴⁵ S.L. Stadniczeńko, *Naród – społeczeństwo obywatelskie – demokracja [in:] Kościół a naród i państwo w perspektywie 1050. rocznicy chrztu Polski*, eds. J. Krukowski, M. Sitarz, I. Dosz, Lublin 2017, p. 115; B. Porter-Szucs, *Wiara i ojczyzna. Katolicyzm, nowoczesność i Polska*, Warszawa 2022, p. 8.

⁴⁶ The project (ID 42b5af1289aa4427b946f7fa4b6664bb) was carried out by the author of this study based on funds from the state budget as part of the path *Social Responsibility of Science II – Popularization of science*.

⁴⁷ J. W. Creswell, *Projektowanie badań naukowych. Metody ilościowe i mieszane*, Kraków 2013, p. 163.

The research focused on the individual's attitude towards religion and culture as an element of national identity. The aim was to learn about the respondents' experiences illustrating their attitude to essential components of religious and cultural patriotism. On the basis of the subject literature analysis and the results of pilot research, six basic categories of the studied variable were distinguished: relationship with previous generations – the history of the nation, readiness to make sacrifices for the homeland, fulfilment of duties towards the homeland and the community, respect for values, ideals and national symbols, care for national culture, and the faith heritage.

The research was in questionnaire form.⁴⁸ The original questionnaire was used. The survey was conducted using the PAPI (paper and pencil interview) method. Respondents received a paper version of the questionnaire, and then answered the questions themselves. The PAPI method was used due to the age of the subjects. The research covered a group of 400 residents from Podkarpacie over the age of 60. The studies were randomized⁴⁹ and were carried out in 2024 in all districts of Podkarpacie Voivodeship.

Randomized nature of the sample made it possible to generalize the results from the sample to the studied population⁵⁰ using appropriate statistical tests.⁵¹ 52% of women and 48% of men took part in the survey, which corresponds to the structure of the population in the voivodeship. More than half of them live in a rural environment – 55%. The largest group of respondents – 42% – have secondary education. In the surveyed group, more than 2/3 of people are married (68% to be exact). On the other hand, 1/4 described their marital status as a widow/widower.

Religious and cultural patriotism of the generation of 60-year-olds in Podkarpacie

Love for the homeland is associated with a sense of duty towards the nation and the country. In the religious and cultural dimension, it includes the nation's history, language, traditions and rites, literature, spirituality and religiosity. It is a broad and complex system illustrating the ways in which individuals and groups operate according to the norms and values adopted by the collective. As written above,

⁴⁸ T. Pilch, *Zasady badań pedagogicznych. Strategie ilościowe i jakościowe*, Warszawa 1998, p. 86.

⁴⁹ E. Babbie, *Badania społeczne w praktyce*, Warszawa 2007, p. 208.

⁵⁰ S. Palka, *Podstawy metodologii badań w pedagogice*, Gdańsk 2010, p. 201.

⁵¹ Detailed empirical data are available for inspection by the author of the study. IBM SPSS Statistics 25 is used. With its help, frequency analyses, analyses of basic descriptive statistics together with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, one-factor analyses of variance in the intergroup scheme, strong Brown-Forsyth mean equality tests, Student's t tests for independent samples, χ^2 tests and accurate Fisher tests were performed.

a detailed analysis of the literature on the subject made it possible to distinguish six basic components in the attitude towards the homeland in the religious and cultural area. Guided by the temporal, spatial and social dimension of the homeland, historical memory, values and ideals, national culture and the faith heritage were taken into account. Among the values, there is a readiness to make sacrifices and commitment to the homeland, as well as fulfilling duties in the community, acting for the good of the community. It was decided to isolate the sentences that open up the free expressions of respondents in the above-mentioned areas, striving to determine the sense, meaning and social context. Respondents were asked to complete sentences starting with separate categories, e.g.: my relationship with previous generations, the history of the nation is... The empirical data collected from the questionnaire has been categorized and included in the table below.

Table 1. Religious and cultural patriotism and its components in the perspective of 60-year-olds in Podkarpacie

Categories	Subcategories	Total data N = 400		Women N = 208		Men N = 192	
		l.b.	%	l.b.	%	l.b.	%
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Relationship with earlier generations, the nation's history – historical memory	Memory about ancestors	267	66.8	115	55.3	152	79.1
	Knowledge of family stories	158	39.5	75	36.1	83	43.2
	Knowing the history of places and towns	148	37.0	57	27.4	91	47.4
	Knowledge of the nations and state's history	134	33.5	56	26.9	79	41.1
	Dissemination of family, local and national stories	195	48.8	78	19.5	117	60.9
Being ready to make sacrifice for the homeland	Taking care of your physical conditions	64	16.0	16	7.7	48	25.0
	Active participation in work for a local environment	101	25.3	67	32.2	34	17.7
	Service in territorial organisations	82	20.5	26	12.5	56	29.2
	Preserving national distinctiveness	102	25.5	44	21.2	58	45.0
	Being ready to give life for the homeland	204	51.0	56	26.9	148	77.1
Responsibilities towards the homeland and the community	Conscientious fulfillment of the duties, following the law, bearing burdens/taxes	106	26.5	81	38.9	25	13.0
	Working for the good of the nation in the country	232	58.0	120	57.7	112	58.3
	Honesty and reliability in professional work	370	92.5	192	92.3	178	92.7
	Self-improvement for the good of the homeland	82	20.5	51	24.5	31	16.1
	Selfless work for the homeland and the nation	198	49.5	132	63.5	66	34.4

<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>
Respect for values of national symbols and ideals	Following moral principles in life	176	44.0	92	44.2	84	43.8
	Following God – Honour – Homeland value in life	185	46.3	104	50.0	81	42.2
	Being responsible for oneself and the community	112	28.0	68	32.7	44	22.9
	Teaching respect for the commons	350	87.5	198	95.2	152	79.2
	Showing respect for national symbols	373	93.3	191	91.8	182	94.8
Caring for national culture, language, traditions and customs	Identifying with the culture of a place	181	45.3	117	56.3	64	33.3
	Preserving regional traditions	158	39.5	92	44.2	66	34.4
	Caring for the culture of mother tongue	229	57.3	132	63.5	97	50.5
	Knowing Polish literature	87	21.8	62	29.8	25	13.0
	Preserving national traditions and customs	197	49.3	123	59.1	74	38.5
Faith heritage and participation in religious life	Service to other people, sacrifice for compatriots	159	39.8	75	36.1	84	43.8
	Spiritual and religious development	110	27.5	62	29.8	48	25.0
	Celebrating religious and national holidays	287	71.8	147	70.7	140	77.9
	Participating in the religious life of parish community	234	58.8	127	61.1	107	55.7
	Participating in religious ceremonies accompanying national holidays	264	66.0	148	71.2	116	60.4

Source: own study.

Statistical distribution of the data indicates interesting biographical experience of the surveyed seniors from Podkarpacie, related to national identity, located in the areas of culture and religion. One of the categories that were separated was historical memory, as a special type of cultural memory. It refers to the past of a given social group and is reconstructed through references to the present. The research process aimed to launch a narrative that would allow us to extract important elements from the field of memory, related to maintaining the identity of a given social group as a historical community. In their answers, respondents refer to two areas of memory: autobiographical experiences and collective memory. As many as 66.8% of all respondents refer to the memory of their ancestors (men did it much more often – 79.1% than women – 55.3%). On the other hand, 48.8% of all respondents indicate links with the history of subsequent environmental circles – family, home, place and town. It should be noted that in the free statements of the surveyed seniors there are references to elements of collective memory related to national historical events and their propagation. In both areas, respondents emphasize taking actions related to commemorating past events in the present. Men are more likely than women to report on passing the local history (47.4% vs. 2.47%) and the national history (41.1% vs. 26.9%), and its dissemination (60.9% vs. 19.5%).

The cultural dimension of love for the homeland is also connected with implementing higher values – sacrifice for the homeland and fulfilling one's duties towards the nation and community. Therefore, in the course of the research, reference was made to the highest form of patriotism related to declaring readiness to give one's own life, to make sacrifices for the good of the homeland. Such an attitude emerges from the narrative of 51.0% surveyed seniors, who declare deep attachment, love and respect for their homeland. In this group, there is a particularly large group of men: 77.1% of respondents and only 26.9% of women. As many as 29.2% of male respondents, despite their advanced age, declare service in territorial organizations. In the group of surveyed senior women, the rate is 12.5%. On the other hand, in the narratives of nearly 1/3 of the surveyed women, activities aimed at community are visible – commitment and sacrifice for the local environment. On the other hand, in the group of surveyed seniors, such views are expressed by 22.9% of respondents.

Reference was also made to the values related to loyalty, expressed in the legal dimension. The respondents were asked to complete the sentence: my duties towards my homeland and community include... Respondents of senior age, regardless of gender, agree that the basic duty of a citizen is an honest and reliable work for the good of the homeland. This view is held by 92.5% of all respondents. Conscientious fulfillment of their homeland duties is declared by a more numerous group of female respondents: 38.9%, compared to 13.0% of male respondents. A larger group of surveyed women (63.5%) compared to men (34.4%) also report selfless activities for the homeland.

The surveyed seniors also indicated intangible activities, such as showing respect for national symbols and common goods, and being guided by values in life. As many as 93.3% of all respondents, and in the group of men, nearly 95% of respondents in their statements emphasize respect for the flag, emblem and national anthem. Activities in the field of teaching respect for the common good are particularly emphasized by the surveyed women (the indicator is 95.2%). And in the group of men over the age of 60, 79.2% of them declare such views. The reference to the historically established phrase God – honour – homeland is emphasized by 46.3% of the total respondents. In the group of women, half of the respondents do so, and among men 42.2% of respondents.

By examining the components of religious and cultural patriotism, the aim was to launch narratives that allow us to learn about the universe common to people from the generation of 60-year-olds in Podkarpacie. More than half of all respondents believe that the basic component of national culture is the mother tongue and a citizen's task is to take care of the culture of expression. The categorized statements of respondents also indicate that women are particularly active in this area. They declare that they take action more often than the surveyed men in areas related to cultivating the culture of the place (56.3% vs. 33.3%), involvement in

national traditions and customs (59.1% vs. 38.5%) as well as knowledge of Polish literature (29.8% vs. 13.0%).

An important place in the religious and cultural relationship to the nation is occupied by the religious community and the faith heritage. These community members feel a strong interpersonal bond, have a sense of mutual belonging, and participate in common practices organized in parishes. Mutual relations based on kinship, friendship and neighborhood are conducive to celebrating religious and national holidays and participating in the rituals accompanying them. The overall ratios in these areas are high and amount to: 71.8% and 66.0%, respectively. Respondents report much less often about taking actions related to spiritual improvement and self-development. Among women, the rate is nearly 30.0%, while only 1/4 of men declare activities related to spirituality.

To sum up, it can be said that the generation of 60-year-olds in Podkarpacie clearly emphasizes basic national norms and values in their narratives, such as honesty and reliability in working for the homeland (92.5%), respect for national symbols (93.3%) and involvement in religious celebration of national holidays (71.8%). In the group of surveyed male seniors, there is a clear attachment to history, readiness to sacrifice, and the memory of ancestors. On the other hand, the interviewed female seniors inform about taking up activities in the local environment, cultivating tradition and culture of the language, selfless action for the community and teaching respect for the welfare of others.

Statistical analysis has made it possible to indicate significant differences between women and men regarding religious and cultural patriotism. Statistically significant differences between male and female seniors were recorded, among others: in the areas of memory about ancestors ($p < 0.000001$), knowing the history of the place ($p < 0.0001$), knowing the history of the nation and the state ($p \approx 0.0037$), and spreading the history ($p < 0.00001$). The V-factor of Cramér was also calculated,⁵² which made it possible to identify the areas and activities of religious and cultural patriotism that most differentiate women and men. In the light of the collected empirical data, a relationship was noted between the male gender and the readiness to give life for the homeland ($V \approx 0.46$ – a very strong relationship), referring to the memory about ancestors ($V \approx 0.25$), disseminating family, local and national histories ($V \approx 0.23$), knowledge of the place history ($V \approx 0.20$) and the history of the nation and the state ($V \approx 0.15$).

On the other hand, in the case of the surveyed senior women, there are less clear links noted between gender and women's involvement in local activities ($V \approx 0.14$), selfless action for the homeland ($V \approx 0.16$), identifying with the culture of the place ($V \approx 0.16$), knowing Polish literature ($V \approx 0.17$) and cultivating national traditions and customs ($V \approx 0.13$).

⁵² Ranges of the V-coefficient Cramér: (0–0.1) – weak relationship; (0.1–0.3) – moderate relationship; < 0.3 – a strong compound

Conclusions

The collected empirical data resulting from the narratives of the surveyed 60-year-olds in Podkarpacie made it possible to determine the meanings and show the social contexts of religious and cultural patriotism, which were categorized according to thematic circles, showing the leading components of religious and cultural patriotism typical for seniors from Podkarpacie. A homeland-parish, historical-activity, and axiological and educational component was distinguished. The discussion on the characteristics of patriotism in the generation of 60-year-olds in Podkarpacie reveals several dividing lines determined by the respondents' gender:

1. Among the generation of 60-year-olds in Podkarpacie, regardless of gender, the homeland and parish component dominates in terms of love for religion and culture as an expression of national identity. Respondents agree that the basic activities in this area include honest and reliable professional work undertaken for the benefit of the community in the country (58.0%) and showing respect for symbols that unite citizens, expressing historical memory and connection with previous generations (93.3%). The ratios are 92.5% respectively; 58.0%; 93.3%. Respondents objectify their actions, showing respect for the laws and principles that organize social life, refer to the conscientious and honest fulfillment of professional duties and respect for symbols. According to the surveyed 60-year-olds from Podkarpacie, an extremely important role in the process of creating citizens' loyalty to the national community is played by the celebrating national and religious holidays in the parish (71.8%), participating in rituals accompanying such events (66.0%) and involving in the life of the religious community (58.8%). A parish is a space considered to be its own, currently inhabited, common to parishioners, residents, citizens. It contributes to uniting members of society around common ideals, values and norms, necessary for the development of social groups and society as a whole.
2. The religious-cultural patriotism typical of men from the generation of 60-year-olds clearly refers to the historical and action component. The connection with earlier generations and rootedness in the place were emphasized here. Male respondents point how important it is to remember ancestors as it is the most important glue building national identity (79.1%), but also to know the history of family, place and nation (indications above 40%). According to the surveyed men, being aware of the common past – events and characters – is the basis for the present. An important place in the statements of the surveyed male seniors is occupied by being ready to sacrifice themselves for the wider community, and even to give their lives for the nation. As many as 77.1% of respondents express such readiness. In this group, there is a clear sense of duty to act in a situation of necessity and danger, which gives security and creates conditions for the development of the whole society.

3. The third component of religious and cultural patriotism is the axiological and educational component, typical for seniors from Podkarpacie. It refers to the commonly recognized and accepted way of communicating inside a community - the language that distinguishes it from other national communities (63.5%). It is about identifying with the culture of the place (56.3%), traditions and customs, which become ways of behaving and reacting to different situations. It is a specific lifestyle, in which nationality expressed in customs and values is the basis for the functioning of 59.1% of the surveyed Subcarpathian women over the age of 60. An important place in patriotism for 63.5% of the surveyed women is occupied by the ability to act selflessly for others, referring to moral self-fulfillment in social activities.

The considerations and research presented in this study do not exhaust the entirety of the issues related to seniors' attitude towards the homeland and will be continued.

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