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The shaping of moral attitudes as a pillar of contemporary security and social order

Introduction

Until recently, the term “security” covered all matters related to national security and its problems. For a short time, the category of “security” was identified not only with the protection of physical endurance or territorial integrity, but also with the freedom ensuring, for example, cultural and socio-economic development, or improving the quality of life. That is how the issue of security is explained in the White Book of National Security of the Republic of Poland, which distinguishes four forms of security, one of which is social security.¹

The social aspect is a part of spiritual culture, which has quite a significant impact on how our relationships with other people develop and how we look at some sociological phenomena. It is a kind of creation that influences the shaping of our moral and ideological principles, as well as those that guide us in interactions with other people. It happens very often that a group of people belonging to the same community

¹ J. Gierszewski, “Bezpieczeństwo społeczne jako dziedzina bezpieczeństwa narodowego”, *Historia i Polityka*, no. 23(30), 2018, pp. 21–38, <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/HiP.2018.002>.

has similar moral principles, although each person has different experiences which affect their outlook on life. The role of a given individual in society is influenced by another factor, namely their personality, and this in turn leaves significant marks on the choice of life ideologies. Each person feels the need to fulfil an appropriate role, some will feel good as revolutionists striving to change the world, while others will come to terms with systems already developed by someone who created the existing reality. A vast majority of people are inclined to maintain a certain social order and to follow it. The word “order” is associated with something nice and good, that is, with something to which most of us are prone: a certain equality that occurs in interpersonal relationships. Sometimes the pursuit of order results in many unfavourable changes only because someone is trying to impose their moral principles on other individuals, often stating that someone else is bad, and our moral principles are good no matter what – without approaching the problem more openly. The basis for creating healthy social ties is the recognition of the equality between two individuals. Statistically, it can be said that in traditional societies, birth was the foundation for establishing a certain order and creating a hierarchy which, in turn, formed the basis for defining a person’s higher or lower social status. This contributed to the use of the terms “better” and “worse” depending on what hierarchy level they came from.

Moral disorder in society as a source of real dangers

Two aspects of education are considered in this article. The first one – psychological – is the complex system of exerting and coming under influence. These processes take place between individuals who play their specific roles: on the one side there is the tutor, the other is the caretaker, so upbringing consists of mutually dependent processes. In psychology, the goal is to work on conscious assumptions about the pupil’s personality. We are therefore dealing with the good of an individual. The simplest and probably the most common example of such upbringing is the influence of the adult generation on those who have not yet matured for social life. An adult subject aims to inculcate in the pupil certain specific behaviours required by the environment and universally acceptable. Upbringing can also be considered in terms of pedagogy. The human personality is shaped by various social, interpersonal, and institutional influences, so here we are talking about social good. Each person is a developing individual, and all processes occurring during this development are the products of the individual’s activities in the environment and its response to them.² Upbringing is nothing else than shaping in each individual specific attitudes which are commonly considered attractive. A person’s upbringing consists of many factors, and we can talk about it in

² A. Gurycka, *Struktura i dynamika procesu wychowawczego: analiza psychologiczna*, Warszawa: PWN, 1979, pp. 54–55.

various categories. One of the areas of education is moral education which is a process aimed at developing in an individual such features which facilitate functioning in society, but also allow them to improve themselves. All educational activities aim at changing the human psyche and shaping a person's socio-moral attitude³ that is desirable from the point of view of the interests of a certain society. The attractive attitudes are altruism, disinterestedness, loyalty, and kindness.

How a human being is brought up translates into their moral education. Why? Because from the first days of our lives, the caretaker's approach has a strong influence on the child's brain. Connections responsible for the emotional sphere are created in the brain, on our "memory card", that is in our brain, the first memories are already recorded, which, unfortunately, in the adult world are not remembered by us, but they subconsciously play a great role in the process of upbringing. Scientists believe that our character, shaped through upbringing, is influenced by stimuli we perceive while still in the womb. The kind of music the mother listens to, the books she reads affect our development. A baby's hearing organs begin to develop and form after about 16 weeks of pregnancy. It is true that music can have a calming effect on our mood. Soft music lowers the cortisol level, and this also translates into how the child develops. Listening to low-frequency music, such as classical music, has a beneficial effect on the child's development, influences later brain plasticity, memory, and concentration, as well as neurological and psychomotor development. It happens that when the mother listens to a certain musical genre during pregnancy, the child remembers this music and it is not about the artist or the title of the piece, but about the sounds; we remember sounds at an early stage of development, and thus, when the child hears a familiar sound after being born, it may be easier for them to fall asleep or calm down when crying; hearing these sounds provides a feeling of safety. Thus, our upbringing is already influenced by various factors even before we are born.⁴

The environment in which we live influences our moral values. Since humans began to form relationships with other humans by creating communities, there have been disputes about what values the law is to serve, and more precisely, what values it is to protect.⁵ Law and morality are two separate systems, but there is a certain relation between them. The relations that exist between law and morality occur throughout the history of philosophical thought. They consisted of questions about what should be right and what should be considered as "right" and "good". They also answered the question of what "bad" law is and what it should be used for. We can find such questions in Aristotle's notes. Considerations about the relationship between law and

³ L. Zarzecki, *Teoretyczne podstawy wychowania. Teoria i praktyka w zarysie*, Jelenia Góra: Karkonoska Państwowa Szkoła Wyższa, 2012, p. 114.

⁴ Doktor Gawel – O Zdrowiu Kobiet Bez Tabu, Jak słuchanie muzyki w ciąży wpływa na dziecko?, 22 December 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHYxtea-L_Y&ab_channel=DoktorGawe%C5%82-OZdrowiuKobietBezTabu [accessed: 6 February 2022].

⁵ W. Łączkowski, "Prawo i moralność", *Poznańskie Studia Teologiczne*, vol. 9, 2000, p. 205.

morality were aimed at finding out whether the foundations of law were deeper and more lasting in the life of the state, and thus also in social life; and at assessing the law. According to Aristotle, the state should fulfil its role in passing “good” law, and these foundations and criteria for assessing the law had their roots in moral principles.⁶

Things get complicated when it turns out that the goals the law is supposed to serve are wicked and the system of values underlying a given law is contrary to the values considered by us as the most important. This is when a moral dilemma arises. This dilemma is not easy to solve as it consists in making a choice either that is against our beliefs and values while remaining obedient to the law, or in breaking the law while remaining faithful to our own convictions. It happens that the situation in which we are caught between a rock and a hard place is a determinant of disorder in society, which affects social security. The problem is serious when it influences a large group of citizens, and even worse when it affects the vast majority of citizens. The legal community emphasises the fact that law deserves absolute respect and obedience because it guarantees order and determines justice. The problem arises when different people have their own interpretation of the law, when a group expresses their views in an unrestrained way, of course, in an unlawful manner. In our rich history, there are several examples of such behaviour, for example, officials of the Third Reich, or representatives of the Marxist doctrine from the moment when they transformed the old law for their own needs and the so-called revolutionary vigilance.⁷

Any established and generally accepted moral norms which society follows, and any law that is considered good, goes hand in hand with security. Abraham Maslow placed them as the second most basic needs in his hierarchy.⁸ Undoubtedly, it is true that this need plays an important role in the sphere of primary and existential needs, not only in the case of the individual, but the entire society, and even states. It is not only about the integrity, inviolability of borders, or independence, but also about ensuring security in terms of a given person’s development, which will contribute to enriching the identity of a person or a nation.⁹ Moral and legal norms are two separate systems of conduct. This is not to say that the development of morality does not influence the development of law, or that the development of law does not influence the development of morality.¹⁰

⁶ M. Michalik, “Moralność a prawo – przegląd typowych ujęć relacji”, *Doctrina. Międzynarodowy Przegląd Humanistyczny*, no. 2, 2005, pp. 377–388.

⁷ W. Łączkowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 206–207.

⁸ Cf. J. Pawłowski, J. Marczak, K. Gąsiorek, Definiowanie i uwarunkowania bezpieczeństwa narodowego (państwa), [in:] *Podstawy bezpieczeństwa narodowego (państwa). Podręcznik akademicki*, ed. J. Pawłowski, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, 2017, p. 32.

⁹ *Obrona narodowa w tworzeniu bezpieczeństwa III RP. Podręcznik dla studentek i studentów*, ed. R. Jakubczak, Warszawa: Bellona, 2003, p. 59.

¹⁰ A. Łopatka, *Encyklopedia prawa*, Warszawa: Prywatna Wyższa Szkoła Handlowa, 1997, pp. 130–131.

A threat to national security, that is, a threat to the society making up a nation is such a series of events, of an internal or international character, which carries with it the probability of detriment or loss of conditions for unhampered existence or development. Such situations also contribute to the deprivation or violation of the state's sovereignty and the reduction of its international position as a result of the use by enemy entities perpetrating various forms of violence, e.g., military, political, financial, economic, or of other nature, e.g., hybrid.¹¹

In axiological terms, threats to security are related to direct or indirect disruptions in meeting material and non-material social needs that are essential to our human existence.¹² From the epistemological perspective, a lack of morality may have a negative impact on the development of an individual or a social group.

In the ontological area, Lech Krzyżanowski mentions three forms of being: objects (not only real, but also abstract), processes, and events. Beings are things (objects) that last over time, and are both tangible and intangible, such as an idea. Beings include, for example, liberty, freedom of development, truth, identity, justice, and dignity.¹³ An idea is considered to be a skeleton in the construction of the "moral compass" motivating a person to search for an essential value in their lives, which is the meaning of life. American thinker Richard Malcolm Weaver states that "ideas bring consequences," that is, they are nothing but signposts which, like a motor, drive people to search for the meaning of life.¹⁴

Processes and phenomena extending over time constitute another ontological category. Some examples of these phenomena are the process of human self-improvement, the process of social integration, and the process responsible for building people's national identity, all of which important for national security.¹⁵

Events, another ontological category, are facts that take place at a given time. Certain facts may play a significant role in terms of changes affecting state security, such as the introduction of martial law by General Wojciech Jaruzelski did in Poland in 1981. Another event related to the national security of another country is the 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center skyscrapers in New York.¹⁶

¹¹ J. Piwowski, *Nauki o bezpieczeństwie. Zagadnienia elementarne*, 2nd edition, Kraków: Wyższa Szkoła Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego i Indywidualnego „Apeiron”, 2017, p. 33.

¹² A. Lisowski, *Skutki występowania wybranych zagrożeń naturalnych i ich percepcja w Polsce*, Warszawa: Uniwersytet Warszawski, 1993, p. 15.

¹³ J. Piwowski, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

¹⁴ J.M. Bocheński, *Sens życia i inne eseje*, 2nd edition, Komorów: Wydawnictwo Antyk Marcin Dybowski, 2008; V.E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*, foreword by H.S. Kushner, afterword by W.J. Winslade, Boston: Beacon Press, 2006; E. Becker, *The Birth and Death of Meaning. An Interdisciplinary Perspective on the Problem of Man*, 2nd edition, New York: The Free Press, 1971.

¹⁵ J. Piwowski, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

A threat to the security of a state is uncritical adoption of foreign models without taking into account own traditions, experiences, history, and changes taking place all over the world.¹⁷

Moral education as the basis for shaping desired social attitudes

Each type of education has its stages and this is also the case here. Considering the process of moral education in a psychological category, where the parent is the tutor and the child is the pupil, we can distinguish three such stages.

At the first stage, the child is not yet aware that certain specific social norms exist, and yet people are often assessed through them. This is the stage where we are completely dependent on the parent, the infant and post-infant period may be the stage where we cannot demonstrate our filters of perception, but definitely a lot starts here. Values, which are being perfected and shaped by society, are very often founded at this stage.

The second stage is the so-called moral heteronomy: the child becomes aware of some not too complicated actions and concludes that there are certain standards which must be followed, as non-compliance may result in a penalty. An individual, already formed at the earlier stages of education, realises that punishment is not a good thing, and hence adheres to the norms.

At the final stage of morality formation, there is a human being who is fully aware that this world is based on certain standards, who knows that one has to take them into account, and self-discipline helps with this. Speaking of a conscious individual, we mean someone who has exceeded a certain level of self-knowledge, so they already have substantial information about themselves and their mental states; they have the ability to control their feelings, know how to deal with stress, also have the experience which allows them to make informed decision and function responsibly in a social reality.¹⁸

Moral attitudes are among the first to be shaped during the upbringing process which accompanies us from the first weeks of our lives. Upbringing is not only punishing when a child does something wrong, although in the past such primitive forms of shaping moral attitudes in an individual were very often used. After all, the parent is the first person responsible for how our moral compass is shaped, and every loving parent will undoubtedly make every effort to ensure that their child grows to be a person able to make the right choices in difficult and critical situations.

In his works, Heliodor Muszyński calls moral attitudes interpersonal attitudes because their subject is the other person, and more precisely, values such as dignity,

¹⁷ W. Okoń, *Nowy słownik pedagogiczny*, extended 2nd edition, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak” 1998, p. 84.

¹⁸ Based on the theory of moral development in terms of Lawrence Kohlberg.

life and health, the right to obtain reliable information, and the right to be different. A person may adopt various attitudes towards another person, e.g., an attitude of respect for life and health, an attitude of tolerance, or an attitude of caring. All these attitudes are usually very desirable in our society, and people who adhere to certain values are considered attractive.¹⁹ After all, people are herd animals, and all animals living in herds look after their families. Wolves are a beautiful example here: for them, the pack is the most important. Unfortunately, there is the flip side of this coin. An individual, who is a human, may also exhibit attitudes that will deprive them of values they have, and may result in their destruction.

Moral education is based on two different educational systems. One of them is established on moral relativism, the other – on a systematic process aimed at instilling certain moral principles. A community supporting the first type of upbringing mainly asks itself the question of what moral values are good to convey to their children, and whether it is worth communicating to them those values which result from own experience and views, or maybe those that are widely accepted as attractive in society. The truth is that each party perceives and defines stimuli differently, thus adopting other values as positive. Some will be led in their lives by the Decalogue, while others will choose something completely different as attractive guidance. Since every person is guided in life by a different understanding of such concepts as “positive,” or “moral values,” is it a good idea to impose them on our children? Is it not more prudent to present these concepts to children and let them decide for themselves?²⁰

The second system rejects moral relativism in upbringing, and those in favour of this method of upbringing claim that pupils should be taught certain moral principles and use them to act in accordance with the adopted moral code. This system is very old. For a long time, societies have sought to systematise and formulate certain moral values that were considered very important for living in harmony with other people. Each young person had to internalise them. Education based on indoctrination was characterized by the use of rewards and punishments. The reward system was intended to show that a particular behaviour was socially acceptable and should be used as guidance, while the punishment system was intended to condemn the behaviour.

However, education based on indoctrination raises some doubts. It is not adjusted to the mental development of an individual. The value system and all norms passed onto children often do not take into account their moral level. It happens that the transferred values and norms exceed their moral level, and thus, no moral argumentation brings the expected results in upbringing. In addition, this system aims to fit a given individual into a rigid framework created by older generations, lifestyle, or

¹⁹ M. Szalkiewicz, “Problematyka wychowania w koncepcji pedagogicznej Heliodora Muszyńskiego”, *Zeszyty Naukowe Państwowej Wyższej Szkoły Zawodowej im. Witelona w Legnicy*, no. 4, 2016, pp. 93–105.

²⁰ R. Murawski, “Rozwój i wychowanie moralne dzieci i młodzieży”, *Seminare. Poszukiwania Naukowe*, vol. 4, 1979, p. 57.

ideology, without taking into account its destructive impact on the individual. Living in such a diverse society, where each group has the right to express their interests, a person is exposed to various influences from different environments or institutions. These, in turn, express their disparate hierarchies of values, often leading the individual into moral uncertainty and doubt. Each community has adopted its own desirable and it uses them to form young people.²¹

There are many factors influencing the process of moral development, including both the family and peer groups or teachers. There is no doubt that the family is the social unit that first influences children. It is the parents who show what is right and what is wrong. As Ralph Linton accurately states, “the first few years of an individual’s life are critical to establishing highly generalized value-attitude systems that constitute the deeper layers of personality.”²²

Traditional families were characterised by a closed educational system. It was based on pre-established parenting goals that had been practiced over years. For the young generation, parents were role models and the examples to follow; the shaping of moral attitudes in a young individual was therefore predetermined.²³ Over time, the family began to change its function. Today, this social unit is becoming an emotional community. This consists in a change from former relations between things into contemporary relations based on emotional ties. Family life expectations are also changing. Nowadays, marriage is treated as a decision for a specified period of time, a life-long commitment seems to be too a decision. Marriage and the family instability may, in turn, contribute to the failure to fulfil certain obligations in the family, posing the threat of its breakup. Family breakdown has a strong impact on the child’s psyche, which often manifests itself in being lost in the world and questioning the values of moral norms. In Poland, the family is considered to be the highest value, many believe that it necessary for a successful and happy life. It is in the family that children absorb important values and create a protective barrier against the inappropriate barriers arising from the social environment.

As we already know, the family plays a significant role in the moral development of children. This social unit is the first influence on the child, hence the justified view that all problems with bringing up children begin in a family that has not fulfilled its educational, caring and developmental role as needed. Unfortunately, pro-family and socio-economic policies are affected by the social and economic problems of the state, and these, in turn, affect family life. As a result of the economic crisis and the lack of a vision for the state’s development, society is experiencing an increase in social pathology. This has multiple consequences, for example, parental authority, so

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 59.

²² J. Mariański, *Wprowadzenie do socjologii moralności*, Lublin: Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL, 1989, p. 190.

²³ *Idem*, *Moralność w kontekście społecznym*, Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy „Nomos”, 2014.

important in the upbringing process, is weakened. Other values contributing to the violation of security and order in social life are also shaken. Political disputes or all kinds of struggle among parties for domination on the political scene also affect the local environment and the situation of families. Parents wanting to ensure their child's well-being forget that this is not their only task. The amount of time they need to spend working to provide for their family means that they often do not have time for their children. Parents come home tired, the first thing they think about is rest because they know that when the new day comes, they will have to go to work again to earn a living. The pursuit of money, which, unfortunately, plays a significant role nowadays, adversely influences the amount of time we spend with our children. Because of tiredness and the daily rush, we forget that the parent is the first person who influences the upbringing of a young individual. Parents are on top of the list of those whom young people trust and believe; trusted parents lend credibility to their actions and words. Certainly, there are many people who, at least once in their lives, have heard from a child that it wants to be like daddy or mummy because it is first and foremost the parents who are first role models for their children. In today's fast-changing world, moral values are also changing. These changes are caused by conflicting ideals and lifestyles. Everyone chooses a different lifestyle and pursues some ideal. Conflicts occur when two different individuals or social groups follow different lifestyles, and it happens that there is rivalry over which one is more attractive. Religion and culture are also sources of conflict. Looking around, we can see a division in society caused by religious differences. Each of these religious groups has their own beliefs, their doctrines, sometimes the assumptions of one are contradictory to the assumptions of the other, which affects the division of opinions on a given issue.

Conclusions

This short review of topics related to moral attitudes and social order enables understanding of the importance of the role moral attitudes play in the security of a state, a social group, or an individual. Better and better comprehension of these issues makes us aware of the role they play in the lives of individuals and social groups they create. Proper shaping of law and moral attitudes enables positive interpersonal relations, and what is more, it also allows us to understand other people functioning with us in society. Muszyński adopted a specific division of moral norms, thanks to which we can classify them properly. He calls the attitudes he distinguished "interpersonal", arguing that their subject is the other person, or more precisely, their values. In relation to another human being, an individual may adopt an attitude of respect for life and health, an attitude of tolerance, an attitude of caring, etc., but may also have an anti-social attitude, i.e., one that will depreciate the other person or pose a threat of losing values, such as dignity, autonomy, life and health,

property, the right to be informed, and the right to be different. In a situation where certain moral values, established as attractive in the society in which we live, are taken away from us, a certain homeostasis is disturbed, and this leaves its mark on an individual's and a group's safety, and when the balance is disturbed in a vast majority, even the state's safety is affected. As the *Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego* [Dictionary of Safety Terms] says that "security is one of the basic human needs"²⁴ it is the greatest need, which means that a need of security results from a natural inclination to live in a community enables human survival and development.

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²⁴ Bezpieczeństwo [headword], [in:] *Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, eds. J. Kaczmarek, W. Łepkowski, B. Zdrodowski, 6th edition, Warszawa: AON, 2008, p. 14.

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The shaping of moral attitudes as a pillar of contemporary security and social order

Abstract

The long-term process of education, and above all, shaping the desired social attitudes among young citizens of each country is the basis of the future social order. Individual moral order translates directly into order in social structures and relations, which is important in the context of ensuring both internal and external security. In an orderly society, the so-called “strong moral backbone” is much more resistant to threats, and also much more effective in counteracting them. Unfortunately, the issue of moral education is not much emphasised in contemporary educational systems. Therefore, the main goal of this article is to identify the components of the moral education process as key factors shaping the contemporary order and social security. Thus, the issues of moral disorder as a source of real threats, both in the individual and social dimension, as well as the problem of moral education as the basis for shaping the desired social attitudes in the contemporary world, were analysed. In order to achieve the assumed goal, the following research methods (theoretical) were used: analysis, synthesis, abstraction, explanation, generalization, and inference. The research was carried out using the technique of examining documents and source materials.

Key words: moral education, shaping attitudes, social security

