

## HOMELAND

A theoretical-emotional construct that binds a particular community to a given territory as a place of residence of its ancestors ("country of ancestors"); "correlations of certain mental attitudes that are part of the cultural heritage of social groups". (Ossowski); ancestral land; the opposite of foreign land.

Ossowski distinguishes between private homeland ("small homeland") and ideological homeland. A private homeland is a space that is someone's birthplace and is defined by personal, individual experiences and memories from childhood, often sprinkled with emotions; a special emotional bond connects the person with this area. The term "ideological homeland" refers to a considerably larger area (basically the territory of the country). People belonging to the same nation may therefore have different private homelands, but a common ideological homeland. A homeland in both meanings is a place where one lives or a place that one misses (e.g. while emigrating).

As an idea, homeland (in both meanings, although most often it applies to the ideological homeland) plays a role in building a sense of community bond. What binds a person with their homeland is the fate of ancestors (the so-called founding myths), the history of the nation, tradition, religion, language; often a positive emotional bond, a sense of respect expressed in the attitude of patriotism (love for the homeland manifesting itself in sacrifice, putting the collective good before the individual, readiness to sacrifice one's life in defense of it). The notion of homeland, like the notion of nation, is sometimes strongly ideologised and has an imaginative character (Gellner, Anderson). It is a colloquial term, functioning in the consciousness, without legal connotations (the homeland should be distinguished from the notions of "state" and "citizenship").

The idea of the homeland is connected with the memory manifested, among others, in monuments reminding about places, events and heroes important to the nation. Remembrance plays a role in the collective rituals that bind a given area and its community, through which the idea of the homeland is expressed and strengthened (these rituals are often of political significance, also religious rituals are sometimes politically important). Rituals can be taken over (appropriated) or invented, creating and sustaining the myth of a community uniting places, people and values [Anderson].

The idea of the homeland is sometimes built around the elements of the environment characteristic for a given country that make up the national landscape, e.g. fauna and flora (European bison and storks as symbols of Poland), climate ("golden Polish autumn"), geography, ways of organising space, etc. National landscapes become a part of identity and, as a result, are sometimes considered by the members of a given nation as the most beautiful in aesthetic terms (such a stereotype applies, for example, to the Polish Baltic coast, Polish mountains, etc.).

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