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## ON THE METHODOLOGY OF STUDYING THE PHENOMENON OF PATRIOTISM

**Anar Asanovna Uyzbayeva<sup>1\*</sup>, Ayazhan Sagikyzy<sup>2</sup>,  
Gaukhar Galymovna Akhmetova<sup>1</sup> and  
Maira Zhanaidarovna Kozhamzharova<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> *S. Toraihyrov Pavlodar State University, Lomov street 64, Pavlodar, 140008, Kazakhstan*

<sup>2</sup> *Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religion Studies, Kurmangazy street 29, Almaty, 050010, Kazakhstan*

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### **Abstract**

Today, the dominant trait of patriotism, love of country loses the status of spiritual, creative and consolidating support and it can be treated as the highest manifestation of the human spirit and as an expression of the lowest, perverse and vile qualities. Yes, Love is the perfect human feeling. Motherland is also the subject of worship of each person. Then how to explain such a connection of these concepts which makes it perceive negatively? Or it is not patriotism at all? Or love, in this case, is not love, but Motherland is not the subject of love that it deserves? Answers to these questions can be found based on the theoretical and methodological sources of patriotism, which are discussed in this article. Authors, highlighting such concepts as naturocentrism, sociocentrism and anthropocentrism, show their insufficiency to reveal this phenomenon.

*Keywords:* society, people, ideology, state, Kazakhstan

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### **1. Introduction**

In the scientific and political environment the problem of patriotism has been affected by the outstanding minds of mankind from time to time. Philosophers view this problem primarily as a moral, whereas political theorists connect it directly with the modern political system [1]. And they offer their own vision of resolving issues related to patriotism. So, Ross Poole claims that modern state must be national and republican patriot must be nationalist [1, p. 145]. However, J.- W. Muller believes that patriotism today should be based on the norms and values of the Constitution [2]. Meanwhile, the discussions on constitutional patriotism are not ceasing, various disadvantages are specified, in particular, one of the obvious disadvantages is the identification problem in constitutional patriotism [3]. Whereas D. Kostakopoulou states that constitutional patriotism and republican patriotism are the shades of civic nationalism [4]. S. Keller concludes that patriotism is a vice, as he sees the tendency to dishonesty in

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\*E-mail: yizbaeva@mail.ru

patriotism [1, p. 71]. As it can be seen in the modern era, as well as at all times, patriotism provokes mixed feelings and expressions. It is clear, that the debate on the question of patriotism arises when there is a question about the unity of the society and integrity of the state.

Today Kazakhstan faces the issue about the political future. Gradually acquiring own path of development, it strives for following it keeping own identity and integrity. Important role in this process belongs to the patriotism of its citizens, which necessarily involves the incorporation of this phenomenon in the priority research tasks.

The task of this study is, firstly, to show the presence of a certain impropriety in the existing approaches to the basis of patriotism, secondly, to consider patriotism not just as a political and ideological construction and attitude or sensory and emotional complex (as such, it gets, as a rule negative evaluation), but as a way of existence of human activity through inclusion patriotism in philosophical categories and definitions to reveal ontological sources of such existence and specifics of their implementation in specific social-cultural conditions, and thirdly, to identify the main tendencies and problematic ‘cross points’ in the forming citizens’ patriotic attitudes and motivations.

## 2. Analysis of patriotism conceptions

On the one hand, many people think that the problem of patriotism seems to be simple and interpreted uniquely as naturally newfound reality: every person must be a patriot as he gets this character from birth, ‘absorbs’ it with mother’s milk; on the other hand, especially when it comes about some aspects of showing patriotic feelings, actions, emotions, acts etc., the uniqueness of this interpretation is in doubt and the phenomenon is completely denied. The main disadvantage of modern ideas about patriotism and its theoretical and methodological, conceptual implementation and categorical design is that the essential aspects of this phenomenon, requiring deep philosophical analysis, are not submitted for the problem field, but simply are postulated as separate, arbitrarily interpreted features, properties, qualities. The ideas of patriotism are usually lined up on the basis of either the ordinary or emotional-sensory perception of certain forms of its expression, or to a greater extent are ‘replica’ of ideological clichés of certain social-political structures that allow, as practice shows, to deal with this concept rather ‘free and easy’. This led to the fact that, in our opinion, patriotism both as a phenomenon and as a concept offers perhaps the most contradictory and mutually exclusive judgments and definitions. For example, some believe that patriotism is a love for the Motherland, the country and the people (Plato [5], A.N. Radishchev, V.I. Lenin [6]), “high state of mind” (Berdyayev) [N.A. Berdyayev, *The philosophy of inequality. Letter 11. About war*, accessed on 10.06.2012, [www.vehi.net/berdyayev/neraven/11.html](http://www.vehi.net/berdyayev/neraven/11.html)]. Others consider this sense as unnatural, unreasonable and harmful (Tolstoy) [L. Tolstoy, *Patriotism and Government*, accessed on 03.07.2013, [www.nonresistance.org/docs\\_pdf/Tolstoy/Patriotism\\_and\\_Government.pdf](http://www.nonresistance.org/docs_pdf/Tolstoy/Patriotism_and_Government.pdf)], declaring patriotism as “a virtue of the

vicious” (O. Wilde) [O. Wilde, accessed on 10.07.2014, [www.goodreads.com/quotes/37302-patriotism-is-the-virtue-of-the-vicious](http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/37302-patriotism-is-the-virtue-of-the-vicious)] and “the last refuge of scoundrel” (S. Johnson) [7].

Science and especially the journalistic literature gave the birth to a kind of whole trend on discrediting and compromising patriotism. Its essential content, valuable meaning is diffused with the substitution of concepts when a minor becomes a major, when it appears as a team with the most extreme forms of nationalism, chauvinism, isolationism, selfishness. In this regard, we turn to the theoretical and methodological roots, which under present conditions provide a conceptual appearance and basis of patriotism. They, in our opinion, include: naturocentrism, sociocentrism, anthropocentrism. We will analyze them in the context of the research problem.

### ***2.1. Naturocentrism***

Naturocentrism serves as a paradigm that emphasizes the priority of natural factors and their determinative role in relation to human nature and social phenomena. Putting forward the thesis of man as a natural living being, naturocentrism claims that the biological level of organization holds a crucial significance for explaining the nature of the human personality, forms of its social behaviour, and many social processes, including the nature of patriotism. From the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> century reference to the laws of Biology was quite common. In this context patriotism is revealed as a natural sense of attachment to their native places due to natural and biological structure of the individual. On this basis, the evidence base about opposition of individual to social, their initial antagonism is built. This approach necessarily leads to absolutism of natural in man and identification of it with biological. As a consequence, analogies between human and animal behaviour are made, and the roots of patriotism and patriotic consciousness are placed in direct dependence on natural and biological characteristics of the individual. Furthermore, the presence of animals’ patriotic feelings is admitted. In 1911, H. Spurrell’s ‘Patriotism. A biological study’ was published in London. This book explicitly pointed that “patriotism seems to have its roots in the brute instinct, which, in its simplest manifestation, makes an animal care for its mate and offspring” [8]. In the 30s biological approach was used extensively by fascist preachers and ideologues. As a result, it was, in some degree, compromised and lost its former relevance.

Building on the success of Biology and, above all, modern Genetic engineering, naturocentrism expands the boundaries of its application and improves methods of argumentation. For this reason there are some definite grounds. It is proved that biological sources are, firstly, specific properties of physiological human nature, his vital needs, to some extent, life expectancy, and secondly, the anatomical and physiological characteristics of the individual – race, type of nervous system, blood, etc. and thirdly, specific disposition for a certain kind of action. All this, according to representatives of this trend, allow them to claim not only the basis of individual features of man, but also his social

status, social inequality, social activity, the hierarchical structure of society, etc. [9]. In addition, there is a real possibility of the formation and explanations, in terms of biological approach, as we call them, hybrid forms of patriotism, such as geographical or territorial patriotism, racist patriotism (respectively: white and black, etc.). Rating biologism as theoretical and methodological foundation in explaining human nature and some aspects of his public life we should recognize some of its role in deepening our understanding of them. However, it is necessary to see its limitations. It is connected with the fact that, absolutising reduction principle, biological approach ignores the specifics of what is new and defining the essence of what makes a transition to a higher level of organization, which is the social sphere of human activity. Therefore, it can not serve as the general methodological foundation to learn the totality of social processes.

## **2.2. Sociocentrism**

Sociocentrism is a deployed system of views on man and society and their ratio is methodologically opposed to naturalistic determinism. The main thing for it is the objective laws of social development, the laws of historical necessity, which provide both various converting social projects, and social technologies, nature and content of human activity, moral content of individual acts and characteristics of his inner world. Sociocentrism principle is fully and consistently implemented in Marxism. Defining the essence of man as an ensemble of social relations, it builds ideas about the formational development of society as a naturalistic process within which the person is present as a 'personal element of the productive forces'. Respectively, according to Marxism, patriotism is a social-deterministic, social-historical, class phenomenon. Its origins and nature should be searched in the objective social relations. At that, the features of the formation and development of patriotism are put into complete dependence on social-political system, social relations between people and class structure of society [10]. Patriotism is seen as naturally fused with internationalism [11].

Asserting the primacy and priority of the social, subordinating the interests of the human individuality to 'social design' sociocentrism creates conditions for aggressive confrontation of individual and social life and, in essence, turns a man into one of the cogs of the social system, thus, it removes the question of dependence of external to the individual, common structural, institutional and other social formations on individual human activities. In real life, this leads to the fact that patriotism manifests itself in the form of duty as a political and ideological imperatives and psychological set – you must be a patriot. At the same time the relevant criteria of patriotism are offered too – you must love the motherland, democracy, political regime, native state, political leader etc. In other words, ideologically verified model of citizen - patriot and a certain standard of patriotic behaviour are constructed. In the absence of the individual's self-determination, the sets, imposed by social structures and mainly state, which lays claim to the monopoly right to determine what a patriot should be, as a rule lead to their rejection and denial. In other words, patriotism as the highest spiritual and

moral characteristic of a person is not denied, but its political and ideological version is.

In our opinion, the principle of naturocentrism is implemented also in constitutional patriotism, in which political attachments are based on the norms and values of the Constitution [2]. It acts as a form of civic attachment, as the basis of a multicultural society, as “a way of conceptualizing “civic identification” at the supranational level” [2, p. 2]. This means that the constitutional patriotism avoids all forms of identification [3]. Here dominates the idea of equality of the majority and minorities, recognition of the right to existence and development of foreign cultures, insisting on the recognition of all ‘common (human, universal) values’ [O.B. Nemensky, *Patriotism and multiculturalism*, International conference Patriotism as ideology of Russia revival, Belgorod, 2013, [www.riss.ru/index.php/analitika/1856-patriotizm-i-multikulturalizm#.Ufb0itphR8U](http://www.riss.ru/index.php/analitika/1856-patriotizm-i-multikulturalizm#.Ufb0itphR8U), accessed on 19.06.2013]. Thus, the minority ranking promotes discrimination of the majority, which leads to the absence of the dominant culture and a common identity; destroys the conditions for common civic patriotism because patriotism is based on loyalty to the state laws and not on a common history and culture as it should be from our point of view. So far, a number of European leaders (Angela Merkel, Nicolas Sarkozy, David Cameron) have openly admitted the failure of this policy.

Thus, the sociocentric principle always comes from the mutual dependence of patriotic behaviour and interests of various social groups and communities. Thereby, the conditions for the politicization of the whole complex of social connections and relationships, division of society into ‘ours’ and ‘not ours’ are created. Patriotism starts to serve the political power, becomes a mechanism to manipulate minds of the citizens, promote their own group or community’s values as primary and defining, strive to solve economic and social problems at the expense of those who are not a part of ‘our’.

### **2.3. Anthropocentrism**

Alternatively anthropocentrism is opposed to sociocentrism and naturalistic determinism. Its main point was laid by Protagoras in his well-known formula: “man is the measure of all things”. It got its most complete implementation and realization in political liberalism, which, as you know, comes from the primacy of the individual’s interests and its inalienability of natural rights. It opposes everything that restricts through social project planning, objective historical laws, various social technologies, intervention of the state machine and others, goal-setting priority of human activity, the individual’s right as a subject of free choice and responsibility for his actions. Patriotism in this aspect appears, from their point of view, to be one of the varieties of social technologies that limit human freedom. Hence, a negative attitude and assessment of this phenomenon. It is manifested in different ways. First, in the form of patriotic indifference, i.e. in an indifferent attitude towards the homeland, its oblivion, deletion from the sphere of self-interest. Such indifference is peculiar to both individuals and social

groups, and parties, and state. Patriotic indifference can evolve in the most extreme form of rejection of patriotism - in antipatriotism. It is expressed in a hidden and open hatred for own homeland, culture, customs and traditions...

Particularly common form of rejection of patriotism is patriotic nihilism. In this case we deal with the denial of the positive value of homeland, its absence in the system of human values and substitution by others, as a rule, purely materialistic value orientations. It is no coincidence that patriotic nihilism is expressed in blind worship for everything that is foreign, whether it is household items, lifestyle, culture etc. In the same row, there is such a thing as cosmopolitanism. In different periods of history, the concept of 'cosmopolitanism' was filled with different content, had both positive and reactionary character, used by different social groups for their own purposes. But one thing remained the same – refusing (in some form) what expresses identity and national and ethnic certainty, as well as searching a social form, which would make everyone's life corresponding a single universal law that is common to all. In addition to these forms of rejection of patriotism, its other manifestations such as false patriotism, pseudo patriotism, abstract patriotism, internationalist orientations are rather widespread. In varying degrees all of them speculate on a strong sense of love for country, rely on social agents' pseudo humanism and vested interests. Thus, both naturocentrism and sociocentrism, and anthropocentrism, claiming to the status of the theoretical and methodological sources of patriotism, essentially lead into a deadlock and contain such costs and absolutisation, which distort the essence of the phenomenon.

It should be noted that attempts to solve the problem of removing the dilemma of anthropocentrism and sociocentrism were constantly made. It remains relevant in the current context. One of the latest attempts was made within the postmodern approach by means of the concept of habitus, which was founded by a French sociologist P. Bourdieu [12]. In his opinion, habitus is a collection of schemes of thought, perception of actions incorporated into the individual. In essence, it is an 'incorporated social', i.e. social body of the individual. On the one hand, habitus is objective, a product of historical factors and circumstances, a complex of cognitive, motivational and other structures, i.e. it acts as a kind of matrix to perceive the reality, set social goals, behavioural tasks etc. On the other hand, habitus is subjective because it is incorporated into the consciousness of the individual and forms his integral part. In habitus external social structures are reproduced under the guise of the individual's internal structures. In general, habitus, structuring and mediating thinking, perception, individual behaviour, reproduces cultural and social-political rules, styles of life and the existence of social groups and communities. P. Bourdieu outlines class (collective) and individual habitus. Unlike Marx Bourdieu considers that class is a body of agents with a similar position in the social space, consisting of a number of fields – political, economic, cultural. The existence in one social field leads to the formation of a common class habitus, which is the matrix for individual habitus. Upon that, single structure of class habitus does not exclude diversity of its manifestations in the individual structural variants. Habitus acts as a stable

disposition to admit and fulfil the requirements which are inherent in certain social.

What significance can this approach have to deepen our ideas about patriotism? Firstly, it removes the antagonism between sociocentric and anthropocentric methodology in the study of this phenomenon; secondly, it allows to allocate patriotic field in the social space, in which a common collective habitus is formed, that acts as a specific matrix with respect to the individual patriotic habitus; thirdly, to detect schemes of patriotic thought, perception and action one should not proceed from the social agents' consciousness, but from the knowledge of the products of social practices that are formed (at pre-reflective level) in accordance with these schemes. However, it is hardly possible to talk about the principal and the final decision to anthropocentrism and sociocentrism dilemma by means of the concept of habitus. If in respect to a traditional society, social agent's social connections are initially defined, the habitus of modern man, involved in the variety of ever-changing set of personal and anonymous social connections, can not be considered as social invariant. Consequently, the proposed approach may have a limited use within certain social systems.

### **3. Conclusions**

Analysis of the main existing theoretical and methodological sources and approaches to the study of the nature and essence of patriotism shows that their philosophical, epistemological and methodological potential is insufficient to get a soundly-based idea of the subject of research; they distort the very essence of patriotism. Existing differences in the approaches to the basis of patriotism, especially in the ensuing conclusions and assessments indicate that patriotism is a complex multifaceted phenomenon that includes both sensual and rational, ordinary and ideological, acts and actions, various complexes of interpersonal and public relations and relationships (family, social groups and institutions, classes, ethnic groups, state, territory etc.), knowledge of the past, present and future.

Modern ideas of patriotism are usually built on the basis of the 'broken' consciousness that makes it quite 'at ease' to deal with this concept. To change stereotypes and overcome the false pluralism in the nature and essence of patriotism is not possible without defining fundamentally new worldview sources. Therefore, it is necessary to find new approaches both in terms of philosophical and conceptual orientation that adequately meet the complexity of the studied phenomenon.

Patriotism as love for Motherland can not be realized without sincere belief in own nation and its spiritual and moral roots, without heartfelt sympathy and compassion for it, without a constant sense of civic duty to it and civic responsibility for its benefit, without relying on historical memory.

In our opinion, conceptual, philosophically fundamental and reasoned idea of the nature, sources and essential content of patriotism is possible at transferring it from the sphere of sociology and political science to the level of philosophical analysis in the system of 'world – man'. Being essentially universal 'world –

man' formula allows you to explore the problem of patriotism, based on knowledge of the transcendent human support. Besides, here man acts not as a part of the world in a number of other things but as a special kind of existence that has special characteristics and definitions. Universal origin, ontological face enable us to understand what makes a man, his uniqueness, meaning and character of a truly human attitude to the world, to reveal the most important thing in man, in his communication with other people and the surrounding social and natural world, his purpose in this world ... Philosophical analysis allows us to see that people do not just exist in the world, but they also have a significant impact on the world and themselves, they are able not only to know their own existence, but also to experience the care, concern and anxiety for the fate of this existence. Man becomes aware of his controversial role in the unified system of existence and acts it with special responsibility for the world as a whole, for the fate of mankind, for being of the human race and human civilization. Learning the internal source of sustainable peace and human harmony, human relations is both disclosure of ontological foundation and origins of the phenomenon of patriotism, its inclusion in the system of philosophical orientations.

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