

ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RUSSIAN PATRIOTISM

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Abstract: Relevance of this research is emanating from the need to identify basic and accessory meaning elements of patriotism, clarify definition of the term "patriotism", which in the modern world acquires new connotations related to the values of the western culture and departure from the historical-cultural heritage. In view of the above, the purpose of this paper is to reveal the essential characteristics of patriotism in modern days as a basic value of the Russians, its national specificity in the light of historical and social changes, different scientific interpretations and cultural metaphors, reflecting multidimensionality of this concept. The leading approaches to the study of this problem are axiological and anthropological, which allow to consider the depth of the concept "patriotism", its national origins, value orientations and specific features in the modern realities. The research employed general scientific methods (analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, comparative-historical and dialectical methods). The paper presents theoretical foundations for the definition of "patriotism", reveals the essential characteristics of Russian patriotism, identifies the key development stages and changes in the socio-cultural content of patriotism and provides an overview of the problems related to the patriotic dimension in the modern socio-cultural reality of Russians. Proceedings of this paper reflect the contemporary views on patriotism, and have a practical value for the studies of Russian national character and specific features of Russian culture and art from synchronic and diachronic viewpoints.

Keywords: patriotism, collectivism, society, values, culture.

1 Introduction

The problems of patriotism and patriotic education, despite the apparent obviousness of their immense importance for the society, give rise to divergent views and opinions in the scientific circles, when it comes to the implementation of socio-cultural projects aimed at strengthening patriotic sentiments. Much of the discussion around the forms and methods of patriotic education is fueled by the ambiguity of the term "patriotism" itself and the symbolic images associated with it (Vaschenko, 2017; Nemova & Svadbina, 2017; Nysanbaev & Bizhanov, 2018).

Usually the concept "patriotism" is interpreted as originating from the Greek word "patris" meaning motherland or land of fathers, and in a broad sense and even with a somewhat pretentious flavor meaning love for the Motherland, service to the Fatherland. But this category also bears an additional meaning. Since the times of Peter the Great the French term "patriote" (compatriot) has been used, implying the deeds for the benefit of others, readiness to come to the aid of others and, perhaps, sacrifice own good for the salvation and well-being of others.

The axiological crisis in the 1990s and early 21st with the crushing of long-held values, ideals and morals and the rejection of "a new system of values" of a pro-Western kind, as well as the intensively imposed "criminal" subculture, affected the essential characteristics of patriotism.

Obviously, it makes sense to discuss not only consequences of the game-changing era, but also new challenges of the transition period in modern Russia, when two levels of basic values (including patriotism) have emerged - the upper echelons of society (power - economy - finance - business), with the rule of money and private property. The second "lower" level, represented by the major social institutions, the only space for fostering patriotism, such as the family, education institutions, workplace teams, army, church, social protection and healthcare agencies (available to ordinary citizens), but, as A.A. Ozerov

(2020) notes, not media and culture, which are commercialized and politically biased.

2 Literature Review

Researchers dealing with the issue of patriotism I. V. Vaschenko (2017), A.Ya. Aslanov, S.A. Glushkova (2017), A.A. Ozerov (2020) et al., rightfully point out that patriotism from the ancient times has been incorporated in the sociocultural code of the Russian people, determining their genotype and ensuring the principle of identity between the life of people and each person and the foundations of the Russian civilization.

A.V. Vaschenko (2017) when tracing the genesis of Russian patriotism brings attention to the gradual changes in the meaning of the concept "patriotism".

Having examined the state documents of recent years in the field of education and upbringing, which declare patriotism, citizenship and social solidarity among basic traditional values of the Russian people, such scientists as A.N. Nysanbaev, A.Kh. Bizhanov (2018) arrived at a conclusion that patriotism is persistently and harshly "forced from the top" in the context of "a nationwide ideology". The reason for such interpretation of patriotism is that a modern man no longer relies on the values dictated "from the top", and is able to independently develop their own individualized multidimensionality amid the crisis affecting a traditional worldview identity.

Another group of researchers focusing on the basic values still hold an opinion that altruism, unselfishness, togetherness are groundlessly attributed to Russians, which has been discussed by V.S. Magun, M.G. Rudnev, P. Schmidt (2015).

L.P. Sidorenko (2017), when analyzing the basic values of Russians, draws a particular attention to the phenomenon of patriotism and its structural components.

Careless assertions regarding patriotism often give rise to disputes and discussions. In the research directed toward solution of the problems facing modern society, patriotism often appears as a stereotype, a combination of certain characteristics and clichés. Such "stereotypes" as patriotism, strong nation, love for one's neighbor, fortitude, collectivism, search for truth have lost their meaning for young people, who have their minds turned to the consumer society; they are set for competition, rivalry, personal growth.

Drawing on the results of the sociological survey of the value orientations among youngsters, V.N. Gulyaikhin, O.E. Andryushchenko, P.P. Fantrov (2018) point to changes occurring in the structure of basic orientations. 10% of young people demonstrate nihilism with regard to traditional values, and the percentage of "supporters" is as follows: for "justice" - 69.2%, for "patriotism" - 56.8%, ready to respect traditions - 55.5%, the number of supporters of "equality" is slightly over 48%, of "collectivism" - 6.7%; while only 8.2% are ready to "search for truth". Moreover, young people demonstrate "narrowness of ethnic and national identity". Such results can be explained by the very logic behind development of a modern urban space, when "residents (of a megalopolis) become less and less talkative, make mainly short-term contacts, engage in fragmentary interactions and all meanings become situational" (Babaeva & Krashennikov, 2019).

On the other hand, A.A. Ozerov (2020) asserts that people at a mature age are more likely to advocate for the leading basic values (patriotism, solidarity, citizenship), after achieving a certain degree of spiritual, moral and personal development and gaining life experience which solidified their principles and personal convictions allowing them to answer the question: "Why do I live? What is the life purpose?" It is apparent that for young people having little life experience and turning to the values under the "here-and-now" principle, the so-called "tangible", material, manageable, mobile values that give an

impetus to grow intellectual, social, spiritual and physical potential, come to the fore. These are family, good education, strong health, interesting job, etc.

Upholders of the principle of "a free will" in the choice of individual value preferences are frustrated with representatives of the "conservative political elite" who are determined to anchor traditional values in the minds of young people and in state documents of the Russian Federation: National Security, Education and Upbringing Strategies. "Development of the Russian civic identity is one of the key goals pursued by the revised Federal State Standard for General Education" (Selivanova, 2014, p. 199), as N.L. Selivanova (2014) notes, describing the major educational trends in the system of continuous education. She also identified a range of opportunities for fostering personal development of students in the educational space: "(a) ensuring that the student's decision to enter educational space is based on a free will; (b) ensuring that the child's choice of activity (its contents and forms) is based on a free will, and that this is a type of activity which would lead child to the greatest success and the greatest self-expression; (c) building dialogical relations with people of different ages and social groups; (d) getting a deeper feel of different roles; (e) becoming part of various teams and communities and switching between them with vigor; (f) developing subspaces: cultural, natural, informational" (Selivanova, 2014, p. 212).

3 Research Methodological Framework

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the essential characteristics of patriotism, based on the historical and cultural traditions of the Russian people. For accomplishment of the stated purpose, the following objectives were set: provide a definition of patriotism and identify the related concepts; describe the stages in the development of patriotism through the prism of changing value orientations in the Russian society; consistent with the stages and the dominant ideas about patriotism in each stage, reveal the essential characteristics of Russian patriotism.

The research methodology was based on an axiological and anthropological approach to the analysis of modern socio-cultural reality and the meaning of patriotism. Historical and systematic approaches were also used in describing the essential characteristics of patriotism at different stages in the country development.

The research mainly employed general scientific research methods, such as the analysis of scientific literature and dialectical methods (Tikhonova, 2012).

4 Results

For understanding the essential characteristics of patriotism it is necessary to pay special attention to certain notions and concepts that provide a comprehensive picture of patriotism. A.A. Ozerov (2020) names collectivism, togetherness and altruism as the basic components of the concept "patriotism", which, in our opinion, makes it possible to explore patriotism as a holistic cultural phenomenon not only in a synchronic aspect, but also in retrospect.

"Collectivism". The definition of this term is usually limited to the its first part: a community, collaborative labor, collective ownership, shared use. Since the 1990s, this term gained a pejorative and mocking connotation of "herd" mentality and behavior (everybody "goes in formation"; there is no place for initiative or individuality); on collective farms people "slaved" for days of labor ("sticks"), while at factories and plants people served their labor duty under "a wage schedule", and slackers and idlers could easily hide behind "workhorses" who were pulling the whole cart for the "collective".

These sentiments were reflected (propagated) in TV series and intensified day to day. Meanwhile, the second part of the definition - the moral principle guiding relationships between people, based on cooperation and mutual assistance, the

conscious subordination of personal interests to the public ones, on the service to the common cause - was strenuously silenced and ignored.

"Togetherness". This term is close to the previous notion. In the habitual perception, it is associated with religious feelings. In social terms, it means communality, cooperativeness, comradeship and brotherhood, the care of everyone for all and of all for everyone. That is, what is now commonly referred to as the basic value - "social solidarity."

"Altruism" means selfless concern for the good of others; a willingness to sacrifice own goods for protection of the weak, liberation of the oppressed, and the triumph of social justice.

It is impossible to define the essential characteristics of patriotism without relying on several definitions of patriotism, demonstrating its organic historical roots and bearing value and meaning:

1. patriotism as a Russian archetype, a socio-cultural genotype (chronotope) formed over the centuries along with the emergence and development of Russian civilization;
2. patriotism as a guarantor of integrity, unity and security of the country, with a public will to enshrine it at the statutory level (as a national idea) in order to consolidate and unite the people to resist any attempts to destroy the country's sovereignty and to demolish national identity of the Russian people;
3. patriotism as creation and maintenance of a single national socio-cultural space, spiritual and moral environment, as the leading factor in education of the younger generation, preservation of historical memory and transmission of cultural heritage to future generations;
4. patriotism as the unity of public and personal, as feeling involved the country's achievements, through full engagement and actions for the benefit of the Fatherland and its people.

Russian patriotism has deep historical, cultural and normative-value roots, and the genesis and development of its meaning and content occurred in four stages.

At the first stage (the reign of Rurik dynasty in the Kievan Rus and Muscovite Rus from the 9th to the 16th centuries), the concept of unity, cohesion and protection of the common territory emerged from belonging to the same geographical location, and common language, culture, religion, economic and household activities, national identity and mentality.

At the second stage (the reign of Romanovs from the 17th century until 1917), patriotism is associated with the need of strengthening the Russian empire and enshrining this concept in law (it was for the first time mentioned in the "Statute of Military, Cannon and Other Affairs" (1601-1621), which emphasized not only the common origin and belonging to the Russian land as a state, but also the common fate, the historical memory of the past, the determination to defend and protect the heritage of ancestors. That was the dawn of patriotic education under the well-known military motto: "For Faith, Tsar and Fatherland!" From that time till present days the Patriotism (originating from the Greek word 'patris' meaning homeland, fatherland) means love for the motherland, service and devotion to the Fatherland and nation.

The third stage (a period of genesis and development of the Soviet patriotism from 1918 to 1991) was heralded by patriotism as the most powerful driver of people's efforts directed at the grand reconstruction of society in politics, economy, culture, science, education and social sphere, and in 1941-1945 the unparalleled heroism shown by people when defending their socialist homeland and restoring the country after the destructions and the heaviest death toll of the war. Patriotism during this period became the most important life-guiding value of the highest morality.

The fourth stage (from 1991 till present days) is characterized as a period of "transformation" of patriotism, a multi-vector framework of attitudes, views, beliefs and feelings of an individual; alternating recessions and depressions (and even de-patriotization of some fraction of society under the influence of both external and internal forces interested in the weakening of Russia), and then, the beginning of the 21st century is the stage of rise, general elevated spirit, reflecting the willingness of citizens to serve their homeland and readiness to protect it against any looking threats (Vaschenko, 2017).

5 Discussion

The revival and strengthening of patriotism does not happen "by order from above," because without the inner urge for unselfish conscious service to the homeland and compatriots, the very foundation of the national identity of the Russian people will be destructed. Pro-Western sociologists and "experts" on the basic values of Russians are well aware of this, and they readily jump to a hasty conclusion that their research "has not found proof of the phenomenon of the "cultural genotype of Russians", the Russian "archetype", nor of the unselfishness, altruism, collectivism, "togetherness" groundlessly attributed to Russians". Starting from 2012, and mostly by the merit of young people, Russia has been making firm steps toward the individualistic values and personal attributes common to the advanced Western countries, such as self-fulfillment, openness to changes, readiness to take risk, independence, self-reliance in the strive for success, wealth, power, and an aspiration to achieve greater heights than others (Magun et al., 2015).

During the period of "Perestroika and Glasnost" [restructuring and publicity] (from 1986 to 2000) the government made an attempt to change the genotype of Russians, to ignite aberration of social consciousness and a spiritual and moral rebirth of people as people's response to the thunderous "historical and cultural trauma".

The intentional "erasure" from the people's memory of their historical national roots, the "besmearing" of belonging to ancestral generations has affected all generations: the elder generation (which the liberal reformers contemptuously hailed "sovok" (a disparaging word ("dustpan" in English) used as a sarcastic reference to people having the Soviet mentality) lost faith in their former ideals and became ashamed of their history and culture; the front-line soldiers were called "red and brown" defenders of the totalitarian regime; people abandoned the Komsomol and Communist Party in droves and burnt their Komsomol and Party membership cards, labeling themselves as the "cheated generation" (as if in an attempt to justify themselves), and young people willingly took up this interpretation and turned their eyes toward the Western values (Govorukhin, 1993, p. 57).

The significance of the second (after the "socio-cultural genotype") essential characteristic of Russian patriotism, which naturally comes from the depths of people's consciousness, was embraced by the leaders of the country, who in the first decade of the 21st century produced federal documents meeting the expectations and needs of the vast majority of the population. Here we primarily mean the National Security, Education and Upbringing Strategies, as well as the latest amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation adopted in 2020.

The third essential characteristic of patriotism as the highest spiritual value is the existence (creation) of favorable spiritual socio-cultural space promoting respectful, careful attitude toward the native language, traditions, folk holidays, customs (both "secular" and religious), folklore, folk music, chanting (especially choral). This spiritual space includes the so-called "attachment to the land of origin", quiet, nostalgic memory and love for the native land from the cradle to old age (Aslanov & Glushkova, 2017).

Nationally colored socio-cultural space is the key to national-patriotic education of young people. True patriotism, as a pride in homeland and native people, should not be confused with

haughty narcissism or arrogance towards other peoples and cultures, or isolationism and xenophobia (fear of others). It implies tolerance and respect for representatives of other cultures, religions and lifestyles, which is the key to ensuring ethno-social unity, civic solidarity, mutual help and devoted service to Russia, which is a homeland for dozens and even hundreds of nations and nationalities co-existing in the same land for centuries (Ilyin, 1993, p. 57).

The fourth essential characteristic of patriotism as a value is the unity of public and personal, when a person feels an urge and aspiration to develop own abilities in order to contribute to the progress and prosperity of society. Practical service to the interests and ideals of the homeland gives meaning to the human life, gives rise to a sense of involvement in the real, visible and tangible achievements of one's home country. This behavior-driving motive is manifested in heroism as an expression of the moral credo of putting the interests of society and the country above personal interests and, if necessary, even sacrificing life for the sake of the homeland and its people. When heroism becomes widespread and common as an indicator of the spiritual and moral state of society, this patriotic feeling of involvement in great deeds is transferred to the entire generation. At each stage in the modern Russian history there were true outstanding patriots - "Papaninites", "Stakhanovites", "generation of winners", "virgin lands explorers", "space explorers", "Arctic discoverers", "Bratsk builders", "BAM builders", "Afghan veterans", etc. And each person throughout his life is trying to hold this high moral bar and to reconcile "should", "must" and personal freedom for reaching the harmony between them to the extent possible.

We have come to the fifth essential characteristic of Russian patriotism, which is, perhaps, immanent to all the basic values of Russians, which L.N. Gumilev (1997) in his days called a unique passionarity of Russians, inherent at the genetic level (taken from ancestors and parents as "behavioral memory"), the readiness to commit heroic deeds and feats on the same level as the ability to breathe, speak, walk; it is a conscious impulse of soul, akin to the sense of honor and duty, cultivated by many generations of Russians. As noted by S.N. Pushkin (2019), a researcher of L.N. Gumilev's legacy, "passionarity induces people not only to meet their immediate needs in their relationship with nature, but also to build and maintain the culture they need".

6 Conclusion

Patriotism as a Russian archetype, as a guarantor of integrity, unity and security of the country, as creation and maintenance of a single national socio-cultural space, spiritual and moral environment, as the unity of public and personal, as the feeling of involvement in the country's achievement finds its expression in the realities of present day. The international aspect of patriotism lies in the fulfillment of a moral duty towards those who need such help and support.

The assertion made repeatedly in the sociocultural and political polemics that patriotism, love of one's neighbor, fortitude, and collectivism (in the meanings as we provided above) have allegedly lost their significance for contemporary society has not found verification in the Russian realities. Some may argue that patriotic behavior may only be expressed in the face of major threats to society - war, epidemics, man-caused accidents, ecological disasters, etc., but this behavior is not a consequence of trauma caused by any threat, but turns out to be an indicator of spiritual development of society and its improvement.

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