

PATRIOTISM AS A CULTURAL UNIVERSAL

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: The purpose of the article is to introduce the concept of patriotism into scientific circulation as a cultural universal as an alternative to the predominant politicization of this concept. The interpretation of this topic in various socio-political contexts presents a lot of discrepancies and contradictory characteristics associated with the ideological and political preferences of researchers.

Methodology: The research methodology is based on a situational and interactive approach to the study of socio-cultural processes and phenomena that are present in the study of social systems, as well as in cross-cultural studies and research of intercultural communication.

Main Findings: The main results of the study are the identification of the possibilities of an interactive and situational approach in the study of patriotism, the development of a common strategy for the formation of patriotism as a sequence of stages of socialization of an individual, and identification of the decisive influence of spiritual culture on the real social experience of a patriotic orientation.

Applications of this study: The results of the study open up prospects for further study of patriotism as a cultural universal, regardless of a particular political regime or national and cultural characteristics of certain countries and peoples. This can significantly expand the concept of patriotism, without linking the latter only to the specifics of its interpretation in a particular society, ethnic group or community, maintaining the necessary balance between communication and interaction in the formation of patriotism.

Novelty/Originality of this study: The novelty of the research consists in the use of an interactive and situational approach to the study and formation of patriotism, based on deep socio-anthropological patterns of formation and development of social groups and communities, as well as in the identified stages (situations and levels) of the formation of patriotism in real society, which can be quite stable and productive.

Keywords: Culture, Patriotism, Interaction, Mentality, Society, Universal.

INTRODUCTION

The main problem of the research is the unexplored phenomenon of patriotism as a cultural universal, i.e. as a phenomenon that is present in the culture of any nation, ethnic group, or country. The manifestation of patriotism is most often considered in a particular political context (Rousselet, 2020; Pearce, 2019), specific population groups (Lubsky, et al., 2016; Kolesnikova, et al., 2018; Morris, 2016), national ideas and movements (Anufrieva et al., 2018; Pereverzeva et al., 2018; Bakhlova et al., 2019; Emelin and Tkhostov, 2019; Polukhina and Vanke, 2019), but not as an objectively existing phenomenon that is of key importance for the institutionalization of the socio-cultural space necessary to preserve the identity of communities permanently residing on a particular territory. Partially, the politicization of patriotism is justified if keeping in mind that the very content of patriotism is interpreted differently across borders depending on the political order, prevailing cultural traditions, historical past and peoples' claims to a particular role in the world community (Hobbes, 2001; Berger and Lukman, 1995; Ivanova, 2004; Anufrieva et al., 2018; Pereverzeva et al., 2018; Danakari, 2019).

Patriotism as a cultural phenomenon has been studied in the works of both Russian and foreign scientists. It was considered as one of the possibilities of searching for the "Russian idea", capable of consolidating Russian society (Bakhlova et al., 2019; Danakari, 2019; Dostoevskiy, 2000). The following researchers considered the patriotism in modern Russia: J.C.Pearce (Pearce, 2019), K. Rousselet (Rousselet, 2020), A.V. Lubsky, Y.G. Volkov, G.S. Denisova, V.P. Voytenko and K.V. Vodenko (Lubsky et al., 2016). O.V. Bakhlova and others in their study concluded the following: "The multi-layered and controversial character of the existing versions and interpretations of the Russian national idea remains. A few key plots and paradigms have been established in this area. They focus on the idea of patriotism (the official discourse), the topics of "restoration" of the "great power status" (the party discourse), the ideas of "justice", "the state of the whole people", "the Eurasian mission" (experts) and the symbiosis of national-patriotic and patriarchal paternalistic keynotes (the population). However, these ideas are shared by most Russian people to a varying degree and represent the basis of social discourse" (Bakhlova et al., 2019). E. Yu. Kolesnikova and others "concluded that civic patriotism dominates among the youth and it is characterized by elements of "blind" patriotism and nationalism risks. Civic patriotism of young people lacks civic constructiveness due to the fact that the youth perceive civic consciousness as a duty of a young citizen to society and the state, and it is devoid of social activity, responsibility, and practical approach" (Kolesnikova et al., 2018).

At the same time, the general methodological grounds for the study of patriotism as a cultural phenomenon are not sufficiently developed in the scientific literature and its characteristics as a cultural universal are not highlighted. The main hypothesis of the study is that patriotism, regardless of its existence in a particular place and time, has some basic features and characteristics that allow identifying its real existence (or lack thereof) in a particular cultural space due to the continuity of the historical memory of a people, ethnos, and nationality.

METHODOLOGY

The main method for studying patriotism as a cultural universal was a situational and interactive analysis of this phenomenon from the perspective of an interactionist approach ([Kamenets, 2016](#); [Pereverzeva et al., 2018](#); [Sherbakova et al., 2016a](#)). The essence of this method is to identify situations of socio-cultural interaction of people that have universal socio-ecological significance for any community or ethnic group to preserve their physical, social, and spiritual well-being. This method was chosen since the very phenomenon of patriotism is associated with a voluntary desire for full cooperation with fellow citizens, homeland, country, people, and members of the clan or compatriots. Moreover, the real manifestation of patriotism is carried out in specific vital situations of self-preservation of both the individual and their homeland. Therefore, the situational analysis from the standpoint of the interactionist approach is adequate to the very essence of patriotism as a cultural phenomenon.

It makes sense to consider the relevant concepts and their interpretation, revealing the content of patriotism as a cultural universal to clarify the understanding of this research methodology. The concept of interaction, in this case, is interpreted as a designation of a process, in which interrelated components are present – interaction and communication of certain subjects (individuals, members of society, countries, peoples, ethnic groups, etc.). It should be noted that if the processes of cultural, intercultural and social communications, considered as an interchange of information, are currently studied quite intensively ([Gadamer, 1988](#); [Sherbakova et al., 2016b](#)) while the interaction processes are not studied enough and are often replaced as an object of research related to the reality of symbolic interactionism, which is, in fact, a kind of communicative processes. However, this is not accidental, because it is much more convenient to study the existing process of information exchange than the actual behavior of interacting subjects based on the "subject-subject" approach instead of the most commonly practiced "subject-object" scheme (activity approach).

On the other hand, if the interaction is reduced only to behavioral interaction outside the communication process (even in a latent form), then there is a triumph of behaviorism, which prevails in most foreign research that studies society and man. It is no coincidence that the humanities are often called "behavioral" in foreign research practice. The behavioral approach to the study of humanitarian issues, based on the methodological scheme "stimulus-response", refuses to consider internal mental processes, spiritual content, and mentality in the study of human behavior, considering mainly the external manifestations of the latter. In this case, many visible manifestations of patriotism remain difficult to explain, for example, examples of nationwide upsurge and enthusiasm in a country where seemingly there are no real prerequisites for this. Thus, it is the relationship of interaction and communication as an object of research that provides a holistic vision of the interaction process, which is crucial for the formation of patriotism as a cultural phenomenon ([Sherbakova et al., 2016a](#); [Sherbakova et al., 2014](#)).

The processes of communication and interaction, being interconnected with each other, constitute a holistic process of interaction that distinguishes human social behavior from animal behavior, where communication is purely instrumental; subject to the interaction of biological individuals in populations (it is difficult, perhaps, to imagine an animal composing poetry or music). However human activity differs from the interaction of robots, whose interaction with each other is subordinate to information (communication) processes ([Leitz, 1994](#); [Moreno, 2001](#); [Freud, 1991](#)).

The formation of patriotism as love for one's motherland, in one way or another, is based on the existing experience of serving one's people, combined with knowledge of the national history and traditions, in which there is an ideal image of one's country. It is this experience and knowledge that make up the information and cultural potential that allows forming a patriotic position in interaction with other subjects. This potential is the ability to transact in society, which is the transfer of "ideal" contents of patriotic attitudes through real interaction and communication. Accordingly, the ideal transactional reality accumulated by individuals is important for both the entire society and a particular social group and is mastered through the appropriate traditions, rituals, education system, folklore, social morality, etc ([Anufrieva, 2017](#); [Afanasev, 1995](#)).

The novelty of the proposed method of interactive analysis of the phenomenon of patriotism consists in the rejection of the traditional theoretical and activity-based methodology for the study of man and society. In this case, there are opportunities to study this cultural universal as a process of interaction between institutional and non-institutional subjects, which results in the creation of an axiological field of the culture of patriotism. At the same time, the interaction itself is considered not only in symbolic reality but also in simultaneously interfaced ideal and physical realities, offering different combinations of the considered ideal and physical resources of social interaction. The analysis of patriotism as a cultural universal from the standpoint of an interactive approach included the study of the possibilities of forming patriotism with the help of resources of both types.

RESULTS

In accordance with not only the interactive but also the above-mentioned situational approach to the study of patriotism as a cultural universal, situations of interaction have been highlighted that have already been studied in social and cultural anthropology and are called "situations of consolidation", "situations of confrontation", "situations of partnership" and "situations of coexistence" (Kamenets, 2016; Lefebvre, 1973; Anufrieva et al., 2018). Each of these situations fixes a certain stage in the formation of patriotism, depending on the age stage and level of personal maturity, as well as a certain social level of interaction focused on the development of patriotic feelings and actions.

The situation of consolidation is forming since childhood and represents harmonized social interactions in the immediate social environment: parents, close friends, co-religionists, members of a single ethnic community, etc. In a situation of consolidation, an important immediate emotional experience of interacting people is formed, which creates the initial experience of the "small motherland" through its personified image in the form of parents, friends, loved ones, representatives of a single ethnic, religious, etc. community.

The situation of confrontation occurs when certain groups and individuals form an image of a common enemy, other confronting groups, and individuals who have opposite values, basic orientations, world views and so on. This creates prerequisites for the development of patriotic self-awareness of groups and communities that rally against those with whom they enter into military, informational, economic and other types of confrontations.

The situation of partnership is significant if there are separate subjects, groups, social strata, and communities within the framework of a single society or country that have their cultural traditions, worldviews, etc. Then there is the task of embedding all members of society in a single system of national-patriotic values on the terms of some compromise, assuming the presence of a common patriotic consciousness and the existence of separate social, ethnic, economic and other interests of individuals and groups that do not harm the interests of the whole society and state.

The situation of co-existence consists of mastering a sense of patriotism at the individual level, regardless of the place of residence of the person (abroad, in another country, outside the community with which the individual identifies himself, etc.). It also includes the awareness of one's subjectivity relating to their people, community, or country perceived as unique, unrepeatable, etc.

Each of these situations can be assigned to a corresponding level of social reality. These are: 1) Micro-level of interaction (situation of consolidation); 2) Meso-level of interaction (situation of confrontation); 3) Macro-level of interaction (situation of partnership); 4) Mega-level of interaction (situation of co-existence).

The micro-level of interaction (situation of consolidation) assumes the dominance of informal emotional content in the form of mutual attraction, love, or friendship of members of a single community, which forms a sense of belonging to their group, clan, family, etc. At this level, the structuring of such groups occurs by minimizing the social distance between the participants in the interaction. At every opportunity, consolidation around a single system of patriotic values is demonstrated. A feeling of love for one's "small motherland", the image of which is inextricably linked with close people who form a sense of home, memory of roots, place of birth, etc. are formed precisely at the micro-level. A clear illustration of such a patriotic feeling formation is present in the famous song performed by M. Bernes – "What is the Beginning of Motherland" ("It begins with a picture in your ABC-book / with your good and true friends / or maybe it begins with those songs that mother sang to us").

The meso-level of interaction (the situation of confrontation) is observed in groups, communities, and collectives, where members balance between informal, interpersonal and functional-role interactions. These are mainly training and production teams. At this social level, there is an inevitable fragmentation of collectives and communities in the form of separate groups and informal entities that may pursue their interests, which do not always fully coincide with general group interests and goals. At the same time, these collectives and groups form a sense of "us" due to the confrontation with others that are not members of this collective or group that can be of varying intensity, reaching a situation of conflict with those "who are not with us" and perceived in the image of a common enemy. There is already an awareness of each member of the community themselves as a member of a corporation, a single team, forming group patriotism as the next phase of the movement to patriotism on a national scale.

The macro-level of interaction (situation of partnership) assumes that functional-role interactions are dominant. At this level, certain inter-group differences, confrontations of individual social strata of society, individuals with different social status, etc. become irrelevant in the name of preserving national unity and patriotism, which is the most important mechanism for the national and cultural identity of an entire people, society and country. Here, a certain compromise between particular individuals and communities that can pursue their private interests, but not to the detriment of national unity as citizens of one country, becomes appropriate.

The mega-level of interaction (situation of co-existence). This is a level where patriotism has an extraterritorial character and is associated with the awareness of a particular people, ethnic group or country of its place in the world and role in co-existence with other peoples and ethnic groups. The ethnoreligious component or a country's adopted version of globalization and its position in this process is the most widespread here. The process of interaction here arises as an

exchange of ideal values that are important for representatives of a single ethnic group, politically like-minded people, etc. regardless of the place of residence (Habermas, 1995; Pereverzeva et al., 2018). This interaction is mainly symbolic and is manifested in liturgical practices, rites, rituals, and holidays that are important for countries and peoples that belong to the same cultural region or for the whole world if the celebrations are related to the fate of all mankind.

DISCUSSION

The identified stages (situations and levels) of the formation of patriotism in a real society can be quite stable and productive if they involve the acquisition of appropriate social experience of serving both neighbours and the whole country with the prospect of serving the whole of humanity if this experience is filled with the necessary spiritual and cultural content. In this case, the strength of the patriotic position of certain subjects cannot be affected by the temporary political environment, short-term social interests, non-critical exposure to the influence of the information environment, etc. At the same time, the experience of patriotism accumulated by mankind and individual societies and groups is already advanced knowledge of the values and norms of patriotic behavior, which is mastered in the reverse movement as the desired result and the necessary content of a particular patriotic activity. The study of the influence of cultural norms and patterns of patriotism confirms this pattern. This means that, in contrast to the realities of patriotic behavior discussed above, evolving from the micro to the mega-level in the process of inculturation and socialization of personality in the context of patriotism, the mental assimilation of the values of patriotism moves from mega-level to the micro-level of patriotic culture formation. Then the completed process of the formation of patriotism as a cultural universal will look schematically as follows (Figure 1):

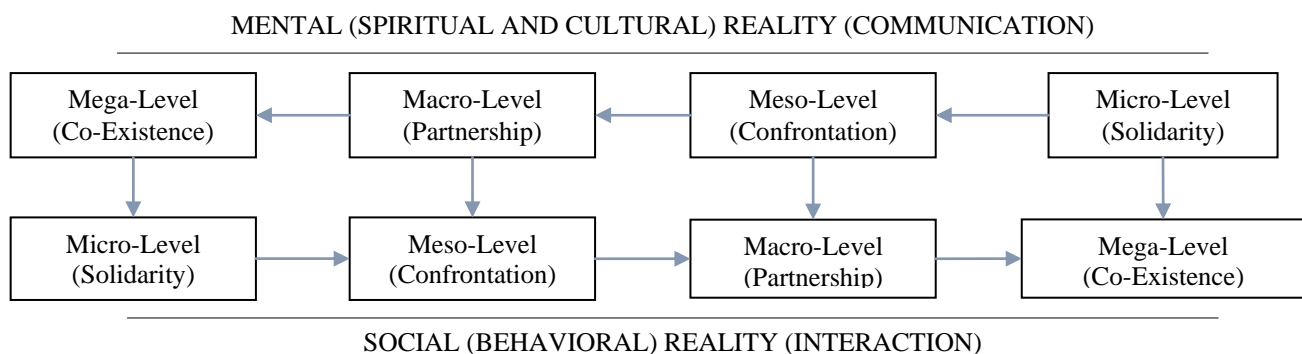


Figure 1: Scheme of the formation of patriotism as a cultural universal

CONCLUSION

The main results of the study are:

- Identifying the possibilities of an interactive and situational approach to the study of patriotism as a cultural universal, which is particularly in demand in the era of post-postmodernism, offering instead of egocentric freedom of an independent individual their self-development through focusing on a significant "other" that stimulates this process;
- Development of a general strategy for the formation of patriotism as a sequence of stages of inculturation and socialization of the individual, as well as increasing awareness of their cultural identity by peoples and ethnic groups of their place in world culture and civilization;
- An important result of the study of patriotism as a cultural universal is the definition of the decisive influence of spiritual culture on the real social experience of patriotic orientation; this experience is an accumulation of achievements in the recognition of patriotic values that have developed over the entire history of ethnic groups and peoples and is the main condition for the preservation, reproduction, and development of traditions of maintaining patriotism.

The main hypothesis of the study was confirmed, which consisted in the fact that patriotism, regardless of its existence in a particular place and time, has some basic signs and characteristics that make it possible to identify its real existence (or its absence) in a cultural space. The presence of the cultural memory of peoples and ethnic groups relating to all stages of their history without any exceptions are among these characteristics, ensuring the stability and preservation of the traditions of patriotism regardless of changing social, political, and economic conditions.

It is especially important to ensure a reasonable balance between communication and social interaction in achieving full-fledged interaction that forms patriotism. Communication in this process is the transfer of cultural heritage to members of society, which is a combination of accumulated historical knowledge, artistic achievements, mythological, religious, ethnocultural heritage, and other achievements of human culture and civilization that are important for the formation of patriotism. Social interaction is the social practice of patriotic service to one's own country, people, ethnic community,

etc. Maintaining the right balance between communication and interaction in the formation of patriotism, therefore, is one of the most important tasks of the corresponding research work and sociocultural practice.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

The obtained results open up prospects for further study of patriotism as a cultural universal, regardless of a particular political regime or national and cultural characteristics of certain countries and peoples. This can significantly expand the idea of patriotism, without linking the latter only to the specifics of its interpretation in a particular society, ethnic group or community.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

N.I. Anufrieva structured the experimental design and formulated the problems and hypothesis, I.V. Derzhavin collected the data and conducted the statistical analysis. O. A. Derzhavina made a literature review and organized and conducted the statistical analysis. E.Y. Ivanova built the apparatus and wrote a major portion of the paper. A.V. Kamenets interpreted the results and wrote a major portion of the paper.

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