

Challenging Patriotic Education: A Quest for Alternative Narratives

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Abstract: Patriotism is a much debated concept in moral philosophy. In this paper I doubt the reasonableness of patriotic education and try to put forward something new to replace it, which I call "education of homeland feelings with cosmopolitanism". By deconstructing the ambiguous and vague concept of "patriotism", I have refuted many traditional arguments for it, and extracted its reasonable components to propose a new theory to replace patriotic education. A good person is supposed to emotionally love the good and the neutral elements of his homeland more than other places, but rationally be cosmopolitan. However, such emotion is natural and can't be eliminated, so we should tolerate a certain degree of partiality but not to intensify such tendency.

1. Introduction

It has long been debated whether patriotism is a virtue or not [1], but little has been said about the necessity of patriotic education. If patriotism is not a virtue, then of course there should not be a strong emphasis on patriotic education. But even if it's a virtue, is it really the best choice to teach patriotism? Why not nationalism¹, or cosmopolitanism? If it's not the best choice, then what should be used to replace patriotic education? To answer these questions, we should make clear which elements of patriotism are reasonable, which are not. When we extract the reasonable elements of it, it may be a new kind of patriotism, or something essentially different which can no longer be called "patriotism".

In this paper, I argue that the only reasonable element of patriotism is the love for the good and the neutral elements of the place in which one lives. Here, the "elements" refers to a place's culture, geography, morality, and its people which constitute a very important part of a person's psychological content. Because these elements are important to a kind-hearted and sympathetic person, he'll naturally love them so much, and more than that of another place's equally good and neutral elements. Having such love makes a person more virtuous not just because that's what a good person would have, but also because by such love, one makes the core part of his personal identity more integral and thus becomes a better person, just like our love for our family and friends. So this kind of love is not just morally permissible, but is also a moral virtue, which should be taught to the people. The "place" mentioned above is not necessary where one was born. As long as

¹ A popular way to distinguish patriotism and nationalism is to define patriotism as attachment to one's country and define nationalism as attachment to one's people and its traditions. Another way is to define the strong and aggressive attachment as nationalism, and the mild as patriotism.

one lives in and loves the place, as long as the people, the scenery and so on consist a very important part of his memory, his love for them is a virtue. "The place's culture" is not necessarily owned by the local place only. National-wide or world-wide culture may also exist in the local place and be counted as a part of the place's culture. I believe that moderate patriotism may be a virtue, but it doesn't mean we should teach it. Because teaching patriotism can be low efficient and taking roundabout ways——only a part of it is reasonable. If we teach patriotism as a whole, it can be too indirect and time-consuming. What should be taught is something that incorporates cosmopolitanism and the reasonable and necessary element of patriotism (a sort of homeland feelings). However, we should also tolerate but not advocate a certain degree of partiality when one deals with his own homeland affairs, since it's human nature and can hardly be eliminated.

This paper will proceed as follows: section two will analyze the connotation of "patriotism" and find out some of its features by definition, then clarify the term "homeland" in this paper; section three will analyze the moral reasons for and against patriotism, and get to know which element of patriotism is reasonable and necessary, which is not; section four will talk about what kind of education we need in order to replace patriotism.

2. Conceptual analysis

In this section, I'm going to first analyze the concept of "patriotism" and find out some of its features by definition, then clarify the term "homeland" in this paper.

2.1 Patriotism

Ordinarily speaking, patriotism means "love of one's country". But this definition, while correct, is not enough. Stephen Nathanson [2, pp. 34–35] defines it as involving:

- 1) Special affection² for one's own country
- 2) A sense of personal identification with the country
- 3) Special concern for the well-being of the country
- 4) Willingness to sacrifice to promote the country's good

To consider the first point, it is evident that the affection referred to is for one's own country rather than his or her own nation. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that an Indian patriot would display a special attachment to India, but not necessarily to other parts of the Indian nation, such as ethnic Indians living in Pakistan or Nepal. If loving one's own country is morally special, then we might wonder why not other parts of the Indian nation?³ It's hard to resist such conclusion if patriotism is only based on culture. After all, Indians and oversea Indian nation share a common culture. Actually, most patriots believe the answer is no, so patriotism isn't just based on culture.

What's more, from the definition, this "country" needs to be his "own". Here, we might also wonder what counts as one's "own". If it's because you have its legal citizenship, then it seems that if you suddenly change your country of legal citizenship⁴, your love for the previous country is no longer a matter of patriotism, while love for the new country would become a matter of patriotism. This sounds odd and arbitrary.

Likewise, neither could patriotism be based merely on the fact that one is born in a certain place. We can imagine a British mother that gave birth to her child in China but quickly moved out. Surely we shouldn't say China is her child's "own" country. Otherwise, philosopher Derek Parfit⁵ could be

² Nathanson uses the terms "special affection" and "love" interchangeably.

³ Indian nation includes not just Indian, but also the Indian ethnic in Pakistan, Nepal and other places. Actually, many Indians understand "patriotism" as loving the Republic of India, not including oversea Indian nation.

⁴ By "changing your country of legal citizenship", I mean you forsake your previous legal citizenship and possess a new one. And one person may have multiple countries of legal citizenship simultaneously.

⁵ Philosopher Parfit was born in west China, but quickly moved out.

counted as Chinese.

Then how about bloodline? Suppose your parents were both Indian and lived in a small town in Uttarakhand (a state in India) for their whole life, and they abandoned you, sent you to Japan the moment you were born, then you lived in Japan for your whole life. Can you be counted as an Indian? Some people may think the answer is "yes" because a part of your personal identity is closely bound up with India. But I don't agree. We can continue to suppose Uttarakhand becomes independent after you were shortly sent to Japan. Your parents, nominally, were no longer Indian. Even though their memory were closely bound up with Indian culture, this was not inherited to you. You just inherit something biological traits from them. This biological element of your identity does not qualify you as "Indian". Because India is too big. The places your ancestors lived may just be some small parts in Uttarakhand, or some small parts around the whole world. So bloodline alone only makes that small town in Uttarakhand your hometown to some degree, but not enough to justify India as your own country, unless that small town names "India".

Is it enough for one to live very long in a country in order to make the country his "own"? If you were British, and moved to America for decades after you grow up, your love for America may be very similar to your love for Britain, even if you keep your British country of legal citizenship unchanged. In both countries, you love them because the formation of your personal identity is closely bound up with them. The main difference is that you were in Britain ever since you were born (usually), your earliest memory was mostly about Britain. Your personality, your belief and other important aspects of your personal identity were already largely taking shape. When you were in Britain, they developed from zero up to a certain point. While in America, they develop from one point to another. You inevitably forget something and acquire some new memory. If you live there long enough, you may even forsake your British lifestyle and acquire the American style. But still, usually speaking, the first country is more important to an international immigrant, and more likely to be counted as his "own", even though we can define both as his "own". Because one's early-period memory is so powerful, and his psychological content in life's early period is more important, especially for those loyal to their past memory, those who cherish and preserve their personal identity [3]. Human nature is such that one can easily fade the past from his memory. But we're more than animals, we're human because we have something transcendental. We shouldn't fade the past from our memory so easily, we should cherish the people, the scenery, the things related to our personal identity.

From the discussion above, we can conclude that a country does not count as one's own just because of culture, or country of legal citizenship, or bloodline, or because it is the place you were born, but rather mainly because you live there for very long (whether from birth or not), long enough to make sure that your personal identity is closely bound up with it.

When we consider the second point (a sense of personal identification with the country), it becomes evident that the concept is somewhat nebulous and potentially dangerous. There are two kinds of explanations: (a) one's psychological content is largely affected by the people, the scenery, the things happened in his own country, and he acknowledges it; (b) the country, which being an entity by itself and can't be reduced to any more basic elements, represents a part of one's personal identity. The second kind of personal identification widely exists in many countries like North Korea. That's why when North Korea being criticized, most North Korean feel they've being criticized too, even if the critics come from inside the country. When more and more problems arise inside a country, but few people ever accept any criticism to it, the country is bound to face serious problems. This kind of patriotism is very dangerous. Usually we call it "extreme patriotism". As history teaches, patriotism can sometimes descend into extreme forms.

2.2 Homeland

In this paper, the term "homeland" does not mean one's own country. It means the place one lives in during the most time of his life. The scope of the place can be as small as a village for some peasants who never go outside, and can be as big as a town, a city, or even a small province. But usually, it's not a country unless the country is not very big. The exact scope depends on where one's emotional attachment exists. If you had been to a town and met some friendly people there, then you're emotionally attached with it. If the attachment is strong enough, then it is a part of your homeland. So "homeland" is more like "hometown" rather than "motherland". But homeland does not have to be the place in which you were born, it can also be another place where you lived for a long time.

3. Moral arguments for and against patriotism

In this section, I'm going to analyze the moral reasons for and against patriotism, and get to know which element of patriotism is reasonable, which is not.

Supports of each kind of patriotism offer different moral arguments. Roughly speaking, there are 5 kinds of patriotism: (1) extreme patriotism; (2) robust patriotism; (3) ethical patriotism; (4) deflated patriotism; (5) moderate patriotism [1].

The first kind of patriotism, as its name suggests, is very extreme. It advocates whatever acts (regardless of its consequences and so on) available for the good of the country, like unjust war. So there is little to be said on behalf of such a crude form of patriotism.

Next, I will intersperse the introduction and refutation of the remaining four theories in the following text, and in the process, draw some inspirations about patriotism.

3.1 How big is the community that our personal identity being bound up with?

The second criterion (robust patriotism), represented by MacIntyre, holds that since one can live and flourish as a moral agent only in a community, then one's identity is bound up with that community. So patriotism is a central moral virtue [4]. But as Nathanson [5, p. 549] points out, "the community" needs not to be a country, but also can be one's family, town, religion..... Put it in another way: if loving one's own country is a virtue, then why not loving a place in which one lives for decades (one's homeland)? I believe the answer is yes. Because one's personal identity is closely bound up with his homeland as well as his own country. But if patriotism is something that should be advocated specially, then there must be something special about it that can't be reduced to the latter. That is to say, the fact that one's personal identity is closely bound up with a place alone can not justify patriotic education, because there are other kinds of education that also have this feature but may be better in other aspects (We'll talk about this later). Otherwise, we not only need patriotic education, but also need to be specially educated to love the east/west hemisphere (depends on which hemisphere you live in), to love our solar system, to love our Milky Galaxy..... So if anyone wants to advocate patriotic education, he must answer the question that what is special about patriotism? What are the essential differences between loving one's own country and loving a place (within the country) in which one both lives for decades? This question can be further reduced to "inside a country, what is special about the rest of the land besides one's homeland that makes it deserves more love than the places outside of the country?" We shall turn to this later.

Furthermore, Primoratz argues that MacIntyre either exaggerates the consequences "of the fact that the individual owes his moral education and growth, his moral norms and values, and his very capacity of moral deliberation and action, to his community" or exaggerates the danger of losing one's capability of using "all genuine standards of judgment" [6, pp. 452–453]. So I'm going to

reject the second criterion without discussing in more details.

3.2 To whom are we indebted exactly

Ethical patriotism holds that, since we benefit from our country, we have a moral obligation to promote the morality in our country [7]. But this can be reduced to the opinion that, since we benefit from the human element and the nonhuman element in our country, we have a moral obligation to promote the morality of human in a country. If we only benefit from the nonhuman element, such as nature, we don't have such an obligation. This obligation can't come from the fact that we benefit from other human in our country either. Because this benefit only implies that we should thank our family, friends and so on. Under other circumstances, our benefit comes from some sort of exchange, most of the things did by the strangers or institutions do not really deserve our gratitude. For example, when you buy something from a boss, you give him your money. You owe nothing to each other unless he charges you less/more than you should. In your interpersonal interaction, you may get less than what you deserve from some people. But your resentment should at most be pointed to them, not to all the people in your country. Similarly, when you get more than what you deserve from some people, like a responsible doctor, or a good policeman, your gratitude should just be pointed to them, not the whole country. So the education that we should thank the people in our country seems redundant, and should be reduced to "we should thank those who help us".

When you enjoy public facilities and services provided by the government, you deserve them partly because you pay your tax and the government is supposed to serve you. Critics may say that some of us (like poor people) pay few tax but get much from the government, so such people should thank those who pay much tax, but since there are too many of them and it's difficult to distinguish them from others, so it's better to thank the country as a whole. Well, this involves the complicated issue about whether what we deserve from the society is solely depends on our tax or not. We know that some people don't pay tax, but they still deserve welfare from the society, not because they deserve mercy, but because other people, especially those rich people take greater share in providing for resources that should belong to the poor, such as natural resources and opportunities. Besides, economic activities are not always fair. You may actually contribute a lot to the society but get few, and may harm the society a lot but get a lot. So it's not easy to determine whether one deserves more or less from the society than he actually does, and thus it's hard to make clear who should thank, or be thanked by the strangers in the society. And it would be strange to require all the people to be patriots, at least insofar as this requirement is based on our benefit from our country.

One argument [8] from ethical patriotism is that when we benefit from social justice, we have an obligation to promote the morality in our country. When we benefit from social injustice, the obligation is to correct it in our country, even if we don't have any casual contribution to those wrongdoings.

This view seems very appealing but still problematic. "When we benefit from social justice" can be reduced to "when we benefit from morally good acts from others" and "when we benefit from others' not doing bad things". As we discussed above, when we benefit from morally good acts from others, we should thank them directly. Promoting the morality in the country with one's effort benefits them too indirectly and too little. When we benefit from others' not doing bad things, we owe them nothing because that what everybody is supposed to be like. How can we owe people something simply because they don't do bad things to us? On the other hand, when we benefit from social injustice, I do believe we have the obligation to correct it. But the scope is not necessarily within our country. It may be our county, our city, our province, and the whole world. Suppose

you're rich and there is a special custom in your city that when the poor meets the rich, they have to be extremely polite. In this case, your obligation to correct the injustice is within your own city, not your country. We can again suppose that country A (not your own) has a lot of intellectual property theft from other countries, like counterfeiting medicines from other countries without authorization. This somehow benefits you indirectly because your company has some business with country A. In this case, your obligation to correct the injustice is not within your own country, but another. So it would be *ad hoc* and redundant to ask a person to promote the morality in his country. We should advocate people to promote the morality in the whole world. And this is an element of cosmopolitanism. It appears, then, that ethical patriotism is an untenable position too.

The fourth criterion (deflated patriotism) is very similar with ethical patriotism. This criterion hold that since we're indebted to our country, we have a moral obligation towards it [9]. But critics may say (in a like manner to what was said above about ethical patriotism) that "we're indebted to our country" can be reduced to "we're indebted to certain human and the nonhuman elements of our country". The human element refers to our family, friends and so on.

The nonhuman element can be further analyzed as consisting of living creatures and non-living beings. We are indebted to other creatures because we take nature resources that partly belong to them and we sometimes harm them. We can only be indebted to creatures because only creatures may have consciousness. We're indebted to other creatures in our homeland more than those in other places. The distinction shall be made between our homeland and other places, not between our country and other countries. So our education should lay greater emphasis on protecting the creatures in our homeland, if indebtedness incurs partiality.

Non-living beings, or entities, can be further analyzed using the distinction between the material element such as mineral, tangible cultural heritage and the non-material element⁶, which is ideology, like intangible cultural heritage and social-political institutions. Although we are not indebted to non-creatures, it doesn't follow that we don't have a higher obligation to preserve the non-creature element in our country than that in other places. After all, such preservation may not be for the non-creature element itself, but for other people to whom we're indebted. It's make it clear below.

We may have an obligation to preserve the material element, yet not just within our country, but, rather, throughout the whole world. We may have a higher obligation to preserve the material element in our homeland than in other places because we consume it too much, which shall be preserved for other people and future generations. Besides, if it has intrinsic value, our obligation shall be stronger. But material resources have been distributed all around the world nowadays. The coal mine and iron ore we use may come from Australia, the grain we eat may comes from America.....it's hard to say how much the obligation for our homeland is higher than that for other places.

When it comes to the non-material element, some people may argue that we benefit from the ideology in our country. But ideology only exists in people's mind. So it can be reduced to that we benefit from others' behaviors that being caused by some state of consciousness. As we discussed above, we are only indebted to a limited group of people like our family, friends and some specific people who helped us.

From the discussions above, we're mostly indebted to a certain group of people like our family, friends, some specific people who helped us and other creatures in our homeland. Besides, we have an obligation to preserve the material element of non-creatures in our homeland. The degree may be a little higher than that in other places.

It would be odd to say that loving our family and friends is an element of patriotism. And we have enough education specifying on loving and being grateful to the people we're indebted, like our family and friends. And our moral obligation is about other creatures and the material element

⁶ Soul shall not be considered here. If soul exists, it belongs to the human element.

of non-creatures in our homeland, not in our country. It's not our country that provides the space in which we can have our family and friends, but rather, our homeland. So deflated patriotism shall be rejected too.

3.3 Does patriotism produce better consequences than cosmopolitanism?

Consequentialists may believe patriotism is a duty because of its good consequences, since helping those who live close to us is easier and can have better consequences. Primoratz argues that, if helping those who live close to us is due to something accidental, then they're not special in themselves [1]. He means in such a case, those being helped do not really deserve our help more than others, so being partial towards them can't really be a virtue. For my part, I believe that's not the key point. Sometimes our moral judgement should indeed be based on its overall consequence. Like, we believe saving resources is a virtue. The key point is that, does patriotism really produce overall better consequences? Better than cosmopolitanism?

I believe the answer is no. It's true that helping those closer to us is easier, but it's not incompatible with cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism will also advocate priority for those closer to us if helping them produces overall better consequence. A cosmopolitan will regard the interest of his compatriots as important as that of foreigners, no more and no less. He'll not sacrifice more of one side's interest for the other side's. He'll make the best choice to benefit all the people in the world. While patriotism favors the interest of one's compatriots. It should be noted that, a cosmopolitan does not necessarily advocate that government resources should be equally distributed to people all over the world. He will agree that those who pay taxes get priority. Being a cosmopolitan does not necessarily mean advocating taking money from the rich to the poor.

Patriotism entails partiality. Being partial towards the human element and the non-human element within one's own country than that of others'. Patriotism inevitably favors one's fellow country-folks over foreigners' a little more interest, and in favor of protecting the environment within one's own country at the cost of giving up more protection for another country's environment. This entails overall worse consequences than cosmopolitanism.

Sometimes the degree of the tilt of the balance is more than a little, especially when it comes to extreme patriotism. In history, we have seen countless examples of how extreme patriotism leads to disasters, as in the case of enthused Nazi patriots who partook in the killings of millions of innocent people, in the name of national interest. Most Nazi patriots believed they were serving a just purpose, because they had been educated to put their national interest as supreme priority. Although extreme patriotism is commonly rejected by scholars, in reality it's always unconsciously adopted by the people, since patriotic education usually only emphasize the love for one's own country. Just like what's happening in North Korea now.

3.4 Is moderate patriotism a better alternative?

Defenders may argue that extreme patriotism can be avoided with proper control, specifically through active cultivation of moderate patriotism [2, 5, 7]. This criterion holds that when dealing with other country's interest, one should follow universal moral law, but when it comes to the interest of his own country and that of another, he should put his own country's interest first. However, this criterion is not unbridled: it doesn't advocate the patriot to do anything in any way for his country. It doesn't exclude the consideration of other country's interest absolutely. It's not unconditional either: it deserves its people's love only when it lives up to certain standards. It seems to avoid the difficulties faced by extreme patriotism.

MacIntyre argues that moderate patriotism is not genuine patriotism but something "appears to be emasculated"[4, p. 6]. While Nathanson believes that there is genuine middle ground between

partialist, extreme patriotism and impartialist globalism/cosmopolitanism. He argues that "virtually everyone has multiple objects of partiality and loyalty", those multiple partialities may be in conflict, and then "we have to decide which type of partiality takes priority", which means we can't have every partialities all the time. But this doesn't affect the fact that we can be multiple partialists [10, pp. 143-144]. Like, when a patriot and homebody's desire to be partial towards his family and to be partial towards his country-fellow are in conflict, he may only choose one side, but he is still a patriot and homebody. Nathanson believes this follows that even if we take due account of globalism/cosmopolitanism, we can still be patriot.

I think Nathanson's argument is somehow inconsistent. At first he focuses on different kinds of partialities, and people can indeed be multiple partialists because those roles are not contradictory with each other. But when he jumps to his conclusion, he doesn't realize that the essence of "patriotism vs globalism/cosmopolitanism" is "partialism vs impartialism"——they're contradictory with each other. How can a moral criterion stands between two criterions that are contradictory with each other? If partiality is right, why not be partial completely? If impartiality is right, why not be absolutely impartial? It's impossible that we should be both partial and impartial.

Then the second question for Nathanson is: according to the refutations of patriotism in the above paragraph, why should one put his own country's interest first?

3.5 Partial or impartial?

One argument against patriotism is that it goes against universal moral law [11, 12]. While Nathanson [2, 5, 10] argues that impartiality required by morality still allows for particular attachments and special obligations by distinguishing different levels of moral thinking. We should be partial towards our country (when dealing with international affairs) just like we should be partial towards our parents (when it's about the choice between our parents' interests and strangers' interests).

But I believe this is deeply misleading. The meaning of the word "country" is somehow obscure and often been misused by people. What is a country? Some people regard it as the government of a country (like "America is aggressive in its international affairs"). Some regard it as the collection of all the people inside a country (like "America hates Russia"). Some people even regard it as an entity that is independent of all the constituent elements of a country (like, many people don't care about the protection of the nature landscape, the inheritance of the traditional culture, other people's interests inside their own country and so on, but still they always say "I love my country", especially when it comes to international affairs). These mutually-inconsistent ideas represent a confused state of affairs, but sadly, they often appear in all kinds of daily contexts. I believe a country should refer to all the things (visible or invisible) within a geographical scope. The scope is usually determined by its actual government. So "being partial towards our country (when dealing with international affairs)" can be reduced to "being partial towards the human and the nonhuman element in our country (when dealing with international affairs)", which can further be roughly reduced to "being partial towards our family, friends, enemies, the strangers and the nonhuman element in our country (when dealing with international affairs)". What is controversial about patriotic partiality is not "being partial towards our family and our friends (when dealing with international affairs)", but "being partial towards our enemies, the strangers and the nonhuman element in our country (when dealing with international affairs)". I can't find any reason to be partial towards our enemies, nor the strangers in our country (when dealing with international affairs). Why should we put the interest of the strangers in our country ahead of that of foreigners? Because we live in the same country? Or speak the same language? I can't find any connection between them.

Next, how about being partial towards the nonhuman element (cultural, environmental, etc.), for example when faced with the choices between protecting the environment in our country and in another country. Our country can be analyzed into our homeland and the rest part. So the non-human element of our country can be further analyzed into the non-human element of our homeland and that of the rest part in our country. Likewise, I can't find any reason to be partial towards the non-human element of the rest part in our country. As a person who lives in a small town in south India, why should I take the environment protection in north India as more important than that in Nepal? However, there are something exceptional that needs our attention: our homeland and the rest part of our country share something. Like culture and government. We'll talk about them blow.

Being partial towards our homeland, like the environment and the culture, is different from being partial towards our family and friends. If we're not partial towards our homeland or our culture, we may feel a little bad. But if we're not partial towards our friends, both of us may feel very bad and it may harm our friendship. Our love for the nonhuman element in our homeland is unidirectional, while our love with our friends are bidirectional and much personal, much deeper. So the reason for being partial towards the nonhuman element in our homeland shall be much weaker than that to our parents. Still, human being have the nature desire to be partial towards the things and the people important to us. This natural emotion can't be eliminated. So we should tolerate a certain degree of such partiality, but avoid to intensify such natural tendency. That is to say, avoid such education.

Critics may say, how we were educated partly determines what things and what people are important to us. To a cosmopolitan, the strangers in his own country are just as important as those foreigners. To an extreme patriot, he will feel the former are more important than the latter. So, to what and to whom should we tolerate a certain degree of partiality is not clear.

Well, by "natural emotion" I mentioned above, I mean such emotion as comes not from education, but from our direct experiences⁷. We love our family, friends and our homeland more than foreigners and their homeland even without any education. The road we pass, the flower we smell, the scenery we see, all left imprint in our memory, and a trace in our personal identity. Such emotions are natural and we come to possess them spontaneously, merely in virtue of being humans.

One special element of a country is its government. At first sight, it seems difficult to clarify it into either the human element or the non-human element. Who and what are we partial towards when we are partial towards a government? Well, it depends on whose interest it represents. Sometimes it's an authoritarian regime and represents the interest of the ruling class (like in North Korea), and being partial towards it always means making the authoritarian regime more stable. Sometimes it represents the interest of the country, and being partial towards it means being partial towards the country. So whether partiality towards a government should be tolerated/encouraged or not depends on what are its exact policies. So when the government represents the interest of the country, the question about the reasonableness of partiality towards the government can be reduced to "whether partiality towards our country except our government should be tolerated/encouraged or not?" Hence for our topic, we don't have to consider about the government specifically.

Now, the remaining question is: should we call the two kinds of partiality (partiality towards the people naturally important to us and partiality towards the non-human element of our homeland (including the culture shared with the whole country)) "patriotism"? Or should they be called something else? Little needs to be said, being partial towards the people naturally important to us is not a special feature of patriotism, which also doesn't emphasis on it. Being partial towards the nonhuman element of our homeland (including the culture shared with the whole country) is not unique for patriotism either, because it can also be a core feature of homeland feelings (for further

⁷ By "direct experience", I mean the experience except those (partly) being conditioned by our education.

discussion of this point see below).

Another point deserves our attention: a good person is supposed to emotionally love the good and the neutral elements of his homeland more than that of others', because he knows about the former more directly and the feeling of such acknowledgement is more intense. But when it comes to the bad element, he may hate it more than that of others'. He knows how the bad element of his culture causes injustice and social depravity; he knows how a bad value system makes people only care about sensory happiness and being indifferent to morality; he knows the details. And when he faces such details day by day, he may hate it more than if it exists in another place. He may criticize it a lot and point out what is more reasonable. But sadly, in some countries like North Korea, criticism is regarded as betraying his homeland, even his country. So our love and partiality towards our homeland should be focused on the good and the neutral elements, not the bad elements.

From the discussions in section two and section three, we find out the main possible reasonable element of patriotism education: teaching us to cherish the good and the neutral elements of the people, the environment, the culture, and other things related to our personal identity, especially the personal identity when we were young.

The element of patriotism that should be tolerated but not encouraged: being partial towards the good and the neutral elements of the people and the things in our homeland, like our family, friends, the environment and our culture.

By principle of Occam's Razor, we know that "Entities should not be multiplied without necessity". We don't need "patriotism" because all these reasonable and necessary elements of patriotism can be incorporated into something else: homeland feelings with cosmopolitanism.

4. Homeland feelings with cosmopolitanism

In this section, I'm going to show what kind of education do we need exactly to replace patriotism, then talk about one potential objection and my response to it.

The education we need to replace patriotism should avoid all the problems mentioned above but keep its reasonable and necessary elements. I call it "homeland feelings with cosmopolitanism". It's not in conflict with worldly value, nor based on the benefit received from a country, but rather, such homeland feelings are based on our personal experience. Strictly speaking, it's not a political idea, rather, it's more cultural. It applies not just to a country, but also a province, a city. That's why I give it another name instead of patriotism. What I want to emphasize is not about loving one's own country, but loving his local culture, geography, and the people he knows directly or indirectly. People are not supposed to love the whole country more than other countries, but they're supposed to have more intense love for the good and the neutral elements of the things and the people with whom they come into direct contact. It is a virtue to the same extent that it is a virtue for a good person to love what should be important to him. He will remember the elements that constitute his important experiences. Those memories are the core parts of his existence. Cherishing those memories makes his existence more profound and abundant. Such people should be evaluated as possessing a higher moral statue than those who look upon their human and natural surroundings with apathy and detachment. Consequently, our education should be oriented towards cultivating more people of the first sort.

However, having stronger love for the good and the neutral elements of one's homeland than that of other places is not necessarily contradictory to cosmopolitanism. One can love his friends yet remain impartial when dealing with his friends and others' interest. Love is a kind of emotion, not reason. In the public sphere of human affairs we can and should guide our conduct through reason rather than pure emotion. Emotionally, we love the good and the neutral elements of our homeland more, but rationally, we can know we should be impartial. However, as discussed above, being

partial towards the things and the people we love is a natural feeling, and it can't be eliminated. If we insist to be absolutely impartial, we may feel very bad. So we should tolerate a certain degree of partiality but not to intensify such natural tendency.

However, some people may worry that this cosmopolitan approach will undermine the local ties that make people generous enough to contribute to a local/national welfare state. But I believe this concern is not compelling. A national state deals with international affairs and domestic affairs. When people acknowledge cosmopolitanism, there will be much less issues of international conflicts. The difference between this cosmopolitan approach and patriotism is not about domestic affairs, but about diplomatic issues. The latter usually advocates partiality towards one's own country, while the former advocates impartiality. So if this cosmopolitan approach really undermines such "local ties", the reduced part will be added to the ties with other countries. Both the two views advocate love for one's own country. The difference is that the latter advocates something unreasonable. So teaching patriotism is inefficient. With the same amount of time and energy, teaching this cosmopolitan approach can make people cultivate more love for the good and neutral elements of the world. When it only concerns affairs in one's own country, the country is his whole world.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, I argue that patriotic education contains elements that are unreasonable or redundant. In practice, it's dangerous and often leads to bad consequences. Patriotism can be reduced and left with something more simple and reasonable. The education we need to replace patriotic education is "education of homeland feelings with cosmopolitanism". Our education should put greater emphasis on cultivating our homeland feelings, environmental protection, the good and the neutral elements of our morality, culture etc, instead of on things which are constrained to the political sphere such as citizenship. We should have more virtuous people who cherish their homeland without losing the spirit of cosmopolitanism.

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