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## JUSTIFYING REPUBLICAN PATRIOTISM

### ABSTRACT

My paper is on the republican version of patriotism and its justification, as developed most systematically by Philip Pettit and Maurizio Viroli. The essence of the justification is as follows: patriotism is to be viewed as valuable insofar as it is an indispensable *instrument* for the upholding of the central republican ideal, namely freedom understood as non-domination. My primary aim is to evaluate the normative force of this justification. In the first section, I introduce minimal descriptive definitions of the concepts of patriotism and the patria. Second, I reconstruct the republican patria-ideal to which patriotism is linked to. In the third section, I reconstruct the republican justification of patriotism. Finally, I ask what we justify when we justify republican patriotism. Two views are prevalent in this regard. According to the first, republican patriotic motivation, similarly to its justification, ought to be instrumental itself too (Pettit, Viroli). I argue that this view is untenable, since it is in tension with the minimal definition of patriotism. The conclusion is that the other view – according to which the patriotic motivation ought to be of intrinsic character (Miller) – possesses greater normative force.

### KEYWORDS

republicanism,  
patriotism, freedom as  
non-domination, love,  
loyalty

Famously termed the ‘last refuge of a scoundrel’ by Samuel Johnson, the moral and political credentials of patriotism have been widely contested in the history of philosophical thought. Above all else, it has often been considered a kind of particularism prone to be permissive of the unjust actions of existing governments, even murderous wars. Given that millions of self-declared patriots have indeed been permissive of such actions, a substantial burden of proof lies on anyone who intends to defend patriotism today. The question to be answered is this: can patriotism be tamed? Republican theorists propose that it can. The following paper scrutinizes this very proposition: it is on the republican version of patriotism and its justification, developed most systematically by Philip Pettit and Maurizio Viroli. The essence of the justification is as follows: patriotism is to be viewed as valuable insofar as it is an indispensable *instrument* for the upholding of the central republican ideal, namely freedom understood as non-domination. The point is regularly put by the famous, though slightly less precise, ‘my country for the values it realizes’ formula. My primary aim

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is to evaluate the normative force of this justification. The argumentation is structured in the following manner. In the first section, I introduce minimal descriptive definitions of the concepts of patriotism and the patria. I define the former as love of and/or loyalty to country, and the latter as a specific sort of political entity. Second, I reconstruct the republican patria-ideal to which patriotism is linked to. This ideal is the *republic* that upholds the conditions of freedom. In the third section, I reconstruct the republican justification of patriotism. This justification – as I implied – is instrumental and refers to the noted freedom ideal. Finally, I ask what we justify when we justify republican patriotism. Two views are prevalent in this regard. According to one – shared by both Pettit and Viroli – republican patriotic motivation, similarly to its justification, ought to be instrumental itself too. Through examining two issues – the object and the character of motivation – I argue that this view is untenable, since it is in tension with the minimal definition of patriotism. The conclusion is that the other view – according to which the patriotic motivation ought to be intrinsic – possesses greater normative force.

## 1. Patriotism and the Patria

As a meaningful *minimum*, patriotism could be described as *love of and/or loyalty to country* (Viroli 1995, MacIntyre 2002: 44, Primoratz 2002: 188, Dietz 2002, Canovan 2000, Nathanson 1993:30, Nathanson 1989). Correspondingly, it involves the acceptance of certain – perhaps biased (Keller 2007) – views or narratives concerning the patria, its past, its future, its place in the world, and its virtues (Primoratz 2007: 18). Above all however, to be patriotic means to accept certain moral standards, and *discriminative* ones at that. Namely, it means the acceptance of the standard according to which the needs and interests of compatriots must take precedence over – or at least receive special consideration in contrast to – the needs and interests of outsiders (Miller 2016, Soutphommasane 2012: 22). To be sure, neither the discrimination, nor the love and/or loyalty constituting its ground may be merely of the sort that is in common parlance called ‘platonic.’ Quite the contrary, these must encompass the undertaking of certain positive obligations, a degree of willingness to act, even self-sacrifice (Primoratz 2015: 74, Kleinig 2007: 37–41). However, they should by no means be regarded as absolute obligations. Not all failures to act should be viewed as constituting disloyalty, or betrayal. For – according to a more abstract definition – only those deliberate acts committed by members should be considered to constitute betrayal that aim to undermine the thickness of human relations, that aim – as Avishai Margalit puts it – to deliberately unglue the glue of these relations (Margalit 2017: 47). The injuries caused by such acts are far more severe than those caused by the occasional failures to fulfill the positive obligations undertaken.

What all this means concretely, depends on what sort of patria we are dealing with. As an absolute minimum the patria could be defined as a self-governing *political* and not merely geographical entity, the membership of which

is – to a degree – committed to its upholding (Gilbert 2009: 325; Soutphomasane 2012: 18–19, Primoratz 2007: 18). Of course, beyond this minimum, patria-formations show an incredible diversity in the world, as do the degrees and variations of the moral demands that they put forth to their respective memberships. If you say you are a patriot of a Northern-Albanian clan, you mean something quite different than someone else who would say they are a patriot of the Iranian theocracy, and probably both of you would mean something entirely different from someone who would say they are a patriot of the Cuban dictatorship. Most importantly however, all three of you would have very different ideas of patriotism compared to the one linked to the political order idealized by republicans, namely the *republic*.

## 2. The Republican Patria

The republic is a territorially bound polity that defines membership on the basis of civic (rather than ethnic, religious, or other) ties, and that upholds the status of *freedom* with the help of various institutional and non-institutional means. The condition of freedom – according to the republican view – is the *absence of domination*. This means that a society may be considered free just as long as there are no radical inequalities of power (domination) in individuals' relations versus other individuals, individuals versus collective agents, or collective agents versus other collective agents. For domination breeds fear: it makes the weak vulnerable, places them at the mercy of the strong. He who is vulnerable, may only be immune from the (arbitrary) interferences of others if these others treat him with goodwill. The condition of freedom is that agents enjoy a status of relatively equal power, which would give them the ability to make their choices – concerning preferred and potentially preferred actions, strings of actions, non-actions, states of affairs or other objects of freedom – without regard to such goodwill. In short, that the power of the strong be contained and their ability to interfere arbitrarily with the weak diminished.

The status of freedom so understood is undeniably quite demanding, but at the very least more demanding than the rival view according to which freedom is constituted merely by the *absence of interference*. It does not merely demand immunity from arbitrary interference, but also the absence of radical inequalities of power that would give way to such interferences. Not merely, in other words, that agents be at liberty of doing as they wish, regardless of their wishes as the rival view supposes (Berlin 1990), but also – to borrow Pettit's formula – that they be at liberty of doing what they wish, regardless of what they wish, and also regardless of what others wish of them (Pettit 2014: 46). Simply put, it demands that they enjoy a status of fairly *equal power* relative to other agents, and thus retain *democratic control* in a significant sense concerning their choices.

This does not imply, by any means, that according to the republican view, freedom can have no limits that would not be detrimental to freedom itself. On the contrary, at least three such limits are enumerated by Pettit. One is the

*freedom of others*: thus, freedom for one agent must not constitute the domination of another. The second limit concerns the *spheres* of freedom. Namely, the above formula according to which freedom requires that agents be at liberty of doing as they wish regardless of what they wish, but also regardless of what others wish of them is not entirely precise. A more precise formula would be that freedom requires that agents be at liberty of doing as they wish regardless of what they wish, but also regardless of what others wish of them on the spheres recognized as relevant, and only there. What count as such spheres is a famously difficult question. According to Pettit for example it may be contended that such are thought, conscience, speech, assembly, property, movement, and leisure time. The list of course may be thought too long or too short, but according to Pettit at least, the complete disregard of any of the above mentioned would seem reasonably hard to justify. Finally, the third limit is composed of *non-dominating interferences*: interferences in other words, over which agents exercise control and that are thus not the results of the arbitrary choices of others. The classic, and – therefore in the republican literature – recurrent example is that of Odysseus. Odysseus, as is well known, fearful of the enchanting singing of the sirens, commanded his sailors to tie him to the mast of his ship and keep him there regardless of what he might command them to do later on. He knew that when the time came, he would experience the ropes as some sort of constraint. Nevertheless, he also knew that their presence would not be the result of alien interference but rather of his own commands. In other words, what he knew is that he would retain his freedom since ultimate control would still be his.

But what does this imply concretely in the case of modern political communities? What are the minimal conditions to be met in order for us to consider any such community free, thus one, in which democratic control is exercised effectively by the citizenry? Two sorts of conditions tend to appear in the republican literature. The first is the existence of *good institutions*: such is the so-called mixed constitution and the separation of powers. And such are the widespread network of basic liberties, the system of checks and balances, or the laws that guard the weak from the strong. But most notably, such are the channels through which citizens – organized from below so to speak – are able to effectively contest government policies and law-making. Absent any of these, power is concentrated, and freedom diminished. The second condition is non-institutional. It is the widespread *political participation* of citizens, by which I roughly mean some sort of realized, active engagement in the formation of political practices, thus, the self-government of the community.

If individuals are not prepared to let the state or others know what their interests are, how can others or the state not dominate them. (Maynor 2003: 120)

Two approaches are prevalent concerning this latter condition. According to one of them, participation possesses *constitutive* value with relation to freedom. In other words, freedom is constituted by none other than civic engagement,

constant presence in the legislative bodies, completely ruling out the possibility of decisions being made ‘over the heads’ of the members of the political community (Sandel 1998: 325, Honohan 2002: 188–213). In contrast, the other approach states the primacy of institutional guarantees and attributes a merely *corrective* role to political participation (Pettit 2012). To be sure, however, both of the approaches agree that there is a logical link between freedom and political participation. Both agree therefore that the status of freedom in modern societies is unattainable without the active engagement of citizens.

It should be clear by now what are the minimal conditions to be met so that an agent may be regarded free on the republican account. But who exactly are these agents? Agents fall into two categories: they may be individual on the hand, and collective on the other. The first category is composed of individual citizens, the second of the many kinds of collective entities formed by individual citizens. Among the latter we may list both particular communities within the republic and also the republic itself as particular among other polities. According to the republican reading, there are strong *positive links* between the freedom claims of the two types of agencies: thus, the claims of the individual cannot be separated from the claims of the communities of which he or she is a member. If the freedom of a group is infringed upon, the status of its membership is inevitably affected too. This is the point that makes intelligible some 18<sup>th</sup> century English republicans’ general hostility to colonialism (Priestley 1993: 140), and support for the American settlers’ claims in opposition to the Crown. Furthermore, this is also the point that makes intelligible the entire supposition according to which freedom requires some sort of collective sacrifice in the political order. (I elaborate on this point in the next section.) Still, it is difficult to deny that the correlation between the freedom claims of the individual and those of the community may also turn out to be *negative* and not only positive. In other words, the broadening of communal freedom may on occasion reduce individual freedom and vice versa. These are potentially conflicting situations. Though it is hard to set a universally overriding principle, I believe that a general orientating principle can be derived from the republican theory in question. Namely, in the event of conflict, the freedom claims of the individual must take precedence over the freedom claims of particular communities within the republic, and then, the freedom claims of both must take precedence over the freedom claims of the republic (Pettit 1997: 247–257, 2014, Andronache 2006). As we shall see, this principle will have consequences regarding the justification of patriotism as well. Namely, the justification is effectively linked to the freedom claims of the individual and of the small-scale particular communities within the republic.

### 3. The Republican Justification of Patriotism

In the second section of my paper I reconstructed the specifically republican patria to which patriotism is linked to in the republican theoretical framework. This patria is the republic, the central *ethos* of which is freedom as

non-domination. In the next section, I turn to the question of how republican thinkers propose to justify patriotism. Which of course immediately begs the related question, namely: why ought it be justified at all in the first place? The answer to this is that it encompasses a sort of moral discrimination according to which the claims of compatriots should potentially override those of all other inhabitants of the planet merely because they are what they are, namely our compatriots. And to be sure, moral discrimination in general, but also of this specific sort, is not something self-evidently endorsable. It usually needs to be *justified*.<sup>1</sup> And not just in any way either: the patriotic disposition (love and/or loyalty) cannot by itself constitute a normative argument in favor of discriminative ethics. Justification ought to involve reason as well (Heller, 1994: 174-178).

The republican proposition is that patriotism has no intrinsic, but merely instrumental value in relation to a good that is *external* to it. This aspect, of course, does not make this justification peculiar in any way. Aside from certain contemporary variants, most notably the one developed by Rawls (Pogonyi, 2012: 80-85), the contractarian thought experiment – meant to justify a notion similar to patriotism, namely *political obligation* – is also instrumental in this manner (Huoranszki, 1999). The genuine peculiarity of the republican justification lies in the peculiarity of the definition of the external good. For the external good may not only be defined in a single manner. On the contrary, both patriotism and political obligation may be justified with reference to a wide variety of such goods. I believe that these could be divided into two analytic categories. The first category of goods is comprised of those that every political order *equally* provides and that are therefore usually cited in order to justify the claim according to which any order – in general – is preferable to the lack of it. Such goods are peace and relative economic prosperity. The second category of goods on the other hand are those that individual political orders provide to a *varying degree* and which, therefore, usually serve to help us decide which order is the right one, or at the very least the most bearable compared to all the alternatives. It is the one that best provides goods of this second category, the most notable examples of which are justice and happiness. It is important to note that the distinction I draw is only an *analytic* one. Most theories in effect make use of both categories of goods. So, on the one hand even those theories – influenced by the works of Hobbes – that primarily wish merely to prove the preferability of order over disorder, also contain at least certain – if not more, a few – ideas on what constitutes a good order. On the other hand, however, every theory that aims to lay down the conditions of the good order already implicitly presuppose the truth of the claim according to which order is preferable to disorder. For how could we intelligibly speak of the good order without presupposing that some kind order already exists?

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1 Arguably, not all moral discrimination requires justification. Certain special duties – the ones we have towards our children for instance – may simply be considered ‘natural.’

So, as I implied, what in fact *does* make the republican justification peculiar is the peculiarity of the external good to which patriotism is linked to in this theoretical framework, namely the republican ideal of freedom. Thus, according to this justification patriotism should be viewed as valuable *precisely insofar* as it is an indispensable instrument for the upholding of the central republican ideal, namely freedom understood as non-domination, within the confines of the political order (Viroli 1995: 9, Maynor 2003: 198, Honohan 2002: 171–174, Laborde 2002, Andronache 2009: 71).

There can be no hope of advancing the cause of freedom as non-domination among individuals who do not readily embrace (...) communal solidarity. (...) To realize republican liberty, you have to realize republican community. (Pettit 1997: 126)

On what precisely is this view grounded upon? In short, on the previously mentioned assumption according to which the only way citizens may attain their liberty is through the making of *collective efforts*, or more specifically, through political participation. But efforts will only count as collective if they are relatively widespread. This is a problem of collective action. Suppose that the enterprise of the upholding of the republic does not require the participation of all citizens. It will still seem probable that it *does* require the participation of a sufficiently large number of them. Which means that freedom for any individual citizen is in a way *dependent* on compatriots' willingness to do their part. But efforts can only be what they are – namely efforts – and thus necessarily involve certain sacrifices. They involve for instance the sacrifice of some of the time, energy, and attention that most of us would otherwise devote to our private lives: to taking care of our children, our gardens, to go to church or the forest, etc. Given that time, energy, and attention are all finite in human life, most of us will make the sacrifices in question only if they seem worthwhile, and probably quite reluctantly even then. So why, and for the sake of whom would the burden seem worthwhile? Certainly not for those – goes the argument – towards whom we are totally indifferent. Rather, only for those who we identify with, see as engaged in a collective enterprise with us, and on whom we are therefore dependent on.<sup>2</sup>

However, patriotism is by no means given by nature (or God). On the contrary, it requires perpetual cultivation, a perpetual process of education. Through this process, citizens must identify with one another, come to appreciate that they genuinely *are* dependent on their co-citizens and that the upholding of freedom as non-domination requires their mutual commitment. Once this appreciation comes to pass on a wide-scale level – as it must – patriotism will

2 I would quickly add an important point of clarification to this: unlike Viroli or Cécile Laborde, Philip Pettit *does not* employ the concept of patriotism in his works, but rather that of *civility*. This however does not constitute a significant methodological problem for – as he himself points it out in a passage – the two concepts, patriotism and civility, denote essentially the same things (Pettit, 1997: 260).



provide a strong *motivating force* for the required collective efforts (Viroli 2002: 86, Laborde 2008: 232, Honohan 2002: 171–174). Simply put, the “laws [will] give support to the norms and the norms [will] give support to the laws” (Pettit 1997: 242). Which is not to say of course that patriotism is the only possible motivating force for collective sacrifices. It is not improbable that some might chose to undertake these according to, say, solidary or altruistic motives. Nevertheless, most republicans – certainly traditionally – have claimed that patriotism is the strongest and most stable motivation (Viroli 1995).

To sum up, the justification goes as follows. Freedom is an intrinsic good (Pettit 1997: 83) and is the central ideal of republicanism. The upholding of freedom within societies is a collective enterprise in which citizens are dependent on one another: they have to make joint efforts to maintain it, otherwise it crumbles. Joint efforts, then, presuppose a strong kind of commitment. The strongest commitment is patriotism. *This* is what justifies the otherwise not self-evidently endorsable discriminative ethics that it encompasses. But what exactly does it mean that freedom as non-domination is the ‘central ideal’ – or as Pettit puts it: the ‘moral compass’ – of republicanism? Generally, it means that the republican theory of (distributive) justice is very closely linked to it. A theory which ultimately comes down to *one* core egalitarian principle, according to which a polity can only be considered just if it equally provides its membership with the status of non-domination (Pettit 2014: 77). More concretely, it means that freedom is an instrument that helps us make judgments concerning political practices, laws, and measures. Whether a given political practice, law, or measure should be maintained or not depends on whether it promotes freedom or not. The same compass helps us decide what sort of new arrangements are to take the place of certain old ones in case they are deemed wrong to maintain. Namely, ones that promote freedom more effectively.

#### 4. What we Justify when we Justify Republican Patriotism

To repeat the foregoing discussion, on the republican reading, only the republic can be considered a good order, or at the very least, one preferable to all the alternatives. As we have seen, there is no republic without the patriotism of its citizens. This is what justifies patriotism. And perhaps the appreciation of this point may put us in a position to provide an answer to the question implied at the end of the first section: what are the precise kinds of moral obligations demanded by the republican patria? I believe that the most general obligation that derives from the above theory is that citizens ought to give special consideration to the *freedom claims* of their compatriots in contrast to those of outsiders. However, no obligation of blind love of and/or loyalty to actually existing governments follows. This is because governments may on occasion put into practice arrangements that restrict rather than promote liberty. In such cases a *critical attitude* – if possible, an active critical attitude – is expected of the patriot idealized by republicans (Viroli 2002: 14–17). Furthermore, due to the rising interconnectedness of contemporary societies, it may even be argued that



a version of republican *cosmopolitanism* may also be derived from the above formulated justification of patriotism. In fact, it may even necessarily follow from it. As we have seen, this justification refers to the assumption that the upholding of freedom is a collective enterprise in which citizens are dependent on one another. If it can be shown that in some respects the upholding of freedom is not merely dependent on the collective efforts of citizens within certain republics, but also on international efforts, then it would seem probable that commitment is required with the citizens of other states too. The dominating potential of international business corporations – to name a straightforward example – is clearly something that cannot be controlled without the joint efforts of at least several states, or without the engagement of international civil movements. What this implies is that in certain power relations the issue of membership becomes complicated: it is not evident who are ‘insiders’ and who ‘outsiders’, who we are engaged in a collective enterprise with, who we are dependent on, and for the sake of whom efforts seem worthwhile, etc.

All this aside however, if we wish to define the content of the republican patriotic disposition/motivation, there is one further question we ought to answer. And it is this: how ought citizens relate to the republic? Or put differently: how ought citizens to value the republic? Two views are prevalent in the republican literature on this issue. According to the first, the patriotic motivation should be instrumental just like its justification (Pettit 1997, Viroli 2002). Recall the formula: ‘my country for the values it realizes.’ Thus, the republican patriot ought to see the patria merely as an instrument for the upholding of the ‘highest good of common liberty,’ as Maurizio Viroli puts it (Viroli 2002: 17). According to the second view, patriots ought to attribute intrinsic value to the republic as well (Miller 2016). In this section, I argue that the latter view possesses greater normative force. This is because unlike the former, it is not in tension with the minimal descriptive definition of patriotism, introduced in the first section. I show this through the discussion of two issues. The first concerns the object of the patriotic motivation. As we have seen at the end of the second section, according to the above reconstructed justification, it is primarily the promotion of individual and small-scale communal (sectional) freedom claims that constitutes the ‘ideals’ that the republic purportedly ‘represents.’ And a degree of tension may follow from this: if the patriotic motivation does not attribute intrinsic value to the freedom claims of the republic too, the eventuality might come to pass that it degrades into the perpetual promotion of individual and sectional claims. The other issue concerns the character of motivation. I argue that instrumental valuation is difficult to reconcile with either love or loyalty. And according to the minimal definition, patriotism must precisely encompass either or the both of these.

#### 4.1 The Object of Patriotic Motivation

The claim according to which the republican justification of patriotism is effectively linked to the freedom claims of the individual and those of the particular

communities within the republic does not stand alone: on the contrary, it fits into a wider theoretical framework. Within this – as we have seen – the desirability of certain political orders depends on their providing the status of freedom as non-domination. We have also seen that this status has some specific preconditions. Most notably, only a democratic order may be considered genuinely free. Democracy however – according to the republican reading – necessarily encompasses the promotion of the *common good*. How then is the common good to be conceptualized? At least two influential views could be listed here. According to the first, inspired by the works of J. J. Rousseau, the common good may be conceptualized even without regard, strictly speaking, to the stated (freedom) claims of the flesh and blood membership of the polity. According to the second, which is the view regularly shared by contemporary republicans, the case should be the exact opposite (Pettit 2004). Thus, the common good is to be conceptualized precisely with some sort of reference to the *explicitly stated (freedom) claims* of the membership.

These freedom claims, to be sure, tend to have a particularistic nature. Nobody is interested in all public issues, and certainly nobody states explicit freedom claims on all spheres. The reason for this lies in the finiteness of time, energy, and attention noted above. There are at least two ways of formulating this thesis too. On the one hand it may be formulated as a *normative* claim, taken to mean that citizens ought to formulate individual freedom claims, and also certain communal freedom claims on behalf of communities that they – similarly – ought to identify with. The basis of identification then should be ascribed membership in certain *vulnerability classes* of society (Maynor 2003: 81). What conditions need to be in place to identify a given group of people as such? The most general condition is that the individuals ascribed to the group be approximately equally – either equally positively, or equally negatively – affected by given governmental interferences such as laws, taxes, policies and the like. So, for example such groups would seem to be the working class, the various kinds of national, ethnic, cultural, and religious communities, women, et cetera. For all workers are affected approximately equally negatively if the labor law is modified to strengthen the position of employers and positively if it is modified to strengthen theirs in opposition to employers. All Hungarians in Serbia, say, are equally negatively affected if the government restricts minority language rights. All Saudi women are approximately equally positively affected if the king rules to abolish the law according to which the driving of cars is a male privilege. A multitude of such examples could be listed, but it is important to note of course that individuals can always be ascribed membership in more than one – but nevertheless a finite number of – such collective entities concurrently. On the other hand, however, the particularity thesis may also be formulated in a *descriptive* manner. Stated thus, it would simply mean that all individuals as a matter of fact formulate individual freedom claims, and also communal freedom claims on behalf of certain communities. To decide just which communities these will be is not left to any external actor, but to individual choice. Nevertheless, it

is likely that they will be the communities that possess the strongest constitutive value for their individual identities.

No matter how we formulate the thesis, the essence of it is that freedom claims in one way or another tend to be particularistic. And it is precisely these claims that constitute the *content* (or input) of citizens' – if possible, widespread – political participation without which the upholding of a free and democratic order that promotes the common good is untenable. We have also seen that the justification of patriotism in question also refers back to these claims: patriotism should be viewed as valuable precisely insofar as it is an indispensable instrument for their promoting within the confines of the political order. The question is, whether any tension arises from this in the wider theoretical framework? Presumably no, as long as we assume that the relation between various kinds of claims is by and large harmonious. But this assumption would be highly unrealistic. Harmony of this sort is not common, while tensions between various freedom claims are. For example, there may be tension between the freedom claims of individuals. Also, there may be tension between the freedom claims of particular communities within the republic on the one hand and their respective memberships on the other. Such tension arises if, say, the Hungarian National Council<sup>3</sup> in Serbia demands from the state authorities that a law be passed which not only guarantees the right of education in the language of the minority, but also makes it mandatory for members of the minority community. For such a law would restrict the individual rights of Hungarian parents to choose an education for their children according to their own discretion in the name of certain purported communal interests, such as the protection of communal identity. Then, there may be tension between the freedom claims of various particular communities within the republic. Such would be a dispute between a conservative religious group and a feminist one concerning the driving of cars, or between trade unions and employers concerning the labor law. But finally, and most importantly for us, there may be tension between the freedom claims of the republic on the one hand and particular communities within the republic on the other, and even between those of the republic and those of individual citizens as well. Such would be a dispute between a secular state and a religious minority contesting the secular policies, and such was the dispute between capitalist governments and certain communist parties in Western Europe during the fifties.

The presence of such tensions within society is not, of course, something that contemporary republican theories would dispute (Pettit 2017). My claim is certainly not that these theories are marred by the lack of a degree of realism, but merely that the acceptance of these tensions seems to be at odds with the instrumental version of patriotic motivation, but not the intrinsic one. For the former assumes a strong hierarchical ordering of various claims: it treats patria-level claims merely as instruments for the promotion individual and

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3 The Hungarian National Council is the autonomous body and arguably the key political representative of the Hungarian minority in the Republic of Serbia.

sectional claims, which means that the latter must override the former in case of tension. Since such tensions – as we have seen – are quite common, the eventuality might come to pass that what is purported to be ‘patriotism’ degrades into the perpetual promotion of individual and sectional interests and claims in the end. And to be sure, this would be, to a degree, contrary to our intuition. For as we have seen, patriotism according to the minimal definition involves the undertaking of certain positive obligations, and even *self-sacrifice*. And just what may this self-sacrifice be directed against if not exactly individual and sectional claims? Thus, it is not at all clear, how the advance of various sectional claims converts into the promotion of the claims of the republic, and consequently why we could denote the instrumental republican disposition a meaningful form of ‘patriotism’ at all in the first place (Andronache 2006: 116–117). The intrinsic motivation is not marred by such tensions, since it assigns independent value to the claims of the patria and does not order them so hierarchically under individual and sectional ones.

#### 4.2 Love, Loyalty, and the Patriotic Motivation

As we have seen, the patriotic disposition according to the *minimal* definition encompasses love of and/or loyalty to country. This has to concern the republican interpretation too. And if I am right about this, then a further tension arises for the instrumental version of it. I claim that both love and loyalty seem to be at odds with purely instrumental valuation in general, but also – consequently – with the purely instrumental valuation of the patria as well. In order to understand why, it might be useful to recall what instrumental valuation means. In short, an agent values a given object instrumentally in the event that it holds no intrinsic value for him or her, but *merely* value with reference to some external good that it provides. It logically follows that in such cases, as soon as the object ceases to provide the given good, the very ground of its value ceases to exist as well. So, for example if the patria ceases (even temporarily) to maintain the institutions of freedom, both love and loyalty towards it would become difficult to justify. I believe that there is something suspicious about this conclusion. Namely, it brings instrumental republican patriotism dangerously close to what is commonly called ‘fair-weather friendship,’ and the phrase of course is meant to demonstrate that love and/or loyalty that is dependent on the presence of an external good can never be considered *real*.

Even if we reject the Kantian suggestion according to which it is precisely the non-instrumental valuation of a given object that *constitutes* love (Velleman 1999), it still seems fairly plausible that it needs to involve it in one way or another (Singer 2009: 52–54). Furthermore, it needs also to involve identification and resilience, perhaps even to an irrational degree, thus perhaps even when nothing is gained from it strictly speaking. The same applies for loyalty. Among other things what makes loyalty what it is, is precisely the undertaking of the eventual costs that it involves. These costs – according to John Kleinig – constitute the *tests* of loyalty. And their undertaking presupposes at least three

things. First, it presupposes *resilience*: to be loyal means to stick to the object even if that involves no particular benefits for us. Second, it presupposes *identification*: an agent can only be loyal to an object that he considers his own in a way. Third, loyalty presupposes a specific kind of *motivation*: namely, that the agent act on the behalf, or in the interest, of the object, rather than on his own behalf, or in his own interest. I believe that this triple system of conditions adds up to a form of valuation that is clearly non-merely-instrumental (Kleinig 2007: 37–41, Kleinig 2014: 17–21, 82–84, Kleinig, 2015: 27–28). The point becomes even clearer if we examine the issue from the perspective of the negativity of loyalty, namely *betrayal*. Is the sentence “Carl betrayed one of the stonemasons working on the construction of his house, when he sent him away, and employed somebody else in his place” in any way intelligible? As long as we suppose that he kept the stonemason around only for instrumental reasons, or the goods – such as mortar, mixed in a workmanlike manner – that he provided: *no*. For instruments can only be replaced by other instruments that, say, provide the goods required in a more efficient way. The sentence can only be intelligible, if we suppose that the relation between the two was more than this. If we suppose, metaphorically speaking, that the stonemason is not anonymous for Carl. Rather, he identifies with him, considers him his own in a certain – for example friendly – manner. Only in this eventuality would it be intelligible to speak of betrayal (Margalit 2017: 47).

One might respond to this by arguing that what certain republican theorists *implicitly* employ are simply radically different conceptualizations of love and loyalty. Different, that is, from usual philosophical articulations, but also from our commonly held beliefs. This would, to be sure, neutralize the objection that I raise here. However, it would also lead to extremely impoverished understandings of the two concepts, ones that most republican theorists, arguably, would not *explicitly* endorse. If I am not mistaken about all of this, and rich and intuitively acceptable understandings of both love and loyalty seem at odds with pure instrumentalism, then so does the minimal definition of patriotic motivation with the instrumental republican one. With a slight exaggeration, we might even go so far as to label the latter in its present form a version of goal-rationality rather than patriotism. I would add a crucial point of clarification to this. Namely, none of what I have said so far implies that there is no possible circumstance that would render love of and/or loyalty to country morally unjustifiable. Naturally there is. In the case of fascist Germany or Stalinist Russia this would seem evident. I only meant to imply that in the eyes of citizens the setting of standards concerning what minimal conditions may count as morally sufficient for the patria to forfeit love and/or loyalty cannot be as rigid as it would *logically follow* from the instrumental version of republican patriotic motivation. For this would as a consequence render even *critical patriotism* – critical that is of the freedom-restricting policies of existing governments – as mentioned at the beginning of this section, a conceptual paradox.

## 5. Conclusion

Of course, this conclusion is merely a logical one, and presumably does not by any means conform to the intentions of either Pettit or Viroli. Even so it *does* make the instrumental interpretation of patriotic motivation somewhat problematic. And only that of motivation! What I have said in section four does not necessarily concern the republican justification of patriotic action. It may well be contended that a *rational* justification of patriotic action can only be instrumental: thus, that the moral discrimination implied by it can only be defended by reference to the assumption that the upholding of the morally right order is untenable without it. The conclusion is merely that the patriotic motivation ought to be characterized by a more *value pluralistic* tendency. Namely, citizens ought to attribute intrinsic value to the patria, that is independent from its' promotion of freedom as non-domination. I mentioned several times already, that there is a version of republicanism that – unlike those promoted by Philip Pettit, Maurizio Viroli, or Cécile Laborde – proposes something like this: namely the one developed by David Miller (2016). The proposal might be accepted – I believe – even if we reject Miller's problematic nationalism. In fact, it might even have to be accepted. For this way, the above formulated tensions can be neutralized, and the wider theoretical framework made, as a consequence, significantly more coherent. First of all, we gain a solution to the problem posed by the conflictive nature of freedom claims: we can explain how the promotion of sectional interests may convert to genuine patriotism. For if one values a relation intrinsically, that – according to Samuel Scheffler – by definition already provides him or her with independent reasons for the fulfillment of moral obligations involved in it, reasons that possess a fairly equal status with even the motivation for the promotion of individual and sectional interests (Scheffler 2001: 101–104). Furthermore, this same move seems to solve the problem of love and/or loyalty too: non-merely-instrumental valuation, unlike instrumental valuation *is not* at odds with either love of, or loyalty to country. Finally, a complexity is thus added to the setting of motivational standards concerning what minimal conditions may count as morally sufficient for the patria to forfeit love and/or loyalty. The (even temporarily) ceased maintenance of the institutions of freedom may no longer count as such a minimal condition for instance. This is because the patria possesses value in the eyes of citizens that is independent from its instrumental value in providing the good of freedom as non-domination. Critical patriotism ceases to be a conceptual paradox. This is perhaps the key theoretical contribution that is thus gained.

Importantly however, none of this needs to mean the abandonment of the view according to which individual claims must *usually* have primacy over communal ones. It only means that the relation between the two must not be as hierarchical *in the eyes of citizens* as implicated by the theoretical frameworks developed by Pettit or Viroli. Individual, sectional and patria-level claims ought to possess a similar status when weighed against one another, and in given specific cases of tension, judgments concerning primacy ought to be a



matter of practical reason, rather than a strict principle. Only thus can republican patriotism be genuinely considered a version of *patriotism*.

Arguably, the grounding of the proposed move has something to do with the concept of *identification*. Human beings tend to identify with even the most mundane of objects: hammers, knives, mugs, blankets, pens, or even – as in the case of the great Mr. Atkins – guitars. In one of her studies, Margaret Gilbert argues that identification in fact is *the basic* constitutive element of the patriotic disposition (Gilbert 2009: 326). And to be sure, the concept is not something absent from Pettit's theory either. In fact, he even devotes an entire, though rather short, sub-section to it in his seminal work, *Republicanism* (Pettit 1997: 257–260).

But civility is as much a matter of identification as it is of internalization, for when I internalize civil norms I can be described, at one and the same time, as identifying with the group whose norm they are. (Pettit, 1997: 259–260)

What I would like to draw attention to, however, is that the introduction of this concept – therefore the emphasizing of the 'my' part of the famous 'my country for the values it realizes' formula – seems to create a degree of ambiguity within the wider theoretical framework. For in light of the foregoing discussion, it may be clear that identification is at odds with instrumental valuation. It is inseparably linked to non-merely-instrumental valuation. For instruments are always something external, things that can only be used so to speak. Identification is only possible with objects that are internal in a way. Such objects by definition possess non-instrumental value.

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## Opravdanje republikanskog patriotizma

### Apstrakt

Članak se bavi republikanskom verzijom patriotizma i njenim opravdanjem, sa posebnim osvrtom na sistematizovane teorije Filipa Petita i Mauricija Virolija. Srž opravdanja je sledeće: patriotizam je vredan utoliko što je neophodan instrument za podržavanje centralnog ideala republikanizma, naime, slobode kao ne-dominacije. Moja glavna namera je da preispitam normativnu snagu ove argumentacije. U prvom delu članka uvodim minimalne deskriptivne definicije patriotizma i domovine. U drugom delu rekonstruišem republikanski ideal domovine, zatim u trećem rekonstruišem republikansko opravdanje patriotizma. U poslednjem delu preispitujem šta tačno opravdamo prilikom opravdanja republikanskog patriotizma. Dve perspektive su preovlađajuće u tom pogledu. Prema prvoj, republikanska patriotska motivacija mora da bude, kao i njeno opravdanje, instrumentalnog karaktera (Petit, Violi). Smatram da je ova argumentacija nebranljiva jer je u izvesnoj napetosti sa minimalnom definicijom patriotizma. Prema tome, zaključujem da druga pojmovna strategija, prema kojoj patriotska motivacija mora da bude intrinzična (Miler), ima veću normativnu snagu.

**Ključne reči:** republikanizam, patriotizam, sloboda kao ne-dominacija, ljubav, lojalnost

