



THE BASIC FEATURES OF THE PATRIOTISM AND HIS PLACE IN THE SOCIAL LIFE

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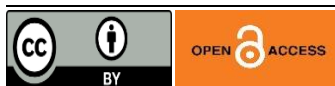
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ABSTRACT

The authors in this article are discussing about different problematic areas in terms of patriotism, including legal environment, forms and ways of education, as well as about the negative manifestations and consequences of misunderstanding principles in patriotism from the individuals point of view. The main aim of the article is the assessment of the basic features of patriotism via analyses the mentioned areas and spheres of patriotism mainly in the conditions of Slovak Republic. In the publication process the authors consulted the given facts with a lot of experts, not only from academic environment but as well as from the environment of public authorities and institutions, for example Matica Slovenská and Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters.

KEYWORDS

patriotism, nationalism, radicalization, educational activities, legal environment



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INTRODUCTION

Existence of the human being is characterized by group coexistence which is about securing living needs. Securing living needs is for the human characterized not only in individual level but also within the group. The group sets goals for its surviving and the values are the starting points for the setting social goals.

One of the social values is patriotism which thus becomes one of the basic documents for the functioning of the social system.

We meet with the different forms of social organisation from the beginning of the civilization. Over time it has taken various forms. From the ancient antic civilization, the specific forms of social organisation have appeared where the wider sections of the population have been involved on the life of society. As Zamarovský (1990) stated, in the conditions of Greek polis, who gave up the activity for society, or didn't participate because

of physical or mental disorder, was in the eyes of others second-class citizen. From this indication we can deduce that a certain degree of social activity or activity oriented in the interest of the prosperity of the society was and still has been related to patriotism. This situation persists to this day and the preparation for life in society is given to the individual by upbringing in the family from the childhood. According to Mikuš (2013), the family creates the conditions for the correct formation of opinions and attitudes of its members in relation to the homeland in which they were born, had their ancestors, in which they live and create values for future generations. Patriotism represents the manifestation of the civic activity and quality. The culmination of this social preparation, as stated by Konfršt (2010), is the connection of the process of education with politics.

1 DEFINITION OF BASIC TERMS AND THEIR CONCEPTS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF PATRIOTISM

In the introduction of the article it is necessary to determine the basic terms and define the concepts that are related to the issues addressed.

The choice of individual terms and their concepts was influenced by several facts. Various forms of individual patriotism have accompanied humanity since beginning. Over time, along with the development of the society, the frequency of war conflicts increased with emphasis on the aspect of patriotism. The issue of patriotism is quite complicated.

The definition of the term **nation** is relatively complicated to clarify unambiguously, as its various forms and shapes have been significantly influenced mainly by geopolitical conditions, as well as the global security environment. According Kolečka (1967), the term nation in the Middle Ages represented all members of the tribe, the inhabitants of the territorial political groups, as well as belonging to the place of birth. Tazzer (2018) in his publication discusses one of the most important personalities in Slovak history – General Milan Rastislav Štefánik. He considered the nation as an association based on 4 basic pillars: idea, program, parties and laws. There is a more specific and complex definition of the term nation in Universum publication: General Encyclopaedia (Ambros, 2001). According to this definition, the term nation can be characterized as a unity of the people, which arose from the action of various nation-building factors, whether economic, geographical or political.

The term nation is then associated with the term **identity**. Bačová (2008) expresses selected characteristics of individuals or communities through identity. Among these characteristics we can include, for example, authenticity, integrity, continuity, awareness of differences, or affiliation with human communities. A specific form of identity is an identity of national character. Jandourek (2001) describes national identity as a deep sense of one's own identity based on one's own community. Carey (2002) understands national identity as a collective social identity in which an individual has a positive attitude towards his or her own nation, a sense of belonging to that nation, including the definition of nations and

cultures perceived as potentially threatening its own culture. According to Walterová (2005), spiritual culture, value orientation, as well as belief in a common future and a national perspective are important for national identity.

Another concept closely related to the subject matter includes **patriotism**. In his publication, Blackwell (1995) describes patriotism as a love for his homeland, which also includes a readiness to stand up for its defence. Unlike nationalism, it is an emotion rather than a political idea. According Petrušek (1996), patriotism is an expression for enlightenment public opinion with an interest in the public good and human rights.

According to Bodolló (2018), under the term patriotism denotes virtue, love and devotion to the homeland, pride in its past and present, efforts to protect the interests of the homeland. A patriotist is a person who feels national pride. Manifestation of patriotism is, for example, the singing of the national anthem. Unlike patriotism, it is not tied to the nation, but to the territory (country), or political nation (inhabitants of the country). According to Nathanson (1993), patriotism is based on four basic pillars:

1. Special affection for one's own country,
2. Feeling of personal identification with the country,
3. Special interest in the welfare of the country,
4. Willingness to sacrifice for the good of the country.

Nationalism is a relatively strong and lively concept related to the issue of patriotism. Breuilly (1994) divides nationalism into three basic areas, namely nationalism as doctrine, nationalism as emotional attitudes, and nationalism as politics. The beginning of nationalism is associated with the transformation of consciousness and the gradual acquisition of nationalist ideas in certain segments of society. Jandourek (2001) understands nationalism as an ideology of exaggerated national consciousness that diminishes the value of other nations. Nationalism is often associated with the demand for the creation of its own sovereign state. One of the most famous British writers, George Orwell (1968), contrasted nationalism and patriotism in terms of aggressive and defensive attitudes. Nationalism is about the power, his supporter wants to gain as much power and prestige for his nation as it is possible. While nationalism is correspondingly aggressive, patriotism is defensive. It is a devotion to a certain place and a way of life that one considers the best but does not want to impose on others.

2 LEGAL ENVIRONMENT DEALING WITH PATRIOTISM IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Legal regulations of the Slovak Republic dealing with the issue of patriotism are created by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic, constitutional laws, laws and lower legal regulations. The system of legal regulations creates a legal environment that governs public

and state administration bodies, legal entities, but also natural persons. Within the legal environment of the Slovak Republic containing (at least marginally) the issue of patriotism, there is a number of legal regulations.

At the beginning, it is necessary to focus primary on the legal environment dealing mainly with the issue of supporting the education of the population of the Slovak republic to patriotism. Before the establishment of the Slovak Republic in 1993, the term patriotism is more significantly mentioned in the basic law of the state of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, The Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, where Article 16, par.1 sounds *“All cultural policy in Czechoslovakia, the development of education, upbringing and teaching are conducted in the spirit of scientific knowledge and in accordance with the principles of patriotism, humanity and democracy.”* In addition to the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the issue of patriotism has received attention in the teaching of physical education and military education. According to Act no. 68/1956 Coll. on the organization of physical education § 1 par. 2 is *“the role of physical education primarily to maintain and improve the health of the people, increase their physical fitness, work performance and military readiness, educate to determination and bravery in defending the homeland and its democratic establishment in the spirit of socialist patriotism and thus contribute to the struggle for world peace.”* Later, this legal regulation was repealed by Act no. 173/1990 Coll. repealing Act No. 68/1956 Coll. on the organization of physical education and laying down certain other relations concerning voluntary physical education organizations . According to Act no. 73/1973 Coll. on military education § 3 par. 1 is *“the content of military education on the basis of Marxism-Leninism to systematically shape, deepen and strengthen socialist patriotism, proletarian internationalism and the conscious attitude of citizens to the defence of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the necessary professional and technical knowledge, skills and habits, physical fitness and mental resilience.”* Later, this legal regulation was repealed by Act no. 217/1991 Coll. on the repeal of Act no. 73/1973 Coll. on military education, as amended by the statutory measure of the Presidency of the Federal Assembly no. 17/1976 Coll.

One of the first legal regulations at the beginning of the establishment of the independent Slovak Republic in 1993, which included support for patriotic education, was Act no.63/1993 Coll. on state symbols of the Slovak Republic and its use. The state symbols of the Slovak Republic are defined and characterized in § 1 of the Act in question. According to par. 2 § 1 *“everyone is obliged to maintain respect for the state symbols of the Slovak Republic. Education for patriotism and respect for the state symbols of the Slovak Republic must be included in the state educational program of schools.”*

Primary and secondary schools play a significant role in the process of carrying out preventive educational activities. Pursuant to § 29 par. 1 of Act no. 245/2008 Coll. on upbringing and education (School Act) and on the amendment of certain laws *“In accordance with the principles and goals of education and training of this law, the primary school*

supports the development of the pupil's personality based on the principles of humanism, equal treatment, tolerance, democracy and patriotism, in terms of intellectual, moral, ethical, aesthetic, work and physical." This Education Act repealed a legal regulation, which was the Decree of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Slovak Republic no. 80/1991 on secondary schools. § 3 of this Decree also provided essential information on the establishment and abolition of secondary schools, while par. 4 reads: *"The head teacher of a secondary school may lease the school's premises and equipment to other organizations for activities that do not run counter to the principles of patriotism, humanity and democracy."* In § 13 it was possible to find specific rules of behaviour of students, while § 1 letter b characterized the basic obligations of students, such as *"to master the principles of patriotism, humanity, democracy and to act according to them, to be disciplined, to follow the instructions of pedagogical staff, instructors and other school staff and to behave inside and outside the school so that they honour the school and themselves"*. These relatively important parts no longer exist even marginally in the subsequent school law.

In addition to primary schools, the legal environment of the Slovak Republic also contained provisions on the relationship of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic to patriotism. According to Act no. 99/2014 Coll., Amending Act no. 321/2002 Coll. on the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, as amended, § 4 is supplemented by paragraph 12, which reads: *"The Armed Forces participate in the preparation of the population for the defence of the state in the education of the population for patriotism, in the development of military traditions and in the provision of cultural, educational, sports and social events organized for this purpose."* However, this relatively important supplemented paragraph was later amended by Act no. 477/2019 Coll., Amending Act no. 321/2002 Coll. on the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic, as amended, and which amends certain laws. Pursuant to this Act, in the present § 4 par. 13 delete the words *"to educate the population for patriotism"*. This adjustment can be considered a significant mistake in the issue of educating the population of the Slovak Republic to patriotism. On the other hand, we can perceive the effort to extend patriotic education to a wider sphere of social preparation than just reducing it to the conditions of the armed forces, so as not to misinterpret that only the armed forces are responsible for its implementation.

Act no. 435/2010 Coll. on the provision of subsidies within the competence of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic in § 2 deals with the purpose of providing subsidies, within which pursuant to letter a) the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic may provide a subsidy to support the education of citizens of the Slovak Republic to patriotism.

The legal environment of the Slovak Republic in the area of support for patriotic education also includes historically important institutions of the Slovak nation, which place emphasis primarily on cultural, social as well as scientific actions and activities. It is primarily the Matica Slovenská and the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters. § 2 Act no. 68/1997 Coll.

on the Matica Slovenská defines the specific tasks entrusted to Matica Slovenská by the state:

- a) *to strengthen Slovak patriotism,*
- b) *to deepen the relationship of citizens to the Slovak statehood,*
- c) *to do basic Slovak research,*
- d) *to participate in the development of local and regional culture,*
- e) *to work on young people in particular in the spirit of national, moral and democratic values,*
- f) *to increase the national awareness of Slovaks in the linguistically mixed territories of the Slovak Republic,*
- g) *to strengthen the relations of the cultures of citizens who declare themselves to national minorities and ethnic groups in the territory of the Slovak Republic with the Slovak national culture,*
- h) *to bring together creators and supporters of Slovak culture and science in the world,*
- i) *to encourage the promotion of the Slovak Republic also through its own information and cultural centres set up abroad,*
- j) *to develop contacts with European and world organizations on issues of culture, national identity, spiritual life and the protection of universal values,*
- k) *to establish foundations and funds at home and abroad to support the national and cultural life of Slovaks and to reward the most important creators from the defined areas of creative activity,*
- l) *to co-operate with state authorities and local self-government bodies in the development of culture and social life,*
- m) *to publish original Slovak works of art, scientific works and journalism,*
- n) *to co-operate in the creation of course books and textbooks of certain subjects of social sciences for primary and secondary schools on the basis of the authorization of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic.*

Act no. 487/2013 Coll. on anti-fascist resistance, position and competence of the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters in § 3 par. 1 specifies what tasks the union performs and carries out:

- a) *promotes the democratic and human legacy of the Slovak national emancipation movement started by the "Štúr group", whose process, which continued during the Second World War in the struggle for national liberation and against fascism, culminated in the Slovak National Uprising,*

- b) *takes care of a true explanation of the history of the struggle for national liberation, against fascism and nazism,*
- c) *organizes reverential and commemorative events on the occasion of important historical anniversaries and memorial days of the Slovak Republic, especially celebrations of the Slovak National Uprising, celebrations of the liberation of Slovakia in individual regions, Dukla Pass Victims Day, as well as seminars and discussions for the young generation and their teachers,*
- d) *initiates permanent care in the bodies of state administration and local authority for the protection and maintenance of monuments, memorials, memorial plaques and war graves of fallen heroes of the national liberation struggle,*
- e) *maintains, establishes and develops friendly relations with resistance organizations abroad,*
- f) *publicly opposes extreme forces promoting nationalism, chauvinism, racism, anti-Semitism, neo-fascism, neo-Nazism, inhumanity and xenophobia.*

According to Act no. 219/2006 Coll. about anti-communist resistance is *“The National Council of the Slovak Republic, driven by the will to appreciate and respect men and women, who fought for their homeland, personal freedom and preparedness for the highest sacrifices, defended the values of freedom and democracy.”* On the basis of this will *“The National Council of the Slovak Republic, is determined to permanently remind the ideals of patriotism, honour and bravery to future generations of our citizens.”*

3 EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF ACCESS TO PATRIOTISM

The preparation of the population in the conditions of the Slovak Republic in the field of patriotism is ensured within the organization and implementation of preventive educational activities. These activities take various forms, and are provided by several organizations and institutions.

According to Mikuš (2013) it is necessary to create a space for teaching patriotic education in all types of schools, the aim of which must be to educate strong, passionate and conscious patriots in proportion to the most important role of the school, by deepening the knowledge base for students. This can happen in many ways, but two strategies have proven to be effective: the first is contact with your homeland, your nation, your roots, and the second is education. In his publication, Matúš (2013) states that patriotism is the basis of our cultural identity, an important source of historical consciousness and education, and at the same time an instrument of tolerance and civic cohesion and understanding among nations. Therefore, education and training for patriotism and national and Christians traditions, together with education for democracy and human rights, represents an important component of education in terms of profiling a moral and at the same time professionally competent and responsible citizen of the Slovak Republic.

Primary and secondary schools perform the basic function within the implementation of preventive educational activities. At the beginning, it is necessary to acquaint the pedagogical public with the issue of patriotism through regular discussions, quizzes and debates, as well as to define the degree of acceptability of the risk associated with the problems of too strong patriotism leading to extremism and radicalism. The main goal of these activities for the pedagogical public is to minimize the risk associated with the increasing incidence of extremism in the young generation of the population of the Slovak Republic. Education of teachers in the field of patriotism is the task of representatives of selected institutions, such as **The National Institute for Education** and **The Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters**. In 2017, the director of the National Institute for Education Ľudovít Hajduk (2017) stated the main goal of practical cooperation between these institutions: *“The National Institute for Education is responsible for the content of education, especially in primary and secondary schools, and in this connection we agreed with the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters very practical cooperation in order to capture our students from an early age, to internally adopt real human values and be able to transform them into their practical attitudes and actions This is necessary to prevent extremism from the outset by the fact that students can distinguish what is good, human and, vice versa. what can hurt us all”*.

In addition to the basic activities mentioned, such as discussions, conferences and discussions with teachers, these institutions also support various types of competitions and exhibitions, seeking to promote them through regional media, including the websites of these organizations and the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic. The director of the National Institute for Education Ľudovít Hajduk (2017) further states: *“Knowledge of one’s own past and healthy patriotism is a necessary condition for the success of prevention against extremism, therefore we support the practical activities of the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters in individual regions of Slovakia. I am convinced that through topics such as the Slovak National Uprising, World War II in Slovakia and in the world, resistance in the regions of Slovakia will spread positive values among the people that convey to us important events and personalities of our national history.”*

The National Institute for Education and the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters also cooperate significantly in improving the content of civic education, ethics, history and homeland studies in primary schools in clarifying the difficult periods of our national history, such as the resistance and the Slovak National Uprising. The National Institute for Education assists the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters in creating professional and methodological materials for teachers in the field of access to patriotism.

In 2009 the National Institute for Education prepared a document entitled “Proposal for the provision of teaching patriotism, including national and Christian traditions as a system of teaching “. The aim of the document was to suggest to teachers the possibilities of developing students’ respect for their homeland, nation and Christian traditions in individual areas of education through the content of subjects at all levels of education. This document

analyzes specific subjects influencing education for patriotism, national and Christian traditions, such as the media (radio, television, newspapers, magazines, books, brochures, the Internet, CDs, DVDs, advertisements, trailers, advertising space), cultural institutions (museums, theatres, galleries), including churches and religious societies. The document points out that respect for the homeland, the nation, and cultural values is not the privileged domain of only some subjects in the school, but it can be adequately developed in all subjects so that students gain basic skills to perceive and develop values. Among other things, this document proposes specific methods and forms of education for patriotism and national and Christian traditions. Such methods and forms include, for example, various competitions (literary, geography, history, civics...), lectures (on the beauties of Slovakia, on Slovak regions – regions, on historical figures of Slovakia, on historical events concerning Slovaks and Slovakia...), patriotic trips and excursions (to the school surroundings, within the region – observation, development, discovery and evaluation of the state in the environment of geographical excursion with topics of physical and human geography, history, biology, art and culture, to memorable places in Slovakia to craftsmen's workshops, visits to museums, galleries...), as well as school wide activities (The School Day) (Hauser, 2009).

Since 2014, the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters has been organizing almost 1,200 anti-fascist events a year, which are increasingly attended by the young generation. The Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters also takes care of the restoration, maintenance, cleaning of memorials and memorial plaques, bunkers (e.g. bunkers Mor ho below Stag rock, Jankov vršok, Vernár, Krčahovo, Pohronský Bukovec, Kyjov), war graves and their surroundings, for which also spends certain resources. In cooperation with the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, military and sports events are regularly organized. Since 2014, there has also been a permanent exhibition of the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters, a library and a club of war veterans in the building of the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters in Bratislava. The specific tasks that the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters performs and carries out are described in the previous chapter in § 3 par. 1 of Act no. 487/2013 Coll. on anti-fascist resistance, position and competence of the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters.

In addition to the National Institute for Education and the Slovak Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters, the **Slovak School Sport Association** has also its justification in the process of preparing the population in the conditions of the Slovak Republic in the field of patriotism. This member of the international school sports organization organizes various types of education, especially for the sports pedagogical public, or physical education teachers. One of the last activities was, for example, a lecture entitled "Patriotism and civic pride through sport." The focus of the lecture was on pride and patriotism through sport.

Ondrušek (2017) prepared a relatively interesting handbook for teachers called „History-Methodical handbook for history teachers in the 9th grade of elementary school“. The third chapter of this publication, dealing with the issue of patriotism, consists of two

parts – What we are proud of and the Personalities of Slovakia. The overall aim of the methodological manual is also to contribute to the reflection on sensitive issues that concern each of us (how to maintain and develop democratic values, how to prevent youth extremism and radicalization, how to strengthen tolerance, resilience to media manipulation, how to lead youth to freedom and responsibilities).

One of the oldest institutions that builds awareness and at the same time encourages literary work about patriotism is **Matica slovenská**, founded on August 4, 1963 in Turčiansky Svätý Martin at the founding general meeting of Matica slovenská. In terms of the date of establishment, in the conditions of the Slovak Republic, a commemorative day of the Slovak Republic – Matica Slovenská Day – is commemorated every year. The specific tasks entrusted to Matica slovenská by the state are described in the previous chapter in § 2 of Act no. 68/1997 Coll. about Matica slovenská. Apart from organizing regular conferences, seminars and discussion meeting of the representatives of the Centre for National Relations, concerts and exhibitions related to patriotism are also organized under the auspices of Matica slovenská. Part of these activities is also the publication in periodicals and historical anthologies. Matica slovenská allows you to rent various types of national dresses, costumes, accessories and props of hire service “Šatnica Matica slovenská.” The main purpose of this “Šatnica” is to support amateur, semi-professional and professional theatricals in the presentation of cultural heritage and memories of important personalities and events of national history of Slovakia. The specialized public archive and central professional workplace for the preservation of the cultural heritage and history of Matica slovenská is the Matica slovenská Archive, which receives and obtains written, photographic, multimedia or museum and gallery documents from the organizational units of Matica slovenská and from personalities of national and public life at home and abroad. These documents are subsequently registered, protected, professionally processed and, last but not least, made available to the public. According to Tkáč (2013), the presence and the future of Matica slovenská is in cultivation of the patriotism in a form worthy of the beginning of the third millennium. The pillar of “Matica’s patriotism” is the care of history, language, education, culture in the broadest sense of the word.

In addition to the mentioned institutions, the individual self-governments of towns and municipalities also play an important role in the process of population preparation in the conditions of the Slovak Republic in the field of patriotism. An example is “Hodža Days” (Hodžove dni) It is a traditional event in the Turiec region, which is focused on strengthening historical awareness and patriotism through science, culture and education. During this event, various tourist ascents are organized (for example to Malý Fatranský Kriváň), including a reminder of the personality of a prominent native, statesman and politician Dr. Milan Hodža.

As part of his editorial and publishing activities Guťan (2013) considers the fact that there is no one to write books on patriotism to be a relatively significant problem. Slovaks traditionally have a weaker historical and national consciousness. The decisive role in

shaping historical consciousness (rather unconsciousness) is no longer played by political elites, school or family, but by the media. The views of those who could shape it more significantly, for example historians, are marginal in the media. According to Gbúrová (2013), the topic of patriotism in recent times is not the centre of media or political attention in the conditions of the Slovak Republic. Patriotic education does not always take place in a natural way. Usually only the state form of patriotism is specified, while in the educational process thematic material illustrating the history of the state idea comes to the fore. Thus, the language of knowledge dominates, which affects the pupil or student in the form of a set of knowledge of a historical nature, not in the form of perceptually creative approaches to the interpretation of a historically demanding subject.

4 NEGATIVE MANIFESTATIONS OF PATRIOTISM IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Within the framework of building the awareness of the population of the Slovak Republic about patriotism, it is possible to find a number of problematic areas with an emphasis on propaganda and disinformation campaigns. These are often presented by various forms of organizations operating, whether in a virtual Internet environment or in personal contact with the population. According to Brezina (2018), since the establishment of the Slovak Republic in 1993, politicians and leading state officials have underestimated these threats and have not paid them the necessary attention. The polarization of society on many important issues is compounded by the increasing radicalization of the population. If political populism is associated with this polarization of society, it may result in the emergence of far-right political parties and movements. Kluknavská (2012) states in her publication that far-right movements in the conditions of the Slovak Republic are not homogeneous. Although the individual movements differ in program and ideology, they are all based on radical nationalism, which in Slovakia often turns into racism aimed mainly at the Roma population and the defense of patriotism, especially from the period of the Slovak state. According to Lichner (2020), extremist movements are characterized mainly by views that the majority society rejects. These are usually quick and easy solutions that may seem acceptable. However, only until individuals realize what the consequences will be. Awareness of the consequences is a factor for some individuals to stop doing these activities. However, for some individuals, even awareness of the consequences is not a reason to stop such proceedings. This is especially the case if he integrates into the structures of a radical, extremist group, or into the structure of a sect or cult. Therefore, it is necessary to know the basic characteristics of these groups, for which they are attractive to at risk-individuals

One of the most famous organizations of this kind is the **Slovak Conscripts** (Slovenskí branci). Kandrík (2018) describes Slovak Conscripts as an independent, non-state group of paramilitary character. The group first appeared in public in 2012. During this period, it had

ties to the Slovak Revival Movement and contacts with the Russian military patriotic associations Národný Sobor and Dobrovoľník. The organization gained wider attention by participating in the commemoration of the anniversary of the Slovak state and the laying of wreaths at the statue of Jozef Tiso. In the past, Slovak Conscripts implemented activities such as military days at schools. This in itself would not be problematic, the problematic is the content, which in some moments was clearly politicized with an orientation towards the Russian Federation. In addition to training, Slovak Conscripts also take part in various volunteer events, such as helping with natural disasters or eliminating the consequences of natural disasters. With their props and philosophy, they are reminiscent of Hlinka's guard and movements to the extreme right. The "Educational activities" of the Slovak Conscripts do not provide the external observer with many reasons to positively and confidently evaluate the loyalty of the Conscripts to the current establishment and foreign policy orientation of the Slovak Republic. In the case of this organization, the purposeful veiled and interconnection of the roles of declared civic activism, political activity and paramilitary structure is extremely problematic. Such a combination grossly transcends and denies the principles of apolitical forces, democratic control of the military and other mechanisms limiting the possibilities of abuse of the state's forces. Currently, the divisions of Slovak Conscripts operate in several Slovak regions, and the organization itself does not take the form of an officially registered civic association.

Another controversial organization is the group **Defiance of Kysuce** (Vzdor Kysuce), which advocates the ideas of radical nationalism and neo-Nazism. The members of the group undergo paramilitary training, which they also present through videos on the Internet. It consists mainly of training in nature four to eight times a month, training is mainly strengthening, boxing and once a month training of combat systems of krav maga and combat systema takes place. The group also organizes tourist marches on a regular basis. The group is active, as the name suggests, especially in the north of Slovakia in the region Kysuce. In addition to training members, the group is also involved in other activities, mainly various volunteer work in the region, the group has its own charity project called Slovak to Slovaks (Vzdor, 2015).

One of the most well-known far-right political parties is the **Kotlebovci – People's Party – Our Slovakia**, which Mihálik (2016) describes as fascist, as the sympathies of some party members are precisely the fascist state and system. According to Kluknavská (2016), this party had been relatively well known in the Slovak Republic for a long time, mainly due to the organization of anti-Roma protests. However, it came to the attention of the media and politicians in 2013, when party chairman Marián Kotleba won the second round of regional elections in Basnká Bystrica. Kotlebovci – People's Party – Our Slovakia publicly subscribes to the legacy of the Slovak state represented by its president Jozef Tiso. Despite the existence of a number of personnel links to the organizations Slovak Conscripts and Vzdor Kysuce, the political party carries out almost no "educational activities" in the field of building an effective approach to patriotism. In the past, various controversial activities of

this political party took place in the school environment, where they promoted their program among young people. This procedure violated the legal environment of the Slovak Republic in the field of education, as according to section 151 of Act 245/2008 Coll. on upbringing and education (the School Act) and on the amendment of certain laws „*the activities of political parties and political movements and their promotion are prohibited in schools and school facilities*“.

Lichner (2020) among the non-parliamentary actors in the territory of the Slovak Republic, whose activities show extreme right-wing signs, advises the **Slovak Revival Movement**. In the past, the association became more prominent by organizing a petition banning the Hungarian Coalition Party, which was signed by 5702 people in three months in 2004. Together with Matica slovenská, it organizes cultural and social events and memorial celebrations on the occasion of the anniversary of the birth or death of Slovak historical figures or representatives of the Slovak state. According to Mesežnikov (2016), from the point of view of the theory of extremism, the Slovak Revival Movement is a moderate nationalist association that is engaged in cultural activities and does not have an elaborate political program. On the pages of their own magazine called “Právo národa”, they are positive about the war-torn Slovak state. It focuses on building cooperation between Slavic countries and presents the idea of Slavic reciprocity.

CONCLUSION

As stated in the article, the concept of patriotism is closely linked to society in a very broad process of socialization of the individual, especially in the creation of a value system. This is associated with a wide range of activities that affect individuals throughout their lives. It intervenes in the field of ethics, culture, folklore, education and the education system, as well as in political life. However, in addition to the description of the existing legislative and organizational framework, it is also necessary to talk about the specifics of negative action, when in the process of creating a value system, both individual and society, there is an undesirable reduction and distortion of the interpretation of patriotism with all negative effects. For this reason, it is clear that the public interest in the issue of patriotism and patriotic education is a long-term process that requires its sensitive control and guidance.

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