

Justice, Love and Patriotism: dangerous liaisons

Theo W.A. de Wit (Tilburg University)

- **Questions AMI: can we distinguish Patriotism from Nationalism? Can searching for our roots help us?**
- **My contribution: do we need ‘patriotism’ in our liberal democracies? How do universal justice and particular love relate to each other? Where lies the danger for a soldier?**

I. My own roots

- ***The morality of ‘no more heroes’: revulsive humanism, admiring humanism, militant humanism***
- ***The ‘heroes of retreat’ (Enzensberger)***
- ***No ‘Gott mit uns’ anymore***

II. Patriotism and nationalism

- ***Patriotism in contemporary Political Philosophy***
- ***Not only democratic legitimacy, but also unity***
- ***Pre-political and political patriotism***
- ***Sovereignty of the people***
- ***Minorities must be heard***
- ***The slide from patriotism in nationalism***

III. Love and Justice (Paul Kahn)

- **Justice as the realization of practical reason**
- **Love: the experience of a world as valuable in and of itself**
- **Sacrifice: the transformation of my body into an expression of some ultimate meaning**

- **Four dangerous liaisons:**
- **1. *Love reinforces justice and vice versa***
- **Pro patria mori**
- **'Worshipping new Gods' (revolution)**
- **2. *Love against law***
- **Prototype: Antigone**
- **Actualization: Guantanamo Bay**
- **The Roman Catholic response (Spaemann)**
- **Political and non-political fundamentalism**
- **3. *Law against love: the expansion of reasonable justice***
- **On our way to a just world without war and sacrifice?**
- **The liberal 'art of separation' (M. Walzer)**
- **The 'new man'?**
- **Criminalizing enmity (C.Schmitt)**
- **The Roman Catholic response**
- **4. *Grateful love transcends the borders of justice***
- **I did not choose my wife on the basis of justice**
- **'The object of our love links us to the macrocosm'**
- **we will always experience discomfort with ordinary politics**
- **Conclusion: we can distinguish nationalism from patriotism.**
- **But: sympathy cannot be our only virtue.**