Patriotism – from intellectual concept to political weapon, in Poland after 1989

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This paper is a draft version of the concluding chapter of my doctoral dissertation: "Dynamics of Polish patriotism after 1989: concepts, debates, identities".

1. Theory and methods used in the research project

The concept of patriotism and its relevance and use in politics is maybe not the most popular research topic, but one can find recent examples of very interesting approaches of studying it. Often, even if it is considered the main topic of some study, it is used interchangeably with other terms, such as ‘national attitudes’, ‘national affect’, ‘national identity’, ‘national loyalty’, etc. Such focus on nation and interchangeable way of using it with other concepts can obscure different paths of its definition though.

Magdalena Kania-Lundholm argued that, in bottom-up debates of citizens, led in Poland on the Internet (between 2002 and 2010), patriotism is a kind of nationalist discourse, and serves the purpose of negotiating national identity and nationhood. While I do not argue against that, not having analysed the same data corpus, given the excerpts provided by Kania-Lundholm, even if they are ‘tagged’ by their authors as related to patriotism, one could rather conclude that other concepts are under discussion, together with the concept of patriotism, or with the help of the concept of patriotism. Hence, their interlinkages would be better captured if a conceptual approach were used together with a discourse analytical one. The combination of these two approaches, used in this research project, provides a more complete instrumentarium for the analysis of such debates about the meaning of the concept of patriotism (led by intellectuals, in this case), because it grounds specific texts better in their particular (social, political and intellectual) context and focuses on a number of perspectives: synchronic, diachronic and morphological.

1 I will be happy to receive your feedback.
2 Nathan Ramsey, "Keeping America exceptional: patriotism, the status quo and the culture wars", (PhD Diss., University of Cincinnati, 2011).
The focus of my research project was on the negotiation of the meaning of the very concept of patriotism itself, in Poland, and it allows reaching broader conclusions on Polish political culture, public sphere, and its languages. Potentially, the choice of patriotism as the key concept under analysis might not have been neutral (even if I remained wary of the research ethic all along while performing the analysis, and dissociated my own ideological or political opinions from the analysis as well as I could). It is not patria that is analysed, or its abstract understanding, but rather the many possible understandings of patriotism that are proposed by symbolical elites in specific circumstances. The choice to focus on the concept of patriotism came from its abundant or even exuberant, and often puzzling, use in political and public discourses during the democratic transition in Poland, and from the willingness of understanding the meaningfulness of such repetitive discussion over its very meaning, and of what were the actors discussing, while talking about patriotism. It was further motivated by my working hypothesis that patriotism is one of the key political concepts in Poland, also throughout the democratic transition, and the negotiation of its meaning helps reaching a broader understanding of the structural and ideational evolution of the Polish public sphere.

The construction of the data body was guided by the purposeful aim of capturing different occurrences of debates over the meaning of patriotism and their different dimensions, showing their regularity. I tried to maintain a balanced breadth of sources per debate, and focussed rather on texts of high relevance, structuring the discussions in the intellectual field, responding to main ‘discursive events’ on this topic, or creating ‘discursive events’ themselves. Utmost care was given to placing these texts in their proper context. Such approach was applied in order to grasp a better understanding and interpret not only the synchronic textual elements of specific utterances, but also the underlying, diachronic intentional frames, structuring the discourse. Discourse is here understood, following a sociological discourse analysis approach, as “any practice by which individuals imbue reality with meaning,” and for practical and theoretical reasons, the specific type of discourse under analysis is the written one. It is performed at three levels: textual, contextual and interpretive.

These methods were deemed fit for the theoretical framework given by intellectual and conceptual histories. Conceptual history focuses on the transformation of the meaning of specific key concepts in the long durée perspective, and intellectual history underscores the importance of individuals that shape ideas in specific contexts. The insights of both of these disciplines

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4 Aleksander Smolar posits that it is the repetitive nature of debates about patriotism that is interesting. I agree with this opinion, but I also think that the plethora of different meanings given to this concept in these debates is informative and allows for reaching broader conclusions. Henryk Woźniakowski and Michał Bardel, “Wybierzmy lepszą historię (Let’s choose a better history),” Interview with Timothy Garton Ash and Aleksander Smolar, Znak, 664 (2010).
5 Piotr Forecki suggests that “the push to start a (public) debate is usually given by a conflict, event, publication, speech, in other words, a discursive event.” Piotr Forecki, Spór o Jedwabne. Analiza debaty publicznej (The controversy over Jedwabne. Analysis of the public debate), (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe INOiD UAM, 2008), 5-6.
7 Ibid., 4.
provided a sound theoretical framework for this project, in which the reconstruction of debates, and the attempt of understanding the meaning of the concept of patriotism, and its usage by the intellectuals, was inductively developed from the word ‘patriotism’, conventionally understood as ‘love of country’. Such approach allowed for not charging patriotism with any intrinsic meaning or value in order to capture different possible conceptualisations of it presented by different actors, who aim at de-contesting the meaning of this concept by establishing one specific definition of it as valid, in accordance with their worldview. These attempts can be likened to what in common language is described as ‘monopolisation’ of patriotism, i.e. attempts at hegemonizing its definition, imposing the dominant narrative of its meaning by one ideological strand, by linking it to other concepts central to this specific ideological position.

If both ‘love’ and ‘country’ are perceived as building blocks, or even ineliminable elements, of the core concept under discussion – patriotism – it would mean that the change of meaning of one of these concepts would imply the transformation of the meaning of the main concept. Furthermore, apart from these two concepts, the morphological analysis of the concept of patriotism performed throughout the dissertation showed that in order to propose its full definition, it needs to be interlinked with a wider variety of concepts that only two.

2. Conclusive remarks based on the analysis of the empirical sources
I analysed a number of discussions concerning patriotism, led by intellectuals after 1989 (which did not necessarily have patriotism for their main topic, but where the discussion of patriotism was important for the main theme, or included a new conceptualisation, re-conceptualisation, interpretation or labelling of the concept of patriotism), accepting the premise that intellectuals are key actors when it comes to defining (or if one wants, negotiating, contesting or de-contesting) key political concepts in crucial moments. I considered that the democratic transition has been such a moment, when after 1989, and practically until now, the instalment of the new democratic regime has put an end in Poland to a long history of missing or partial sovereignty and ‘deranged

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8 For this reason, even if patriotism is sometimes understood as part of the idiom of nationalism or as an idiom of its own, as an emotion, rhetoric or a political value of its own, no prior preconceptions were applied to it.
9 I perceive the conceptual contestation as a possibility (essentially contestable concepts), not as a permanent option (essentially contested concepts). Terrence Ball, “Political theory and conceptual change”, in Political theory: tradition and diversity, ed. Andrew Vincent (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 34. Furthermore, following the insights of Michael Freeden: “concepts can be essentially contestable even when they are not in fact contested in a given usage, or when not all aspects of the concept are contested”. Michael Freeden, Ideologies and political theory. A conceptual approach (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 13-139.
10 Piotr Tadeusz Kwiatkowski, in his study of the collective memory in Poland considered that from the beginning of the 1990s many public discussions were led concerning the assessment of PRL, Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa (Polish People’s Republic), engaging academics, Publicists and politicians. Piotr Tadeusz Kwiatkowski, Pamięć zbiorowa społeczeństwa polskiego w okresie transformacji (Collective memory of the Polish society during the transformation) (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo naukowe Scholar, 2008), 312. This is also the case of patriotism.
11 Claudia Snochowska-Gonzalez presents a critical account of describing these times as 173 years of colonial domination: 123 years of partitions, 1795-1918; the war occupation of Poland, by the Nazis and the Soviets, 1939-1945, followed by the communist rule, 1945-1989. ("Post-
statehood’ as I will put it further on. Furthermore, the liberalisation and pluralisation of the public sphere, and the abolishment of censorship, enabled these discussions, as it prompted the re-opening of the discursive field in general, and of the field related to nationhood\textsuperscript{12}, but also to statehood, in particular.

Nine instances of (often very broad) debates were analysed\textsuperscript{13}, and they were grouped chronologically and thematically in four chapters, based on the analysis of empirical sources, presenting the evolution of discussions. Such chronological approach, stemming from the longitudinal analysis, allowed for a suitable contextualisation of specific utterances, providing a proper grounding of arguments, and allowed avoiding the impression of using specific textual sources in a purely illustrative manner. It also allowed identifying key manoeuvres or discursive strategies, leading to imposing or disqualifying one or the other definition, that would be otherwise difficult to detect within one discussion.

My analysis, built step by step with concurring empirical chapters, shows that the debates over the definition and meaning of the concept of patriotism are an example of a reflection of intellectuals (and with time, of an increasing number of political actors or broadly understood symbolical elites) over the nature and the form of the wished-for statehood, the object of attachment and the type of allegiance that should link people to it. At first, the main focus of the debates lays in determining what should be the proper object of patriotic allegiance, later, the object of discussions switches towards determining the very nature of allegiance. In other words, I suggest that ‘country’ is discussed first, and only then it is turn of ‘love’ and its nature, and what should be done in the name of the ‘good’. From there, I claim that patriotism is one of the key political concepts enabling a deeper understanding of the post-communist regime transformation, and of Polish political culture, public sphere and intellectual and ideological positions. The patterns of use of the concept of patriotism allow intellectual elites not only

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  \item \textsuperscript{12} Robert Brier, “The roots of the "Fourth Republic": Solidarity’s cultural legacy to Polish politics”, \textit{East European Politics and Societies and Cultures}, 23 (2009), 68.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} A number of important public debates occurred after 1989, concerning PRL and its legacy, Polishness and national identity, Warsaw uprising, etc. The discussions, which were chosen for this research project, were deemed the most influential in terms of debating patriotism, even if this concept could have appeared also at other moments. Three initial discussions selected from the first decade of the transition (1992, 1997 and 1998) were centred on recovering of the meaning of central concepts such as fatherland, patriotism and nationalism, from the past manipulation of the communist propaganda (Chapter 2). The analysis of further two discussions (2000/2002; 2005-2007) focussed on the new conceptual framework proposed by the emerging circle of conservative intellectuals, and its infiltration into politics. A particular interest was put on the initiatives linked to the concept of patriotism (Chapter 3). It was followed the discussions that followed the publication of three books of Jan Tomasz Gross (respectively in 2000, 2008, 2011) related to Polish-Jewish relations during and after the Second World War that exemplified an intensifying opposition between affirmative and critical patriotisms (Chapter 4). Finally, Chapter 5 focussed on the debate that followed the plane crash of the President Lech Kaczyński on his way to the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre in 2010. This last debate was used, in a sense, as a test-bed for assessing whether earlier intellectual developments and conceptualisations managed to maintain their importance and influence in such a traumatic moment for the community.
\end{itemize}
to express their position on the current regime and its relationship to the communist past and democracy, but also to introduce to the public discourse elements of their specific political agendas.

The aforementioned evolution of debates is strongly impacted by the growing polarisation of the political scene, and correspondingly, of the public sphere, where after the creation of two right-wing parties in 2001, PO\textsuperscript{14} and PiS\textsuperscript{15}, a curious example of a quasi-bipartisan right-wing party system emerges\textsuperscript{16}, between the conservative liberals (PO) and conservative national right-wing (PiS), both having relatively similar Solidarity roots (that evolved respectively from 1990s’ KLD, Kongres Ludowo-Demokratyczny, Popular-Democratic Congress and PC, Porozumienie Centrum, the Centre Alliance)\textsuperscript{17}. This ideological dichotomy strongly predates further discussions, but the examples of such dichotomies (e.g. between liberals and conservatives, or between liberal and communitarian position) will not be taken for granted, but rather as intellectual constructs. After 2000, and 2005 particularly (when PiS accessed to power), the frequency of the usage of the word ‘patriotism’ in the press and in politics increases exponentially, and the dynamic of the contestation over its meaning is increasingly linked to the political landscape. Even if the focus of the analysis is not on party politics, but on political languages and their importance in concept contestation, this fact needs to be noticed.

In this instance of a fight over achieving the domination over the symbolical sphere\textsuperscript{18}, the conservatives progressively attain the dominant position in the 2000s, in both political and public spheres, when it comes to definition of concepts from the realm of nationhood (linked to Romantic templates, and rather historical and cultural perception of nation). It needs however to be noticed that liberal and leftist intellectuals do not want to get excluded from these discussions or lose their imprint on these concepts. It is of particular importance for them to propose their reading of key concepts (or provide powerful counter-concepts). With respect to patriotism, it becomes a political tool for the conservatives to exclude their opponents from the community by discrediting their stance and trying to exclude them from the discursive field; but leftist-liberal intellectuals also try to seize it, in order to advance their political agenda, notably to promote a more civic approach, in order to reinforce people’s attachment to the state, and foster the formation of responsible citizens acting upon their civic duties, for the good of the country.

Interestingly, despite the fact that the democratic transition was also a time of change of international landmarks, and of the integration with international

\textsuperscript{14} Platforma Obywatelska, the Civic Platform.
\textsuperscript{15} Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, Law and Justice.
\textsuperscript{16} Radosław Markowski, ”The 2007 Polish parliamentary elections: some structuring still a lot of chaos”, West European Politics, 31 (2008), 1055-1068.
\textsuperscript{17} Natalia Letki, ”Do social divisions explain political choices? The case of Poland”, in Political choice matters, edited by Geoffrey Evans and Nan Dirck de Graaf, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 353.
\textsuperscript{18} Prior to 1989, the communists also tried to achieve it by manipulating national and patriotic references, in order to ensure people’s allegiance and legitimacy for their power. Marcin Zaremba, Komunizm, legitymizacja, nacionalizm (Communism, legitimisation, nationalism), (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo TRIO, 2001).
structures such as NATO and the European Union, these facts constitute rather a broader international context of the discussions about patriotism, which are much more marked by internal references and political developments.

Furthermore, progressively, the role of 'public intellectuals' (if we follow the distinction proposed by Michael Freeden\(^{19}\), for purely intellectual purpose of clarity), who were the sole discussants in the earlier debates, evolves. From main protagonists of the discussions they turn into experts, who are asked for their opinion on these topics, at later moments. Their place, of active contributors to Publizistik on important matters, even if it should not be dissociated from their political or other interests (in order not to idealise their contributions by charging them solely with concern with the public good), is taken over by young 'political intellectuals' (as proposed by Freeden), of different political leanings, who are more of (missionary or doctrinarian) ideologues than (hermeneutic) ideologists, position assumed by the 'public intellectuals'.

Because the contestation over the concept of patriotism is on-going, the conclusions that were drawn in this section can only be partial, to the extent that it is not yet possible to tell when it could possibly end, and with what result. This task can be left off to a proper conceptual historical approach that would study this contestation in a *long durée* perspective. Rather, further sections will provide insights over the political dimension of this contestation and its significance for the broader public sphere, and the mechanisms and content of such contestation. First, the evolution of the contestation over the concept of patriotism will be assessed. It will then be placed in the context of the question of statehood and its regime(s). The discussion of the aforementioned ideological dichotomies and (dis-)continuities of political languages will follow. Finally, a handful of conclusions relevant for the political culture and public sphere will be presented.

3. Patriotism – the story of the contestation

3.1. The longitudinal analysis of debates over the meaning of patriotism

As aforementioned, in order to avoid commencing from a loaded ideological position, a conventional definition of patriotism as love of country was my starting point. Yet, both of these building blocks can have different meanings. One could ask, what is a country: is it a state, a society, a nation? And what is love and how should it refer to country: is it an emotional or a rational approach? Should it be an unconditional or a conditional loyalty? Should it be based in pride or accept also shame? Its essence should be fight or work?

The never-ending discussions about patriotism in Poland, try to provide answers to these questions. The nature of the discussions evolves throughout the period under analysis. Within the selected discursive events the meaning of being a patriot in specific circumstances – in peaceful times, in uncovering shameful past, in the national mourning, - is discussed. I will refer to a number of crucial

elements and changes of argumentation, in a chronological perspective, in order to show the dynamic of the discussions and its changes.

The selected debates, led in the first decade of the transition, focus more on the ideational aspects and pluralist re-definition of a number of concepts, such as fatherland, patriotism, nationalism, after decades of their manipulation by the communists. They are led in the context of a relatively high uncertainty about the direction of social and economic changes, and of the future of the new state on the international scene, which all give the broader context to discussions. Intellectuals express their worries concerning a potential come back or outbursts of aggressive nationalism, as it occurred in the Balkans in the 1990s, for instance. The very occurrence and content of these debates, as analysed in Chapter 2, contradicts, as I suggest, the assumption, put forward by many conservative Publizists, that the initial years of the democratic transition were not characterised by a deeper reflection over the key political concepts, and patriotism in particular. What is true is that these debates maybe did not have a broad outreach, i.e. were led in a more closed intellectual group, of older, in generational terms, intellectuals. However, their impact, at least on the intellectual level, should not be overlooked, given that they constitute a reservoir of references for further utterances, and often are invoked or built upon in later discussions. These three debates, respectively led in 1992, 1997 and 1998, show the emerging trends and opposition between ideological positions. Intellectuals are there trying to exercise what they perceive as their mission, i.e. proposing an approach to the world and an interpretation of the changing reality and regime.

The discussion about fatherland opposed in 1992 an older generation of intellectuals, many of whom experienced emigration and the democratic opposition, to the younger generation, trying to make sense out of communism, also linked to the opposition, by past. Its main focus was fatherland and what it meant in the post-communist reality (and how to incorporate the communist experience to it, on a spiritual level). A number of its possible versions were discussed: private and small (akin to German Heimat), public and big (compared

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20 When it comes to patriotism itself, apart from the aforementioned nationalistic legitimating strategy, the communist discourse included e.g. the reference to ‘true patriots’, loyal to the regime, or the support for the activity of ‘patriot priests’, an organisation particularly active in the first half of 1950, federating priests independent form the Catholic hierarchy, but collaborating with the communist state apparatus. They also supported the activity of PAX, a pro-communist secular Catholic organisation, created in 1947, by Interwar nationalists of Falanga, notably Bolesław Piasecki, who led it until his death in 1979, even if its importance started waning after 1956.

21 The thesis of radical conservative Publizists wants to show that the public sphere of the beginning of the transition was characterised by a progressive disappearance of patriotic rhetoric and feelings.

22 This generational distinction, without having strong value for prediction of arguments, opposed older intellectuals, born mostly in 1910s and 1920 to those born during the War. Older intellectuals who remained in emigration after the war, had the tendency to be nostalgic about Kresy, Eastern lands lost by Poland in 1945, and presented a more unconditional attachment to the ideal vision of the country, than those who remained in the country, and who often went from revisionists positions, and dissidence, to more liberal ones. The younger participants of this discussion mostly had experience of democratic opposition, but they diverged in their judgments of the communist past.
to German *Vaterland*), spiritual and ideological\(^{23}\). The intellectuals disagreed concerning whether patriotism (and as it will be later shown, the political as such, understood as a place of taking political decisions) would belong only to one of these dimensions or to all of them. Nevertheless the small and local dimension of attachment (often nostalgic to the lost Eastern lands, *Kresy*, for older intellectuals) was presented in a sense as its natural, emotional and material (landscapes, people, language) habitat.

The reflection on fatherland furthered a deliberation over the nature of patriotism and whether it was a natural and quasi-unconditional feeling of national allegiance, as posited by Jan Nowak-Jeziorański\(^{24}\), or it implied a certain selection from fatherland – that could be conceptualised as a (not necessarily national) community, – its traditions and history, as set out by Marcin Król in the opening act of the discussion\(^{25}\). While the former approach was based on the saying ‘my country right or wrong’, the latter, in a liberal vein, proposed to accept the pluralisation of points of views and references, but still with strong respect for history and memory. Against this background, the opinion voiced by Stanisław Stomma\(^{26}\) that, within the progressing universalization of moral and ethical references, the attachment to particular material or specific characteristics of a country (that historically characterised patriotism) should be gradually replaced by a general value-oriented position, resulting in the homogenisation of the meaning of this concept (in a kind of constitutional patriotic way), was rather isolated.

The following discussion, led in 1997, showed a growing preoccupation with the nature of the newly established democratic regime. The question was raised concerning the values on which a stable and long-lasting democracy should be built, and whether a ‘cold’ democracy (understood as a procedural regime) was compatible with ‘warm’ feelings – patriotism, or national values. The apparent aim of this discussion was to present an academic discussion and literature review of then-recent foreign publications in the domain of nationalism studies and of general theories of nation. While ethnic or essentialist position did not gather much approval, neither did political definition of nation. Rather, most participants upheld a kind of historical and cultural view on the nature of nations. As a result, nation perceived as an axiological community, as suggested by Antonina Kłoskowska, was conceptually opposed to instrumental society.

The discussion of the nature of nation prepared the ground for an interesting conceptual turn, an attempt at rehabilitating the concept of nationalism and linking it to the question of democratic stability, as proposed by Jerzy Szacki\(^{27}\). Such move of a number of authors (coming from older generation from both

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\(^{23}\) A longer discussion over the differences in the perception of these concepts was offered in Chapter 2, it will not be reproduced here.

\(^{24}\) The first time an article from specific debate is mentioned, it will be referenced in the footnote. In case there are more that one article per author, it will be stated in a footnote. Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, “Najdroższy wyraz (The sweetest word)”, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 12 April 1992.


liberal and more left-wing background: Szacki, Andrzej Walicki\textsuperscript{28} or younger liberal Marcin Król\textsuperscript{29}) to try to neutralise negative connotation of nationalism, and propose its liberal version, was attempted by presenting it as a modern concept, and increasingly theoretically adapted to current geo-political conditions. The resulting reflection attempted going beyond the opposition between ‘bad’ nationalism and ‘good’ patriotism, but did not attain any conclusive results or lasting changes of the main discursive frames. While the very concept of liberal nationalism was later invoked at a number of occasions, it seems that such coordinated interest in it did not outlive this specific debate or upset the common understanding and usage of the concept of nationalism that is, in Polish, close to ‘integral nationalism’.

The reflection on nationalism was followed by an exchange on patriotism between two prominent intellectuals, who discussed it with respect to fading civic engagement and activity. Gustaw Herling-Grudziński and archbishop Józef Życiński concentrated over the question of transformation of the nature of patriotism after Second World War, from a 'loud' pathetic call of arms into a silent virtue.\textsuperscript{30} Their diagnosis underscored the progressive passage from loud patriotic declamations towards silent expression of patriotism. Herling-Grudziński insisted that this transformation was a positive development, but if not framed properly, it could also lead to civic apathy. And indeed, this risk, together with increasing voters’ absenteeism, could be compared to the aforementioned opinions about the first decade of transition that would be characterised by a lack of a strong patriotic narrative in the public sphere, or of public expressions of national pride or other signs of patriotism, and increasingly big focus on economic aspects of the transition.

These discussions had another implicit aim, in the immediate post-communist reality: they tried to suggest the way of dealing with the communist heritage, its discursive deformations and damages to political culture and mentality. By rediscovering fatherland, and multiple possible ways of creating a community, in a more civic (society) or even national (but not nationalistic) manner, the intellectuals tried to encourage people not to retreat to their private sphere, and abdicate on their duties, and at the same time foster their faith in the state that was not foreign anymore, and needed citizens to contribute to its good, where from a call for new patriotic formula. These debates clearly concerned the question of the ‘country’. However, because of their rather limited scope, one cannot draw overarching conclusions about different ideological positions. Nevertheless, some strong positions started emerging, the clearest of which is a liberal-conservative one, proposed by Król in 1992, and then even more developed by older intellectuals, Szacki and Jedlicki\textsuperscript{31}, in 1997. It implied the acceptance of a pluralist point of view and references, selection of some elements

\textsuperscript{29} Marcin Król, “Narodowy albo liberalny? (National or liberal?)”, Znak 502 (1997).
of the tradition, and a strong rooting in memory and history. Furthermore, it presented certain scepticism towards the very possibility of political nation, or of purely political type of national or patriotic allegiance. The importance of constructing a strong community was put forward with this respect, showcasing the need of redefining the relationship between the citizens and the state, promoting more civic engagement, also pointing to the fact that in times of peace, the duties of citizens change and should encompass e.g. voting. A criticism of the Romantic frames and templates of the political culture and public discourse, that were deemed no longer appropriate for the times of peace and the construction of a new healthy democratic regime, also characterised this approach.

The situation changed diametrically in the second decade of the transition, which was marked by the emergence of new, strong intellectual circles, the conservative one (around 1995, within Warsawski Klub Krytyki Politycznej32, Warsaw’s Club of Political Critique) and the leftist one (in the early 2000s, Krytyka Polityczna33, Political Critique) that gave the tone to further debates. The conservatives gradually attained the domination of the public and political spheres (parallel to the right-wing bipartisanism, and an increasing polarization of the public discourse). Their ‘natural’ propensity to conceptualize themselves as the protectors of tradition (however, especially at the beginning of transition, and at the time of emergence of the conservative circle, they expressed some uncertainty about which tradition they should link themselves to34) allowed them to master the act of definition or labelling of some concepts (e.g. patriotism). However, given that patriotism remained one of the key concepts, other ideological strands did not give up the contestation over its meaning and tried to impose their counter-narratives, or counter-concepts, to challenge that dominant conservative frame. While in early 2000s, the conservative intellectuals also criticized the Romantic references (e.g. in 2002 when Cichocki insisted that the ‘defenders of tradition’ (that could be assimilated to Romantics) mummified the nation, by using grandiloquent phrases35), with time and political usage of the conceptual framework that they provided for PiS, combined with the emergence of a strong group of Catho-national Publizists in mid-2000s, the Romantic36 schemes grew strong again, to impose themselves as dominant. The debates led in the second decade of the transition concerned rather the ‘love’ element of the definition of patriotism, because they provided different ideas of what the essence of the good of the country should be: fight or work, critical or unconditional love, etc.

32 http://www.omp.org.pl/stareomp/index6c84.html?module=pagesetter&func=viewpub&tid=1&pid=64
33 http://www.krytykapolityczna.pl/
36 The proponents of Romanticism would tend to speak about neo-Romanticism, while its critics about post-Romanticism. Tomasz Rowiński in his article “Porzućcie Romantyzm (Let go of Romanticism)”, published in Znak in 2011 (671), characterizes the narrative of post-Romanticism by: unwillingness to everyday political effort, love of political mythologies, and the extreme positions towards nation.
The first discussion, integrally concerning patriotism, in the second decade of the existence of the III RP, was provoked in 2000, by a proper ‘discursive event’ – the exhibition ‘Heroes of our liberty’. It was a social billboard campaign organized by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage that on 400 billboards installed across Poland presented people who contributed to regaining Polish independence and were still alive (but not publicly known). Their pictures were accompanied by a question: “Would you be ready to sacrifice your life for fatherland?”

At first, the campaign and the follow-up exhibition was criticised from the liberal position by Magdalena Środa, who proposed a counter-proposition to what she qualified a militaristic patriotism, because of its reference to the sacrifice of life in the fight for independence. Her praise of patriotic minimalism, ‘patriotism of minimal means’, was not meant to turn back to history, but instead of linking patriotism entirely to history, proposed to link it to civic positions. Środa’s suggestions was, in current geopolitical circumstances, to push for establishing the loyalty to political community, as it existed, with its own hopes and problems, the current state, and promote the ethos of work, rule of law, and virtues of citizenship. The proposition of Środa of changing the focus of patriotism from fight to work could be seen as a potential attempt at changing its very essence (adapted to the passage from war to peace times). It can be compared with the change of nature of patriotism that followed the loss of state’s independence in 1795, from a concept territorially oriented at the state (even if its idée fixe was the national will of the gentry) to nation-oriented, lacking a strong state reference, as conceptualised by Walicki.

The conservatives refused to associate the label of ‘militaristic’ with their exhibition, and called it ‘modern’ instead, implying that one can never know when the need of dying for fatherland would occur again; hence it should not be discarded. Rather, to their mind, fight for the highest values, such as liberty and independence was the paramount of the political. In order to better establish this approach, they also linked it to the question of civic values, among which they placed sacrifice of life. It showed the main tenets of the emerging conservative conceptual framework. Cichocki et al. proposed to go towards a certain communitarian position (in opposition to liberal ‘patriotism of minimal means’, advocated by Środa), in order to inspire more civic action, but they did not want it to be based on anachronistic, to their mind, ‘bourgeois’ or ‘2nd order’ virtues (such as work ethic, etc.), but on a rooted belonging. Such proposition obtained interest and a certain acceptance of the older liberals – Jedlicki and Szacki, who considered that Cichocki’s reasoning was interesting, despite of

38 Andrzej Walicki, Trzy tradycje polskiego patriotyzmu i ich znaczenie współczesne, Warszawa 1991. This orientation at nation, followed by the transformation of the nature of the state into almost homogenously one-national after the Second World War also contributed to the fact that it is difficult to clearly dissociate the idioms of patriotism and nationalism nowadays.

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certain flaws. Here, the crucial move of the conservative intellectuals was to reject a strong liberal position proposed by Środa, who was in a sense the first one to conceptualize a possible liberal view of patriotism42 (but who also proclaimed the importance of history and memory). The master move of Cichocki was to disqualify this proposition, by refusing it the name of civic, and framing it as liberally-dogmatic, and linking the civic qualifier with his communitarian proposal43. He also distanced himself from a strong national(ist) position, criticising both liberals for narrowing the reflection over fatherland, and the ‘defenders of national tradition’ alike, for mummifying it44. Instead, he tried to propose a communitarian third way when it came to fatherland and patriotism. It fleshed out a number of ideas that were raised since the beginning of the transition, starting from Król’s statement of the impossibility of rebuilding fatherland without rebuilding community, in 1992. The question of community is crucial for further understanding of the opposition between nation and society that could both provide its basis and essence, respectively in a more historical-cultural, or political way.

This debate clearly opposed different points of view on what the nature of love of country in the current situation should be: the conservatives, who were responsible for the aforementioned exhibition, maintained that fight should still be the main reference, because only the acceptance of the ultimate sacrifice for the country, on the battlefield, could contribute to constructing solidarity and sacrifice in times of peace; while liberals were more of the opinion that the crucial question was to construct a ‘work’ ethic for the country, for its good, and promote other civic virtues with in order to foster the loyalty to the state. Another important element within this debate was the usage of the qualifier ‘modern’, because both camps used it for describing their assessment and proposition of patriotism. Putting this ‘hat’ (label) on one or the other conceptualization of patriotism was supposed to establish it as the formula to be followed, the most adapted to the given situation. And while its association to the (traditional) vision of patriotism based in fight and sacrifice could be a little odd, surely it helped the communitarian approach to push the liberal one into defensive. While liberals would perceive their ideas as modern, the conservative attempt at dismissing their civic virtues as ‘old-fashioned’ was also supposed to cancel out their pretension to incarnate modernity.

Surely, this instance of discussion can be qualified as the first one close to the model definition of a public debate proposed by Piotr Forecki:

“Pod pojęciem debaty kryje się bowiem publiczne omawianie, rozstrzyganie pewnych spornych kwestii i problemów, a funkcją debaty jest ich rozstrzygnięcie. Debata stanowi swoją zbiorową refleksję nad jakimś zagadnieniem angażującą zazwyczaj wielu uczestników, którzy wzajemnie odnoszą się do swoich wypowiedzi.(…)” (The concept of a ‘debate’ denotes public discussion, contestation over conflicting questions and problems, and the function of the

42 Król focussed in 1992 rather on liberal approach to fatherland, yet he also suggested applying the idea of pluralism to patriotism, understood as the allegiance to fatherland.

43 What needs to be noted is that liberalism, connoted to the drastic economic reform of the beginning of the 1990s, also acquired rather a negative connotation in Polish, where it mostly denotes its economic dimension.

The debate is to resolve the controversy. The debate constitutes a collective reflection over a specific question, engaging usually a number of participants, who mutually refer to their positions.)

It was provoked by a ‘discursive event’ (the exhibition), and composed by a number of interventions of intellectuals from different ideological sides, who entered into a clear and polemical exchange, with rather high discursive argumentative standards. Nevertheless, such discussions were also harshly assessed by their participants, e.g. Jedlicki presented a rather mitigated appreciation of these constant debates about patriotism to which he was invited, organised in different configurations and at different fora, because to his mind, they rarely led to anything more than an exchange of ideas, and no concrete programme of action or education was ever presented.

This rather harsh assessment of the nature of public debates could be amended after the subsequent one, linked to the consolidation of a conservative ideological framework, which was characterised by a broader political outreach, and strong impact on the domain of public policies. The rise of PiS to power in 2005, and its coalition with populist Samoobrona (Auto-defence) and nationalist LPR (Liga Polskich Rodzin, League of Polish Families) was characterised by the implementation of a number of ‘patriotic’ initiatives in the realm of public policies. They were enacted under a common umbrella of ‘politics of history’, programmatic element of PiS, aiming at promoting an affirmative vision of the nation’s past and history. The assessment of these political initiatives was taken into consideration in the analysis (even if they rather concerned the political realm), because it allowed assessing the transposition of intellectual propositions of the conservative philosophers onto political level via the introduction of specific public policies by the conservative party. It showed, first, a certain simplification of ideas that gave basis to political initiatives, and also their radicalization, due to the participation of a radical party of Roman Giertych, LPR, to the government, and his ideas, promoted as Minister of National Education. However, this political constellation also allowed the conservatives to achieve a stable domination over the political discourse even despite losing the subsequent parliamentary elections in 2007 to PO, the liberal-conservative party. The whole framework of ‘politics of history’ promoted an ‘affirmative’ approach to the national past, and an ‘affirmative patriotism’, which was supposed to shine through concerted efforts of two Ministries: of National Education and of Culture and National Heritage, with particular focus put on the education of youngsters.

While in 2000 the conservative intellectuals tried to present a rather balanced communitarian third way (between universalist liberalism and defensive nationalism) approach to patriotism and fatherland; with time, and evolution of the political and social context, they also diverted towards more ‘closed’ positions. This change can be exemplified by the promotion of a label of ‘critical

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45 Forecki, Spór o Jedwabne, 5-6.
46 Jedlicki, “Nacjonalizm, patriotyzm i inicjacja kulturowa”.
patriotism'\(^{48}\) granted to three 1980s texts of Jan Józef Lipski, Jan Błoński and Jerzy Jedlicki\(^{49}\) that dealt with the question of, respectively, patriotism and nationalism/Polish-Jewish relations during the War/collective responsibility for the crime. Its emergence was prompted by the discussion about the pogrom of Jewish inhabitants of Jedwabne, by their Polish neighbours, in 1941, following the publication of a book of Jan Tomasz Gross on this very topic\(^{50}\), in which the aforementioned texts were often referred to. Dariusz Gawin condemned these articles – whose aim, still in the 1980s, was to extend the scope of the possible discourse and to un-lie the official, communist version of history, and of national myths, – for their overly critical approach.

The Jedwabne debate included the discussion about the nature of patriotism in the situation when shameful facts of the past were uncovered. It was strongly related to the moral reflection whether to accept or to reject collective responsibility for crimes. While there were different approaches to this dilemma, two broad positions emerged, illustrating the profound split between two Polands\(^{51}\). The first one was open to discussion and to the acceptance of guilt, and was called ‘critical’, because of its approach to national history. The other one rejected introspection and responsibility (for different reasons, and with different aims in mind, but mostly in the defence of the ‘good name’ of Poland) – and it was called ‘affirmative’, because of its apologetic relationship towards national history\(^{52}\). An opposition between ‘affirmative’ and ‘critical’ patriotism emerged.

While the debate among professional historians concerning theses of Gross’ book was compared to the German Historikerstreit\(^{53}\), also because of the questioning about the nature of patriotism in such situations, it did not result in proposing a new formula of patriotism, such constitutional patriotism, to replace the ‘old’ traditional patriotism, based on the pride of national history. Rather, it insisted on moderating the ‘pride for shame’\(^{54}\) argument. The newly conceptualised


\(^{50}\) Jan Tomasz Gross, Sąsiedzi. Historia zagłady żydowskiego miasteczka (Neighbours. History of Holocaust of a Jewish village), (Sejny: Fundacja Pogranicze, 2000).

\(^{51}\) Forecki used this qualifier to analyse the opinions that were voiced during the Jedwabne debate, yet, as it will be shown later, it only came back in strength during the national mourning in 2010. Forecki, Spór o Jedwabne 135-136.

\(^{52}\) For a more detailed typology see Andrzej Paczkowski, “Debata wokół ’Sąsiadów’: próba wstępnej typologii (Debate around the ‘Neighbours’: attempt at an initial typology)”, Rzeczpospolita, 24 March 2001.

\(^{53}\) Forecki, Spór o Jedwabne, 28

\(^{54}\) Such approach was initially proposed by Jedlicki in his 1987 article, where he said that shame for past wrongdoings, and atonement and reparation for them should precede any pride in national successes.
‘critical patriotism’ was a label used rather by those who formed it, in an accusatory manner. It was defined as a revisionist approach to national history\textsuperscript{55}, and did not go beyond it\textsuperscript{56} to search for other objects of allegiance. Surely it was so, because it was proposed in a reversed negative way by the conservatives, basing themselves on older intellectual texts, in order to describe the position of those who accepted the importance of the matter brought up by Gross. Had it been conceptualised by Gross’ proponents themselves, they would probably be more positive about their aims\textsuperscript{57}. Nevertheless, in the very moment of the Jedwabne debate or in its aftermath (the debate took place on the turn of 2000 and 2001, and the emergence of the concept of ‘critical patriotism’ can be dated to 2005 and the text of Dariusz Gawin\textsuperscript{58}), they failed to propose a broader and coherent framework of their understanding of patriotism, which uncovered their inability to propose a strong narrative, reflecting their ideas. In this way, they left the way to the conservatives to scoff their approach and ideas, and frame it as ‘critical’, hence negative. Only in such situation, did they mobilize to provide counter-concepts. The positions that emerged in later debates that followed the publication of two subsequent books of Gross on related topics of Polish-Jewish war and post-war history, in 2008 and 2011\textsuperscript{59}, were more of a backlash with respect to the breadth and openness of the initial Jedwabne debate, in which the critical voice was strongly heard, which probably also provoked its opponents to conceptualise the label aimed at deriding and disqualifying it.

Within the debates in 2008 and 2011, the approach supporting open and painful introspection and reworking of the national consciousness was rather overpowered by a strong group of Catholic-national (\textit{kato-endecy}) Peulizists\textsuperscript{60} and historians, promoting the affirmative narrative. Hence, a possibility of a Polish version of ‘constitutional patriotism’ seems currently in defensive, after a

\textsuperscript{55} Gawin, \textit{Krytyczny patriotyzm}.

\textsuperscript{56} It was also so, because the whole nature of the debate was strongly grounded in historical considerations. It concerned mostly the revision of the traditional version of war history, based in national myths and reinforced by the communist propaganda, where Poles were depicted as victims and heroes, and not wrongdoers, to any extent.

\textsuperscript{57} Even if they also agreed about the links to the ‘critical school’ of literature and approach to history, dating back to the 19th century.

\textsuperscript{58} Gawin, \textit{Krytyczny patriotyzm}.


\textsuperscript{60} On this point, Forecki shows an important reorientation, e.g. of the editorial line of \textit{Rzeczpospolita}, conservative daily, which published varied and important articles during the Jedwabne debate, but in the following debates subscribed to a strong ‘affirmative’ stance and promoted the opinions straightforwardly rejecting any debate, without even reading subsequent Gross’ books. Forecki also referred to other, institutional changes that reinforced such trend – e.g. the reorientation of the line of IPN, (\textit{Instytut Pamięci Narodowej}, Institute of National Memory), which in the Jedwabne debate contributed strongly to uncovering shameful past, but in further debates responded by publishing counter-publications of Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, strongly criticised by independent historians. Piotr Forecki, \textit{Od "Shoah" do "Strachu". Spory o polskożydowską przeszłość i pamięć w debatach publicznych (From "Shoah" to "Fear", Disputes about Polish-Jewish past and memory in public debates)}, (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2010), 420-421.
more optimistic start. It is also because, with time and rising influence of the affirmative politics of history, some conservative intellectuals (even not the most radical ones, but e.g. Paweł Ukielski, from the Museum of the Warsaw Uprising, close to the conservatives such as Chichocki) started radicalising in their ideas, and tried to frame ‘critical patriotism’ as almost no patriotism at all, an extreme position. Only then, its proponents, closely linked to liberal-leftist circles, and centre-left newspaper led by Adam Michnik, Gazeta Wyborcza, for that matter, coined a counter-label of ‘mature’ patriotism to describe their intentions and approach, and defend its premises:

“Dojrzały patriotyzm jest prawem do dumy z dokonań, ale nierozewalnie zespołonym z obowiązkiem wstędu za hanbu, jakie się dopuściliśmy (mature patriotism constitutes the right to be proud of the achievements, but it is inextricably linked with the obligation of shame for the disgrace that we have done)”

However, it seems that with respect to morphological analysis, there is no substantial difference between ‘critical’ and ‘mature’ patriotism – their main ideas is that the pride in past achievements is possible, but only is linked together with shame for past disgrace. Rather, the exercise of ‘re-labelling’ of this approach was meant to show its positive aspect, and retrieve it from the negative offensive of the conservatives. It was a necessary reaction, because given that ‘critical patriotism’ was from the beginning formulated in order to be a derogatory term, it was also sceptically assessed by a number of leftist thinkers.

Maciej Gdula from Krytyka Polityczna, notably, declared that because of its strong rooting in national history, it could not be a basis for future development. Nevertheless, Krytyka Polityczna also developed a strong argument in favour of leading a ‘politics of history’ of the left, in order not to leave ground to the right-wing to define all concepts to their liking or annihilate all leftist traditions, automatically assimilated with communism. This approach was prompted by their rising awareness of how efficient the conservatives were in labelling specific concepts, e.g. in refusing the label ‘civic’ to the liberal proposal of Środa of patriotism of minimal means in 2000, or by forging the name of ‘critical patriotism’ and combating it with their ‘affirmative patriotism’, in the domain of

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61 “Uważamy, że można poruszać się pomiędzy tym, co zwykle się nazywać patriotyzmem krytycznym, a drugą skrajnością – chwaleniem wszystkiego co polskie, bo polskie właśnie. (We consider that we can navigate between what used to be called critical patriotism, and the other extreme – praising everything that is Polish, because it is Polish)”, Paweł Ukielski in the debate “Polityka historyczna – za i przeciw (Politics of history – pros and cons)”, published in Mówią Wieki, 17 August 2006, available on http://portalwiedzy.onet.pl/4869,1581,1352888,2,czasopisma.html, consulted on 23 August 2013.

62 It was also the title of the section where Gazeta Wyborcza published articles concerning Złote żniwa, Gross’ book of 2011.

63 Kurski, “Życie w polskich rękach”. The question of maturity of society, was also linked to the quality of the public debate in reaction to the public reaction of Gross’ books. Dominika Kozłowska, “Po co nam Gross?”. And the question of maturity of democracy was linked to the provision of a propitious framework for an open patriotism to develop. Henryk Woźniakowski, “Patriotyzm aktualnego etapu (Patriotism of the actual stage)”, Znak, 664 (2010).

approach to national history. These successes in imposing conservative labels and understandings motivated other actors to propose more coherent stances of their own. It is probably important for understanding the engagement of Krytyka Polityczna in the fight over these concepts, which are not necessarily traditionally in the scope of leftist highest interests, and trying to propose a third leftist language to resolve the rising deadlock between the conservative and the liberal ones.

It is also noticeable that intellectuals linked to Krytyka Polityczna managed to ensure a better resonance to a number of topics of their interest, also thanks to, I would suggest, linking them to the discussion of patriotism. It is notably the case of the question of discrimination of national or homosexual minorities, or the reflection of the role and status of women in Poland, and their discrimination in an overly patriarchal and religious structure of domination, proposed by one of the leading feminist thinkers, Agnieszka Graff. This is another result of the analysis, reinforcing my claim that the concept of patriotism is one of the key political concepts that is used by different actors to achieve the recognition of some topics or postulates, in the public and political spheres.

The debates about Jedwabne, and ‘politics of history’ were provoked by ‘discursive events’ of scientific or political nature. They did not focus on patriotism entirely, but patriotism and its different conceptualisations constituted a key to a fuller understanding of different conflicting arguments. This concept also served a number of actors for pushing their argument in a more efficient way, and bringing some elements that were not part of the mainstream discourse into it, because of linking them to patriotism. Also, especially on the question of approach to history, the conservatives and liberal-conservatives parted their ways. While the conservatives started from underscoring their pride in national history, before even considering potential acceptance of shame, the liberals (following Jedlicki’s approach of ‘pride for shame’) started from discussing the need of accepting the shame, and collective responsibility for past crimes, before turning to pride. Hence, the ephemeral coalition that they constituted before, e.g. in their discussion of a communitarian option of patriotism in 2000/2002 dissolved when the conservatives started radicalising their position, and not only rejected ‘dogmatic’ liberal position, but also a critical one.

The last instance of discussion, chosen for the analysis in this dissertation came from 2010. It occurred after the catastrophe of the aircraft of the President, Lech

65 It is not to say that historically the left did not lead a reflection over patriotism, for that matter. Krytyka Polityczna, evokes on this point the Interwar Socialists and their concept of ‘state patriotism’. Krytyka Polityczna, "Strategie lewicy (The strategies of the left)", 2 June 2007. Available online http://www.krytykapolityczna.pl/Teksty-poza-KP/Strategie-lewicy/menu-id-63.html, accessed on 18 September 2012.


67 Agnieszka Graff, “Feminizm, patriotyzm, religia (Feminism, patriotism, religion)”, in Magma, idem. (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej 2010).

Kaczyński, flying for the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre. I decided to set the cut off date of analysis on this debate (even if am still scrutinizing the occurrences of the discussions about patriotism that happened later on), because it was, in a way, a crucial debate for assessing whether earlier intellectual developments concerning the perception and definition of patriotism were mobilised and/or structured the debate in such traumatic moment of the national mourning. Also, it allowed showing that the supposedly progressively eroding national myths – of intrinsic Polish Catholicity, and of Romantic fight and messianism, – are temporarily reinstated as structuring mechanisms of the public discourse. Hence, this debate showed their strong imprint in people’s consciousness, and the fact that they still provided a strong cultural code of dealing with traumatic situations. Patriotism, in this discussion, was used by PiS in an increasingly political and very exclusionary manner. The politicians, with help of the strong group of the aforementioned religious-national Publicists (the emergence of which was noted in prior debates surrounding Gross’ books), by using the motive of ‘two Polands’, promoted a division into ‘real patriots/Poles’ and others who were not ‘worthy’ of belonging to national community.

While already by past the concept of patriotism was used to say who should belong to the community, or not, for the first time it allowed for such a strong polarisation. The attempts at contravening this move were not powerful enough to overturn them (e.g. another invocation of the ‘mature’ patriotism), which allowed PiS to achieve its ‘monopolisation’ of patriotism and consolidation of the domination of the public sphere. Already during its government between 2005-2007, in the political sphere, patriotism became one of their leading frames – prompting the situation where any other view on it had to be presented as a counter-concept, referring to it. The mourning patriotism reinforced such situation. It offered a way of understanding reality and simple, yet powerful ‘us’ and ‘them’ categories that divided the community. It can then be concluded that the theses that a more civic path of defining the nation would be on the way of success were not strong enough to survive in such a challenging moment.

3.2. One patriotism or many?
Another interesting question is whether there would be one single (concept or type of) patriotism or there are many patriotisms. In some debates, this

70 This situation was also analysed with reference to previous debates. Mirosław Czech referred to Walicki’s differentiation between two types of nationalism: A (liberal) and B (integral), proposed in 1997, to say that PiS’ exclusionary passions belonged to the come back of Nationalism B, in its xenophobic and exclusionary aspect. In this way, by opposing it, he tried to revive the discussion and positive assessment of Nationalism A, but without broader outreach. “My, liberalni nacjonaliści - obywatele III RP (We, liberal nationalists – citizens of the III RP)”, Gazeta Wyborcza, 14 June 2010.
dilemma was alluded to: most of the times when intellectuals were accusing their political or intellectual opponents of attempts of monopolisation of the concept of patriotism. One might say that the call for creating a new patriotic formula or model could be perceived as resulting from a conviction that there is one possible ‘good’ view of patriotism. It would be compatible with the assumption of essential contestability of concepts, where multiple actors try to determine the understanding of one or the other concept.

In the aforementioned debates many possible understandings of patriotism were proposed, however the discussion often did not concern ‘patriotism’ as such, but patriotism with an adjective. With time different adjectives multiplied, and it got increasingly difficult to range them in any clear pattern. Some of the most used expressions included, in random order: traditional patriotism, modern patriotism, new patriotism, patriotism of minimal means, critical patriotism, mature patriotism, healthy patriotism, patriotism in good times, militaristic patriotism, patriotism of defeats, mourning patriotism, symbolical-martyrological patriotism, patriotism of defeat, open patriotism, Romantic patriotism, Sarmatian patriotism, patriotism of development, patriotism of heritage, patriotism of tomorrow, hurrapatriotism, patriotism as silent virtue. The previous section showed in which circumstances some labels emerged or faded away.

The proof of everlasting contestation might be provided by the fact that older understandings of patriotism keep strong, but the newly coined ones become progressively anchored in the public discourse and become frequent reference. Hence, one has probably to resign herself to the fact that there will not be one master-meaning of a concept, but that there might be different meanings, and that at times these meanings can change, and one or the other could become dominant, in specific intellectual or political configuration.

Furthermore, the longitudinal analysis of the debates allows determining trends, and grouping different potential understandings together. Many of these patriotic labels are associated with the right-wing, a little by default, because patriotism is a concept commonly associated with this political strand, or rather one should say that they successfully ‘monopolise’ it, or dominate its definition, throughout the democratic transition. The conservatives would be here representatives of this traditional patriotism that focuses on the need of sacrificing for fatherland, and even dying for it, if needed. For this reason, this approach was called ‘militaristic’ in 2000, as it often refers to the ‘tombs’ of past heroes who died in the fight for fatherland. By virtue of its attachment to history and tradition, other labels used underscore its ‘symbolical-martyrological’ aspect of ‘heritage’. While lately during the national mourning after the

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73 Janusz Majcherek described it as contradictory to the liberal pluralist approach.
74 Mariusz Janicki, Joanna Podgór ska and Ewa Wilk (“Słownik zawłaszczonego języka (Dictionary of the appropriated language)”, Polityka, 18 July 2012) conclude that the concept of patriotism was the most strongly appropriated by the conservative right since 1989, among others such as nation, truth, values, etc.
75 Magdalena Środa, “Powstanie Warszawskie poniosło absolutną klęskę (The Warsaw Uprising was totally defeated)”, Wirtualna Polska, 2 August 2010.
presidential plane crash in 2010, the outbursts of such loud, declaratory patriotic discourse were qualified ‘Romantic’ or ‘Sarmatian’, it has also been described as ‘closed’ or ‘of besieged fortress’. While it wanted itself to be civic (in 2002) or ‘of tomorrow’ (2005-2007), maintaining that patriotism of war times is not necessarily out-dated in times of peace and that the question of the highest sacrifice should still be taught to youngsters, its critics would rather call it ‘hurrapatriotism’, implying that it only has a superficial and shallow meaning, of displaying symbols during national holidays (hence a tad anachronistic and potentially also plainly nationalist).

This ‘traditional’ approach to patriotism, has been more or less consistent over time, and no matter good times or bad times, the fight for fatherland remains one of its important motives, which was above all qualified as modern. In opposition to this Romantic paradigm, there have been counter-proposals of the so-called modern or new patriotism. These counter-concepts challenged it on the form of expression (silent versus loud and pathetic), on content (work for country, instead of sacrifice of life, citizens versus victims) or on approach to history and tradition (critical instead of affirmative). Herling-Grudziński suggested focusing on ‘development’ and contribution to the transformation of the old patriotism into ‘silent virtue’. Others proposed that such patriotism should focus on ‘minimal means’, or be ‘critical’, ‘mature’, ‘healthy’ and ‘open’. While these counter-propositions vary, not one manages to become a powerful alternative. Yet, most of them also want to be qualified as ‘modern’.

In guise of illustration of these attempts, I will shortly discuss two recent political usages of this label of ‘modern patriotism’ coming from diverse backgrounds that have not yet been thoroughly discussed in previous sections.

The first one is linked to the efforts of the current President of the Republic, Bronisław Komorowski, elected in 2010 as PO’s candidate. Since his election, the very theme of ‘modern patriotism’ was linked to a number of the initiatives led by his Chancellery: in the domain of culture, history, sport or civil society. These initiatives rather swiftly navigate between different ideological positions, and it can be said that they try to bring together many aspects discussed within the civic approach to patriotism, in both liberal and communitarian veins, such as underscoring the importance of work for the modernisation of the country as the core of patriotism, but at the same time linking it to tradition and history. Komorowski has been leading a constructive, pluralist politics with respect to discerning distinctions, celebrating national holidays (and among those,)

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76 Marcin Bosacki, “Patriotyzm rozwoju czy patriotyzm dziedzictwa (Patriotism of development or patriotism of heritage)?”, Gazeta Wyborcza, 12 January 2007.
77 Woźniakowski, “Patriotyzm aktualnego etapu”.
78 http://www.prezydent.pl/prezydent/dwa-lata-prezydentury/nowoczesny-patriotyzm/
80 There are a number of national holidays that provoke discussions about patriotism. Most of the times it is the case of on 3rd May (Constitution Day) or 11th November (Independence Day). Other anniversaries that also bring reflection over this topic are 1st August (commemorating the Warsaw Uprising of 1944) and 15th August (the Day of the Polish Army, commemorating the battle of Vistula against the Bolsheviks in 1920; which coincides with the holiday of the Assumption of Mary). These last two national holidays are highly significant to traditionalists. It
particularly 2 May – Day of the national Flag\textsuperscript{81}, and 4 June – Freedom and civic rights day\textsuperscript{82}), promoting voluntary work, and different aspects of Polish history (e.g. opening a new exhibition room in the Presidential Palace with historical Polish banners, support of the scouting movement, promotion of discussion about the status of women) and pro-European positions.

I would suggest that such approach is in line with the very role of the President, who is supposed constitutionally to rise above party politics and promote a common ground positions. Indeed the reflection over ‘modern patriotism’ presented by the president is different e.g. from Janusz Palikot’s one (a Chameleon politician who from very conservative positions drifted towards liberal ones, while being in PO, and finally towards anticlerical, probably leftist, in his own party). Palikot is known in the political sphere for his propensity of creating scandals, hence his party’s representation of ‘modern’ versus ‘right-wing’ patriotism should not be shocking (below\textsuperscript{83}), but in a sense depicts, in a exaggerated way the opposition between strongly liberal-civic approach, and very closed-nationalist one, where both are ideal-types of earlier discussed (extreme) models.

The ‘right-wing’ closed model depicted on the black background includes a fascist salute, listening to Radio Maryja of Father Rydzyk, obsession with the cross as national symbol, conspiracy theories about the plane crash of 2010 and the anti-Semitic frames of Judeo-communism and Europeanism. The ‘modern’ patriotism that is opposed to it, pictured on the orange background incorporates paying taxes, voting, validating one’s ticket, supporting Polish culture, recycling and cleaning up after one’s dog.

happens that on 15 August 2009 and on 1 August 2012 two subsequent concerts of Madonna took place in Warsaw. They were both highly objected. In the first case, religious groups objected the fact that the artist blasphemes religion both in her songs and choreography. In 2012, the protests against the concert had less of a religious flavor, and rather took the turn of patriotic paranoia, where, the concert collided with the ‘required’ serious atmosphere needed for the commemoration of the Uprising. While sober commentators tried to advance the point of view that both events on the same day are compatible, or asked rhetorical questions whether on this day people should restrain also from watching comedies and laughing (Katarzyna Wiśniewska, “Zabawa, czy żaloba (Amusement or mourning)”, Interview with Jerzy Szacki, Gazeta Wyborcza, 28 July 2012); others, e.g. the Catholic Association of Journalists, demanded to cancel the concert (“Katolicy dziennikarze domagają się odwołania koncertu Madonny. “To potwarz dla Polaków” (Catholic journalists require the cancellation of Madonna’s concert. “It is a slap for Poles”)), available at http://www.fronda.pl/news/czytaj/tytul/katolicy_dziennikarze_domagaja_sie_odwolania_koncertu_madonny._to_potwarz_dla_polakow_22695/, consulted online on 28 September 2012). In the end a compromise solution has been reached, and a short movie about the Uprising has been projected to the public before the concert.

\textsuperscript{81} The Day of the Flag was established in 2004. It is not a day free of work.

\textsuperscript{82} The President was promoting the celebrations of such day since 2011, it was officially established as a holiday in 2013, by Sejm. It is not a day free of work.

\textsuperscript{83} https://plus.google.com/117996936419128466713/photos accessed on 23 August 2013.
The series of debates and of different approaches to patriotism that were presented in the analysis give tools to analyse the multiple usages of the concept of patriotism in politics (the previous two of course do not exhaust the full list).

4. The question of statehood

In order to fully understand the relevance and meaning of this long lasting controversy about the concept of patriotism, witnessed in the Polish public sphere and different public debates, one has to recognize that it has a broader significance than discussion of the meaning of patriotism only. I argue that it is about the country, or rather, about the state, and the nature of this statehood, III Republic that emerged in 1989, after the slow twilight of the communist regime. The position towards specific versions of patriotism taken by the participants of these discussions can be linked to one’s position on the current regime, its performance, and the relationship to the former regime, or even democracy, on the whole. Furthermore, the questions discussed are of importance for any polity in the state of transition and consolidation of its main institutional aspects, borders and foundations.

4.1. Statelessness

I suggest that the long period of statelessness is one of the important explaining factors of different conceptualisations of patriotism. Poland is a country with long traditions of statehood, and had a relatively powerful position in Central Europe until 18th century, that then was stateless during 123 years of partitions (1795-1918), under foreign occupation (1939-1945), and with a communist regime imposed from abroad (1945-1989). Indeed, during this ‘deranged statehood’, the nation (supposedly formed by the gentry during the I Republic) had to strive to survive the absence of the state, while at the same time, elsewhere in Europe, it was the crucial moment of emergence of modern nation-states. Furthermore, the rule of law, during these times, was respected rather out of fear, or threat towards the subjugating powers, than out of true allegiance and commitment to the state. It was also important for the question of national identification which “was developed not based on state institutions, but in opposition to them, due to the fact that they were imposed on rather than
supported by the Polish people.” The stateless moment also strongly marked country’s history and political culture, by establishing intelligentsia as a compensating element for lacking state structures, forging strong political self-identification into ‘us’ versus ‘them’ categories (directed against strong neighbours, Russia and Germany) and imprinting it with Romantic templates, of messianism, among others. It also marked the reflection concerning patriotism.

Walicki in his seminal work on Polish patriotism conceptualised this moment of the loss of independent statehood as a crucial change of parameters for the concept of patriotism that from a territorial notion, after the disappearance of the state had to be reconceptualised as an attachment to the nation. During 19th century, first in the Romantic vein, it was linked to the commitment to the idea of nation, and then in the realist (nationalist) vein, to the nation’s interest, contributing to the growing confusion between the concepts of (older) patriotism and (emerging) nationalism.

Against this background it can be easily understood, that the pro-state attitudes or behaviours did not have a propitious environment to emerge, and were (and continue to be) lacking. Even the long experience of statehood under the I Republic (until 1795), or the short-lived II Republic (1918-1939) did not provide strong state-oriented models that could survive or be reproduced in the III Republic, in the name of (re-)connecting with tradition.

The conservative authors often praise the I Republic, also called gentry’s democracy, for its strong attachment to liberty. This liberty, following the distinction proposed by Isaiah Berlin between negative and positive liberties, was positive and participatory in nature. This ‘Polish model of republicanism’ did not seem a potential model to revive in a liberal democracy (where rather negative liberty was needed), even for a kind of ‘republican patriotism’. Indeed the republican frame was relatively rarely mentioned in the debates about patriotism, unless one wants to take communitarian stances for a proxy for it, but then, it would be closer to communitarian proposition of patriotism of Alasdair MacIntyre, than of the republican one of Maurizio Viroli. Nevertheless, conservative intellectuals refer sometimes to the Polish tradition of republicanism, considering it the habitus of Poles, or implying that the term

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85 Ibid.
86 Walicki, Trzy patriotyzmy.
87 Isaiah Berlin proposed this distinction in his lecture “Two Concepts of Liberty” delivered in the University of Oxford on 31 October 1958.
88 While this was the first of three big Polish patriotic traditions, as posited by Walicki, rather the other two: Romantic and realist, are currently basis for discussion or sources of references.
89 Alasdair MacIntyre, “Is patriotism a virtue?”, The Lindley lecture (University of Kansas, 1984).
'civil society' is a Western invention and means the same as Polish republicanism\(^92\).

When it comes to the II Republic, especially in the beginning of the democratic transition it was nostalgically praised as a symbol of Polish democracy, but one has to remember that the progressively authoritarian rule of Józef Piłsudski and Sanacja, especially after the 1926 coup d'état, blurred this picture. Such idealised vision of II Republic was mostly upheld by older intellectuals early in the transition, because it gave them a spiritual refuge in times of communism, and often pushed them into external (or internal) emigration. For that reason, especially in the 1992 debate on fatherland, some of them were particularly critical of their younger colleagues, born and raised under the communism, whose whole life was subdued to this 'foreign' oppressive regime.

This long period of problematic statehood, that I called earlier 'deranged statehood', was tainted rather by concerns to regain independence and/or sovereignty, and pushed the political thought rather towards reflecting about the ways to do it, than into preoccupations about the potential form of the prospective polity\(^93\). In 1989, like in 1918, the state regained its sovereignty, but without ready-made solutions and answers to the questions related to the political, its place and foundations\(^94\). I suggest that having this in mind enables to grasp the meaningfulness of the usage of the concept of patriotism during the democratic transition, when it served, among others, as a tool to develop one’s theory of the state, its tradition, and continuity (or its lack) with the previous regime. Undeniably, the discussions about patriotism touched upon a number of these issues. At first, it served the purpose of making sense of the fast changing reality, and of the world in general. The search for the right values, and definitions ensued, in order to contribute to ensuring the right establishment of democracy. In other words, it was the question of finding adequate values for a newly established democratic form of the regime, and developing an adequate approach to the national values, so that they are not monopolised by one of the political forces.

I claim that this crucial contextual change of regaining sovereign statehood in 1989 can be compared, with respect to its influence over the need of redefining the nature of patriotic allegiance, to the loss of independent statehood at the end of the 18th century. As aforementioned, Walicki suggested that the loss of statehood prompted the redefinition of the concept of patriotism from territorial to nation-oriented. After 1989, in the new democratic framework, the strong Romantic paradigm of heroic fight seemed obsolete and was constantly under the fire of intellectual criticism. It prompted the search for a powerful counter-proposition. One of the most frequent references was to substitute fight by work. I suggest this effort to change the focus of patriotism, from fight to work, did not aim to affect solely the adjacent elements of the definition of the concept.


of patriotism, but rather it attempted to affect its core, and push for a more civic definition of it.

4.2. Regaining sovereignty and constructing democracy

While in the beginning of the transition the intellectuals were preoccupied by its nature, they shared the conviction that the state finally entered times of peace and its future was tied to the re-unification with the Western part of the continent and joining international organisations, such as NATO (in order to guarantee the security and sovereignty of the new state) and the EU (in order to guarantee the proper economic catching up). Even if some suggested that peace was never secured once and for all\textsuperscript{95}, and different visions of the Polish participation in the EU were developed\textsuperscript{96}, it seems that there was a general agreement about the wished for direction of the international relations towards more integration. For that reason, the call for a new patriotic formula for times of peace came back repeatedly, and its possible components were debated.

The changes initiated in 1989 marked the progressive end of the communist regime, and the installation of a new, democratic form of government, on the one hand, and of a market economy, on the other hand. It did not happen overnight, but was a gradual process, denoted by different names: liberalisation, transition or transformation (semantic differences between them is not of relevance here). The change of the regime occurred in a peaceful, negotiated way, which was once dubbed a ‘\textit{Refolution}’ (combining ref(orm) and (r)evolution) by Timothy Garton Ash. This situation has good and bad points alike. While on the positive side, one can point to the fact that it contributed to a rather smooth transition between the old regime and the new one; on the negative side, people did not witness a clear break-though, there was neither a symbolic closure\textsuperscript{97} of the communist regime, nor a foundational moment for the new state.

The most fervent critics of the new regime, would call the III Republic ‘\textit{PRL-bis}’\textsuperscript{98} and say that it was born of the original sin of the Round Table negotiations (or of the Magdalenka negotiations\textsuperscript{99}), when the party representatives concluded agreements with the opposition members, who were not chosen or elected in any way. Its proponents, to the contrary, recognize the past necessity of leading Round Table negotiations and signing agreements, and claim that at that moment, it was unsure what could have been achieved, and whether the

\textsuperscript{96} Mach and Góra, “Between old fears and new challenges”.
\textsuperscript{97} Brier, “The roots of the “Fourth Republic”, 76-77.
\textsuperscript{98} A number of statements expressed in the article of Jadwiga Chmielowska exemplify such way of thinking, ”Norwid ma rację, “Ojczyzna to wielki zbiorowy obowiązek”. Jesli naród nie dba o państwo to je traci (Norwid is right “Fatherland is a big collective duty”. If a nation does not care about the state, it loses it)”, 13 August 2012. Available online on \url{http://wpolityce.pl/artykuly/33974-norwid-ma-racje-ojczyzna-to-wielki-zbiorowy-obowiazek-jesli-narod-nie-dba-o-panstwo-to-je-traci}, accessed on 20 August 2013.
\textsuperscript{99} The talks in Magdalenka, among a limited number of Round Table participants, were supposed to contribute to the resolution of problematic issues of the negotiations. With time, because they were not transparent, the critics of the 1989 agreement coined the ‘black legend’ of Magdalenka, implying that the participants of the talks forged secret pacts among themselves. Jan Skórzyński, \textit{Revolucja Okrągłego Stołu (Revolution of the Round Table)}, (Kraków: Znak 2009).
opposition could have fought for more. There is another, mid-way position, closer to critical one. It states that while the Round Table negotiations might have been necessary back then, but after the victorious elections of 1989, at the first possible moment, the agreements should have been discarded and the power taken over integrally by the democratic opposition, instead of creating a shared government. Here, the axis of criticism (by the conservative right-wing of the former opposition) is turned against these members of the democratic opposition (of central, liberal or leftist leaning) who, after the spectacular triumph during the elections in 1989, pushed for respecting the agreement and followed through with its realisation. Such position does not recognise the positive aspect of gradual and peaceful take over of power, and its proponents can be found among those who were advocated ‘acceleration’ at that time.

Born of the original sin or not, the uncertainty about the nature of the III Republic created a lasting problem of landmarks. It was mostly related to the question of the moral and spiritual foundations of the new state, the continuity/discontinuity of both regimes, and of the way of dealing with the difficult past. These elements are important to be mentioned, because, their discussion predates a high number of, especially initial, debates about key political concepts, such as patriotism. It weighed particularly strong on the questions related to fatherland and democracy.

The whole meaning of democracy was discussed, if not contested, and there were two paradigms of it among the (post-)Solidarity elite. The first interpretation of democracy saw it as a vessel of modernisation and catching up with the West, a rather procedural, minimalist a set of ‘cold’ procedures (supposed to help building a civil society). This reduced understanding of democracy supposedly did not have the power to attract people’s allegiance, and could even push them to retreat to ‘warm’ anachronistic forms. It was opposed by a competing paradigm of substantive democracy that was supposed to rebuild Polish politics by “the moral community of the nation and the ‘purification’ of the society from the remnants of the communist system”. However, these high expectations were not met immediately, and the disappointment turned into criticism of the ‘thin’ democracy. For this reason, the question of whether patriotism (understood as a kind of particularist, and ‘warm’ attachment) could be compatible with democracy was raised in the quest of defining the right values to ground the new democratic regime on, the same as the question of liberal nationalism, defined as the combination of liberal and national values.

The question was open of how to achieve progress, and where to find a third way in order to avoid falling into one of the extremes, as in the schematic opposition between ‘peacock’ (nationalistic defence of the exceptionalism of the national identity, linked to ‘blind patriotism’) and ‘parrot’ (non-reflexive imitation of the West). This metaphor quoted by Andrzej Wolicki, referred to Juliusz

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100 Brier, “The roots of the “Fourth Republic”, 76.
101 Ibid.
102 Krzysztof Wolicki, "W Ojczyźnie we szklanych paciorków (In the fatherland of glass beads)", Tygodnik Powszechny, 17 May 1992.
Słowiński's rant about Polish approach to politics during 19th century\textsuperscript{103} (one among structuring Romantic references) – that Poland was able of doing solely one of two things – either be (egotistically) proud of own tradition and existence without questioning oneself about its very nature (peacock) or simply copying others' (Western) ways of life and doing things, without a proper reflection of what would be the best approach (parrot). In order to avoid such a situation and a democratic backlash, the question of bringing liberal values together with the national ones was discussed, especially at the beginning of transition, and it was critical of Romantic frames.

Further conservative criticisms of the liberal democracy tried to frame it as 'liberal dogmatism' and 'cold modernism', and oppose to it 'warmer' community (that some liberals tried to discredit as 'warm anachronism'). While the question of (re-)constructing community has been raised as early as 1992, by Król, as a prerequisite to rebuilding fatherland adapted for the new times, it got particular attention of the conservatives in the beginning of 2000s. While the 'discursive event' that provoked the discussion about patriotism in 2000 – the exhibition 'Heroes of our liberty' – still relied on fight for independence and sacrifice of life as the lynchpin of patriotism, the follow-up discussion prompted an emergence of a moderate communitarian position. The conservatives presented it as the only one apt to inspire solidarity and people's allegiance to the regime. Older liberals also received it more or less positively.

However, the critique of the former regime, PRL, structured the symbolic politics of III RP and was linked to the question of democracy. The conservatives continued to object the alleged continuity between PRL and III RP, saying that the newly established regime was not the state that the 1980s right-wing opposition fought for\textsuperscript{104}, and that proper accounts with the past were not drawn. They insisted that the nature of the state should be thoroughly changed, and IV Republic installed, and the state conquered from the liberal-leftist elites. The concept of the IV Republic\textsuperscript{105} migrated from intellectual reference of conservative Publizists to the broader public discourse, when it became a strong point of the electoral programme of PiS in 2005, and was supposed to be realised within its affirmative 'politics of history'\textsuperscript{106}. This position can be linked to the

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotetext{103}{"Pawiem narodów byłaś i papugą, A teraz jesteś służebnicą cudzą. (You (Poland) were the peacock and the parrot of other nations. And now you are others’ servant)." Julisz Słowacki, Grób Agamemnona (Agamemnon’s grave), 1839.}
\footnotetext{104}{"III RP nie jest nowym państwem, o które walczyła prawica lat 80. (…) prawa i instytucje w znacznym stopniu dziedziczą cechy dawnego systemu (III RP is not the new state that the right-wing of 1980s fought for (…) it inherits in a high degree laws and institutions of the old regime) « Manifesto Krajowego Komitetu Konserwatystów (The Manifesto of the National Conservative Committee) 1998, quoted by Kwiatkowski, Pamięć zbiorowa społeczeństwa polskiego, 50.}
\footnotetext{105}{This concept was used as early as July 1989, by the Marshall of Senate Andrzej Stelmachowski, former member of the democratic opposition, in his critique of the election of Wojciech Jaruzelski, former communist leader of PRL, for the President of Poland. A conservative intellectual Rafał Matyja, further developed it in 1998, and Paweł Śpiewak, in 2003. In the legislative campaign 2005, it was used by PiS, PO and PSL (Polish Popular Alliance), but it became progressively identified with PiS.}
\footnotetext{106}{Kwiatkowski, Pamięć zbiorowa społeczeństwa polskiego, 50-51.}
\end{footnotesize}
growing radicalisation of the conservatives, mentioned before, parallel to their reaching of a stronger political position.

This radicalisation of positions was also one of the reasons why the paths of the conservative and of liberal intellectuals (sympathetic to many communitarian stances as shown before) parted. While liberals also noted a number of problems and shortcomings of the new regime, they did not refuse it legitimacy, and rather tried to adopt a constructive critical approach, in order to make it better, and grow mature. They constructed an interrelation between the concepts of democracy and patriotism, saying that only mature patriotism could help establishing a strong democracy able to deal with both pride and shame of the past, and only a mature democracy could provide the ground for such open and critical patriotism to flourish.

4.2.1. Society versus nation, or a missing civil society

In the discussion over patriotism, and the controversy about the country, one could ask what a country is or should be, and on which community it should be based: political or cultural, rooted in rule of law or tradition? There are a number of possible options of a form of the country: state, society or nation. Since the very beginning of the debates, the categories of society and nation were opposed, and the intellectuals were pondering over the place of the political and the possible survival or imminent disappearance of the nation in the new, globalizing reality.

The opposition between nation and society is also rooted in history, and was powerfully expressed by a Romantic poet Cyprian Kamil Norwid in the following terms: “Jesteśmy żadnym społeczeństwem. Jesteśmy wielkim sztandarem narodowym (We are no society, we are a big national banner)”. There is a trend to interpret this catch phrase as a criticism of society and praise of the nation. However, its meaning changes if it is related to his following thought: “Gdyby Ojczyzna nasza była tak dzielnym społeczeństwem we wszystkich człowieka obowiązkach jak znakomitym jest narodem we wszystkich Polaka poczuciach, tedy byłibysmy na nogach dwóch, osoby całe i poważne – monumentalnie znakomite. (If our Fatherland had been such a brave society in all man’s duties, as it is a great nation in all Pole’s feelings, we would be standing on two feet, whole and serious people – monumentally great)”. It expressed, under partitions, the criticism of the lack of civic duties in the society, which weakened the fatherland, and did not let it be strong and sovereign, because great national feelings were not enough to achieve it.

107 It needs to be noted that this strong radicalisation did not touch all right-wing intellectuals. It was surely linked to the growing influence of PiS on the political sphere, and the emergence of the strong circle of Catholic-national Publizists, linked to Rzeczpospolita and other conservative publications. But it also resulted in the exclusion of the ‘Museum people’ (conservative intellectuals close to Lech Kaczyński from Warszawski Klub Krytyki Politycznej) from the party in 2010, who were always on the side of criticising blunt and exclusionary references to nation.

108 Woźniakowski, "Patriotyzm aktualnego etapu".


110 Ibid.
After 1989, ‘country’ can surely be identified with the state. An effective and sovereign state exists, unlike during partitions when the ‘country’ category got extra-territorial, and pushed the patriotic allegiance towards the nation, and to an idealised vision of country. The question would be how to operationalize community in this newly sovereign country, and on what to base patriotic allegiance, society or nation. Obviously the category of ‘nation-state’ is common, and it is based on the link (sometimes congruent\textsuperscript{111}) between national and political communities. While the nation itself can be defined in different manners, in Poland it continues to convey a historical and cultural aspect (as demonstrated e.g. by the 1997 debate, even despite the reflection concerning liberal nationalism). The question is more complex with society, given that a term such as ‘society-state’ does not exist. I would suggest that even if the opposition is created between (weak) society and (strong) nation, the real discussion concerns the civil society, its nature and compatibility with the state.

Throughout the contestation of the meaning of patriotism, some posited (e.g. Herling-Grudziński in 1992\textsuperscript{112}) that the society should be the basis of patriotic allegiance; the proponents of nation, in turn, tried to disqualify society by describing it as merely functional or instrumental, lacking the axiological, value component of nation (Kłoskowska in 1997\textsuperscript{113}). Nevertheless, the question of society was also posited as the desirable form of community or country mostly because it could better contribute to the development of civic virtues. It was pinpointed, e.g. in 2000 by Środa, that nowadays Poland would rather need its citizens to be willing to work for it, and respect the rule of law, than to sacrifice their lives on the patriotic altar. She referred to the obvious lack of strong civic virtues and of state allegiance among people that I linked before to the long period of statelessness, when the citizens were acting outside, or against the state\textsuperscript{114}, in order to defend their interests, or national attachment. The short lived experience of independent statehood in the Interwar period did not allow for the emergence of pro state attitudes and their imprint in people’s minds, neither did communism promote such behaviour. The need of strengthening these civic virtues was in turn linked to the question of civil society, and its weakness was presented as a problematic situation.

There are a handful of reasons why the civil society did not easily emerge in Poland after 1989 and why it constitutes an object of contestation. Agnieszka Graff points to two questions related to the heritage of the anti-communist dissidence\textsuperscript{115}. First of all, she mentions the vision of a majoritarian democracy, or unity, as promoted by Solidarność, in which the Nation (‘us’) had to be united in a common front against the system (‘them’). This vision federated the members of dissidence of different ideological allegiances against communists, but subsequently it made it difficult for public discourse to evolve towards

\textsuperscript{111} Pushing for such homogeneity would be one of the aims of nationalism, e.g. Ernest Gellner, Nations and nationalism, (1983).
\textsuperscript{114} Matyja, "Przestrzeń powinności", 244.
\textsuperscript{115} Agnieszka Graff, "Pułapka społeczeństwa obywatelskiego (The trap of the civil society)", in Magma, op. cit., 92-101.
deliberation and conflict that, to her mind, are characteristic of the political and the civil society, on the whole. Secondly, she referred to the ideological stance of the dissidents, and their ‘anti-authoritarian model of civil society’ based on antipolitics.

György Konrát conceptualised civil society as antipolitics, and Václav Havel promoted the moral idea of living in the truth, as the refusal of politically engaging with the state, because the terms of such discussion were imposed and not free. While Konrát suggested that “antipolitics is the ethos of civil society, and civil society is the antithesis of military society”, it was a vision of civil society within a regime that did not recognise its existence and that overused the citizenship discourse in order to ensure the legitimacy of its power. However, this attempt at not engaging with the state, or engaging from ‘outside’, as performed in Poland by Solidarność, resulted in an inability of developing proper models of civil society for the democratic times that would imply engaging for the state, its good, and politics (e.g. by voting). Graff suggested that the focus on moral questions, and living in the truth, did not contribute to the creation of trust between people or social capital or models of citizens’ activity. To her mind, 20 years into democratic transition, the idea of civil society as free association and action of citizens, is still rather channelled in Poland by NGOs, but in a rather institutionalised and service-oriented way.

Furthermore, the very concept of civil society is not as neutral as it seems, and it is sometimes criticised by the proponents of the nation, as dangerous for its existence. It was even criticised by Cichocki and Karłowicz, who suggested that this ‘foreign’ concept had a proper name (and existing tradition) in Polish republicanism (in their aforementioned attempt at collapsing republicanism and communitarianism). While it is not the place here to develop on the theory of civil society in its different historical instances, proposed e.g. by Hegel or Gramsci, it needs to be underscored that most of such theories have in common a normative depiction of civil society as independent from the state, or at least, as keeping its self-organisation. In short, while the communitarian approach puts an accent on socialising or solidarity-building effects of voluntary associations, the liberal vision of civil society accentuates the importance of negative freedom of political participation. But as Sven Eliaeson points out, the communitarian vision of civil society as a structure of networked associations does not

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119 Andrzej Siciński, “O idei społeczeństwa obywatelskiego (About the idea of civil society)”, Wiedza i życie, 6 (1996).
120 Cichocki, Karłowicz, “Jamnik na weselu”. However, a number of authors contest collapsing ideas of communitarianism, which insists on the importance of tradition, and of civil society, which is a modern concept, hence cannot be grounded in tradition. Wim Dubbink, “Political philosophy: salvation by civil society?”, in Idem. Assisting the invisible hand, contested relations between market, state and civil society, (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publisher 2003), 135. Yet again, Polish conservatives, by linking the concept of civil society with the tradition of I Republic republicanism try to engineer such traditional references.
necessarily guarantee that they would be ‘schools of democracy’. Hence indeed, the relationship between civil society and democracy can be seen in different manners. Ralf Dahrendorf, for instance, characterised the liberal regime as a symbiosis between political institutions (democracy) allowing for peaceful transfer of power, and social institutions (civil society) allowing for autonomous manifestation of people’s values, preferences and interests. They would be both necessary to ensure freedom.

Among many models of civil society the two aforementioned visions: communitarian and liberal are of use here, because they exemplify the oppositions on other key political concepts as well. On the one hand, the liberals and the leftists would underscore the vital importance of civil society for the liberal democratic form of regime and see its role in the “upbringing and education, together with the provision of public forums and arenas for the diversity of opinions and interests”123. On the other hand, the conservatives would be surprisingly sceptical of this concept, without trying to push for a communitarian understanding of it, like they quite successfully did with the concept of patriotism, for that matter.

This scepticism can be understood in the light of the fear that the transformation of current political reality (globalisation) weakens the state124, and that the subsequent strengthening of the civil society could endanger the vigour of the national community. Hence, also on this level of the reflection of the conservatives, nation trumps society. Such state of facts would testify of the lasting importance of the category of the nation for them, and of the rejection of any other concepts that could potentially undermine its significance. As mentioned before, in the emerging and consolidating conservative mind-set, the search for a way out (third way) of the opposition between liberal dogmatism and defence of national tradition, i.e. conventionally understood ‘culture wars’ or cultural conflict over values, was the idea of civic patriotism that Cichocki proposed in 2002. It underscored the importance of civic activity, yet dismissed the assumption that it could be based in civic virtues only (that he qualified as old-fashioned). He linked civic patriotism to the nation, community based in history and culture.

Consequently, it is possible to conceptualise at least one of the aspects of the conflict between the left-wing and the right-wing as the opposition between (civil) society and nation, which is also one of the axes of the contestation about patriotism (stronger in the discussions that took place in the first decade of transition though). This dichotomy between the society and the nation can be compared to the one between state and nation from the Interwar period that will be discussed in the following section.

122 Quoted after Eliasson, op. cit.
123 Ibid. 20.
Yet, simple dichotomies using the concepts of society and nation, assuming that the idea referring to (civil) society is closer to patriotism and the one referring to nation to nationalism, would be misleading, because, as shown before, not only nation and society can be differently defined, but also patriotism can be linked to nation, and does not necessarily have to slide towards integral nationalism, but develop towards civic positions.

5. Political languages and theoretical references
Throughout the period under scrutiny, the references to international theoretical literature (on nations, nationalism, cosmopolitism, communitarianism and patriotism) in the discussion of the concept of patriotism progressively multiplied (as discussed in the specific chapters). However, the use of these references was a bit automatic, in the sense, that they rather served the authors to underpin their positions or points of view, and not to propose a fully-fledged new theory or present a polemical opinion to the quoted source. Most of the times authors selected and discussed sources that proved their specific points.

Surprisingly, one of the possibly crucial aspects of the theoretical thinking about patriotism, its moral permissibility, received relatively little attention in the analysed debates. There was virtually one example of an author discussing it in detail and proposing a strong individualistic stance that any particularistic attachment such as patriotism should not be permitted (following the theory of Peter Singer)\(^{125}\). Other authors seem to take the need or value of patriotism for granted (or assume that it has an intrinsic value, along the lines of the communitarian argument). It is also the case of a number of liberals, especially from the older generations (Szacki, Jedlicki), who have a relatively big amount of sympathy and understanding for mild communitarian theories (such as proposed by Cichocki in 2002).

At this stage probably it would be also interesting to refer to continuities (or the lack thereof) of ideological positions and political languages, because it can be enlightening when it comes to views on patriotism. Surely, this would require a reference to the II Republic (1918-1939), as the only democratic antecedent of the III Republic (1989-present). While it marked the reconstitution of the country after 123 years of partitions, after the coup d'état de Sanacja in 1926, orchestrated by Józef Piłsudski, it drifted towards more autocratic positions. Reflection about II Republic should also include a deeper analysis of the figures and ideas of Piłsudski and Roman Dmowski.

Dmowski's ideas were more or less constant over time, and he always subscribed to nationalist stances, and ethnic vision of the nation, expressed also by the National-Democratic Party, *Endecja*, that he co-founded in 1897. Before the First World War, he did not advocate undertaking military action, but subscribed to the option of constructing some level of autonomy under the umbrella of the Russian empire, because he believed than an independent Polish state would fast become dominated by Germany. Piłsudski, to the contrary, initially a socialist, during the First World War, at first, fought on the side of the

\(^{125}\) Tomasz Żuradzki, "Patriotyzm jest jak rasizm (Patriotism is like racism)", *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 17 August 2007.
Central Powers (his goal was to defeat Russia), but then switched sides in 1917 and contributed to regaining independence on the side of the Allies. His vision of the state was multicultural in which he opposed Dmowski’s integral nationalism\textsuperscript{126}. In the end, in 1921, after Piłsudski defeated the Bolsheviks in 1920, the Allies imposed a compromise solution between their two visions of the state’s Eastern border (less to the East privileged more ethnic unity – Dmowski, more to the East implied having more national minorities – Piłsudski). These two men and their strong ideas became a kind of ideal types of opposed approaches to nation and the form of Polish state; this is why a saying coined by Jerzy Giedroyć, editor-in-chief of the emigration opposition publication *Kultura*, that ‘two coffins ruled Polish politics’ still stands. Possibly the third coffin of Lech Kaczyński will not change the situation, because apart from his spectacular death in the plane crash, he did not bring a way to get out of this ideological deadlock.

It also needs to be mentioned that these two main camps were opposed on the form of the nation, or rather on its importance, but also on the question of the state\textsuperscript{127}. The coup d’état in 1926 constitutes an important caesura for this question as well, because before that the lines of opposition on these two concepts, or ‘collectivist visions of the world’\textsuperscript{128}, run across both camps. However, after the coup, and the radicalisation of the politics, the division started coinciding with both camps, logically, the nationalist *Endecja* stood on the side of the ‘nation’, while progressively authoritarian *Sanacja* on the side of the ‘state’. When we think of the current opposition between the (civil) ‘society’ and the ‘nation’, sketched in the previous section, it resembles this opposition in a sense; again, the most conservative element subscribes to the nation, while the promotion of society is stronger on the side of leftist or liberal minds. It is not to imply though that the arguments or oppositions state–nation and society–nation are the same, as it would require a more thorough analysis.

What is important to mention rather, is that *Endecja*, and Dmowski in particular, have been strongly critical of Romantic ideas, especially concerning the nation as

\textsuperscript{126} Andrzej Mencwel, following the analysis of Andrzej Walicki, thinks that the vision of nation and nationalism promoted by Dmowski had the consequence of furthering the pejorative connotations of ‘nationalism’ in Poland, also in the academic discourse, because of its strong elements of anti-Semitism, exclusive link between nationality and one specific religious denomination, and cultural fundamentalism. For that reason, he says that the highest skill in Poland is to discuss ‘the problem of the nation’ without falling in the nationalist trap and to free nationalism from its integral connotation. To his mind Walicki greatly contributed to such task, by making distinction between different possible options of nationalism and advocating for liberal nationalism. He also thought that there was no contradiction between national bond and civic society. Nation however, in comparison to society, had a strong historical identity.. Andrzej Mencwel, “Od historii idei do ideowego projektu (From history of ideas to ideational project)”, in *Kultura i myśl polska. Prace wybrane (Culture and Polish thought. Selected works)*, t. 1. Naród, nacionalizm, patriotyzm (Nation, nationalism, patriotism), Andrzej Walicki, (Kraków: TAWPIN „Uniwersitas”, 2009), XIV.

\textsuperscript{127} Krzysztof Kawalec, “Problem patriotyzmu w myśli politycznej Enedacji (The problem of patriotism in the political thought of Enedacja)”, in *Patriotyzm Polaków*, op. cit., 153-156.

a spiritual being or as a cultural idea. They criticised the 19th century uprisings as a waste of the energy of the nation, and pointless revolts. Instead of these useless gestures of defiance against partitioning powers, they insisted on the need of hard work. In a sense, their political realism promoting national egoism was closer to positivist stances of ‘work at basis’. To the contrary, Sanacja, the camp of Piłsudski, were closer (yet not uncritical) to the Romantic idea, as it put the nation’s freedom high on the political agenda and promoted the fight for its independence and supported the insurrectional tradition. Another point that some authors underscore is that Romantics, in their time, were close to political liberalism129.

Nowadays, the lines of ideational divide are far from being the same, as it could have been seen in the debates about patriotism. While by past, it was Endecja that criticized the national uprisings, now it is the left that adopts the rationalist discourse (especially with the two most recent debates and Krytyka Polityczna’s stances in them)130. What’s more, by past the left (Piłsudski) was inspired by Romanticism, now it is mostly a reservoir of references for the political conservative right-wing. Its representatives are convinced of being the only true patriots and their liking of the Romantic paradigm is strongly linked to its cult of nation’s sacrifices and glorious defeats on the battlefield. Furthermore, as demonstrated before, nowadays conservatives are strongly attached to nation, and while they might refer to Piłsudski, at times, Sanacja’s focus on the country and questions of citizenship is further from their preoccupations. They rather subscribe to templates of national interest, and have a vision of nation that is closer to the ideas of Endecja, but they also are attached to big gestures and discourse, and emotional and spiritual aspects of Romanticism.131

Of course, Endecja cannot be described as the sole tradition of the right-wing ideas, one should not forget other important 19th century groups such as liberals or the conservative Kraków’ historical school. However, today’s conservatives do not take after this last heritage, in the sense that they reject critical approach towards the nation’s past132. When it comes to today’s liberals, they resemble positivists, in their focus on ‘work at basis (praca u podstaw)’, and the need of reinforcing civil society, but they also take after Endecja in their criticism of martyrology. Hence, one can observe that the use of templates and historical references is rather a curious mélange and is not necessarily consistent over time. Probably the most surprising element is the new left’s highly rational stance, especially during the national mourning in 2010. It remains in contradiction with the fact that overall they also strongly refer to Romanticism in

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130 Jakub Halcewicz-Pleskaczewski, "Prawicowiec przeciwko powstaniu (Rightwinger against the Uprising)", Gazeta Wyborcza, 24 July 2012.
131 This mélange of references is further evolving, according to Marcin Zaremba. In his analysis of the "Report on the state of the Republic", published by PiS in 2011, he concludes there that currently PiS goes away from its traditional mix of ideas (a bit of Endecja, a bit of Sanacja, and a bit of ‘soc’) towards stronger and more pronounced nationalist stances, where nation is treated as an absolute, and there is a constant need to defend national values. Marcin Zaremba, "Program partii programem narodu (Programme of the party as programme of the nation)", Polityka, 30 April 2011.
132 Marcin Król, "Polska prawica, byt fikcyjny (Polish right-wing, a fictional existence)", Wprost, 16 (2012).
their programmatic documents\textsuperscript{133}, but in this critical ‘Romantic moment’ this reference is silenced. It cannot be said that it is because the deceased president was from the right-wing, because among the deceased in the catastrophe there were many important left-wing politicians too. Hence, one can observe that in a diachronic perspective, the ideological positions vary considerably.

While much was said before concerning the ideological positions of the II and III Republics, one should not lose sight of the communist times and the ideological developments that occurred then especially in the field of nationhood. One of the important heritages of the communist period with respect to ideological positions is a certain devastation of the heritage and concept of the left, making it difficult for that ideological family to regain its position after 1989.\textsuperscript{134} In the domain of nation, it needs to be noted that the transformation of the state that occurred after 1945 provided an important contextual change. The change of the borders, the loss of the Eastern lands, the acquisition of the Western lands, and subsequent transfers of populations completely changed the structure of the population. Poland from a multicultural country, where national minorities constituted more than 30% of the population, became an almost homogenous nation-state. The communists took full credit for it in their propaganda. While they rejected nationalism in their official discourse, and the propaganda proclaimed the rejection of the ‘right-wing-nationalist deviation’ (this term was first used in 1948), they also used national symbols and references to nationalism, in order to obtain people’s allegiance to the new regime, most frequently during crisis moments\textsuperscript{135}. While their simplistic approach led to reducing nationality to folklore and popular culture\textsuperscript{136}, they also tried to create a ‘socialist patriotism’, based on very selective use of past traditions, that was supposed to amalgamate the interest of the party with the interest of the national community, in the name of their slogan “program partii, programem narodu (program of the party, program of the nation)”. Robert Brier describes the attempt at promoting this peculiar vision, as a rationalisation of the contradiction between the system’s proclaimed values and the country realities; and as a challenge to the dominant, despite all propagandist efforts idea of a “Catholic nation”, which was not less constructed, but based on more adapted reinterpretation of past traditions, and coincided with the ‘imagined community’\textsuperscript{137}.

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\textsuperscript{133} In their \textit{Krytyki Politycznej przewodnik lewicy} (Guide to the Left), Krytyka Polityczna’s authors affirm that Polish Romanticism was an instrument of “including Polishness to the overall project of freedom for humanity”, 167. Kucharczyk follows on this point and criticizes the fact that they omit the fact that Romanticism also had a religious aspect, the same as they omit it from Brzozowski’s biography. He also objects to the fact that while Krytyka Polityczna criticizes the coup d’état of Piłsudski of 1926 they do not mention that the left was generally partisan of this solution. Kucharczyk, \textit{Polska myśl polityczna}, 183.
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\textsuperscript{135} Zaremba, \textit{Komunizm, legitymizacja, nacjonalizm}.
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\textsuperscript{136} Wóycicki, “Jaka pamięć o drugiej rzeczpospolitjej”.
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\textsuperscript{137} Brier, \textit{The roots of the “Fourth Republic”}, 73.
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The evolution of the political sphere after 1989 surely provides a valuable political contextualisation, but it needs to be mentioned that the languages in which concepts are discussed, the broadly speaking liberal, conservative and leftist positions, are not necessarily to be identified with specific political parties. These languages are better referred to the interventions of the intellectuals (be them ‘public’ or ‘political’). While some authors (e.g. Geneviève Zubrzycki) collapse leftist-liberal intellectuals into one category, for the purpose of simplicity and construction of an easier dichotomous position, I suggest that this can be justified rather for the beginning of the democratic transition, and the position of the former democratic opposition. A number of its members, mostly from the older generation of intellectuals, at a certain time, evolved from revisionist leftist positions towards more liberal ones, and had a wider propensity for understanding or having sympathy for different arguments: liberal and communitarian alike (e.g. Jerzy Szacki). However, the emergence of two new, strong intellectuals camps: first the conservative philosophers, in mid-1990s and their influence on PiS (including e.g, Marek Cichocki, Dariusz Karłowicz, Dariusz Gawin, Tomasz Merta or Zdzisław Krasnodębski, and Jarosław Gowin) and then leftist circle, in early 2000s (that can be linked to *Krytyka Polityczna*, and associated groups, e.g. of feminists, represented by Agnieszka Graff or Kazimiera Szczuka), rather testifies of a progressive clarification of three distinct political languages. It is interesting to note that while the opinions of the leftists would be at the beginning ignored by the conservatives, this situation changes progressively. It is correlated to the fragmentation of the conservative circle and publications, and a relative cohesion of the activity of *Krytyka Polityczna*.138

While the (political) liberal language might share a number of assumptions with the leftist, the latter has specific claims of its own. Many important intellectual figures, such as Marcin Król, or Magdalena Środa are often taken as examples of liberal thinkers in these discussions, but their sensibilities can at times put them closer to the conservative side of the argument (Król) or to the leftist one (Środa). Hence, one should not consider intellectual boundaries as set in stone and impermeable, but rather as ideal-types, used in order to render the understanding of certain arguments a little simpler. The progressive emergence of different ideological camps, their influence on politics, and their sustained interest in the concept of patriotism, suggests that it is one among key political concepts the definition of which is crucial for ideological camps to achieve further domination over the political or public spheres.

6. The insights from the discussions of patriotism for public sphere and political culture

Brier starts his analysis of the concept of the IV Republic from stating that “few scholars analysing politics and society in Poland’s Third Republic fail to recognize the deeply divisive influence that debates over collective identity, religion or history have on the country’s political discourse”139. Indeed, also debates about the meaning of patriotism are increasingly structured by a

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number of powerful cleavages, e.g. the motives of ‘two Polands’ and of ‘two nations’, the opposition between ‘real Poles’ and ‘normal Poles’ or between ‘real patriots’ and ‘cosmo-Poles’. It needs to be noted that most of these oppositions were fleshed out recently, and a strong majority of them in the aftermath of the plane crash of 2010.

As mentioned before, despite the fact that often times the intellectual or ideological oppositions over patriotism are sketched as between two ideological camps, broadly speaking conservatives versus liberals, with time it is possible to observe the emergence of a strong, third, leftist circle that also engages in the contestation. However, as mentioned before, often the liberal and leftist groups of intellectuals or languages are collapsed together into one category that is opposed to the dominant conservative one, in order to create a simpler dichotomy. Such binary trend of referring to the seemingly everlasting opposition between liberals and conservatives, structuring for public discourse, reflects a deeper cultural conflict over values. This fact also leads to the creation of mutual discourses of exclusion, where the views of the other are rejected from the start, which does not lead to dialogue, let alone deliberation, but reinforces sticking to one’s positions at any cost.

Subsequently, one gets aware rapidly of the necessity of analysing the process of contestation of the concept of patriotism with a broader focus on political discourses (or ideologies) within which it is used and going beyond schematic oppositions. But also it shows that even the camps, which traditionally are not strongly associated with patriotism, such as the left wing, should not be disregarded in this discussion, because they strongly voice their views (at least intellectuals from Krytyka Polityczna do) and do not want to get marginalised in debates about crucial political concepts.

However, one should also be aware of the fact that nowadays, the old cleavage between left and right wings is reconceptualised. Kucharczyk has a point when he says that, in Poland, one of the main factors of understanding of left and right wings nowadays is their respective position concerning the III Republic\footnote{Kucharczyk, Polska myśl polityczna.}. While the right wing would be strongly critical of it, describing it as resulting from a faulty transformation of the communist regime into a post-communist one, and even aspire to transform it into (already discussed before) IV Republic, the left wing active in politics, SLD, would be more appreciative of its heritage. It does not necessarily have to be the case of the emerging leftist intellectuals from Krytyka Polityczna. Mirosława Grabowska, in her 3D matrix, points to yet another dimension of the left-right cleavage. To her mind, it is increasingly relying on the worldviews and one of the axes concerns the ‘spiritual realm’\footnote{Mirosława Grabowska, “System partyjny w budowie (A political system under construction)**, Krytyka, 37 (1991) 24-33.}. Here, the opposition would concern the question of whether politics should be fought and defined in terms of civil society and liberal values or ‘nation’ and national values. I suggest that these insights are crucial and meet in the debates about patriotism as demonstrated in the previous sections, which show indeed
that the newest face of Polish ‘culture wars’ are related to the opposition between civic and national values, society and nation.

The conclusion that one can form on the question of the public sphere and political culture, basing oneself on the debates about patriotism, is that the mainstream discourse undergoes a growing radicalisation and polarisation\textsuperscript{142}. In terms of political culture, the general opinion states that it was formed under partitions, and is based mostly on the Romantic templates. It is also coherent with the view of the national mythology as imprinted by the question of national survival (linked to Catholicity) and of fight for independence and sovereignty\textsuperscript{143}. Even if, throughout the transition, in the debates about the meaning of patriotism, intellectuals of different ideological circles challenged Romantic frames and tried to propose other objects and options of patriotic allegiance for the new reality, no substantial change occurs. Firstly, it is exemplified by the references used during the national mourning. Secondly, one can notice that the challenge of the Romantic model is rather observed at the intellectual level. There, even the conservative intellectuals develop ideas of communitarian patriotism distinct from Romantic templates. To the contrary, in the political sphere, the conservatives rely on black and white vision of the reality and fear that any criticism of national history that would weaken or even destroy national tradition and community, hence push towards strong affirmative approach. This strength of Romantic model demonstrates that no new values or cultural codes for political culture were successfully created during the transition\textsuperscript{144}, and that the national reference still stands strong, and it is a strong leverage to be called ‘good patriot’. Furthermore, the very poetic of the Romantic pathos reinforces the tension between two worlds: the real one and the one of unconditional values. This dualism, which rises to be the main characteristic of the political culture impedes any hope for constructing a lasting unity. The polarisation of the public sphere is also reflected in the approach to patriotism, which is characterised by a permanent contestation.

Some go as far as saying that it is the phenomenon of Polish patriotism to divide instead of uniting; to destroy the community, instead of creating it\textsuperscript{145}. It forges and reinforces the (national) identity based on what divides, not what unites. The everlasting dream (or rather obsession) of unity idealises its short moments in the collective memory (e.g. the opposition to communism, Solidarność), but does not make them last. Because of the uncertainty, which reigned in Poland after 1989 concerning the state and its nature, the panic searching for meaning ensued. The political quarrel slid from the concrete questions to values and turned into axiological conflict, which remains confined in the symbolical sphere. While people remain in a strong distrust of politics, politicians contribute to the Polish-Polish war, a destructive conflict, which does not generate energy and impedes change. Despite efforts of some intellectuals, this conflict promotes exclusion, because if someone is excluded from the community, there is no obligation to talk to them anymore, hence their arguments can be dismissed.

\textsuperscript{142} More niche publications and discourses were not scrutinised, the main frames were analysed.
\textsuperscript{143} Zubrzycki, “History and the national sensorium”.
\textsuperscript{144} Michał Stasiński, “Jakiego patriotyzmu Polacy potrzebują (What patriotism do Poles need?)”, Interview with Jerzy Jedlicki, Gazeta Wyborcza, 26 April 2010.
\textsuperscript{145} Żakowski, “Wojna świąt”.

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