Re-Branding a Nation Online
Re-Branding a Nation Online
Discourses on Polish Nationalism and Patriotism

Magdalena Kania-Lundholm
Abstract

The aim of this dissertation is two-fold. First, the discussion seeks to understand the concepts of nationalism and patriotism and how they relate to one another. In respect to the more critical literature concerning nationalism, it asks whether these two concepts are as different as is sometimes assumed. Furthermore, by problematizing nation-branding as an “updated” form of nationalism, it seeks to understand whether we are facing the possible emergence of a new type of nationalism. Second, the study endeavors to discursively analyze the “bottom-up” processes of national reproduction and re-definition in an online, post-socialist context through an empirical examination of the online debate and polemic about the new Polish patriotism.

The dissertation argues that approaching nationalism as a broad phenomenon and ideology which operates discursively is helpful for understanding patriotism as an element of the nationalist rhetoric that can be employed to study national unity, sameness, and difference. Emphasizing patriotism within the Central European context as neither an alternative to nor as a type of nationalism may make it possible to explain the popularity and continuous endurance of nationalism and of practices of national identification in different and changing contexts. Instead of facing a new type of nationalism, we can then speak of new forms of engagement which take place in cyberspace that contribute to the process of reproduction of nationalism. The growing field of nation-branding, with both its practical and political implications, is presented as one of the ways in which nationalism is reproduced and maintained as a form of “soft” rather than “hard” power within the global context. The concept of nation re-branding is introduced in order to account for the role that citizens play in the process of nation branding, which has often been neglected in the literature. This concept is utilized to critically examine, understand, and explain the dynamics of nation brand construction and re-definition, with a particular focus on the discursive practices of citizens in cyberspace. It is argued that citizens in the post-socialist countries, including Poland, can engage in the process of nation re-branding online. It is also argued that this process of online nation re-branding may legitimately be regarded as a type of civic practice through which citizens connect with each other and reproduce a form of cultural national intimacy.

The results of the analysis of the online empirical material illustrate that nation re-branding is a complex, dynamic, and ambivalent phenomenon. It involves a process of discursive negotiation of nation and of national identity, but also challenges, dismantles, and transforms the national image as it is communicated both internally and externally. This reveals nation re-branding as an element in the post-socialist transformation from a “nation” to a “Western,” “modern,” and “normal” country in which dealing with an “old” nation brand is as equally important as the introduction of the new brand. Nationalism does not disappear in the digital age, but rather becomes part of the new way of doing politics online, whereby citizens are potentially granted a form of agency in the democratic process.

Keywords: nationalism, patriotism, nation branding, nation re-branding, cyberspace, Poland, post-socialist transformation, cultural national intimacy

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urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-180903 (http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-180903)
To my Grandparents

Dziadkom
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Acknowledgements

This work could not see the daylight without the presence of several people who shared their advice, inspiration and support throughout the process of researching and writing my dissertation. I am particularly indebted to my supervisors Vessela Misheva and Sandra Torres for their strong commitment, expertise, encouragement, enthusiasm and advice during the last two years of preparing and writing the thesis. I would also like to thank Jukka Gronow for supervision and advice during earlier stages of my research. In addition, I want to acknowledge Kerstin Jacobsson, Tanya Jukkala, Marie Flinkfeldt and Hedvig Ekerwald for helpful comments and suggestions on the earlier versions of the manuscript. All the remaining mistakes remain solely mine.

I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends at the Department of Sociology, Uppsala University; the “06:orna”: Malinda Andersson, Catrine Andersson, Kitty Lassinantti, Stina Fernqvist and Helen Ekstam. Malinda-thank you for sharing the room with me, inspiration and discussions for more than five years! I would also like to thank my friends and colleagues Jessica Mjöberg, Naomi Smedberg, Serine Gunnarsson, Magdalena Vieira and Ugo Corte as well as other members of the seminars and workshops where I have presented some of the ideas advanced in this dissertation. I would also like to thank members of the staff at the Department, in particular Emma Hansen Dahlqvist, Ulrika Söderlind and Anders Hökback.

My special thanks also goes to Steven Saxonberg, my mentor and friend; without your encouragement, inspiration and advice I would probably never have started my PhD studies in Uppsala. I also would like to thank Magnus Rodell for comments on parts of the manuscript, Janusz Korek and Julian Ilicki for discussion and valuable advice and Jakob Lusensky for inspiring conversations and friendship.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge Sabina Mihelj and Michael Pickering from the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University, UK- your advice and inspiration have strongly shaped the ideas in this dissertation, thank you. I would also like to thank Larry Ray from the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research University of Kent, UK for discussion and suggestions during my stay at the School. The material support for the travels during my studies came from SYLFF (Sakasawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund), Rektors Wallenbergstiftelse and the Smålands Nation.
I also would like to acknowledge Christopher Kennard from Anchor English for professional proofreading of the dissertation.

Finally, I would like to thank my family both in Poland and Sweden; you are my rock and “cheering team”, thank you for always being there for me. Kochani Dziadkowie i Rodzice: dziękuję Wam za miłość, wsparcie, inspirację i wiarę we mnie, nawet wtedy, gdy sama wątpiłam w swoje siły i umiejętności. Mamo: dziękuję za to, że mnie słuchasz. Tack Rolf och Gudrun för stöd och kärlek. And last, but not least; thank you Jonas and Leonard for love, patience, listening and challenging me in so many different ways and for never giving up on me. I hope I can make you proud one day.

Uppsala, September 2012
People from different places live in a new situation of proximity with each other. Consequently, a nation-state is less than ever an impermeable container of a person's culture and identity; is less than ever an adequate delimitation of his ethical or political or economic concerns; is less than ever, it follows, a sufficient artistic canvas.

"Man without a country" J. O’Neill on V.S. Naipul

In a world where people can share their thoughts and ideas throughout the globe in the blink of an eye, do national borders disappear? In a world where some can juggle with their image and lifestyle as much as they wish, do national identities disappear? In a world where the nation-state is less than ever a sufficient artistic canvas for human expression, does nationalism disappear? The answer in each case is ‘no’.

Although many believe that we have finally entered the post-national, global, and cosmopolitan era (e.g. Held, 2001, Vertovec & Cohen, 2002, Beck, 2002), nations and national identification continue to matter, not only for groups struggling for a piece of soil to be internationally recognized as nation-states, but also among members of well-established democratic societies. The importance of nations and nationalism in legitimizing statehood was particularly confirmed by the collapse of communism and the fragmentation of such supra-national structures as the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. Over the last twenty years, the research concerning nationalism has not only grown extensively, but also shifted from macro-scale debates focusing on the origin and ontology of the nation to more empirically grounded studies focusing on specific cases, questions of representation, reproduction of national discourses, and intersections between national identity and other social categories, such as gender, age, and class. Stated simply, this has involved a change from defining nationalism as a modern force that contributes to the creation of modern societies (Anderson, 1983, Gellner, 1983, Hobsbawm, 1990) to regarding nationalism as a discourse that contributes to the reproduction of already established societies through popular culture and a set of everyday “bottom-up” practices, including discursive ones (Billig,

The question these newer approaches seek to answer is not what nationalism is but rather how it continues to be one of the most important social, political, and cultural forms of identification that people engage with. The discussion about nationalism can hardly ever take place without a discussion about what the nation is. This project starts from the idea that a nation is a category of practice rather than an entity defined in substantialist terms.

Over a hundred years ago, Renan (1996[1882]) delivered a lecture in Paris on the question “what is a nation?” Renan criticized the accounts of nation that attempted to define nations in terms of national boundaries founded on race, language or culture. Instead, he provided a powerful critique and account of nationhood as a subjective phenomenon based on the metaphor of nation as an “everyday plebiscite”. Nation, according to Renan, is a “spiritual principle”, a large-scale solidarity and a daily plebiscite “just as an individual’s existence is a perpetual affirmation of life” (ibid:19). Based on the understanding of nation suggested by Renan, it can be argued that nation is also a form of agreement and negotiation that is produced, reproduced and challenged by various practices, including discursive ones. In other words, nation is never ‘out there’ but rather ‘here’, ‘with us’, whenever we speak, agree, and disagree about it. As such, nation is also an ambivalent, contested and challenged space, and nationhood is a political claim rather than ethnocultural fact (Brubaker, 2004). This aspect of ambivalence is pointed out by Bhabha (1990) who says:

> It is an ambivalence that emerges from a growing awareness that, despite the certainty with which historians speak of the ‘origins’ of nation as a sign of the ‘modernity’ of society, the cultural temporality of nation inscribes a much more transitional social reality (ibid:1).

The “cultural temporality” of the nation that Bhabha talks about relates to the aspect of contingency in the process of construction and representation of the nation. The “transitional social reality” he talks about shifts our attention towards the understanding of nation as an ongoing process of becoming, rather than a fixed entity. This understanding of nation becomes particularly relevant in the context of social and political change, such as the conditions after the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe.

The socio-political changes during the late 1980s and 1990s connected to the collapse of communism in the region are among the significant factors that contributed to the development of scholarly work on nations and nationalism. On the one hand, nationalism served as an important theoretical tool for gaining a better understanding of the social, political and cultural changes in the region. On the other, however, the literature focused primarily on those aspects of nationalism that were associated with violence, ethnic cleansing, and war. As a result, the literature on the topic became saturated
with studies of "Eastern," "ethnic" and "bad" nationalism as a destructive force that dominated the region. This status of nationalism as a "moral mistake" reproduced the vision of nationalism as a problematic ideology and a basis for collective identification. Consequently, some scholars (Habermas, 1998, Beck, 2000) suggested that we need to look for alternative forms of collective identification, particularly in a globalized era.

As a response to the problems associated with this status of nationalism and the growing literature on postnationalism and globalization, scholars from a variety of disciplines sought to restore the concept of patriotism as a possible alternative to nationalism in a post-national globalized context (Nussbaum, 1996, Habermas, 1998). However, the literature in this regard remains focused on the established democratic societies and seldom takes into account the way patriotism has been defined and discussed in other parts of Europe. The majority of the literature on nationalism presents an Anglo-Saxon Western understanding of patriotism as a form of civic loyalty to the nation-state. In addition, there remains a persistent legacy of the distinction between civic and ethnic nationalisms as mutually exclusive. This logic supports the understanding of Western nationalism as a form of “good” civic patriotism while portraying Central and East European nationalism as inherently ethnic, “bad”, violent, and inferior (Kohn, 1944, Schöpflin, 1995).

At the same time, the Central European scholarship developed a different and much narrower understanding of nationalism that led to a different understanding of patriotism as well (Szacki, 1999, Auer, 2004). Therefore, it can be suggested that the scholarly debates concerning nationalism and patriotism went in different directions. The question is whether or not an understanding of nationalism as an ideology which focuses on the practices of national production, reproduction, and identification, including everyday “bottom-up” practices, is capable of challenging the one-sided dichotomies of nationalism that persist in the literature. And if that is the case, then how are nationalism and patriotism related to each other. These questions are particularly relevant within the context of Central and Eastern Europe, a region that has been generally regarded as synonymous with the problematic face of nationalism.

After the collapse of communism, the countries of the region went through a process of systemic transition. Scholarly debates concerning the post-communist transition have primarily focused on the political and economic aspects of this systemic change (Lauristin, 1997). Consequently, the tendency has been to overlook transition as an issue of cultural and national

\(^2\)Unless otherwise indicated, by "Central and Eastern Europe" I here refer to the geo-political division of the countries of both Central and Eastern Europe into three groups according to their progress in transformation, namely, 1) Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia, 2) the Baltic republics, 3) the so-called Balkan countries of Southern Europe (Lewis, 1997). Since the empirical focus of this dissertation is on the Polish case, the discussion is perhaps most relevant for the countries of the first group, namely Central Europe.
transformation. This does not mean, however, that questions of nation and national identity were overlooked. On the contrary, the systemic transformation has been accompanied by a deep need for national self-redefinition that has implied searching for a new self-image as modern European nations\(^3\). The importance of this national self-image has been reinforced by the need to face international competition, including competition associated with the rise of neoliberal globalization (Kaneva, 2011). One of the ways of dealing with this situation has been to introduce marketing strategies in which groups of externally employed experts have been invited by the Central and Eastern European states to work with domestic agencies in order to build coherent nation images, also known as nation brands. The main goal has been to introduce an attractive and competitive nation brand that would attract investors and other external audiences. An additional goal of these expert-driven strategies has been to improve the national self-image and boost the sense of national pride domestically.

The idea that nation-states can be perceived as brands conforms to the logic of market capitalism addressing nations not necessarily as complex and dynamic ethno-historical projects of exclusion but rather economic objects of exchange. This process suggests the double logic of the emerging commercial nationalism, in which nation branding is considered a form of global governance in the era of global capitalism (Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011) in that while states are marketing themselves as brands, commercial entities also make use of nationalist appeal in order to increase their profits. Consequently, it can be argued that this process can enter into and alter discourses concerning nationalism, national identity and how we communicate and relate to nations in general. However, so far, the majority of initiatives aiming at improvement of the national self-image, both in post-communist Central Europe and beyond, have been focusing on state-sponsored initiatives. In other words, nation brand or collective national self-image has been mainly the work of experts such as marketers and policy-makers. This means that the main focus has steadily been on constructing new and cohesive images that can be attractive and helpful in managing negative stereotypes and other stigmas. This also means that these experts are neither particularly interested in citizens’ views nor take into account that nations and national identities

\(^3\)In this project the terms transition and transformation are used interchangeably throughout the text. This is also true of the terms post-communist and post-socialist transition/transformation. However, in the literature on the changes in Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of the communist regime, transition is usually referred to as a framework focusing on the political and economic realm leading to democratic consolidation. Transformation on the other hand, is described in terms of changes brought by different legacies of communism which include complex processes of social and cultural change (Sztompka, 2006). For more on the topic of transformation see: http://monumenttotransformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/index.html and on the “varieties of transition” see: (Offe, 1996).
can be dynamic and complex matters of disagreement. Therefore, if we assume that what we are facing here is part of a larger process of redefining and communicating the idea of the nation, can this process also be practiced by citizens? And if so, how do citizens engage in the "bottom-up" process of national production and reproduction?

The question of citizens’ engagement in public matters is often a topic of debate within media studies. In recent years the development of new media, such as online forms of communication, has had an immense impact on the proliferation of online diasporic communities, the emergence of "virtual nations," and other forms of collective national identification. The growing body of research illustrates that digital media are arenas that provide emerging opportunities for diverse forms of national re-imagination (Bastian, 1999, Chan, 2005, Eriksen, 2007). Along with this development, scholars have raised serious questions concerning the potential of cyberspace for reviving the public sphere and providing participatory opportunities for political debate (Dahlgren, 2009, Papacharissi, 2010). Following this development, one may ask how we can account for processes of negotiation of political identities, such as national identities, taking place in the cyberspace.

One important matter related to the issue of citizen engagement in the context of the new media is the understanding of democracy and democratic process. In this respect, democracy means more than an egalitarian form of government and a pluralistic political system in which all citizens are equal before the law and together determine public policy, laws and activities of the state. Instead, the concept of democracy understood in this project is close to what Ost (2005) describes as democracy that does not limit itself to elections and the right to participation. Ost suggests an inclusive model that focuses on the openness and quality of the democratic system and the degree to which this system accepts all its citizens. This inclusive model of democracy is based on the idea of liberal democracy that all citizens should be treated equally. Ost stresses the importance of citizens in the democratic system and suggests that non-elites have “always been central to democracy” (ibid:27).

This idea of inclusive democracy can be related to the debate about the new media as providing potential for emergence of new spaces of democratic participation and new forms of civic sociality and engagement (Dahlgren, 2009, Papacharissi, 2010). Taking into account the challenges in the way nations are defined and understood as well as the new ways people engage in political matters, one might want to ask whether we can speak of a newly emerging form of nationalism. And if so, how this new type of nationalism is maintained?

Finding an answer to the questions posed above is not an easy task. However, the condition where nationalism is more complex than representing just one side of the “civic” /”ethnic” dichotomy, where the need for a new, post-socialist nation brand is strong and the internet provides a growing potential
for involvement in public matters, makes **Poland** an interesting case, for at least two major reasons.

First, in the literature on nationalism, Poland is discussed as an example of a country where the “ethnic” and “civic” forms of nationhood are not as fundamentally opposite and mutually exclusive in practice as they are in theory (Zubrzycki, 2001). Poland is also an interesting case in Central Europe, since the country combines two separate traditions. On the one hand, Poland is a Catholic country and the Polish language employs the Latin alphabet, which points to its Christian, European heritage. On the other hand, Poland also shares Slavic heritage, and the Polish language belongs to the group of Slavic languages that are present in most of Eastern Europe, including parts of the Balkans. This ambiguity is part of the Polish specificity and at the same time grants Poland a position of a country that is “in between” the East and West. As some scholars suggest, this ambiguity is also one of the sources of the national identity crisis, particularly in the post-socialist context (Janion, 2006).

Both the history of struggles for national independence and the geopolitical situation have shaped the way patriotism is understood in Poland, namely as one of the major national values. The country is often stereotypically represented as a bastion of Catholicism and traditional values. However, after the collapse of communism over twenty years ago, there has been an intense debate concerning the idea of becoming a modern European nation and acquiring the corresponding identity. The public debate, both off and online, has to a large extent been monopolized by a right-wing conservative discourse in support of the traditional, past-oriented vision of patriotism as a form of ethno-cultural belonging to a nation. More recently, however, this traditional image of patriotism has been confronted by an opposing future-oriented vision that defines the relationship to the nation-state on the basis of civic values (Szeligowska, 2008).

Second, one of the ways of dealing with the situation of an emerging collective identity crisis has been the Polish state’s attempts to improve the national image. Although these efforts have been mainly externally oriented, the public debate on the domestic level also raised serious questions about Poland’s national identity, patriotism and the collective self-image. One of the issues has been that the process of systemic transformation has proved to be more complex than expected. The idea assumed by some scholars that transformation from communism to democracy would be more or less equal to the idea of “Westernization”, market liberalization, and democratization has proven to be overly optimistic and one-sided. Additionally, the citizens’ role in this process has seldom been addressed by the scholarship on the

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post-communist transition. Moreover, Poland is one of the Central and Eastern European countries that after joining the European Union received the possibility for a large-scale labor emigration to the West. Recently, scholars pointed out that in the context of the growing mobility and labor migration Westwards, the internet has emerged as a new platform for communication and involvement in the public sphere within and beyond the borders of the nation-state (Gałasińska, 2010).

Aims

Taking stock of the arguments and questions developed above, the goal of this dissertation is two-fold.

First, the dissertation endeavors to engage in a theoretical debate concerning the relation between nationalism and patriotism. It asks whether, taking into account the more critical literature on nationalism, the one-sided dichotomy between civic and ethnic nationalism still holds true. Furthermore, by addressing the latest developments in the scholarship and practice on nation branding and citizen engagement in cyberspace it seeks to understand whether we are facing the possible emergence of a new type of nationalism. By doing this, the dissertation ends up problematizing the literature on nation branding as not a set of marketing campaigns ordered by experts, but rather as a “bottom-up” process of national reproduction and re-definition online.

Second, through the empirical focus on these “bottom-up” processes, as they take place within the online Polish post-socialist context, the aim is to deconstruct discursive practices focusing on dialogue and polemic about the new Polish patriotism and more specifically on the way national identity and nation brand are presented in this debate. Ultimately, the dissertation will show that what the post-socialist countries like Poland do is engage in the process of nation re-branding online. Consequently, by studying how citizens engage in the practice of nation re-branding and analyzing their voices in the debate about patriotism and national identity, the ambition of this dissertation is also to problematize the post-socialist transformation.

5 My goal here is not to propose any normative version of nationalism. Nor do I wish to present nationalism as either exclusionary, illiberal, and ethnic, or inclusionary, liberal, and civic. I instead employ what Beck (2006) refers to as a "both/and" approach. In relation to nationalism this is the view implying both inclusionary and exclusionary aspects of this phenomenon. This view is consistent with more recent scholarship concerning nationalism that employs a broader understanding of this phenomenon (Özkirimli, 2000, Mihelj, 2011).

6 The specific research questions and the way they are operationalized will be discussed in the method section of this thesis.
Study outline

The dissertation begins with the theoretical discussion in chapters 2, 3 and 5. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the scholarship on nationalism and patriotism and seeks to understand the relation between the two concepts. Chapter 3 problematizes the literature on nation branding as a form of ‘updated nationalism’ by looking at the political consequences of this practice in a Central and Eastern European context. Chapter 5 explores cyberspace as an arena of *cultural national intimacy*, where citizens engage in a debate about issues of public concern, such as patriotism and national identity. Chapter 4 addresses the second aim of the dissertation by putting the practice of nation re-branding in the context of post-communist Poland and describes that country’s attempts to redefine nation brand and identity. Chapter 6 provides an overview of the method and the material employed in this study, while chapters 7 and 8 present the results of the analysis. Chapter 9 summarizes the discussion and connects the two levels, theoretical and empirical, to discuss nationalism in a digital age.
Nationalism and patriotism. Usually the two are presented as opposites; nationalism as something negative that should be avoided and patriotism as a positive attitude or feeling towards one’s country. For instance Orwell (1945) argued that the two should not be confused with one another, because while nationalism is inseparable from the desire for power, patriotism means devotion to one place and one way of life, both believed to be the best in the world. However, despite the general belief that one should draw a sharp distinction between them, the reasons for that are rather vaguely defined. Because it is often taken for granted that the two concepts are different, scholars seldom ask about the relation between them, and more importantly, why nationalism and patriotism are theorized as opposites. Another question that is seldom asked is whether they are really that different.

The goal of this chapter is to understand whether nationalism and patriotism are different or not, and if so, why it is that they are theorized as normatively and qualitatively different. In order to pursue that inquiry, the first section addresses the more classical Anglo-Saxon literature on nationalism and ends up discussing the prevalent distinction between two types of nationalism. The second section goes a step further to explore the more recent and critical approaches to nationalism as discourse and ideology reproduced in daily discursive practices. The third section looks at patriotism and the way it is theorized as an alternative to nationalism. Finally, the fourth and final section shifts focus to the discussion about both nationalism and patriotism in the Central European context. This section sheds new light upon the relation between the two concepts, provides insights into why they are theorized as different, and why they are not necessarily as different as is customarily assumed.

Over the past century and especially in the last twenty years or so there have been many attempts to define and classify nationalism. The contentious character of nationalism is often captured by the metaphor of the Janus face. In Roman mythology Janus, a God of time, was depicted as having two heads looking in opposite directions; one into the future and the other one
into the past. In the literature of nationalism Janus face refers to the contradicting aspects of this phenomenon, such as universal and particular factors, integrative and disruptive forces.

There are a number of typologies of nationalism based upon different criteria. Some include historical periods, political strategies and specific ideas and themes that scholars developed around nationalism. In the typologies based on the historical periods, scholars emphasize the dominance of two contradictory forces in the past two centuries. For instance Snyder (1954) distinguished between historical periods starting from the integrative nationalism dominant in the first half of the 19th century to the contemporary, disruptive and xenophobic forms that emerged after World War II. Similarly, typologies based on political strategies point to contradictory uniting and separatist forces that drive nationalist movements to reach the goal of independent nation-states (see Breuilly, 1993). Scholars also distinguish between humanitarian and integral types of nationalism based on the attitudes towards other nations (Szacki, 1999). The humanitarian type of nationalism was popular during the 18th century and followed Enlightenment’s ideals, such as the belief in human progress, solidarity, and the possibility of international collaboration. The integral type is an example of ideology favoring integration within the political and territorial borders of the state as well as national interests, hostility towards those outside of the borders, and refusal to engage in international cooperation. Because of its strong support of national interest and sovereignty, integral nationalism was particularly popular during the 1920s and 1930s among the newly independent nation-states in Europe, such as Poland and Hungary.

However, apart from the typologies based on historical periodizations and political strategies, one of the most influential and persisting typologies in the literature on nationalism refers to the specific ideas about nationalism. Anglo-Saxon scholarship in particular took much inspiration from the works of Kohn (1944).

From idea to nation

“Without idea there would be no nation” (Kohn, 1944:298).

Kohn was among the first scholars to engage in systematic studies on nationalism7. His writings not only acknowledged the growing interest and importance of nationalism as a field of research but also established the basis for thinking about national phenomena in the future. Two themes in the

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7Another influential historian who also contributed to the systematic studies of nationalism was Hayes (see Hayes, 1931)
study of nationalism deserve particular attention here. The first one suggests the distinction between two qualitatively and normatively different types of nationalism, namely the “good” civic type and the “bad” ethnic type. The second theme is the narrative that positions nationalism as ideology and the major mode of socio-political organization and legitimation in the modern era. The thinking about nationalism as modern ideology, until today, has shaped scholarly imagination and thinking about nationalism. Kohn’s legacy mostly lies in his distinction between value-laden and geopolitically polarized ideas about “good/Western” and “bad/Eastern” nationalism. It also lies in the suggestion that behind different forms of nationalism are also different ideas about what the nation is.

From the perspective of this study, this binary distinction and especially the impact it had on research about nationalism and conceptualization of patriotism are of particular importance. The distinction between civic and ethnic nationalisms, has to date been one of the most prominent and persistent typologies in the field of nationalism studies. Civic nationalism has been traditionally associated with the Western political ideas that inspired revolutionaries in the USA and France to struggle for the sovereignty of the people (see Smith, 1991). Within this type, national community remains inclusive and based on political rights of citizenship. Thus, the only means of exclusion, at least from the theoretical point of view, are the territorial boundaries of a given country. The idea of civic, liberal inclusive nationalism is the opposite of the ethnic, cultural and exclusive one that is often associated with non-Western societies, where national belonging and inclusion in the national community depend on culture/ethnicity, blood and birth.

The distinction between two geopolitically separate and ideologically contrasting types of nationalism has been captured by Mainecke (1917) in the two qualitatively different types of nations, such as Staatsnation and Kulturnation. However, later on Kohn developed these ideas into a distinction between civic and ethnic forms of nationalism, where political nationalism based on the principle of citizenship is contrasted sharply with the cultural and ethnic form of national belonging. This distinction was later described by his student Snyder (1954) as “Kohn’s dichotomy”.

By suggesting that the idea is what shapes the nation, Kohn distinguished between two separate concepts employed to define the nation, namely demos and ethnos, which correspond with political and cultural/ethnic types of nationalism respectively. The concept of demos refers to the idea of the nation based on social contract, while ethnos describes more organic and natural collectivity. By giving the USA, France and Britain as examples Kohn de-

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8The distinction between demos and ethnos referring to voluntarist versus organic forms of nationalism suggests a different line of thinking than for instance the Durkheimian (1933) distinction between mechanical and organic forms of solidarity corresponding to different forms of society. The former refers to traditional societies with a sharp division of social roles
scribed Western nationalism as universalistic, inclusive and based on political principles of unification, democracy, liberty and benign love of one’s country. This politically-oriented type of nationalism based on the ideal of inclusive citizenship occurred in England, chronologically before the emergence of the other, Eastern type of nationalism. Ethnic nationalism that is based on culture and the ethnic idea of the nation originated from Romantic movements in Germany and Russia to further inspire national movements in Eastern Europe. Contrary to the civic type, ethnic nationalism builds on the idea of people (Volk) that share the same traditions, history, legends and roots. Ethnic nationalism is exclusive, particularistic, and authoritarian; this is perhaps why it is often regarded as aggressive and violent. Although this sharp distinction between two qualitatively different and opposite types of nationalism “like many typologies obscures as much as it reveals” (Calhoun, 2005:xli), it has resurfaced in many studies of nationalism over the years. One of the reasons is this typology’s persisting logic of difference in thinking about nationalism. According to this logic, we can distinguish between two normatively and qualitatively different types of nationalism. Particularly persistent is the normative distinction between the “good”, desirable, and liberal Western nationalism, often described as “patriotism”, and the bad, violent, backward and unwanted Eastern form.

In Kohn’s description, nationalism is a form of collective identification with lives and aspirations of other people that we might never meet, and territory that we might never entirely see. The way he presents it shows that nationalism is also “a story of liberal achievement and an illiberal challenge to it. It is a story in which the “West” - represented principally by England, France, and the United States - represents the universal and the rest of the world, frequently identified with the “East”, represents innumerable particularisms” (Calhoun, 2005:x). In Kohn’s dichotomy the civic form of nationalism is the normatively acceptable form of social and political organization. The distinction between good and bad nationalism along with the belief that civic nationalism is a Western phenomenon and the result of modernization processes resurfaced in the debates on nationalism during the 1980s and 1990s.

From nation to nationalism

The debate that started in the early 1980s centered around two specific questions, namely “what is a nation?” and “when did it originate?” (Özkirimli, 2000:57-63). According to scholars supporting the view that nationalism is a product of modernity, such as Gellner (1983) or Hobsbawm (1983), the approach and positions, and the latter refers to modern societies and could possibly be associated with more civic, thus voluntarist nationalism.
pearance of the nation-state in Europe was a response to growing processes of industrialization, capitalism, urbanization, the emergence of new elites, and development in communication technologies and education systems. The emergence of nationalism was also related to more general changes in human relations from small-scale communities with local ‘Gemeinschaft’-type relations to the creation of large ‘Gesellschaft’ civil societies with increasing numbers of anonymous ties (Tönnies, [1887], 2001). Modernism can be also described as a reaction to primordialism, an approach that defines nation as naturally given social category, especially its socio-biological form (e.g. van den Berghe, 1978). In addition, modernists supported the idea of nations as constructed, ‘imagined’ and ‘invented’ by social actors in the course of history.

At least three major works that transformed the field of study of nationalism appeared in 1983. These were: Gellner’s “Nations and Nationalism”, Hobsbawm and Ranger’s “The invention of Tradition”, and Anderson’s “Imagined Communities”. These seminal works are referenced in virtually every historical or sociological study that deals with questions of nationalism. The arguments that these three authors put forward are often classified as modernist (Özkirimli, 2000) and focus on nationalism as an ideology or movement that emerged in Europe from the late 18th to 19th century to facilitate the creation of independent and sovereign nation-states.

One of the main points made by modernists is that nation-states are political and cultural units, and nationalism normatively acknowledges this form of statehood legitimization. This is the civic understanding of nationalism because it assumes that the idea of the nation goes hand in hand with political units, such as states. At the same time, it would be misleading to think that the same year of release is synonymous with unanimity in theoretical approaches. If Gellner and Hobsbawm can be classified as scholars emphasizing the political aspects of nationalism, then Anderson’s legacy belongs more to the tradition pointing to culture and a means of communication that enable national identification. In other words, it is culture rather than politics that constitutes the main aspect of national integration. In the following section I briefly discuss both traditions and their characteristics.

Nationalism and politics

Gellner’s (1983) contribution to the literature on nationalism concerns the political role of the state, which he calls the polity, and industrial capitalism as major agents in the process of the formation of modern nationalism. He defined nationalism as an ideology and political principle that merged cultural (national) and political aspects in the form of a nation-state. According to Gellner, the modern nation-state facilitated processes of creation of the labor force leading to growth of capitalism in terms of efficiency of production and distribution. Thus, in the modern state, a nation is a social group
with particular interests, and the state is the final instance to protect the group’s affairs. In this way the modern nation-state also became the basis for the development of the industrial society with a division of labor and other forms of social stratification, such as class. In order to maintain and reproduce the loyalty to the state, social elites developed the strategy of consolidating the masses around the very idea of the nation-state, something that Hobsbawm (1983) defined as part of the process of “invention of tradition”.

In practice ‘invention’ relates to the adjustment of older traditions and customs to modern conditions but also the production of new rituals, ceremonies, public monuments and symbols to celebrate the national unity of the modern state. In this context Hobsbawm spoke of history as providing “cohesion and legitimation of action” (ibid.:12). The role of these old and new traditions was not only to reproduce the nation but also to provide a sense of continuity with the past. For Hobsbawm, political aspects of belonging played an important role as he assumed that people are able to think of national belonging in rational terms. This vision of nationalism as a strictly rational political movement that aims to achieve state power was also described by Breuilly (1993). In Breuilly’s theory, nationalism is synonymous with the drive to establish a modern state and provides the only context for the existence of the nation. He defined the nation as a sovereign, independent political doctrine that represents particular national interests and values over other ones. Breuilly’s approach to nationalism emphasizes the role of national movements, particularly in stateless nations.

This definition of nationalism as an ideological movement and a foundation for building a strong state is also present in Tilly’s (1975 [1997]) writings. Tilly defines nationalism in rather general terms as an idea that seeks congruency between the political aspects of the state and the cultural homogeneity of the nation. Tilly, like Gellner, also pays much attention to the role of the state in the process of homogenization of the national culture and development of state nationalism. However, Tilly acknowledges the unifying role of the political state as an agent setting boundaries for its citizens in terms of geography (development of maps), language, education, historical tradition, cultural heritage, national rituals, symbols, but also administration, the tax system and security. The existence of such boundaries suggests that the processes of nation-building, inclusion, and construction of national unity also imply exclusion of members of other nation-states, or ethnic or religious groups. According to Tilly, the processes of emergence of the new type of state that united citizens also contributed to the growth of hostility towards difference in such forms as anti-Semitism. The focus on the Other as an important aspect of nationalism was also discussed by Greenfeld. In her book “Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity” (1992) she argues that nationalism emerged out of a drive to create a society that could respond to a sense of envy and hatred towards the Other. In her writings she uses the Nietzschean concept of resentment as a state of suppressed feelings of anger and
inability to satisfy them (ibid:15). Nationalism, she claims, is what defines modernity, and not the other way round. It is the will of nationalists to achieve status as nation-states recognized internationally.

As we can see from the discussion so far, modernists such as Gellner, Hobsbawm and others pay much attention to the aspects of nationalism that contribute to the creation of sovereign, modern states. In many of these writings, nationalism is portrayed as an ideological device or ‘glue’ that would keep the state and its citizens together. Nationalism is a basis for social integration and organization and an instrument that connects the state, public, and national interests with the private interests of loyal citizens. This political, civic idea of nationalism corresponds with what Mainecke (1917) called the ‘state nation’ (Staatnation) which emphasizes political rights and citizenship as major factors in the nation-state building process. The belief that the goal of each nation is to achieve state independence and cultural homogeneity within the territorial borders of the nation-state is one of the main premises of the modernist approach to nationalism. The modern forces such as the bureaucratic structures of the state and the industrial society are among the main factors that explain the emergence of nationalism. At the same time, modernists agree that it is the “fusion of culture and polity” that is the foundation of modern nationalism (Gellner, 1983:14).

Nationalism and culture

One of the major factors in the development of modern nationalism pointed out by Anderson (1983) is the rise of capitalism, and “print capitalism” in particular. Anderson, known for his popular definition of nation as a form of “imagined community”, mentions three major conditions for development of nationalism, namely “capitalism, printed press and rise of vernacular languages” (ibid:46). These factors, especially the decline of Latin, adoption of vernacular languages for administrative purposes, and access to newspapers point to the cultural origins of modern nations. It can be argued that, compared to Gellner and Hobsbawm, Anderson took the role of culture and means of communication seriously and gave it the same importance as the political and economic aspects of nationalism.

Nationalism for Anderson was also a major force in the processes of secularization in Europe. He even suggested that nationalism at some point in European history replaced religion. In these new secular conditions people obtained access to the national idea that could be worshipped, instead of God, through national ceremonies, anthems and symbols. Similarly to Gellner and Hobsbawm, Anderson also stressed homogenizing economic and political aspects and anonymous social ties, but defined nation as an “imagined political community that is both politically and territorially limited and sovereign” (ibid:6-7). Thus, contrary to other modernists, such as Gellner, Hobsbawm and Tilly, Anderson emphasized the imagined aspect of
the national community and the role of *culture* as one of the major factors in the process of national imagination. This aspect continues to inspire much of the recent scholarly writings on nationalism and beyond (e.g. Mihelj, 2011). Among the reasons for the popularity of the concept of *imagined communities* one can mention the rise of discursive and constructionist approaches to social reality and globalization, and connected to this, search for alternative, post-national forms of collective belonging. Moreover, the popularity of Anderson’s account can be connected to bringing the concept of culture, traditionally reserved to social anthropology, to the scholarship on nationalism.

At the same time the understanding of culture that is developed in Anderson’s idea of nations as imagined communities is closer to the approach developed in the tradition of cultural studies. Within the Birmingham School where the concept of ‘cultural studies’ originated, culture has been defined in terms of collective subjectivity, as a way of life, an outlook adopted by a community, group or social class (Alasuutari, 1995). The starting point for the cultural studies approach has been a critical stance towards the hierarchic definition of culture that would sharply distinguish between high culture and art on the one hand, and mass/popular and mundane culture on the other. Instead, scholars from the school of cultural studies such as Hall (1997b) suggested an understanding of culture as the terrain of practices, representations, language, values, traditions and customs of a specific society or group. These also include contradictory forms of common sense that derive from and give shape to popular life. Culture understood in this way is also concerned with questions of shared social meanings, such as the variety of ways we make sense of the world. The important aspect of meaning is that it is not produced in a vacuum. Meaning is always generated through signs, such as language. Language is one of the most important aspects of culture because it is constitutive of meanings and knowledge (Barker, 2008). What follows from this is that nation can be defined in at least two ways. On the one hand, nation is a linguistic, cultural community, while on the other it is more of a political community.

Hall’s (1997b) definition points out an important aspect of culture, namely the symbolic and learned aspects of collective identity which are different from biological ones and which can be a basis for the construction of a sense of unity as well as difference in the sense of symbolic borders in nationalism. Anderson’s contribution lies exactly in the understanding that nations as “imagined communities” can be constructed or ‘imagined’ differently because they are products of human thinking, meaning-making and learning. The importance of this symbolic aspect distinguishing one nation from another can also be related to national sentiments and willingness to sacrifice for the national community.

According to Anderson (1983), a nation can be imagined as a “horizontal comradeship” with a sense of fraternity that, if needed, allows for sacrifice.
The question of sacrifice for the nation puzzled scholars who were willing to explain not only the establishment of modern nation-states but also to answer why sometimes people who consider themselves members of a nation are irrationally willing to sacrifice their lives in its name. Anderson suggested that this readiness to die for one’s nation stems to a large extent from the idea of ‘self-sacrificing love’ to the country, but also from cultural products of nationalism, such as art, music and poetry that inspire and convey the attachment to the nation in a form of national identity.

Anderson was particularly interested in explaining the role of affect as a link between an abstract idea of a nation and its members. He argued that feelings of filial love and fraternity make it possible for people to be willing to die for their nation. He claimed that patriotism understood as “political love” provides the right vocabulary of ‘kinship’ (motherland) and ‘home’ (patria) which is “something to which one is naturally tied to” (ibid:143). This vision of national belonging as based on “natural ties” suggests that nation is “interestless”, and that is why it can ask for the ultimate sacrifice (ibid:144). In this case the language of patriotic attachment and love represents national belonging as “naturally” given, and obscures its historically constructed form. At the same time, patriotism as a form of “political love” implies loyalty towards the state and thus a more civic understanding of nationalism, similar to the one suggested by scholars such as Gellner and Hobsbawm. Nevertheless, Anderson’s suggestion that nations are impossible without culture as a co-constitutive element of the process of national formation makes his approach closer to what Yuval-Davis (1989) called Kulturnation, as opposed to the ideas of Staatsnation discussed earlier.

In her discussion of the role of women in the nationalist projects, Yuval-Davis talks about Kulturnation, a concept borrowed from Meinecke (1917)⁹, as one of the three gendered forms that modern nation-states take. In this form of the nation-state, women are conceived as the cultural bearers and guards of the symbolic borders of the nation as well as embodiments of the national collective. This form of the nation-state was particularly popular in areas where access to the state apparatus was limited. In such cases, nationalism has been understood mainly as an ideology of national movements aiming at liberation of their countries from foreign oppressors. In the literature on nationalism, Central and Eastern Europe is considered as the region where national culture played an important role in the process of nation-building (e.g. Hroch, 1993, Schöpflin, 1995).

For instance Hroch (1993) argued that there were different conditions facilitating the rise of national movements in various parts of Europe. Unlike in the West, where ethnic conflicts could have been articulated in political claims thanks to better communication and social mobility, the small, often

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⁹In the concept of Kulturnation, Meinecke refers rather to the idea of the German cultural nationalism than to the idea of the Prussian political nationalism.
stateless Central European nations consolidated around common culture and language as the main factors of integration. Therefore, Hroch defines nation as a formation consisting of various elements, such as: collective memory, myths of common descent, density of cultural ties and civil rights providing a considerable level of equality and independence within society (ibid.). He also mentions the role of the elites and cultural institutions, such as churches, libraries, reading circles and periodicals as important for the process of creation of national consciousness in these nations. Thus, these elements that contribute to the process of accounting for the nation as an “imagined community” are similar to those that Anderson (1983) was talking about. At the same time, even today we can come across statements such as the one saying that Hroch’s approach has “an Eastern European touch to it” (Pryke, 2009:6). These types of comment reflect the geopolitical division of Europe in terms of Western and Eastern types of nationalism, and can be related to the popularity of contrasting the civic idea to the ethnic nationalism often associated with the “East”.

Two types of nationalism

Sometimes the cultural aspects of nationalism are considered to belong to the tradition that criticized modernists for their focus on rational, modern aspects of national belonging. This criticism came from scholars who looked for the origins of nations and nationalism in pre-modern structures such as ethnic groups, myths, and collective memories (e.g. Armstrong, 1982, Smith, 1991).

One of the arguments of the scholars criticizing the approach to nations and nationalism as having its roots in modernity is that this approach fails to provide convincing arguments about anything other than the rational, political and economic aspects of nationalism. For instance, Connor (1994) argues that members of nations share socio-psychological emotional bonds and ethnic ties. These go beyond rational thinking and manipulation of elites. He suggests that the origins of such strong ties uniting people into a nation go far beyond modern times. From this perspective, modernity is a historical moment of transformation of nations but not a point of their origin. Scholars critical of the modernist approach claim that nations have a much longer history that goes back to antiquity, and these ancient forms of human organization need to be studied from alternative perspectives. For instance Armstrong argued in his book “Nations before Nationalism” (1982) that nations appeared long before nationalism, and originate from persistent ethnic foundations. He coined the concept of myth-symbol complexes that constitute grounds for ethnic identities. Armstrong’s perspective stresses the importance of non-rational and cultural factors, such as psychological bonds, myths, symbols and history. This approach has further inspired many scholars who looked for cultural explanations and origins of nations and national-
isms. Among them is Smith (1991) who received much credit for introducing the perspective known in literature as *ethno-symbolism*.

The point of departure for ethno-symbolists is the assumption that nations and nationalism derive from earlier formations called “ethnies”. These are pre-existing social forms of collective being that were adapted to new conditions. In this way for instance previous religiously-oriented rituals have turned into state-oriented secular ones. Nationalism from an ethno-symbolic perspective is an ideological movement that maintains the coherence, unity and sovereignty of nations. Smith defines nation as a “human population sharing a historical territory, common memories, myths of origin, a mass standardized public culture, a common economy and territorial mobility, and common legal rights and duties for all members” (ibid:14). Being rooted in past ethnic myths, symbols and collective memories can sometimes trigger seemingly irrational acts such as willingness to die for one’s nation. Despite pointing to the ethnic past as the origin of the nation, nationalism in the light of this perspective is an important element of the modern world, providing the basis for collective identity and a sense of belonging. Contrary to scholars pointing to capitalism and development of the industrial society as basis for nationalism, ethno-symbolists emphasize the role of culture and history in uniting people and raising their national sentiments. However, inspired by the ambition to provide a comprehensive theory of nationalism, Smith distinguished between two types of nationalisms: *territorial* (Western) and *ethnic* (Eastern). For Smith these two separate types of nationalism also reflect different processes of national formation.

On the one hand Western, territorial nations are communities that share the same culture of Latin origin and are formed around shared territory, common law, institutions and citizenship. These legal and political rights are integral elements of the Western idea of the nation. Members of these nations are also “legally equal and subjected to the law of their patria” (ibid:10). On the other hand, Eastern, ethnic nations are communities that emerged from pre-existing, originally stateless ethnic groups. The main elements of this type of nationalism are shared genealogy and history, popular mobilization of the masses, and the importance of dialects, languages, customs and traditions. Smith argued that the Western type of national formation was initially more inclusive than the Eastern one, since it was based on the principle of civic “bureaucratic incorporation” of a larger strata of society into the national community. Hence, following this concept of the nation “an individual could choose to which nation he or she belonged, whereas the non-Western, ethnic concept allowed no such latitude” (ibid:11, my emphasis).

This idea that Western nationhood is a matter of individual choice contributed to what Yack (1999) later described as “the myth of the civic nation” based entirely on civic voluntarism. This normative evaluation of the civic, “Western” nationalism as more universalistic and inclusive reproduces
the logic of difference in thinking about the division between *ethnic* and *civic* types of nationalism, suggested by Kohn (1944) and discussed earlier in this chapter. Additionally, by mixing the cultural elements with the question of “ethnies”, sometimes Smith’s understanding of nationalism can be interpreted as close to what Yuval-Davis (1989) distinguished as a third form of nation-state called *Volknation*. In this form, the emphasis is on the biological aspects of national membership, such as blood and race, and where state regulation of sexuality is a crucial element to preserve the “pure” roots of the nation and ensure a collective future. Therefore, the attempt to provide a comprehensive theory of nationalism, such as Smith’s ethno-symbolic approach also falls into the trap of taking sides between two opposite types of nationalism.

However, it has to be acknowledged that although there are some fundamental disagreements within the classical literature on nationalism, there are actually things scholars share in common. The underlying notion is that ethno-symbolism emerged as a response to the dominant modernist paradigm by questioning the modernity of nations. For instance, Smith does not question modernity as the formation providing conditions in which *ethnies* turn into nation-states. Therefore, in spite of looking for different explanations regarding the historical origins of nations and nationalism, the classic authors such as Gellner, Anderson, Hobsbawm and Smith implicitly agree upon economy, politics and culture as inherently modern forces, and thus nationalism as a sort of ideological “glue” for modern nation-states.

Nevertheless, when it comes to the dichotomy between *civic* and *ethnic* nationalism and the normative evaluation of the West/East divide these scholars neither question that typology nor try to come up with alternative classifications. Instead the geopolitical distinction between territorial, civic and ethnic forms of nationalism leaves out other types of nationalism, such as cultural nationalism. Therefore, it can be argued that the debates that transformed the study of nationalism also reproduced the reductionist logic of difference when it comes to types of nationalism. This bipolar logic refers not only to *civic* versus *ethnic* notions of nationhood but also to those that directly relate to them, such as the normative and geopolitical division between the “good” West and “bad” East. The table below summarizes this dominant dualistic logic of thinking about nationalism. I depart from Smith’s distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism and develop it further following a similar logic of difference.
Table 1. The logic of difference between civic and ethnic types of nationalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIVIC</th>
<th>ETHNIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“good” citizenship</td>
<td>“bad” ancestry (blood) and race/ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political institutions</td>
<td>traditional loyalties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unification as political ideal</td>
<td>tribal, ‘natural’ community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citizen</td>
<td>folk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modernity</td>
<td>tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staatnation</td>
<td>Volknation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inclusive</td>
<td>exclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open, democratic</td>
<td>violent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle class</td>
<td>elites, intellectuals and populists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integration</td>
<td>disintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>resentful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td>past</td>
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<tr>
<td>progressive</td>
<td>backward</td>
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<tr>
<td>rational</td>
<td>emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>norm</td>
<td>aberration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>national identity and patriotism</td>
<td>nationalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be argued that the major role of this type of classification is the simplification of the diversity of forms of collective belonging. In spite of the ambition to provide a comprehensive theory of nationalism by introducing the concept of ethno-symbolism, Smith contributed to the reproduction of dualistic mode of thinking within scholarship on nationalism. In particular, connecting the symbolic, cultural elements (language, tradition, history, myths) with biological ones (blood, race), triggers the understanding of biological differences in cultural terms that can potentially lead to culturalism and exclusion. I will address the risks of culturalism later in this chapter, but before that we need to take a closer look at some questions that the classical literature on nationalism left open.

Among these unanswered questions are, for instance, the ones related to the various practices of national reproduction and representation. The classics did not pay much attention to questions such as what happens when modern nations turn into established states. Does nationalism disappear then? How does nationalism contribute to the nation-building processes in established democratic countries? Does it mean nationalism is always either civic and inclusive or ethnic and exclusive? How does nation-building look outside of the top-down elitist state institutions and rituals? These questions have been addressed by scholars representing the so-called “new approaches” to nationalism (e.g. Chatterje, 1990, Billig, 1995, Yuval-Davis, 1997, Özkirimli, 2000, Edensor, 2002, Calhoun, 2007, Fox&Miller-Idriss, 2008).
Towards critical approaches: nationalism as discourse and ideology

One of the characteristics of these so-called “new approaches” to nationalism is the critical evaluation of the mainstream literature on this topic (Özkirimli, 2000:191). The criticism of this literature partly stems from the idea that some issues have been either ignored or overlooked by the “classics”. It is also based on the belief in the possibility of transcending the mainstream debate and providing new, sometimes alternative ways of thinking about nationalism, nations and national identity. The proliferation of critical scholarship on nationalism in recent years can be connected to such socio-political and economic processes as world decolonization, the emergence of “new” social movements, the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, and globalization, to name a few (ibid.). The criticism has been also influenced by growing disciplines and fields such as studies of diaspora, migration, race and transnationalism. There are at least three major areas of inquiry that have problematized the traditional and more classical scholarship on nationalism.

First, postcolonial studies, where scholars point to the ambivalence of the concept of nation, as well as to important questions concerning race and power dynamics that turned scholarly attention to the experiences of the subaltern Other (Spivak, 1985, Bhabha, 1990, Chatterjee, 1990). Second and partly related to the above, has been an issue of gender blindness in the mainstream literature, pointed out by scholars who problematized the exclusion of women from the public sphere and official national narratives, discourses and representations (Yuval-Davis & Anthias, 1989, McClintock, 1995, Yuval-Davis, 1997). The third area of inquiry touches upon the criticism of the literature that reproduces an image of nationalism as volatile, passionate and “hot” while overlooking the routine, mundane daily national reproduction in Western contexts (see Billig, 1995, Calhoun, 1997, Edensor, 2002, Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008). This latter approach offers an interesting analytical perspective on nationalism as a discourse present not only in official nationalist narratives but also in media, popular culture and everyday contexts. This perspective offers also a broad definition of nationalism as a discourse encompassing a wide spectrum of social and political life, which seems to be particularly useful for this study.

Nationalism as means for discursive reproduction

Among the premises of nationalism as a broad, multi-faceted discursive phenomenon is that it concerns “us”, the national selves, whether reading a na-

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10 For instance Habermas’ theory of the public sphere has been widely criticized for being oblivious to aspects of gender (see Frazer, 1990, Benhabib, 1995).
tional newspaper, watching weather forecasts or supporting football teams during the World Cup. In each of these instances, when the national “we” and “you” are being called upon, such collective inclusion suddenly stops at the borders of the nation-state. This practice of referring exclusively to the national audience is what Billig (1995) calls the “syntax of hegemony” that is part of the discursive daily process of national reproduction (ibid:99).

The “syntax of hegemony” is often employed as an element of the rhetoric of patriotism, especially when the national idea is communicated to people in times of crisis, war or conflict. In such contexts patriotic rhetoric can work as a trigger turning on the national switch when igniting intense nationalist feelings that have otherwise been “peacefully” reproduced through daily ideological practices of banal nationalism (ibid.). Social actors who employ the patriotic rhetoric refer to specific national narratives that are produced and reproduced through media and everyday contexts. For instance, they might refer to a national audience by calling upon shared culture, namely values, myths, traditions, language, memories, symbols etc. In this way “playing the patriotic card” is at the same time a practice of reproducing and representing both nationalism and the nation-state.

Billig also argues that discursive practices of national reproduction are commonly employed as part of a political strategy by groups who tend to “play the patriotic card” (ibid.:104). This process concerns everyone who aspires to represent the nation and its interests, ranging from populist patriots from the extreme right to the left (ibid.). Often in the context where nationalism is habitually considered a dangerous and extreme ideology that should be publicly avoided, representing the nation passes under the rhetoric of patriotism.

It can be suggested that because of the practices of daily, discursive reproduction, nationalism continues to flourish in the established nation-states. The power of nationalism lies in the fact that because it often takes banal forms and is reproduced daily, nation-states continue to appear as the natural form of social and political organization of the world. This idea that nationalism does not disappear from the established nation-states has inspired scholars, who have suggested that national reproduction can be also grounded in spatial, material, and performative dimensions of everyday life (Edensor, 2002, Fox&Miller-Idriss, 2008). For instance, Edensor (2002) argued that once nation-states are established, the national discourse often “escapes the grip of the state and is transmitted through commercial and more informal networks” (ibid:4).

So far we have concluded that one of the aspects of critical approaches to nationalism has been the suggestion that even in the context of established nation-states, nationalism does not disappear and is reproduced discursively through a set of practices. However, one needs to be cautious when assuming this discursive “nature” of nationalism and not overlook the fact that these practices are situated in the socio-political context of power relations.
This is to say that, apart from the discursive aspect of nationalism that shapes and structures our thinking of the world, nationalism is also a principle of a socio-political legitimation employed in order to justify a given national status quo. Hence, nationalism also functions as a norm and ideology regulating social groups and institutions that act and represent a given nation state and its interests.

Nationalism as ideology

Contrary to understandings of nationalism in relation to politics contributing to the construction of modern nation-states (Gellner, 1983, Hobsbawm, 1983, Smith, 1991), nationalism can also be understood as ideology, namely a set of “fragmented meanings of common sense inherent in a variety of representations” (Barker, 2008:67). Understanding nationalism as ideology is useful for at least three reasons.

First, nationalism, like other ideologies such as racism, communism or capitalism, involves contradictions and dilemmas. For instance, Billig (1997) argues that ideology is “society’s way of life that includes all that passes for common-sense which is fragmentary, locally embedded and contains conflicting themes” (ibid:217). He suggests that it is the “nature” of ideology to “contain contradictions and contrary themes that involve dialogic discussion” (ibid:218). Additionally, he also suggests that “in examining ideology (...) the analyst is decoding what is being taken for granted as common sense, for ideology embraces the common-sense of each period” (ibid:219-220).

Second, the analysis of ideology is also an inquiry into what passes as “natural” and taken for granted, as the process of naturalizing socially constructed patterns has been an important mechanism in the production and reproduction of ideologies. Such analysis can point to things that are seldom challenged or questioned. Therefore, one should be alert to the gaps and “silences” and everything that is assumed to stay beyond controversy (ibid.).

Third, ideologies operate discursively. In order to explain this process, Billig employs the concept of “ideological dilemma” to describe the dilemmatic notion of conflicting lived ideologies. The dilemma refers here to controversies between different ideological constructions, such as the one between ethnic and civic notions of nationhood. The aim of the ideological analysis is to focus on patterns of sense-making, namely on “how participants employ language in order to discursively rationalize, legitimize or naturalize identities, prejudices, stereotypes and social relations” (Tilieaga, 2006:26). The concept of lived ideologies refers to local, embedded constructions that “reflect social, political and ideological climate of given societies” (ibid.). By studying these fragmented, contradictory lived ideologies

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11For a similar argument see Mihelj (2011:4).
and how they are discursively constructed; the researcher has a chance to gain insight into the processes involved in the production of ideological representations of social life and social actors that participate in this process. Hence, ideology in this context can be also understood as a “shared set of social representations by members of a group that is used by these members to accomplish certain discursive, semiotic and other social practices” (Van Dijk, 1998:8).

Fourth, the perspective on nationalism as ideology that operates discursively involves contradictory themes and allows for an inquiry into naturalized social patterns. Hence, it offers an approach that can question the normative simplistic distinction between different types of nationalism mentioned earlier. It also provides an understanding of how nationalism continues to flourish even in democratic “peaceful”, conflict-free contexts. Moreover, the contribution of scholarship focusing on the micro politics of national mobilization, demobilization, production and reproduction questions the mainstream narratives of nation-building as a linear, irreversible process. Instead, recent critical research illustrates that nation-building is an episodic and complex process that involves both periods of “quiet” and “hot” nationalism (i.e. Hutchinson, 2001, Mihelj, 2011). One of the most prominent examples of how daily nationalism’ suddenly turns into “hot patriotism”, and a loosely connected nation of citizens becomes a nation of warriors, simply overnight, is the language of media coverage of the ‘9/11 attacks’ in New York in 2001 (Mihelj, 2011).

The understanding of nationalism as an ideology focusing on practices of national production and reproduction challenges the simple dichotomies of nationalism persistent in the literature. It also addresses the need for approaches grasping nationalism in all its complexity. For instance, it can be helpful to explain the case of countries in transition where the road towards the civic “West” is more complicated than simply leaving the discredited ethnic “East” behind. However, curiously, if we agree that patriotism is a part of the nationalist rhetoric employed in the practices of discursive representations and reproduction of the national community then why are some scholars continuously tempted to apply the logic of difference in thinking about nationalism, and separate the “good” and the “bad” aspects as two very distinct species?

One of the reasons might be the quest for a new form of collective belonging in the contemporary world based on universal ideas of solidarity, justice, democracy and feelings of belonging to a human collective. This development has encouraged several scholars to search for alternatives to nationalism, such as “constitutional patriotism” or “cosmopolitanism” (Habermas, 1990, Nussbaum, 1996, Beck, 2000). In order to do justice to the approaches searching for eligible alternatives to nationalism, the next section will look at the attempts to rehabilitate the concept of patriotism in contemporary social theory.
Patriotism as an alternative to nationalism

The concept of “patriotism” originates from the Greek *patriós* which means “coming from the same father” (*pater*), but with time, it also became commonly associated with a positive relationship with one’s country and fellow countrymen. The idea of patriotism has been discussed by philosophers such as Rousseau (1762, see Barnard, 1984), but has been more recently rehabilitated on the scholarly agenda as part of the theoretical and moral attempt to extract the “good” sides of nationalism, such as a sense of collective belonging and solidarity, isolating these from their “bad” counterparts such as xenophobia, violence and exclusion.

Since the 1980s, mostly due to the revival of communitarianism as a response to liberalism in Western philosophy and a resurgence of nationalism, there has been an increased interest in the concept of patriotism. In most literature that distinguishes between nationalism and patriotism, the latter equates loyalty to the nation with loyalty to the state. Definitions of patriotism vary depending on how we define the object of patriotic loyalty. For example, Primoratz (2009) distinguishes between five different types of modern patriotism, ranging from the most extreme and narrow one to the most “universal”, based on ethics and universal values of human solidarity and justice. These debates are particularly lively within philosophy, political philosophy and political theory. The philosophical understanding is generally concerned with questions of morality, ethics and the problem of combining universal moral obligations with particular loyalties and attachments. The approaches coming from political philosophy and political theory search mainly for a strictly political, republican understanding of patriotism as a form of loyalty to the polity and common laws.

Philosophers pay particular attention to the moral aspects of loyalty to the patria. McIntyre (1995) argues that morality always refers to a particular community, and contrasts patriotism with liberal commitment to universal values. In the essay “Is patriotism a virtue?” MacIntyre argues that liberalism and patriotism are two opposite forms of universal-rational and particular types of morality. He suggests an account where “the questions *where* and from *whom* one learns morality are important” (ibid:215). Patriotism here is defined as loyalty to a particular nation, and a patriot is one who “is committed to a particular way of linking the past (…) with the future for the project which is his or her nation which is his or her responsibility to bring into being” (ibid:222).

This type of particularistic morality, according to MacIntyre, prevents the dissolution of social bonds, a direction in which liberal morality is going. MacIntyre suggests the rational universalistic liberal morality as the major threat to patriotism. Primoratz (2009) calls this way of thinking about patriotism a “robust patriotism”. It refers to a limited and particularistic form of patriotism that has a fundamentally irrational character. In this type of patri-
otism, only a particular country and polity are objects of loyalty, which excludes the more universal notions of justice and human solidarity. “Robust patriotism” can be juxtaposed with other, more moderate forms of patriotism. One of them is the idea of patriotism developed by Viroli (1995) in the book entitled “Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism”.

Viroli suggests that patriotism is an emotional form of “identification with concrete cultural and political community that we call nation” (ibid:173). Viroli’s essay is an attempt to not only rehabilitate patriotism on the scholarly agenda, but also to suggest it as a valuable alternative to nationalism. He departs from the assumption that there is a clear distinction between these two concepts and offers a historical perspective on how the language of patriotism has been gradually taken over by the rhetoric of nationalism, mostly during the second half of the nineteenth century. His aim is thus to bring back the notion of patriotism of the “right sort”, namely in a political form that advocates the love of liberty and “does not need social or cultural or religious, or ethnic homogeneity” (ibid:184). He refers to the revolutionary spirit of the year 1848 and connected to it, the patriotism of the left that distinguished between the concepts of patrie and nation. The former was referring to a democratic republic of equal rights and solidarity of citizens beyond national borders, while the latter assumed cultural and ethnical unity within the territorial borders of the nation state.

Viroli argues that the concept of patrie became confused with the concept of nation and was taken over by the right-wing language of nationalism. Consequently, it has “lost connection with liberty, which it had had for centuries” (ibid:160). Viroli’s aim is not only to do justice to the neglected notion of patriotism in theoretical discussions but also to offer an alternative understanding and the possibility of “patriotism without nationalism” (ibid:161). This view resembles the idea of civic nationalism. For example, Viroli argues that:

We need, (...) patriotism and we must at the same time help to reduce, rather than invoke, identification with ethnocultural values’ and ‘focus on the political values of democratic citizenship and present them and defend them as values that are part of the culture of the people (ibid:174).

This view that patriotism can be a way to diminish the importance of ethnic elements suggests that loyalty to the patria is above all loyalty of citizens to the polity, namely the state. At the same time, Viroli claims that cultural unity and political values can go together and that “the ethno cultural unity may translate into civic solidarity, if a culture of citizenship is erected on it” (ibid:175). Therefore, he suggests that patriotism devoid of nationalism assumes love of one’s country and specifically love oriented towards the republic “as a political community based on the principle of common liberty, with its own culture and way of life” (ibid:183). He also claims that patriot-
ism and nationalism speak different languages. Patriotism speaks the language of common liberty, whereas nationalism focuses on unity and homogeneity. For Viroli, the main point is to stress that these two terms are not synonymous and although they can both employ the same references, the meaning is essentially different. By focusing on the differences between patriotism and nationalism, Viroli portrays nationalism as rooted in fear and hatred of “the Other” and, eventually, as a form of racism.

He suggests therefore “the patriotism of compassion” (ibid:165), assuming inclusiveness and a complex approach to a nation’s history. This means for example that remembering shameful moments of collective history is as important as commemoration of heroic ones. Moreover, he claims that such understanding of patriotism can offer a resource for the democratic left so that the political right will be deprived of the “monopoly over the language of patriotism” (ibid:15). Here, Viroli refers to the notion that the left, and particularly the academic left in the USA, is being unpatriotic (cf. Rorty, 1994). However, contrary to Rorty’s suggestions that the left should take pride in the American nation, since there is “no incompatibility between respect for cultural differences and American patriotism” (ibid.), Viroli insists on the specific notion of patriotism, which is qualitatively different from the one present in the discourses of the political right. By making clear the distinction between different sorts of patriotism and between patriotism and nationalism, he associates the latter with narrow-minded politics of exclusion. A similar conceptual conundrum asking how to rehabilitate patriotism while keeping it separate from nationalism is also present in debates among political theorists (e.g. Habermas, 1990, 1998, Nussbaum, 1996).

These theorists question the idea that patriotism is not a moral attachment but rather an ethos of a well-functioning political community (Habermas, 1990). This is also the main interest of those who share a belief in the possibility of coexistence between cosmopolitanism and patriotism. The main argument that they share is that in a post-national era traditional ties that formerly bonded people to one place, such as bonds of blood, place of birth or even the idea of national “imagined community” start to compete with other forms of collective belonging that are not necessarily tied to one place. In the increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural societies, nationalism, which stands for particular and traditional forms of state organization, needs to be replaced by common political culture that goes beyond the territorial boundaries of the nation-state (Gutman, 1996, Nussbaum, 1996, Appiah, 1996). Thus, the goal of this emancipatory project of “new patriotism” is to replace bonds of ethnic nationhood with universal principles of democracy and human rights. This approach suggests an alternative to nationalism that has been partly inspired by the idea of the constitutional patriotism developed by Habermas (1990, 1998).

Habermas popularized the concept of constitutional patriotism (Verfassungspatriotismus) that was initially launched by Sternberger, for the pur-
pose of introducing an alternative to the ethnic understanding of the concept of fatherland in the post-war Germany (see Primoratz, 2009). Habermas embraces the idea of rational patriotism that stems from Kantian liberalism and French republicanism. He stresses the importance of political loyalty and commitment to the shared political culture in pluralist “post-national” liberal and democratic societies. The idea of constitutional patriotism is based on the optimistic belief that this form of patriotism can be helpful in building a collective political identity, and can eventually lead to increasing human solidarity across the globe.

According to Habermas, constitutional patriotism is compatible with the Western European constitutional culture. In such a culture, citizens can be socialized and educated about universal principles and human rights instead of exclusionary national ideals. His ambition is to develop theoretical understanding of contemporary processes, with a particular focus on the European enlargement, “post-national citizenship”, increasing cultural diversity, and political interdependence (cf. Habermas, 2001). Habermas grants civic, constitutional patriotism an important role in contributing to the ideal of shared belonging and solidarity. The model for this kind of community is the USA, where citizens are bonded by the ideals of the constitution. In the European context Habermas points to Switzerland as an example of a successful state which respects the rights of citizens of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This idea of patriotism as opposite to nationalism refers to the possibility of solidarity and consensus based on liberal constitutional principles and loyalty to political institutions. The basis of this idea is not only the belief that universal principles have the potential to overcome national and ethnic particularities but also that they have the chance to turn strangers into fellow citizens of the world. This problem of how to deal with cultural particularities and universal principles is also addressed by Nussbaum (1996) in her collection of essays about patriotism and cosmopolitanism entitled “For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism”.

The argument Nussman develops is that both patriotism and cosmopolitanism can complement each other and take the form of “nesting identities”12. She argues that patriotism should be promoted as part of civic education from an early stage. Only in this way will a moral community of human rights in a form of world cosmopolitan citizenship be possible. In a similar mode, Appiah (1996) claims that “cosmopolitans can be patriots” (ibid:26) and that patriotism is about “responsibilities and privileges of citizenship” (ibid.). At the same time, he suggests that patriotism and cosmopolitanism are “sentiments more than ideologies” (ibid:23). In this manner, it can be argued, sentiments are naturalized as legitimate forms of loyalty and belong-

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12 The idea of “nesting identities” can be defined as a set of separate yet complementary levels of identification starting from the self, family, neighbours, city, and fellow countrymen, and finishing at the level of humanity as a whole.
ing while nationalism is implicitly rejected as an unwanted ideology. I suggest that this way of thinking not only further reproduces the logic of difference between patriotism and nationalism but also suggests a very narrow understanding of the latter. Therefore, I suggest that the idea of patriotism as an emancipatory political project and possible alternative to nationalism in a post-national era is problematic for at least four reasons.

Firstly, there is a problem with the shared argument present in these debates stating that patriotism can be developed as a political emancipatory project and a sort of remedy to nationalism. Put in this way, patriotism is not only defined as inherently opposite to nationalism but also as a project focusing on work towards shared universal values such as solidarity, justice and democracy. The proponents of this project take advantage of the rhetorical juxtaposition of patriotism against nationalism, where the latter is reduced to particular interests and associated with exclusionary ideologies such as xenophobia. Particularly in the case of philosophical debates, patriotism is defined as qualitatively different from nationalism. The arguments used to support that distinction often employ references to emotions and morality in order to describe patriotism as a ‘good’ form of national loyalty. It can also be argued, as Canovan does, that the supporters of the sharp distinction between patriotism and nationalism are “employing the traditional tactics of the rhetorician, such as using familiar terms in altered senses, redescribing the political situation and shifting the battle lines to maximize support for their own position” (Canovan, 2000:432). Therefore, in spite of their rhetorical effectiveness, they fail in the ambition of bridging “universalist principles with particularistic commitments” (ibid:413).

Secondly, the Habermasian vision of constitutional patriotism becoming a pan-European or at least Western European liberal project derives from specific socio-political conditions of post-war Germany dealing with its Nazi past. This is also to say that examples of successful countries, such as Switzerland, Germany or the U.S. where citizens, through the constitution, strongly identify with the state are limited. Thus, it can be argued that even if constitutional patriotism is well adopted in the states with a constitutional tradition it does not necessarily have to be the case in other places. This particularly concerns cases where the idea of citizenship does not immediately transcend ethnic and cultural boundaries, but rather strengthens and reproduces them.

Thirdly, it can be suggested that the nature of liberal, universal ideals that constitutional patriotism relates to is rather problematic. For example the French “affair of the headscarves” and the controversy it caused illustrates that in multi-ethnic and multicultural societies seemingly universal ideas of freedom, democracy and individual liberty are intertwined with and dependent on the state’s power over its citizens (Canovan, 2000). Thus, it can be questioned whether the Western idea of patriotism defined in terms of loyal-
ty to the state and based primarily on citizenship rights can, in every case, be interpreted as compatible with universal ideals and human rights.

Lastly, it is difficult to distinguish between the concept of patriotism and the idea of civic liberal nationalism. Some authors, such as Calhoun (2007), claim that Habermasian theory develops the concept of civic nationalism, traditionally associated with the French model and that the ideas of constitutional patriotism are simply “idealizations of the civic model” (ibid:114). Additionally, Calhoun argues that the rhetoric of civic nationalism can mask some of the “underlying commitments to particularistic and cultural definitions of what counts to be a good, proper citizen” (ibid:42, my emphasis). For example, in the context of the “affair of the headscarves” the question would be whether a good, female citizen has the right to cover her head in public places or not.

So as we can see from the discussion above, in spite of the ambitions to overcome problems caused by particular commitments and identities of ethnic nationalism, the idea of rehabilitating the concept of patriotism on the scholarly agenda leaves many questions open. One can agree with skeptics such as Canovan (2000) who claims that “it sometimes happens that intellectually weak arguments are rhetorically effective and politically constructive” (ibid:432). She expresses a concern that rational and politically-oriented patriotism might be too weak to become the basis for identity and to motivate social actors into political participation.

Moreover, based on the discussion above, it can be argued that scholars who theorize patriotism as an alternative to nationalism also depart from different ideas about nation, as either a form of community of emotions or a strictly political community. Consequently, it can be argued that both nationalism and patriotism can be accounted for as two ways of theorizing the same thing, namely national belonging. Depending on the starting point, nationalism begins with modernity and the modern nation-state as the point of departure for national formation, identity, national discursive production and reproduction (e.g. Gellner, 1983, Hobsbawm, 1983, Smith, 1991, Billig, 1995), while patriotism stresses emotions and feelings of solidarity (e.g. Viroli, 1995) reaching beyond the modern nation-state, which makes it an “upgraded form” of civic nationalism with its focus on “world citizenship” (Habermas, 1990, Nussbaum, 1996).

The ambition to distinguish patriotism as qualitatively different and thus a normatively and morally better source of collective identification than nationalism might be the result of the persisting in the literature logic of difference in thinking about nationalism. However, the problem with presenting patriotism as an alternative to nationalism is that instead of asking when are patriotism and nationalism defined differently, scholars assume that they are essentially different. So neither scholars who define patriotism in terms of sentiments or morality (e.g. MacIntyre, 1995, Viroli, 1995) nor those who suggest it as alternative political project of belonging (e.g. Habermas, 1990,
1998, Nussbaum, 1996) ask why it happens that sometimes these two concepts go separate ways.

Since one of the objectives of this thesis is to address the question of how nationalism and patriotism are related to each other, it is also important to ask why they are sometimes theorized as separate. As the following section will show, when a nation has a long history of statelessness, these two concepts might part ways. For political and historical reasons, scholarship on nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe developed a different understanding of patriotism and nationalism than was the case with Anglo-Saxon literature. In contexts such as Central and Eastern Europe, where nationhood has been historically primarily defined in the context of the experience of statelessness, the idea of patriotism has been sharply contrasted with nationalism and closely related to the meaning of nation and culture.

**Shifting focus: nationalism and patriotism in Central Europe**

The collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe surprised many people, including social scientists and analysts across the world. The outbreak of the war in Yugoslavia in the 1990s partly confirmed the fears of some analysts that there would be a resurgence of ethnic, violent nationalism in the region. Under such conditions the literature on nationalism became replete with scholarly analyses focusing on the re-emergence of “evil”, illiberal nationalism that Kohn (1944) and others (e.g. Plamenatz, 1973) had previously warned about. It can be argued that the region was represented in the literature on nationalism according to a dualistic framework that simply failed to address the complexity of the post-communist transformation and the specificity of contemporary nationalism. In the debates about the post-socialist transformation in Central and Eastern Europe, nationalism and the meaning of nation became objects of particular scrutiny (Verdery, 1994, Brubaker, 1996).

The historical and political specificity of the region was pointed out by Verdery (1994) who argued that “a nation in Eastern Europe is not a country” (ibid:3). She suggested that nations in a post-Soviet bloc had to create or re-create their states after 1989, often by referring to national symbols to legitimize the newly constructed political center. This process of transition from communism to democracy produced a specific national rhetoric appealing to the national consciousness and homogeneous interest of the nation (ibid.). In this national rhetoric an image of wholeness as a nation played an important role to “construct idea of unity against different forces of fragmentation” (ibid:17).
The newly re-opened public space invited the rhetoric of “civil society”, where the idea of national unity became a metaphor for discussing all types of political and social problems. Consequently, as Brubaker (1996) has argued, the 1989 revolutions showed that “far from moving beyond the nation-state, history was moving back to the nation-state” (ibid:2). This refers particularly to the role of political elites who often explained their actions and “promoted culture, language, economic flourishing and political hegemony in the name of the core ethno-cultural nation” (ibid:9). The suggestions that the specificity of the post-communist “nationalizing states” lies in the prevalence of the ethnic element revived anew the sharp distinction between civic and ethnic forms of nationalism and their respective normative associations with “West” and “East”.

For instance, Kuzio (2002) suggested that Brubaker’s theory builds on the division that is prevalent in the classical literature on nationalism. Kuzio argued that such a division requires “urgent revision” since both civic and ethnic elements are present in different visions of nationalism and that the proportions of these elements rest “upon the extent of the progress in democratization and creation of civil societies” (ibid:151). This is to say that both the historical stage of development and depth of democratic consolidation are factors that influence the composition of ethnic and civic elements in a society. This also means that the presence and prevalence of civic elements is a matter of linear progress from ethnic to civic nationalism. Kuzio, who is particularly critical of Kohn’s dual framework for understanding nationalism, developed an argument saying that “evolution from ethnic to civic nationalism is only likely to take place after the core ethnic group is self-confident within its own bounded territory to open the community to “outsiders” from other ethnic groups” (ibid:36). According to this author, both Western and Central Eastern European countries went through this path from ethnic to civic nationalism. In the context of the transformation in the post-socialist countries Kuzio argued that according to the US think-tank “Freedom House” all Central and Eastern European countries, apart from Belarus and Yugoslavia, were defined as “civic” in 1999 (ibid:28). However, it seems that apart from the debate on how to define successful transformation in terms of civic nationalism it is also problematic to consider the ethnic and civic elements as a matter of evolution and progress. This is because such an approach reproduces the normative assumptions about civic nationalism as a desired form and a prerequisite for becoming a “modern” and “civilized” nation.

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13 In order to illustrate this case Kuzio gave the example of America as a country that was first dominated by one ethnic community of Native Americans, and further developed into the multicultural, civic society of today (see Kuzio, 2002:26).

14 In 1999 Poland joint NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) which can be considered as entering the “Western club”, at least in a geo-political and military sense.
One could argue that challenging the idea of the sharp normative distinction between the two mutually exclusive types of nationalism is a contribution to the literature on nationalism. At the same time, the term *evolution* implies a linear and irreversible form of development with a clearly defined (“civic”) goal to achieve. Put in this way, development from ethnic to civic nationalism leaves out temporary acts of national ethnic outbursts and challenges the existing dynamic between the two elements. Hence, we can again see that even if scholars decide to problematize the “civic/ethnic” distinction, they can seldom resist the temptation to extract positive elements of nationalism from the negative ones.

Following this logic, in order to find positive foundations for collective identification and belonging, some scholars decide to look elsewhere, which explains why they focus on patriotism as an *alternative* to nationalism, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Consequently, whenever the concept of nationalism is employed, it automatically brings associations with illiberal forces. This has been the case with the majority of the literature on nationalism focusing on Central and Eastern Europe (e.g. Schöpflin, 1995). Therefore, scholars with an ambition to provide more complex and nuanced perspectives on nation-building and nationalism in the region argue that nationalism is more than what it has been usually associated with, and in fact can even play a role in a successful transition to liberal democracy (Auer, 2000, Auer, 2004, Walicki, 2009).

Liberal nationalism and culture

The collapse of communism and national liberalization in Central Europe has shown that old classifications of nationalism do not address the complexity of contemporary nationalism and are centered in predominantly Western discourses and history. In the communist period, nationalism, usually in the form of a state-promoted agenda, often served as a tool to legitimate the power of elites and dictators. At the same time it was a force that contributed to the collapse of communism and the restoration of democracy. Some argue that the nationalist legacy even to some extent helped societies to recover from the “cultural shock” they experienced during the transformation (e.g. Sztompka, 2004). For instance in the case of Poland, national and religious symbols have been widely employed by the anti-communist opposition in the process of national liberation. Auer (2004) suggests that in Central Europe nationalism “was used to legitimize both left-wing and right-wing dictatorships, but it was repeatedly employed as a tool of national liberation, and thus furthered the cause of liberal democracy” (ibid:18).

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The discussion on liberal nationalism concentrates mainly on post-communist Central Europe and not Eastern Europe, which includes countries such as Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia. From now on, my discussion here will also focus mainly on this region.
The case of Central Europe illustrates that there are different manifestations of nationalism, with complex and ambivalent potentials that go beyond any dualistic classifications. This case is, however, not region-specific since the idea and possibility of identification with a particular nation has been previously connected to processes of democratization and struggles against oppression and discrimination. Scholars who focus on the positive aspects of nationalism, such as inclusion and solidarity between sovereign subjects, often point to the role civic nationalism has played as a tool of national liberation, dismantling empires and removing dictators in places and regions as different as Latin America, Africa, India, to post-communist Central Europe and contemporary China. This is to say that historically, nationalism has provided the framework and language for articulation of interests and demands concerning citizenship and other social, economic and political rights.

In the last couple of decades liberal nationalism in particular has received much scholarly attention as the type of nationalism that can be compatible with democracy. One of the ambitions of scholars who support the vision of liberal nationalism has been to overcome the traditional “civic/ethnic” divide and instead point out the importance of national culture and identity as important elements of collective national identification (e.g. Miller, 1993, Tamir, 1993, Kymlicka, 1995 Lichtenberg, 1996, Vincent, 1997, Couture, 1999, Nielsen, 2003).

One of the arguments shared by proponents of the idea of liberal nationalism is that national belonging, often articulated through the support for national identity and national culture, history, language, tradition, and geography is an important aspect of democratic societies and both collective and individual identities. The writings by scholars such as Canovan, Kymlicka, Tamir and Miller from the early 1990s mark the emergence of a normative political theory emphasizing the importance of national belonging and nationally-bounded political communities. The idea of liberal nationalism stems from the belief that liberalism is compatible with national identity, national self-determination and even global democracy (cf. De Schutter & Tinnevelt, 2008). The notion of liberal nationalism can also be interpreted as criticism of those civic forms of nationalism that focus on political allegiances and neglect the role of culture in shaping national identity (cf. Kymlicka, 1995). Instead, the proponents of liberal nationalism argue that liberal democratic communities should also be national communities. This is because the question of collective responsibility to the political community is a matter of patriotic loyalty to the nation-state rather than civic duty, trust and civic responsibility in merely political terms. National identities and nation-building processes are thus catalysts of patriotism, trust and responsibility (Miller, 1993).

Among arguments supporting the importance of national culture as an important dimension of collective identity and belonging is that promotion of cultural, liberal nationalism and national culture is a means to secure col-
lective identity as well as autonomy for the individual, the latter being such an important aspect of life in contemporary Western societies (Tamir, 1993). This means that national cultures should not only be promoted but also protected in order to provide a satisfying and autonomous existence to members of every national community. One of the reasons for this is that in times of crisis or change it is the culture that is mobilized to help deal with the situation. This also implies that one specific type of nationhood supporting a dominant form of national culture should be acknowledged by practices of political legitimization of national culture.

This emphasis on cultural aspects of nationalism echoes the tradition of writings by Anderson (1983), Hroch (1993) and other scholars who emphasized the role of culture in their analyses of nationalism. It has not been a coincidence that Anderson’s book on nations as “imagined communities” has been particularly popular among Central European intellectuals as it for example challenged the dominant writings about nationalism as a “problem” in the region and even inspired critical reflections about other post-national forms of imagination and belonging, such as cosmopolitanism (Pryke, 2009). In the context of the post-communist Central Europe, liberal nationalism, rooted in the collectivistic and culturally-based idea of patriotism, is also mentioned as one of the forces that has the capacity to maintain and reproduce the democratic order.

Apart from nationalisms’ contribution to the development of democracy, scholars also point out the connection between nationalism and civil society. For example Walicki (2009) suggests that there is no contradiction between liberal-democratic values and the broader vision of nationalism, and that “liberalism is not only a matter of politics and economy but also a matter of national identity and collective memory” (ibid:420, my translation). He argues that as a broad form of nationalism, liberal nationalism offers the notion of diversified community with plural identities, traditions, memories and value systems (ibid.). Such a vision can offer a chance for the development of civil society and can define nationhood in terms of a variety of representations and critical approaches towards dominant national mythologies.

Auer (2004) argues that one of the defining characteristics of liberal nationalism is a “positive attitude to one’s own national community combined with respect for others” (ibid:96). However, he claims that this understanding in a Central European context falls under the concept of patriotism. He makes the point that in this part of Europe the term “nationalism” usually brings negative associations with national chauvinism; therefore patriotism is the only term that describes the relationship to one’s own national community in positive terms. The understanding of a relation to the national community in terms of patriotism instead of nationalism has also broader implications on the study of nationalism in Central Europe. I will come back to this issue later in this chapter.
For now, it is important to say that after the fall of the communist regime, what remained was the culture and strong will of the people to actively change their situation and modernize their country. In this way, transition can be understood as a process of cultural and social change where culture is an active agent of that change. This will to become modern not only in the spheres of economy and politics but also in terms of “Westernization” can explain the view of liberal nationalism as an attractive basis for collective identification and a chance for modernization and democracy in the region. For instance, Auer speaks of “success” and “winning” of this type of nationalism over other ones, he says:

[S]uccess of the post-communist transition will be the result of the contest between different forms of nationalism within the particular countries of Central Europe. The crucial question is whether liberal nationalism can win the upper hand over a nationalism that derives its strength from xenophobia and chauvinism (ibid:28).

Auer is generally optimistic about the role of liberal nationalism in Central Europe and argues that the countries “have a very good chance in sustaining their liberal democracies with the help of liberal nationalism” (ibid:29). The author acknowledges the important role in the dissemination of liberal nationalist ideas to the public of intellectuals such as Adam Michnik, Václav Havel and Miroslav Kusy (ibid:27). This approach not only portrays nationalism as a constructive force of transformation but also questions the notion that one Eastern type of nationalism is dominant in Central Europe.

At the same time, the implicit notion of the victory of liberal nationalism suggests that liberal forces can potentially take over the illiberal ones. However, one needs to be cautious about the liberating and constructive potentials of this type of nationalism. One of the reasons for this is that liberal, nationalism with its primary focus on national culture, bears a risk that it might lead to culturalism.

Culturalism
On the one hand we can acknowledge that nationalism can be compatible with democracy. On the other, however, this does not mean that we should forget about nationalism’s exclusionary aspects or at least hope that one day they will simply fade away. This is an issue neglected by scholars who propose the idea of liberal nationalism as a necessary condition for democratic consolidation. Examples from the Western European context show that we need to be careful when assuming the positive aspects of nationalism, and liberal nationalism in particular. For instance the argument about one encompassing national, liberal culture is not quite convincing, at least not if we acknowledge that “promotion of a dominant national identity automatically
might lead to exclusion and diminish possibilities for cultural expression of other groups within the same political territory” (Hjerm, 2003:46). So we can say not only that culture can be both a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion but also that promoting liberal, cultural nationalism we might mean excluding individuals who do not belong to the same national, and cultural community. This idea that a single culture provides foundations for the nation-state can also result in seeing culture as a political ideology and may lead to a form of nationalism, namely culturalism.

Culturalism stems from the belief that individuals are inherently determined by their culture. In contemporary Western societies, culture is often synonymous with political ideology and is naturalized in the public discourse as representing the political interests of different groups. Curiously, culturalism can be found on both sides of the political spectrum, from the extreme right to the left. The major difference lies in the understanding of whose culture should be defended. While right-wing supporters usually tend to focus on the protection of the culture of the majority, often defined as the national culture or heritage, the left tends to be more sympathetic towards the cultures of the minorities. For instance, in Denmark shaken by the so-called Mohammed cartoon controversy in 2005, the defenders of the infamous cartoon argued that freedom of speech is a part of the “Danish culture” (Eriksen & Stjernfelt, 2009). This example illustrates that some claims made in the name of the national culture might obscure the particular political interest behind these claims. In this case the anti-Muslim and anti-immigration discourse can be associated with these culturalist ideas as a form of defense of the Western liberal democratic order.

Culturalism is also sometimes theorized as a “polite form of ethnocentrism”. For example, Lentin (2011) argues that the rise of culturalism has been a response to the widely discredited concept of race as a structuring political idea. She argues that the concepts of culture and ethnicity came onto the political and social agenda after the Second World War instead of race because, at the time, they were considered less hierarchical than race. However, according to Lentin, culture is no less reifying than race, and as a mild form of ethnocentrism, culturalism implies the hierarchical view that people and nations can be ranked in accordance with different levels of progress (ibid.).

Also, as I argued earlier, culture has been rather neglected in the scholarship on nationalism (e.g. Gellner, 1983, Smith,1991). Anderson’s (1983) study on nations as “imagined communities” is an exception in this case (cf. Renan, 1882). At the same time, in his account on culture’s role in nationalism, Anderson focuses mainly on the aspects that unite the people into nation. However, one cannot forget the relational aspect of this process, for the same ‘culture’ can also be a mechanism of exclusion. Among more recent examples of this process we find the political discourse of parties such as the right-wing Swedish Democrats (SD) who employ the discourse of Swedish
national culture or Swedishness to talk about cultural differences in the processes of integration of the multicultural society. According to Hellström (2010) the recent development of SD’s discourse points even to the replacement of the term ‘ethnicity’ by the term ‘culture’ (ibid:118). This is an important lesson for the societies in Central Europe that need to be particularly cautious about uncritical embracing of the idea of national culture promoted by the “good” liberal nationalism. However, what scholars proposing to extract the positive elements of nationalism seem to neglect is that more often than not the typologies of nationalism are challenged empirically.

The empirical research on the role of culture in national identification illustrates that culture can work as a mechanism of both inclusion and exclusion. For example, Shulman’s (2002) survey study measuring conceptions of national identity in the East and West shows that culture is sometimes misleadingly associated with exclusive ethnic elements of nationalism such as race and ancestry. He argues that in practice this is not the case, and that cultural elements such as memories, history, myths, symbols, religion, tradition etc. are equally present in the East and West (ibid.). The difference is thus not geographical or geopolitical but rather refers to the very understanding of culture. This understanding can imply diachronic and/or institutional aspects, and also understanding of nationhood and national identity can differ depending on the social groups who define them. Growing empirical research that focuses on popular notions of nationhood questions the relevance of the “civic/ethnic” dichotomy as an academic, elitist framework that does not reflect the views of other social strata.

Janmaat (2006) confirms to some extent Schulman’s (2002) argument about culture as an important element in definitions of nationhood. In his study based on the analysis of the 2002 Eurobarometer surveys on national identity, Janmaat points to culture as a third dimension and complementary notion of nationhood next to political and ethnic dimensions. He also makes the point that “there might be a distinct difference between the elite and the masses in the way in which they interpret their national attachments” (ibid:28). Apart from pointing to culture as an additional element in the dualistic typology of nationalism, a growing body of empirical research questions the relevance of the sharp distinction between civic and ethnic elements and shows instead that they are often intertwined (Zubrzycki, 2001). Even if in some cases the distinction proves to be valid empirically, it is difficult to apply this framework in a cross-national perspective (Reeskens & Hooghe, 2010).

The results of empirical studies draw our attention to the fundamental problem with the theoretical assumptions about possibilities of extracting the “good” sides of nationalism from their “bad” counterparts. That is, scholars tend to overlook the constant tension between exclusion and inclusion, between the constructive and destructive forces of nationalism. Theoretical attempts to capture the idea of nationhood either in civic or ethnic terms or
through exclusively positive or negative elements not only obscure the fact that these visions are often intertwined in practice but also, that inclusionary and exclusionary forces are rather mutually constitutive than mutually exclusive. Additionally, the problem is with understanding of culture as either employed by the proponents of inclusive nationalism, as in the case of liberal nationalism, or by those leaning towards the more exclusive vision. In any case it seems important to point out that in the interplay between the “good” and the “bad” sides of nationalism, sometimes culture can become the ”ugly” aspect supporting the particular interests of a given group. Consequently, the distinction between nationalism and patriotism is equally problematic.

Porter-Szucs (2009) argues that the sharp terminological distinction between nationalism and patriotism continues Kohn’s clumsy geographical distinction between Western and Eastern nationalisms. Instead, he claims that:

> Drawing distinctions between these two concepts carries the risk of obscuring the intimate bond between identity and ideology, between the subjective sense of nationality and a politicized deployment of national categories. Bracketing ‘patriotism’ apart from ‘nationalism’ makes it harder to perceive the ways in which ideology inevitably penetrates identity (ibid:5).

This argument suggests that the distinction between nationalism and patriotism is not particularly useful. However, this is not to say that it should stop us from exploring nationalistic discourses and the meaning of nation and nationalism in particular socio-historical contexts. Rather to the contrary. If we assume that different forces of nationalism are intertwined, namely that the collectivistic and cultural forms of identification and belonging such as patriotism are connected to exclusionary, xenophobic aspects, it will help us to better understand how they influence one another, and the dynamic between them. This is an important aspect in the context of the nation-building processes in the post-socialist Central Europe, where, as some scholars suggest, nationalism, often passing under the term of patriotism, has played an important role in post-communist transformation and democratization.

Patriotism and nation in the Central European context

It is practically impossible to discuss patriotism in Central Europe without touching upon the concept of nation. It is also difficult to discuss nationalism without mentioning patriotism. This is because nations that historically have been deprived of the state for many years have developed an idea of patriotism that differs to some extent from the one present in Anglo-Saxon literature. If Western patriotism relates to sentiments towards a given country, meaning the sovereign or asserting sovereignty nation-state, then Central European patriotism relates first of all to the nation understood as a historical
and cultural community of people. In such a context, nation does not necessarily mean a country. For example, in the Polish historical and sociological literature the term naród (nation) is routinely used to describe a historically formed cultural community of people united by a sense of shared solidarity, history, tradition and national culture (Chalasiński, 1969).

In the classical Western sociology, which focused mainly on issues related to macro structures such as class or state (Weber, Simmel, Durkheim), the category of nation as relating to people (Volk) rather than a nation-state was relatively neglected. Contrary to that, Polish sociologists working in the first half of the 20th century such as Gumplowicz, Balicki, Chalasiński and Znaniecki developed theoretical and empirical perspectives where knowledge about society was mainly knowledge about nation and its people. This was also the case with other sociologists working in historical and political circumstances similar to Poland (e.g. Kurczew ska, 1997).

In the countries where the main issue of political and social thought was the regaining of national sovereignty, nation became one of the key concepts within social sciences and particularly in sociology. At the same time, sociological literature on nationalism went in different directions so that to date the majority of studies on nationalism coming from the Anglo-Saxon world have described phenomena that in Central Europe are translated in terms of national ideas, patriotism and national sentiments (Szacki, 1999). A researcher on nationalism relatively forgotten by Western scholarship was Znaniecki, the author of “Modern Nationalities” (1952) who argued that in Polish the word naród does not have an equivalent in the English language. It closely relates to the German concept of Volk (people), indicating a community of shared culture, tradition, language, religion and not necessarily a common state.

Walicki (2009) argues that the national and state traditions in Central Europe have led to the development of a distinction, disputable today, between the so-called “historical” and “non-historical” nations. According to Walicki, as old “historical nations” Poland together with Hungary have their own “state traditions, historical class in a form of gentry, elitist national culture and developed national consciousness” (ibid:510). This historical dimension became reinforced by the belief that some nations have a special historical and cultural mission to fulfill. This is the case with the Polish Romantic Messianism developed during the 19th century. The idea of the messianic mission can be characterized by the belief that Poland has a special role in saving the Christian Europe from different “barbarians”, such as Turks and Russians, and must spread the light of the Latin civilization in the Slavonic East. For scholars who emphasized this historical dimension in the processes of nation-building in Central Europe, nations occur as sociological realities created in the 19th century as a result of objective social and historical forces.

It can be mentioned that also Renan’s early essay from 1882 is an exception here.
Therefore, those who focus on the historical, diachronic aspect of nationalism and national identity tend to support the idea of sociological realism instead of social constructionism\(^\text{17}\), which is much more popular in the West.

The specific understanding of the concept of nation in the context of statelessness also had epistemological and methodological implications. Often overlooked by Western scholars is Znaniecki’s early contribution from 1912, where he suggests that nations can be studied as both categories of *analysis* and *praxis*. Znaniecki argued that in order to understand and explain human actions, social scientists need to make use of categories that can be both analytical and practical. He suggested that the ‘nation’ can be one such category. This approach acknowledges nation’s “imagined”, thus constructionist, and its material reality. This means that on the one hand nation as a discursive space is a category of analysis constantly reproduced within given socio-cultural and political contexts. This view implies that nation is a contingent construct existing only within and through discursive networks and representations. As such, nation is a relatively flexible discursive space within boundaries ascribed by certain historically positioned narrative structures, such as narratives of national traumas or other collective mythologies and memories. On the other hand, apart from nation’s ‘existence’ through discursive representations, nation is something that can be easily taken for granted by those who identify with it. In that sense, nation is also a category of praxis, for example in situations when nation’s meaning, definition and boundaries are strongly disputed by various groups. In that sense the nation exists for its members along with the practical, social implications such as national symbols, traditions, rituals, artifacts etc. Znaniecki (1912), by studying nation as *both* category of analysis and praxis, suggested that researchers are risking neither production of abstract facts without any relation to reality nor pure empiricism without any theoretical foundation. Only such “categories that can be both categories of practice and analysis are appropriate in understanding and explaining human action” (ibid:8, cf. Luczewski, 2005).

In a context where nation is defined as *the people*, it can also mean prolongation of a nuclear family and as such can be constructed as a *collective body*. Such a body, when endangered by hostile forces, can be defended with the help of patriotic rhetoric that builds on cultural references to heroism, sacrifice, conspiracy, national mythology, martyrdom and death. Under such circumstances being a patriot means defending the national community. It also means showing solidarity with fellow members or even sacrificing one’s life for the nation’s soul. This type of rhetoric relates closely to the traditional understanding of patriotism. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the word *patriotism* originates from the Greek *patriós* which means “coming

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\(^{17}\)This is not to say that realism was the only dominant approach. Polish sociology also developed the culturalist approach that supported the view that nation could survive without state and its institutions for many years (Kłoskowska, 1996).
from the same father” (pater), hence patrió corresponds to English fatherland, but also Polish ojczyzna, Bulgarian takovina and Ukrainian bat’kivshchyna.

Burszta (2003) argues that patriotism understood as love of one’s country implies subordination of sons and daughters to their father-nation. This relates to practices of representing nation as a family, constructed in a patriarchal manner. National community is perceived as a prolongation of the nuclear family. In that way, the core of patriotism is driven by the moral and hierarchical relationship between father and children, and alludes to the idea that children are supposed to respect and obey the norms of the national community. It also explains the relation between patriotic discourse and the patriarchal family structure, which is questioned and challenged in more individualistic, liberal democratic societies but remains strong in traditional patriarchal societies.

Traditional patriotism has been important for stateless nations and those under colonial rule. Burszta argues that traditional patriotism assumes ethical particularism and becomes “a matter of a moral duty towards the nation defined as an ethical community” (ibid:24). The first duty of a patriot is to fight and be ready to sacrifice one’s life for the nation. Such traditional patriotism is defined as an attitude and sentiment of respect, admiration and sacrifice to the fatherland. However, since nationalism is an inherently gendered phenomenon (Yuval-Davis, 1997), the roles of both father and mother are essential to maintain its normative structures. Therefore, on the one hand the idea of fatherland can be related to the figure of the father in the European culture, as the one providing the identity and the status and opposed to the role of the mother, which is to give life. On the other hand, the role of mother is also important. Again, particularly in the context of oppressed nations, the fatherland has often been embodied as a female, suffering body that was tormented, chained and sometimes pushed into the grave (Janion, 2011). This female body represents the suffering nation but also the mournful mother, always pure and dedicated. In the Polish context, for instance, Polonia was depicted as allegory, symbol and myth (ibid.). Also, nation represented as female connects the powerful ideal of motherhood with nationhood in a form of mythologized representation known as Mother-Pole (Matka-Polka). Her role during the occupation and statelessness has mostly been related to guarding language, culture and faith, but also to reproduction. It can be suggested that this particular importance given to women in reproducing nationalism has an impact on understanding of nation primarily as a linguistic, cultural community rather than a political one. Today, questioning of the Mother-Pole myth is associated with challenging of the traditional vision of nationhood in Poland (Kowalczyk, 2003).

The concept of patriotism in the Central European context is often employed to describe the relationship to national community of shared culture, language, traditions and faith. Because of the historical experience of state-
lessness and foreign oppression, the notion of patriotism in the region is closely connected to the concept of nation as a cultural, rather than a civic, political community. This is to say that patriotism in Central Europe resembles more a form of cultural nationalism. However, in stating this one may ask whether this understanding of patriotism immediately excludes other forms of nationalism. The answer is no. However, it is important to point out that the understanding of patriotism that is dominant in the literature means primarily loyalty to the civic-political community. Because of the geopolitical and historical conditions in Central Europe, patriotism is closely related to the concept of nation defined more as a spiritual than a political community. Of course, this is important when one begins the study of nationalism in Central Europe. So finally we may ask: nationalism and patriotism - are they opposites or not?

Nationalism or Patriotism? Towards an understanding in the Central European context

This chapter departed from the persisting discussion in the classical literature on nationalism, and the dichotomy between two normatively and qualitatively different types of nationalism, such as civic and ethnic ones. It was argued that this distinction is based on different understandings of nation as either a political or ethno-cultural community. Such a distinction between two forms of nationalism is problematic as it reproduces the logic of difference in thinking about nationalism. This logic is frequently challenged by empirical research showing that the civic and ethnic forms of nationalism are often mutually constitutive rather than mutually exclusive.

Further, I suggested that the more critical approaches to nationalism provide an account of nationalism as broad phenomenon that operates discursively, also on the level of daily practices. As such, nationalism is both a means for national reproduction and a form of “lived ideology”. Consequently, nationalism is also a complex, multi-faceted rather than dualistic, one-sided phenomenon. Therefore, the critical approaches to nationalism have the potential to challenge the dualistic dichotomy of nationalism. However, as further discussion has shown, even if scholars generally agree that the distinction between civic and ethnic forms of nationalism is not particularly useful, they still tend to focus on nationalism as a generally negative phenomenon. Accordingly, some scholars are inclined to look for alternatives to nationalism, such as patriotism.

Patriotism, as an alternative form of collective belonging is often theorized as either founded on universal, inclusionary values or as a form of emotional attachment to the idea of patria. In both cases, the scholarly discourse on patriotism falls into a trap of desperately attempting to find an
alternative to nationalism. As such, the point of departure is based on the assumption that patriotism and nationalism are inherently different, but the current scholarly debate fails to answer why they are perceived as such.

The Central European understanding of patriotism illustrates rather sharply the close relation between understanding of nation and patriotism. Because of historical experiences, patriotism in the region has been associated with attachment to nation and traditional values that were under threat from foreign oppressors. Consequently, patriotism is synonymous with support for reproduction and preservation of the national community and is the only acceptable way to talk about the relationship to the imagined community. Patriotism thus provides the language to talk about the national unity and the ‘we’-community. It can be suggested that as such, patriotism provides a “syntax of hegemony” (Billig, 1995) and remains a discourse reproducing a certain vision of nationhood and, consequently, nationalism. Therefore, it can be suggested that patriotism is neither a separate discourse nor an alternative to nationalism. Rather to the contrary, it is part of the nationalist rhetoric.

To sum up, on the basis of the arguments developed in the previous sections, patriotism can be accounted for as neither an alternative to nationalism, nor merely a type of nationalism that focuses on the “good” aspects of national belonging. As the discussion focusing on Central Europe has illustrated, patriotism can be employed as an analytical concept, particularly in the context of studies that focus on the discursive practices of national reproduction. As such, patriotism can be defined as discourse that plays a role in the processes of articulation, redefinition, production and reproduction of nationalism and nationhood, particularly in the context of democratic transformation and development in Central Europe. Patriotism is employed to describe people’s relation to the nation from the perspective of the cultural, collective identity. It focuses on the representations of nation and forms of identification with those, such as national identity. At the same time, since national identity is a contingent and relational construct, patriotism mobilizes the collective self in relation to other identities.

Having said this one needs to be aware of the tensions within nationalism as well as other discourses that might be co-constitutive of nationalism. This means that the debate on nationalism does not exist outside of the discourses that constitute it. It is never only past-oriented, and neither is it reproduced in a vacuum (Calhoun, 2007). Instead, as a ‘lived’ form of ideology, nationalism operates ‘here and now’ and the study of contemporary forms of nationalism also needs to take into account other discourses that might alter the ways in which we think about nations and national identity.

For instance, in the context of Central European post-communist countries, the incentive to break away from the communist past has been connected to the idea of a reinvention of the national image for both internal and external audiences. Becoming modern, ‘Western’ societies has implied
building a *new image* of the nation that would be attractive enough to compete with others in the region and internationally. The construction of this new image has also been a means of national reproduction in the post-communist context. One of the most powerful and interesting perspectives on how we perceive nations today - yet rather neglected by scholars of nationalism - is the idea of imagining nations as brands.
CHAPTER 3 | CHALLENGING NATIONALISM: NATION AS A BRAND

This chapter regards nation branding as an “updated” form of nationalism. The aim is also to discuss nation branding as a process contributing not only to the promotion of a given country-brand but also as a process that transforms nationalism and consequently, the way we imagine and talk about national belonging and identity. The chapter introduces the concept of nation re-branding to argue for the importance of citizen negotiation of the new national self-image and identity. This concerns particularly the case of countries in transition, such as those in Central and Eastern Europe.

The argument unfolds in the following steps. First, I provide a short evaluation of the existing literature on nation branding. Second, I move on to discuss the more recent critically oriented theoretical perspectives emphasizing the political consequences of nation branding, with a particular focus on nation branding in Central Europe. Third, based on the critical approaches to nation branding focusing on the political, social and cultural implications of the nation branding process, I argue for the critical focus on negotiation of culture and identity in the process of nation re-branding. Consequently, I suggest that the process of nation re-branding involves both internal and external\(^{18}\) ways of communicating the nation, and that taking into account both these ways can potentially challenge our social imagery, namely how we think about nationhood in the global era. Finally, I suggest that this way of theorizing nation branding as a process of nation re-branding and discursive reconstruction of the national self-image can also be a way to problematize the transformation in the post-communist context.

The phenomenon of nation branding has generally been neglected in the literature on nationalism but recently it has been introduced as a theoretical frame to study processes of national production and reproduction (cf. Aronczyk, 2008). This interpretative frame provides a new and challenging way of looking at nationalism and national development in the contemporary era. In the increasingly commercialized competitive and globalized world we tend to think of nations differently than, for instance, fifty years ago. Today, nations and their prominent symbols such as flags appear not only in the

\(^{18}\) Internally and externally communicated forms of nationhood correspond to domestic and international ones respectively.
context of war and international diplomacy but also in much more mundane contexts such as food, clothes, sports and leisure. Such proliferation of national emblems and symbols points to the fact that in spite of globalization, transnational movements, and intensification of inter- and transnational networks - or perhaps precisely because of them - nations continue to matter (Calhoun, 2007). At the same time, nationality and particularly representations of different nationalities make a difference in how we experience the world around us. Often, we tend to perceive nations in terms of stereotypes: sunny and joyful Spain, peaceful and equal Sweden, easy-going and laid-back Australia etc. It is not so important here whether these statements bear any resemblances to reality, but rather that representation and stereotypes are ways to define the characteristics of different nationalities. Some countries embrace their stereotypical images, others have to work hard to change or improve the way the citizens define themselves and are perceived by others. Despite some arguments suggesting that globalization is blurring national borders, we are experiencing a strengthening and reinforcement of symbolic national boundaries rather than their dissolution. At the same time, what seems to be increasing in terms of international competition is the national image. Anholt (2003), who introduced the concept of “nation branding”, foresees a day when the most important part of foreign policy will not be defense or trade but rather image.

In the eyes of marketers like Anholt (e.g. Anholt, 2003, 2008) one of the features of the global market is that nations are competing with each other. Nation branding as a field of both theory and practice which aims to build, measure and manage the reputation of countries is thus promoted as a successful strategy to pursue that competition. Nation branding began to emerge during the last decade as a response to the changing global relations, structures and networks that nation-states have been part of since the rise of nationalism in the 19th century. Some scholars argue that what we are experiencing today is a shift from the modern world of geopolitics and nation-states to the postmodern, post-political world of contemporary image culture and branding, with the emphasis on style and the new aesthetics of patriotism (cf. Aronczyk, 2007, Sturken, 2009).

The cohesive and coherent image of the nation communicated to both internal (national) and external (inter- and transnational) audiences plays an important role in attracting investors, tourists and other types of spectators that can contribute to a country’s economic, social and cultural development. Nation branding is usually associated with the more conventional views on branding connected to marketing, promotion and selling of products, in this case national images. One of the main roles of nation branding is to provide a cohesive image of a nation, particularly to the external audience. Construction of such images has been particularly important for the countries that went through the process of transformation, where the re-construction of national identity and building of a cohesive strong image of the nation has
been one of the priorities, as in the case of the post-communist nations in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) (Kaneva, 2011, Kaneva & Popescu, 2011).

Nation branding: perspectives and practical implications

Branding is one of the most effective marketing strategies in capitalism. It usually refers to a number of practices in which companies build not only their own image-brand, but also communicate with the customer through verbal and audio-visual means. Brand can be defined as any symbol, name, design or feature that identifies one commodity or service as distinct from others. The goal of branding is then to differentiate one good from another, but at the same time to ensure that it provides shared value to the company and its customers. Branding is one of the most effective neoliberal tools, accumulating value based on commodification of symbolic and emotional attachments between the brand and the customer. The main goal of branding strategies is to build up a relationship with the customer who will later be able to identify with the particular brand. Through this capacity of circulation of the symbolic capital, branding is also a tool that allows for extraction of economic profit from almost all spheres of social life (Lury & Moor, 2010). This status of branding as an active agent in the production of the social meaning and identity is one of the elements of contemporary commercial, promotional culture where both the economic and the symbolic elements are tightly intertwined.

Nationhood, discussed earlier as a form of political claim to live together as a nation (Renan, 1996[1882], Brubaker, 2004), is among those many social practices that are no longer independent from the market forces in the era of industrial capitalism. Although at first glance it might seem far-fetched that the idea of the nation can sell, this is in fact what we experience in our everyday lives. The idea that nations can be turned into commodities is one of the basic assumptions of nation branding. Nation branding became popular as part of the processes of expanding globalization, liberalization of media, and introduction of new technologies that go beyond nation borders. In the “postnational world” (Habermas, 2001), the relations between consumption and production, citizens and consumers are constantly blurred, which also implies that many of the social relations turn into relations of value exchange. The emergence of the phenomenon of nation branding can be connected to the geopolitical changes in the dynamic of nations and na-

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19One of the recent developments in the sector of branding is music branding, which builds on music’s capacity to address emotions and thereby eventually turn brand customers into its fans (cf. Lusensky, 2010).
Nation branding, referred to by some authors as “country branding” (e.g. Szondi, 2007) is a relatively new phenomenon, and the literature from both academics and practitioners alike dates back to the mid-1990s. As Dinnie (2008) suggests, “nation branding” is an imperfect term, since the activities involved in branding include “the activation of diaspora, the coordination of diverse government agencies and debate on national identity” (ibid:251). However the more conventional view on nation branding focuses mainly on the practical applications and strategic outcomes as well as advice and recommendations for more efficient and successful branding implementations. The majority of research in the field of nation branding comes from such areas as marketing (e.g. Olins, 1999, Hall, 1999, Anholt, 2007), public and international relations (e.g. Dinnie, 2008, van Ham, 2001) as well as public diplomacy (e.g. Szondi, 2007). For instance Olins (1999:23-24) offers a set of instructions for successful nation branding. This seven-step process includes the creation of a working group with representatives from different sectors, evaluation of how nation is viewed both domestically and abroad, consultation of opinion leaders about nation’s advantages and weaknesses, identifying the core strategy for the branding campaign, developing a visual design to accompany the campaign, adjusting the message to the main target audiences i.e. tourism agencies and investors, and finally creation of a public-private group to start the program. It can be argued that based on practitioners’ previous experience with brand marketing, following these steps should contribute to a successful nation branding campaign regardless of the target in question. However, in spite of similarities between more traditional branding of commercial products and nations in terms of strategies employed, nation branding is sometimes described as an “exciting, complex and controversial phenomenon” and a field with “little theory but a huge amount of real world activity” (Dinnie, 2008:13).

Since the topic of nations and nationhood tends to be a highly politicized area of public debate, the term “nation branding” is an object of controversy, with the capacity to generate different viewpoints and opinions. However, at the same time there seems to be a silent agreement among the majority of researchers that nation branding is an important aspect of global development and competition. For instance, Anholt (2003, 2007), one of the leading practitioners and proponents of nation branding, argues that “popularization of nation branding practices is one of the consequences of democratization and globalization of media” (ibid:39). He suggests the term “competitive identity” to describe nation branding’s potential to address public opinion in achieving political goals. Anholt argues that nation branding is an example

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20 In order to avoid confusion in this chapter I consistently refer to the concept of nation branding as opposed to country or state branding
of “soft power” as opposed to the “hard power” of economic and military resources of the big, influential countries. It is the only type of power available to small nations that gives them the opportunity to compete in a global market. In that sense, according to Anholt, nation branding is also an agent for global justice. By acknowledging branding’s potential, Anholt supports the view that brands are an inevitable aspect of global capitalism and “gradually become the dominant channel of communication for national identity” (Anholt, 2003:139, see also Jansen, 2008).

In 2005, Anholt introduced the Nation Brands Index (NBI)\(^{21}\), a concept of measuring and managing the global image, perception and reputation of countries. The main principle of this index is that the way a country is perceived globally can make a critical difference to the success of its business, trade, tourism, and relations with other countries. The index is measured in a global study where citizens of about 50 countries worldwide are asked in an online survey to evaluate countries. Measuring the power and quality of each country’s “brand image” takes place in six dimensions that include: people, tourism, culture and heritage, governance, exports, investment, and immigration. The results are further presented annually in a form of ranking. The main principle of such ranking is the idea of accountability, namely that one can track a given country’s rise and/or fall and adjust necessary actions to either maintain or improve the global image. The Nation Brand Index is an example of the holistic approach to nation branding, and is different, for instance, to destination branding, which focuses mainly on the promotion of specific tourist destinations.

Literature on nation branding primarily refers to so-called destination branding, which aims at promotion of the tourism industry (Hall, 1999). However, since the idea of nation branding has turned out to be one of the priorities for transitional and developing countries, the practice has stretched to cover other spheres of the public realm. The literature distinguishes between destination branding and nation (country) branding. While the former focuses mostly on building the brand to attract visitors and boost tourism, the latter aims at “developing a coherent and comprehensive image of the nation to promote economic, commercial and political interests at home and abroad” (Szondi, 2007:9). Nation branding thus requires a more holistic and creative approach to practices of promotion than destination branding. That is, nation branding as a practice suggests coordination between different actors and institutions, both from public and private sectors. The ideas about both destination and country branding are disseminated in professional journals such as the “Journal of Brand Management and Place Branding and Public Diplomacy”.

\(^{21}\)For more information, see: http://www.gfkamerica.com/practice_areas/roper_pam/nbi_index/index.en.html, 2012-05-12
Established in 2004, “Place Branding and Public Diplomacy” describes itself as “the first and only journal to concentrate on the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques and disciplines to the economic, social, political and cultural development of cities, regions and countries”. The second concept in the journal’s title, namely public diplomacy, has existed since at least the 1960s and refers to “governmental practices to cultivate public opinion in other countries” (Dinnie, 2008:251). The contemporary understanding of public diplomacy approaches what usually passes under the concept of “nation branding”. This is pointed out by van Ham (2001) in his article “The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation”.

According to van Ham, in an era when more traditional selling-oriented advertising is being replaced with branding in order to emphasize the emotional connection between the product and the customer, we are also experiencing a shift in the political paradigm. That is, we are moving “from the world of geopolitics to postmodern world of branding and images” (ibid:4). What does this shift imply in practice? Van Ham suggests that in the increasingly globalized world, the image is everything and that in order to convey positive associations brands often merge with states. Examples of that process are the international recognition and association of Nokia with Finland, McDonald’s with USA, SONY with Japan and IKEA with Sweden. The process of “state branding” implies not only that “preference of style over substance is increasingly shaping Europe’s political landscape” but also that “state branding is gradually supplanting nationalism” (ibid:3).

This idea about nationalism being potentially replaced by practices of state and nation branding is problematic for two reasons. First of all, the idea of commodification of nation leading to the disappearance of nationalism is very difficult to prove empirically. It is based on the assumption that essentialized and simplified images of the nation as a product of market exchange would eventually win over nation as an ethno-historical project of exclusion. Second, the shift in political paradigm from modern geopolitics to the postmodern political culture of images and style turns nation branding strategies into potential tools of democratization and liberalization. Van Ham suggests that “by marginalizing chauvinism, the brand state is contributing greatly to the further pacification of Europe” (ibid:3). This suggestion that nation branding can channel negative nationalist sentiments and turn them into identification with attractive and competitive brands has been challenged by more critically-oriented literature on nation branding focusing in particular on the political implications, such as power relations and exclusion, of nation branding practices (e.g. Aronczyk, 2007, 2008, Jansen, 2008, Kaneva, 2010, 2011).

22 For information about the journal see: http://www.palgrave-journals.com/pb/index.html
The emergence of theoretical perspectives on nation branding

The theoretical research on nation branding comes mainly from such disciplines as cultural, media and communication studies (e.g. Kaneva, 2009, 2011, Jansen, 2008, Tegelberg, 2010), sociology (e.g. Aronczyk, 2007, 2008) and anthropology (e.g. Dzenovska, 2005). The majority of these studies are grounded in critical theories of society, communication and culture. Therefore, contrary to the research coming from marketing or public relations, critical research on nation branding is not interested in practical applications, strategic outcomes or advice for better and more efficient branding applications. Instead, one of the interests of this approach is to theorize and problematize nation branding from a more historical perspective of major turning points, such as the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the neoliberal global system. As Kaneva (2012) argues, cultural approaches to nation branding are interested in uncovering the “new ways in which nation branding operates as a new site upon which national identity and globalization come into contact and are reconfigured in the post-communist environment” (ibid:5). This particular interest in the post-communist European countries is what gives critical nation branding studies the possibility to challenge the regionally dominant political paradigms of transition, such as modernization, Westernization, and so-called ‘shock therapy’ in terms of fast economic transition. In this way, studies which address transition in a revisited way also see nation branding as an important element of identity politics on the post-communist landscape. Additionally, by pointing to nation branding as part of identity struggles in the post-communist context, this literature also suggests that nation branding is not necessarily a new phenomenon, but rather a discourse that influences the articulation and communication of contemporary forms of nationhood.

Scholars interested in examining the political implications of nation branding have a different agenda as compared with those interested in practical implications and applications. This agenda is grounded on the assumption that in the context where both the ideological and the economic aspects are difficult to set apart, branding is also an important process of making social meaning. At the same time, by connecting nation branding to power, by “historicizing the texts and practices”, researchers are also exposing the “linkage between nation branding and the relations of social power” (Kaneva, 2011:128). By exposing this relation, nation branding appears as an ideological practice and construct that reproduces certain images and discourses of the nation while silencing others. Since the main goal of nation branding marketing strategies is commercial, the dominant discourses reproduce the image of a given nation as a paradise for tourists or investors. This is often achieved by visually portraying places that are aesthetically appealing and people that are happy and smiling. Potential social problems, contro-
versies such as poverty, unemployment or pollution are thus absent from nation branding campaigns. This is particularly the case when nation branding experts such as brand consultants are looking for the “brand essence”, namely the core idea capturing the ‘nation’ as a competitive and attractive product on the global market.

Critics, such as Widler (2007) and Jansen, (2008) argue that stereotypes are usually the first step in the process of developing the nation brand. This highly selective process of brand identity development is also a “practice of essentialism and reduction of diversity and pluralism” (Aronczyk, 2008:52). In order to define the “core brand”, also known as the “brand essence”, experts tend to focus on nation’s competitive value, often defined in terms of uniqueness and difference. Following the logic of commodification where ‘difference matters’, nation branding tends to employ common sense ideas about nations, and consequently often reproduces stereotypical representations of them (Widler, 2007). At the same time I would like to point out that reproducing stereotypes can only be helpful in cases when they convey positive associations, for example France associated with style, elegance and cuisine, or Italy with fashion and culture. However, in the case of developing or/and transitioning countries the task of branding experts is usually focused on production rather than reproduction of representations. These ideas are reflected in both destination and country branding slogans describing countries’ identities as belonging to a ‘certain type’ that can be communicated to other nations. So for instance post-communist Latvia became “The Land that Sings”, Estonia “Positively Transforming”, Poland “Creative Tensions”, Hungary “The Talent for Entertaining” and Croatia “The Mediterranean As It Once Was” (Szondi, 2007).

The practice of representing nations through catchy slogans is also part of the larger global power structures favoring the dominance of representations that can be easily communicated and appeal to tourists, investors and other audiences from the West. In this way, nation branding is not only a neo-liberal discourse but also a neo-colonial one. Among the features of such neo-colonial discourses is a desire to satisfy the desires of an external and ‘Western gaze’ combined with silencing of local perspectives and avoidance of controversial issues (Tegelberg, 2010, see also Kaneva, 2011). Therefore, nation branding is not necessarily a benign, ‘soft’ way of communicating the national interests (Van Ham, 2001), but rather “a sort of preemptive management and control, a national discourse for a global context” (Aronczyk, 2008:44). Neither is nation branding a new phenomenon. As some more critically oriented researchers show (Aronczyk, 2007) the mechanisms of communication of a national idea can be traced back to modern forms of nation building.

For instance, as argued earlier, the idea of what nation is has an impact on the type of nationalism it is connected to. As a reminder, scholars of nationalism have long been emphasizing the importance of myths in shaping the
national imagery. Smith (1991) defines nation as “a community of common myths and memories” (ibid:40, my emphasis). The myth as suggested by Barthes (1957) naturalizes the past, and turns culture into nature, so that the given social object appears as reified and a permanent element of the natural order of things. Often the myths of national unity are part of the symbolic machinery shaping the collective imagination of community. Such machinery is important in the creation and reproduction of the national past, since myth is also a certain version of history that is taught at schools and presented as the only existing ‘true’ vision (Stomma, 2006). As powerful tools of symbolic violence, myths are employed by political elites to manipulate and control people’s understanding of the past, their collective memory and identity.

Also, although on a different level, myths are employed by branding experts. The goal of the majority of such marketing experts, and those working with nation branding, is to create a brand that will become an icon (Holt, 2004). In the book “How Brands Become Icons: The Principles of Cultural Branding”, Holt argues that in the contemporary brand-saturated consumer society the brands that gain the desired status of icons, such as Apple, Coca-Cola, McDonalds or Nike, tend to operate on the cultural level. This implies that iconic brands offer the potential to channel desire and relieve anxiety. Holt explains that the key to cultural banding is offering the myth, the story that the customer can identify with. He explains the mechanism of myth-creation by suggesting that iconic brands create what he calls ‘myth markets’ (ibid.). The opportunity for such markets occurs usually when the national ideology is in conflict with social reality. For instance in the case of American brands, national myths such as ‘the land of opportunity’, self-reliance and manifest destiny were employed by the beer-company Budweiser when the country faced the first waves of outsourcing during the 1970s. When the high-wage industrial base of production was threatened by growing outsourcing, the company decided to build their image based on the virtues of the traditional artisan in order to pay respect to the embattled blue-collar workers. In this way, everyone choosing the Budweiser brand could also pay respect and honor to the national mythology of self-reliance in the land of opportunity. In their latest book, Holt and Cameron (2010) argue for the concept of cultural strategy where the principle of cultural branding is based on innovation and provides new products and new services. They suggest that a brand’s success relates to the application of certain cultural tropes.

These principles can also be applied to the strategies of nation branding, where myths of paradise beaches, unpolluted air, investment opportunities and happy local people are reproduced and disseminated through a variety of channels of communication. In this sense branding is much more than communication. Branding, including nation branding, provides a value for both company and consumers. This value is usually based on myths and identity that are employed in order to provide the meaning to the brand and eventual-
ly turn it into an icon. In order to generate profits, this value has to be competitive as it is helping the company to differentiate its products from others. For instance, Holt (2004) summarizes this process of iconic brand-making by saying that the idea is to “align the brand with the right identity (myth) in an appealing way” (ibid:214). Analogically it can be argued that in the case of nation branding in order to generate profits in terms of tourism, promotion and trade, a state’s reputation relies to a large extent on its international image. The practices focused on increasing or changing of the overall nation image have been particularly popular among small developing nations as well as nations undergoing transition, such as post-communist countries in Europe (e.g. Szondi, 2007). It can also be argued that this connection between image and collective identity in nation branding can potentially challenge our “social imagery” and alter the ways in which we imagine, define and redefine nation and nationhood.

Challenging the “social imagery”: nation and nationhood redefined

Critical studies which pay attention to the political implications of nation branding have an ambition to examine the connection between how we think about nations and how this thinking is connected to the relations of power, culture and economy. Practices of nation branding operate within the capitalist mode where branding is one of the most effective ways of communication. At the same time, as some scholars suggest, these practices go far beyond the idea of mobilization of national identity for economic purposes (Bond et. al., 2003, my emphasis). The idea of cultural branding (Holt, 2004) is an example of a practice that aim to create value, myth and identity to supply the neo-liberal, global demand for coherent image and identity. In the case of nation branding, governments and nation-states have to globally compete among each other for profit for tourists, investment and trade.

The usage of corporate branding tools locates nation branding practices at the core of the neo-liberal, geopolitical context of international exchange. This feature is addressed by one of the harshest critics of nation branding practices, Jansen (2008), who concludes:

Nation branding is monologic, hierarchical, reductive form of communication that is intended to privilege one message, require all voices of authority to speak in unison, and marginalize and silence dissenting voices (ibid:134).

Jansen addresses here an important aspect of nation branding which makes its practices an attractive tool not only for experts but also for the local elites in countries working on brand development. Nation branding is not only powerful as a hierarchical and reductive form of communication. It is because of that feature that authorities often use it to put forward certain dis-
courses and representations while simultaneously silencing others that can be problematic. For instance, the issue of ethnic minorities of a given country is seldom a subject of a nation branding campaign. Because of the selectivity of this reductive form of communication, unsurprisingly nation branding became a voice of the new post-communist authorities struggling with the challenges of transforming their economy and politics and searching for a cohesive national identity. As Kaneva (2011) suggests, nation branding quickly became “a new propaganda vehicle for post-communist elites” (ibid:128)\textsuperscript{23}.

As a powerful, complex tool employed in the processes of national re-definition, nation branding can be compared to the proverbial wolf coming in sheep’s clothing; that is, it is ‘wrapped’ in a patriotic discourse of collective solidarity, national community and national pride. I agree with Jansen (2008) that nation branding can be a reductive form of communication, particularly when favoring the elitist, and silencing other voices. However, it can be argued that as a particular nationalistic discourse triggering the debate on national identity, nation branding can also be a productive force and means for upgrading and repairing of the national collective. Especially when we consider alternatives to state-sponsored channels of communication, such as internet portals, forums and other social media. As this dissertation aims to illustrate, nation branding not only changes the way we think of nations but also the ways in which we talk and debate about them. I will come back to this issue later, but before that we need to look at how nation branding is part of larger processes of production, reproduction and re-definition of nationhood.

Aronczyk (2007) contextualizes nation branding in relation to existing theories of nation-state and nationalism, and argues that ideas and practices of nation branding constitute an updated form of nationalism. Aronczyk suggests that the phenomenon of nation branding is not necessarily a new one but rather a logical extension of “a particular way that national (or other territorially bounded) identity has long been construed and communicated in time and space” (ibid:107). This updated form of nationalism has been particularly daunting for countries with emerging democracies, such as the post-communist countries in Europe. It can be argued that many of these countries, after the collapse of the communist regime, suffered from what Van Ham (2001) calls a “massive image problem” (ibid:5).

\textsuperscript{23}This has been particularly the case of the small nation-states, for instance the Baltic states such as Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia.
Branding Central Europe

After the collapse of communism, the countries in Central Europe experienced significant transformation in the spheres of politics, economy and culture. These changes were accompanied by a deep need for national self-re-definition and renewal. The process of national re-definition was first of all directed at challenging the representations of the region as backward, poor, underdeveloped and overall colorless. It also implied the practice of distancing from the past in terms of history, but also stereotypes. The process of distancing from the past spent behind the iron curtain was related to the crisis of identity and the need for a collective answer to questions such as ‘who are we?’ but also ‘how do we want to be perceived by others?’ (Marciniak, 2010, Kaneva, 2011). These changing patterns of articulation of nationhood and national belonging forced governments to struggle to establish a cohesive image of the nation, both at national and global levels.

For instance for post-communist Central European countries, such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland, the process of entering the international structures has been connected to joining the European Union in 2004. This symbolic “return to the West” implied opening up to the new political, economic but also cultural forms of transformation and ‘normalization’. One of the challenges of the ‘normalization’ process has been to deal with a collective identity crisis rooted in a sense of backwardness, underdevelopment and inferiority as compared with the West, which was often idealized under communism. This sense of inferiority has sometimes been strengthened by the representation of the whole region as struggling with corruption, unemployment and high crime rates. Therefore, entering the European Union triggered questions related to national identity and sovereignty in a way that was previously undermined by the communist, ‘foreign’ system. So the problem that the newly independent countries faced was how to revive national identity and collective pride while at the same time facing the newly gained ‘Europeanness’?

One of the strategies to deal with that situation was to build a new and comprehensive vision of the nation as well as national identity. The process of national re-definition was part of the public debate and political struggles. Recovering from the communist system the newly sovereign countries had to face the challenges of global markets and competition as well as the challenges of positioning themselves as democratic, attractive, and politically and economically stable countries. Additionally in order to attract investors and tourists they had to convey an image of being reliable and eligible members of the new system, and democratic and politically stable partners. They also had to define themselves as leaders of transition by, in the language or marketing, pointing to their “unique selling points” (Szondi, 2007, Kaneva, 2009). A number of external brand experts and consultants have been employed by governmental agencies in order to work on the ‘nation brands’
that would distinguish these countries from each other. The major focus has been on creating a cohesive, unique and attractive image, particularly for external audiences (Fujita & Dinnie, 2009). Scholars and practitioners in the field of marketing generally agree that the region has been in need of nation branding efforts which can provide it with a strong image in order to attract investors and visitors and generally face global competition (Olins, 1999, Szondi, 2007). Developing a coherent and comprehensive nation brand has been considered a ‘new challenge’ (Florek, 2005), an important practice for transitional countries and a prerequisite for the success of transition (Szondi, 2007), and a crucial marketing tool in today’s globalized world (Fujita & Dinnie, 2009).

A number of case studies from across the region offered evaluations and suggestions for improvement of branding practices. For instance the absence of a clearly defined branding strategy was one of the conclusions of the study of the Latvian case (Endzina & Luneva, 2004). The study suggested that one of the main problems on the road to development of a successful strategy has been the lack of coordination among institutions involved in the process, as well as lack of political and financial resources. Similar conclusions come from a study of the Polish case, supporting the view that the post-socialist Poland needs a strong nation brand (Florek, 2005). Again, the need for coordination among organizations responsible for nation branding, financial support and the acceptance of the Poland brand by the citizens were among the major suggestions for brand implementation. The importance of nation branding and image-building, particularly for small nations, such as Estonia and Lithuania, has been acknowledged as well (e.g. Gardner & Standaert, 2003, Park, 2009). Gardner and Standaert (2003) argue that those nation states that fail to brand effectively soon get left behind. In the case of Estonia, winning and hosting the Eurovision song contest in 2002 turned out to be an important and ‘priceless’ turning point for the brand Estonia in terms of international exposure (ibid.). In order to strengthen the competitiveness of the small Baltic nations, some have suggested examining the potential for the whole Baltic Sea Region to develop a consistent brand (Andersson, 2007).

Also comparative studies, particularly in Central Europe reveal that one of the major challenges for nation branding implementation has been the coordination between organizations responsible for nation branding both from the private and public sectors (Hall, 1999, Fujita & Dinnie, 2009). Hall (1999) argues for the need of cooperation between local governments and tourism industry promotion, while Fujita and Dinnie’s (2009) study of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary points to financial restraints and weak cooperation between different agencies responsible for the implementation of nation branding. Also Szondi (2007) offers an overview of important challenges and mistakes of place branding in the region. He outlines the most important functions in the practice of developing a compre-
hensive nation brand. One of the functions of branding is the communication of the idea of the nation. Szondi argues that “branding may not provide best answers as national identity is more complex and not subject to ‘selling’ but it can certainly help define a certain type of ‘country identity’ that can be communicated to other nations” (ibid:11). He also suggests that in order to achieve success the domestic audience needs to support and be able to identify with the brand, so that the “citizens can become their brand ambassadors” (ibid:19). However, apart from acknowledging the importance of citizens’ own engagement with the nation brand, Szondi does not develop these ideas further, and neither do other scholars interested in practical applications of branding practices.

At this point it needs to be acknowledged that the majority of the research on nation branding, particularly that concerned with practical applications of branding practices, does not seek to problematize and explore questions related to consequences of introducing the “core brand”. Instead, it is often taken for granted that branding, as a source of value and identity, is something inherently “good” and valuable. It can be argued that the critical approaches to nation branding challenge that assumption by arguing for branding as an inherently elitist practice aiming at production of limited representations of national images. However, even these more critical approaches tend to neglect one important aspect of nation branding processes, namely, that if we are to assume that nation branding is a form of national discourse for the global context, then it is also important to address the agents of that discourse and their interests. As I pointed out earlier, some scholars acknowledge that “nation branding” is an imperfect term, because nation branding goes beyond conventional marketing strategies. It also includes, for example, activities that involve processes of activation of diasporic communities as well as debates on national identity (Dinnie, 2008).

However, it is curious that even the critics of nation branding strategies seem to focus on the conventional, marketing aspects of nation branding’s domain and their consequences. What follows is that the issues such as negotiation of national identity and national self-image remain unexplored in the context of nation branding and its critique. Therefore, in order to do justice to the less conventional practices that are part of the nation branding processes and to the social actors involved in these processes, particularly in the context of the post-socialist countries in need for a new nation brand, I suggest the concept of nation re-branding.

Nation re-branding: nation brands as objects of debate

*Nation re-branding* can be employed to define the dynamic process in which national identity and national self-image are debated. This debate involves actors such as members of the cultural and political elites as well as regular
citizens. The main goal of nation re-branding is to conduct the process of both deconstruction and construction of national narratives that might challenge the existing dominant national representations and provide a new nation brand. One may ask, however, why nation re-branding, and how does it differ from nation branding practices and national identity negotiation practices? The following reasons can be put forward:

First of all, I would like to emphasize that the concept of nation re-branding could belong to the growing body of critically informed research on nation branding discussed above. Instead of focusing merely on practical implications of implementation of nation branding strategies it turns scholarly attention to the political and cultural implications of the branding process. However, its goal is not to critically examine nation branding as a set of ideas grounded in Western marketing, but rather to go beyond this conventional view. I suggest that this concept can be helpful to explain processes of negotiation of national identity and national image, and that this negotiation has a discursive character.

Second, the process of nation re-branding has a discursive character because it involves different actors, such as members of the political elite as well as regular citizens. This is to say that the questions of national mythology, identity, culture and value are not merely the domain of experts and state propaganda but issues that citizens can also be involved in. Elites and citizens might seemingly share the same interest to make the national image better - but the ways they do it might be different.

Third, the concept of nation re-branding can be particularly helpful when explaining the need for a quick fix for the identity problems of transitional societies in Central and Eastern Europe (Kaneva, 2011). From previous research (e.g. Fujita & Dinnie, 2009) we know that after the collapse of communism almost every country in the region was engaged in nation branding initiatives of different scope and with different results. We know, however, relatively little about citizens’ participation and engagement in the process of de-construction of the nation brand. Also, little attention has so far been paid to the more bottom-up discourses of national identity and nationhood in relation to changing socio-political and cultural landscape. If we assume that nation branding practices extend beyond the domain of marketing experts and also include debates and negotiation of national identity, then we also have to acknowledge the contesting actors participating in these debates and the discourses they are involved with.

The post-communist countries are an interesting case because the systemic transformation from communism also implied a form of national transformation. Verdery (1994) once argued that “a nation in Eastern Europe is not a country” (ibid:3) by pointing to the dominant ethno-cultural understanding of nation as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon civic vision. However, it can be argued that nation branding strategies and nation re-branding for that matter are in fact about turning these ‘ethnic’, stateless nations into coun-

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tries. From this perspective, nation re-branding can be seen as taking place in every context where societies and their citizens debate about their relation to the nation-state. It can also take place in every context where countries look for international recognition, also as developing markets.

As a developing market, becoming a ‘country’ can also mean the building of a new nation brand that reflects the nation’s cultural wealth. As Bandelj and Wherry (2011) argue, symbolic resources affect social, cultural, and economic development. This means that the value of being for example ‘Made in USA’, ‘Made in Switzerland’, ‘Made in Italy’ depends not only on the material resources and advantages these places have to offer but also on the symbolic resources that are embedded in these places. Consequently, the idea of ‘made in…’ connotes not only the information about where the given product has been produced but also provides with representations of a given region or country. Thus, for example, on the electronic products from the computer giant Apple we find the following information: “Designed by Apple in California. Assembled in China”. In this short statement California is represented as a place with symbolic resources and skilled labor providing design, while at the same time China is represented as a place of cheap and unqualified labor. In the context where national image and reputation are one of the prerequisites for economic success, nations strive to enlarge the public perception of their brands in order to add benefits to their economies. However, in the case of countries that have experienced atrocities such as genocide, or natural disasters such as hurricanes or earthquakes, the goal might be to provide a new positive nation brand, distancing this brand from the stigma of the past and challenging the negative stereotypes.

This need to deal with the previously “spoiled identity” can be met through the process of impression management, which focuses on converting symbolic into economic capital. The concept of impression management as a way of dealing with problematic aspects of identity, either on an individual or collective level, comes from Goffman’s (1963) study on stigma. The concept of social stigma has been defined as a form of disapproval of certain characteristics of beliefs that are in conflict with dominant social and cultural norms (ibid.). Stigma is also employed to describe characteristics that are highly undesirable, so the goal is to overcome them in order to ‘pass’ as ‘normal’. For instance, in the case of post-war Croatia, the main goal of the state and branding experts has been to produce new and attractive narratives. The aim has been to distance the country from its difficult past and provide a positive image to attract external audiences (Rivera, 2008).

The concept of “nation rebranding” is not a new one. However, so far it has mostly been associated with the literature focusing on practical implementations - how to remove the stigma and unattractive nation brand identity. This literature is to a large extent directed towards experts of tourism marketing who are advised to radically break with an old image and replace it with a new one in order to fully experience the “living of the brand”
(Amujo & Otubajo, 2012). This is also to say that so far the majority of literature on nation branding as well as nation rebranding has been focusing on the implications of the effective corporate identity management. From this perspective, virtually every country and every ‘spoiled’ and ‘unattractive’ nation brand and identity can be rebranded in order to improve its image and self-respect.

These corporate managing advices go so far as to provide practical solutions for marketing in order to boost the so called “dark destinations”, namely countries that have experienced various atrocities, such as the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe in Ukraine and the genocides in Cambodia and Rwanda. This “black-spot tourism”, according to some authors, can become an attractive target and part of a larger process of nation rebranding (ibid.). Although citizens are mentioned as one of the factors in the rebranding process, researchers seldom address the role of citizens in the process of nation rebranding. Therefore, one of the goals of the concept of nation rebranding suggested in this study is to critically address citizens as agents of nation rebranding who actively discuss the nation brand they identify with. Thus, nation rebranding is also about the creation of new or alternative narratives and values or, as the empirical part of this study aims to show, the challenges of the dominant discourses about the already existing values, such as patriotism in Poland. However, one might ask, how does nation rebranding differ from any other process of negotiation of national identity? This brings us to the fourth aspect of nation rebranding, namely the internal and external perspectives of identity negotiation.

Communicating the nation: internal and external perspectives

The main element that differentiates nation rebranding from nation branding strategies focusing on marketing practices, and also from ‘regular’ public debates about nation and national identity is the possibility to account for both the internal and the external perspectives on the nation.

As a reminder, in the traditional literature on nationalism, nation is usually defined as an ethno-historical project based on the idea of cultural unity and loyalty often reproduced in a form of patriotic education, national rituals, mythologies and other practices and narratives which aim to unite different individuals as members of the same “imagined community”. This form of loyalty to the nation is directed internally at its members, and in the case of the nation-states, also at citizens. Conventional nation branding marketing strategies employ the opposite logic, where the communication of the idea of the nation is directed particularly at external, namely international audiences. In this case the goal is to produce an image of the nation that would meet the competitive expectations of the market. Hence, in the latter case, rather than being a complex ethno-historical project, the nation resembles more an economic object of exchange aiming to attract these audiences.
This distinction continues to influence the way we think of nations today. On the one hand we understand nation as a space where social agents struggle to define their subjectivity and the meaning of national belonging. In such a space, nations matter as projects of collective belonging based on shared culture, regardless of how contested it is. National unity is internally communicated through the production of knowledge about shared history, heritage, memories etc. On the other hand, nation defined internally faces challenges from the outside. One of these challenges for post-communist countries has been the long-cherished idea of joining the West. Nation branding practices and campaigns are designed to help transitioning nations to face these challenges. It is not, however, simply a matter of replacing nationalism in the sense of introducing an alternative narrative. It is rather, as Aronczyk (2007) argues, “a barometer of some of the challenges facing the nation-state and collective sense of identity in the contemporary era” (ibid:120). It is also a phenomenon reflecting the political and social reality of contemporary global times, where economic value is a powerful asset which defines social relations.

In these conditions it seems fair to suggest that both internal and external perspectives on nation and national identity as well as internal and external visions of nationhood are important in shaping our understanding of the global world as divided into nations and nation-states. Moreover, the relationship between external and internal visions of national identity is crucial to our understanding of contemporary processes of production, reproduction and national identification. This is particularly true for nations undergoing the transition, where nation re-branding is often part of the process of constructing a ‘new’ national identity while negotiating and/or distancing from the past. Moreover, similarly to nationalism as a discursive practice discussed in the previous chapter, nation re-branding can be accounted for as a discourse where the meaning of national identity is constructed by the difference between subjects in various nations i.e. “us” and “them”. The discursive employment of difference might refer for example to comparisons between nations and experiences of nationals, such as migrants, abroad. In this way, both the internal visions of national identity are continually confronted with the external ones. This dialogue between external and internal visions of nationhood forms the discursive practice of nation re-branding beyond the conventional view of the domain of nation branding.

It is also important to mention that even scholars who focus primarily on the practical implications of external nation branding point out that internal collective self-identification with the nation brand is a prerequisite for its acceptance by the external audience. According to Szondi (2007) the domestic audience has to stand behind the brand in order to support it and identify with it. He means that “the country must subscribe to its own brand before expecting others to do so” (ibid:19). The role of the domestic audience in the process of identification with the brand is also acknowledged by others who
suggest that debate about national identity is also part of the nation branding process (e.g. Fan, 2006, Dinnie, 2008). However, scholars seldom ask about the connection between the internal and external perspectives on nation and nationhood and the role they play in the processes of articulation of contemporary forms of collective identification. The concept of nation re-branding could also be helpful here in explaining these processes.

This role of nation re-branding is a particularly important issue for post-communist countries struggling with a collective identity crisis and national re-definition. So, instead of supporting the belief that nation branding will eventually replace nationalism we can instead acknowledge that nation branding is “an intervention into the social and cultural fabric that constitutes the nation, one which challenges our ‘social imagery’”(Aronczyk, 2007:123). If we accept this critical vision of nation branding, then nation re-branding is an intervention in the social and cultural fabric of the nation that challenges our “social imagery” precisely because it takes into account not only citizens’ negotiation of national identity but also because it is a unique opportunity to address both the internal and external perspectives. The table below summarizes the arguments that emphasize the difference between nation branding and nation re-branding practices. It can be useful to understand the potentials of nation re-branding as a rather “bottom-up” dynamic process of dialogue and debate as compared with the more conventional view on nation branding.

Table 2. Comparison between nation branding and nation re-branding

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<th>NATION BRANDING</th>
<th>NATION RE-BRANDING</th>
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However, as argued earlier, the potential of the nation re-branding concept lies not merely in the possibility of challenging the social imagery. It is also a concept that allows for critical examination of the process of construction
Problematizing nation branding as an aspect of problematizing transition

“Societies in transition” became a common way to refer to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that went through the process of revolutionary changes after 1989. As Lauristin (1997) points out, “the concept of transition is a concept invented not by the participants of the process but by its observers who pretend to know beforehand what the final outcome of changes would be” (ibid:25). Hence, the overall idea of the transition theory was based on the assumption that the post-communist countries were somehow ‘delayed’ in their civilizational development as compared with their Western colleagues. The vision of transition originated in the Western idea of Enlightenment, and defined civilizational progress primarily in terms of democracy, rationality and market economy. Therefore, the vision of transition to be achieved by the post-communist countries assumed a shift towards neo-liberal capitalism and liberal democracy (O’Donnell, 2007). In other words, Western observers conceived transition as a system of universally applicable and pragmatically achieved interventions eventually leading to the final goal of Westernization.

Prepared for a transition from communism to democracy and from a state-controlled to a free market economy, the majority of the post-communist elites warmly welcomed the possibility of rejoining the West. Some scholars argue that the process of Westernization or re-Westernization has been in fact “the most important systemic aspect of the transition process” (Lauristin, 1997: 31). The slogan “back to Europe” popularized by the elite became a hallmark of systemic transformation synonymous with the embodiment of political stabilization, economic prosperity and the liberalization of culture. The enthusiastic welcoming of Western iconography, culture and consumption patterns has been linked to the processes of European enlargement initiated at the beginning of the 21st century. Coming back to (Western) Europe has been associated with progressive, liberal and democratic changes, unconstrained mobility, opportunities, freedom of choice, and improved living standards.

However, twenty years after the fall of communism in Europe it has become clear that not only has the capitalist democracy not been fully achieved in former communist countries, but also that there is hardly one single road leading to democracy for all the post-communist countries if they are to catch up with the West. Consequently, the question of what kind of democracy post-communist countries should follow remains open. Even more im-
portantly, the recent economic changes and hardship experienced in the West have shown that “the idea of a homogenous collective or liberal society is a mythical project” (Rabikowska, 2009:167). These experiences illustrate that at the very core of transition lies the systemic societal change that is often full of contradictions, contrasts, tensions and ambivalence.

Marciniak (2010) refers to the “euphoria of transnational progress” to describe this eager embrace of Western European ideas, celebratory rhetoric of the “New Europe” and globalized mobility. Marciniak studied media representations and articulations of the “New Europe” in promotion materials disseminated in Poland before the EU Referendum in 2003. She argues that the main focus of the pro-EU campaign supported by the Polish liberal elites, has been mainly on material benefits and privileges, such as the right to travel, study and work abroad. Consequently, the celebratory rhetoric of global mobility and pro-European euphoria clashed with multiple instances of “poverty, unemployment and aggravated racial and ethnic oppression” (ibid:99). In this landscape of clashes and conflicting discourses between the ‘old’ socialist past and the ‘new’ Western future, nation branding is customarily associated with practices belonging to the latter.

However, the need to attract investors and tourists, working on the cohesive self-image and identity also became part of the larger process of re-definition of nationhood, not only in relation to the newly emerging state and civil society but also in relation to a new, complex global environment. I suggest that nation re-branding, in the same manner as nation branding, can be understood as a response to the new challenges that post-communist liberal elites faced after the collapse of the regime. One of the most important challenges has been the necessity to navigate between the newly embraced ‘Western’ discourse of progress and liberalization on the one hand, and the will for national self-upgrading and redefinition on the other. Therefore, the questions of production and not only national reproduction became important issues and objects of struggle on the public agenda. These struggles are mostly concerned with the power to define the meaning of the past, and determining the direction for the future became part of the crisis of representations and an inherent element of post-communist identity politics (Kaneva, 2012). This is because the complex process of the re-definition of the collective identity required not only a transformation from within but also, due to the rising level of migration abroad, interest in how the nation is perceived from the outside.

The concept of nation re-branding offers a possibility to explain and understand the transition not as a linear process but rather as an ambivalent, multi-vocal and complex process. Because it focuses on citizens and not only elites, and also because it concerns the process of contestation and the debate on culture, identity and national image. Both nation branding and nation re-branding practices illustrate that in a world where image matters as much as geopolitics do, we continue to think of the world as ‘naturally’ di-
vided into nations and nation-states. This is not a new phenomenon. In this way nation re-branding can be defined as part of the wider process of definition and re-definition of nationhood in relation to emerging global patterns of belonging. Consequently, nation re-branding practices can also be considered an updated form of nationalism rather than emerging alternatives to nationalism.

This is to say that in spite of the fears that globalization might undermine national sovereignty, contemporary forms of nationhood are not necessarily an obstacle to globalization but together represent one of its constituting aspects. According to Mihelj (2011) globalization requires difference and uniqueness in order to make global relations possible. She argues that providing a standardized system of categorizing the difference on a global scale is part of emerging “grammars of nationhood” (ibid:28). The logic of the grammars of nationhood is based on the assumption that globalization requires difference, be it national or local, to organize it in a set of standardized ways. This is the case with practices of glocalization, where globally available patterns are adjusted to the local tastes and requirements, such as in the case of McDonald’s restaurants, TV production, and even the new media (Robertson, 1992, Ritzer, 1993, Imre, 2009). In this way, nation-states continue to be an important element of the worldwide system and instead of them diminishing in power, we are experiencing a shift in the forms of articulation and redefinition of nations and nationhood.

Consequently, in this process of national self-redefinition not only are nationalism and globalization two mutually constitutive processes, but also nations are making global relations possible. In other words, nation-states do not disappear, but instead are subject to the forces of globalization. Cultural differences are commodified and standardized according to reductionist “grammars of nationhood” where cultural differences are linked to the pursuit of economic profit. Moreover, the process of mediation of these grammars takes place in the context of relations of power, often initiating the emergence of new forms of exclusion along the lines of class, wealth and access to resources, such as new technologies and other media.

This is particularly the case with developing and transitioning countries, whose elites strongly rely on nation branding experts to reinvent their countries’ national images. As the study of the branding campaigns in post-communist Bulgaria and Romania (e.g. Kaneva & Popescu, 2011) shows, the results of appropriation of national identity to the neo-liberal mode of globalization results in a form of a “national identity lite” (ibid.). This emerging form of identity not only provides a limited, ahistorical and apolitical framework for articulation of nationhood, but also “severely limits the range of national subjectivities that post-communist countries can imagine for themselves” (ibid:203). This limited spectrum of identities can be connected to the idea of an individualistic consumer society, where even the sense of national identity can be commodified, privatized and limited to the
question of an individual lifestyle. Some critics are rather pessimistic about the consequences of this ‘commercialization’ of national identities. Jaskułowski (2009) argues that the “sense of national identity becomes privatized (…) and limited to the individual lifestyle, which does not translate into any increase of political engagement, not mentioning the readiness to sacrifice for the nation” (ibid: 419, my translation). He agrees with Bauman (2008), who suggested that together with the rise of consumerist skills, citizenship skills decline. This is to say that in the era where nations can be defined in terms of brands and logos, the difference between them becomes a matter of an “aesthetic ornament” (Jaskulowski, 2009:418) and individual taste and style. Consequently, the level of engagement in political and social problems decreases, which leads to the weakening of the public sphere as an arena of debate and negotiation.

But is this really the case? Does the public sphere, in the Habermas’ understanding, disappear and the level of engagement decrease? Or perhaps the mechanisms and arenas of debate and negotiation change? As argued before, in the context of transforming ways of thinking about nations and national identities, arenas for articulation of nationhood also change. Since nation rebranding is about debate and discussion involving both internal and external perspectives on nation, this situation poses a question about the means by which the re-branding process possibly takes place. I suggest that this access to both internal and external perspectives can be facilitated by the new technologies, allowing for communication across the boundaries of space and time. For example, the internet offers possibilities for translocal dialogue and exchange between citizens within and outside of the nation-state. In this way, cyberspace can become a place for political debate that connects the discourses of nation, nationalism, identity and transformation.

These ideas will be developed later in chapter 5 but before that, in order to look more closely at nation re-branding empirically, we have to put this theoretical discussion in context. The following chapter is about Poland, a post-socialist country that has been dealing with a national identity crisis in recent years and that is searching for a new nation brand.
CHAPTER 4 | POLAND: A COUNTRY IN NEED OF A NEW NATION BRAND

In order to understand the importance of nation, nationhood and national identification in the Polish context, one needs first to understand the historical and political context in which these issues occur. In the first part of this chapter, the discussion focuses on the historical background and the patriotic traditions of Polish nationalism. The second part addresses the importance of the Catholic narrative of the Polish nation and the figure of the ‘national hero’—the Pope. The third section looks at the process of the post-communist transition, mainly in terms of its political impact and its consequences. Finally, the last section explores the question of the collective identity crisis and discusses the attempts to construct new narratives of nation that would be attractive to both international and domestic audiences.

Poland: historical overview

Poland, with over thirty eight million inhabitants, is currently the sixth most populous country in Central Europe. The series of periods of foreign occupation, partitions, uprisings, long period of statelessness and shifting borders have contributed to the turbulent picture of Polish history. Therefore, even today, political and social debates are often shaped in the prism of the past historical and geopolitical dilemmas.

Poland adopted Christianity in 966. This was followed by the establishment of the Jagiellonian monarch dynasty. The Jagiellonian dynasty had close relations with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which culminated in the establishment of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, also known as the First Republic in 1569. This period of Polish history is often characterized by territorial expansion, religious tolerance and cultural development. From the mid-17th century a series of invasions occurred, which led to decline of the Commonwealth. Three partitions executed by the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Prussia and the Austrian Habsburg Monarchy in 1772, 1792 and 1795 terminated the Commonwealth’s independent existence. The decline of the First Republic was followed by a one hundred and twenty-three-year-long period of statelessness (1795-1918). During that period, Poles engaged in armed resistance, with the last failed attempt at national liberation being...
the January Uprising in 1863. It has often been pointed out that the period of partition has a strong significance for Poles as a chapter in Polish history where the Polish nation survived and became socially and culturally stronger despite the loss of independence (Sanford, 1999).

The geopolitical location of the country between Germany and Russia has contributed to a particularly turbulent history in modern times. Poland regained independence in 1918 and the Second Republic was established. The independence lasted only until the beginning of the Second World War in 1939 when Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union invaded Poland. Despite the subsequent loss of independence, the Polish government kept functioning in exile, supporting Polish military formations and their struggle on the Western and Eastern fronts. Both the physical and psychological consequences of the war have been vast. About six million Poles, including an estimated three million Jews, lost their lives. About forty per cent of the economy and seventy per cent of the infrastructure was destroyed (ibid.). In particular, the capital city of Warsaw was severely destroyed, with major loss of civilians during the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and the 1944 Warsaw Uprising. When the Nazi forces were forced to retreat, the Soviet Red Army advanced. Eventually, as a result of the Yalta conference in 1945, Poland’s borders shifted westwards and the country lost part of its eastern territories to the Soviet Union.

Poland’s geopolitical location in Central Europe from before and right after the First World War, physically shifted eastwards during the Cold War. At the end of World War II in 1945 the communist People’s Republic was established and Poland became an ethnically homogeneous Soviet satellite state. During the communist period the anti-communist resistance steadily developed into a mass workers’ movement joined by students and the intellectual elite, and with the support of the Catholic Church. I suggest that Poland’s Christian, Catholic heritage has been one of the factors contributing to the general perception of the communist state and party as foreign forces. Established in 1980, the Solidarity movement, by the end of the 1980s, had become a crucial actor in the process of the relatively peaceful downfall of communism and the subsequent “return to the West”. By the early 1990s the Third Republic was established as a modern Polish state transitioning from the one party-based system towards parliamentary democracy and from a state-planned to a free-market economy. In 1999, Poland joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) along with the Czech Republic and Hungary. Five years later, in May 2004, Poland became a full member of the European Union, being the largest among the countries that joined the EU structure at that time. After the introduction of a plan of extensive reform in the early 1990s, the Polish economy has been steadily growing and it has maintained its annual level of growth at about 4.3 percent for the last twenty
years\textsuperscript{24}. The unemployment rate has decreased from 17.8 percent in 2005 to 8.2 percent in 2009.

In recent years, as some observers point out, Poland has been an exceptional country in Central Eastern Europe when it comes to the performance of its economy and its ambition to become an important European player (Rupnik, 2012). Among the factors contributing to that situation one can mention the sustained popularity of the governing, liberal Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform), which was re-elected in 2011, and the idea of ‘modernization in Europe’s name’ (ibid.). In relation to the latter, the current government’s pro-European attitude aims to break with the domestic and international image of Poland as the suffering, martyred nation. These ambitions are also reflected in the recent geopolitical self-positioning of Poland in response to the economic crisis. With regard to the international and European economic crisis, Poland’s foreign minister suggested in a speech given in 2011 at Harvard University that Poland belongs to Northern rather than Southern Europe\textsuperscript{25}.

This recent socio-political development in Poland supports the idea that despite Poland’s attachment to sovereignty for historical reasons, the country has ambitions to become a European nation. At the same time, becoming European requires defining and re-defining the national identity, and consequently also understanding of the nation and the country. As will be discussed later, the concept of patriotism has been the object of a lively public debate in Poland, particularly during the second decade of transition. However, before we move to the contemporary discourses and debates, I suggest that in order to understand the contemporary role that patriotism plays in the processes of collective identification, one has first to understand patriotism in the context of Polish history and Polish nationalism in particular.

### Patriotic matters: patriotic traditions in the history of Polish nationalism

In the essay “Trzy patriotyzmy” (Three patriotisms), Walicki (1991) argues that for historical and political reasons there have been at least three distinct yet coexisting patriotic traditions\textsuperscript{26} that until today have influenced the understanding of national identity in Poland.

Walicki argues that this typology comes from the reflection on the history of Polish patriotic attitudes and provides grounds for the analysis of different

\textsuperscript{24}This data comes from the UN data website: http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=POLAND, 2012-01-29

\textsuperscript{25}R. Sikorski at Harvard University, 28 February 2011, see: (Rupnik, 2012)

\textsuperscript{26}These traditions are intellectual constructions and for analytical explanatory purposes are discussed separately here.
forms of contemporary Polish patriotism (ibid:7). He distinguishes between three separate ways to legitimize patriotic action. In each of them, patriotism is a form of loyalty to the nation that is also defined in different ways. These forms of patriotism include loyalty to the national will, national idea and national interest. I suggest that if we assume that patriotism can be used to describe various forms of relationship to the nation, then the story of Polish patriotism also provides a genealogy27 of Polish nationalism. These patriotism-isms, Walicki argues, have their own historical traditions and are closely related to the historical, political and cultural conditions in which they originated (ibid:8). Each form of patriotism corresponds with a different definition of the nation, such as political, ethno-cultural and ethno-religious. The three definitions of nation correspond to three forms of patriotism, such as national will, national idea and national interest.

National will

Patriotism in the form of loyalty to the national will refers to the period of Polish history (1569-1795) when the nation was conceived primarily as a political bond between citizens-noblemen28 (szlachta in Polish). During this period of the Polish-Lithuanian Republic, the Democracy of Nobles defined nation in civic terms as a subject of collective sovereign will (ibid:31). Members of the Polish nobility were equal in rights with each other and bound by the idea of patriotic duty to the state. Nation was understood as a form of territorially-bound community, a gigantic Gemeinschaft with national identity generally oblivious to ethnic or religious backgrounds. The state guaranteed the nobility a set of privileges and liberties29 known as the “golden freedom”. Walicki argues that this idea of collective freedom differs from the understanding of freedom popularized in the West, which is more individualistically-oriented.

27The concept of genealogy in social sciences is often associated with the works of Michel Foucault who developed the historical genealogical method in order to track the complex origins of contemporary discourses. The idea of a genealogical analysis is to show that a given system of thought was the result of contingent turns of history, not the outcome of rationally inevitable trends (see Gutting, Gary, "Michel Foucault", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), available at: http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/foucault/, accessed 06-11-2011). The particular focus of Foucault’s analysis was on power relations and their impact on individuals, a problem that remains outside of the scope of this thesis.

28At that time, the Polish nobility was one of the largest in Europe and constituted about 10-13 percent of the republic’s total population (Zubrzycki, 2006).

29One of the most in (famous) principles was liberum veto, which contributed to the development of a unique Polish form of constitutionalism. Liberum veto allowed for every single nobleman to refuse the ratification of any law by simply saying ‘I freely forbid’ or ‘I do not allow’ (‘Nie pozwalam’ in Polish). Liberum veto is an example of a privilege in a political culture that by politically empowering individuals favored consensus, unanimity and the collective over the individual will. It is also an example of the political empowerment of individuals (Walicki, 1991).
This distinction between collective and individual freedom is worth mentioning here because, as we will see later in the empirical sections, the post-communist debate about patriotism in Poland is closely connected to the development of the individualistic, modern and ‘Western’ understanding of freedom. The idea of individual freedom was developed along with the rise of the protestant ethic, capitalism and liberalism (ibid:15). Collective freedom refers to an ancient understanding of this concept and implies democratic participation in the power as opposed to the modern idea of freedom as liberation from the power. Collective freedom assumes participation in politics and the public sphere because they are defined as a sphere of freedom. In the second case, individual freedom is reserved to the private sphere and economic activity.

Walicki (1991) suggests that the idea of collective freedom in 16th century Poland had an impact not only on the understanding of the nation in Poland as a subject of collective will but also on the development of an anti-individualistic patriotic ethos that favored values such as collective moral responsibility and solidarity. Because of the predominance of the civic understanding of national identity, some scholars see the origins of civic protonation and civic nationalism in Poland in the Democracy of Nobles (Zubrzycki, 2006). The documented presence of civic nationalism and patriotism as loyalty to the collective national will, challenges the dominant theme in the Anglo-Saxon literature on Polish (and Central-Eastern European for that matter) nationalism as being predominantly ethnic. As a matter of fact, the process of ethnicization of the nation in Poland did not take place until the period of partition (1795-1918).

National idea

After the Third partition of Poland in 1795, which followed the dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian republic, began probably the most mythologized period of Polish history. When the political vision of the nation was no longer possible to sustain, Polishness became a matter of ideals residing in the hearts and souls of the Polish people30. Walicki argues that in this stateless period of Polish history, patriotism became associated with loyalty to the national idea defined in terms of shared heritage, culture and language (Walicki, 1991). The state’s dissolution led to reorientation of the relationship between nation and state, which resulted in the emergence of a national identity defined along ethno-linguistic and cultural lines. Additionally, in a situation of limited access to public education and limited access to freedom

30The 19th century in Europe was a period of intense nation-building and the Polish national anthem comes from that period. Its opening line reflects the situation of Poles at the time: “Poland has not yet succumbed as long as we remain. What the foe by force has seized, sword in hand we’ll gain” (my translation).
of organization, Catholic practices and worship provided the space where Poles could express their sense of community. This special relation between nationalism and Catholicism became not only an important narrative of Polish messianism but also shaped national self-understanding by linking national identity to Catholicism. This new vision of nationhood forged grounds for development of cultural nationalism. Similarly to other parts of Europe, the 19th century nation-building in Poland was strongly influenced by the Romantic Movement.

Faced with statelessness and continuous struggles for independence, Polish Romantic poets played an important role in developing Romanticism into Romantic messianism based on the belief that Poland had an exceptional mission to fulfill in Europe. Romantic poets played a crucial role in the creation and dissemination of the ideas of messianic martyrdom. In particular, the myth of Poland as the “Christ among the nations”, the country fighting for liberation and sovereignty, “for your and our freedom”, was supported by poets such as Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki. Thus, the idea of ‘Poland’ was mostly an abstract cause supported and described by poets and other national prophets. As Zubrzycki (2006) argues, their writings, which were filled with references to God and Christian doctrine, spreading the idea of Romantic messianism, “gave not only a narrative structure to the situation of Poles under Partitions, but a framework for the entire Polish history” (ibid:49, my emphasis). The idea of Romantic messianism supported the view that even “a defeat is as a victory in a moral sense” (Walicki, 1991:53).

Two national myths originate from that period, namely the one of Poland’s intrinsic Catholicism and the one of messianic martyrdom comparing Poland’s historical suffering to that of Jesus Christ. This messianic, Romantic national mythology associating Polishness with being intrinsically Catholic provided an interpretative framework for both collective memory and historiosophy. In the conditions of statelessness that lasted for over one hundred years, national mythology became part of the Polish political culture. However, as Zubrzycki (2011) argues elsewhere:

National mythology is more than a core narrative or a root paradigm, a structure defined by historical events and their framing that shapes the understanding of the present. It is also an embodied, phenomenological experience through which subjects become invested in the national idea (ibid:29).

It can be suggested that the fashion of wearing ‘patriotic jewelry’ by noble Polish women in the 19th century is an example of such ‘embodied experience’ and investment in the national idea. Long, black or somber gowns were accompanied by necklaces, bracelets and pins shaped in the form of a crown of thorns with engravings such as “Poland” or “God save Poland” Women would also wear necklaces shaped in a form of rosaries and lockets with pictures of national martyrs inside (ibid.). It can be interpreted that this
patriotic fashion was a way not only to show support for the widespread idea of national martyrdom but also to manifest the experience of collective trauma on a personal level. At this time of national crisis, marked by constant struggles for independence, membership of the nation was still open to those who decided to fight for a free and independent Poland. Such ‘embodied’ patriotic experience also illustrates that, as I argued in chapter 2, the understanding of patriotism in the stateless context differs from the one developed in the Anglo-Saxon literature. Instead of collective loyalty of citizens to the state, patriotism takes the form of loyalty to the nation - an idea understood mainly in ethno-cultural terms.

Poles unsuccessfully struggled to regain state independence throughout the entire 19th century, but it was no longer possible to sustain Romantic idealism and mythology after the defeat during the January Uprising in 1864.32 Instead, a new generation of intellectuals supported and disseminated the idea of constructive work within existing political structures33. This new language and practices of representing the nation took place within the context of positivism that favored the idea of praca u podstaw (organic work)34 in terms of economic and cultural self-improvement. The intellectual construction of the nation was followed by processes of democratization and promotion of national consciousness among previously excluded social classes, such as the peasantry. Nationalization of the peasantry included the introduction of national education and abolition of serfdom. Education and ‘organic work’ were part of the program of construction of common national identity above the class cleavages that could eventually lead to regaining national independence.

National education often took place during clandestine classes led by noblewomen who promoted patriotic values by teaching children about Polish history and national heroes. Particularly active in the practice of spreading national consciousness was the right-wing National Democratic formation called Endecja. Endecja’s charismatic founder and leader, Roman Dmowski (1864-1939), is known as a father of Polish modern nationalism. Dmowski

32By the time the uprising collapsed there had been up to 20,000 casualties, and about 70,000 persons were imprisoned or exiled to Siberia. Thousands of other people, especially intellectual elites who supported the Romantic idea of messianism, left Poland for Western Europe (Davies, 1996).
33After the collapse of the January uprising Poland was divided between Russia and Prussia. Under this occupation, the idea of Romantic messianism and national ideals was rejected and replaced by thinking in terms of social problems, needs and the language of science (Davies, 1996).
34Praca organiczna or praca u podstaw (organic work) is a term coined by the 19th century Polish positivists. It refers to the claim and belief that the collective power of the nation should be focused on labour and education instead of ineffective and unsuccessful national uprisings. The main principles of organic work included education of the masses and improvement of the economic potential of Poles that would eventually lead to improvement of the situation in partitioned Poland.
played a crucial role, particularly at the beginning of the 20th century, in disseminating the idea of Polishness as inseparably related to Catholicism. This representation of Polishness combined ethnicity and religion into a single category known as Polak-Katolik (Pole-Catholic). This ethno-religious vision of Polishness was “constructed and politicized in opposition to ethno-religious ‘Others’, both external, such as Orthodox Russians and Protestant Germans, and internal, such as Jews” (Zubrzycki, 2006:55). Also, following this line of thought, after regaining the long-awaited independence in 1918 the Polish nation was reconceptualized as a community of culture, ethnicity, language and religion and united by the same interests shared by the majority of Polish-speaking social strata of society.

National interest

During the interwar period of the Second Republic (1918-1939) patriotism has been redefined as an idea of serving the objective national interest of the Polish state. In his famous book, “Mysli nowoczesnego Polaka” (1903) (Thoughts of a Modern Pole) Dmowski argued that being Polish means not only speaking the Polish language but also sharing the same goals and interest of other compatriots in the form of allegiance to the same Fatherland (Ojczyzna). For Dmowski, national interest and national well-being were valued above the private ones. In this way, civic freedom, subject to the national interest, came before individual freedom. This definition of freedom as a matter of collective participation recalls the era of Democracy of Nobles. However, the difference lay in the formulation of national identity and nation. Instead of a civic vision of nationhood, Polishness was defined strictly in ethno-religious exclusionary terms. Thus, the dominant national narrative during this short period of Poland’s independence criticized Romantic idealizations of defeats in Polish history and replaced them with notions of political realism as opposed to romantic idealism (Walicki, 1991). This process of constructing and strengthening the modern national consciousness along the lines of an independent nation state was interrupted by the Second World War, and then by the subsequent implementation of the Communist regime.

This brief overview of the history of Polish patriotic traditions shows that the particular understanding of the nation as well as the loyalty to the national community heavily depend on the geo-political situation of the country. At the same time, although these traditions played a significant role in naturalizing certain visions of Polishness, it is important to note they are historically contingent constructions. In the ideal-typical terms they correspond with three types of nationalism: civic, cultural and ethnic. In this way, we can once again see that the theoretical dichotomy between civic and ethnic nationalism is impossible to maintain in practice. These traditions are not only reflective of different forms of national identity, but they are also con-
stitutive of them. In the table below, I summarize the three patriotic traditions according to Walicki (1991).

Table 3. Patriotic traditions in Polish nationalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PATRIOTIC TRADITION</th>
<th>DEFINITION OF NATION</th>
<th>FORM OF PATRIOTISM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican: Civic (1569-1795)</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>National will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth</td>
<td>(collective freedom)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic: Cultural (1795-1918)</td>
<td>Ethno-cultural</td>
<td>National idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partitions</td>
<td>(Romantic messianism)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realist: Ethnic (1918-1939)</td>
<td>Ethno-religious</td>
<td>National interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Second Republic</td>
<td>(Polak-Katolik)</td>
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The three distinct patriotic traditions provide not only a complex picture of the forms of patriotism present in Polish history but also a picture that questions the stereotypical image of Polish identity as ethno-cultural and ‘naturally’ linked to Catholicism. At the same time, one might wonder, if the construction of Polish nationhood has been historically contingent, then why the image of Poland as a ‘Catholic nation’ so persistent, both domestically and internationally? And further: how can we account for these patriotic traditions and competing visions of nationhood in more contemporary contexts? The following section will look more closely at these questions.

The Catholic narrative of the Polish nation

It is widely assumed both in Poland and abroad, that Catholicism is essentially connected to Polishness and Polish national identity. As Borowik (2002) points out:

In Polish mentality as well as in the opinion of the church, Catholicism is entirely connected with Polishness. Religious and national identities are characterized by a feeling of belonging to Polishness and Catholicism (ibid:240).
Sometimes it is almost taken for granted that religious and national identities in Poland are, and always have been inextricably intertwined. Often one can find descriptions of Poland as a ‘Catholic nation’ (Porter, 2001) or the Catholic Church considered as ‘national’ in Poland (Platt, 1977). This implies not only that church and the Catholic religion is deeply rooted in Poland, but also that discussion and research on national identity in Poland has to include Catholicism as a crucial element. At the same time, nationalism studies (Gellner, Smith, Hobsbawm) show that every nation has its myth of foundation that serves as a legitimizing force for the very existence of the nation as such. The role of the myth is, as Barthes (1957) claims, to naturalize the past, so that the given object of the myth appears as naturally given and ever-existing. The most common myth in Poland is the one of Poland’s intrinsic Catholicism that presents the country as a bulwark of Christendom, defending Europe against the infidel. In Romantic texts Poland was, in addition, presented as the “Christ of the nations”, martyred for the sins of the world and resurrected for the world’s salvation (Zubrzycki, 2006). Some recent studies (Porter, 2001, Zubrzycki, 2006) show that the pervasiveness of this myth is actually based on a particular Catholic narrative of Polish history; that “it is an ideologically loaded conceptual framework that gives specific meaning to the past and helps determine what is remembered and what is forgotten” (Porter, 2001:291). Forgetting is, as Renan (1882) pointed out, a “crucial factor in the creation of a nation” (in: Bhabha, 1990:11). This means that not only the nation itself is a construction, but also that the constitutive narratives that contribute to that process are special ways of telling the national history by which certain facts and rituals are collectively remembered, strengthened and reproduced, whereas others are neglected and ‘forgotten’.

The Polish case is an example of how collective memory has been shaped through the relation between Catholicism and a certain understanding of nationhood. In particular, the Catholic narrative had been such a strong factor in creating the national myth that it eventually made people believe that the relation between Catholicism and the Polish nation was natural, primordial and essential. Of course, the fact that such a narrative is a historically determined contingent construction does not deny the actual ideological and semantic power of the way it was appropriated. However, it is crucial to understand first that Polish nationalism was not always shaped by religion.

As argued above, the process of defining the Polish nation along ethnic lines in which religion, next to blood ties, culture and language, is a central part, took place at the end of the nineteenth century. First of all this means that there is historical evidence for Polishness being already defined along civic lines, where the term nation (naród) had political connotations. Second, Poland was a multi-ethnic, pluralist and tolerant society until the end of the eighteen century. However, two historical events in the seventeenth century contributed to the strengthening of the role of Catholicism in Polish nationalism. One of them was stopping the progress of Swedish invaders at
Czestochowa in 1655 with the help of the “Black Madonna”, the Virgin Mary who ‘saved’ the nation and thus was designated as the “Queen of Poland”. The other one was King Jan III Sobieski’s fight against the Turks and liberation of Vienna in 1683, which was used as a powerful resource to construct the national myth by presenting Poland as a bulwark of Christendom, saving Christianity and European civilization.

Nevertheless, the era of partition was a time of both statelessness and ultimate ethnicization of the nation. During that period the national consciousness became strongly tied to the Church as it was the only institution with a Polish character that could allow the definite enactment of ethnicity (Porter, 2001). Furthermore, the myth of Poland as the “Christ of Nations”, the country fighting for liberation and sovereignty, ‘for your and our freedom’, was supported by Romantic poets such as Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki. Their writings, which were filled with references to ‘God’ and Christian mentality, were spreading Romantic messianism, “that gave not only a narrative structure to the situation of Poles under Partitions, but a framework for the entire Polish history” (Zubrzycki, 2006:49). Therefore, one should not underestimate the role of the nineteenth century Romantic influences that contributed to the shift from the understanding of the nation as a political unit towards understanding it mainly in terms of culture, shared history and language. Later on, during the interwar period of building modern Polish nationalism, the idea of Polish messianism was politicized and another strategy was implied, such as the identity of Polak-Katolik (Pole-Catholic). It was based on constructing the opposition between Poles and their both external and internal ‘Others’ such as Germans, Russians and Jews respectively. As a result, the ‘real’ Poles were only those who were Catholic. The Germans were Protestant and the Russians Orthodox. The Polak-Katolik identity became a tool in the hands of Polish nationalists from the circles of Endecja (National Democracy) with Roman Dmowski as its leader. The process of constructing and strengthening the national consciousness was interrupted by WWII and the subsequent implementation of the Communist regime.

Communist times: between the Church and the State

For over forty years of the communist regime, Poland, like other Eastern and Central European countries, experienced constant tensions between official and unofficial discourses in public and private spheres. In Poland it was mainly between the Catholic Church and the Communist party-state. As

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35It is important to mention that in spite of the significant role of the Catholic Church in the reproduction of Polish nationalism, the Church was never the only space for expression of the national myths, customs and practices. As recent research shows, also during the period of foreign occupation, books, newspapers and magazines published in Polish appeared, several of them being liberal or even anti-clerical (Porter-Szucs, 2011).
Zubrzycki (2006) points out, the church provided the infrastructure for moral and political resistance and drew support mainly from Western Catholic organizations. In addition, the Communist state was perceived in Poland as a foreign dominated and repressive (Kubik, 1994). As a result, the Church had the monopoly over the specific Catholic narrative of history and could maintain the role of the ‘traditional’ defender of the nation as it was under the period of partition. This meant that religious symbols such as the cross or the Virgin Mary became national symbols at the same time. Therefore, the Communist period can be characterized by two opposite discourses and two competing narratives of the nation; the civic one popularized by the Communist state, and the ethno-cultural one supported by the Catholic Church.

When the Church was mainly using the narrative based on religion and ethnicity, the party-state was forced to promote the official public and secular one. The patriotic motif was one of the dominant elements of the official propaganda in the 70s. Kubik (1994) calls it “reinvented patriotism” since patriotism, customarily associated with Romantic martyrdom and struggles for national liberation, was acceptable only in the socialist version. The focus here has been on promotion of socialist state traditions, national homogeneity, and secularism. As Halas (2002) argues, “every society and state manifests itself in symbolism where ‘objectivization’ of the national community takes place by means of symbolic practices and their symbolic representation” (ibid:119). That also means that a collective history and memory of the community are a result of the selective construction of the past. The image of an ethnically homogenic socialist country was one of the priorities of the official propaganda, guarded by censorship. To be Polish under the communist regime meant above all being a citizen of a recovered socialist land that had to be built up with collective effort. National identity was constructed as identification with the triple relation between the nation, the state and the people, the latter understood mostly as the ‘working masses’ (ibid:126). The official discourse constructed Polish history as coming from the Piast dynasty, stressing the fact of the cultural and ethnic homogeneity of the Polish nation. This resulted in elimination of ‘foreign’ ethnic groups, such as Jews from official Polish history (Kubik, 1994).

Although Christianity was in fact a very powerful force in the Polish historical narrative, the official communist discourse was focused on removing religion and religious references. The idea of reshaping Polish culture according to the socialist model was put into practice partly by introducing a system of public rituals that corresponded with religious ceremonies. For instance, the name day celebrations were a counterpart to baptizing days. Similarly, secular marriages and funerals were promoted over religious ones. At the same time, the peculiarity of that situation reflects the fact that people often continued to celebrate religious rituals, such as Christmas or Easter,

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36The Piast dynasty was the first historical ruling dynasty of Poland (960-1370).
along with the new communist ‘traditions’. One can say that propaganda was not successful in achieving its goal of complete replacement of religious rituals with secular ones. Religious rituals were still celebrated in the private sphere by families. The state succeeded however, in socializing Polish citizens to believe in certain historic narratives, like the one that Poles not Jews were the main victims in Auschwitz (Zubrzycki, 2006). Thus the polarization of society continued along lines such as public versus private, official and unofficial, secular/sacred, or the civic vision of nationhood against the ethnic one.

There were, in other words, two competing institutions claiming to represent the nation under the communist period; the Catholic Church and the Communist state (ibid.). However, it was the Church, as mentioned above, that inherited the Romantic messianic narrative of Polish history. Hence, in this competition for legitimacy, the Catholic Church provided the most powerful narrative of the nation, built around Poland’s suffering and martyrdom. This narrative found fertile ground in the circles of political opposition against the Communist party-state. People eventually realized that they had strong bonds and ideological support to form resistance and national liberating movements, such as Solidarność (Solidarity). It is not a coincidence that the leader of the movement later president of Poland, Lech Wałęsa, always had the image of a “Black Madonna” in the lapel of his vest. It was a symbolic action to demonstrate that the essence of Polishness lies in its ties with religion. The liberation discourse of the anti-communist opposition was built extensively on the Polish Romantic tradition and myths of martyrdom (Törnqvist-Plewa, 1992). The anti-communist resistance was widely inspired by the strong connection between nationalism, religion and the revolutionary Romantic ethos intertwined in the Polish collective memory. It can be argued that during the communist period of Polish history, the Catholic Church served as an umbrella institution for the opposition by uniting different groups of workers, intellectuals and the political elite.

By holding a monopoly over power to symbolically define Polishness outside of the communist regime, the Catholic Church played a crucial role in constructing and maintaining this counter-hegemonic discourse and keeping the ethnic and religious homogeneity of the country. This liberating force of cultural nationalism was strengthened because, as Kubik (1994) suggests, the “anti-communist opposition in Poland was not limited to politics; it was an articulate and relatively well-established public counter-hegemonic culture” (ibid:267, my emphasis). A strong element of this culture was based on the Romantic patriotic tradition as the communist state was compared to foreign oppressors from the period of partition. The Church presented itself as a true holder and defender of the nation in the same manner just as it had been during the period of the 19th century partitions. The discourse of polarization between “us”, good, patriotic people and Catholic Poles, and “them”, namely bad, secular communists, worked as a resourceful force to mobilize
the masses against the totalitarian regime. This association of the state with foreign power contributed to the popularization of the distrust not only of the communist party and state but of politics and the idea of the government in general. It also further strengthened the idea of nationhood based on the principle of resistance to the state.

Another advantage of the Church against the Communist state was the presence of two important personae who eventually contributed to strengthening, both domestically and internationally, the image of Poland as an inherently Catholic nation. One of them was Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, who in his numerous sermons emphasized the endurance of the Polish nation and family against the ephemeral state. He described the nation as an “organic community and unifying force” (Zubrzycki, 2006:63). The second person was the Pope, John Paul II, whose first visit to Poland one year after his election in 1978 provided a “massive political catharsis” and who was “the most important actor leading to the final collapse of the official discourse in the 1970s” (Kubik, 1994:150). The election of the Polish Pope and his first visit are regarded as the “midwife” of the Solidarity movement, since they provided a new foundation for national self-identification and contributed to the experience of mass mobilization (Zubrzycki, 2006). At that time, the Pope became the central moral authority in Poland, particularly for anti-communist opposition.

The Pope: the ‘Polish hero’

The Catholic Church as an inclusive institution during the communist period gained even more trust when the ‘Polish Pope’ became its symbol. Karol Wojtyła, the bishop of Kraków, was a symbol of national independence and strength. The Pope was the highest office in the Catholic Church and one of the leading positions in the non-communist, Western world. The election and first visit to homeland in 1979 are regarded by some as important factors contributing to the birth of the Solidarity movement, because they provided “a new cultural foundation for national self-identification, and the organizational experience for mobilizing it” (Kennedy, 1991:43, in Zubrzycki, 2006:66). John Paul II signified the unity of the Polish nation against communism and was the best ‘messenger’ to the non-communist world (Borowik, 2002). He also symbolized the hope for freedom; therefore, very often his presence was interpreted as having both religious and political meaning. And again, with the presence of the figure of the Polish Pope, the Catholic narrative of Polish history and national mythology were strengthened and reproduced.

The Pope and his charismatic presence served as a reminder of the historical ties between the nation and the Church. He proclaimed that “without Christ it is impossible to understand the history of Poland” (Porter, 2001:290). Moreover, as the representative of the Catholic Church the Pope
also played a role as an informal leader of the Polish nation. This in turn enabled the anti-communist opposition to perform the Romantic model of nationhood in a public sphere that was highly restricted to secular rituals and celebrations. For example, the first pilgrimage of Karol Wojtyła as John Paul II made it possible for people to gather and confess their faith together in public and to experience the unity of values and resistance (Marody & Mandes, 2005). At the same time, the strengthening of the ethnic vision of the nation took place again through religion, and religious symbols and values. This fact, according to Marody and Mandes (2005), contributed to freezing the feeling of collective identity in its traditional religious shape, and this has lasted until the present (ibid:62). Hence, the construct of the nation tied to religion remained separate from the state.

However, during the Pope’s pontificate from 1979 until 2005 many things changed. Poland became a pluralist democracy with a free market economy, then a member of NATO and the EU. Also individual values, attitudes and strategies of behavior changed. At the same time, John Paul II was still considered an “uncontested authority and national hero in Poland” (Zubrzycki, 2006:194), since he was regarded as the one who freed his nation and the whole Eastern block from communism (Czubaj, 2007). His unquestionable authority, particularly on moral issues, constituted a stable element in the national identity of Poles, especially during the shaky process of transition. Every slight criticism concerning the Popes’ teachings and opinions on topics that were controversial in Poland, such as abortion, celibacy or contraception received public condemnation. During his pontificate many people could not imagine Poland without the Pope, who served as an unofficial ambassador, representing his country abroad. Thus, as some scholars point out, the Polish Pope became an “icon of collective Polish identity and as long as he lived, this identity would manifest itself mainly through religious rituals” (Marody & Mandes, 2005:62).

John Paul II passed away in the Vatican at the age of eighty five on the 2nd of April 2005. The whole week after was a time of national mourning in Poland. The scale of the media coverage of the events that followed right after was incomparable with any other public funeral or public mourning in Poland. In spite of the fact that the funeral was held in the Vatican, it was perceived as an essentially national experience. For a couple of days after the death of the Pope, the Polish public television channels literally did not present any other news, information or opinions than those concerning the life and death of John Paul II. The most popular newspapers and magazines prepared special supplements with pictures, quotations and stories about the Pope, calling him “The Great Pope”, “Great Man”, “Holy Father”, “John Paul the Great” etc.

The sources that stressed the Polishness of the Pope created a sense of common identity, strengthened social integration and became elements of support and spiritual reflection (Bieliński & Wierzbicki, 2006). The core
idea of such a phenomenon as national mourning is the fact that it “consti-
tutes a part of the sacral time with its typical pathos and idealism” (Po-
demski, 2006:233) that cannot last long. The time of celebrating and com-
memorating the Polish Pope was like a one-week ‘holy Sunday’, essentially
different from the mundane, everyday routine. Short after the first week of
national mourning its emotional dimension turned into more rational discus-
sions on the spiritual heritage of John Paul II, the future of Poland without its
moral leader and again, questions about national identity. One of the topics
that arose in the media and public opinion polls was the meaning of the term
coined by someone as Pokolenie JP2 (Generation JP2).

The “Generation JP2”
The term Pokolenie JP2 (Generation JP2) as created long before April 2005.
It was used to describe mostly young people from different countries who
participated in international meetings with the Pope during his whole ponti-
ficate. During these meetings, people spontaneously applauded the Pope in a
manner that is usually reserved for pop stars, by shouting: “J-P- two-we-
love-you!”. Eventually the term was popularized as a symbol of experiences
connected to commemorating and mourning the death of John Paul II. The
popularity of this expression became an object of scientific scrutiny and a
topic of media and public discussion in Poland (Figiel et al., 2006,
Nosowski, 2006). The debate about the “Generation JP2” raised questions as
to whether it was anything more than just a one-time, extremely emotional
experience of collective solidarity.

According to some sociol-
ologists (e.g. Źukowski, 2006), “Generation JP2” is a sign that young people are rediscovering their own identity as Poles, Catholics and patriots. Others argue that the it is rather a spiritual potential and a new quality in the public discourse (Nosowski, 2006), but not really an existing generation as such. However, regardless of debates concerning the existence of the actual generation that would follow his teachings, the Polish Pope played an important role in the lives of many persons. In a survey con-
ducted after his death, the young respondents pointed out the multidime-
nimensionality of his personality; from being described as a close family member
to a moral authority and “the most important Pole” (Figiel et al., 2006).

One of the aspects that scholars agree upon is that the Pope was acknowl-
edged as an important person promoting Poland abroad, a specific ‘label of
Polishness’, and was a source of national pride both during and after the
communist period. For instance, even the international media attention
around the Pope’s death has been perceived by some people as having poten-
tial “for promotion of Poland” abroad (ibid:265). His person of not merely
being the Pope but above all being the Polish Pope has symbolized close ties
between the ethno-cultural idea of the nation and Catholicism. It also sym-
bolized the idea of a struggling victorious and brave nation that against all the odds managed to find its way to liberation from the communist regime.

Therefore, the passing away of the “Polish Pope” and the national spiritual leader symbolically closed a certain period of Polish history. It can be argued that the process of transformation opened up possibilities for re-definition of the Polish national identity along different lines than merely ethno-religious ones. Together with the disappearance of its main leader, the Catholic Church became a more vulnerable actor in the whole process of transformation. As Marody and Mandes (2005) suggest:

Polish society is becoming more secularized, at least in the sense that it wants to limit the role of the Church to strictly religious matters and rejects its influence on political and social decisions. People’s religious beliefs are becoming more selective. These processes deepen the polarization of Polish Catholicism. Although it is still confined to the old institutional formula, one can expect this formula to change since the death of John Paul II (ibid: 62).

Scholars also point to the decline of trust in the Catholic Church as an institution, especially questioning its involvement in politics (Borowik, 2002). This decline in the Church as an institution can also be related to the Church as an institution representing the Polish people and nation in general. Although Catholicism has been and continues to be an important actor in Poland, “the Catholic narrative of Polish history (...) offers us a picture that is equally incomplete and misleading” (Porter, 2001:298, my emphasis).

An important vestige from the communist times is present in today’s inconsistency between two visions of nationhood and thus two discourses. One uses the language referring to civic nationalism based on citizenship; the other stresses the ethnic belonging. Consequently, in the discourse of the opposition, the “bad” communists were associated with the Communist party and “good” patriotic Poles always with the Church that was supporting opposition, human rights, freedom and democracy (Borowik, 2002). The paradox lay in the fact that constant attempts to redefine the nation along civic lines by communist propaganda contributed to the opposite process of strengthening the ethnic, unofficial discourse. This means that the Catholic narrative of Polish history and national mythology persisted after the collapse of communism when Poland eventually regained sovereignty. Consequently, as Borowik (2002) argues: “The Church therefore entered the period of transformation with considerable reserves of respect and trust from society” (ibid:242). Moreover, the Church was perceived as a political actor and co-creator of civil society, since it was ‘in charge’ of that narrative.
The post-communist transition in Poland

The collapse of the communist regime for Poland meant transformation in at least three spheres: the political system changed from a totalitarian regime to a democracy, economics changed from a state controlled type to a free market economy, and society changed from a dual to a pluralist system. The post-1989 transition is therefore perceived as a nationalistic one. The newly constructed civil society needed new symbolic identifications. So the first step mostly involved rejection of old symbols and replacing the ‘working masses’ with the most powerful narrative of the anti-communist opposition that was represented by the Catholic Church. Therefore, as Zubrzycki (2001) argues, the discursive field of the nation had been reopened. Poland gained independence and liberated itself from ‘foreign’ communist occupation. Therefore, the transition period is often described as a period of rejection of everything that was associated with the communist system. In the fields of politics and economics it was much more obvious than with culture and collective identity. The point of reference and specific ‘role model’ for the newly recovered republic became the image of Poland from before WWII, the time of the building of the modern nation-state and when the image of Polak-Katolik was created.

Establishing the “new Poland”

Established in 1989, the Third Republic of Poland, which is sometimes described as the “new Poland”, used the strategy of restoring the symbols of the Second Republic (1918-1939) and thus rejecting those of the communist People’s Republic. This has led to the “ambiguity of its identity” (Halas, 2002:125). It became problematic, since there was no longer ‘the other’, the enemy against which both the nation and Church could mobilize. Therefore, there was a strong need to clearly define what Polishness is and the meaning of contemporary patriotism, nation and national identity. In fact, the question for the new political elites has been whether Poland should define itself through the ‘traditional’ relation to Catholicism (Polonia Semper Fidelis-Poland always faithful), or whether it should be ‘heading West’ and define itself as a secular nation-state. It is important to note that transformation was not only the period of democratization and marketization of the society, but also the period of construction of the nation-state understood as a political and administrative unit. However, it soon became apparent that it was more complicated than just rejecting the old and ‘bad’ system. As mentioned before, during communism there were two opposing and competing visions and discourses of the nation, but only one of them was actually referring to the nation-state; this was the Communist one. The discourse that was maintained by the Catholic Church and opposition was a powerful narrative imagining the stateless nation struggling for independence.
In post-communist Poland, especially in the first half of the 1990s, the Catholic Church was still an important social institution. At the same time it is an authoritarian organization that claims to possess “the only true knowledge of what is best for the nation” (Borowik, 2002:250). Borowik also stresses the fact that the Church is “without awareness of multicultural society” and has a “problem with using language relevant to democratic rules” (ibid.). This puts the Church outside the civil and democratic discourse. The political engagement of the Church in Polish politics, especially in the 1990s, has reduced the public trust in the Church, and a majority of Poles oppose the direct involvement of the Church in public life (Karpov, 1999). But what is particularly interesting and important in this case is that there is also a struggle within the Church itself.

This struggle is between the so-called “open Catholics” who support the de-politicization of religion and the deepening of faith, and “traditionalists” who claim that Roman Catholicism is essentially linked with Polishness; therefore the Church’s mission is automatically political (Zubrzycki, 2006). This distinction is important in order to understand that there is an essential difference between religiosity understood as strong belief, religious commitment and participation and the ‘religiosity’ seen as imperative to defend the nation against its enemies. The Catholic narrative of the Polish uniqueness and messianism are used by the groups that support the strong power of the Church. As Karpov (1999) shows, there is a positive correlation between increased intolerance and the “traditionalists” support of the strong power of the Catholic Church. However, popular religiosity is not necessarily an obstacle to the development of civil democratic society in Poland, even though it is sometimes assumed that religion might cause problems for democracy and modernization (Casanova, 1994).

In post-communist Poland, the Church with its narrative of the “defender of the nation” has lost its monopoly on national identity. Moreover, the national identity in a democratic country can be expressed through other channels than religion, such as popular culture (Burszta, 2006). Furthermore, the collapse of communism also meant the end of the binary world, described as East versus West but also within the country as between the (Catholic) nation and the (Communist) state. People were curious about what lay behind the Iron Curtain; they wanted a new model of society, freedom, new ideas, openness and a ‘return’ to Europe. As Mach (1997) points out:

The disappearance of the great enemy, the Communist state, broke the ideological and political polarization of the society and put a question mark on the political role of the Church (ibid:71).

Together with the growing criticism of the Church there has been an attempt by liberal intellectuals to redefine national identity in civic terms. This civic discourse aims to counterbalance the ethnic-national one by, for instance,
showing that the ethno-religious narrative is reductive and against the vision of Poland as a modern country and member of the EU. These two are sometimes presented as promoting two different images of patriotism; the red one represents the Romantic and heroic vision of patriotism while the white one represents the everyday, ‘mundane’ civic and modern form of patriotism (Terlikowski & Holownia, 2005). The civic discourse is also supported by proponents of the “open Catholicism”, namely those who claim the Church now has greater flexibility and adaptability. According to them, the Church should rather focus on sacred matters, faith and religion per se and not on the national-Catholic ideology.

Nevertheless, the ethnic narrative is still very widely claimed in Poland. The model Polak-Katolik is often taken for granted as the ‘true’ Polish identity. Thus, as sociologists point out, Poland continues to remain somewhere between the community of common culture and national myths and the community of citizens (Kurczewska, 1997). These communities represent to a great extent two different visions of the nation, two value systems and worldviews. Above all, they represent also two different visions of how the civil society should be. The point is that these narratives may serve as interpretative frameworks of various political, social, economic and cultural changes. In that way they not only contribute to the creation of the contemporary collective identity in Poland, but also to the way the nation is portrayed.

As we can see from the discussion above, it is impossible to overlook the importance of the Catholic narrative in the process of shaping of the Polish nationalism. In fact, without understanding this narrative it is practically impossible to understand the dominance of the ethno-cultural vision of nationhood in Poland throughout its history. However, I suggest that it is equally important to acknowledge that this narrative is a socio-historical construction and thus the Polish nation is not and has never been ‘naturally’ inclined towards Catholicism. The ideological struggle and ambivalence of the nationalistic discourses not least during the period of communism illustrates that Polish nationalism involves different, sometimes competing narratives and representations within one nation. This is to say that several of the principles supporting the vision of nationhood based on the Romantic idea of martyrdom for the stateless nation supported both by the Solidarity movement and the Pope did not necessarily meet the expectations of the recovered sovereign Polish state. The death of the spiritual leader of the nation left open questions concerning the future of Catholicism and religion in general in Poland. It also left open questions about Polish national identity in a recovered democratic country. The following section will look closer at the process of post-socialist transition, particularly the identity crisis and what remains of Solidarity’s legacy.
Political aspects of transition

In Poland, the process of transition after the collapse of the communist regime proved to be volatile and ambiguous. This was partly because the post-communist transition was to a large extent understood in terms of a national transformation. According to Zubrzycki (2006) the transformation in Poland was particularly associated with a national revival of the Polish people. Zubrzycki argues:

The post-Communist transition is (…) first and foremost understood by Poles as the national one; it is period characterized not merely by democratization and marketization, but primarily by the construction of a national state, a state of and for Poles (ibid: 24, emphasis in original).

Nevertheless, in spite of the importance given to national and cultural aspects of transition by the Polish people, the Polish political elites during the 1990s rather neglected these aspects. Instead, the major priority has been given to the political and, above all economic, ‘catching up’ with the West. Among the consequences of the enthusiastic embrace of the neoliberal free market economy has been the emergence of consumerism, and new socio-economic cleavages.

Śpiewak (2005) argues that under communism the deep social and economic cleavages remained to some extent ‘frozen’. However, they crystallized and intensified under the conditions of transition. The development of the civil society has been followed by growing consumerism and the emergence of an individualistic attitude, namely a form of “asocial individualism” (ibid:161). This attitude relates to a modern understanding of freedom as a matter of individual action confined to a private sphere and economic activity. Contrary to the republican idea of collective freedom popularized in 16th century Poland and discussed earlier in this chapter, this individualistic life-orientation became one of the obstacles to the construction of civil society based on the ideas of collective work and mutual trust. Faced with the rise of neoliberal globalization, this anti-collectivistic attitude fell on the fertile ground of a developing consumer society. Polish consumers, presented with much wider freedom of choice, as compared to the communist period, became one of the most dynamic social groups in Polish society (Śpiewak, 2005). However, the legacy of the anti-collectivistic individualism and apolitical understanding of freedom also resulted in diminished social trust, low participation in public life combined with a claimant attitude, and lack of belief in the results of collective action and democratic decision-making (Sztompka, 2006). This type of individualism focuses on material and private gains and losses rather than on interest in public matters.
Internal “othering”: winners and losers of transformation

The emergence of the ‘new order’ during the 1990s often went hand in hand with the global expansion of capitalism and neoliberal hegemony. Introduced in Poland in 1989, the Balcerowicz Plan (Plan Balcerowicza), also known as “shock therapy” was a plan of extensive and rapid economic reforms. Its main goal was to bring about the transition from a centrally-planned communist economy to a capitalist market economy. The main idea of the plan implied the principle of sacrifice of short-term goals for long-term economic growth. Poland’s growth between the years 1989-2000 was the highest of all other post-communist countries; however the social costs of this reform proved to be more widespread than expected. In particular, the workers employed within large industries suffered since about one million lost their jobs at the beginning of the 1990s. The rapid changes also impacted the large rural areas, where unemployment reached the critical 20 percent level in some places. Consequently, the gap between the so-called “losers” and “winners” of transformation deepened (Parysek & Wdowicka, 2002).

At the same time, the dominant discourses of the political elites continued to perpetuate these growing social divisions. As Buchowski (2006) points out, the unprivileged groups were depicted in the public media during the 1990s in essentialized and stereotypical ways. For example, workers and peasants were portrayed in situations of conflict, demonstration or road blockades. Buchowski suggests that among the social consequences of the embrace of the new neo-liberal order was the emergence of a new form of orientalism that managed to “escape the confines of time and space” (ibid:465). In other words, various exclusionary practices that during the communist times were based on the geopolitical distinction between the cultures and societies (i.e. ‘East’ versus ‘West’)) suddenly became practices of “internal othering” within one society. This “internal othering” can be referred to as practices of social categorization, which in post-communist Poland have crystallized into distinctions and inequalities between the urban and the rural, the educated and the uneducated, as well as between the winners and losers of transformation. Buchowski argues also that this “orientalizing mental map” has not only morphed into a social space (ibid:466) but has also been reproduced in scholarly analyses. He is particularly critical of the Manichean logic present in the analyses suggesting that the emerging inequalities in post-communist Poland were a matter, or lack of a “civilizational competence” (Sztompka, 1996).

According to this logic, the civilizationally incompetent were those unable to embrace and adapt to the new order, namely all those with socialist as opposed to capitalist mentalities. Buchowski (2006) notes that the “creation of inferior categories of people, an intellectual process that shares its logic with orientalizing modes of thought, legitimizes political practices, sanctions discrimination and possibly exploitation” (ibid:476). Therefore, it can be
argued that the reproduction of this particular intellectual discourse of the ‘new order’ has strengthened the neoliberal hegemony promoting the Western model of capitalism, modernization and progress against perceived communist backwardness. Consequently, it also set the normative frameworks of interpretation based on Western, neoliberal ideas defining what it means to be ‘normal’ in the post-communist context. For example in the stratified social landscape those lower down in the Polish social hierarchy, such as workers or peasants, were not “merely portrayed as the people with problems but also the people who are problems themselves” (ibid: 468).

These stigmatized groups often remained outside of the dominant representations of Poland as a rapidly developing market economy and a country enthusiastically embracing processes of commercialization and “return to Europe”. As more recent analyses show (Marciniak, 2006, Marciniak & Turowski, 2010) the post-socialist urban landscapes in Poland are marked by tensions and clashes between the celebratory rhetoric of globalized mobility and Europeanness on the one hand, and multiple sites of economic and ethnic oppression on the other. In practice, this means that on the same street opposite flashy shopping centers and advertisements one can find insulting graffiti such as “Jews To Gas” or “Negroes Go Home” (Marciniak, 2006). I suggest that in order to capture the complexity of the post-socialist social and cultural landscapes one has to acknowledge these tensions. The studies pointing to the ambivalence and practices of “internal othering” offer a critical reflection on the dominant theories of modernization and transformation in the region. Moreover, in order to do justice to the complexity of dramatic political, economic, cultural transition and progress, the questions of power cannot remain untouched. As I have argued elsewhere, studies that address all these issues have a chance to show that the popular “back to Europe” slogan is not necessarily synonymous with the embodiment of political stabilization, economic prosperity and the liberalization of culture (Kania-Lundholm, 2011).

This problem can also be related to the critique of the nation branding strategies discussed in the previous chapter, which offer an essentialized and selective image of the nation while obscuring complexities and inconsistencies. One may ask, however, how can we possibly understand the emerging ambivalences, tensions and inequalities within the post-communist context? When it comes to Poland, this question can be related to others such as how we can account for the fears and phobias targeting different minority groups? And more importantly: how did it happen that the legacy of a large workers’ opposition movement such as Solidarity was to mobilize nationalistic and populist ideas?
The defeat of Solidarity and the victory of the populists

As argued earlier, the transition in Poland has been understood as a national one, namely as a form of liberation from the foreign, communist regime. It meant building a new society, but also a new democratic country and what follows. It also meant redefining the national identity. However, the political elites during the 1990s were mainly occupied with issues related to economic growth and implementation of “shock therapy” methods. It was not until the second decade of transformation that the debates about patriotism and national identity became particularly vibrant. The presence of debates about national identity, patriotism and collective memory on the public agenda was related to the winning of the 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections by the national-conservative coalition. But how is it possible to explain this success of the populist political right in Poland in the second decade of transformation?

Ost (2005) suggests that the success of the right in Poland is not necessarily a consequence of the Polish ‘Catholic mentality’ or a simple reaction to the economic hardships of transition. Instead, he offers a complex explanation, suggesting that it was a failure of the liberal political elites and their misunderstanding of democracy that led to what he calls “the defeat of Solidarity”. Ost argues that the former leftist opposition activists fully adopted the economic liberalism and turned into liberals almost overnight. By embracing the new capitalist society with its political and economic inequalities, the liberal elites neglected the new “subalterns”, such as workers and peasants, and quickly lost their support. Ost suggests, however, that the problem with the liberal elites steadily losing their power was not necessarily a direct consequence of embracing the capitalist system and neglecting the growing inequalities. In fact it is what they did not address that contributed to their failure. Ost argues that liberal elites in Poland misunderstood the main principles of democracy and neglected an important aspect of social integration in democratic process, namely the question of class.

Populists used this opportunity to address workers’ anger and offered a new narrative: instead of the ‘shock therapy’ they explained the inequalities and social costs of transformation as the elite’s fault. For example, Andrzej Lepper, leader of the populist party Samoobrona (Self-defense) coined the slogan Balcerowicz must go (Balcerowicz musi odejsc) and this was repeatedly introduced as the core element of his party’s program. One of the main aspects of the populists’ narrative was to question the liberal elites, but not on the basis of their competence or class but rather their ethnic origin, values and their allegedly, communist past. Therefore, the success of the political right can be interpreted in terms of their clever strategy of addressing moral issues, such as values and identity instead of economic ones. I suggest that the right has established a particular discursive order, reminiscent of the stateless periods, to talk about nation, national identity and patriotism by
promoting nation as an ideology with a dominant ethno-religious vision and mobilizing the Catholic narrative.

I agree with Ost’s analysis that the consequence of not addressing the issues of economic interests in terms of class resulted in a political move of the populists that shifted the accumulated class anger towards a different type of politics, namely identity politics. Despite the Polish “virtually mono-ethnic society, where class and cultural diacritics fulfill a primary role in making social distinction” (Buchowski, 2006:476), the liberal elites during the 1990s did not manage to address these distinctions. Instead, the social and cultural distinction took place along the lines of belonging to the national community and understanding of the major Polish value, namely patriotism. Shifting the anger and frustration towards a different type of politics that did not address questions of group interests and representations but morality, identity and values turned the public debate in Poland in another direction. The questions that became relevant were, for example, ‘Who is really Polish?’, ‘Who belongs to the nation?’, ‘Who is a traitor?’ and of course ‘What is patriotism?’. Hence, it can be suggested that the success of the political right became at the same time a defeat of Solidarity’s ideals. As Ost (2005) argues, the Polish liberal elites underestimated the fact that the collective anger and disappointment of the working class needed to be channeled in some way. Consequently, instead of addressing the anger in terms of class interests, the public attention turned to issues of identity, values and morality such as abortion and vetting (lustration). In this new political climate, national culture became a topic of political struggles.

From political struggles to culture wars

When the conservative-right wing party Prawo i Sprawiedliwość [PiS] (Law and Justice) emerged as the largest party in the Polish parliament, they immediately established ties with the ultra-conservative Radio Maryja network. This move allowed them to appeal to a racist and homophobic electorate. Their public agenda, including anti-Semitism and homophobia, proved to be an effective means of rallying support, and reinforced the worst stereotypes about Poland (Porter, 2006). In 2006-2008 the Ministry of Education and National Heritage launched a program called Patriotyzm Jutra (Tomorrow’s Patriotism)37 and acknowledged the importance of the revival of patriotic values and attitudes, especially among the young generation. The main goal of the program was to support educational programs by non-governmental organizations that promoted patriotic attitudes in schools and other educational institutions. The program included a competition for the best textbook spreading ideas of patriotic education, and a competition for best film or

37For more information about the program, see: http://www.nck.pl/kategoria/120/program-mkidn-patriotyzm-jutra/pr/true, 2010-10-23
radio program promoting patriotic attitudes among the youth and children. It also provided support for more unconventional media, such as comic books about important episodes in Polish history. The narratives of victimhood and martyrdom played an important role in understanding the country’s unfortunate position throughout the years. These narratives were also embraced in the vision of patriotism promoted by the government. At the time, the program was mostly criticized by liberal and left intellectuals for referring to history as a tool of internal and foreign politics of the ruling party, and for providing a limited and exclusive vision of the national community (Pawłowski, 2006). An additional problem was that instead of vivid discussion and research about the meaning of the past, the focus was on celebratory tribal-military and victim-oriented patriotism.

The symbolic “return to Europe” by Poland involved the necessity of critically examining the previously cherished ideals of national unity. The model of Polish community based on the collective struggle for independence, common tradition, history and solidarity was confronted with the development of democratic institutions based on pragmatic principles of law, competition and compromise. However, the public debates about patriotism did not take place in a vacuum, as researchers widely acknowledged the impact of cultural legacies from the communist period on politics in Poland (e.g. Kubik, 1994, Zubrzycki, 2006, Bier, 2009). Scholars point to the importance of cultural cleavages, if not wars, that have intensified in the 2000s after two decades of democratization and market reforms (e.g. Bier, 2009, Bielasiak, 2010, Koczanowicz, 2010).

Bier (2009) argues that the period of cultural wars started around 2003 when Poland’s largest conservative right-wing party Prawo i Sprawiedliwość [PiS]) (Law and Justice) inaugurated a political campaign of “moral revolution and structural change” (ibid:64). They suggested that the establishment of the new Fourth Republic as part of the country’s moral revival in terms of religious and patriotic values, processes of decommunization, and strengthening of national identity and collective memory. The new state was, according to PiS, a realization of the values and ideals of the 1980s Solidarity revolution, therefore all its opponents were those “who betrayed Polish identity and the legacy of democratic opposition” (ibid.). From this rhetoric, which characterizes Polish politics in the new millennium, there emerged two contrasting visions of the country advocated by opposing political camps that later developed into political parties. These camps were Polska Solidarna (Solidaristic Poland), associated mostly with the anticommunist opposition, and Polska Liberalna (Liberal Poland), which was pro-Western and pro-European.

38 The third republic, established after the 1989 revolution, is Poland’s contemporary state. It was preceded by the first, 18th century gentry republic and the second, interwar 20th century republic.
Bielasiak (2010) suggests that in the 2005 election campaign these divisions were crystallized into opposite programs of political parties, such as PiS, representing the Solidaristic Poland, and the centro-liberal Platforma Obywatelska [PO] (Civic Platform) representing the Liberal Poland. Bielasiak argues that conditions of rapid, far-reaching and complex post-1989 transition generated a “normative discourse defined by the politics of values and identity instead of politics based on interest representation and compromise” (ibid:55). He distinguishes between five main arenas of contestation in post-socialist politics in Poland; namely: the nature of the nation, social norms and practices, evaluation of the past, the place of Poland in the international arena, and evaluation of the economic transformation (ibid:49-55). Accordingly, the Solidaristic camp favored a vision of Poland as a homogeneous community rooted in Christian traditions, preservation of moral and religious values, and economic and social solidarity combined with stark skepticism towards European integration and the communist past. The liberal camp assumed a country built on a more open understanding of procedural democracy, assurance of individual rights, pluralist political practices, moderate social values, tolerance of the past, and further integration with European culture and institutions. Among these arenas of contestation, the evaluation of the past became, according to Bielasiak, a “litmus test in contemporary politics” in Poland (ibid:52).

Under these conditions, in which politics was defined in cultural and moral terms, the notion of patriotism was employed also as a token in the culture war between the opposing political camps. Thus, defining who is a ‘real patriot’ became a criterion for measuring the authenticity of belonging to the nation (Koczanowicz, 2010).

The collective identity crisis: looking for new national narratives

Since Poland joined the European Union in 2004, debates in the Polish media about national identity and Polish patriotism have become increasingly popular. The concept of patriotism has often been employed in order to define the symbolic boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in and from the national community. The general theme of these debates is that patriotism is an important aspect of the Polish national character and an important collective value. For instance in the 2010 presidential elections, when Poles were asked about the features of a good president they mentioned intelligence and patriotism as the most important (SMG/KRC for TVN2439). There is a general

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39SMG/KRC is the leading human resources company on the Polish market conducting, among other activities, media research. TVN24 is a Polish private TV channel.
consensus that patriotism is important in Poland, at least when it comes to the stereotypical self-images of Poles as compared to other Europeans.

Poles continue to see themselves as a nation that differs significantly from other European nations, in particular when it comes to support for collectivistic values, such as faith, patriotism and family (CBOS, 2011)\(^{40}\). Also, even though the level of religiosity in the country is complex and changing (Porter-Szucs, 2011), abroad Poland is often perceived as a bastion of Catholicism and traditional values. Sometimes, in the foreign press Poland has been represented as a country with strong nationalistic sentiments, which can be problematic for the process of European integration\(^{41}\). About 88 percent\(^{42}\) of Poles declare they are proud of their nation, although this correlates positively with older age and lower level of education.

Probably the only point of agreement among different political and intellectual actors is that patriotism is important for the ‘new’ democratic Poland, the debatable question is how it should be defined. Taking into account the legacy of the three patriotic traditions and the role that Romantic national mythology played in the process of liberalization of the nation, this task seemed to be more difficult than previously expected. The newly constructed civil society also needed new symbolic identifications. Although the importance of national redefinition was publicly acknowledged during the early stages of transition, the actual debate about it did not start until the second decade of transition (Czubaj, 2007). This can be related to the fact that Poland’s post-communist aspirations of returning to the West and joining the European community left national discourses relatively absent from the public eye during the 1990s and early 2000s (ibid.).

The issue that causes the debates about patriotism in Poland to become polarized and heated is the understanding of the so-called new, modern, post-communist patriotism. Although there has been a general agreement among Poles about the importance of patriotism (Szostkiewicz, 2009) the focus has been on values and ideals that should become foundation stones for this new patriotism. As some authors argue (e.g. Graff, 2007), the Polish media and the public sphere have been monopolized by the discourse of the national-conservative right, having support from the Catholic Church. Consequently, the notions of ‘patriotism’ and ‘national identity’ have been employed to describe Poland as a mono-ethnic Catholic national community. The media debate developed yet another dimension when national belong-

\(^{40}\)For the rapport between stereotypes of Poles and Europeans and the Polish national self-image in the European context see: http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2011/K_033_11.PDF (in Polish), 2012-01-29

\(^{41}\)For an article about Poland from a Swedish leading daily newspaper Dagens Nyheter, see: http://www.dn.se/ledare/sista-chansen-for-eu, 2012-01-30

\(^{42}\)For the rapport about national pride in Poland, see: http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2002/K_062_02.PDF, 2012-01-29
ing, collective history and memory became themes occurring not only in public political debates but also in popular culture.

Around 2005 in the light of the contentious public debate on national belonging, the Polish media started pointing to the increasing production of music, with references to previously neglected themes in popular culture such as Polish history and national identity. Therefore, the ‘comeback’ of the national and patriotic references in the early 2000s was warmly welcomed by many journalists. Some went as far as to suggest that “art is serving patriotism” (Pyzik, 2007) and that young Poles are starting to redefine the meaning of national identity and patriotism and provide new ‘lessons’ in patriotism for the young generation. Among the young artists who took up patriotic motifs and referred to national identity one can mention musicians such as rappers O.S.T.R and L.U.C and rock band Lao Che, who critically approached dominant Polish patriotic motives in their songs and albums. Also, artists such as the group Łódź Kaliska, Anna Baumgart, Artur Żmijewski and several others started questioning the dominant visions of nationhood and representations of nation and identity in Poland. For instance, under scrutiny were the stereotypical and exclusionary representation of womanhood (Matka Polka) in Polish nationalism (cf. Mizielińska, 2001) and the problems of homophobia and anti-Semitism. However, one might wonder how to explain this growing popularity of national and patriotic themes in public debate and popular culture?

One of the answers may be that the populist right, although widely recognized as responsible for introducing the issues of nation and national identity onto the public agenda, did not manage to monopolize the capital and potential of nationalist discourses. This is also to say that scholars such as Ost (2005) have underestimated the emancipatory potential of national identity issues. This potential was particularly explored after the defeat of the right-wing government in 2007, when the urban youth, artists and feminist activists begun to advocate a more inclusive understanding of patriotism and,

43 Among articles that were published on the topic in 2005, include: “Patriotism in fashion” published by weekly Polityka (Czubaj, 2005) and “New patriotism in music” that appeared in largest Polish daily Gazeta Wyborcza (Sankowski, 2005).
44 This critical approach towards the dominant national narratives follows the tradition of “critical patriotism” suggested by Lipski (1981). Lipski was one of the most prominent critical voices in the circles of the anti-communist intellectuals. In his essay entitled “Dwie Ojczyzny-Dwa Patriotyzmy” (Two Fatherlands-Two Patriotisms) he argued that Polish Romantic narrative that for years was feeding the national megalomania can be juxtaposed with the more pragmatic tradition which takes critical stance on Polish national myths. He suggested introducing of the “critical patriotism”, which could possibly challenge the one-sided vision of Polish history. The idea was to show that larger picture of past events is needed, including also shameful moments and dark pages in Polish history as well as challenging of the dominant myths, national megalomania and xenophobia that are often used as tools for national self-admiration. Therefore, he argued, patriotism is not only about the attitude involving love and respect for one’s country but also involves responsibility and self-criticism.
consequently, democracy in Poland (Dietz, 2008). So, instead of class, culture and identity continue to mark the terrain of social (and national) distinction in Poland. With their emancipatory potential, narratives of the nation and national identity in Poland are a terrain of struggle and dispute in the “new” Polish society.

Scholars who point out the national identity crisis in Poland, argue that Polish society suffers from the “complex of the unwanted child” (Törnqvist-Plewa, 2002) and a “national neurosis” (Tazbir, 2007). Among the symptoms of this condition has been an inferiority complex and backwardness in relation to the West, combined with a lack of collective self-confidence, and negative self-stereotyping. Additionally, this sense of inadequacy and negative self-stereotyping resulted in exclusion and fear of various ‘others’, particularly ethnic and sexual minorities. As Graff (2008) argues in her book “Rykoszetem” (Ricochet) the tensions related to an ongoing identity crisis in Polish society rebounded on the weakest members, such as women and different ethnic and sexual ‘others’. She argues that this process of exclusion belongs to mechanisms that are widely recognized by sociologists and historians and is not unique to Poland. In this process of re-definition of various symbolic national boundaries the crossing axes of gender, sexuality and nation in Polish public discourse appeared to be a powerful mechanism of exclusion. Therefore, it can be argued that in the public identity struggle the notion of Polish patriotism that has been employed to describe the relationship to the nation has played an important role. Reference to patriotism has been employed by different actors to provide meaning to these boundaries.

Polish feminist philosopher and literary critic Maria Janion (2011)45 talks about the crisis of Polish identity connected to the crisis of Polish culture in general. She argues that Poland is distancing itself from its Slavic heritage by desperately wanting to join the ‘Western club’. Consequently, it is experiencing an identity crisis and alienation from the Slavic heritage, which makes Poles prone to xenophobia and anti-Semitism. She suggests that the crisis of Polish culture is also related to the crisis of patriotism, and these are indicative of the process of shaping of the “new Polish imagery”. Dealing with this situation according to Janion, implies coming to terms with the past as well as with dominant narratives of the Polish nation, including national megalomania and the Romantic-messianic legacy. This also means there is a need for a new narrative, a new story of the post-communist nation. In relation to the possibility of the emergence of such a new story, Janion rhetorically asks:

Is it possible - taking into account the mechanisms embedded in capitalism of absorbing the cultural sphere into the system of capitalist economy and of

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45For an electronic version of the article published by the Baltic Worlds see: http://balticworlds.com/the-uprising-of-a-nation/, 2012-07-14
It can be suggested that the possibility of the permeation of the cultural sphere with the mechanisms of capitalism is already taking place, and practices of nation branding are an example of this process. However, the question that remains is whether conversion of spiritual values, such as national ones, into commercial goods can actually help to build a civic society based on trust. Faced with all the internal challenges and the on-going identity crisis, Polish society has steadily become an actor on the global scene. In order to reinvent the national identity and pride at home while at the same time attracting external audiences, the Polish government directed itself towards brand experts.

Branding Poland by experts
In 2002, Poland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, responsible for coordination of international promotion and public diplomacy, employed an external consulting firm, Saffron Brand Consultants from the UK, to work on the new image and logo for Poland. After a considerable time the agency came up with the logo of a kite in national, white and red, colors. Asked about the rationale behind the decision to choose a kite as a new ‘symbol’ for Poland, Wally Olins, an international branding expert, answered that flags have military and political connotations while the kite represents a distancing from Poland’s “military past” into a more joyful and modern, “post-political” world (Boxer, 2002 in: Aronczyk, 2007). However, instead of bringing associations with the Solidarity movement, as planned, it has rather been associated with the sign used by the Polish air force.

As the study conducted in 2002 shows, opinions on whether Poland needed a logo at all were mixed. About half of the Polish population answered that the logo would help to build a better image of Poland abroad, while the other half expressed the opinion that the national flag as well as a coat of arms were sufficient symbols to represent the country. This example, along with the ones discussed earlier in chapter 3, suggest that the process of nation branding as a marketing top-down strategy was received with mixed attitudes. At the same time these collective efforts made by government-employed foreign experts can be juxtaposed with the parallel ongoing public debate about patriotism, national identity and community.

The same year, as part of the same initiative, the Polish government represented by the Polish Chamber of Commerce, embarked on a multi-million zloty investment into a nation brand campaign. The main objective of this

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46For a study about Pole’s reactions to the new logo, see: http://www.obop.pl/archive-report/id/1271 (in Polish), 2012-01-29
project was to introduce Poland’s own nation brand and slogan that would differentiate the country from other nations and present national characteristics in an attractive and effective way. The company’s plan for developing the new brand for Poland begun with research among both international and domestic audiences. The brand development group investigated perceptions of Poland amongst significant foreign audiences. The studies were conducted in major European countries, in the US and Russia. The research was also conducted on a domestic level, and Polish people were asked about their image of contemporary, post-1989 Poland. The results from external audiences revealed that Poland is generally perceived as a boring, poor and grey country, mostly inhabited by peasants. The results of the domestic investigation have shown a split vision of the country, with rather negative perceptions among the older generation and more optimistic ones among younger people.

After two years of investigations and analysis the branding consultants came up with Poland’s new brand named “Creative tension”. According to Sffron’s report (2005) summarizing what is so appealing about creative tension and why it captures the ‘essence’ of Poland, we read:

Poland draws its personality, power and perpetual motion from a wealth of apparently opposing characteristics. For example, Poland is part of the West and also understands the East; Polish people are passionate and idealistic and also practical and resourceful; the Polish character is ambitious and also down to earth. (…) This creative tension is why Poland is constantly changing and evolving, sometimes tumultuously. And it’s why Poles have always tried to achieve the seemingly impossible and often succeeded (ibid.).

Wally Olins, the chairman of Saffron, argued that the concept of creative tension captures the change and illustrates the work in progress that is taking place in the “new Poland”. He also added that the biggest problem “is not so much that Poland suffers from an image problem, more that it has no image at all” (2004). It is important to mention that after 2005 Olins did not continue to work with the new nation brand in Poland, and as some authors ironically put it, “creative tension” might not be the best of slogans but rather is a diagnosis of the situation in Poland (cf. Ash, 2011).

One of the obstacles to continuing to work with the new nation brand has been the institutional and bureaucratic complexity in Poland. The new nation brand became one of several competing logos representing Poland created by different organizations, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Polish Tourist Organization, the Polish Information and Foreign investment Agency, and different logos of Poland that appeared each year at international Expo exhibitions. Additionally, incoherent communication between different actors responsible for the cultural and economic promotion of Poland contributed to a lack of agreement on the characteristics of the new nation
brand. This is a similar situation to other post-communist countries struggling with their new nation brand, as discussed in chapter 3.

In an article from the newspaper *The Guardian*, historian Timothy Garton Ash (2011) argues that nation branding is a sign of our times, and in the past Poland’s brand was created by mounting an armed insurrection against the Russians and celebrating Romantic poets, but now the country has to hire an external branding consultant to do the job. Garton Ash is rather critical of Poland’s new nation brand and argues that “creative tension” stands for a form of a cognitive dissonance between the ‘normal’ Poland that is in Europe, and Poland that is still a poor country by European standards with internal tensions and paranoid-style politics, occasionally feeding on old style patriotic and religious martyrlogy (ibid.). In other words, tensions are there but they are not necessarily of a creative nature; “creative tension” is more a form of social diagnosis than a nation brand. I suggest that the difficulties encountered by the branding experts should not come as a surprise. The specific commercial logic of nation branding - assuming that nations are the results of experts’ work in producing cohesive globally communicated images - clashes with the ambivalent, contested and value-laden images and representations of Polish nation communicated internally. In addition, an attempt to create a completely new national logo revealed the already existing negative stereotypes and prejudices about Poland abroad. The example of the “Polish plumber” is a case in point.

The “Polish plumber” (*le plombier polonais* in French) was a phrase first used in 2005 in France to describe the wave of cheap labor coming to France after the 2004 EU-enlargement. This expression also symbolized the fear of French people against the decision during the EU constitution referendum to open up the labor markets to immigrants from Central Eastern Europe. The expression caused controversy in France as reflecting negative, nationalistic, and anti-EU attitudes and negative rhetoric against Poland in particular. However, the expression has been also used by the Polish tourism board as an advertising *response* to these negative associations. Thus the ‘Polish plumber’ is also a fictional character portrayed by a young male model who is supposed to convince the French that he is not willing to work in France and instead remains in Poland and invites them to visit his country. The slogan of the Polish campaign says in French: “I stay in Poland, come on over”. The campaign’s success was due to the fact that it managed to turn the negative stereotype of cheap Eastern European labor into a positive image of an attractive young male carrying a monkey-wrench who beckoned foreigners to visit his home country (Zaremba, 2008). It is also argued that the campaign provided Poland with good publicity by indirectly portraying Poles as a witty and self-critical nation.
Poland: between the internal and external perspectives

As discussed above, the public debate in Poland has mostly been concerned with the internal, domestic issues of patriotism and national identity. At the same time, the task of creating an attractive nation brand for the external audiences has been left to experts. It can be argued that this discrepancy between the internal and external perspectives and ways of communicating the nation creates a void that is neither explored nor addressed by the elites. One of the reasons for that may be the public’s preoccupation with the so-called Tragedia Smoleńska (The Smolensk tragedy) which became one of the defining moments in recent Polish history.

On April 10th 2010, ninety high ranked officials, including the Polish president Lech Kaczyński and his wife Maria, and six members of staff were travelling to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyn Massacre, a mass murder by the Soviets of Polish intellectuals, members of the military elite, politicians and military officers. The plane crashed near Smolensk, Russia killing all on board. The public reacted with shock and grief, followed by national mourning. The Smolensk tragedy, which brought a tragic end to the presidency of the national-conservative Lech Kaczyński, marked a symbolic beginning to further cultural and political struggles between the two opposing camps and the visions of the nation they proposed.

Among the first tests for the society after the accident was an eight-day period of national mourning that, as usual in times of crisis, briefly united the society under the same banner of solidarity, community and sorrow. However, right after that the public debate again became divided between those who suffered in the ‘right’ way and those who did not. The issue of the potentially unifying character of national mourning has been addressed by Olga Tokarczuk (2010), a Polish left-liberal feminist writer. In an article, of which an English version was published in the New York Times in April 2010, she commented on the post-accident situation in Poland:

I fear that the people of my country can unite only beside victims’ bodies, over coffins and in cemeteries. Like tribesmen who dance around old totems, we ignore the living and can only appreciate the dead. (…) I am sick of building our common identity around funeral marches and failed uprisings. I dream of Poland becoming a modern society that is defined not by the crippling nature of history, but by our individual achievements, a sense of our own self-worth and ideas for the future (ibid.).

Tokarczuk addresses here an issue that has been troubling Polish society throughout the whole process of systemic transformation, namely how Poland can be imagined as a modern society if the dominant forms of national imagining are based on past historical narratives of victimhood and martyr-
dom. She expresses the hope for change of the national self-image, a hope for the new nation brand. Tokarczuk is not the only intellectual expressing concerns about the future of Polish identity.

In late 2011 the mass-market weekly Wprost ran an article entitled “Pol-ska jako wspólnota?” (Poland as a community?) in which the author, conservative philosopher and historian Marcin Król problematized the current situation in Poland in terms of a disappearing sense of solidarity and ‘higher’ national feelings for the community. He argued that one of the paradoxes was that Poles were not enjoying being Polish in spite of the constantly improving situation in the country, above all in economic terms. Król’s article was dedicated to the newly elected parliament (Sejm) and can be interpreted as a call to politicians to encourage them to work collectively on Poland, not only as a civil society but also as a national community. The tone employed in the article suggested the importance of the coherent national self-image and identity that would unite the divided, individualistically-oriented society. It also suggested that the idea of civil society and democracy in Poland should be connected to the idea of national community.

Although both Tokarczuk and Król come from the intellectual elite, they talk about different issues. Their approaches represent also the internal tensions and clashes in the elite’s view on national community and patriotism. Tokarczuk talks about the identity crisis in Poland as a result of a backward-looking attitude, and Król is concerned about the weakening of national ties in the society. However, what they both share is a general concern about how to imagine Poland as a modern nation and society, and how to deal with the fact that the changing economic and socio-political conditions require a process of national re-definition. They touch upon the question of identity crisis in a society that continues to define itself in national terms, a society that is in need of a new nation brand and self-understanding, not only externally communicated, but also internally.

At the same time, these authors represent the voice of the elites who are present in the public debate in Poland. The voices of regular citizens, which are the empirical object of this thesis, are heard in a much more limited way. One of the arenas where citizens have a chance to participate in the public debate as well as get an opportunity to negotiate national identity is the internet. This is why the next chapter will address the idea of cybersalons as arenas for cultural national intimacy.
CHAPTER 5 | CYBERSALONS AS ARENAS FOR CULTURAL NATIONAL INTIMACY

Today’s era is often characterized by remarkable changes when it comes to the use and availability of the new information technologies. Usually, scholarly theorizing about new media falls into a dichotomy between voices of enthusiasm and fear about the potential of digital technologies (Rheingold, 1995, Sandor, 2003, Krzysztofek, 2006). On the one hand, scholars acknowledge the advantages of crossing physical and territorial boundaries, creating new connections and reviving civic activism in cyberspace that contributes to the development of the public sphere (Castells, 1996, Kaldor, 2004). On the other hand, they raise concerns about the fragmentation of information available in cyberspace, and the disappearance of ethical and moral responsibility leading to erosion of the rational public sphere (Kluver, 2001). More recently, scholars have also been pointing to the rather ambiguous nature of digital technology (Fuchs, 2011). In any case, the question of the new media’s impact on society remains important and is often expressed in a shared concern about the internet’s potential to enhance democracy (Papacharissi, 2010). These concerns are also relevant in relation to the presence of nations and nationalism in cyberspace.

The goal of this chapter is to discuss some key ideas from the scholarly debate about the new media as an emerging public space, and to suggest that nations and national identification play an important role in how citizens connect online. The first section thus discusses notions of cyberspace as a public sphere and space, and suggests the notion of cybersalons as arenas where citizenship can be practiced. The second section looks more specifically at the issue of national cybersalons as online spaces of political activism and virtual nations. The final section explores the notion of cultural national intimacy to explain how people connect as citizens who share the same interest in debating issues of public concern.

The entrance into the “information age” and “network society” proclaimed by Bell (1973) and Castells (1996) has meant the growth of new inequalities, exclusions and forms of social organization. Castells stresses

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48In this chapter, if not noted otherwise, I use expressions such as ‘digital technology, ‘new media’, ‘cyberspace’ and ‘internet’ interchangeably.
the important mutual influence between the man and the medium, by arguing that society in general transforms technology by appropriating it, modifying it and experimenting with it. The internet as part of the fabric of our lives and a product of human action which “was purposely designed as a technology of free communication (...) is a particularly malleable technology, susceptible to being deeply modified by its social practice, and leading to a whole range of potential social outcomes” (ibid:5). This malleability is acknowledged in the ambivalence of the medium where “volatility, inequality and social exclusion go hand in hand with creativity, innovation, productivity and wealth creation” (ibid.). The potential of the internet has been acknowledged by scholars looking at possibilities of sustaining and developing different counterhegemonic discourses that challenge the established hegemonic systems of domination, and legitimize and spread the claims of the excluded or marginalized (e.g. Rheingold, 1995, Sandor, 2003, Della Porta, 2006). Some argue that compared to other media, the internet provides a low-cost alternative outlet for critical social perspectives that are seldom found within the mainstream traditional media (Warf & Grimes, 1997).

In response to the increasing potential of the internet, scholars started to express concerns in relation to the access of information that can empower the marginalized. These continue to be formulated in the framework of the so-called “digital divide” argument (Willis & Tranter, 2006). Advocates of this perspective argue that the “internet can only deepen the already existing power relations and strengthen privileged groups in their positions while excluding disadvantaged social categories, since it tends to reproduce existing divisions of race, class and gender” (Zappala, 2000 in: Willis & Tranter, 2006:44). Others see new media in an even more pessimistic vision as the algorithmic, “Matrix society” of widespread repression and control49 (Krzysztofek, 2006). Yet regardless of the proliferation of opinions, scholars share the view that the internet is a terrain of contested philosophies and politics (Warf & Grimes, 1997). This means that it is neither inherently oppressive nor automatically emancipatory, but it certainly does have an impact on social, political and cultural life in Western societies. This ambivalence is also present within the debate concerning potentials and obstacles for the emergence of a democratic virtual public sphere.

49The idea of the techno-totalitarian, algorithmic society as portrayed in the iconic pop cultural film “The Matrix” (1999). This film is about how technological determinism increasingly limits human freedom. It portrays a society where increasingly intelligent tools require less human intelligence and proceed more towards impersonal, algorithmic centres of control. For example, today’s PIN (Personal Identification Number) codes are “algorithms in a pure shape” (Krzysztofek, 2006).
Virtual sphere: potentials and limitations

In the classical theory of the public sphere, Habermas ([1962]1989), inspired by the 18th century French and English salons and coffee houses, envisaged a space of social life that was independent from state apparatus and market forces. In this space, individuals-citizens could freely get together and exchange ideas. This idea of the public sphere is based on the assumption that discussion of social problems and communication can eventually lead to political action. In this way the public sphere is an area of production and circulation of discourses that can be critical of the nation-state. Emergence of the bourgeois public sphere with development of the printing press and capitalism was a milestone for the emergence of liberal democracy in Europe. For Habermas, the ideal public sphere was based on the principles of rationality, equality, inclusivity and common concern. These principles became an object of criticism for scholars who pointed to limitations of the rational bourgeois public sphere and suggested a more inclusionary vision composed of many counterpublics (e.g. Frazer, 1990, Benhabib, 1995, Hauser, 1999). In addition, the idea of the rational public sphere as an arena of political debates has been challenged by the idea that a public salon can in fact also be a sphere of joyful conversation and civic friendship (Benhabib, 1995).

Together with the rapid development of digital technologies, the question of the democratic virtual sphere became a concern among scholars interested in exploring new opportunities that traditional media could not provide. The question of the internet’s potential appeared on the scholarly agenda in the form of inquiry into whether the new technology could lead to the development and spread of democracy, and if so, is the internet becoming a new public sphere, a brand new cybersalon? Among concerns relating to the internet’s impact on social life there has been uncertainty about whether political use of this new technology can affect the public sphere in terms of offering new solutions and opportunities, or if it simply reproduces already existing ones.

The initial discourses were pointing to the positive role of internet as a medium that would encourage political activism and public discussions and open up a democratic exchange of views. The proponents of “cyber utopia” were stressing the fact that cyberspace could enhance already existing practices and make democracy work better (Rheingold, 1995). Another argument was that cyberspace would eventually go even further and transform and enlarge the notion of democracy in terms of proliferation of voices and emergence of new spaces (Barker, 2008). In this second case, scholars were

50 More recently, scholars such as Papacharissi and Yuan (2011) have argued that the tendency to consider technology as a source of empowerment and liberation derives from Western standards of social inquiry and reflects capitalist, neoliberal and imperialist way of thinking.
referring to cyberspace’s decentralized, interactive and non-hierarchical features that could lead to expansion of the public sphere. However, other literature suggests a limited and situated participatory potential of this new medium (Papacharissi, 2002). This means that the internet might encourage political discussions and activism and reduce access barriers for minority voices (Di Maggio et al., 2001) but it could also become an “electronic battleground” where people get together and discuss freely, but these might be random meetings and exchanges of ideas that result in fragmented political debates without any outcome or audience.

Scholars generally acknowledge the possibilities for interactive exchange and plurality of voices in cyberspace, but also point to the increasing fragmentation and lack of central authority of this medium (Slevin, 2000). As Papacharissi (2002) points out: “the value of the virtual sphere lies in the fact that it encompasses the hope, speculation and dreams of what it could be” (ibid:22). Papacharissi distinguishes between a virtual space and virtual sphere. In both cases the internet allows for sharing and exchange of information and communication. In the case of the virtual space, sharing and exchange might lead to increased sociality and discussion. At the same time only the virtual sphere provides conditions that allow these forms of online sociality to turn into some form of actual political engagement, solidarity and potential democratic development. Papacharissi expresses doubts about whether cyberspace can turn from being a “virtual space” to a “virtual public sphere”, because the space for interaction and conversation does not necessarily lead to political democratic debate. Instead, it might lead to the “proliferation of voices and an illusion of dissent” (Barker, 2008:355). This is also to say that the emergence of various platforms for online communication and sharing does not automatically lead to the emergence of a virtual democratic public sphere. This is not to say, however, that the emergence of opportunities and arenas for online communication automatically excludes such possibilities.

The results of the ongoing debate are inconclusive and scholars are not unanimous in their opinions. Some argue that public spheres on the internet have limited and usually elitist audiences (Jensen, 2003) and that internet communication does not differ much from the offline debate in print media (Gerhards & Schäfer, 2010). Others, like Parham (2005) are critical of the general tendency of accounts that choose to focus either on the positive or the negative sides of the new media. Instead, Parham acknowledges that while some internet-mediated public spheres largely reproduce offline forms of communication, there are others, such as public spheres created by diasporic communities, that expand the range of interaction and communication possibilities.

Nevertheless, most accounts that address questions related to the new media and public sphere tend to focus on the role of the media while rather neglecting actual political debates that take place online. This makes the
discussion about the participatory opportunities of cyberspace relatively abstract. Consequently, some scholars acknowledge the impossibility to evaluate the actual impact of political debates online (Papacharissi, 2002). Therefore more empirically grounded and contextually situated research focusing on online debates about actual politically and socially contested aspects of public life is needed in order to expand the range of studies on participatory potentials of cyberspace. The general focus is on the role and form of the media and not on what is being discussed and how it can lead to misunderstandings and doubts about social media and cyberspace in general. This was the case in the context of the use of social networking such as Facebook and Twitter during the Arab spring revolutions that have been taking place in the Arab world since December 2010.

“Does Egypt need Twitter?” was a provocative title of a blog post by the New Yorker’s journalist Malcolm Gladwell at the beginning of 2011. Gladwell suggested that the role of social media in social and political activism was largely overrated and came down to the form of a communicative act. He argued that people protested and brought down governments before Facebook, and that they will always find ways to communicate. He concluded by saying that the ‘how’ referring to the mode of communication was less interesting in this respect. Gladwell’s account on the role of informal communication met with harsh criticism. Those who directly commented on his post, and other bloggers51 pointed to the shallow understanding of media dynamics and even lack of basic knowledge about the role of digital technologies. Gladwell has been also criticized for not understanding that informal communication enabled by social media had an important impact on those who participated in the revolutions. Social media were the key channels through which protesters could organize themselves, but also platforms through which they could circulate information in the form of short, instant messages-tweets and live updates, as well as post pictures and videos which would have been impossible to spread via traditional media.

Giving this example here is not driven by the intention to argue for some sort of technological determinism, nor am I saying that the Arab revolutions could not have taken place without the social media. However, the problem with Gladwell’s suggestion is that he sees social networking as detached from the ‘real’ world events and does not acknowledge that social media are in fact integrated into the everyday lives of people. Such platforms, that enable communication and interaction in an online environment can only be accounted for and studied as situated in a given socio-political context. The practice of sharing information with other people takes advantage of the available opportunities for multiple modes of interactivity that cyberspace

offers, and it has a significant impact on how we think, act and create public spheres.

The ambivalence and inconclusiveness that surrounds debates about the virtual public sphere suggests at least two things. Firstly, that the new media are shaping and are shaped by social, political life and media landscapes of societies and cannot be approached as separate ‘realities’. Secondly, that the participatory potential of digital technologies is limited and depends on the specific contexts and activities that are under scrutiny. Having said this allows us to ask: where can we look for more tangible examples of political activity in cyberspace?

Places in cyberspace: the emergence of cybersalons

Dean (2001) suggests that we need to rethink the public sphere and replace it with a more complex model of civil society. She argues that such a model would replace the ideal public sphere based on norms of equal participation, inclusivity, rationality and authenticity. Instead, civil society focuses on interaction in the media, associations, institutions and practices that configure contemporary politics (ibid.). Such a model is also, she notes, more appropriate to accommodate a variety of emerging cybersalons. Dean defines a cybersalon as a form of computer-mediated discussion and communication among people who are linked not necessarily by proximity, tradition and ethnicity but by “shared interests and the ability to use networked interaction” (ibid:245). The cybersalon, she argues, “provides a link (…) to the networked complexities of communication, interaction and information exchange in late capitalist technoculture” (ibid.). The idea of the cybersalon suggested by Dean is intended to provide a conceptual apparatus for thinking about democratic possibilities in the online environment. It is also a reaction to the limitations of the more traditional public sphere theories, like the rational public sphere (e.g. Habermas, 1989).

Instead of referring to the public sphere, Dean (2001) uses the concept of cyberia to mark the “heterogeneity of subjectivities, practices, institutions and exchanges in civil society’ and also to ‘invoke the inescapable mediations governing political conversations and representations and to see these sites as loci of democracy” (ibid:264). The term cyberia might at first be confusingly associated with a stereotypes of the cold, remote and detached idea of the Russian Siberia, but in fact it is the complete opposite. It refers to plurality, heterogeneity and diversity of opportunities offered by cyberspace. Cyberia is a site for cybersalons that allow for multiple forms of interaction, diverse forms of mediated interaction, different forms of subjectivity and disagreement.
In a similar mode, Drakopoulou and Barbrook (2000), the authors of the *Cybersalon manifesto*\(^\text{52}\) argue that:

Cybersalon is a real-time environment. Cybersalon is a real and virtual space where people involved in digital creativity can *congregate and meet with each other*. If we want to discover innovative practices and theories, it is essential for us to *share and communicate* our on-line experiences. Some short-sighted interests are trying to inhibit the participatory nature of the Net. In contrast, we want to celebrate and promote the *emancipatory and creative possibilities* of the new information technologies (ibid., my emphasis).

At first glance the idea of the cybersalon might not differ much from Habermasian salons and coffee and tea houses as ideal places for the emergence of the public sphere. However, taking into account on the one hand the limitations of the “ideal public sphere” and emerging participatory opportunities of the new media on the other, cybersalons as discussion platforms are potentially more inclusionary than traditional coffeehouses. Unlike the 18\(^{\text{th}}\) century salons which excluded women and minority groups, cybersalons give opportunities for exchange among citizens across territorial borders, class, gender and ethnicity (Imre, 2009). Regardless of the scholarly doubts about the potential emergence of an alternative, new public sphere, people continue to take advantage of what the new technology has to offer in terms of communication, discussion, interaction and the sharing of information.

Based on these main interactive principles, cybersalons encompass a widespread range of different online platforms such as internet discussion forums, portals, social networking sites, blogs and other IMCs\(^\text{53}\). Hence, cybersalons allow for multiple modes of online interactivity and political interaction including posting instant messages, debating on internet forums, posting articles on online citizen journalism portals, blogging etc. Such plural models of interaction and mediation through language, image and representation correspond with “multiple and flexible forms of subjectivity that can come together and meet in the cyberspace” (Dean, 2001:261). Last but not least, the space of interaction in cybersalons goes far beyond the reach and scope of the nation-state. This makes cybersalons part of the global media dynamic, and places for political activity, engaging individuals beyond territorial but also beyond traditional divisions of nationality, class, citizenship, gender and religion.


\(^{53}\) IMC stands here for internet mediated communication forms.
Online voices: practicing citizenship

From its early years the internet served as a platform for the discussion and exchange of knowledge and information. This capacity of the medium might be said to represent one of the major developments of civil society in terms of expanding the public sphere and supplying citizens with an enormous, renewable resource of data. Access to these facilities has the potential “revolutionize the way people participate in society, culture, politics and economy” (Rojek, 2007:18). The internet as a platform for discussion has attracted grass roots activists as well as those who search for discussions about politics, religion and other topics. One of the main concerns addressed in relation to the internet as a discussion platform is a question related to agency and audience, namely who speaks and who listens online?

According to Papacharissi (2002) the virtual space might enhance discussion and provide a forum for “political debates and sociality but they do not necessarily have to lead to enhancement of democracy and solidarity” (ibid:11). This means that cyberspace might be about the expression of “hasty opinions” (Abrahamson, 1988 in Papacharissi, 2002:17) and fragmented, floating information. The possibility to post messages on discussion forums and boards might also provide space for the declaration of political standpoints but not necessarily debate about them. This demonstrative aspect of the internet “raises concerns about the internet being a platform without an audience that produces talk without consequences and impact” (Van Zoonen et al., 2010:251). Such criticism is mainly founded on the assumption that the impact of the medium can only be measured in terms of its audience. However, more recent research (e.g. Hermes, 2006) suggests that voices online can be meaningful in themselves. This means that the participatory potential of the internet can also be accounted for in terms of individual performances and practices seen as acts of citizenship (e.g. Hermes, 2006, van Zoonen, 2007, van Zoonen et al., 2010).

Citizenship has traditionally been defined as a relationship between the individual citizen and the nation-state in terms of legal, political, cultural or social rights and duties (Marshall, 1950). However, with the rise of the internet, globalization and the proliferation of transnational networks, the notion of citizenship expands beyond territorial borders of single nation-states. In today’s multicultural and multimedia societies the traditional notion of citizenship is confronted with set of challenges that require new interpretative frameworks. Hermes (2006) argues that the changes in both media content and practices allowed by the new information and communication technolo-

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54 Among the downsides of the expansion of the internet has been the proliferation of opportunities for the emergence of “the new channels for exploiting and developing pornography, pedophile rings, cultural stereotyping, fanning the flames of racial and religious hatred” (Rojek, 2007:21).
gies have a strong impact on practices of citizenship. She refers to the concept of “cultural citizenship” (Turner, 1994) that assumes competent membership in terms of “bonding and building of a community and reflection on that bonding” (Hermes, 2006:303). Such a notion of citizenship encompasses not only political aspects, but also bonding and solidarity based on shared experience, emotions, culture and knowledge.

Culture in this case refers to shared interests between fans of movies and TV series. The study by van Zoonen (2007) that analyzed how people discuss online their favorite films about politics shows that people ‘do’ politics when discussing and commenting on boards and use these films to “construct a particular and public version of their political selves” (ibid: 544). In a similar vein, Stein (2002) has argued that the cultural connection between the fans of the Roswell TV series became a citizen-type connection during the 9/11 attacks in New York in 2001 when topics of terrorism, American patriotism, and security temporarily became priorities for discussion.

In another study of online responses to the anti-Islam video Fitna posted on YouTube, van Zoonen et al. (2010) use the concept of “voice” to argue for a performative approach to citizenship online. They conclude that new forms of unlocated citizenship emerge when dispersed people get the opportunity to articulate political and religious identities with different modes of audience. The study also suggests that citizenship performances are meaningful in themselves and “citizenship can be conceptualized as brought into being through embedded practices and routines, as well as occasional acts and interactions” (ibid:252). This points to the performative aspect of citizenship, suggesting that by doing citizenship, in this case via participation in the online debates about the Fitna video, one becomes a citizen. I would suggest that apart from occasional acts and interactions, discursive negotiation of political identity, such as nationhood, can also be considered a performative act of citizenship. In other words, in the context where the spatiality of citizenship becomes challenged, acts of citizenship are also undergoing transformation.

Citizens who, as in the examples above, engage in discussions online have an opportunity to present their ‘political selves’ and get involved in a variety of activities that engage rational arguments, emotion, as well as commitment to communities and their members. Consequently, the interaction that takes place in cybersalons can be interpreted in terms of citizenship practices where “groups of strangers connect with each other on a basis of shared and disputed agendas and goals” (Hermes, 2006:306). It is this opportunity to communicate, share and exchange on a cultural level that makes cybersalons spaces for political activity.

So far we have concluded that the potential of the virtual sphere lies in the existence of cybersalons as platforms for multiple forms of interaction, communication and situated political activity in the form of various citizenship practices. However, it is difficult to account for the role of the new me-
dia in perpetuating political activity without looking at more concrete examples of debates taking place online. In the next section we will connect previously developed arguments to look at how power, politics and culture come together in cybersalons where questions related to nationalism and national identity are discussed.

National cybersalons: political activism and virtual nations

In a world that is often described in terms of global mobility, rapid change, increasing homogenization and localization, the new media become an intrinsic part of this ‘new global order’. Globalization is a name often used to describe the “complex relations that refer to the persistent interdependence of capital, commodities and communications across increasingly porous national boundaries” (Storey, 2003:107). The internet with its non-territorial character can be defined as one of the core forces of globalizing processes that would strongly contribute to the erosion of the nations and national integrity. It is not valid to accept that people who identify with a given nation are those who inhabit the same space (Gellner, 1997, Smith, 2001), nor is it the case that the sense of collectively shared identity, memory, common myths and representations can be ascribed to one territory. Therefore, the very idea of the nation is put against increasing global processes and new media dynamics. However, an increasing number of studies in recent years show that predictions about the role of global patterns in threatening the cultural integrity of nation are not entirely true, for in many cases the internet is used to strengthen rather than weaken national identity (e.g. Bastian, 1999, Chan, 2005, Eriksen, 2007, Lechner, 2007). This is particularly the case with emerging forms of political mobilization and the formation of “virtual nations” online, which are addressed in the following sections.

Political activism and the mobilization of national groups

Cyberspace has been used for mobilizing various kinds of political campaigns and protests. Apart from the more recent case of the above mentioned ‘Arab spring’, the internet is an arena for contesting other oppressive state apparatuses, such as the Chinese regime (Liu, 2006). According to Hoctor (2007), in the nations that have a long history of a limited public sphere, digital technology is associated with progress and a chance for the development of democracy. For the emerging virtual nations in Southeast Europe, China and Indonesia, the internet represents “the path towards delayed economic prosperity and an arena to articulate an often-suppressed public sphere” (ibid:697). The main obstacles on this path include the fact that the
internet access is still limited mostly to elites, and the fact that the available space for protest and dissent does not automatically lead to an increase in democracy (ibid:703). At the same time the enthusiasm about the new media is spreading fast, and cyberspace offers an opportunity for nations that are struggling to overcome authoritarian regimes. Hoctor admits that the existing criticism of the internet’s potential for democracy usually comes from the Western privileged position where access to digital technologies is easier than in other parts of the world. For developing democracies, the internet actually represents ‘the look and feel of democratic civil society’ and offers the “potential to link emerging nations to the transnational network and facilitate global support” (ibid:705).

In the case of China, the rapid spread and use of the internet have provided new ways for a critical voice to be heard against the Chinese Communist Party’s vision of the nation, and have contributed to the development of the civil society (Xiao, 2003, in: Liu, 2006). Moreover, the internet, with its participatory and decentralizing character, plays a crucial role in facilitating popular boycotting practices. This is the case for the members of the cybersalon called the Japan-China forum. They oppose the justification and glorification of the Japanese Empire’s colonial rule in Asia and Japanese militarism and “see political dissent and boycott online as an act of Chinese patriotism” (Liu, 2006:150). However, in addition to political mobilization, cybersalons are also platforms for emerging new forms of violence, extremist sentiments, stereotypes and inflammatory rhetoric against different transnational hegemonies (Kluver, 2001).

Kaldor (2004) points out that digital communication technologies have an enormous impact on global communities. She argues that they are actually much more important than print technology in “making possible new horizontal or transborder cultural communities” (ibid:175). She calls them symptoms of the “new nationalism” and a response to ambiguous forces of globalization. Such new forms of nationalism tend to favor cultural purity, are highly exclusive, and perceived as having features of religious fundamentalism. These new movements are founded on extended transnational networks and closely tied to the contemporary structural conditions. For instance, the idea of the “Islamic nation” is firmly connected with the religious aspects of the movement’s ideology where the action is directed against various cultural, economic and political aspects of Western hegemony. Cybersalons can be means of spreading symbolic violence by guerrilla and terrorist groups, such as Al Qaeda, where “violence is a form of message, of making a statement” (ibid:170). They can also be means of mobilization on a transnational scale, since “what matters is mobilization and not achievement of specific goals” (ibid:172). Kaldor suggests that the future developments of nationalism will be determined by the outcome of the ideological struggles between forward-looking and reformist perspectives on one hand and backwards-looking and regressive ones on the other. So far, it is still too early to suggest any possi-
ble results of this struggle. Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that the internet in this context is a double-edged sword that can be used for a range of purposes, often with the consequences going far beyond single nation-states. This ability to transcend the borders of nation-states allows “developing and maintaining interconnectivity, deepening relationships and broadening networks with lesser investment in terms of time, cost and effort” (Kalra et al., 2005:19). In that context, cybersalons facilitate the emergence of the so-called “virtual nations”.

Virtually connected: the emergence of nations online

Some scholars point out that cyberspace allows for the emergence of virtual nations that significantly differ from territorial nation-states. Eriksen (2007) notes that the main difference between territorial nation-states and diasporic cyber nations can be compared to the difference between the *patrilineal* kinship system subjected to one principal idea of the state and the *matrilineal* one where the main task is to balance conflicting principles (ibid.). This is due to, he argues, the internet’s potential to accommodate a broader range of debates and issues as compared with traditional state institutions and discourses. However, as much as it might be theoretically appealing, this distinction is ultimately flawed when it comes to empirical insights into the distinction between ‘real’ and “virtual nations”. In fact, as some studies illustrate, some of the ‘virtual’ nations operate in a similar way to the territorial ones.

For example Bastian’s (1999) study of the Nigerian online diasporic community asks what becomes of nationalistic discourse when it is freed from the physical constraints of the nation-state. The answer suggests that being freed from such constraints does not immediately imply a complete lack of limitations. In his ethnographic study of a listserv55 called Naijanet, established at the beginning of the 1990s, Bastian illustrates that online communities do not only reflect a diaspora’s internal divisions but also constitute separate “virtual nations”. Firstly, such communities are mostly ‘inhabited’ by highly educated men with access to personal computers, with modems or office computers connected to local networks. Secondly, the authenticity and access to participate fully in the Nigerian online community has been measured by such factors as: language, preferably ‘pidgin’ English native to Nigeria, knowledge about national cuisine, and expressed interest in returning to the homeland or at least evidence of strong connections with the country of origin. Violation or rejection of one of these prerequisites automatically implies denial of membership in this virtual community. For

55 *Listserv* is a name for the first electronic mailing list software application originally developed in 1984. Today, the word is commonly used to name any email-based mailing list application.
example, Bastian mentions a woman who, as she did not follow one of the mentioned requirements by claiming that she did not desire to return to the homeland, was subjected to insults and attacks for not being a ‘real’ Nigerian or even African (ibid.).

The case of this particular national cybersalon shows that nationalistic discourse freed from physical territorial constraints does not necessarily have to be synonymous with a complete detachment from the ‘real’ territorial nation-state. Moreover, nationalistic discourse online in this case ascribes culture as the main criteria of authenticity of belonging to the virtual nation. Combined with limited access to the virtual community based on class and gender, culture becomes a vehicle of exclusion and an agent of power of the nation state. This example also shows that in spite of the differences between virtual and ‘real’ nations, the potential of the former does not automatically lead to empowerment or inclusion. Instead, some national cybersalons might reproduce hegemonic notions of national identity.

Additionally, because the membership of online communities is in many cases voluntary and often anonymous, one of the problems with virtual nations and other communities online is the difficulty of measuring the actual involvement of participants, since some of them are “actively involved while others are just ‘lurking’ (Bakker, 2001:13). Nevertheless, regardless of members’ actual involvement, there is often at least an ambition to create an alternative public sphere that would confront the state monopoly. In such diasporic cybersalons there is a constant tension between the two principles of belonging, namely kinship and territory. Cyberspace has the potential to provide virtual nations with the first one, namely space for developing identity, a sense of consciousness, belonging and cultural resources. It can also be a source of empowerment for suppressed and marginalized groups such as migrants.

A case study of internet usage by Chinese migrants living in Singapore (Chan, 2005) shows that migrants are subjected to at least two hegemonic discourses of national identity; the one of their host country and the one of the country of origin. This particular position allows these groups to question the visions of “imagined community” that have been imposed on them. Cybersalons where they meet and connect have the potential to open up this liminal ‘in between’ space and enable participants to express their resistance and to challenge the hegemonies imposed on them by both their homeland and the host society. The combination of texts and images supports the online image of China as a superpower and empire against the perceived hegemony of the host state of Singapore and even the United States as the hegemonic power in the international system (ibid.). Chan suggests that the outcome of practices of negotiating nation online is “not an essentialist Chinese identity, but rather the dialectic of homogeneity and diversification” (ibid:361).
In the cases of both political activism and emerging “virtual nations”, cybersalons emerge as spaces ‘in between’ hegemonic discourses of the nation and state authorities. In some cases they might lead to political mobilization, empowering practices and emergence of new heterogeneous identities, and in others to perpetuation of violence and reproduction of hegemonic national discourses. However, this does not suggest a decline in national identities, but rather that these emerging forms of identification with the nation are changing. In the case of transnational migrants the awareness of loss of the old home and the impossibility to belong to the new one create an opportunity to connect and share, not only in terms of political goals but also cultural experiences beyond the national borders.

For instance, Calhoun (2002) reminds us that solidarity in the public sphere emerges from connections that are far beyond mere politics:

The importance of the public sphere lies not only in achieving agreement on legal forms and political identity, but in achieving social solidarity as such. For this to happen, it needs to be a realm of cultural creativity as well as rational discourse, and a realm of mutual engagement (ibid: 171, my emphasis).

Cybersalons where national issues are debated provide that opportunity for mutual exchange, engagement, debate and cultural creativity. I suggest that in the realm of cybersalons, diasporic subjects can share a sense of intimacy that is more than just nostalgia for the lost land, and this provides opportunities for developing a sense of global cultural identity. Consequently, it might seem that the democratic model and global potential provided by cybersalons will automatically lead to the crossing and destabilization of nation-state boundaries. This is only partially the case, as some forms of intimacy online remain strictly national in the use and form of interaction.

Intimacy in the cybersalon

In contemporary democracies, citizens can come together and debate political issues in various ways. As discussed above, cyberspace provides a wide variety of possibilities that are not without constraints. Yet what combines these forms of interactivity is the fact that citizens retreat to the private sphere in order to perform political acts of dissent. Recently, Papacharissi (2010) has argued that all civic actions in contemporary democracies emanate from the private sphere, which means that citizens are connected and alone but not lonely. The private sphere is the arena where citizens can retreat in order to go public and stay connected. In relation to nationalism, this connection between people who do not know each other personally yet get together to discuss common issues goes beyond Anderson’s (1983) idea of “imagined community”. I suggest that because sharing and connecting
online excludes embodied connection, cybersalons provide an opportunity to develop a sense of intimacy on a cultural level.

Cultural intimacy between members of the same nation refers to a sense of connection based on familiarity with national traits and flaws, and to practices of daily negotiation of common sociality and identity within the nation-state. The concept of cultural intimacy was introduced by Herzwelt ([1997] 2007) to better understand why nationalism continues to be an attractive form of collective identification. The notion of cultural intimacy has been developed as an “antidote to the formalism of cultural nationalism” (ibid:14) and offers an approach to nationalism that bridges the top-down, official and more popular, bottom-up visions of nationhood, just as the concept of nationalism can be a “lived ideology”, as discussed earlier (e.g. Billig, 1995). In practice, cultural intimacy is about the “recognition of those aspects of a cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality” (Herzwelt, 2007:3). These aspects can include self-stereotypes, cultural idioms and icons, intimate self-knowledge and other forms of familiarity with social traits and flaws. Cultural intimacy accounts for tensions between official and more popular discourses of the nation. This idea to distinguish between official and popular forms of national reproduction and nationalist discourses has been previously discussed in terms of the division between ‘lived’ and ‘intellectual’ ideologies (Billig, 1995) and “performative” versus “pedagogical” discourses (Bhabha, 1990). Acknowledgement of these tensions allows cultural intimacy to offer an approach that studies how “nationalism is understood by living actors” (Herzwelt, 2007:11).

Herzwelt also argues that a nation-state is constructed and reified within the intimately cultural space that operates through social poetics. This means that social agents of powerful institutions as well as ordinary citizens engage in the practice of essentializing to produce a homogeneous and stable vision of the nation-state and national culture. Essentialism implies production of the naturalized notions of national identity and ideas about the nation-state as an eternal formation. Consequently, social life in general consists of “processes of reification and essentialism as well as challenges to these processes” (ibid:26) and social poetics are about “the analysis of essentialism in everyday life” (ibid:31). This implies that in the poetics of everyday life, people negotiate the identity of modern nation-state. The concept of cultural intimacy is therefore particularly useful to account for processes of identity-negotiation and construction in the context of the re-building of the modern democratic nation state and civil society.

As nationalism continues to flourish in the information age, Imre (2009) expands on the concept of cultural intimacy to argue that internet-mediated communication enhances forms of national intimacy. She suggests a more nuanced and differentiated understanding of the role of nationalism and nation-state in the operation of internet-mediated communities. Imre introduces
the concept of “national intimacy” to argue that some forms of the internet-mediated communication emerging in post-socialist contexts in Europe can be grasped in terms of the tensions between a democratic model of interaction and its national boundaries and between a global communication and strictly national use of the media. She uses the example of the Hungarian social networking site Iwiw to suggest that the internet enhances the national intimacy that has been cultivated for centuries in the small, semi-colonized nations of Central and Eastern Europe.

Historically, the main function of this type of intimacy has been the mediation between the domestic and the national family against oppressive state regimes. Even though it has been over two decades since the fall of communism, national intimacy is still cultivated across the region. According to Imre, cyberspace “provides a virtual outlet for the emotional and ideological affiliation that most people in the region consider essential to their identities: belonging to a national culture” (ibid:224). This sense of belonging has been important in order to re-establish cultural identity in the post-socialist context. Such a sense of identity is also a “potentially fertile ground for building of political solidarity” (ibid:228).

As I have discussed earlier in the context of nation branding, nation-states are responsible for making global interactions possible by employing the logic of the grammar of nationhood. Here, I suggest that the popularity of some websites and practices reproduced in national languages is yet another example of the logic of “grammars of nationhood” operating, in this context, in an online environment. Consequently, it can be argued that cultural national intimacy online is a process where globally recognized patterns of interaction, such as social media facilitating citizen participation, are practiced to articulate, contest and challenge specific forms of national identification. In other words, cyberspace is also an arena when people not only talk about nations but also reproduce forms of national identification.

At the same time it must be mentioned that cultural national intimacy online does not necessarily lead to formation of online virtual communities (Rheingold, 1995, Svenningson, 2001). Instead, it can be interpreted in terms of a political act in the digital age that tells us more about how we function as citizens in contemporary democracies. As Thompson (2012) argues, the emergence of the new media of communication has altered the nature of the public and the private, and the relationship between them. Consequently, we are experiencing a fluid situation where the boundaries between the public and the private are porous, blurred and subject to constant negotiation. In a similar vein, Papacharissi (2010) points out:
Whereas in the truest iterations of democracy the citizen was enabled through the public sphere, in contemporary democracies the citizen becomes politically emancipated via a private sphere of reflection, expression, and behavior. This relocation suggests that we re-examine the spatiality of citizenship. Within this private sphere, the citizen is alone but not lonely or isolated. The citizen is connected, and operates in a mode and with a political language determined by him or her (ibid:132, my emphasis).

What Papacharissi suggests is that in the context of the commercialization and prevalence of the new electronic media, not only the traditional understanding of the public sphere is challenged but also the traditional understanding of the private sphere needs to be reconsidered. Her argument is that one of the aspects of democracy in the digital age is the emergence of alternative spaces for citizens to engage with public matters. Thus traditional notions of civic participation are no longer the center of the civic debate (ibid., cf. Hoffbauer, 2012). Instead, new civic habits are emerging such as blogging, vlogging, discussing on internet forums, and the use of other social media that contribute to redefinition of how citizens engage, interpret and practice their civic habits. At the same time, one needs to remain cautious when it comes to democratizing aspects of these participatory practices. Papacharissi (2010) is warning us that unequal access to information, commercialization and limited reciprocity in communication restrict these new civic habits and new public spaces from transitioning into open public spheres. As democratic as their potential might be, they are not necessarily democratizing in themselves.

This democratic but not immediately democratizing aspect of the new media communications is an issue that is particularly relevant to address for the countries where the new media is rapidly growing. It potentially provides an opportunity for a different type of citizen participation and dialogue. The connecting role of cyberspace beyond territorial borders is also important for countries whose citizens live abroad and who can thus recreate a civil society in an online transnational space of participation.

In the context where the private sphere takes over some of the functions of the public sphere, connection between citizens can take place via participatory acts of citizenship and new civic habits such as such as practices of nation re-branding and other forms of discursive negotiation of political identities. In the context of nation re-branding, new media that offer various forms of civic engagement are also making it possible to account for both internal and external perspectives on nation and national identity. Where citizens can connect on the level of culture, language can serve as a tool not only for dialogue but also deconstruction and dismantling of the dominant narratives. The form of participation that is enabled by the new media also offers a form of engagement that comes from the bottom-up level as opposed to the top-down elitist level. In such a “new” space the possibilities for trig-
gering the process of nation re-branding are increased. It is not the final goal or result that matters but the process itself.

I also suggest that the concept of cultural national intimacy can be helpful for understanding how citizens connect from the private sphere to raise issues of public concern. Particularly, cultural national intimacy can account for how citizens employ linguistic constructions to discursively achieve connection on cultural and national levels. For instance linguistic categories and ‘small words’ such as “we” and “them”, “here” and “there” can be employed in order to construct group cohesiveness and connection on the cultural level, but also to challenge the dominant representations of nation and national culture. In other words, by knowing who we are, we can make an attempt to say who we are not and/or who we want to become.
CHAPTER 6 | METHOD AND MATERIALS

This chapter addresses the methodological aspects of the research conducted for the purpose of this dissertation. In this first section I summarize the main theoretical points developed earlier. In the second section, I discuss the critical discourse analytical method employed in this study and the major reasons for choosing this particular method of analysis. The third section explores in more detail the material and the selection criteria applied in the research process. The fourth section addresses the analytic procedure, including research questions and issues related to trustworthiness, translation and ethical considerations. The main principle structuring the analysis presented later in the empirical chapters focuses on the ideas of discussion and contestation of discursive representations of nation, national identity and national culture. As argued in chapter 2 the persistent logic of difference in the literature of nationalism distinguishes between the civic, Western and “good” forms versus the ethnic, Eastern and “bad” forms of nationalism. I illustrated that some scholars look to overcome these distinctions and search for possible alternatives to nationalism, such as patriotism (e.g. Habermas, 1990, Viroli, 1995, Nussbaum, 1996). Although this logic of difference in nationalism studies remains a useful analytical tool, it is, however seldom proved empirically (Zimmer, 2003, Janmaat, 2006). Thus, more research is needed where the competing visions of nationalism are not mutually exclusive, but intertwined in practice. I also argued that scholars of nationalism tend to neglect the idea that nations can be constructed not only as ethno-cultural historical projects of exclusion but also as globally competing images and brands. This form of “soft power” can be considered an updated form of nationalism, and is part of the growing body of research on nation branding. This is a particularly current issue in the context of Central European post-communist countries where the new image of the nation is a question of domestic and international recognition.

The concept of nation re-branding developed in chapter 3 touches upon the practice of negotiation of national identity and new national image from both inside and outside. This concept points to nation rebranding as a form of contested, citizen bottom-up debates, as opposed to the focused on coherent conventional elitist practices of nation branding. As illustrated in chapter 5, these practices of negotiation are facilitated in the context of new media technologies that allow for sharing and re-production of the cultural national intimacy among citizens in an online sphere of cybersalons.
The idea of contestation and debate is the main principle structuring the analytical work in this project. It reflects the tensions and ideological struggles in the process of identity-making in the context of post-socialist Poland. Although, as discussed in chapter 4, a collective identity crisis during the 2000s in Poland emerged as a result of competing visions of nationhood among different political actors, and there has been much written about the elitist struggles over the collective identity in Poland (e.g. Graff, 2007, Bier, 2009, Bielasiak, 2010), we still know relatively little about citizens’ accounts of transition in national terms and subsequently reactions to the public ideological tensions. This dissertation will contribute to our understanding of citizens’ accounts of transition in national terms by providing empirical analysis of internet-based material that focuses, to a large extent, on citizen’s voices. This project focuses on debates about patriotism and national identity that take place in an online setting. The discursive approach to these “naturally occurring texts” seems to be the most appropriate way of conducting research. Before we move on to discuss the specific method employed in this study, we will offer a few words on the discursive analytic approach in relation to the concepts of nation, national identity and national culture.

Nation, national identity and culture as discourses

Instead of thinking of national cultures as unified, we should think of them as constituting a discursive device which represents difference as unity or identity (Hall, 1997a:617).

The common sense understanding of nation, national identity and national culture suggests that they are something people are either born with or acquire over a certain time. This approach of perceiving nation, national identity, and national culture as ‘possessions’ and stable entities leaves little space for negotiation and dynamic between different subjects who identify themselves with a given nation. However, as the citation above suggests, another way of thinking about national cultures and identities is possible. Looking at national culture and identity as discursive constructions enables us to see the complexity of mechanisms that portray the differences in a form of unity. Hall (1997a) argues that national identities are not things we are born with, but are formed and transformed within and in relation to representation. From this point of view, nation can be defined as “a system of cultural representations”; a symbolic community which operates with the power to generate a sense of shared identity and allegiance. Consequently, national identity can be defined as a form of identification with these representations. In other words, for instance we only know what it is to be ‘English’ because of the way “Englishness has come to be represented as a set of meanings, by Eng-
lish national culture” (ibid: 612). This view on nation and national identity as discursive constructions renders even national culture a product of discourse.

In Hall’s understanding, discourse is a way of talking about or representing something. It produces knowledge that shapes perceptions and practice. Discourse can be also defined as a body of representations embedded in a social context. Since there is a relationship between the language (discursive and rhetorical strategies) and power (discourse might aim to preserve or subvert existing power relations), discourse is part of the process in which power operates, often through the production of knowledge. When it comes to the ideas about nation, national identity and culture the knowledge often focuses on the idea of unity, consistency and homogeneity. That knowledge is a result of the discursive practice of representing difference as unity. Consequently, meaning is not an inherent part of language but it is rather a discursively constructed part of representation.

Concerned with the social meaning and with the language as a system of signs, discourse analysis goes beyond mere production of meaning and looks at what discourse does in a given context. In other words, discourse analysis looks at the “meanings in particular social context, (…) at effects and consequences of particular practice of representation” (Kolsto, 2009: 16). For example, a semiologist, mostly concerned with the production of meaning, would be interested in the meaning of the national symbol, such as a national flag, what it means that someone refers to a flag to identify with the nation. A discourse analyst on the other hand goes a step further and might ask what this employment of the flag means in this context? Perhaps it means manifestation of national belonging, but it can also mean exclusion of groups who do not identify with particular national symbols. Consequently, one can argue that discourse analysis is concerned with the production of meaning through representation but also with the discursive production and reproduction of knowledge and its relation to power. In that sense discourse is ideological, meaning that it is formulated, reproduced and reinforced by the social representations shared by members of a group and used by them to accomplish everyday social practices (Barker & Gałasiński, 2007). At this point it is important to mention that such a view on discourse, where linguistic forms are constitutive of ideological positions, is close to one of several approaches to discourse, namely critical discourse analysis (Kress & Thew, 1978, Fairclough, 1995, Wodak, 1999, van Dijk, 2001).

There is variety of different theoretical and methodological approaches to discourse, such as Foucauldian post-structural theory, focusing on how institutions construct their subjects as objects of knowledge (Heath, 1982), rhetorical psychology, with a focus on language as a function of contexts of talk (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), conversation analysis, focusing on the spoken interaction as a complex achievement (Schegloff, 1997) and more recently, feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis (Baxter, 2003). Since the focus of this project is on the ways in which nation and national identity are com-
municated and articulated as well as relationships between text and practice, and language and power, the inspiration from critical discourse analysis (CDA) seems to be the most appropriate choice.

Critical Discourse Analysis

The data corpus selected for this study has been analyzed by drawing inspiration and resources from CDA in order to capture the contested character of identity negotiation. In particular there is a focus on resources such as different strategies, where national identity is constructed, negotiated, challenged and contested. Critical discourse analysis is a textually-oriented method of analysis, with a focus on the social actions accomplished by language users communicating within social and cultural contexts (Barker & Gałasiński, 2007). The goal of CDA is to analyze structural relations of dominance, control, discrimination and power that manifest in language (Wodak, 2005). The idea is that power also operates through language. Power is, however, not inscribed in language but it is rather that language ‘gains’ power by the way people use it (Fairclough, 1995). In the same manner language, can be used in order to challenge or question the power. One of the most significant examples of how power operates through language in relation to national identification is the discursive construction of boundaries through employment of the ‘we/them’ categories. These boundaries are symbolic, yet might cause real-life consequences, such as discrimination, structural racism or exclusion.

Discursive strategies: Discourse as social practice

One of the major concerns of critical discourse analysis is that discourse is perceived as a form of social practice. The proponents of CDA agree that there is a dialectical relationship between discursive practices and contexts in which they occur (Barker & Gałasiński, 2007). This is to say that discourse is “socially constitutive as well as socially shaped” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997:258). Discourse constitutes social practices, social relations, identities and other formations. At the same time these formations constitute discourses. This means that for example on the one hand a nationalist discourse influences political and social reality, the way social actors perceive the world as naturally divided into nations. On the other hand, this discourse is affected by different social situations, events and structures such as the development of digital technologies and globalization. Social actors discursively construct knowledge, social roles and identities but their actions and practices are also affected by different discourses. Consequently, discursive acts are socially constitutive (Wodak et. al, 1999). In this study, the focus is on the four discursive strategies that contribute to the construction, reproduc-
tion, transformation and dismantling of national identities. These strategies are employed in the analysis.

First, the constructive strategy focuses on the linguistic acts that contribute to the process of ‘building’ of national identity, usually by discursive references to the personal pronoun ‘we’ and the linguistic procedures which constitute the “we-group” that serves as reference to the idea of national unity and solidarity, i.e. “we Poles”, “we, as a nation”. The second strategy focuses on the reproduction of national identity and is employed in order to emphasize and support the continuity of nation and identity. Specific types of reproduction strategies are justification and perpetuation strategies. Perpetuation is usually employed to support and maintain the continuity of the national identity, while justification is to “defend and preserve a problematic narrative of the national history” (ibid:161). The third strategy refers to discursive attempts at transforming the meaning of national identity or some of its aspects, and replaces it with new ones. The fourth strategy of dismantling refers to discursive attempts to change or even destroy, de-mythologize or deconstruct existing identities or elements of them (ibid.).

Small words that make a difference

Processes of identity construction and transformation are linked to processes of marginalization, exclusion and stigmatization. Thus, identity is not only symbolic and imagined but also negotiated and subject to discursive cultural representations. National identity is a relational construct; so that “me” involves “you” and “we” involves “them” (Woodward, 1997). This is also the case with the discursive construction of nation, national identity and culture. Thus little words such as “we” and “they” (referred to as personal references) “here” and “there”, (spatial references), “long ago”, “then”, “now” (temporal references) have big consequences (Barker & Galasinski, 2007, Kolsto, 2009). Such expressions constitute anchorage points from which texts or utterances come and then position text producers either as insiders or outsiders. They are also quiet reminders of nation and national identity. In other words, the construction of discursive representations of nation, national identity and culture remains the achievement of speaking subjects.

Discourse analysts mention a variety of linguistic strategies employed by language users. These include for example grammatical structures such as the use of passive and active voices, and semantic devices such as metaphors, analogies and indexes (Fairclough, 1995). To describe the collective self in positive terms people use linguistic forms structuring the speech. For instance, the personal pronoun plural “we” can be employed discursively to construct the notion of collective identity. In the discourse about nation, the pronoun “we” is a particularly significant category often employed together with the possessive pronoun “our”. This is shown by Michael Billig (1995) in his inspirational work on banal nationalism. He argues that such small
words as “we”, “here” and “our” operate discursively in order to reproduce nationalism, for instance when news reporters in media refer to a given state as ‘our nation’. Billig’s suggestion is that these small words can make a big difference in terms of identity construction and representation as they might include or exclude different members of the “imagined community”, depending on whether they identify themselves with this community or not. Also Wodak et al. (1999) argue that “the use of the personal pronoun “we”- including all its dialect forms and the corresponding possessive pronouns - appears to be of the utmost importance in the discourses about nations and national identities” (ibid:163). This is therefore the reason that this dissertation’s empirical analysis not only focuses on the discursive strategies mentioned earlier, but also on the “small words” that are employed in the online setting.

Material: sample and selection criteria

The data corpus for this study is based on online sources. The main principle of selection of the material has been based on the principle of looking for different forms of civic engagement online. At the same time, as Bryman (2008) points out, qualitative social research follows theoretical rather than statistical logic. This is important to point out since this study is not intended to be a full-scale analysis of the online debate about patriotism. The study is however seeking to focus on theoretically and empirically interesting phenomena that could inform further analysis based on a larger and different data corpus. Although a single study like this project can rarely make claims about generalizability, the latter can be increased by an approach focusing on theoretical purposive sampling. Such an approach allows for selection of material on the basis of theoretical relevance to the questions rather than aiming at representativeness of data. In other words, the focus is on collecting the sample that is “theoretically meaningful and in relation to the theoretically defined purpose of the research project” (Silverman, 2006:307).

Consequently, the goal has been to collect a sample that would focus primarily on citizen’s debates and allow for participation in a form of exchange of points of view of citizens from both ‘home’ and abroad. The principle of selection has been to look for civic engagement in relation to the theoretical aims and relevance to the questions posed. Thus, only the forms of engagement were included that involved taking up the issue of Polish patriotism in a way that encouraged discussion, and a discursive polemic, posing questions for debate or suggestions for improvement and/or introduction of a new, alternative nation brand. The process of selection has been continuous and the final sample consists of three different sources. Before we discuss the corpus in more detail, a few words about the internet in Poland in general seem necessary.
Internet in Poland

There are about 14 million internet users in Poland, which is about 35 percent of the population (MB SMG/KRC, 2010). The number of internet users has been steadily growing in Poland from 4 percent in 1998 to 23 percent in the first half of 2002 (TNS OBOP, 2002) and increased drastically by over 300 percent between 2000 and 2006. In a country of 38 million inhabitants, about 25 million have cell phones. Broadband access is considerably smaller, at just under 2 million. However, according to Polish Internet Research in 2010 about 53 percent of the population was aware of social media and more Polish users are active in using web 2.0 services.

There has also been steady development in recent years from 38.8 percent in 2005 to 59 percent in 2009 (UN DATA, 2009). In a survey conducted in 2009, nearly half of the internet users (47 percent) answered that the content created by internet users was more interesting than content created by journalists and companies (MB SMG/KRC, 2009). According to the EURO-STAT data for 2010, Poland is currently among the European leaders when it comes to the use of social media. Among the most popular social media types in Poland are social networking sites, blogs, gossip portals and discussion groups. There is also a growing trend for internet citizen journalism (ECCO ICN, 2010).

The selected sample consists of highly commented upon media texts and discussion threads that are heterogeneous in terms of style but united by the same theme of discussing Polish patriotism. The data examined in this study consists of a total of 148 articles, (including 15 letters) and 1909 online comments. This material is summarized in more detail in the appendix section. All websites are publicly available, meaning that there are no restrictions in terms of providing a login and password, which practically means that anyone who has mastered the Polish language can join and introduce a particular topic on the forum. However, it is important to mention that discussions on the forum are moderated, so that content that may be considered offensive is continuously removed by the website administrators. The material can be divided according to three major sources: articles, letters and comments from an online newspaper debate, online forum discussions/comments, and articles from citizen journalism portals. Table 4. summarizes the collected material, which I later discuss in more detail according to the following categories: type of source, description and the collected sample.

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56 For more information about this research company, see: www.pbi.org.pl
57 Data concerns the age group 25-54. Although this data relates primarily to the use of networking sites, blogs and chat sites, the term ‘social media’ can also include such types of internet communication as discussion groups, internet citizen journalism and social bookmarking (source: www.onboard.pl).
Table 4. Summary of the material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF SOURCE</th>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper debate(^{58})</td>
<td>Articles &amp; comments</td>
<td>31 articles &amp; 448 comments</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion forum(^{59})</td>
<td>Online comments</td>
<td>28 threads (total of 1461 comments)</td>
<td>2002-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen journalism(^{60})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiadomości 24 (W24)(^{61})</td>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2006-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interia360 (INT)</td>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2007-2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eioba (EIB)</td>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2008-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infotuba (INF)</td>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2008-2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 148 articles          2002-2011  
N=1909 comments

Newspaper debate

The series of articles, letters and comments is entitled Czas Patriotów (The time of patriots) and was an initiative started by the largest Polish daily Gazeta Wyborcza (Election Gazette) in 2010. The newspaper’s editors made an attempt to address the questions of contemporary patriotism as part of the mainstream changes in contemporary Polish society. In order to encourage the debate the editors posed the following questions: “What does our daily patriotism looks like?”, “What kind of patriotism do Poles need today?”, “What does it mean to be a patriot in the contemporary world?” and “Do we feel proud that we are Polish and how do we express this pride?”

\(^{58}\) Czas Patriotów (The time of patriots): http://wyborcza.pl/8,75402,7974918.html
\(^{59}\) The name of the forum is: gazeta/forum.pl
\(^{60}\) The websites of the studied citizen journalism portals are the following: wiadomosci24.pl, interia360.pl, eioaba.pl, infotuba.pl
\(^{61}\) The abbreviation in the brackets refers to the way these sources are presented later in the empirical section.
The series started in May 2010 after the April plane crash in Smoleńsk, which killed the Polish president and over eighty members of the Polish government. This was a very emotional moment for the society, and is often described in media as a national tragedy. It has triggered public discussions about collective identity, patriotism and the future shape of the Polish state. Since ‘patriotism’ was employed by the conservative late president Lech Kaczyński in his political speeches, the future vision of patriotism after his death became open. Thus, the studied article series can be seen as an attempt to encourage citizens to debate this very current issue for Polish society.

Apart from letters written to the editors, there has also been the possibility to comment on both articles and letters that were published on the website. Established in 1989, Gazeta Wyborcza is owned by a Polish media corporation, Agora SA, and remains a prominent domestic challenge to the majority of foreign-owned Polish media. The newspaper aims to set standards of journalism in terms of publishing multi-perspective, discursively heterogeneous and thought-provoking material (Maryniak, 2010). Both Gazeta Wyborcza’s paper and electronic versions offer a variety of highly commented media texts that are different in style. Gazeta Wyborcza is the leading Polish daily newspaper with average circulation of about 319 thousand. The title refers to its foundation at the time of the partially free elections of 1989, which saw the widespread success of candidates and political opponents from the workers’ Solidarity movement. Gazeta Wyborcza was the first legal newspaper published outside communist state control since the late 1940s. It is broadly center-left in tone and supports the liberal democratic and economic changes that took place since 1989. The online edition of Gazeta Wyborcza is one of the sections of the portal Gazeta.pl - the one with the largest discussion forum described above. The website provides a feedback section which allows readers to contact the editors and express opinions.

The sample drawn from the newspaper debate includes 16 articles, 15 letters and 448 comments that are part of the series about contemporary Polish patriotism (see Appendix)⁶².

Online forum
The decision to choose this particular forum has been driven by the search for a discussion forum where political views would be expressed. As recent research shows, online forums about politics tend to differ from others, such as sports or science, in terms of controversies, disagreements and negative sentiments (Chmiel et al., 2010). During the selection process attention was not paid to the specific categories/topics into which the Forum.Gazeta is divided, although the majority of the discussions retrieved come from a fo-

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⁶² Czas Patriotów (The time of patriots): http://wyborcza.pl/8,75402,7974918.html, 2011-07-14
rum called Spoleczeństwo (Society). The forum is open and does not require registration to post a comment, although users can register on the portal.

*Forum.Gazeta* is one of the largest internet discussion forums in Poland, with about 2 million users visiting each month. One of the specificities of *Forum.Gazeta* as compared to other portals on the Polish market, is that comments on articles are published on both the Gazeta.pl portal and Forum.Gazeta. In this way, comments can be read from the level of articles and can be also retrieved directly from the discussion forum. This also means that *Forum.Gazeta* allows tracking the discussion on particular topic, regardless of the articles that discussion relates to. Other large internet portals in Poland such as *Interia*, *WirtualnaPolska* or *Onet* usually offer only the possibility to comment on articles. However, they do not offer a similar possibility to discuss on such a large and multi-faceted discussion forum as *Forum.Gazeta*, which constitutes a separate online service related to the main portal. Hence my decision to include this portal in the sample.

Established in 2001 *Forum.Gazeta* has been developing rapidly and reached the level of 100 million comments in 2009. Out of the over 2 million visitors that come to this site each month, about 55 percent are women, mostly young people between 15-34, and about 40 percent are students and graduate inhabitants of large cities. Also, out of about 350 thousand daily visitors, about 33 thousand live abroad, mostly in the USA, UK or Germany. *Forum.Gazeta* and Gazeta.pl are owned by the Polish media company Agora SA. *Forum.Gazeta* consists of over 5 thousand small discussion forums divided into over 30 categories. The forum is a service and part of the large Polish online portal Gazeta.pl that was ranked as ‘the most opinion-making internet portal in Poland’ in September 2011. The search engine allows users to retrieve information on a given topic selected either according to date of publication or relevance to the keyword.

The sample drawn from online forum consists of a selection of 28 different discussion threads that directly began with the topic of patriotism, and a total of 1461 entries/comments, selected on the basis of chronology from 2002 to 2010 (see Appendix).

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64 Data according to: Megapanel PBI/Gemius, June 2009

65 According to the ranking by *Instytut Monitorowania Mediow*, IMM (the Institute of Media Monitoring) portal Gazeta.pl have been the most quoted source of information by other media, as of September 2011, see: [http://www.instytut.com.pl/raporty](http://www.instytut.com.pl/raporty), 2012-05-10

66 At the time the sample was being collected, the search engine available on the portal would give over eighty thousand hits after typing one of the two keywords. In order to handle this large amount of data, another selection criterion had to be applied. Namely, only the threads that began with the theme of patriotism were considered. This was facilitated by the information provided in the brackets saying ‘beginning of the plot’ (początek wątku).
Citizen journalism

Citizen journalism (dziennikarstwo obywatelskie in Polish) is a form of journalism practiced by amateurs for the public interest. It is a specific form of social media based on the principle of user-generated content. The term refers to a wide range of activities in which citizens contribute commentary or information about news events. Since citizen journalism usually requires a certain level of commitment and skills it can be seen as an ‘elite’ form of civic engagement (Dahlgren, 2009). The development of this form of journalism can be related to the general growth and popularity of internet communication, which has facilitated an interactive form of creation and communication of information. This is also a growing trend in Poland. Although the development of citizen journalism in Poland is generally assessed as rather weak, it is argued that it is part of the general problem of low level of participation in the public sphere and public debate rather than a problem with the development of social media in Poland (Kus, 2011).

The first citizen journalism portal in Poland called Ithink.pl started in 2005 and was a Polish version of Wikinews. In 2006 other portals started, such as Wiadomości 24 (News24 in English), Salon24 and Eioba, followed by portal Interia360 established in 2007 and Infotuba in 2009. In the year between 2007 and 2008 there was growth in popularity of such portals from 4.1 percent to 12.2 percent with about 25 percent of users coming from rural areas. In 2008 there were about 1.7 million users visiting different portals, which statistically means one in eight Poles were accessing such services. The most popular citizen journalism portals were: wiadomości 24, interia360, ithink, eioba and salon24 (Megapanel PBI/Gemius, 2008).

The sample collected from citizen journalism portals consists of a total of 117 articles from four different popular Polish online citizen journalism portals, such as: Wiadomości 24 (36 articles), Interia360 (16 articles), Eioba (13 articles) and Infotuba (52 articles) published between 2006-2011 (see Appendix). The main criteria of selection were based on popularity and diversity in media ownership. Thus, the sample consists of articles from two large portals such as that owned by Polish media corporation Polskapresse Wiadomości 24, which has over 35 thousand registered users, over 200 thousand articles published, and in 2008 had over half a million visitors monthly. Another large portal is Interia360, which is a service belonging to the popular online portal Interia.pl owned by Bauer Verlagsgruppe, and also has over half million visitors monthly. The two other portals from the sample are Eioba and Infotuba. Eioba is owned by a Polish corporation Grupa Eioba, which, unlike other portals, focuses particularly on publishing articles and not local news. Eioba has over 28 thousand registered users and over 18

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68 If not stated otherwise, data according to Megapanel PBI/Gemius, June 2008

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thousand articles published. Established in 2009, Infotuba is a portal and service offered by the AWR Wprost group owned by the opinion-leading Polish press title Wprost. This portal is part of a larger group of services that altogether generate over 450 thousand real users (Megapanel PBI/Gemius, 2009).

Selection criteria: why ‘patriotism’?

The selected material comes from the years 2002-2011. As I argued in chapter 4, the second decade of transformation in Poland was a period of intense public debate about national identity, patriotism and the international image of Poland abroad. At the same time, as the dates of publication reveal (see Appendix), the majority of articles and comments come from the period between 2008-2010, namely when the conservative coalition that introduced the debate about national renewal lost power and was replaced by the new center-liberal government.

In the search engines I used patriotyzm (patriotism) or Polski patriotyzm (Polish patriotism) as the main keywords. There are at least four reasons to focus on the term ‘patriotism’ as the main criteria of selection of the material in this project.

First, since the topic of this project focuses on the questions of nationalism, national identity and negotiation of national image, these concepts were appropriate for the selection of the material. However, it quickly turned out that particularly the concept of nationalism bears rather negative connotations. Nationalism, as I argued earlier, is customarily associated with extreme politics, ethnic hatred and violence and is usually referred to as a feature of ‘others’ rather than ‘us’. Hence, in order to collect a sample that would concentrate on these categories I decided to limit the selection process to the term ‘patriotism’ since, as I argued in chapter 2, nationalism in the Central European context bears negative associations close to national chauvinism and is customarily identified as the ideology of ‘others’.

Second, although some scholars try to make a point out of discussing patriotism as an alternative to nationalism (e.g. Viroli, 1995, Nussbaum, 1996), patriotism in this study is defined as a form of nationalist discourse that is constructed and reproduced in the process of discursive negotiation of representations of nation and forms of identification with these representations. In other words, patriotism is not a separate or alternative discourse but rather one that contributes to reproduction of nationalism, particularly through forms of discursive negotiation.

Third, as argued in chapter 3, a part of the process of nation re-branding is the construction of a unique value that differentiates one nation from others, and this is not a specifically Polish phenomenon in itself. However, in Poland, patriotism is considered to be not only a value but also “the most important feature of the Polish character” (Gałasińska, 2010:360). Thus, based
also on the earlier discussion (see chapter 4) I suggest that in the context of post-socialist Poland ‘patriotism’ became an object of heated debate concerning nation, national identity and the image of Poland both at home and abroad. Thus, as I argued, the process of moving from the (stateless) nation to the (modern) country involves re-definition of this symbolic value in the new democratic context. I suggest therefore that this very process of national re-definition of nation and nationhood can be captured in the debate about patriotism. This is because nation is a system of different representations, and in order to study nation as a process of negotiation of these representations, one needs to focus on the phenomenon about which disagreements exist. So, for instance in the Polish case, the public debate acknowledged that patriotism is important, but how it should be defined is a controversial matter.

Fourth, an additional reason to narrow down the search to these keywords was that when I input other keywords such as ‘nationalism’, ‘national identity’, and ‘Polish national identity’, the results of the search were the same articles from citizen journalism portals since many of them had been tagged with several keywords including ‘patriotism’. However, another reason was that the search engine retrieved other online forum debates and articles that seemed irrelevant to the aims in focus in this dissertation. However, it is important to mention that, although not relevant for this study, some of the topics that appeared in the search for the term “patriotism” remain highly relevant topics of sociological research. For example the term can be employed in order to describe actions by extreme neo-fascist groups who tend to call themselves patriots in order to appeal to collective national feelings and justify their actions. This has been the case with articles published by Gazeta Wyborcza to draw public attention to these actions, which include drawing a swastika sign on the car belonging to a historian and Holocaust scholar from Lublin. These types of articles and comments where the word “patriotism” has been explicitly employed to describe extremist fascist and/or racist views are, however, outside of the scope of this study. The main reason for this is that, as already mentioned above, the principle of selection has been to search for material that involves discussion, debate and suggestions for improvement and/or introduction of a new or alternative nation brand. In other words, it has been to look for material that can be captured by the definition of nation re-branding. Thus, the focus in the selection process has been also on the inclusion of both internal and external perspectives on nation as well as attempts to contest the existing narratives. Therefore, material where ‘patriotism’ could be employed to convey racist, homophobic, xenophobic or other extremist views but which did not include any attempts at re-branding the nation in the manner described above, has not been considered.

The selection of the material for this study took place in two stages. First, in order to capture a variety of citizen voices I chose to search in different
online-based sources. Additionally, in order to account for the process of discursive negotiation where different voices come together, one of the selection criteria has been to combine online articles and comments. What remained outside of the selected sample were portals and other websites associated with explicitly conservative right-wing organizations such as the independent conservative-right portal prawica.net and others. Second, the focus has consistently been on instances where the term ‘patriotism’ has been employed in order to discuss such topics as the Polish ‘new’ national identity, national culture and the place of Poland in the international context. Thus, the selection criteria for the material were that they involved taking up the word ‘patriotism’, either in the title or in one of the available tags. In the case of discussion threads the sample was narrowed down to the threads that began with the topic involving patriotism in some way, so that the sample automatically excluded those discussions that began with other topics and for some reason displayed the keyword ‘patriotism’ in the search engine. One can distinguish between at least two different communication modes when it comes to online discussion forums. One is a reactive mode, where a single comment is a reaction to a preceding one; the second is interactive, when a subsequent comment/message relates to a whole discussion (Chmiel et al. 2010). For this study, the focus has been primarily on the interactive type of messages, because of the interest in the main topic of discussion. However, reactive messages were considered as well. These messages of the reactive type were included only when they related to the main topic of discussion. In order to increase the richness of the argument, an additional selection criterion was that participants treated the argument as controversial in some way, for instance by addressing the ideological struggles in Polish politics or patriotism as an object of heated debate in Poland.

Analytic Procedure

It is important to mention that the main focus in the analytical process has consistently been on various emerging discourses, regardless of the genre/form of the material, a practice that is rather common in discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995, Wodak, 1999). For example, citizen articles could be classified into forms such as: opinion, information, debate and reportage. Although this way of sorting material can prove useful in some studies, my decision has been not to pay particular attention to an article’s form, because it was consistently the content relating to the debate about patriotism that was in focus. Therefore, the form of an article, letter or comment did not

69The list of over sixty Polish online sites explicitly promoting conservative patriotic values, often containing racist, homophobic and anti-Semitic content can be found here: http://patriotyczna.listastron.pl/, 2012-04-27
have an impact on the coding process and the focus in each of them has been consistently on the emerging themes, namely on the content rather than form. This means that the material gathered for the analysis in this study has been analyzed as discourse throughout. However, when it comes to the presentation of the material, information about the source and titles of articles/threads is provided.

In the empirical chapters I refer to the term ‘extract’ when presenting excerpts from selected articles, letters and comments. The presented extracts are typical of the patterns emerging from the analysis and the information about the context is provided before introducing each of the extracts. In some instances the replies are also part of the extracts. The extracts have been selected on the basis of how well they exemplify the range of identified categories and themes. The material is summarized in detail in nine tables in the Appendix section. As some scholars point out about the discourse analytical research process, it is the data that drives the analysis and constitutes the most important aspect of it so that the data must be allowed to speak for itself (cf. Wodak et al., 1999). However, in this study, this process of data speaking for itself has been limited, because the emerging themes followed the main objectives of the study. The analysis of the material took place in several steps.

The first step involved reading the material a number of times in order to reach step two, namely reduction of data by coding (cf. Lindgren & Hjerm, 2010). The material was open-coded manually with notes written on the margins of transcripts. From this inductive process of coding, the analytical categories were identified followed by the identification of the key themes. In order to facilitate identification of the key themes, I developed data summaries on each of the themes that were translated into English. The process of data reduction through coding brought to fore three main themes and six subthemes. Theme 1: national identity, followed by sub-themes such as “national character” and “national values”. Theme 2: internal and external perspectives, followed by sub-themes such as “patriotism and migration” and “us” and “others”. Theme 3: nation re-branding, followed by sub-themes: “national mythologies” and “modern times”. The results of the analysis of the bottom-up process of construction of Polish national identity are presented in the following two chapters. Chapter 7 addresses the aspects of debate about nation and national identity and seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What representations of nation are emerging from the debate about patriotism?
2. What are the aspects contributing to the discursive achievement of national sameness and difference?
Since the main interest of this chapter is the discursive construction of national identity, I am particularly interested in what are the discursively achieved elements of national identity in relation to the internally constructed vision of national unity (sameness) and to the vision of nationhood in relation to the external audiences (national difference). It is important to consider these aspects in order to account for the image of national identity that is discursively achieved in the studied material. It is also important in order to go further and focus on the discursive process of nation re-branding which is at the core of this dissertation’s main objectives.

Chapter 8 focuses on the discursive quest for the new modern nation in a post-communist context of nation rebranding. It takes stock of arguments developed in the preceding chapter to ask:

3. What are the emerging elements of the new nation brand?
4. How construction of a new nation brand is achieved discursively?

Since, as suggested earlier, the process of nation branding in the post-communist context is about construction of the new identity, namely nation re-branding, the focus here is on the discursive strategies that help us to understand how the process of nation re-branding is discursively achieved ‘from below’ in the analyzed material.

In order to answer the above questions, the analysis focused on close reading and examination of the material from the perspective of the discursive strategies presented earlier in this chapter, such as: constructive, reproduction, transforming and dismantling as well as linguistic means of realization. It also focuses on the “small words” corresponding to three types of references: personal, spatial and temporal respectively. It is important to mention that some of the selected extracts contain multiple instances where a reference is made for each of the themes/categories across the whole material.

Trustworthiness

The question of trust is the qualitative researcher’s equivalent of the touchstones of validity, reliability and generalizability in quantitative research (Barker, 2008). I agree with Silverman (2006) who argues that:

[Q]ualitative research’s concern for an ‘in-depth’ focus on people’s activities (or representations of these activities) is no warrant for sloppy thinking or anecdotal use of ‘telling’ examples. We owe it to ourselves and our audiences to generate reliable data and valid observations (ibid: 237).

The citation above illustrates that trustworthiness is an important aspect of qualitative research and touches upon the question of the researcher’s re-
Responsibility for her work. In the context of this study, which applies discourse analysis to a relatively small sample, the responsibility concerns the issue of acknowledging the provisional nature of the findings. As I argued earlier, the process of collection of the material in order to construct a reliable sample has been based on the principle of theoretical, thus purposive sampling. One of the advantages of using a small corpus in the discourse analytical method is the opportunity to access more details of the material (Barker, 2008). At the same time, one runs the risk of the material being merely illustrative. Therefore, one of the most important aspects of the qualitative research process, as in the present one, is to take responsibility for the claims that are made and the stability of the research procedure.

Responsibility for the claims refers to the awareness that “discourse work needs always to be conducted within an explicit recognition that talk of all kinds arises within the circuit of culture” (Barker, 2008:167). In other words, discourse work implies continuously moving from text to context and back. The stability of the methods and findings in this study has been ensured by aiming for transparency in the research process. The material has been systematically collected and saved in word.doc files in order to ensure offline access whenever necessary to verify the conclusions of the analysis. In order to ensure transparency the material is also summarized in tables in the appendix section.

The analytic procedure describing the research strategy and data analysis methods is also part of the process of making the research transparent. Thus, attention has been paid to “theoretical transparency” by making explicit the anti-essentialist, discursive and constructionist theoretical stance from which interpretation of data takes place. It is also important to point out one of the advantages of studying texts in terms of reliability. As Silverman (2006) argues, “textual data are, in principle, more reliable than observations” (ibid:285), because text is a type of data that is already available and unfiltered through the researcher’s field notes. Another important aspect of trustworthiness in discourse analysis is the question of translation of data.

Translation

Translation is a rather overlooked issue in the qualitative methods literature and research. However, the issue and risk of being ‘lost in translation’ has been addressed by scholars who point out the increasing amount of empirical and analytical work done in languages other than English. As Nikander (2008) points out, transcription as part of the qualitative process does not need to seek perfection. However, as she argues, “providing space and access both to the original and the translated materials favors transparency and makes the author directly accountable for translation” (ibid:229).

In this study, the analysis took place on the original material written in Polish, while only some parts were subsequently translated into English. The
material is presented in two columns, the original version on the left and the translation on the right—hand side. Presentation of the material in this way leaves analysis open to challenges but also provides an opportunity for further suggestions and improved versions to be made. Translation, like transcription, is not a technical process but also a form of analysis. Translation in this study is designed to present the features of the text that correspond to the original and are perceived by the researcher as significant. Therefore, the style of translation applied here corresponds with the idea of free translation where some expressions are not literally translated from the source word-by-word, but are replaced with other formulations from the oral language that connect with the original (Sneijder & Te Molder, 2004).

**Ethical considerations**

Due to the growing quantity of research that uses data coming from the internet, there has been continuous interest in the ethical considerations of internet research. One of the emerging problems has been the distinction between public and private space that, in the context of emerging new technologies, is often contested and blurred (Thompson, 2011). However, in relation to the research drawing from online-based material, there seems to be a general agreement among scholars that the more a venue is acknowledged as public, the less obliged the researcher is to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of individuals using that venue (Bryman, 2008).

Since internet citizen journalism has ambitions to follow in the steps of traditional journalism, the exact dates and names of the authors were provided in this study in the same manner as when one quotes articles from traditional media. The same procedure was followed for quotations from internet forums, by providing the username/nickname of the author. Since I consider this data public, I decided to follow the recommendation by Barnes (2004, in Bryman, 2008) suggesting the general principle that the ideas shared by individuals in online public discussions should be attributed to their authors in the same manner as if they have been written in a printed text under the copy law.

Following these procedures as a researcher one has to remember to remain critical in relation to data that is cited under pseudonyms, and thus one does not know who is the specific person ‘behind’ the screen. This is also related to the empirical/ontological interests in this project: as a researcher I am not interested in who is saying something, but rather what is being said. The discursive analytical approach also helps to analyze the how, namely what the participants discursively achieve in their statements.
CHAPTER 7 | WHO ARE WE? 
CONSTRUCTING NATIONAL SAMENESS AND DIFFERENCE

The focus in this chapter is on the process of the discursive construction of national identity in the online debates about patriotism in Poland. Two main aspects of this process are of particular interest, namely construction of national sameeness and difference. As I argued earlier, nation in this study is defined as a system of cultural representations based on the ideas of shared collective past, experiences, symbols and continuity. But nation, as Renan (1996 [1882]) pointed out over a hundred years ago, is also a plebiscite negotiated on a daily basis by those identifying with the nation. Thus, national identity can be defined not only as a construction that is assembled through national rituals, experiences and symbols in relation to territorial and administrative categories, but also as a form of identification with representations of the nation (Barker & Galasiński, 2007).

Patriotism in the Polish context is a value and aspect of the national identity. Therefore, in order to avoid confusion between patriotism as a discourse that is studied and patriotism that is discussed by participants I approach the latter as a type of national identity that is discursively constructed (produced) and reproduced by the participants in an online context. The categories of national sameeness and difference are employed in order to study how this type of national identity is discursively constructed and debated. It is also important to mention that the categories of sameeness and difference are not mutually exclusive. Rather to the contrary, I suggest that the construction of national sameeness, namely ‘who we are?’ also implies construction of difference, namely ‘who we are not’. At the same time, as this chapter will illustrate, construction of national difference also provides a basis for construction of the national identity.

The analysis that is presented in this chapter focuses on two of the three themes that emerged during the analytical process. The first theme is called ‘national identity’ and has two sub-themes such as ‘national character’ and ‘national values’. The second theme focuses on the internal and external perspectives and emerging sub-themes such as ‘patriotism and migration’ and ‘us’ versus ‘others’. This chapter focuses on answering the following questions:
1. What representations of nation emerge from the debate about patriotism?
2. What are the aspects contributing to the discursive achievement of national sameness and difference?

The analytical process focused on four discursive strategies of construction of national identity, namely constructive, reproduction, transformation and dismantling strategies (Wodak et. al, 1999). Additionally, three types of linguistic tools of realization, namely personal, spatial and temporal references or so-called ‘small words’ also guided the analytical process. The extracts from the material are numbered in order to facilitate the presentation the analysis. However, this does not reflect the chronological or any other type of order in which the material has been selected or analyzed.

Each time an extract is introduced, there is also a source provided, together with the reference to the corresponding table in the appendix section where this source can be found. The information provided in the brackets under each presented extract refers to the following: name/nickname of the author, abbreviation of the source to be found in the appendix, and the year of publication. The numbers next to the abbreviations stand for the corresponding number of the article/letter/thread as it appears in the table (see Appendix). So, for instance, GA stands for Gazeta Article and GL Gazeta Letter, GAC stands for Gazeta Article Comment and the same principle applies to letters. W24 stands for Wiadomości 24, INT for Interia 360, INF for Infotuba and EIB stands for Eioba.

**Constructing national sameness**

**Unity in character**

Features of the Polish national character are constructed in the analyzed material as typical aspects of the collective identity. Among them bravery, heroism and endurance are particularly mentioned as markers of Polishness. Consider the three examples below. The first one is an excerpt from the article entitled “Do you love your country, Poland?” from the citizen journalism portal Eioba (see table 6)\(^7\). The other two that follow are excerpts from an article series in the Gazeta Wyborcza newspaper; extract 2 is from an interview with a Polish historian, Janusz Tazbir, provocatively entitled “Romanticism is dying in a Pole” (see table 1), and extract 3 is one of the replies/comments to that article (see table 2).

\(^7\)In presentation of the material references are made to tables 1-9 in the Appendix section.
In the three extracts above, Polish people are constructed as belonging to a nation that has gained experience during the course of history. This experience of being oppressed is constructed as leading to both the capacity of looking at things from a distance and the capacity of preserving the identity and culture. In extract 1, both personal (‘we’) and temporal (‘always’) references are employed to construct the idea that Polish bravery is an essential feature of the nation. In extract 2, the temporal reference (‘hundred years’) is discursively employed to justify and support the continuity of the Polish nation. I suggest that all three extracts employ the reproduction strategy and specifically the strategy of perpetuation, where the difficult historical experience of long-term statelessness is discursively employed in order to construct the nation’s continuity. Thus the nation is constructed as remaining strong in spite of the oppression and many years of statelessness. These extracts illustrate that the discursive connection between Polish collective identity and specific telling of the national history is replete with moments of struggle and suffering. This historical experience is also granted to Jews (extract 3). At the same time, Jews are constructed as inhabiting the same land as Poles, but not being Polish, which suggests exclusion based on an ethno-cultural form of belonging. The importance of this ethno-cultural aspect of collective identity is illustrated in the example below, which is yet another comment out of the overall sixty two comments on the same article entitled ‘Romanticism is dying in a Pole’ (see table 1) mentioned above:
Extract 4

Without Polish romanticism you would write in Yiddish or talk in Russian today. Poland exists thanks to the romantic/irrational/force and Romanticism means also ideas, literature and art.

(nielenin, GA7C, 2010)

Here, Polish Romanticism is described as the savior of the Polish nation. The reference to Yiddish and Russian language constructs these languages as possible, yet unwelcome alternatives. The discursive employment of the verb ‘to exist’ suggests a naturalized relationship between the Polish nation and the cultural movement of Romanticism. This reference to Polish Romanticism can be interpreted as being employed to maintain and justify that Poland as a nation but also a state exists thanks to this cultural force of Romanticism. This is an example of the reproduction strategy, where discursive categories, such as the verb ‘to exist’ in this case are employed in order to justify and defend narratives such as Romanticism and its historical role in maintaining the Polish culture and nation.

It can also be argued that the tone and title of the article, suggesting that Romanticism might be ‘dying’, provoked the readers to respond in this way. They reacted to the suggestion that the dominant Romantic narrative of the Polish nation that defines national belonging in terms of victimhood, heroism and collective suffering might be not particularly relevant to contemporary Poland. At the same time, as has already been pointed out in chapter 4, the Romantic narrative was one of the most exploited by Polish media interpretative frames to analyze the causes and consequences of the Smołenšsk tragedy in 2010. Therefore, the construction of Romanticism as the ‘core of Polishness’ in the posts above can be interpreted as a practice of reproduction and at the same time, a form of reaction to the possibility of introducing of a new, perhaps alternative narrative of the Polish nation.

The vision of Poland as a suffering and martyred nation that has been occupied and that has fought for centuries for its own and others’ freedom is one of the most persistent motifs in Polish national mythology (Törnqvist-Plewa, 1992). With its main roles, which include integration, mobilization and consolation, the Romantic myth of Polish martyrdom has been employed as a powerful resource of collective unification in times of crisis or threat. In the examples discussed here, the Romantic narrative of Polish nationalism is called upon to construct the nation in terms of its strong character, which survived the period of statelessness. It is also constructed as a force that defines Polishness culturally. Consequently, the Polish nation is constructed as an ethno-cultural community that in spite of numerous oppressors, and lack of state and sovereignty, has managed to maintain its identity. At the same time, Romanticism is also constructed as an ‘irrational force’ that, as the
following examples will show, has also influenced the national character. Among other elements of the national character closely linked to the legacy of Romanticism are emotionality and incapacity for rational thinking.

Extracts 5 and 6 are excerpts from articles from the portal Wiadomości24 (see table 9). Extract 5 is from the article “Conflict on the Caucasus and the patriotism of the Poles”, and extract 6 is from the article entitled: “Patriotism today. 62 years after the outbreak of the Uprising”. What these articles share in common is the argument that Poland is an exceptionally emotional nation:

**Extract 5**

My - jako naród, jesteśmy chyba pozbawieni trzeźwego myślenia i łączenia faktów w jedną, logiczną całość.  
(Agata Rippel, W24-15, 2008)

We - as a nation, are probably lacking (the ability to) think realistically and connect the facts into one logical whole.  
(Agata Rippel, W24-15, 2008)

**Extract 6**

‘(...)charakterystyczne dla nas przedkładanie emocji nad pragmatyzm. (...) obecne w naszym myśleniu o patriotyzmie aż do dziś.’  
(Tomasz Sawczuk, W24-8, 2006)

‘(...)typical for us is taking emotions over pragmatism (...) is present in our thinking about patriotism until today.’  
(Tomasz Sawczuk, W24-8, 2006)

These two extracts offer a critical evaluation of the aspect of Polish character described as incapacity for rational, pragmatic thinking, and dominance of emotions over pragmatic attitude. The use of the personal references such as ‘we - as a nation’ or ‘typical for us’ constructs the national identity and consequently also sense of shared cultural national intimacy based on “the fellowship of the flawed” where the” national embarrassment can become an ironic basis of intimacy and affection within the private spaces of the national culture” (Herzwelt, 1997:28). This is an example of the constructive discursive strategy employed to construct the entire nation as emotional and lacking the skills for pragmatic, rational thinking. Also, in extract 6, it is suggested that these traits of the collective character are ‘present in thinking about patriotism “until today”’. This is an example of a temporal reference that can be interpreted as a comment on the continuity and pervasiveness of this national trait regardless of socio-political and historical circumstances. The criticism of the Polish character concentrates also on the self-image of Poles as victims, as the two excerpts below illustrate.

Extract 7 comes from the portal Interia360 (see table 8) and an article entitled “For your and our freedom” which refers to a common salutation during the stateless period of Polish history. Extract 8 comes from a comment on an already mentioned article (GA7C, see table 2) that deals with the issue of the Romantic ‘nature’ of the Polish nation:
Both of these extracts refer to the Polish nation constructed as a community of sufferers and warriors ready for the biggest sacrifice for the nation but not necessarily capable of living in a dignified way. The discursive employment of personal references such as ‘we’ and ‘our’ in extract 7 is an example of a constructive strategy. By employing this strategy, participants achieve the inner-national sameness that is at the same time uniquely Polish. Further, in extract 8, the temporal references such as ‘always’ and ‘never’ are juxtaposed in relation to categories such as ‘die’ and ‘live’. This can be interpreted as another example of the constructive strategy where sarcasm about inability to ‘live worthily’ is employed to reproduce the intimate knowledge and idea about the we-group.

This critical comment about self-victimization can be connected to the Romantic legacy of messianism and martyrology, one of the dominant cultural narratives within Polish nationalism. Here however, opposite to extract 5 presented earlier, the influence of Romanticism is critically evaluated. Even the praised (extract 3) capacity for looking at things from a distance as a quality of a collective character does not hold when it comes to the collective self-image. The excerpt below is an example of discursive construction of the Polish character as lacking ‘self-distance’. It comes from the portal Infotuba (see table 7), from an article entitled: “I am Polish and I am...proud and stupid”:

This lack of ‘self-distance’ is constructed as a national flaw by employing a personal reference (‘ourselves’). Again, this is an example of a reproductive strategy, because by pointing out the common national ‘flaw’, the participant acknowledges the existence of a we-group, so that ‘all’ Polish people are constructed as having problems with creating self-distance. This can be further connected to the ‘emotional’ character of the nation discussed earlier. It can also be suggested that by referring to the national flaws in such an ex-
plicit way, participants are negotiating the self-image of Poles as having some particular characteristics but lacking others.

Extract 10 comes from the portal Interia360’s article entitled “Does a Pole-victim also mean a Pole-citizen?” where the author summarizes the collective features of the Polish nation as desirable in times of national crisis yet insufficient in times of peace:

Extract 10

As a nation we can survive difficult situations honorably. However, when the emotions fade away, Polish patriotism becomes doubtful and many of us don’t even feel like stepping out to vote (in the elections).
(Magda Szymczykiewicz, INT-15,2010)

Here again the cultural national intimacy is reproduced through the employment of the personal references (‘we’, ‘us’) that refer to the whole nation and the capacity of the Polish to go through difficult situations together. This is an example of the constructive strategy, where the capacity to survive difficult situations is constructed as a national characteristic. However, Polish patriotism is defined as something that connects people in difficult situations yet becomes problematic in other situations. Here the temporal reference is employed (‘when the emotions fall’) to construct the difference between the ‘emotional’ and ‘non-emotional’ circumstances. In the first case, Poles are represented as skillful; in the second case as unwilling to practice one of the citizen’s duties, namely voting. Interestingly, it is not the ‘we-nation’ that is constructed as problematic but rather Polish patriotism that is ‘doubtful’. Consequently, the transformation strategy is employed to suggest that it is not the nation that should change but rather the way patriotism is performed daily as a form of civic duty.

The extracts presented above suggest an image of Poles as a nation constructed in relation to the past, where sacrifice, victimhood and martyrdom were considered main virtues. This is connected to the vision of patriotism as the force connecting the nation in times of trouble. Hence, the features of the national character that played an important role in sustaining the collective identity during the times of statelessness are critically evaluated as not particularly suitable for the contemporary civil society. Consequently, there is an ongoing negotiation between the construction of the nation in ethnocultural terms and the nation defined in civic terms. This can also be related to the distinction between ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ (banal) nationalism (Billig, 1995, Mihelj, 2011), where the Polish nation is represented as a collective of warriors and heroes ready to struggle, but not necessarily a collective of citizens. This can also be interpreted as a critical evaluation of the vision of patriotism.
associated with martyrdom and readiness to sacrifice in the name of the nation that is dominant in Polish public discourse.

Overall it can be suggested that in the analyzed material, Polish identity is constructed as the product of a specific narrative of the past. Part of that narrative points to the importance of the national character, a virtue ‘tested’ in the difficult, stateless period of Polish history. At the same time this national character is also an object of critical evaluation as an obstacle forcing Poles to be stuck in the past as a ‘heroic nation’. This critical reflection on the state of affairs of Polish identity implicitly suggests the need for other forms or points of identification that would be more appropriate for the contemporary situation where the nation is no longer under external threat. So if the national character is ambivalent, what other grounds for collective identification could there be?

Unity in values

While some aspects of the Polish identity are constructed as problematic and not appropriate for the democratic peaceful society of today, others are described as particularly valuable and specific just for Poles. This is for instance the case with Polish values, as extracts 11 and 12 illustrate. The excerpts below come from two different sources. Extract 11 is from a letter written to the editorial team of Gazeta Wyborcza and titled with the rhetorical question “Has my patriotism failed?” (see table 3). Extract 12 comes from an article asking “Is Poland the cradle of Christianity in secular and liberal Europe?” retrieved from the Infotuba portal (see table 7). What both authors discursively achieve here is the suggestion that Poles are exceptional, particularly when it comes to Christian values:

Extract 11

(...)w Polsce nie zgubiłyśmy jeszcze "wartości chrześcijańskich", które starała się zniszczyć władza komunistyczna i od których tak bardzo odzegnuje się Europa Zachodnia (...) ale również z hasła "solidarność" (musimy)uczyścić nasz sztandarowy wkład do Europy.
(Maria Lempicka, GL13, 2010)

Extract 12

(...)in Poland we have not yet lost ‘the Christian values’ that the communist power wanted to destroy and from which Western Europe is distancing so much (...) but also from the slogan ‘solidarity’ we have to make our major contribution to Europe.
(Maria Lempicka, GL13, 2010)

Extract 12

Na tym całym poletku europejskim kraj, jakim jest Polska to taka latarnia dla (...) dryfującej Europy. (...) To właśnie moce polskie oddanie, co do wiary, przyczyniało do symboli narodowych powinno być wyznacznikiem zmian i kierunku Europy ku takim postawom. (...)Polska powinna być przykładem.
(AndrzeCh, INT1, 2008)

On this whole European plot a country like Poland is such a lighthouse for (...) Europe, which is drifting away. (...) Exactly this strong Polish devotion, when it comes to faith, and attachment to the national symbols should be an indicator of change and direction for Europe (...) Poland ought to be an example.
(AndrzeCh, INF1, 2008)
In the two extracts above, the reproduction (justification) strategy is employed in order to construct Christianity, solidarity, faith and national loyalty as specifically ‘Polish values’. By discursively employing personal references (‘we’, ‘our’) the participants are connecting Polishness with ‘Christian values’ and ‘faith’ and thus reproduce the idea of national exceptionality. This exceptionality is also achieved by employing the spatial references of Europe (‘Western Europe’, ‘the European plot’) as a place where these ‘values’ are rare. Additionally, the employment of the metaphor of a lighthouse in extract 12 can be interpreted as granting Poland a particular role in ‘enlightening’ Europe. This can be read as a reference to the Romantic narrative of the Polish nation where Poland is represented as the ‘Christ of nations’ saving Christian Europe from the Barbarians, an issue discussed in chapter 4.

In both extracts, it is suggested that Poland’s contribution to Europe is important. The reference to Christianity in this context can also be related to the widespread image of Poland as a bulwark of Christianity. Solidarity, on the other hand, can be connected to the establishment in 1980 of the workers’ liberation movement Solidarność that is linked to the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe. Finally, faith and national loyalty can be related to the Catholic religion and its strong ties with the national identity in Poland. All these values are constructed as part of the cultural heritage of Poland that is unique and important enough to make a contribution to European cultural heritage.

As I discussed earlier in chapter 4, the Catholic narrative of the Polish nation represents the idea that nation in Poland has been fundamentally loyal to the Church throughout history. So instead of perceiving the relationship between religion and nationhood as politically established, Polish faith is constructed as a natural element of the collective identity. Additionally, Polish Catholicism is constructed as exceptional since it is given an ethno-cultural meaning and not necessarily a theological one in terms of doctrine of faith (Porter, 2011). Therefore, it can be argued that Christianity is discursively connected to Polish national loyalty and solidarity. I suggest that the employment of this reproduction strategy is a way of dealing with potentially problematic narratives associating Poland with conservatism, backwardness and ritualistic Catholicism, which can be perceived as obstacles on the way towards political and cultural integration with Europe.

In an article from Gazeta Wyborcza entitled “Patriotism can be pleasant” (see table 1), the author suggests not only that the idea of Polish patriotism does not have to be past-oriented but also that Polish history can be a source of the optimistic collective attitude:
In this extract, Polish history is discussed as unique yet not as exceptionally unique, as the national values in the example above. The personal references (‘we’, ‘our’) are discursively employed to construct the vision of history that is collectively shared by the nation. The category ‘peripheral’ is juxtaposed with ‘aspirations’ pointing to a positive, promising self-image of the country. It is yet another example of the reproduction (justification) strategy where the questionable exceptionality of Polish history (‘because all histories are exceptional’) is justified not with difficult past historical experiences but rather with ‘aspiration’, suggesting orientation towards the future. Apart from collective values and history, another aspect emerging from the analysis is the idea of patriotism constructed explicitly as something that unites the Polish people.

Extract 14 comes from the portal Infotuba and the article “Kenyan lesson of Polish” where the author describes her experience of talking about Poland and Polish culture to a Kenyan colleague with whom she worked in Great Britain in 2008 (see table 7). The extract that follows is from the portal Eioba and the article is entitled “The crisis of national consciousness” (see table 6). What is interesting in the extracts below is that in both cases patriotism is constructed as the ‘glue’ connecting the Polish into one nation:

Extract 14


What connects us? Many things, and among them patriotism. Is it mature? Not necessarily, it is sometimes childish, sometimes primitive, but honest. (Magdalena Kutynia, INF37, 2010)

Extract 15

Co nas, Polaków łączy? A no właśnie ten patriotyzm, może dalece niedoskonały, ale w takich momentach promieniujący ze wszystkich mieszkań w Polsce. (slavanr, EIB1, 2008)

What is connecting us, Poles? It is exactly this patriotism, perhaps far from perfection, but in such situations, shining from all the houses in Poland. (slavanr, EIB1, 2008)

In the two extracts the same representation of patriotism as connecting Poles into one nation is constructed as ‘natural’ through the discursive employment of the constructive strategy. The personal reference (‘us, ‘us, Poles”) is discursively employed in order to construct the idea of national unity and sameness.
According to a survey study conducted in 2008 by the leading Polish public opinion center (CBOS)\(^1\) 49 percent of Poles understand patriotism as attachment and love towards the Fatherland, which is considered the greatest value one can sacrifice one’s private life and happiness for. The same study has also shown that Poles define patriotism in traditional terms as connection to national symbols, and struggle to defend national values. Also another study right before the presidential elections in 2010 conducted by Millward Brown SMG/KRC\(^2\) revealed that 99 percent of Poles think that the perfect candidate for president has to be competent, and 96 percent that the president should also be patriotic. These numbers support the dominant understanding of patriotism in Poland as a value shared collectively.

In extracts 14 and 15 patriotism is constructed as a force that is ‘immature’, ‘imperfect’, ‘childish’ but at the same time ‘honest’ and ‘shining’. The reference to immaturity and imperfection can be related to a still developing, ‘young’ democracy in Poland that is still in the making. The discursive employment of the *personal* reference ‘ours’ also points to the connecting role of patriotism that is constructed as a property of the whole nation, similarly to the connecting role of history in extract 13. However, in order to understand the discursive meanings given to patriotism in this debate, we first need to look more closely at how nation is defined.

The exchange presented below points to the dialogic form of the debate taking place online. The discussion about the meaning of Fatherland (see F6, table 5) took place on November 11th 2005, which is the Independence Day in Poland. The participant who initiated this discussion thread asks about the meaning of the Fatherland (see table 5):

**Extract 16**

*Czy Ojczyzna coś dla was znaczy? (F6)*

*Czy może uważacie, że Ojczyzna powinna zadbać o to, by wam było dobrze na jej łonie? Chodzi mi o to, czy w razie potrzeby by-libyście w stanie po-wśród wszystko,by Ją ratować? Zastanawiam się często czy istnieją jeszcze prawdziwi patrioci, tacy który po-swięciły by swoje życie w obronie kraju? (...)*

*(nina_simone, F6, 2005)*

*Does the Fatherland mean anything to you? (F6)*

*Do you think that the Fatherland should make sure that you are well? I mean in case of such need would you be able to sacrifice everything in order to save Her? I am often wondering whether there are still any real patriots left that would sacrifice their life in defence of their country? (...)*

*(nina_simone, F6, 2005)*

\(^1\)http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2008/K_167_08.PDF, 17-01-2012

In this extract the participant constructs the idea of ‘real patriots’ as related to the ability to sacrifice for the nation. It is important to mention that although a verbatim English translation of the Polish term ‘ojczyzna’ is ‘fatherland’, this term in fact suggests a female gender. For example in the extract above the participant refers to ‘saving Her’ and emphasizes this with the use of a capital letter. It can be interpreted that the participant discursively employs this form to justify the strong and almost natural patriotic attachment manifesting in the ability to save the nation represented as a mother. It can be argued that the participant implicitly suggests the traditional vision of patriotism that dominated during the stateless periods of Polish history. In the context of democratic Poland, the question about ability to sacrifice one’s life for the nation remains rhetorical. However, instead of providing an answer, the participant discursively employs the personal reference such as the first person singular ‘I’ and the possessive pronoun ‘my’ (‘my home’, ‘my family’, my language’) in order to construct loyalty to the nation in a form of her own ‘private patriotism’. This ‘private patriotism’ is constructed in cultural terms with references to home, family and language as basis for the national pride and attachment. Several responses followed the question initiated by the participant “nina_simone” (extract 16), and below is a selection of three of the replies:

Reply 1

Mysle, ze z ojczyzna to jest troche tak jak z ojcem, matka lub w ogole z rodzicami -- ani ich, ani ojczyzny sie nie wybiera, oni i ona - ojczyzna - po prostu sa czescia nas samych, czescia naszej świadomości i tozsamosci; (...)nie sposób sie jej wyprzec, nie sposób udawac, ze sie jest kims innym; Jestes kim jestes i jestes Polakiem, bo urodziles sie akurat w tym a nie innym kraju na świecie - i nie miales wyboru. (quo vadis, F6, 2005)

I think that with fatherland it is little bit like with the father or mother or generally with the parents—either them or the fatherland one can chose, them and her –fatherland - are simply a part of who we are, the part of our consciousness and identity; (...) it is impossible to deny it, impossible to pretend one is someone else. You are who you are and you are Polish, because you were born in this and not another country in the world - and you had no choice. (quo vadis, F6, 2005)

Reply 2

Ojczyzna? Kraj lat dziecięcych, język, chyba też groby bliskich, zwyczaje, które są wspólne. Najbardziej jednak chyba język - w znaczeniu Muttersprache. (po_godzinach F6, 2005)

Fatherland? The land of the childhood years, language, probably also the graves of the relatives, customs that are common. But probably language the most, in the meaning of Muttersprache (the Mothertongue). (po_godzinach F6, 2005)

Reply 3


It can be noted that the participant “quo vadis” (reply 1) employs categories such as ‘mother’, ‘father’ and ‘family’ in order to construct national belonging to nation (fatherland) as occurring naturally. In this way, nation is constructed in ethnic terms, where national belonging is predefined by birth and not a matter of individual choice as in the case of the civic form of nationhood. The participants with nicknames “po godzinach” (reply 2) and “ferment” (reply 3) discursively employ categories such as ‘language’, ‘customs’, ‘food’ and ‘traditions’ which can be interpreted as cultural aspects of national belonging. Consequently, it can be argued that in this short exchange, the constructive strategy is employed in order to discursively reproduce nation (fatherland) in ethno-cultural terms. However, this is achieved by different linguistic means. So for instance, although the participants are unanimous when it comes to the construction of the nation in these terms, the participant in reply 3 also employs the spatial reference to the ‘Polish countryside’ and ‘landscape’ which can be interpreted as construction of the fatherland as a particular place. This extract is rather untypical compared with the others where nation and national belonging are constructed through references to such cultural aspects as language or tradition.

In the analyzed material not only is nation defined and represented in ethno-cultural terms, but also patriotism is constructed as a specific form of ‘natural’ attachment to the nation. In 2006, when the Minister of Education and member of the national conservative party, Roman Giertych, came up with the suggestion to introduce ‘lessons on patriotism’ (‘lekcja patriotyzmu’) in Polish schools, he met with harsh criticism, mostly from center-liberal and left-oriented media, and shortly after his appointment almost one hundred forty thousand individuals signed the petition to remove him from the post. The two extracts below come from that year and can be interpreted as reactions to the idea of introducing ‘patriotic education’ to the curriculum. One of the analyzed discussion threads from the online forum is entitled “The lesson of patriotism” (see table 5) and can be seen as citizen commentary on and negotiation of the suggestion to introduce patriotism as a subject at school. The reactions are generally skeptical, as the extracts below show:

Extract 17

Lekcja patriotyzmu (F12)  Lesson on patriotism (F12)

Patriotyzm jest sprawą bardzo osobistą (...)  Patriotism is a very personal matter (...). One
Trzeba wynieść go z domu lub wykształcić w needs to bring it from home or develop in
sobie na drodze poznania historii kraju i chęci oneself through learning about the country’s
kształtowania dobrej opinii o nim, najlepiej history and cherishing the will to keep a good
godnie reprezentując go własną osobą. opinion about it, preferably by proudly repre-
(worldmaster1, F12, 2006) senting it.
(worldmaster1, F12, 2006)
In extract 17 and reply 1, the participants employ categories of ‘home’ and ‘school’ as mutually excluding spatial references. What they discursively achieve can be interpreted as an argument that patriotism belongs to the private sphere of home as opposed to the public sphere of school. Consequently, it can be suggested that they construct the idea of patriotism that not only cannot be ‘learned’ because it implies feelings such as a ‘sense of responsibility’ and ‘love’ for the country, but also because it is as ‘natural’ as the bond to the nation-family. Consider the extracts below which come from another online discussion thread from the forum entitled “The hour of patriotism” (see table 5) from the same year:

Extract 18

Mi osobiście, przedmiot ten wydaje mi się bezsensem, z prostej przyczyny - nie da się patriotyzmu "nauczyć"! Uczucie to może być kształtowane jedynie w warunkach rodzinnych, a nie szkolnych. (worldmaster1, F15, 2006)

I personally think this subject seems to be pointless, for a simple reason- it is impossible to ‘learn’ patriotism! This feeling can be only created under family conditions, not at school. (worldmaster1, F15, 2006)

Reply 1

Ja też uważam ten pomysł za chybiony. Patriotyzm się wynosi z domu (...) Tu chodzi o wewnętrzne poczucie dumy z kraju i gotowość jego obrony, a nie wyśpiewywanie hymnów... (Jaija, F15, 2006)

I also think this is a failed idea. Patriotism comes from home (...). It is about the internal sense of pride in the country and the readiness for its defense and not singing out anthems... (Jaija, F15, 2006)

In extract 18 the participant employs the personal reference ‘I’ (‘personally think’) which can be interpreted as an attempt to present the opinion and comment on the suggested ‘hour of patriotism’ in the curriculum. The participant employs the term ‘pointless’ in relation to patriotism as a ‘subject’ at school. This can be interpreted as the discursive strategy to justify patriotism as a ‘feeling’ that one acquires within the family. In reply 1, patriotism is constructed in a similar way. Here, the expression ‘internal sense of pride’ is employed as opposite to ‘singing anthems’, which can be interpreted as an external, ritualistic manifestation of patriotism. Again, a similar construction of patriotism appears in the discussion thread from 2006 about the meaning of being a patriot, entitled “What does it mean to be a patriot?” (see table 5):
In this extract, statements such as being ‘born Polish’ and terms such as ‘Polish language and culture’ are discursively employed as part of the reproduction strategy. This extract can be interpreted as an attempt to represent ‘Poland’ as a home and family that one is born into and where one acquires identity. This extract is also an example where the participant discursively constructs nation in the meaning of ‘motherland’. This idea of the nation as an extended family structured on the notions of kinship and clearly defined gender roles is an important aspect of the literature on nationalism and national imagination, as discussed in chapter 2. The case discussed here is no exception. It can be argued that the definition of patriotism as reserved to the private sphere of home and family is a consequence of a discursive construction of nation in ethno-cultural terms. This construction connects nation to the private sphere of national reproduction, with women taking the important role of culture bearers of the nation (Yuval-Davis & Anthias, 1989).

However, in order to understand the construction of patriotism in this way, one has to bear in mind that the extracts discussed above are retrieved from the discussions that were taking place upon a particularly sensitive political topic at that time. One year into the conservative-right government rule, the major Law and Justice party was particularly open about the ‘new’ sort of history politics. The idea of new patriotism, which could be supported and disseminated by the state, played a particularly important role in this process. Therefore, I suggest that this idea of patriotism as emerging from the private, intimate sphere of home and family as discussed online can be understood as an attempt to negotiate the narrative suggested by the state. In particular, it refers to the state’s attempts to introduce patriotism as a school subject like any other, such as math or geography. Also taking into account the context of Polish history where patriotism was ‘learned’ from below through the process of socialization into the Polish culture, the state might be synonymous with ‘foreign’ propaganda, indoctrination, or simple trivialization of such an important issue. In the context where nation is constructed as a mother, the external attempt to question her ability to ‘raise her children’ can be perceived as an external threat on nation’s body and violation of the family’s home and its members.

Consequently, it can be argued that by employment of the constructive and justification strategies, the nation is constructed and reproduced as a community of ‘naturally’ shared bonds, feelings and responsibilities, so that
patriotism might be a question of individual attachment (or ‘feeling’) and identification, but not a matter of individual choice. This construction of patriotism as defined in ethno-cultural terms, which points to the shared character and values, is what Walicki (1991) calls patriotism, based on the national idea that was popularized during the stateless period of Polish history. In the analyzed material this national idea constructed as a form of national sameness is confronted by the discourse of migration, particularly the latest wave of labor migration to other European countries. In the material, the discussion about migration and opportunities to travel and work abroad raised questions not only about the possibility of remaining patriotic abroad but also how the Polish nation is perceived from the outside. The following parts address these emerging topics.

Patriotism and migration

Among the advantages of an online form of communication in the globalized era is the opportunity to have a dialogue between those who are physically located in different places. This opportunity is of particular importance in the debate touching upon patriotism that is generally associated with loyalty to a specific place, territory or nation-state. In the analyzed material, national difference is constructed in relation to questions about migration, patriotism and Polishness abroad. Three different subthemes were distinguished constructing migration as: opportunity, necessity and (national) betrayal.

Migration as opportunity

The extract below comes from the article entitled: “Patriotism: love and shame” (see table 1) published by Gazeta Wyborcza. It is a typical example of the future-oriented pro-civic discourse that aims to challenge the ‘old’ idea of Polish patriotism. The article takes up the issue of the “new patriotism” in the context where migration and international mobility are increasingly common for people from post-communist countries:

Extract 20

Nie zawsze sobie zdajemy sprawę z implikacji słów naszego hymnu(...)A przecież sugerują one jednoznacznie, że naprawdę Polakiem można być tylko tu, w państwie polskim. Że polskość właściwa jest terytorialnie zdefinowana, (...). W dobie rozbiorów taka myśl była czymś oczywistym. Dziś jest inaczej - można być przecież dobrym Polakiem, nie wstydząc się i nie wyrzekając patriotyzmu, także w Brukseli, Nowym Jorku czy Sydney.

(Wojciech Sadurski, GA3, 2010)

We do not always realize the implications of the lyrics of our (national) anthem but they suggest clearly that one can really be Polish only here, within the Polish state. That Polishness is defined territorially, (...). During the partitions such thought was obvious. Today it is different- one can actually be a good Pole, without feeling ashamed and without renouncing patriotism, also in Brussels, New York or Sydney.

(Wojciech Sadurski, GA3, 2010)
In this extract, the discursive employment of the *temporal* reference ‘today’ (‘is different’) can be interpreted as an attempt to suggest and negotiate the possibility for an alternative form of patriotism and, consequently, Polishness. This contemporary form implies the possibility of being ‘Polish’ outside of the territorial borders of the Polish state. The *temporal* references suggesting that ‘today is different’ can be also interpreted as marking the line of difference between the traditional territorially defined form of patriotism and the ‘new’ global form that allows one to ‘be a good Pole, without feeling ashamed’. This discursive marking of the difference between past and present (‘today’) is an example of employing the *transforming* strategy in order to provide alternative, new meanings to national identity and consequently, patriotism. It also suggests that Poles might have felt ashamed in the past, but this has changed. The employment of the *spatial* references to the cities of ‘Brussels’, ‘New York’ and ‘Sydney’ implies that the author takes for granted that there might already be Poles living or travelling to these parts of the world.

The relationship between migration and the emerging possibility of a new form of patriotism is also explored in a distinction between those who have left and those who stayed. Extract 21 is from *Interia*’s article entitled “Independence and then what?” (see table 8) where the author comments upon the new situation of Poland being an independent, democratic country whose citizens are migrating for work. Patriotism here is constructed as a ‘modern’ attitude of those who decide to leave the country and come back, as opposed to those who manifest their patriotism in a ritualistic way:

**Extract 21**


Who can be called a patriot? Who loves their Fatherland more? A pompous populist who is marching and singing the (national) anthem and carrying the national symbols. Or perhaps a young man who left for Ireland? The answer is simple, but not obvious: the second one. (...) migrants (are the) people, who left the Fatherland in order to search for a better home. But they are coming back. They want to come back. With the money earned abroad they are coming here and starting up businesses that are giving bread to others. Isn’t this a patriotic attitude? (Puzon, INT-13, 2007)

In this extract, in order to answer the question asked in the title (i.e. “Independence and then what?”), the author juxtaposes two opposite positions such as ‘pompous populist’ and ‘a young man’. This extract can be interpreted as a critical commentary on the situation in Poland where politicians from the conservative right made attempts to monopolize the vision of patriotism
as territorially-bound national interest (Walicki, 1991). It is important to mention here that migration became a hot political topic in 2007 because Poland entered the Schengen agreement, which facilitates mobility within the European Union. I suggest that by employing the category of a ‘young man who left for Ireland’ to construct and define a patriot, the participant distances himself from the ideas of patriotism promoted by the right-wing politicians who present themselves as defenders of the national interest within the nation-state. This statement can also be interpreted in the context of the ongoing political struggles and cultural wars taking place in Poland, which were discussed in detail in chapter 4.

In the light of these cultural wars it can be argued that the ‘populist’ and the ‘young man’ represent negotiation between two opposite positions from which patriotism can be defined. On the one hand, the ‘populist’ stands for the ritualistic ‘old’ form of patriotism manifested in a celebratory approach to national symbols and identity. On the other side stands a young person with a pragmatic ‘modern’ approach. So here again, similarly to extract 20, the juxtaposing of two opposite positions and two opposite visions of patriotism is an example of transforming strategy where new and alternative meanings of patriotism are suggested and negotiated. In the case of this ‘alternative’ patriotism of the young, migration is constructed in terms of improvement of the economic standard (‘better home’). However, the ‘test’ of patriotism in this case is not migration itself but the willingness to come back in order to contribute to the economic development of the country (‘starting up businesses’).

It can be argued that in this extract the possibility of coming back is constructed as an inherent aspect of migration. This opportunity, however, is a relatively new phenomenon that characterizes the post-EU increase in migration. With the opening of the borders and permission to work abroad, people were not only ‘free to leave’, but also, more importantly, “free to leave and to come back” (Morokvasic, 2004:8, my emphasis). The opportunity to return as well as live abroad are thus constructed as being not necessarily obstacles to patriotism. This new situation might appear as something obvious to those who take the possibility of migration for granted (thus, the ‘young’), but not necessarily for those who grew up behind the Iron Curtain and in conditions of severely constrained mobility.

Another discussion thread where the topic of migration and patriotism are discussed begins with the question of whether Polish patriotism is a ‘show-off’ type of attitude (F18, see table 5). The extracts presented below come from the part of the discussion where participants consider the possibility of remaining patriotic while abroad:

Extract 22

Patriota to czlowiek, ktory kocha swoj ojczysty. Nie ma tu znaczenie gdzie mieszka. (Pawel, F18, 2007)

A patriot is a person who loves their fatherland. It does not matter where they live. (Pawel, F18, 2007)
In the extracts above, particularly extract 22 and replies 1 and 2, by discursively constructing the place in the sense of ‘abroad’ as irrelevant, participants construct patriotism as a question of ‘love’ (extract 22), cultural attachment such as language (reply 2) and the possibility to come back (reply 3). For example, as in the statement that ‘a patriot loves the Fatherland’ and thus ‘can work abroad’ (reply 1) the actual location is made irrelevant because patriotism is constructed as a feeling that implicitly one can take with wherever one goes. If we relate this statement to the construction of patriotism as ethno-culturally Polish, as discussed earlier in this chapter, then it is possible to argue that Polishness in the extracts above is constructed as not mutually exclusive with migration. As the third line in reply 1 shows, migration can be justified by economic reasons and the opportunity to ‘make some cash’ and, possibly, ‘come back’ (reply 3). Overall the logic of these statements constructs migration as a necessity justified by material reasons. Migration is thus constructed as temporal and not inconsistent with patriotism. Rather to the contrary, by constructing migration as a temporal necessity, the participants construct Polishness, and patriotism, as consistent and stable aspects of collective identity.

At the same it can be argued that one can serve the country in different ways and migration can be one of the forms that does not exclude having a patriotic attitude. The following extracts from the same thread entitled “Is Polish patriotism for show?” (F18, see table 5) illustrate that the national identity and patriotism remain not only unchallenged by migration but can be a reason for national pride:
Extract 23

Ludzie powinni czuć sie obywatelami całego świata, nie zapominając o własnych tradycjach (...). A niby dlaczego nie mam być dumnym z dokonan Witkacego, Wyspianskiego, Gombrowicza i Mrozka... Ich twórczość związana była z Polska (...) i mówiąc o nich ludziom z zagranicy przekazuje wiedzę o rzeczach pięknych w naszej kulturze.
(bd3art, F18, 2007)

Extract 24

Od prawie 2 lat mieszkam poza granicami kraju i w rzeczy samej ciężko jest czasami znaleźć coś z czego mogę być dumnym (...), ale...Polska jest krajem, który jest w moim sercu i zawsze będę z dumą o nim mówił(... ) I zawsze z dumą opowiadali o naszej odrębności narodowej, tradycjach chrześcijańskich, ludziach, zabytkach, historii. (...)Najważniejsze jest teraz aby i Polacy zauważali co mają i opowiadali z dumą o tym z czego warto być dumnym. Nie zauważajmy tylko złych rzeczy... są to te dobre i piękne, których nie zobaczymy w innym kraju.
(ksobier, F18, 2007)

What connects the two extracts above is the discursive employment of the spatial reference such as ‘abroad’ as well as personal references such as ‘our’ in relation to such categories as ‘culture’, ‘national exceptionality’ etc. I suggest that what participants discursively achieve here is the suggestion that being abroad is actually an opportunity to share knowledge about Polish culture, traditions and other achievements. In both cases the employment of the personal reference, such as using the pronoun ‘I’, implies the intention to construct an account of a personal confession and sharing of the experience of living abroad. This pronoun is also discursively connected to ‘pride’ in achievements and Polish culture. In extract 23, the names of Polish writers and artists are listed in order to construct the representation of Polish culture as intellectually rich. In extract 24, the participant also shares a piece of personal story about living abroad. First, he\(^{73}\) acknowledges the difficulty to ‘find things I can be proud of’ in order to later employ the temporal reference ‘will always proudly speak’.

\(^{73}\)The (male) gender of the participant in this case is possible to figure out from the grammatical structure of the utterance in Polish (‘bede z duma o niej mówil’) - something that cannot be done in English.
This statement also connects the personal performance with identification with the Romantic narrative of the national community (‘our national exceptionality’). By connecting the discourse of migration with national identification and specifically with national pride, the participants construct the experience of living abroad as an opportunity to embrace identification with the national idea and culture. The discursive use of ‘national pride’ suggests also that the justification strategy is being employed, as if the participants would like to say ‘although we are abroad we proudly remain Polish’.

The possibility to remain ‘Polish’ and ‘proud’ while working abroad constructs migration as an opportunity in a double sense. On the one hand migration is an opportunity for improvement in economic and material terms. On the other hand it is also an opportunity to communicate achievements of Polish culture externally. Constructed as an opportunity that does not harm national identity and thus patriotism, migration is constructed as a positive aspect of contemporary socio- and geo-political development. However, when patriotism and the situation in the country are constructed as problematic, migration can be constructed as a question of necessity.

Migration as a necessity

The extracts below come from two different discussion threads eight years apart. What they share is the discursive construction of migration as a question of necessity to leave the country because of the unsatisfying living conditions there. Extract 25 is from the discussion thread entitled “Poland’s land of humiliation” (see table 5), extract 26 comes from the stream of comments to a letter published in 2010 by Gazeta Wyborcza and entitled “Patriotism, or pride and work for Poland” (see table 4):

Extract 25

[...] poszlam niedawno na intensywny kurs języka angielskiego na poziomie "advanced" i w przyszlym roku zamierzam stad wyjechac. (...) Przykro mi bardzo, ale wegetacja w tym kraju mnie nie interesuje. Bo niby w imie czego? Na zachodzie latwo nie jest, ale jest NADZIEJA - tu jej nie ma (...) Solidarnosc solidarnoscia i patriotyzm patriotyzmem, ale zycie mamy tylko jedno i kazdy odpowiada za SWOJE! (...)W Polsce jak na razie zyc godnie nie mozna......taka prawda! Jak Polska znormalnie to wroce! (mis_alas_mi_alma, F1, 2002)

[...] I recently attended an intensive course in the English language on the “advanced” level and I plan to leave next year. (...) I am very sorry but to vegetate in this country does not interest me. In the name of what? It is not easy in the West, but there is HOPE- that is not here (...)...Solidarity and patriotism are one thing, but we have only one life and everyone is responsible for their OWN! (life) (...). In Poland so far one cannot live honorably.......this is the truth! When Poland becomes normal then I will come back! (mis_alas_mi_alma, F1, 2002)

In this extract the participant with a nickname “mis alas mi alma”, presumably a female, explains the preparations and reasons for leaving Poland. She employs the category ‘vegetation’ to describe the situation in Poland. The
‘West’ is constructed as a destination with opportunities that are lacking in Poland. The participant discursively employs the category ‘hope’ in capital letters, which in the online context can be read as screaming. By referring to the ‘lack of hope’ Poland is constructed as not ‘normal’ where ‘one cannot live honorably’. This can be interpreted as the reason for leaving the country. However, the participant employs the temporal reference ‘when’ (‘Poland get normal’) to construct the possibility of coming back which can be also interpreted as an implicit assumption that the improvement of this ‘abnormal’ situation will take place in the future. This discursive construction of the possibility to come back under different conditions can also be interpreted as a suggestion that migration is a temporal matter of necessity rather than free choice.

Similarly, in one of the comments on the letter “Patriotism, pride and work for Poland” the participant “1warren” refers to the lack of ‘normality’ to describe the current situation in Poland:

Extract 26


I also recovered from patriotism thanks to Solidarność with the addition of the church. I started my convalescence 27 years ago in the USA and I managed to heal. I am still waiting for normality to come. Unfortunately, so far nothing indicates it. Too bad. (1warren, GL3C, 2010)

In the extract above, the participant discursively employs such words as ’recovery’, ‘convalescence’ and ‘to heal’ in relation to patriotism. By referring to terms that are associated with sickness or disease the participant constructs patriotism as a sickness. Consequently, migration is constructed as a necessary ‘cure’ needed to recover from that condition. Additionally, the reference to ‘convalescence in the USA’ can be read to mean that only migration is a solution to the ‘problem’ of patriotism. However, it is not only patriotism that is the problem but rather patriotism in Poland. The participant’s statement that s/he is ‘waiting for the normality to come’ can be interpreted to mean that migration is necessary because of lack of ‘normality’ in Poland.

In both extracts 25 and 26, participants discursively employ the category such as ‘lack of normality’ in relation to the situation in Poland. I suggest that the reference to the ‘abnormal’ situation in Poland can be a strategy to justify migration as an unwelcome, yet necessary move. In the study of Polish online discourses on migration in the context of the post-communist transformation, Gałasińska (2010) argues that normality is synonymous with a certain quality of life. For Polish migrants who left Poland after the country’s accession to the EU it means an opportunity to work and study, some-
thing that is perceived as difficult to pursue in Poland. Gałasińska suggests that in the pursuit of ‘normality’, work satisfaction becomes equally significant as patriotism, which is “so far the most valued feature of the Polish national character” (ibid:316). This growing importance of work can perhaps explain why migration and work abroad are discussed in relation to patriotism.

But normality can mean more than just an opportunity to pursue work abroad. In an ethnographic study of young educated Polish middle class women, Lindelöf (2006) argues that normality in contemporary Poland refers to the idea of striving in order to “be like Europe”. She suggests that the transformation discourse in post-socialist Poland where the West is represented as superior to the East sets standards of normality as defined in terms of what is perceived as ‘European’ norms. For instance in the case of the group of privileged young women in Poland, having normality and a ‘normal life’ means balancing work and family activities in daily life. This opportunity to balance is perceived as one of the qualities of life in (Western) Europe. Consequently, one can argue that normality is closely related to the dominant aspect of the discourse of transition where Western standards of life are constructed as the ultimate goal and norm. Therefore, in relation to patriotism and migration, one could argue that normality is constructed as relevant and already ‘available’ abroad. According to this logic, patriotism in Poland is important but not relevant enough in order to stay. However, as the extracts from the following discussion illustrate, sometimes life and work abroad can be understood not as an opportunity or necessity but as an anti-patriotic act of betrayal.

Migration as loss or betrayal

Some participants in the debate express strong feelings about the behavior of their compatriots abroad. The author of the article entitled “The crisis of national consciousness” published by the portal Eioba (see table 6) argues:

Extract 27

‘Niedawno doszły do mnie wiadomości, że obywatele Polski zamieszkujący obecnie w Wielkiej Brytanii wyrzeczą się swych polskich imion, aby ułatwić wymowę anglojęzycznym mieszkańcom. Czy taka postawa można nazwać inaczej niż zdrada? Ktoś kto wyrzeka się imienia polskiego, wyrzeka się tym samym części polskiej duchowości. Czy można ufać komuś takiemu(...)NIE.’

(slavanr, EIB1, 2008)

I recently came across the news that Polish citizens currently living in Great Britain self-deny their own Polish names in order to facilitate the pronunciation for the English-speaking inhabitants. How can we call this attitude other than betrayal? Someone who denies a Polish name denies also a part of Polish spirituality. Is it possible to trust someone like this (...)? NO.

(slavanr, EIB1, 2008)
In the article that this extract was retrieved from, the author suggests that patriotism and ‘Polishness’ are undergoing a crisis in Poland. This is particularly the case among the young generation. The example of Polish citizens residing abroad who decide to change Polish–sounding names is given to illustrate how far this crisis has gone. In extract 27 the category ‘betrayal’ is employed when juxtaposing ‘denial of Polish name’ with ‘denial of Polish spirituality’. It can be argued that the changing of Polish names abroad can be interpreted as a double betrayal of ‘Polishness’, so that not only is one leaving the country but also deciding to hide all the ‘stigmas’ that are associated with it.

The topic of migration as a problem in relation to nationhood and patriotism is also present in other parts of the analyzed material. Extract 28 and reply 1, which come from the letter exchange entitled “Patriotism, or pride and work for Poland” published by Gazeta Wyborcza (see table 3) are examples of this. Extract 28 comes from the letter that initiated the exchange and reply 1 is a direct answer to the same letter:

Extract 28

(Małgorzata, GL3, 2010)

I am 54 years old and I am a retired teacher. Since 2006 when I retired, every year, for five-six months I work in Germany. I take care of sick and elderly persons. I work very hard, and I do it mostly for the money. But the most important reason is the feeling that I represent Poland and Poles. I sincerely want to show that we are responsible, that one can trust us. (...) I am satisfied and I think that I fulfill some patriotic duty.
(Małgorzata, GL3, 2010)

Reply 1

Jestem oburzona listem emerytowanej nauczycielki (...), która za przejaw swojego patriotyzmu uważa fakt, że w wieku 54 lat wyjechała pomagać niedolężnym Niemcom. (...) W Polsce nie żyje się trudniej, żyje się inaczej, a mój patriotyzm polega na tym, że ciężką pracę (...) na co dzień udowadnia sobie i innym, że Polacy są tak samo dobry jak inne narody.
(Aldona S., GL3, 2010)

I am outraged by the letter from a retired teacher, (...) who considers it a form of patriotism that at the age of 54 she has left in order to help disabled Germans. (...) Living in Poland is not more difficult, it is different, and my patriotism is about hard everyday work (...), every day I prove to myself and others that Poles are equally as good as other nations.
(Aldona S., GL3, 2010)

This extract is from the letter signed with a female name ‘Malgorzata’. In it the author delivers a piece of a personal story from a perspective of a migrant seasonal worker in Germany. This is not a typical excerpt as participants rarely reveal their age in the posts and if they do so, they usually refer
to themselves as ‘young’. The participant employs personal references such as ‘we’ and ‘us’ in order to construct the Polish as ‘responsible’ and ‘trustworthy’. Although the practice of working abroad is justified as being done for economic reasons (‘I do it mostly for money’), the author refers to ‘representing Poland and Poles’ abroad as ‘the most important reason’ for migration. In this way it can be argued that migration is constructed as an opportunity, not only to work and make profit but also to ‘represent abroad’ and pay a ‘patriotic duty’. This idea of patriotism that assumes an opportunity to ‘represent Poland abroad’ is rather far from the traditional understanding of patriotism in Poland discussed in chapter 4. This might also be one of the reasons for an emotional reply to this letter. As the reply that followed the extract shows, the openness about patriotism and ‘representing Poland abroad’ can be interpreted as provocative.

In reply 1 the author signed as ‘Aldona S.’ expresses a strong emotional reaction (‘outrage’) to the letter by ‘Malgorzata’ (extract 28). The reason given for this is the description of patriotic attitude as being possible while working abroad and ‘helping disabled Germans’. ‘Aldona S’ discursively employs personal pronouns such as ‘I’, ‘my’ and ‘myself’ to construct a different account of patriotism that includes ‘hard work’ in Poland. This work however is not necessarily aiming to ‘prove’ any patriotic attitude to the outside but rather to provide a form of self-reassurance that ‘Poles are equally as good as other nations’. This statement can be interpreted as constructing a sense of national pride that is an element of the patriotic attitude. Therefore, it can be suggested that the employment of the word ‘outrage’ to describe the reaction to the letter (extract 28) is a strong emotional reaction to the idea that migration and work abroad can both imply a life opportunity and be perceived as an act of patriotism at the same time. Thus, reply 1 can be compared with the statement about ‘betrayal’ from extract 27. They both challenge and negotiate the idea of migration as an opportunity and instead suggest that migration can be a potential threat to ‘Polishness’.

This idea that patriotism and migration are constructed as mutually exclusive has already been pointed out by scholars such as Marciniak (2010), who argues that migration is often represented as a gain in material reasons but a loss in terms of identity. She argues that “to leave Poland and to establish a niche for oneself in another nation, means to lose one’s ‘Slavonic soul’, to betray the Polish ‘core’, atrophy the personal ‘authenticity’” (ibid.:157). Marciniak suggests that Poland is a country with the “unwavering possession of the nation”, so that “even now when mass migration of young people seeking education and work outside Poland is legally possible and encouraged, the underpinning emotionality is still that of Polish exceptionalism” (ibid.). This idea of ‘losing the soul’ can be related to Renan’s (1882) definition of nation as a daily plebiscite connecting people not on the basis of race, religion or geography but rather on a basis of the ‘spiritual principle’ and understanding of a nation as a ‘soul’ (ibid.). Consequently, migration re-
mains a zero-sum game, where gaining one profit equals with permanently losing another, or even betrayal of the ‘nation’s soul’.

So far the analysis has focused on the questions related to the problem of construction of the national sameness. Namely, the idea of shared values, character and patriotism that are considered ‘typically Polish’. However, the construction of national sameness can also be connected to the construction of the national difference. In other words, it is the relational aspect of national identity; to know who ‘we’ are also means to know who ‘we’ are not.

Constructing the difference: ‘us’ and ‘them’

In the analyzed material, national difference is constructed by making comparisons to other countries. For example the author of the article “Patriotism can be pleasant” published by Gazeta Wyborcza (see table 1), similarly to other participants, mentions the situation in Poland as lacking ‘normality’ as compared with France and Italy:

Extract 29

In Poland for 60 years - first occupation, then PRL 74 half-independence - we’ve stopped being used to normality. And a normal situation is like in France: their own nation-state, police that are unpleasant and you don’t like. Italians can even make fun of their politicians. Their affairs, lies, pranks, though this kind of distance might be dangerous. Perhaps this is a healthy approach?

(Tomasz Łubiński, GA4, 2010)

In this extract the personal pronoun ‘we’ is employed to provide an account of shared historical experience constructed as directly contributing to the loss of ‘normality’ in Poland. References to France and Italy as examples of possibly ‘normal’ countries can be interpreted as discursively acknowledging Western European countries as setting the norms and standards of social and political development. However, I suggest that discursive employment and the reference to ‘normality’ in this context is also aiming to emphasize the difference between Poland and other nations. This construction of difference can be interpreted as an example of cultural national intimacy, where the idea of inadequacy and underdevelopment takes the form of shared experience, as it is still the ‘we’ that is different from ‘others’.

74PRL stands for the People’s Republic of Poland (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa), the official name of the state during the communist period from 1952-1990.
National difference is also mentioned in a more explicit way. For instance in one of the letters to the editorial team of *Gazeta Wyborcza* entitled “What is the difference between Czech and Polish patriotism?” (see table 3) the author, a male presenting himself as a citizen of the Czech Republic, compares Polish attitudes to the nation with the ones from his home country. This is the only post in the analyzed corpus of data where the author openly presents himself as a foreign citizen:

Extract 30


(Andrzej Ruscak, GL5, 2010)

Poles often do not feel this “practical” love for their country. Almost everyone has flags for the 3rd of May (Polish bank holiday), but Poland is all covered with litter (as compared not to Ukraine, but for ex. to Germany or Norway). We say that if one wants to be proud of their country, first they have to do something for it. I really wish Poles would also discover this type of patriotism.

(Andrzej Ruscak, GL5, 2010)

As I mentioned above, this letter is unusual because it is written from an ‘outsider’s’ perspective. Thus, it can be read as how the Polish are perceived abroad. The author employs the personal pronoun ‘we’ to construct the ‘Czech’ as different from the ‘Polish’ when it comes to understanding of patriotism. This extract can be interpreted as friendly advice, suggesting that Poles should redefine their patriotism from being ritual-oriented, thus the reference to the flags on bank holiday, to more practice-oriented. The statement ‘but Poland is all covered with litter’ can be interpreted as criticism of this ‘Polish’ form of patriotism as it does not translate to civic attitudes such as caring for the environment. Comparisons with Western European developed countries (‘Germany’ and ‘Norway’) are employed in order to construct the difference between Poland and the West. Also the reference to Ukraine as not a suitable country for comparison (‘as comparing not to Ukraine, but...’) might suggest that the countries serving as a positive example belong to the West. Again, as discussed earlier in this chapter and present in the discourse of transition, this can be related to the topic of ‘normality’ as an inherently Western standard.

This letter generated over fifty comments on the forum (see table 4). The participants generally agree with the argument presented in the letter. Below is a typical example:
This letter brings out exactly what I myself think about this nation (Polish people. Polish patriotism is trashy and cheap. (...) We derive our sense of pride from history - the Polish Pope. We dwell on the glory of past battles that nobody but us remembers. The Czechs have Skoda. Nobody in Ireland (where I lived for a longer time) knew that they owe us, the great Poles, their freedom (...). But everybody knew that Skoda is Czech. Unfortunately, we do not have anything to offer for daily use that would be associated positively with our country. (slawczan, GL5C, 2010)

This reply can be interpreted as not only an agreement with the argument presented in the letter above but also as a critical and negative evaluation of the traditional understanding of Polish patriotism. For example the adjectives such as ‘trashy and cheap’ are employed to construct this negative view of patriotism. It can be argued that the author criticizes the idea of Polish patriotism and national pride as merely based on the past achievements and single national heroes such as the late Pope John Paul II. The author refers to ‘history’ with a capital ‘H’ which can suggest the important role history and collective memory play in the construction of Polish identity. This importance of history and ‘past battles’ is presented as an internally constructed aspect of Polish identity since ‘nobody but us remembers’. On the one hand one can argue that this comment is an example of how cultural national intimacy is discursively reproduced by the continuous employment of the personal references ‘we’ and ‘us’ when referring to Polish identity, pride and patriotism. On the other hand, this is an example of the dismantling strategy, where discursive juxtaposition of Polish patriotism and the ‘Czech Škoda’ aims to deconstruct and possibly negotiate not only the vision of Polish patriotism but also the way Poland is perceived abroad. It should be noted that the employment of this particular discursive strategy shifts the focus from construction and reproduction towards introduction of new meanings of nation and national identity. In other words, it shifts the focus from what Poland and Polishness is to what and how it should become.

The overall argument constructed in this extract might suggest that instead of looking to the past, Poles should focus on the present. This means that the current need for recognition of post-socialist countries like Poland and the Czech Republic requires the presence of internationally recognized brands such as the Škoda car that ‘the Czechs have’. The personal experience of living in Ireland can be read as a statement that Polish achievements, the source of national pride at home, are not recognized outside of Poland. The discursive juxtaposing of ‘no one (...) knew’ with ‘everyone knew’
constructs the difference not between Poland and the Czech Republic but between associations these countries convey in an international setting. Juxtaposing these two countries can be interpreted as a justified comparison since they both share a communist past. The consistent employment of the personal reference and pronoun ‘we’ in relation to Poland constructs the collective responsibility for the lack of attractive resources that would contribute to building a positive image of Poland both inside and outside of the country.

This attitude and orientation towards the past by constant public reminders about lost battles, massacres, partitions and martyrdom is what Tazbir (2007) calls “Polish national neurosis” (ibid:85). He argues that part of the problem related to the post-communist Polish society is the fear of “dehistoricization”. In a country like Poland, where collective history constitutes an inherent part of collective identity, the “national neurosis” can also be interpreted as a fear of losing the nations’ ‘spirit’ or ‘soul’ when faced with the new geo-political situation. According to Tazbir, the situation in Poland will change as normalization proceeds in Poland (ibid.).

Other countries are not only constructed as objects of comparison in relation to international recognition but also in terms of practices that can potentially contribute to the process of re-definition of national pride and patriotism in Poland. This is the case with the example of Germany as a nation that boosted its national pride after the football World Cup in 2006. The following extract comes from an article published on the portal Infotuba entitled “Will the football’s magic work again?” (see table 7):

Extract 31


Will in two years the streets of Polish cities turn into a white and red flood? The Germans have shown that they are proud of their nation, proud of their fatherland, of their football players, of themselves (...) our Western neighbors have stopped being ashamed of who they are. And what about us? We actually do not have to be ashamed. We are Polish, we are patriotic- proud of (our) own history, proud of ourselves, but perhaps not so proud of the Poland that we have built. (...) Will in two years the magic of sport work on us the same way it did on the Germans four years ago? Will football heal us? (Kasia, INF27, 2010)

In this article the author, who signed with a female name ‘Kasia’, is referring to the European Football Championship, in Poland often referred to as ‘EURO’ that was scheduled to take place in the early summer of 2012 in Poland and Ukraine. The author discursively employs the personal reference ‘we’ and ‘us’ to reproduce the cultural national intimacy of Poland as a nation that
is facing an opportunity to change its national image. In this context, the statement ‘we (...) don’t have to be ashamed’ can be interpreted as acknowledging that there are elements of Polish identity that could be a source of shame.

Shame on the collective level can be defined as a pre-modern feeling that requires an external audience as a source of public judgment. Such shame causes a feeling of inadequacy or perhaps even inferiority as compared with others. However, as Misheva (2000) points out, shame is also inherently connected with active attempts to overcome it. Hence, shame belongs to the realm that is the source of human creativity. The struggle to overcome shame is a struggle to improve human nature (ibid.). Thus, the reference to an internationally broadcast sporting event such as a championship in football can be interpreted not only as an opportunity to host athletes and other guests, but also as an opportunity to improve and ‘heal’ the national image and overcome the feeling of collective shame. I suggest that by discursively constructing this sporting event as important for Poland’s identity, the author employs the dismantling strategy, where collective shame can be replaced by other collective feelings, such as national pride.

The opening rhetorical question about the ‘white and red flood’ might suggest that the author is referring to the waving of the Polish flags as an act of patriotism. The author constructs ‘Germany’ as the nation that successfully used the opportunity of the World Football Championship (World Cup 2006) to manifest national pride and identity. The Germans are a positive example to follow, not only because of the regained sense of pride but also because they managed to overcome the sense of shame. The employment of shame can be interpreted in the light of Germany’s dark periods of history, with memories of Hitler and Nazism. After the successful hosting of the World Cup, the international media reported the emergence of ‘new German patriotism’ and connected it to the young generation of Germans.

In extract 31 it is argued that the football championship was then discussed as an opportunity that could provide a chance for ‘healing’ Poland and the Poles. This international European football event was presented as a chance to boost the ‘new patriotism’, as happened in the case of Germany in 2006. From the perspective of the organizing host countries, international football events such as the World Cup and EURO are opportunities for international promotion and recognition. From the perspective of the post-socialist countries such as Poland, an event like this is also an opportunity to present the results of transformation to an external audience as well as a chance to embrace new future-oriented visions of patriotism and national identity.

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75 See for example: http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=33653, 21-01-2012
Summary

The goal of this chapter has been to examine the representations of the nation and constructions of national identity in the debate about Polish patriotism. The main focus has been on the discursive construction of national *sameness* and *difference*. In order to answer the question about representations of nation, we also need to look closely at how national *sameness* and *difference* were constructed in the material.

When it comes to the construction of national *sameness*, as discussed in the first part of the chapter, nation is constructed through the employment of constructive and reproductive strategies. Participants discursively employ such terms as shared ‘values’ and national ‘character’ as well as such linguistic means of realization such as the personal references ‘we’ and ‘ours’ and the temporal reference ‘always’. By doing this, what they discursively achieve is the representation of the Polish nation as an ethnocultural entity. Particularly, when it comes to shared past experiences and national ‘bravery’, there seem to be unanimous agreement upon who the Polish *are* as a nation. However, the personal pronoun ‘we’ is also employed to critically evaluate, negotiate and construct the Polish as a nation that knew how to ‘suffer’ and ‘die beautifully’ in the past but does not necessarily know how to live in the present. This employment of the ‘we’ pronoun not only reproduces the nation represented as one entity but is also an example of referring to the *cultural national intimacy* where both national qualities and flaws are constructed as shared by the whole nation.

In the second part of the chapter, national sameness is constructed by contested representations of nation and national identity. Confronted with migration and thus the possibility of leaving, and coming back to Poland, participants construct migration in relation to patriotism in three distinct ways. When migration is constructed as an *opportunity* to go abroad, work and possibly come back, also patriotism is constructed as possible abroad. By using spatial references such as ‘abroad’, the transforming strategies are discursively employed by participants to argue for new emerging possibilities to ‘remain Polish’ even outside of the territorial borders of the country. Moreover, migration is also constructed as an opportunity to communicate knowledge about the Polish cultural heritage and traditions. Hence, I suggest that in the case when migration is constructed as an opportunity to go abroad and ‘stay proud’, the nation is represented as cultural heritage and tradition that can be communicated to ‘outsiders’.

However, when migration is constructed as the *necessity* to go abroad, it is also a necessity to leave the national identity and patriotism behind. In this case, migration is justified by employing the category of ‘normality’. Poland is constructed and represented as not ‘normal’. In this case, it can be argued that in order to justify the difficult decision to leave, Poland is represented not as a ‘nation’, but rather a ‘country’ that has not reached certain ‘normal’
levels of civilizational development. The discursive employment of temporal references such as ‘when’ (Poland becomes normal) can be interpreted as implicit anticipation of change in this matter.

Migration is also constructed and discursively negotiated as a context where nation and national identity are betrayed or lost. This is the case when participants employ categories such as ‘betrayal’ or ‘outrage’ to construct migration as potentially threatening ‘Polishness’. In this case it can be argued that nation is represented as an ephemeral entity or ‘soul’ that only spreads as far as the nation-state borders. This form of construction of nation is opposite to the context where migration is constructed as an opportunity. I suggest that when migration is constructed as potentially leading to loss of a national ‘soul’ it is an example of representing nation in terms of national interest (Walicki, 1991). In this context, migration, work abroad and other practices outside of Poland are constructed as performing against the nation’s interests, and thus are a form of ‘betrayal’. Consequently, depending on the context in which migration is constructed, also nation and national identity can be represented and negotiated differently. This, I suggest, is a context where contested representations of nation emerge from the discourse of patriotism in Poland. Although there seems to be a silent agreement upon who ‘we are’ in relation to past experiences and national ‘character’, national sameness can be confronted and challenged when possibilities to leave the country emerge. But national sameness can also be discursively challenged when confronted with national difference.

As discussed in the third part of the chapter, national difference is discursively constructed by employment of categories such as ‘France’, ‘Italy’, ‘Czech’ and others to refer to other European countries that Poles and Poland can be compared with. In these comparisons Poland is represented as generally worse off, compared to other countries. The personal pronoun ‘we’ is employed to construct Poland and the Polish as not ‘normal’ and not particularly practical when it comes to celebrations of national identity. It can be suggested that national difference is employed here in order to discursively construct national sameness. This type of national sameness when confronted with difference is constructed more in terms of how ‘we are’ rather than ‘who we are’ as discussed earlier in this chapter. Here again, the critical evaluation pointing to national flaws and lacks is another example where cultural national intimacy is discursively achieved and performed. However, participants do not merely state the national flaws and shortcomings but instead employ dismantling strategies to suggest and negotiate new and alternative meanings to nation and national identity. This is for example the case when suggesting that Polish patriotism dwells too much on national martyrdom and too little on internationally recognized Polish products and achievements.

I suggest that contesting representations of nation emerge from the analysis of the debate about Polish patriotism. The analysis reveals the picture of a
divided nation. This division is between the identity constructed *internally* in ethno-cultural terms and referring to shared national character and values, and the identity constructed *externally* as a ‘country’ and a society that is on its way towards improvement, mostly in terms of the Western model of modernization. As I discussed earlier in chapter 3 one of the aspects of *nation re-branding* is the possibility to confront both the internal and external perspectives. In the analyzed material the category of ‘migration’ is constructed as a context where both opportunities and threats to national unity and identity emerge. Depending on how nation and national identity are constructed, migration can be positively or negatively evaluated.

The image of the split nation relates also to a division between the past-oriented identity supported by traditional celebratory patriotism, and the need for a future-oriented patriotism that goes beyond the nation-state and offers internationally recognized aspects boosting national pride. Consequently, the analysis reveals a picture of negotiation between the culturally and ethnically strong (the ethno-cultural ‘we’) *nation* on the one hand, and the *country* (“abnormal Poland”) that asks for improvement on the other.

Can the two be combined and if so, how? In the following chapter I will show that the debate on patriotism online is also a discussion about Poland becoming a ‘European’ and ‘modern’ civic society. This redefinition of nationhood, which takes into account both internally constructed visions of identity as well as external ones, can be considered a part of the nation re-branding process.
In the preceding chapter we looked at the emerging representations of nation that are discursively negotiated in the online debate on patriotism. The specific focus has been on the construction of national sameness and difference. In this chapter we go a step further and look at how this ethno-cultural nation is becoming a country in the process of discursive negotiation of the new nation brand. As I argued in chapter 3, the logic of nation branding and re-branding in the context of countries in transition implies the process of turning previously stateless or oppressed nations into countries so that they can strengthen their position globally. I also suggested that, contrary to the expert-conducted nation branding campaigns that focus on production of coherent nation brand, nation re-branding processes involve citizen negotiation and contestation of the national self-image both domestically (internally) and internationally (externally).

The analysis that is presented in this chapter focuses on the third of the three themes that emerged during the analytical process. Namely, it focuses on nation re-branding as the main theme, followed by two sub-themes, namely ‘national mythologies’ and ‘modern times’. Similarly to the previous chapter, the analytical process focuses on four discursive strategies of construction of national identity: constructive, reproduction, transformation and dismantling strategies (Wodak et. al, 1999). This chapter tries to answer the following questions:

1. What are the emerging elements of the new nation brand?
2. How is construction of the new nation brand achieved discursively?

The chapter begins with a discussion on the first sub-theme, namely national mythologies and their role in the process of re-branding Poland. Then follows the discussion on the second sub-theme, ‘modern times’ with a particular focus on Europe as a ‘new’ point of collective identification and an element of the nation brand.
Questioning the national mythologies

As discussed already in the previous chapters, Polish national identity has been strongly influenced by the dominant representation of the nation constructed during the stateless periods of Polish history. In particular, the Romantic vision of the nation as a martyr defending the Christian Europe from barbarians, and the nation as a victim of foreign oppressors became part of the national mythology. Faced with the situation of the collapse of communism and developing democracy the narrative that supported the stateless nation became obsolete. At the same time, over twenty years after the collapse of communism, national mythology is still an object of public debate. The extracts presented below come from different discussion streams but all three are retrieved from the corpus of comments on articles published by Gazeta Wyborcza (see table 2). Extract 1 is a comment on the article “Patriotism can be enjoyable” whereas extract 2 and reply 1 are comments on the article “Romanticism dies in Poles”. In the analyzed debate, national mythology is often constructed as belonging to the narratives of the past:

Extract 1
Dobrze by było gdybyśmy w końcu zdobyli się na odwagę i zaczęli ‘demitologizować’ swoje dzieje.
(sewa1, GA4C, 2010)

It would be good if we finally got some courage and started to ‘demythologize’ our history.
(sewa1, GA4C, 2010)

Extract 2
Mniej romantyczni od nas, dużo lepiej wyszli z zawirowan historycznych, a ich pragmatyzm w dużo lepszy sposób przyczynił się do ich miejsca w świecie i Europie. Pora, żeby Polacy sobie uświadomili, że patriotyzm nie polega na umieraniu dla Ojczyzny i oplakiwaniu wszystkich nieudanych powstania, ale praca nad jej miejscem we współczesnym świecie. (…) Pora zerwać z obrazem POLAKA MEGALOMANACA - tak bardzo utrwałego w świecie.
(realvicky, GA7C, 2010)

Those less romantic than ourselves came out much better from the swirls of history, and their pragmatism has contributed to their place in the world and Europe in much better way. Time for Poles to realize that patriotism is not about dying for the Fatherland and crying over all the unsuccessful uprisings, but about working for Her place in the contemporary world. (…) It is time to break with the image of the MEGALOMANIAC POLE that is so persistent in the world.
(realvicky, GA7C, 2010)
reply 1

Pora na pozbycie się kompleksów i nastawienia się na "zwycięstwa moralne". Jedyne co służy gospodarce to - pragmatyzm, racjonalne myślenie, pójdzie w stronę społeczeństwa "obywatelskiego" (...) i nie oglądanie się na cuda i maryje zawsze dziewice. (djenn, GA7C, 2010)

It is time to get rid of complexes and stop looking for 'moral victories'. The only things that can serve the economy are pragmatism, rational thinking, moving towards 'civil' society (...) and not looking for miracles and the Ultimate Virgin-Mary. (djenn, GA7C, 2010)

The extracts above are rather typical of the pro-civic discourse promoted by the Gazeta Wyborcza that aims to challenge the idea of ‘old patriotism’ and instead promote the idea of ‘new patriotism’ in a democratic and free Poland. However, the introduction of new, alternative narratives of the nation and patriotism is also about challenging the already existing ones. The three extracts above illustrate that by discursively employing temporal references such as ‘finally’ (extract 1) or ‘it is time to’ (extract 2 and reply1) participants mark their readiness to accept different narratives of the nation. However, this readiness for the ‘new’ also means distancing from the ‘old’. Thus, for example, in extract 1, the participant employs the temporal reference ‘finally’ with categories of ‘courage’ and ‘start to demythologize’. Additionally, the personal reference ‘we’ is employed, which can suggest a collective act of ‘demythologization of our history’. This is an example of the dismantling strategy. Polish history or rather collective memory is constructed as ‘mythologized’, and the temporal reference (‘finally’) might suggest that the activity of ‘demythologization’ has not been pursued yet, perhaps because of a lack of collective courage. One might ask, however, why this ‘mythologized’ Polish collective memory is questioned?

Zubrzycki (2011), who studied how the Polish national mythology is constitutive of and constitutes national identity points out that the practice of questioning national mythology has been a key feature of the post-communist transition. She argues that questioning the mythology continues “as the independent state has seriously weakened the political valence of a dominant mythology primarily articulated in the context of statelessness and colonial domination” (ibid:53). However, Zubrzycki focuses mainly on the public attempts to redefine the meaning of the national mythology while at the same time neglecting the actors contributing to this process as well as other arenas of questioning the national mythology. Therefore, it can be argued that taking into account the new socio-political context, the online debates about patriotism are an example of an ongoing process where national mythologies are not only questioned and challenged by citizens but also where alternative frames of national identity are suggested. It can also be
argued that the construction of the national mythologies as belonging to the past discursively opens up the space for other narratives, such as ones focusing on the present. In this context it is important to keep in mind that when it comes to the practices of reformulation of collective memory, the past is often employed as a trigger to talk about the present. As Bodnar (1992) points out:

Public memory is a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present and, by implication, its future (...) the major focus of this communicative and cognitive process is not the past (...), but serious matters in the present (ibid:15, my emphasis).

In the case of Poland this ‘present’ refers to the post-communist society coming to terms with the situation of the ‘new’, post-1989 state and developing a democratic society. In the analyzed material the past and present are constructed as opposites, so that in order to be able to talk about the present (and future), the past needs to be ‘dealt with’ first. At the same time, dealing with the past is not only a matter of opening one chapter and closing another. This is a different logic than for example when professional nation branding experts decide to focus on particular narratives while silencing the others. This has happened for example in the case of countries with ‘difficult pasts’, such as Croatia, where the government nation branding campaigners deliberately omitted mentioning the war that in fact contributed to the country’s independence in 1991 (Rivera, 2008). In the analyzed citizen online discussions, national flaws and other ‘stigmas’ are not omitted but serve rather as trigger points for discussion about the needs and possibilities for future change.

If we look back at extract 2, the personal references such as ‘we’ and ‘us’ are employed to construct the Polish not only as one nation but also as a nation that shares the same understanding of patriotism as an act of martyrdom (‘dying for the Fatherland’ etc.). Here again, as in the case of some of the extracts discussed in the previous chapter, ‘the others’ are constructed as generally more competent than the Polish. It can be argued that ‘the others’, who are ‘less romantic’, are also ‘more pragmatic’ which is considered a quality that the Polish lack. ‘The others’ are also constructed as different on the basis of the competence that ‘patriotism’ is about ‘work for [Poland’s] place in the contemporary world’. This statement can be interpreted as discursively pointing to the necessity to introduce new, alternative narratives where international recognition is a measure of a nation’s success. Moreover, the discursive application of the temporal reference in the statement ‘time to break with the image of the MEGALOMANIAC POLE that is so persistent in the world’ is an example of the dismantling strategy. Megalomania is usually negatively defined as a sense of inflated self-esteem and superiority characterized by overestimation of power and beliefs. It can be
interpreted as a suggestion that this image of the Polish people is not only negative but also recognized internationally, and thus needs to be changed. This extract can be read as a form of collective self-criticism of the externally recognized negative image of Poland connected to national martyrdom. The reference to ‘the world’ can be interpreted as a form of a spatial reference suggesting the importance of the external perspective on Poland that goes beyond the nation-state.

In reply 1 ‘complexes’ and ‘moral victories’ are juxtaposed with ‘economy’, ‘pragmatism’, ‘rational thinking’ and ‘civil society’. The discursive juxtaposing of these words can be interpreted as an example of the transforming strategy so that introduction of the ‘new’ narratives will automatically exclude the ‘old’ ones. ‘Pragmatism’, ‘rational thinking’ and ‘civil society’ are constructed as opposite to ‘complexes’ and ‘moral victories’ which suggest the romantic narrative of Polish history. They are also employed as markers of modern development. These aspects are juxtaposed against the rejected ‘miracles’ and ‘the Ultimate Virgin Mary’. The latter can be interpreted as a reference to the practices of Radio Maryja, an ultraconservative and nationalistic radio station led by the charismatic person of the ‘Father director’ Tadeusz Rydzyk. Reference to the Virgin Mary as the ultimate virgin is a common way to salute and welcome listeners of this radio. The juxtaposition of pragmatism, rationality and civil society with miracles and the salutation from the ultra-Catholic radio station has a hyperbolic effect. It linguistically constructs the exaggerated difference between the two as belonging to different worlds and thus mutually exclusive.

Dealing with both superiority (extract 2) and inferiority (reply 1) issues has been part of the larger process of the symbolic and cultural transformation in Poland. As Janion (2006) suggests, Poland’s historical experience and geopolitical position “between the East and the West” contributed to the development of this ambivalence manifesting a sense of mixed attitudes that still today shape the collective Polish imagination. These attitudes can be characterized by a sense of pride and superiority, and a desire to orientalize the East, represented as backward and emotional (particularly Russia, Ukraine and Belarus), while at the same time keeping an attitude of inferiority towards the West, which is constructed and represented as developed and rational.

In the analyzed material, part of the process of construction of the new nation brand in contemporary Poland is calling for change or re-branding communicated both internally and externally. Thus distancing from the ‘old’ national mythologies that are mostly associated with negative representations of Poland both domestically and internationally can be considered one of the first steps in this process. The reference to other countries as generally ‘better’ and more competent can be related to the narratives about ‘normalization’ where Western standards of economic and civilizational development also set normative expectations for the nation-states.
Towards ‘modern times’

Today, over twenty years after the collapse of communism in Central Europe it is possible to note that the process of transition from communism to democracy has proved to be slower than initially expected. There are also a growing number of accounts challenging the dominant perspectives that were predicting a relatively smooth transition from communism to democracy (Rabikowska, 2009). Instead, it is suggested that in order to grasp the dynamics of development in each country, one needs to look into political struggles, social fissures and complexities within their past and present (ibid.). Only in this way can we better understand the omitted aspects of the major theories of transition, such as the cultural aspects of transition.

The example below (extract 3) from the article “Patriotism of cooperation, patriotism of dispute” (see table 1) published by Gazeta Wyborcza illustrates that transition is discussed as a completed process, at least in terms of political and economic development:

Extract 3

Poles are lucky that they no longer live in difficult times. In October 2009 (...) we found ourselves among the richest countries in the world. The last 20 years, in spite of all the failures and imperfections, has been a success in terms of Polish democracy and freedom. Time to learn a new patriotism. (...). It means that if we are going to develop, Poland should modernize together with us. (K. Wigura & S. Witkowski, GA6, 2010)

The discursive employment of the adjective ‘lucky’ (‘Poles are lucky’) in this extract can be interpreted as a suggestion that the current generation of Polish people have the privilege to live under different socio-historical circumstances. The expression ‘they no longer live in difficult times’ might suggest that past collective experiences that have caused suffering are finally gone. The employment of the personal reference ‘we found ourselves among the richest countries in the world’ can be interpreted as suggesting that Poland has reached a level of economic development comparable to most affluent countries. This symbolic entry into the company of the ‘rich’ also marks readiness for yet another change. The use of the temporal reference (‘time to learn a new patriotism’) can be read as an expected next step in the assumed development. It can be argued that according to this logic the new political and economic situation also requires a new relationship to the nation and to the state. This excerpt is rather typical of the positive view on transformation and its outcomes presented by Gazeta Wyborcza. The suggestion that it is ‘time to learn a new patriotism’ can be interpreted as a logical consequence
of the transition process, so that after both political and economic transition Poland is finally ready for transition in cultural terms.

This idea of the ‘new’ patriotism is constructed as a prerequisite for the development of Poland as a country. In the last sentence of extract 3, the personal reference ‘we’ is juxta posed with ‘Poland’ which can be interpreted as juxtaposition between the nation in the sense of the ‘people’ on the one hand and the state and the country on the other. However, although both ‘nation’ and ‘state/country’ might be different, in fact the idea of the ‘new patriotism’ can be interpreted as the suggestion to connect them in the process of modernization. This is an important aspect of development for a society like the Polish one, where the idea of nationhood has been historically built on resistance against the oppressive state(s) (Gerner, 2009).

The legacy of the clear separation between the nation represented as the ‘people’ who are different from the political body of the state is constructed in the last sentence. The pronoun ‘we’ is employed as distinct from ‘Poland’, which points to the gap between the ‘we’-nation in cultural terms and the state as an ‘external’ political construction. This extract can be interpreted as an example of the transforming strategy, where temporal references (‘no longer’ and ‘time to’) are employed in order to discursively introduce narratives that are more suitable to ‘modern’ times.

There is an implicit assumption running throughout the analyzed material that patriotism is important. There is also a silent agreement upon what patriotism has meant for the Polish people in the past. However, the contemporary vision of patriotism is an object of negotiation. As the extracts presented below illustrate, temporality plays a role in constructing patriotism. In other words, in order to justify the need for a ‘new patriotism’, participants discursively mark the difference between the past and present.

Below are the excerpts from two articles published by Gazeta Wyborcza (see table 1) that deal with the idea of a ‘new patriotism’ confronted with the ‘ghosts of the past’. Extract 4 is from the article “Patriotism can be pleasant” where the author argues for the vision of patriotism that would break the traditional victim-oriented vision of patriotism in Poland. Extract 5 is from the article “Patriotism cannot be measured”, pointing to the new historical and geo-political situation in Poland:

Extract 4

Dziś w dużo mniejszym stopniu potrzebujemy tradycyjnego rozumienia patriotyzmu, (...) a dużo bardziej jego nowoczesnego wymiaru, który powinien nas zachęcać do otwartości, do poświęcania się na rzecz drugiego człowieka, promowania bliskich nam postaw, ale i rozumienia odmienności. (Dominik Krakowiak, GA12, 2010)

Today to a much lesser extent we need the traditional understanding of patriotism, (...) and much more its modern dimension that should encourage us to develop openness, sacrifice to other people, to promote familiar attitudes, but also an understanding of diversity. (Dominik Krakowiak, GA12, 2010)

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The two extracts above are examples where the temporal reference (‘today’) is discursively employed to justify and negotiate between the traditional understanding of patriotism in Poland and requirements and challenges of the modern nation-state. The participants employ the personal reference ‘we’ to construct an account of the whole nation as needing to learn this patriotism of today. But what is this ‘new patriotism’ about? As the extracts above illustrate, the new patriotism is as much about acknowledging the inadequacy of the ‘old’ narratives as about suggesting alternative ones. Consequently, patriotism is not about heroism and martyrdom but rather ‘civil courage’, ‘openness’ and collective self-criticism. Here again, strategies of transforming of national identity are employed to discursively negotiate and suggest the need for new, alternative meanings.

Similarly, the emphasis on the present is constructed in the post from one of the discussion threads entitled “Feminism and patriotism” (see table 5) where participants discuss the (im)possibility of combining the two concepts. The extract below is not typical of the whole topic of discussion developed in this thread. Nevertheless, it points out the argument about temporal aspects of patriotism:

Extract 6

Patriotyzm to miłość do swojego kraju. Dziś i-aj to nie rzucenie się szablą na czołgi, ale raczej zdolność do rezygnacji z własnych partykularnych interesów, na rzecz dobra ogółu.
(aelithe, F 22, 2008)

Here again the temporal reference (‘today’) is employed to mark the need for an alternative understanding of patriotism in Poland. The discursive construction of difference between the heroic past and the ‘new’ present as shown in the extracts above can be interpreted as again negotiation of ‘old’ and ‘new’ understandings of patriotism, and consequently, the new nation brand. The sets of opposites such as distinguishing between traditional and modern, heroism and civil courage, can be interpreted as a discursive attempt to discipline Poles to redefine their identity. Additionally, transforming the ‘traditional’ understanding of patriotism can imply a construction of what it
means to be ‘modern’. Consequently, distancing from the idea of traditional patriotism also suggests construction of Poland as a modern society. This ‘modern’ patriotism that is more appropriate to ‘today’ is constructed along Western ideas of modernity. The participants define it in terms of ‘openness’, ‘sacrifice for other people’, ‘others’ well-being’ and ‘diversity’. Interestingly, this idea of modernity implies a development towards modernity defined not in political and economic terms of neo-liberalism but rather cultural and social norms of social democracy.

However, taking into account that the traditional understanding of patriotism is still dominant in Poland, the process of discursive re-definition of patriotism implies complementary narratives rather than complete dismissal of the past. The following three extracts come from different threads of a discussion forum (see table 5). Extract 7 is from the discussion “Teenager’s patriotism” about the importance of a new vision of patriotism for contemporary Polish youth. Extract 8 is from the discussion entitled “Is Polish patriotism for show?” touching upon the ritualistic aspects of how patriotic attitudes are continuously manifested in Poland. Finally, extract 9 comes from the discussion thread “Bye bye patriotic excursions” which can be interpreted as a comment on the closure of the patriotism educational program initiated by the Polish Minister of Education in 2006, the same program that I mentioned in a previous chapter. The way in which patriotism is constructed in the three extracts below is rather typical for the civic-oriented discourse promoted by Gazeta Wyborcza, both in articles and on the discussion forum from which these extracts are retrieved. One of the characteristics of this discourse is the idea that contemporary Polish patriotism requires different forms of civic involvement, and should be distinguished from the traditional understanding that dominated in the past. Consider the extracts below:

**Extract 7**

Patriotyzm to też nieoszukiwanie fiskusa, niedawanie w łapę policjantowi, urzędkowi, lekarzowi i placenie za korzystanie z komunikacji miejskiej.

(dolores, F3, 2003)

Patriotism is also about not cheating the treasury (tax office), not bribing the policeman, clerk, doctor, and paying for use of public transportation.

(dolores, F3, 2003)

**Extract 8**

Uważam, że jesteśmy patriotami. Objawia się to szczególnie w takich momentach jak wojny czy kryzysy. Niestety czasem nie rozumiemy, że patriotyzm to też np. nauka czy wykonanie dobrze swojej pracy, a dziś tego patriotyzmu nam trzeba.

(mm, F18, 2007)

I think that we are patriots. This shows particularly in times such as wars or crises. Unfortunately, sometimes we don’t understand that patriotism means also, for ex. learning or doing one’s job right, and today we need this type of patriotism.

(mm, F18, 2007)
In extracts 7, 8 and 9 the participants construct a similar account of patriotism. The discursive employment of the term ‘also’ when referring to patriotism might imply that the participants are aware of the dominant traditional vision of patriotism in Poland. The use of ‘also’ in these extracts can therefore be interpreted as an attempt to negotiate other meanings of patriotism that are complementary to the already existing ones. So the discursive logic applied here suggests negotiation between the ‘old’ traditional patriotism that is no longer suitable, and making room for the ‘new’, modern one.

The idea of the ‘new’ patriotism as modern is closely connected to the ideas about modernity and modern civic society. Therefore, the ‘new’ patriotism includes aspects of participation in a civil society, such as ‘not cheating, ‘not bribing’ but ‘paying taxes’, ‘learning’ or ‘doing the job right’. These aspects can be interpreted as constructing a vision of patriotism rooted in the idea of collective civic effort as the basis for social and economic achievements. The employment of these categories suggesting civic performance can also be interpreted as a discursive attempt to transform one of the legacies of state socialism, namely the “claimant attitude”\(^{76}\) (Domanski, 2004). The last sentence in extract 9 can be understood in a two-fold way.

On the one hand it is another attempt to discipline compatriots about the necessity to reformulate the meaning of patriotism. On the other, however, it suggests that Poles as a nation and society are still ‘sleeping in the past’ and are thus not ready for the ‘modern world’. At the same time, as the following section will show, the construction of the whole nation as holding to the traditional, idealistic and thus ‘unmodern’ vision of patriotism can be juxtaposed with performances of ‘practical patriotism’.

Practical patriotism

The attempt to define and discuss contemporary Polish patriotism runs all through the analyzed debates. In the majority of cases the personal pronoun ‘we’ is employed in order to talk about patriotism as an important aspect of

\(^{76}\)This attitude refers to the presence in the socialist system of a “pervasive state control and non-administrative market regulations of access to various resources”. Both enterprises and individuals were forced to pursue their goals by “means of claiming goods and services from state gate keepers instead of achieving them from their own initiative and activity” (Domański, 2004:378).
national identity and a matter of collective attitude or responsibility for the nation and the state. However, in some instances, patriotism is also constructed as a matter of individual practice or effort. In this section I will discuss more in detail how participants connect the purchase of Polish products with a specific form of patriotic attitude. For example, in one of the comments of the discussion thread asking whether Polish patriotism is ‘for show’ (see table 5), the participant ‘pmro’ states:

Extract 10


(pmro, F18, 2007)

In this extract the participant employs the pronoun ‘I’ to present the personal account about purchasing of Polish products as a way to support the Polish economy and local community. In order to describe the ‘state of the art’ the participant employs three different adjectives to describe the products not only as ‘Polish’ but also as: ‘good’ (furniture), ‘bad’ and ‘non-existent’ (cars). On the one hand, one could argue that mentioning of the cars as ‘non-existent’ is a comment on the Polish economy as lacking any internationally recognizable industries and brands. On the other hand, the tone of the argument presented in this extract suggests that support of the economy through the practice of purchasing local products is possible and important. By putting support of the economy and local community in focus the participant distances himself from the traditional heroic understanding of patriotism dominant in Poland. At the same time, the employment of the personal reference ‘we’ (get a better life) can be interpreted to mean that this individual practice is in fact a contribution to the collective. It can be argued that this form of support via consumer practices is different from the traditional patriotism defined in terms of national martyrdom and heroism. It is a form of support that takes place via daily practices.

A similar argument is present in a discussion thread entitled “Polish practical patriotism” (see table 5). Extract 11 and the two replies that follow are retrieved from there and illustrate how the idea of ‘practical patriotism’ is discursively negotiated and connected to consumerist practices. This short exchange between three participants is an example of a reactive type of communication mode (Chmiel et al., 2010) where subsequent comments are reactions to the comment opening discussion, in this case by a participant with the nickname ‘trazybul’:

I am 25 years old. Whenever I can, I purchase Polish products. There are good ones (furniture) and also bad ones or non-existent ones (cars). I don’t treat it as nobody-knows-what-kind of patriotism. I treat it as a supporting of the local community and economy, so that WE get a better life and not them.

(pmro, F18, 2007)
Extract 11

Myślę sobie, że jak ktoś uważa się za polskiego patriotę, to powinien kupować polskie produkty. (...) Ja np. zawsze kupuję sprzęt agd pewnej polskiej firmy na literę Z. Uważam, że jeśli taki sprzęt jest w tej samej albo niższej cenie i przy tym w dobrej jakości, to taki praktyczny patriotyzm jest godny polecenia.
(trazybul, F27, 2009)

I think that if someone considers himself a Polish patriot, then he should buy Polish products. (...) Me for ex. I always buy appliances from one Polish company the name of which starts with Z. I think that if these kinds of appliances are at the same or lower price and also (have) good quality, then this kind of practical patriotism is worth recommending.
(trazybul, F27, 2009)

Reply 1

Nie mówmy więc o patriotyzmie praktycznym, bo to nadal modlitwa do napisu i symbolu. Wyrażona w gotówce, co też żadną nowością nie jest.
(lernakow, F27, 2009)

Let’s not talk about practical patriotism, because it (patriotism) still means praying to a slogan and a symbol. (The difference is) it is expressed in cash, which is nothing new either.
(lernakow, F27, 2009)

Reply 2

Patriotyzm to postawa wyrastająca z przekonania, że ojczyzna jest wartością. Skoro to akceptujemy, to powinniśmy dbać o dobro ojczyzny, czyli m. in. o prestiż Polski. Jednym z czynników wpływających na prestiż kraju jest przemysł, a także istnienie znanych marek(...). Zatem kupując polskie wyroby, przyczyniamy się do prestiżu Polski także wtedy, gdy te wyroby są produkowane w Chinach.
(trazybul, F27, 2009)

Patriotism is an attitude coming from a conviction that the fatherland is a value. If we accept that, then we should take care of the fatherland’s well-being, and among other things, Poland’s prestige. One of the factors influencing the prestige of a given country is industry, but also the existence of well-known brands (...). So when we buy Polish products, we contribute to Poland’s prestige. This is also the case when these products are manufactured in China.
(trazybul, F27, 2009)

This short exchange between two participants addresses the practice of purchasing Polish products as a form of ‘practical patriotism’. This formulation is employed by the participant in extract 11 where the connection between the act of purchasing and patriotism is made even more explicit than in the previous extract. Here again, the pronoun ‘I’ is employed to construct the personal account of practices that are defined as examples of ‘practical patriotism’, an activity that can be recommended to other potential consumers. The modal auxiliary verb ‘should’ is employed twice by the same participant in extract 11 and in reply 2. This verb is usually used in order to talk about obligation, making recommendations, or expressing probability. It can be argued that in both cases this verb is employed in order to discursively negotiate the relation between patriotic attitude, or ‘being a Polish patriot’ and the practice of purchasing ‘Polish products’. Consequently, it can be suggested that this is an example of the *transforming* strategy, where patriotism is connected with consumerist practices.
The deliberate use of nationalist appeals in order to increase sales and differentiate products available on the market is often employed by commercial entities to perpetuate the logic of commercial nationalism (Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011). This is a double logic since both commercial brands and states focus on generating profits by appealing to the national vibe as part of their ‘brand identity’. This practice of selling nationalism appeals also to “the reflexive form of nation identity building since the consumers are faced with a choice to purchase a specific version of national identification” (ibid:613). This logic of commercial nationalism is rather typical of the post-socialist countries in Central Europe undergoing a transformation that includes economic neo-liberal globalization, decline in public services and state-supported broadcasting, and development of a consumerist society.

It is important to note here that this notion of ‘practical patriotism’ that is present in the analyzed material is generally discussed and constructed as something that is rather new, if not controversial. The statement in reply 1 can be interpreted as confronting this idea of ‘practical patriotism’ and not only questioning its potential novelty but also stating that it is an abstract practice (‘praying to a slogan and symbol’). At the same time it can be argued that ‘practical patriotism’ is an acknowledged form of practice. Reply 2 offers an explanatory logic where patriotism is constructed as caring for the nation’s well-being. What is interesting about this logic is that the nation’s well-being is constructed in terms of international recognition (‘Poland’s prestige’). The word ‘prestige’ is connected here with ‘industry’ and ‘well-known brands’. This can be interpreted to mean that an act of ‘practical patriotism’ is not only about the support of the local community, but also about how this support implies the recognition and status of Poland internationally. So here we can see how the discursive logic connects the practice of purchasing Polish products as a form of support of the local community and economy with the importance of the external status and recognition of Poland abroad.

Replies 3 and 4 are the follow up from the same discussion. In reply 3 another participant asks about the possibility of this ‘practical patriotism’ when purchasing other kinds of products:

Reply 3

OK, a jesli chce kupic telefon, komputer, telewizor, mp3, samochod lub pile tarczowa? Jakies propozycje? (wilma.flintstone, F27, 2009)

OK, but if I want to buy a phone, computer, TV, mp3, car or a circular saw? Any suggestions? (wilma.flintstone, F27, 2009)

Reply 4

Tu propozycji brak niestety. Życie zwolennika patriotyzmu praktycznego jest jednak pełne frustracji... (trazybul, F27, 2009)

No suggestions here, unfortunately. The life of the practical patriotism advocate is actually full of frustrations... (trazybul, F27, 2009)
This short exchange illustrates that the notion of ‘practical patriotism’ is not taken for granted but rather negotiated by participants. Reply 3 can be interpreted as challenging the idea suggested earlier that patriotism can be a form of practice realized by purchasing a certain category of products that are ‘Polish’. The participant with the nickname ‘wilma.flinstone’ mentions different items of daily use. It can be argued that by mentioning these products the participant not only questions the idea of ‘practical patriotism’ in general but also points to potential obstacles that can occur on the way. In reply 4 ‘tranzylbul’ states that there are ‘no suggestions (…) unfortunately’ which can be interpreted as giving up the argument and acknowledging that the above-mentioned products of daily use are neither associated, produced or in any other way associated with Poland. The use of the word ‘frustrations’ can be read as suggesting that in spite of the strong will to support the Polish economy, there are a limited number of products that can be purchased on the basis of their ‘national provenience’. This statement can also be interpreted as a comment on the state of the Polish economy, which does not provide products that are attractive and recognized but also labeled ‘Polish’.

At the same time, in spite of the suggested difficulties in exercising ‘practical patriotism’ the examples above are suggesting the possibility of something different to the dominant-traditional understanding of patriotism in Poland. The idea of ‘practical patriotism’ can be connected to consumption, as a reflection of a broader development of the Polish society as a consumer society. Śpiewak (2005) suggests that one of the most significant aspects of the post-communist transformation in Poland has been the emergence of a dynamic group of consumers. He suggests that consumers have become one of the “most dynamic groups in social life and important actors of the social change” (ibid:161). Śpiewak connects the emergence of consumers to the developed post-communist understanding of freedom as a matter of individual choice and value. Individual needs and opportunities that were unfulfilled during the communist period suddenly became major foundations for how people approached the everyday life. Consequently this idea of freedom could have been best realized by 'Poles as a community of consumers, rather than workers or citizens’ (ibid.).

However, apart from addressing the broader changes in Polish society, the participants in the analyzed debate also touch upon yet another issue. They address Poland’s lack of symbolic value and other symbolic resources that it requires to succeed economically as a country. As Bandelj and Wherry (2011) point out, economic success results from the symbolic resources, such as narratives, reputations, status that nations, regions and communities have at their disposal. They suggest that “not all places can reap developmental benefits from their cultural wealth; cultural wealth needs to be activated or mobilized to have potential economic consequences” (ibid:8). In other words, the suggestions about ‘practical patriotism’ point to the fact that Poland is not a ‘culturally wealthy nation’ but rather a disadvantaged market.
and that this influences practices of managing the country’s reputation globally.

The importance of the symbolic value generated in terms of reputation and status of the nation is not only a matter of external communication about the nation to potential investors and tourists. States also make attempts to increase the prestige and success in economic terms on a domestic level. However, it is not enough to attach the nation’s label to the product. One can recall here the Polish government marketing campaign *Dobre, bo polskie* (Good because Polish) from the mid-2000s, which aimed to tackle unemployment, promote competition with Western producers, and support the protection of local companies. The campaign’s goal was to attract consumers by advertising the products as being of good quality. The adjective ‘Polish’ in this case was supposed to serve to guarantee that quality. The problematic aspect of this campaign can be related to the fact that in Poland the category of ‘Polishness’ is associated to a large extent with a traditional understanding of patriotism and thus sacrifice, battles, heroism and suffering rather than with good quality (Krajewski, 2006). In other words, gaining economic success in not merely about labeling products as ‘Polish’ but about the actual value that is associated with the nation, both internationally and domestically. Hence it can be suggested that the “new” form of patriotism is also about the cultural wealth and prestige of Poland as a country, that might in turn constitute the basis for future national pride. The following section addresses national pride as a potential outcome and prerequisite for international recognition.

**National pride: ‘yesterday’ and ‘today’**

The traditional understanding of patriotism in terms of heroism and sacrifice for the stateless nation has contributed to the development of a specific understanding of national pride in Poland. Pride for Poles has been primarily understood as an appreciation of certain historical events that have led to ultimate freedom after the collapse of communism. As research shows, Poles continue to express much pride of their history. The topic of national pride is also one of the emerging subjects in the studied debate on patriotism.

In the discussion from 2006 entitled “Lesson of patriotism” (see table 5) where participants share their reactions to the suggestion of introducing patriotic education in schools, one of the participants describes national pride as dependent on the historical and geopolitical situation of Poland:

> In a survey from 2006 conducted by one of the leading public opinion centers in Poland (TNS OBOP), 42 percent of Poles answered that they were particularly proud of their history, and 62 percent thought that Poles had suffered more than other nations in the course of history. For a copy of the report, see: http://www.tnsglobal.pl/archive-report/id/4325, 2011-08-23
Extract 12

Kiedyś, wystarczało samo istnienie Polski, by jej obywatele byli dumni ze swojego kraju, cieszyli się, że mogą żyć we własnym, wolnym państwie i byli gotowi bronić jej choćby i za cenę własnego życia. (...) dzisiaj nie wystarcza samo istnienie niepodległego państwa, by jego obywatele je docenili. (worldmaster1, F12, 2006)

Once, only the existence of Poland was enough for her citizens to be proud of their country, they were happy to live in their own, free state and they were ready to defend it even at the price of their own lives. (...) today just the existence of an independent state is not enough for its citizens to appreciate it. (worldmaster1, F12, 2006)

In the extract above, the participant discursively juxtaposes temporal references such as ‘once’ and ‘today’ in order to negotiate the difference between understandings of national pride. It can be argued that what this participant suggests is that national pride based on the existence of the nation-state is a characteristic of the past understanding of national pride (‘once’). However, the contemporary, post-socialist context differs from the past because the existence of the nation-state is no longer the only sufficient basis for the citizens to build their pride on. Therefore, it is suggested that there is a need for other, additional points of reference that can potentially become a source of national pride for Poles. This extract is rather typical of some arguments in the analyzed debate. Namely, the discursive distinction between ‘past’ and ‘present’ is a starting point to argue for and negotiate the need for redefinition of patriotism, national identity and consequently, re-branding of the nation. This also means that previously cherished national pride based on narratives of historical achievements of heroism is not sufficient. Moreover, it seems that after the collapse of the communist regime, the narratives of the nation that played the role of symbolic resources for the struggle against the regime became obsolete.

Research shows that during the last twenty years of transformation, Poles became more critical of the idea of national pride. For example the panel study conducted by the public opinion center CBOS\(^\text{78}\) shows that in a period of ten years, the sense of national pride in Poland had declined from 73 percent in 1994 to 54 percent in 2004. Declaration of national pride also negatively correlates with the socio-economic status; the lower the level of education and the worse the economic situation, the higher the sense of nation pride declared. The same study shows that the majority of people who declare a strong sense of national pride are over 55 years old, with elementary education, and living in rural areas. Those who express doubts about the shared history as the main reason for national pride belong to a group of young, mostly highly educated individuals living in urban areas. The report also concludes that the latter group is more likely to challenge the dominant representations of Polish history.

\(^{78}\)For a copy of the rapport, see: [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K_162_04.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2004/K_162_04.PDF), 2011-08-23
According to another study conducted by the same public opinion center in 2004, among the major possible factors responsible for the continuous decline of national pride in Poland are: the negative evaluation of Polish politics, the Polish economy, and the poor functioning of Polish institutions. However, the report does not mention the importance of international recognition of Polish achievements and the image of Poland abroad. It can be argued that one of the reasons for this is the focus on internal state affairs and construction of national pride on a domestic level. On the other hand, it can also be argued that decreasing national pride has to do with the negative press Poland received during the period when the conservative Kaczyński brothers government was in power. Present on the Polish political scene from the early 2000s, twin brothers - the late president Lech and the current opposition leader Jarosław - became known for their fierce nationalistic style and playing of the 'national card' during the negotiations with the EU. Although they eagerly accepted the EU as a valuable source of financial support for the growing Polish economy, they were rather explicit about accepting the support as a form of compensation for Poland’s past misfortunes rather than a form of genuine development assistance. Thus they were also happy to consider blocking negotiations with Brussels whenever Polish sovereignty was threatened. Additionally, through their conservative populist Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice Party) the Kaczyński brothers perceived themselves as champions of Polish nationhood and traditional Catholic, family and patriotic values.

The extracts below are from the 2005 discussion thread entitled “Declaring of ‘Tomorrow’s patriotism” (see table 5) that critically takes up the issue of identity politics practiced by the then conservative government. The participants in this discussion are almost unanimous and critical of the government’s plans to, among other things, introduce ‘patriotic education’ as a subject in public schools:

Extract 13
Patriotyzm to (...) jak lzy leca kiedy polscy sportowcy wygrywaja na olimpiadzie, albo w business-weeku czytamy, ze Polacy maja najlepszych programistow a Uniwersytet W-wski bije na glowe MIT, albo kiedy znajac historie potrafimy inteligentnie dyskutowac i wyjasniac nasza przeszlosc. Do tego nie trzeba tworzyc sztucznych instytucji - tego nikt nam nie odbierze ani nie da. (kbengi , F4, 2005)

Patriotism is when tears are shed when Polish athletes win at the Olympics, or when we read in a business-week (magazine) that Poles have the best programmers and that Warsaw University beats MIT, or when knowing history we can intelligently discuss and explain our past. This does not need any artificial institutions - this is (something) nobody will take away from nor give to us. (kbengi , F4, 2005)

Reply 1
Obliczem patiotyzmu moze byc duma z wspolnej przeszlosci i wynikajace stad poczucie wyzoszczy wobec innych.Tej pier-

Patriotism can mean pride in the common past and be related to the sense of superiority towards others. This first one Poles, contrary
to the historical logic, do not miss (…) the pride of the present is rather neglected, perhaps because while racing after a ‘decency’ living there is not so much time for it, or perhaps because (our) common present is way less interesting than my own one! Pride in our achievements both past and present is only possible if they exist, under the condition that they are recognized and if the term ‘achievement’ has meant and still means the same thing for us as for other nations. (1europejczyk, F4, 2005)

Extract 13 can be interpreted as an attempt to challenge the conservative, traditional vision of patriotism supported by the Polish government. Instead, patriotism is defined by naming different arenas such as sports, science and education where patriotism can be understood as more of a spontaneous practice rather than ‘learned’ at school subject. Moreover, these arenas imply concrete achievements recognized on an international level. Thus, such a form of patriotism is justified and ‘deserved’ because of achievements that can be recognized by others. Therefore, it can be argued that top-down state patriotism is challenged here. In the last sentence, the personal reference ‘us’ is employed discursively, which again can be read as suggesting that the ‘we’-nation is opposed to ‘them’, the state that imposes a certain vision of patriotism on its citizens.

In reply 1, the participant ‘1europejczyk’ suggests that the dominant vision of patriotism in Poland is based on the common past and the idea of historical exceptionality. At the same time it is argued that the pride that should be based on current achievements is neglected. The author suggests that a possible explanation for this condition relates to the focus on individual instead of collective needs. The statement ‘common present is way less interesting than my own one’ can be interpreted as a reference to the understanding of freedom as a matter of individual choice, which was popularized during the transformation. Śpiewak (2005) argues that one of the aspects of the post-socialist transformation in Poland has been the emergence of particular form of “asocial individualism” (ibid:165). He suggests that this anti-collectivist attitude became an obstacle in establishing collective civic projects and other forms of collective effort requiring compromise, solidarity and cooperation. This individualistic orientation of citizens may also explain why, apart from a few intellectual and artistic voices during the mid-2000s, there has not been a larger public debate openly challenging the dominant visions of patriotism and nationhood in Poland. It can also be suggested, however, that some of the debates, as the current study shows, have moved to cyberspace where citizens can relatively openly express their opinions and ideas.
For example, as reply 1 shows, the participant ‘1europejczyk’ discursively suggests the possibility of national pride in the ‘present’. This ‘new’ form of national pride would derive from the achievements that are recognized according to universal international standards. It is suggested that this pride could possibly include both past and present achievements. However, national pride is constructed as conditional, as a matter of achievements that ‘exist’ and that are recognized and understood in the same way by other nations. This latter condition can be interpreted as pointing to a specific Polish understanding of achievements in the historical sense of heroism, sacrifice and political victory. Consequently, it can be argued that in order to ‘be in the game’ Poland needs to adjust to the specific grammars of nationhood that operate globally.

I suggest that the extracts above are examples of how participants in the online debate discursively employ the transforming strategy to negotiate new meanings of national identity and what follows, a national brand. That is, internationally recognized Polish achievements can not only be a source of patriotism but can also boost national pride in the post-socialist context. To sum up, as the discussion above illustrates when it comes to the citizen online debates about patriotism, the international recognition of Polish achievements is one of the important aspects of the ‘new patriotism’ and a source of the ‘new national pride’. This ability to have something to ‘offer’ as a nation and a country in an international context is a form of cultural capital and symbolic value that becomes particularly important for the construction of Poles as ‘Europeans’.

**Poles as Europeans**

Since joining the structures of the European union in 2004 and even before that, Poland had an ambition of becoming a strong player when it comes to relations with other European countries. Because of Poland’s Christian heritage, one of the dominant pro-EU public discourses has been suggesting the rhetoric of a ‘return to Europe’ rather than joining it anew. Attitudes towards Europe, the European Union and ‘Europeanization’ were highly debated on the Polish political scene during the 2000s. The major division was between the so-called ‘euro-enthusiasts’ and the ‘euro-skeptics’, the former represented by the liberal Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform) and the latter by the conservative-populist Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice) party. In the analyzed material, one can also distinguish two major opposing visions. On the one hand Poland is discursively constructed as part of a Europe that is searching for new and alternative forms of patriotism. On the other hand, Europe and Polish national identity are constructed as mutually exclusive and thus not compatible with each other. The extracts below illustrate these contested, ambivalent visions.
National pride: Europe as an opportunity

Extract 14 comes from the article published by the *Eioba* portal, and is entitled “Future generation, (or) about modern Poles” (see table 6). As this citizen journalism portal regularly publishes the number of hits each single article receives, it can be mentioned that this article has received over two thousand hits in less than two years, which makes it one of the most popular articles in the analyzed sample from this portal. The article takes up the theme of the contemporary young generation of Poles who, as the author argues, are different from the previous generations because of their opportunity to live in a free and democratic Poland. Thus, being both Polish and European is as a natural element of life for this young generation.

**Extract 15** is from *Infotuba*’s portal’s article “To the railways for discovering the important value” (see table 7), one of the three articles nominated in the portals’ competition *Polska Różnorodna?* (Diverse Poland?) where citizens were asked to submit their articles and try to answer the question asked by the editorial team about what is special and original about Poland today, and what is connecting and what is dividing Poles. In the article that is cited below, the author writes about his experience of being on an overcrowded train somewhere in Poland and having an opportunity to listen to fellow passengers’ opinions about Polish politics and society. The overall argument in this article is that power of diversity lies in a dialogue with others who have different opinions, visions and points of view when it comes to state, politics and society. The extract below illustrates one such opinion about Poland’s strong position in Europe reported by the author of the article.

**Extract 14**

O współczesnych Polakach śmiało możemy powiedzieć, że są obywatelami Europy Zachodniej i euroentuzjastami, o czym świadczy ich zachodni styl bycia, zachowań, (...) Młodzi Polacy patrzą w przyszłość bez kompleksów i lęków, ponieważ w swoje możliwości, mają świadomość, że to od nich zależy ich przyszłość.

(Robert Monik, EIB10, 2009)

**Extract 15**

Jesteśmy w NATO, Unii Europejskiej, Polska to silny kraj z którym się liczą na świecie a ludziom żyje się dostatnio”.(...) Przecież jesteśmy zieloną wyspą na tle Europy, skutecznie opieramy się kryzysowi ekonomicznemu, banki funkcjonują normalnie, kraj się rozwija(...) nadal jesteśmy na doskonałej drodze by dogonić państwa Europy Zachodniej. Mamy szansę, trzeba ją tylko wykorzystać.

(Lukasz Rosiak, INF38, 2010)

About contemporary Poles we can boldly say that they are Western European citizens and euro enthusiasts; their western lifestyle and behavior prove that (...) Young Poles look into the future without complexes and fears, because they believe in their own possibilities and are aware that their future depends on them.

(Robert Monik, EIB10, 2009)

We are in NATO, the European Union, and Poland is a strong country taken into account internationally and people live wealthy lives’. (...) But we are a green island as compared with Europe, we effectively resist the economic crisis, banks are functioning normally, the country is developing (...), we are still on the perfect way to catching up with Western Europe. We have a chance, the only thing is we have to make use of it.

(Lukasz Rosiak, INF38, 2010)
It can be suggested that both extracts above are examples of the discursive construction of national identity achieved by the employment of the *constructive* strategy. In extract 14, the expression ‘Poles (...) are Western European citizens’ can be interpreted as suggesting that Polish people are not only citizens of Poland but also belong to Western Europe. However, this ‘European citizenship’ is evaluated on the basis of the Polish ‘euro-enthusiasm’ and ‘Western lifestyle. However, in the second part of this extract the adjective ‘young’ is employed to refer to a particular group of Polish people, which can suggest a reference to the young generation, who grew up or lived most of their life after the collapse of the communist regime.

While in extract 14 the *constructive* strategy is employed by referring to the Polish people in the third person plural (‘contemporary Poles’), in extract 15 the *personal* reference ‘we’ is employed to construct the Polish people and Poland as a European nation and country. The statement that ‘Poland is a strong country taken into account internationally’ can be juxtaposed with what was discussed earlier in this chapter about the need for recognition of Polish achievements internationally. When the debate focused on the notions of ‘practical patriotism’ some of the participants took up the importance and sometimes lack of global recognition of Poland. It can be suggested that when debate about Poland’s place in Europe is at stake, participants discursively negotiate between two major, opposite standpoints present on the Polish political scene, namely the division between ‘euro-enthusiasts’ and ‘euro-skeptics’. The extracts above are representative of the former. The positive attitude characteristic of ‘euro-enthusiasts’ is also present in the comment about the performance of Poland during the economic crisis. At the same time, in spite of the positive attitude and solid performance, the statement ‘we are still on the perfect way to catching up with Western Europe’ may suggest that Poland has not yet achieved a similar level of development, although it has chances to do it in the future.

This idea of Poland and Poles ‘becoming European’ is also present in other parts of the analyzed debate. For example the national and European identities are discussed in the context of Polish patriotism and possibilities for its redefinition. The two extracts below come from articles published online by *Gazeta Wyborcza* (see table 1) and are part of the analyzed *Czas Patriotów* (The time of patriots) article series. Extract 16 is from the article entitled “Patriotism: love and shame”, and extract 17 is from the article “Open patriotism”. Both articles develop a similar argument about the need for public and collective redefinition of patriotism in Poland that would also include identification with Europe:
Extract 16
UE nie jest po prostu organizacją międzynarodową taką, jak wszystkie inne. Stąd potrzeba redefiniowania patriotyzmu polskiego w Unii, szukania formuły, na mocy której bycie polskim patriotą nie jest sprzeczne z byciem patriotą europejskim
(Wojciech Sadurski, GA3, 2010)

The EU is not just some international organization like any other one. That is why there is a need to redefine Polish patriotism in the (European) Union, to search for a formula, based on which being a Polish patriot is not contradictory with being a European patriot.
(Wojciech Sadurski, GA3, 2010)

Extract 17
Nowy polski patriotyzm powinien być tożsamy i otwarty na Europę i patriotyzm europejski, tak aby Polacy czuli się w Europie jak w domu, który kochają i za którego losy również ponoszą odpowiedzialność. Otwarty patriotyzm powinien szukać swoich nowych mitów, które będą kształtować Polaków, jako ludzi gotowych do podejmowania wielkich wyzwań, pozytywnie myślących o świecie.
(Blazej Lenkowski, GA11, 2010)

The new Polish patriotism should be identifying with and be open for Europe and European patriotism, so that Poles would feel the same way about Europe as about home, that it is a place they love and for which they are also responsible. Open patriotism should search for its new mythologies, which would shape Poles as people ready to take on great challenges, thinking positively about the world.
(Blazej Lenkowski, GA11, 2010)

Contrary to the constructive strategy employed in extracts 14 and 15 where participants discursively suggest Poland is part of Europe, the extracts above are examples where participants discursively suggest Poland is becoming part of Europe. In extract 16 the statement ‘there is a need to redefine Polish patriotism in the European Union’ can be interpreted as suggesting that Poland’s membership of the European Union requires broader forms of identification that are not solely limited to the nation-state. This can be interpreted as an example of the transforming strategy, where new meanings of national identity are proposed discursively. Additionally, the statement that the two forms of identification are ‘not contradictory’ can be read as a hint that the author is aware of discourses that suggest the opposite. In extract 17 the adjective ‘new’ is employed in relation to ‘new patriotism’ and ‘new myths’, which points to a dismantling strategy where the author attempts to discursively deconstruct and challenge the dominant ‘old’ vision of patriotism in Poland. Also, the employment of the modal verb ‘should’ (powinien) can be interpreted as a recommendation or advice given from a privileged position.

To sum up, it can be argued that the two extracts above are rather typical of the discourse of ‘euro-enthusiasm’ promoted by the civic and liberal-oriented Gazeta Wyborcza. However, this pro-European attitude can also be perceived as a reaction to the specific nationalist discourse of the conservative right. Therefore, I suggest that the ‘new patriotism’ promoted in the analyzed series of articles and letters, but also present in some of the online discussions and citizen articles, is based to a large extent on the criticism of the idea of patriotism supported by the conservative right. This is that ‘new patriotism’, described as ‘modern’, ‘open’, and ‘inclusive’ is negotiated in
relation to or against the ‘traditional’, ‘closed’ and ‘exclusive’ vision of patriotism supported by the ethno-religious vision of the nation and patriotism as defending the national interest (Walicki, 1991). Following this logic, if the ‘old’ patriotism is oriented towards the national interests of the state, the ‘new’ one invites identification with other formations such as ‘Europe’.

Overall, it can be argued that the four extracts above illustrate ‘euro-enthusiasm’ where Poland and Polish identity are represented as embracing the fact of already being or becoming part of Europe, particularly the European Union. The popular ‘back to Europe’ slogan can be characterized by promises of progress, modernization, political stabilization, economic prosperity and liberalization of culture. However, these enthusiastic proclamations of Polish ‘Europeanness’ can and often are employed to conceal the problematic narratives of national identity. This process reflects what Marciniak (2010) calls the ‘euphoria of transnational progress’, the pro-European discourse popularized in the Polish media, particularly around the time of Poland’s accession to the European Union. The ‘euphoria of transnational progress’ is a concept to describe how the pro-European enthusiasm conceals attitudes of indifference towards various practices of exclusion, and economic and racial oppression. It is also employed to symbolically silence the spaces and practices of hate, violence and visual assault such as racist and anti-Semitic graffiti present on walls in the majority of Polish urban spaces. Therefore, it can be argued that becoming ‘European’ can be seen as an opportunity for Poland, and the Polish image abroad, particularly when it comes to the young generation. At the same time, as the following section will show, while ‘Europeanness’ can be an opportunity for some it can be also considered a threat to others.

National fear: Europe as a threat to Polishness

The enthusiastic pro-European debate about Poland’s place in Europe can be juxtaposed with the vision of Europe as a strange and foreign monster. In the analyzed material the discourse of ‘euro-enthusiasm’ can be juxtaposed with the one of ‘euro-skepticism’. While the former embraces Europe as an opportunity for Poland’s development and open patriotism, the latter focuses on Europe and the European Union as a potential threat to the Polish identity and sovereignty.

Extracts 18 and 19 are from two different articles published by the portal Infotuba (see table 7). Extract 18 is from the article “The time of patriots” (see table 7) which can be interpreted as paraphrasing and referring to Gazeta Wyborcza’s series with the same title. The article presents a critical and negative evaluation of the Polish liberal elites’ ‘pro-European’ politics. Instead, the author suggests that Polish sovereignty and patriotism need to be defended against ‘foreign’ influence in the name of national interest. Extract 19 is from the article “Rough thoughts on the fate of the Polish language”
(see table 7) which is a comment on the suggestion to decrease the amount of lessons in the Polish language at schools. The author points out the importance of language as an element of national identity. In both articles, Polish identity is presented as important and potentially threatened by the idea of Europe and ‘Europeanness’:

Extract 18

Mit europejskości prysnął, jak mydlana bąbelka, a zatem nienawiść i pogarda dla własnej historii, tradycji i kultury, oraz odrzucenie własnej narodowej tożsamości nie jest już „cool i trendy” w nowoczesnej Europie.
(Centurion, INF51, 2011)

The European myth burst like a soap bubble, so that hatred and disdain of one’s own history, tradition and culture and rejection of one’s own national identity are no longer ‘cool and trendy’ in modern Europe.
(Centurion, INF51, 2011)

Extract 19

Ciekawe tylko gdzie się obudzimy? Czy nie w Europie bez tożsamości narodowej, w której Polacy piszą na forach internetowych my Niemcy, zapominając na każdym kroku skąd przyszli?
(Dawid Miedziocha, INF5, 2008)

I am curious about where we will wake up? Perhaps in Europe, without a national identity where Poles are writing on internet forums (presenting themselves as) ‘we Germans’, forgetting at every step where they come from?
(Dawid Miedziocha, INF5, 2008)

Extract 18, where the participant refers to the bursting of the ‘European myth’, can be interpreted as a comment on the economic and financial crisis across the Eurozone which has been part of the global financial crisis since 2008. This comment can also be interpreted as suggesting that ‘Europeanness’ is an idea that is not grounded in reality, hence a ‘myth’ which is associated with something opposite to ‘real’. As such, this ‘European myth’ is put against the national ‘history, tradition and culture’. Consequently, one could argue that in the context where idea of ‘Europeanness’ is fading due to the economic crisis, national identity is not only stronger but also the two are mutually exclusive. A similar argument is presented in extract 19. Here, the personal reference ‘we’ is employed in order to directly address the Polish people as a nation. The national ‘we’ is discursively presented as endangered by the potential ‘Europe without national identity’. Such a vision of Europe is presented as impossible to accept and as threatening the national identity. It can be suggested that taking into account the Polish political and historical experience, the idea of ‘Europeanness’ among the ‘euro-skeptics’ can be perceived as potentially threatening the Polish national sovereignty that has been regained after many years of foreign oppression.

The idea of ‘Europe’ or ‘Europeanness’ can also, as extract 20 illustrates, be considered a threat to the traditional Polish patriotism. This extract is from the article “Unfashionable patriotism” published by the Eioba portal (see table 6). The article presents criticism of the pro-European, ‘euro-enthusiastic’ politics promoted by the Polish liberal political elite. The title is
an allusion to the idea of a trendy, modern civic patriotism promoted by liberals, as opposed to the traditional patriotism based on national heroism and martyrdom:

Extract 20


(Jaszczurka, EIB9, 2010)

This extract is an example of how sarcasm and irony are discursively employed in order to construct European and national identities as mutually exclusive. In the first line the statement ‘patriotism is fading away so that Europeanism would get promoted’ is a sharp and bitter sarcastic remark suggesting that Polish patriotism is being replaced by the idea of ‘Europeanism’, so instead of Polish patriotism, identification with Europe is imposed on the Polish people. This comment can also be interpreted as criticizing the ‘euro-enthusiastic’ attitude of the Polish government that is blind to the consequences of the financial crisis in Europe and particularly in Greece. The spatial reference ‘idyll at our place’ is employed to construct Poland as a place where the consequences of the crisis are not felt to the same extent. The rhetorical question ‘how long will it last?’ can be interpreted to mean it might be just a matter of time until Poles realize that the ‘European promise’ of modernization and progress has not been what they were expecting. In the last sentence of this extract, the ‘European’ and the ‘patriot’ are juxtaposed and presented as sharply different. I suggest that this can be interpreted as a form of ironic, sarcastic comment on the discourse promoted by the ‘euro-enthusiasts’. Here, the idea of ‘Europe’ associated with modernity, openness and progress is negotiated and juxtaposed with the ‘euro-skeptics’ who particularly focus on national identity and patriotism ‘at home’.

Previous research shows that the linguistic devices such as irony, sarcasm, humor and satire can be discursively employed in order to achieve such outcomes as dealing with group norms, encouraging internal order, raising delicate matters or managing tensions (Clift, 1999, Billig, 2005). I suggest that in the analyzed material, the tensions within Polish society are dealt with on the discursive level by distinguishing at least two separate groups; those who support Poland’s integration with Europe and those who perceive it as a potential threat to Polish sovereignty. As discussed earlier in chapter 4, Polish public debate at least during the second half of the 00s has
been saturated with divisions and ‘culture wars’ between the liberal, civic discourse of the Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform), and the conservative-populist Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice) party. The latter had an ambition to promote the traditional vision of patriotism that has met with criticism from the opposition, intellectuals, artists and others who argued that the right cannot monopolize one vision of patriotism and national identity in the public sphere. The sarcastic rhetoric employed in the online discussions can also function as a form of provocation, so that one wants to attract others to take part in the debate (Wästerfors, 2005). I would argue that in the analyzed material, the concept of patriotism is often discursively negotiated by the employment of irony. In this way the traditional heroic vision of patriotism can be questioned or challenged.

However, as extract 20 shows, the difference between ‘Europeans’ and ‘patriots’ is not only a rhetorical tool but rather a comment on the actual divisions within Polish society. In other words, the distinction between these two groups reflects the process of ‘internal othering’ or ‘domestic orientalism’ (Buchowski, 2006) that has been taking place in Poland since the beginning of transformation. That is, the new post-socialist order has not only led to modernization, progress and an increase of global mobility but has also sharpened the social divisions, often along the lines of the urban and rural divide, and also the divisions of age and level of education. As Buchowski (2006) suggests “social inequality is thus reproduced not only by the uneven distribution of power and wealth (…) but also by the daily routine and opposition to such difference” (ibid:474). This is to say that the ‘euro-skeptics’ who are resisting the process of ‘Europeanization’ of Poland and mobilizing in the name of national solidarity and patriotism are also reproducing the difference between themselves and the ‘euro-enthusiasts’.

As the extract above shows, managing these tensions and unprivileged social positions can be discursively achieved by the employment of irony and sarcasm. Consequently, one could argue that it is not ‘Europe’ as such that is constructed as threatening Polish identity but rather the discourses of progress, modernization and development that are supported by the ‘euro-enthusiasts’ in Poland.

As Rupnik (2012) argues in the context of the recent euro crisis, Poland is an exception in Central Eastern Europe when it comes to the reactions to the economic crisis in Europe. He suggests that, for example while the Czech Republic has been very skeptical, and Hungary reacted mostly with nationalist attitudes, Poland remains a euro-enthusiastic country that has an ambition to become a strong actor on the European scene. However, as the analysis shows, this enthusiasm is not shared by the entire Polish society. Rupnik argues that modernization “in Europe’s name” has been the dominant feature of the transformation and that this process has sharpened the divide between the urban, educated middle class in the western parts of Poland and the more rural, conservative classes in the eastern parts. Consequently, it can be ar-
guessed that the ‘new image’ of Poland as a strong, developed European country is shared only by some groups of the society.

In spite of the popularized opinions that European identity might suppress national ones, the analysis by Moes (2009) shows that European and national forms of identification do not have to be mutually exclusive but rather can complement each other. However, Moes based his conclusions on interviews with Polish university students, so the results are far from conclusive. At the same time, these results seem to confirm conclusions from the Polish quantitative study by the Centre of Public Opinion Research (CBOS) from 200979 which suggests two separate models of collective identification among the Polish people. The first one encompasses identification with local communities and regions, and is popular among older members of the population, the less educated, and those living in rural areas or small towns. The second one suggests that those who identify with “Poland” as the whole country in the first place also chose Europe as a second aspect of collective identification. This second model is more popular among groups that are young, educated, middle class and living in the big cities.

In conclusion, one could suggest that in the quest for the new national image, identification with Europe becomes a social marker that distinguishes the social and political elites from the less privileged groups of Polish society. In the context of an online debate, Poland’s ‘Europeanness’ is a discursively contested and highly ambivalent position constructed on the one hand as an opportunity to develop the country and improve its international reputation, and as a threat to national identity and sovereignty on the other.

Summary

The main focus of this chapter has been on the process of construction, and elements of the emerging new nation brand. Additionally, the question posed was how this process is achieved discursively by the participants in the online debate on Polish patriotism. The analysis of the material points out that the construction of the new nation brand focuses on the process of distancing from the traditional ‘old’ vision of patriotism, which is associated with past heroic struggles for independence and supported by the dominant national mythologies. By employing both transforming and dismantling strategies, participants discursively negotiate the difference between the past and the present. This is done by suggesting the dismantling of the national mythologies associated mostly with heroism and martyrdom.

This logic of difference between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ Poland is also present when referring to the contemporary context constructed as ‘modern’.

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The latter is constructed by the employment of such *temporal* references as ‘today’. This emphasis on the ‘modern times’ can be juxtaposed with the concept of normality discussed in the previous chapter. ‘Normality’, along with ‘modernity’ and ‘progress’, are terms employed in the analyzed material to construct an image of Poland as a country that either is already Western or on its way to achieving certain level of civilizational development so that it can be compared with other Western European countries.

The term ‘practical patriotism’ is employed to suggest national identification can take place via practices of consumption that include purchasing products that come from Poland. This discursive connecting of national identity and consumerist practices can be considered an example of the *transforming* strategy. What employment of this discursive strategy achieves is to suggest that consumerist practices are about the support of the country and the international recognition of Poland as an element of the national image. I suggest that the idea of ‘practical patriotism’ implies conforming to the logic of commercial nationalism, where purchasing of ‘Polish products’ equates with showing support for Poland as a country. At the same time, along with the discursive attempts to transform not only the national identity and the national brand, participants address the problematic aspects of lack of symbolic resources and ‘cultural wealth’ that Poland can offer. Consequently, it can be argued that the construction of the new nation brand is a matter of discursive negotiation; it is as much about distancing from the past and suggesting new meanings as about acknowledging the shortcomings that Poland is facing globally as a country in transition.

National pride is constructed in the material as an important issue that urgently needs re-branding. The *temporal* references such as ‘once’ and ‘today’ are employed to mark the time difference between the historical and contemporary contexts. International recognition of Poland as a nation is constructed in terms of the achievements that can boost Polish national pride both home and abroad. I propose that this new national pride can be interpreted in terms of adjusting to the specific logic of “grammars of national-hood” (Mihelj, 2011). This is to say that the new national pride as based on international achievements, and recognition is part of the standardized system of categorizing and organizing the national difference. Consequently, the new nation brand that is debated by citizens online must conform to that standardized global system of national difference and recognition.

However, despite a certain level of unanimity when it comes to distancing from the ‘old’ and focusing on the ‘new’, the issue of Poland’s ‘European-ness’ is one of the most contested topics in the analyzed material. Europe is constructed as both an opportunity and a threat to Polishness. It can be argued that similarly to the contested issue of migration discussed in the previous chapter, this ambivalence reflects the internal divisions in the Polish society and the inherent ambivalence of the process of post-socialist transformation. While global mobility and possibilities to work abroad can be
perceived as chances for Poland and Poles to grow, they can also be seen as potentially threatening national sovereignty and independence.

If we take into account the discussion from the previous chapter, the analysis of the material shows that Poles are deeply concerned with their national identity and self-image. The discursive logic depicted in the analysis presented in this chapter suggests that distancing from the past is a prerequisite for achievement ‘normality’ leading to modernization, and consequently also to a new nation brand and a new form of patriotism. It can be suggested that while nation is represented in terms of ethno-cultural unity, as discussed in chapter 7, the discussion of the new nation brand points to the process of nation re-branding towards a more open and inclusive vision of patriotism that may suggest civic understanding of nation and national identity. However, at the same time, the nation brand is an object of discursive negotiation, ambivalence and contestation.

Particularly interesting from the analytical point of view is the employment of personal references, such as “we”. As I argued earlier, the discursive employment of this personal pronoun can be interpreted in terms of discursive construction of the cultural national intimacy. In this chapter the construction of “we-ness” is achieved in at least three different ways. First, “we” is constructed as referring to the Polish nation as an ethno-cultural and historical project and shared experience. Secondly, “we” refers also to Poland as a “country” in the process of transformation, particularly when it comes to negotiation of the new form of patriotism that implies construction of Poland and Polish achievements recognized internationally. Third, “we” is also constructed as the Polish people as opposed to “them”, namely the state. In the latter case it can be argued that participants discursively construct the difference between regular citizens on the one hand and political elites on the other.

In relation to the construction of “we” as people opposing the state, the practice of discursive negotiation of the new nation brand can be seen as subverting the notions of patriotism that are supported by the government. Consequently, the discursive construction of the “we-ness” is a part of an online process of formation of political identity, in this case, national identity. Therefore, it can be argued that although contested and ambivalent, it is taken for granted that the new nation brand is an issue of common concern for the Polish people.
This study departed from the idea that in spite of views to the contrary, nationalism continues to remain one of the most important social, political and cultural aspects of contemporary life. This project has had two goals: theoretical and empirical. The first goal has been to provide a theoretical framework to understand why, in spite of the attempts to challenge and look for alternatives, nationalism remains a powerful ideology. In the light of this framework, the goal has been to understand the relationship between nationalism and patriotism. Furthermore, the framework addressed the scholarship and practice on what is sometimes debated as a recent challenge to nationalism, namely practices of nation branding. By problematizing nation branding as a practice done not necessarily only by experts but also by regular citizens, I asked whether we are facing the possibility of emergence of a new type of nationalism.

Nationalism revisited

The theoretical point of departure in chapter 2 has been previous studies on nationalism. I argued that the traditional literature on nationalism has developed a dualistic and normative logic of thinking of nationalism as both civic, Western and “good”, or ethnic, Eastern and “bad”. I suggested that more recent critical approaches to nationalism that focus more on the discursive, daily practices of national reproduction and nationalism as ideology have the potential to challenge these persistent dichotomies. Therefore, instead of two separate inconceivable types of nationalism, we can describe nationalism as a broad and complex phenomenon that is reproduced on a daily basis. However, I also pointed out that even if scholars do not directly agree with the civic/ethnic distinction within nationalism studies, they often make attempts at theorizing about forms of collective identification and legitimization as alternatives to nationalism.

One among such alternatives is the concept of patriotism, theorized as having the potential to replace nationalism on the basis of more universalis-
tic principles spreading beyond the realm of single nation-states. However, I argued that the concept of patriotism is a tricky one, especially if we look at the understanding of this concept in other than the dominant Anglo-Saxon literature. Particularly in the context of countries with a historical tradition of statelessness, such as Central and Eastern Europe, patriotism resembles more a form of cultural and liberal rather than civic nationalism. As such, patriotism is theorized as having potential for nation building and can positively influence the process of transition towards liberal democratic order. At the same time, with the emphasis on culture, patriotism also carries the risk of developing into a form of problematic culturalism, an ideology that favors national culture over others. Having said this, one might still wonder; what is the relationship between nationalism and patriotism?

Based on the discussion in chapter 2, I suggested that the two concepts should not be theorized as separate and mutually exclusive. This is not only because empirical research shows that they often co-exist in practice, but also because it leads to the reproduction of the logic of difference in thinking about nationalism and urges us to search for alternatives. Consequently, making distinctions between both nationalism and patriotism is also flawed. Instead, if we take into account that nationalism is an ideology operating discursively through a set of daily practices, we may look at patriotism as an analytical concept. As such, patriotism is part of the rhetoric of nationalism, providing the linguistic tools to construct the reality around us, also in terms of representations of national unity, sameness and difference. I suggest that by emphasizing that patriotism is neither an alternative nor merely a type of nationalism, we may possibly explain the popularity and continuous endurance of nationalism and practices of national identification in different, changing contexts. One such context that may be helpful for understanding contemporary nationalism and its ‘updated’ forms is the growing field of nation branding.

If we consider the history of nationalism and capitalism as taking parallel paths, then nation branding is an example where diplomacy, flags and wars recognized as signs of the “hard power” of nationalism, are replaced by the “soft power” of images and catchy slogans. The general focus of the scholarship on nation branding has been either on practical or political consequences and implications of these processes. The practical consequences of nation branding are topics of scholarship focusing on campaigns and practices organized and performed by experts such as advertising consultants employed by governments. The main goal of such campaigns is to come up with a cohesive nation brand that is commercially attractive and competitive on the market of global exchange.

Based on the growing literature that critically examines the political consequences of nation branding practices, in chapter 3 I suggested that nation branding combines nationalism and market ideology to operate as a “soft” kind of power. By doing this, nation branding conforms to the logic of
“grammars of nationhood” by making global relations possible. I also suggested that nation branding provides a particularly attractive form of legitimacy for the post-communist elites, who are looking for improvement of their respective nation brands, both domestically and internationally. For post-socialist countries, like Poland, the question of a new national image became not only a matter of prestige and global recognition but also, as discussed in chapter 4, a matter of dealing with the cultural and national identity crisis.

Because the main goal of nation branding campaigns is to produce a coherent nation brand for external audiences, the process of construction of a nation brand internally, on the domestic level is usually overlooked in literature. Therefore, I argued that even if nation as an economic object of exchange and nation as an ethno-cultural project of exclusion are not the same thing, one does not immediately exclude the other. This is to say that if we assume that nation branding constitutes an ‘updated’ form of nationalism, we cannot limit ourselves entirely to elitist practices. Departing from this assumption, I suggested that the concept of nation re-branding can be helpful to critically examine, understand and explain the dynamics of nation brand construction with a particular focus on citizens’ discursive practices online. As I argued in chapter 5, cyberspace is a growing public arena where different forms of citizen engagement in issues related to nations and nationalism take place. This concerns various forms of mobilization ranging from political activism, the emergence of “virtual nations” to connecting on the level of cultural national intimacy. In relation to the latter, I suggested that this concept may be helpful to understand how citizens connect from the private sphere in order to raise issues of public concern, and how they discursively achieve connection on cultural and national levels. This connection online is particularly important in relation to nation re-branding practices that can be understood as an emerging civic habit. I also argued that problematizing nation branding in a post-socialist context as having an impact on our “social imagery” entails problematization of the transformation process.

So, can we say that what we are facing here is a new type of nationalism? The answer is no. However, as this dissertation aimed to illustrate, by addressing nationalism through the “bottom-up” discursive practices of citizens and the socio-cultural circumstances in which these discourses emerge we can learn more about nationalism as an ideology and means of national reproduction. So, instead of searching for alternatives, or new types of nationalism, I suggest that what we are dealing with here is the emergence of new forms of civic and political engagement online. Thus, in order to better understand nationalism, we should look at different ways citizens involve themselves in political matters. One of these ways is nation re-branding, which has the potential to explain how nationalism can be discursively reproduced, challenged and transformed in an online context. In other words, if we problematize nationalism in this way, we will be able to learn more about why it continues to remain such a powerful ideology, especially in a digital age.
New politics of nationalism in a digital age

As we can see from the discussion in the preceding chapters, nationalism is far from fading into oblivion. Instead, it is reproduced discursively by citizens who are taking advantage of the emerging venues available in cyberspace. The concept of nation re-branding points to negotiation, ambivalence and tensions within the nationalist discourse. It is also helpful to understand that citizen involvement in political matters can take place by addressing nation and nationalism in an implicit way through the concept of patriotism. This, of course, is not to deny the presence of more extreme forms of nationalism in cyberspace. However, the focus in this dissertation has consistently been on the less conspicuous side of nationalism that sometimes passes unnoticed, mostly because it addresses the sense of “we-ness” based on the intimate idea of connection on the cultural level.

I suggest that nationalism continues to appeal as an attractive point of identification because it transforms and adjusts to the new patterns of civic engagement, particularly in the online context. This is to say that nationalism is a political matter, but not necessarily in terms of formal politics as an instrumental activity for achieving certain goals. It is rather part of the “new politics” pointing to engagement beyond the parliamentary system and beyond the nation-state borders (Dahlgren, 2009). This new type of politics, as an expressive and performative activity, is about transformation related to the processes of individualization, shifting from traditional forms of participation and involvement to issue-based participation. In other words, this transformation also means “altered modes of participation and newer notions of what constitutes politics and the political” (ibid:7).

In a climate where cultural and political markers of national identification are being transformed to suit the language of consumerist, individual lifestyles, market exchange and transnational corporations, nationalism is being transformed as well. However, this does not mean the disappearance of a passion for politics. Quite the contrary. The mobilization and activism online has never been more present. If we assume that the political is, as Mouffe (2005) reminds us, a “dimension that is inherent to every human society that determines our very ontological condition” (ibid:3), then nationalism, is part of the process of doing “new politics”. Recent studies of negotiation of political identities in the internet age bring us to a similar conclusion.

For instance, in a study of how the Chinese youth are negotiating political identity in the internet age, Liu (2012) argues that online nationalism constitutes an important form of “new politics” in the Chinese context. More specifically, it is the concept of patriotism (‘aiguo zhuyi’ in Chinese) that is employed to negotiate the political self that is divorced from the state, government, or the party’s official nationalism. Instead, Liu argues, nationalism “represents a critique of the present and a yearning for a better world” (ibid:66) and is an aspect of social transformation. The current study, alt-
hough adopting a different perspective, suggests a similar argument. By claiming that *nation re-branding* is part of the process of reproduction of nationalism, this study ultimately contributes to the scholarship on nationalism by adopting a sociological reflection. This is to say that ‘nation’ and ‘national identity’ are sociological categories, and in the same manner as other categories such as ‘class’, ‘gender’, ‘race’ or ‘family’ are basic concepts employed by humans in order to provide meaning to their social world (cf Thompson & Fevre, 2001). As the empirical part of this study has illustrated, nation and national identity are objects of discursive struggle and negotiation and as such, important aspects in the process of negotiation of the nation brand. Additionally, by analyzing and explaining the actual process of discursive negotiation of the nation brand in the online context, this thesis also makes a contribution to media and communication studies by exploring *nation re-branding* as a form of civic engagement in the online context. This topic, along with exploring the new politics and alternative forms of civic engagement online, may be worthwhile areas for further research.

**Re-branding: From nation to country**

The dissertation’s second, empirical goal has been to focus on the online debate on patriotism in a Polish post-socialist context. By addressing forms of civic engagement online the goal has been to discursively analyze the process of *nation re-branding*. More specifically, the focus has been on emerging representations of nation, on aspects contributing to the construction of national sameness and difference, as well as on elements of the emerging new nation brand in a post-socialist context. As the empirical analysis of this study illustrates, the discursive construction of nation and national identities in the online context is a complex, dynamic and multi-dimensional process.

The empirical material of this study is situated in the post-socialist Polish debate on patriotism. As I argued earlier, Poland is a Central European country that over the past twenty years or so has been undergoing the complex process of systemic, political, economic, social and cultural transformation. I argued that the transition in Poland can also be understood in national terms. This means that questions of national identity and patriotism are of particular relevance for the public debate. More specifically, and as shown in chapter 4, understandings of patriotism, nation and identity in the new democratic context have become the basis of political struggles. These struggles have revealed that in spite of the hopes for a smooth and relatively painless transition, the political scene in Poland became separated into two major political factions, a process that further deepened the divisions within the society. At the same time, in 2002 the Polish government embarked on a large nation
branding campaign led by a UK-based consulting agency. Consequently, one can speak of a discrepancy between the internally-oriented domestic struggles and identity politics on the one hand and the externally-oriented expert-driven practices of nation branding on the other.

The empirical analysis illustrates that nation re-branding can be described as a process of discursive negotiation in the Polish case. This negotiation implies, as shown in chapter 7, construction and representations of Poland as a nation in ethno-cultural terms as well as a country in terms of civilizational development. Also, as illustrated in chapter 8, the emergence of the new nation brand implies negotiation between notions of past and present, tradition and modernity, internal and external perspectives on nation. The struggle to define the new nation brand takes place through negotiation between at least two different visions of the national community. One implies the ethno-cultural vision of nationhood based on commonly shared character and values. The other one suggests a vision of a more civic-oriented nationhood, representing Poland as a ‘normal’ and ‘modern’ European country. These two visions of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ patriotism could be compared with the ethnic and civic visions of nationhood respectively. However, in the analyzed debate, these visions are not mutually exclusive.

I suggest that the process of nation re-branding implies both reproduction and dismantling of different visions of nationhood. Depending on the context, the dominant representations of nation can be reproduced or challenged. To put it in perspective we can say that the goal of ‘regular’ nation branding campaigns is to provide a new coherent nation brand suggested by experts. Since the goal in this case is to address external audiences, the process of turning a nation into a country requires no more than suggesting a new nation brand. One might ask, however, what happens to the ‘old’ brand? Can it be simply replaced by the new one? If we look at the process of nation re-branding as practiced by citizens online, we can immediately see that dealing with an ‘old’ brand is equally as important as introducing the new one. Therefore, the processes of discursive dismantling, challenging and transforming of both internally and externally communicated national image plays an important role and cannot be overlooked. Here, the process of turning a nation into a country is much more complex, because it entails considering the nation both in terms of its ethno-cultural unity as well as its cultural wealth in terms of economic value. At the same time, the dismantling of the ‘old’ nation brand is highly selective and does not immediately include questioning of all the national stigmas. These conclusions, pointing to the crucial role of citizens in the process of nation re-branding, may be found useful by various nation branding experts. That is, the potential ‘success’ of the new brand heavily relies on citizens’ view on both internal and external perspectives and the discrepancies between them.

As the empirical analysis shows, the logic of nation re-branding is, after all, an improvement of the nation brand that can be communicated external-
ly. Hence, the debate about the new patriotism focuses to a large extent on Poland becoming a brand that can successfully compete with other nation brands. Consequently, participants question and challenge only those representations that do not comply with the image of Poland as a ‘modern’ and ‘normal’ country. This is the case with the Catholic narrative of the Polish nation. Although not directly challenged, it is questioned as part of the Romantic narrative, and constructed as belonging to ‘tradition’ and the ‘past’. At the same time, Poland’s Christianity is reproduced as an inherent element of the Polish nation and culture. So, it can be suggested that the process of construction of the new brand is not only negotiation between different narratives and representations but is also about ambivalences and tensions between them. This brings us to the issue of how nation re-branding can problematize the post-socialist transformation.

**Nation re-branding and the problematization of transition**

The discursive analytical tools employed in the analysis, such as the four strategies of construction of national identity, show that political identities are formed in the process of negotiation of contested visions of nationhood. This approach can potentially challenge the assumption that the process of democratic transition implies a relatively smooth shift from communism to democracy and from ethnic to civic nationalism (Kuzio, 2002). I suggest that the emerging tensions between the competing visions of nationalism in the analyzed material can be related to the post-socialist culture and identity struggles in Poland. The tensions and ambivalences in the process of negotiation of nation brand are not necessarily only between ethnic and civic nationalism but rather within the realm of the shift from the previously oppressed nation towards a modern country and democratic state. It is within this context of transition that participants in the online debate make sense of the national identity and emerging new nation brand.

The main point about nation branding is that it is a double-edged phenomenon. It is both empowering and exploiting; it is about the national pride and recognition of collective subjectivity but it also follows the exclusionary and exploitative logic of consumer capitalism. Thus, I suggest that nation re-branding as a contested and ambivalent process of negotiation reveals the competing discourses within the realm of the post-socialist transformation. As I argued earlier, scholars (e.g. Marciniak, 2006, 2010) emphasize the ambivalence of the post-socialist space in Poland. On the one hand there is the celebratory rhetoric of global mobility suggesting possibilities and opportunities to embrace the “New Europe”, challenge the ‘old’ visions of patriotism, and declare new sources of national pride. On the other hand, how-
ever, there are multiple instances of aggravated racial, economic and ethnic oppression often occurring in the form of assaults on Polish streets and theorized by some scholars as being part of the process of “internal orientalism” and stigmatization (Buchowski, 2006, Kalb, 2009).

This post-socialist ambivalence is a source of tension and internal division. This tension is also present in the analyzed material in the form of negotiation between different opportunities and threats. For instance, both migration and Europe are constructed as potentially threatening Polishness, but they also emerge as opportunities to embrace the new global order. Thus, one could argue that the online context where the negotiation of nation brand takes place, is also a space for contested discourses. It is also important to point out that ambivalence and tensions between inclusion and exclusion, equality and discrimination are in fact fundamental elements of nationalism inscribed in the fabric of national imagination.

Finally, it can be argued that whatever ambivalence this study has found, it is possible to point out that in the process of nation re-branding online citizens are granted a form of agency that can potentially translate their engagement into participation in the democratic process.
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CBOS *Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej* (Public Opinion Research Center):
http://www.cbos.pl/

TNS OBOP Osrodek Badania Opinii Publicznej (Public Opinion Research Institute):
http://www.tnglobal.pl/

PBI Polskie Badania Internetu (Polish Internet Research), the carrier of the Mega-panel PBI/Gemius study:
http://pbi.org.pl

ECCO Social Media
http://eccosocialmedia.wordpress.com/2010/02/16/poland/
EUROSTAT “Europe by Numbers: the complete interactive guide” *The Guardian*,
### Table 1. *Czas Patriotów* (The time of patriots) article series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gazeta Article nr</th>
<th>Title (English translation)</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date of publication</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GA 1</td>
<td>Nie żywmy się klęskami (Let’s not feed on [our] defeats)</td>
<td>Jarosław Kurski</td>
<td>2010-05-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA 2</td>
<td>Czas patriotów (The time of patriots)</td>
<td>Rozmowa (Conversation): Natalia Waloch, Dorota Wodecka, Dariusz Kortko, Iwona Sobczyk, Wojciech Todur, Bozena Aksamit, Magdalena Dubrowska, Jacek Kowalski</td>
<td>2010-05-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA 3</td>
<td>Patriotyzm: miłość i wstyd (Patriotism: love and shame)</td>
<td>Wojciech Sadurski</td>
<td>2010-06-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA 4</td>
<td>Patriotyzm może być przyjemny (Patriotism can be pleasant)</td>
<td>Rozmowa z Tomaszem Łubieńskim-Adam Łeszczyński</td>
<td>2010-06-04</td>
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<tr>
<td>GA 5</td>
<td>Zakorzenieni kosmopolici (Rooted cosmopolitans)</td>
<td>Rozmowa z dr Renata E. Hryciuk Lidia Ostadowska</td>
<td>2010-06-04</td>
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<td>GA 6</td>
<td>Patriotyzm współpracy, patriotyzm sporu (Patriotism of cooperation, patriotism of dispute)</td>
<td>Karolina Wigura, Szymon Gutkowski</td>
<td>2010-06-04</td>
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<td>GA 7</td>
<td>Romantyzm umiera w Polaku (Romanticism dies for Pole)</td>
<td>Rozmowa z prof. Januszem Tazbirem, Rafał Kalukin</td>
<td>2010-06-05</td>
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<td>GA 8</td>
<td>Wzory i antywzory (Patterns and antipatterns)</td>
<td>Rozmowa z Hanna Świad-Zięba, Milada Jędrusik</td>
<td>2010-06-07</td>
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<tr>
<td>GA 9</td>
<td>Dwa patriotyzmy, oba potrzebne (Two patriotisms, both needed)</td>
<td>Rozmowa z Janem Ołdakowskim, Paweł Wroński</td>
<td>2010-06-08</td>
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<tr>
<td>GA 10</td>
<td>Czym się różni patriotyzm po czesku od patriotyzmu po polsku - list (What is the difference between Czech and Polish patriotism - list)</td>
<td>Andrzej Ruščak</td>
<td>2010-06-09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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1 [http://wyborcza.pl/8,75402,7974918.html](http://wyborcza.pl/8,75402,7974918.html)
| GA 11 | **Otwarty patriotyzm**  
(Open patriotism) | Błażej Lenkowski  
2010-06-09 |
|--------|-------------------|----------------|
| GA 12 | **Patriotyzm po polsku**  
(Patriotism in Polish) | Dominik Krakowiak  
2010-06-09 |
| GA 13 | **Patriotyzmu nie można mierzyć**  
(Patriotism cannot be measured) | Anna Jakubowska  
2010-06-10 |
| GA 14 | **Patriotyzm współczesności**  
(Patriotism of the contemporary era) | Kazimierz Łastawski  
2010-06-15 |
| GA 15 | **Polska w sercu wandała**  
(Poland at the heart of vandal) | Witold Gadomski  
2010-08-01 |
| GA 16 | **Spiewać hymn nie każdy może**  
(Not everyone can sing the anthem) | Wojciech Staszewski  
2010-11-14 |
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<tr>
<th>Gazette Article Comment nr.</th>
<th>Title (english translation)</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Comments Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GAC 1</td>
<td><em>Nie żywmy się klęskami</em>  (Let’s not feed on [our] defeats)</td>
<td>31-05-10 2-06-10</td>
<td>77 com. 47 part.</td>
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<td>GAC 2</td>
<td><em>Czas patriotów</em>         (The time of patriots)</td>
<td>31-05-10</td>
<td>1 com. 1 part.</td>
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<td>GAC 3</td>
<td><em>Patriotyzm: miłość i wstyd</em> (Patriotism: love and shame)</td>
<td>02-06-10 08-06-10</td>
<td>57 com. 23 part.</td>
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<td>GAC 4</td>
<td><em>Patriotyzm może być przyjemny</em> (Patriotism can be pleasant)</td>
<td>05-06-10</td>
<td>1 com. 1 part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAC 5</td>
<td><em>Zakorzenieni kosmopolici</em> (Rooted cosmopolitans)</td>
<td>05-06-10 06-06-10</td>
<td>3 com. 3 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAC 6</td>
<td><em>Patriotyzm współpracy, patriotyzm sporu</em> (Patriotism of cooperation, patriotism of dispute)</td>
<td>07-06-10</td>
<td>1 com. 1 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAC 7</td>
<td><em>Romantyzm umiera w Polaku</em> Romanticism dies in the Pole)</td>
<td>07-06-10 12-6-10</td>
<td>62 com. 43 part.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| GAC 8 | Wzory i antywzory  
(Patterns and antipatterns) | 08-06-10 | 1 com.  
1 part. |
| GAC 9 | Dwa patriotyzmy, oba potrzebne  
(Two patriotisms, both needed) | 08-06-10 | 0 com.  
0 part. |
| GAC 10 | Czym się różni patriotyzm po czesku od patriotyzmu po polsku - list  
(What is the difference between Czech and Polish patriotism – letter) | 09-06-10  
16-06-10 | 54 com.  
28 part. |
| GAC 11 | Otwarty patriotyzm  
(Open patriotism) | 10-06-10  
10-06-10 | 4 com.  
4 part. |
| GAC 12 | Patriotyzm po polsku  
(Patriotism in Polish) | 10.06.10  
10.06.10 | 4 com.  
3 part. |
| GAC 13 | Patriotyzmu nie można mierzyć  
(Patriotism cannot be measured) | 11.06.10 | 1 com.  
1 part. |
| GAC 14 | Patriotyzm współczesności  
(Patriotism of the contemporary era) | 15-06-10 | 0 com.  
0 part. |
| GAC 15 | Polska w sercu wandalą  
(Polish at the heart of vandal) | 01-08-10  
01-08-10 | 28 com.  
19 part. |
| GAC 16 | Spiewać hymn nie każdy może  
(Not everyone can sing the anthem) | 16-11-10  
05-12-10 | 2 com.  
2 part. |
Table 3. *Czas Patriotów* (The time of patriots) letters from readers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gazeta Letters Nr</th>
<th>Title (English translation)</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date of publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GL 1</td>
<td><em>Flaga to nie płótno transparentowe</em> (The flag is not a canvas banner)</td>
<td>Bolesław Howorka</td>
<td>2010-04-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GL 2</td>
<td><em>Być patriotą</em> (To be a patriot)</td>
<td>Harry Irrgang, Wojciech Radomski, Ewa Kurowska, Katarzyna Mieczysław Marasz</td>
<td>2010-06-07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GL 3</td>
<td><em>Patriotyzm, czyli duma i praca dla Polski - polemika Czytelniczek</em> (Patriotism, or pride and work for Poland- a polemic between readers)</td>
<td>Małgorzata, Aldona S.</td>
<td>2010-06-08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GL 4</td>
<td><em>Ufff, jak miło – nie Być patriotą! – list</em> (Whew, how nice- not to be a patriot)</td>
<td>Marian Maciejowski</td>
<td>2010-06-08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GL 5</td>
<td><em>Czym się różni patriotyzm po czesku od patriotyzmu po polsku</em> (What is the difference between Czech and Polish patriotism)</td>
<td>Andrzej Ruščak</td>
<td>2010-06-09</td>
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<tr>
<td>GL 6</td>
<td><em>Bal przebierańców</em> (Costume party)</td>
<td>Jakub Napolen Gajdziński,</td>
<td>2010-06-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GL 7</td>
<td><em>Uznajemy się za patriotów PRL</em> (We recognize ourselves as patriots of the PRL)</td>
<td>Alicja i Jeremiasz Salwa</td>
<td>2010-06-11</td>
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<tr>
<td>GL 8</td>
<td><em>Mój patriotyzm został sprywatyzowany</em> (My patriotism was privatized)</td>
<td>Franciszek Dyrma</td>
<td>2010-06-11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^2]: [http://wyborcza.pl/8,75402,8018807.html](http://wyborcza.pl/8,75402,8018807.html)
| GL 9 | Mam dwóch dziadków w Wehrmachcie. Czy jestem patriotą?!  
(I have two grandparents in Wehrmacht. Am I a patriot?!?) | Piotr W.  
2010-06-11 |
| GL 10 | Jesteś patriotą!  
(You are a patriot!) | Jan P.  
2010-06-15 |
| GL 11 | Polska w zwiewnej szacie nie zje z nami obiadu  
(Poland in the airy layout will not eat dinner with us) | Jacek Wesołowski  
2010-06-15 |
| GL 12 | Patrioci w białoczerwonych krawatach  
(Patriots in red and white ties) | Aleksander Rodziewicz  
2010-06-15 |
| GL 13 | Czy mój patriotyzm poniosł porażkę  
(Did my patriotism fail) | Maria Łempicka  
2010-06-15 |
| GL 14 | Patriotyzm zachęcający, nie wykluczający  
(Patriotism encouraging, not excluding) | Sławek Burkeusz  
2010-06-15 |
| GL 15 | Kto ty jesteś? Polak mały!  
(Who are you? A little Pole!) | Kuba Drewa  
2010-07-09 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gazeta Letters Comments nr</th>
<th>Title of the letter (English translation)</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GLC 1</td>
<td>Flaga to nie płótno transparentowe (The flag is not a canvas banner)</td>
<td>2010-05-01 - 2010-05-03</td>
<td>21 com.</td>
<td>17 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 2</td>
<td>Być patriotą (To be a patriot)</td>
<td>2010-06-09 - 2010-06-09</td>
<td>2 com.</td>
<td>2 part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLC 3</td>
<td>Patriotyzm, czyli duma i praca dla Polski - polemika Czytelniczek (Patriotism, or pride and work for Poland- a polemic between readers)</td>
<td>2010-06-08 - 2010-06-10</td>
<td>3 com.</td>
<td>3 part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLC 4</td>
<td>Uff, jak miło - nie być patriotą (Whew, how nice -not to be a patriot)</td>
<td>2010-06-08 - 2010-06-11</td>
<td>21 com.</td>
<td>11 part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLC 5</td>
<td>Czym się różni patriotyzm po czesku od patriotyzmu po polsku (What is the difference between Czech and Polish patriotism)</td>
<td>2010-06-09 - 2010-06-16</td>
<td>54 com.</td>
<td>28 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 6</td>
<td>Bal przebierańców (Costume party)</td>
<td>2010-06-13 - 2010-06-13</td>
<td>11 com.</td>
<td>5 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 7</td>
<td>Uznajemy się za patriotów PRL (We recognize ourselves as patriots of the PRL)</td>
<td>2010-06-11</td>
<td>0 com.</td>
<td>0 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 8</td>
<td>Mój patriotyzm został sprywatyzowany (My patriotism was privatized)</td>
<td>2010-06-11</td>
<td>0 com.</td>
<td>0 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 10</td>
<td>Jesteś patriota! (You are a patriot!)</td>
<td>2010-06-15</td>
<td>0 com.</td>
<td>0 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 11</td>
<td>Polska w zwiewnej szacie nie zje z nami obiadu (Poland in the airy layout will not eat dinner with us)</td>
<td>2010-06-15</td>
<td>0 com.</td>
<td>0 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 12</td>
<td>Patrioti w biało-czerwonych krawatach (Patriots in red and white ties)</td>
<td>2010-06-15</td>
<td>0 com.</td>
<td>0 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 13</td>
<td>Czy mój patriotyzm poniosł porażkę (Did my patriotism fail)</td>
<td>2010-06-15</td>
<td>0 com.</td>
<td>0 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 14</td>
<td>Patriotyzm zachęcający, nie wykluczający (Patriotism encouraging, not excluding)</td>
<td>2010-06-15</td>
<td>0 com.</td>
<td>0 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GLC 15</td>
<td>Kto ty jesteś? Polak mały! (Who are you? A little Pole!)</td>
<td>2010-07-09</td>
<td>0 com.</td>
<td>0 part.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forum Nr</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Title of forum thread (English translation)</td>
<td>URL</td>
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<td>F3</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Patriotyzm u nastolatka (Teenager’s patriotism)</td>
<td><a href="http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/w,29,6081003,,patriotyzm_u_nastolatka.html?v=2">http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/w,29,6081003,,patriotyzm_u_nastolatka.html?v=2</a></td>
<td>18.05.2003-20.06.2003</td>
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<td>F5</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>co jest z nami - Polakami?? (What’s up with us- Poles?)</td>
<td><a href="http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/w,29,27445537,,co_jest_z_nami_Polakami_.html?v=2">http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/w,29,27445537,,co_jest_z_nami_Polakami_.html?v=2</a></td>
<td>7.08.05-8.08.05</td>
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<td>F6</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Czy Ojczyzna coś dla was znaczy? (Does the Fatherland mean anything to you?)</td>
<td><a href="http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/w,29,31817454,,Czy_Ojczyzna_coz_dla_was_znaczy_.html?v=2">http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/w,29,31817454,,Czy_Ojczyzna_coz_dla_was_znaczy_.html?v=2</a></td>
<td>11.11.05-17.11.05 and 3.05.11-4.05.11</td>
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<td>F7</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Patriotyzm (Patriotism)</td>
<td><a href="http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/w,29,20740311,,patriotyzm.html?v=2">http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/w,29,20740311,,patriotyzm.html?v=2</a></td>
<td>18.02.05-18.02.05</td>
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3 http://forum.gazeta.pl/forum/0,0.html
4 Date of retrieval presented in the bracket next to each title
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<td>F10</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Dwie ojczyzny - dwa patriotyzmy Uwagi o megalomanii narodowej i ksenofobii</td>
<td>(Two Fatherlands-two patriotisms. Observations about national megalomania and xenophobia)</td>
<td>26.09.2008-11.11.09</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>F11</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>patriotyzm? (patriotism?)</td>
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<td>03.03.06-07.06.06</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>F12</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>lekcja patriotyzmu (lesson of patriotism)</td>
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<td>07.06.2006-08.06.2006</td>
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<td>F13</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>PiS obrzydza tzw. &quot;patriotyzm&quot; (PiS ahors the so-called “patriotism”)</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.05.2006-15.05.2006</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>F14</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Co to znaczy być patriotą? (What does it mean to be a patriot?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.04.06-20.04.06</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>F15</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>&quot;godzina patriotyzmu&quot; - co o tym myślicie? (F) (“ a lesson of patriotism”- what do you think about it?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>06.06.2006-07.06.2006</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>F16</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Patriotyzm-rzeczywistość czy fikcja? (F16) (Patriotism- reality or fiction?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.07.07-21.07.07</td>
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<td>F17</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>patriotyzm zapomniany-APEL (Forgotten patriotism- CALLING)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.09.2007-5.09.2007</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>F18</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>czy polski partotyzm jest na pokaz? (is Polish patriotism for show?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.02.2007-21.02.2007</td>
<td>199</td>
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<td>F19</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Patriotyzm rozwoju czy patriotyzm dziedzictwa? (Patriotism of development or patriotism of heritage?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.07.2007-20.08.2007</td>
<td>29</td>
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| F20  | 2008 | Pa, patriotyczne wycieczki (Bye, bye patriotic excursions)  
Duration of thread: 22.11.2008-22.11.2008  
Posts: 134 |
|---|---|---|
| F21  | 2008 | MEN nie chce patriotyzmu ? (MEN5 does not want patriotism?)  
Duration of thread: 22.11.2008-24.11.2008  
Posts: 43 |
| F22  | 2008 | Feminizm a patriotyzm (Feminism and patriotism)  
Duration of thread: 11.11.08-12.08.08  
Posts: 162 |
| F23  | 2008 | Romantyczny patriotyzm? Nie! Dziękuję. (Romantic patriotism? No! Thanks!)  
Duration of thread: 17.11.08-22.11.08  
Posts: 15 |
| F24  | 2008 | Kto twierdzi że nacjonalizm jest zły. (Who says that nationalism is wrong)  
Posts: 35 |
| F25  | 2008 | Czym dzisiaj jest Patriotyzm? (What is patriotism today?)  
Duration of thread: 11.11.2008-11.11.2008  
Posts: 18 |
| F26  | 2009 | Patriotyzm od kołyski... (Patriotism from the craddle…)  
Duration of thread: 11.09-14.11.09  
Posts: 9 |
| F26  | 2009 | Polski patriotyzm praktyczny (Polish practical patriotism)  
Duration of thread: 02.07.09-02.07.09  
Posts: 24 |
| F27  | 2010 | Patriotyzm. (Patriotism.)  
Duration of thread: 03.05.2010-5.05.2010  
Posts: 36 |

5 Polish Ministry of Education
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<tr>
<th>Eioba.pl nr</th>
<th>Title6 (English translation)</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date of publication</th>
<th>Number of reads</th>
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<tr>
<td>EIB 1</td>
<td>Kryzys świadomości narodowej (The crisis of national consciousness)</td>
<td>Slavanr</td>
<td>2008-08-20</td>
<td>952</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIB 2</td>
<td>Ważniejsza niż ojczyzna (More important than the fatherland)</td>
<td>Maciej Strzyżewski</td>
<td>2011-01-20</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIB 3</td>
<td>Gross na stos! (Gross on the stack!)</td>
<td>Wojciech Mika</td>
<td>2011-01-28</td>
<td>577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIB 4</td>
<td>Patriotyzm to lojalność wobec własnego narodu (Patriotism is a loyalty to one’s nation)</td>
<td>Prezes, dodał: swistak</td>
<td>2011-02-19</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIB 5</td>
<td>Czy Polak katolik może być patriotą? (Can a Catholic Pole be a patriot?)</td>
<td>Roszpunek</td>
<td>2010-09-11</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
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<td>EIB 6</td>
<td>Ten motłoch od krzyża (This mob from the cross)</td>
<td>Mątwa</td>
<td>2010-08-05</td>
<td>1272</td>
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<td>EIB 7</td>
<td>PPN. Znasz taką partię? (PPN. Do you know this party?)</td>
<td>Natalia Julia Nowak</td>
<td>2010-12-21</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
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<td>EIB 8</td>
<td>Na temat patriotyzmu (On the subject of patriotism)</td>
<td>Czarny Wilk</td>
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<tr>
<td>W24 27</td>
<td>Wara Wam od mojego patriotyzmu! (Stay away from my patriotism!)</td>
<td>Stefan Góranski 2010-05-15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24 28</td>
<td>Patriotyzm w modzie (Patriotism in fashion)</td>
<td>Barbara Romer Kukulska 2010-11-22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24 29</td>
<td>Żywe lekcje historii uczą patriotyzmu bardziej niż niejeden wiec (Living history lessons teach more of patriotism than any demonstration)</td>
<td>Bartłomiej Kowalewski 2010-05-29</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>W24 30</td>
<td>Polska-nasz dom (Poland-our home)</td>
<td>Andrzej Przybylski 2010-11-20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24 31</td>
<td>Oblicza patriotyzmu (Faces of patriotism)</td>
<td>Małgorzata Najda 2010-11-27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24 32</td>
<td>Wrocław: Marsz Patriotów wygwizdany (Patriots’ march booed in Wrocław)</td>
<td>Jarosław Jakubczak 2010-11-21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24 33</td>
<td>Żeby Polak był Polakiem (So the Pole is a Pole)</td>
<td>Miroslaw Krasowski 2011-03-22</td>
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<tr>
<td>W24 34</td>
<td>Czas wyleczyć się z narodowych kompleksów (Time to cure the national complexes)</td>
<td>Wojciech Arciszewski 2011-03-12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24 35</td>
<td>PiS planuje własne obchody rocznicy katastrofy (PiS is planning their own celebration of the anniversary of the disaster)</td>
<td>Rafał Gdak 2011-01-25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W24 36</td>
<td>Nowa choroba, patriotyzm (Patriotism, a new disease)</td>
<td>Maciej Kędzierski 2011-04-08</td>
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