

*Editorial*

**Patriotism and Brutality vis-à-vis Nationalism, Ethnicity and other Identity Formations: Conceptual, Normative and Empirical Reflections<sup>1</sup>**

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Introduction

This extensive Editorial—provided in this issue by the Executive Editor rather than the Chief Editor Dr. Babak Rezvani, due to the latter's current commitments abroad—first discusses the challenge of how best to define patriotism and distinguish it from nationalism, ethnicism and other related, often overlapping concepts and phenomena. This is followed by, and intimately related to, my proposed principles on how best to define any concepts and phenomena in time and space. Suffice to say here now, is that proper, workable conceptualisation should be based on a tripartite distinction between *action*, *actor* and *motive* or human drive.

I then propose normative, i.e. moral and ethical, principles regarding the distinction between 'good' i.e. decent and defensible and 'bad' i.e. brutal and indefensible forms—that is to say, actions, norms and any other manifestations—of patriotism, based on the exemplary triad of *conscience*, *empathy* (or at least tolerance) and *honour* or self-respect. These principles are closely related to my ongoing research on brutality in armed conflict and other forms of political violence. Thus I will also say something about my *Brutalisation* theory and its constituent variables, and how forms of patriotism could either prevent, counter and combat brutality or rather, unfortunately, fan its flames.

I subsequently apply, in a very preliminary fashion, my main relevant concepts of patriotism, decency and brutality on a number of cases, often regarding contentious and sensitive events happening now or having transpired in the recent past, specifically from Poland, Ukraine and the Netherlands. I also address an unfortunately widespread phenomenon that is closely related to tendencies of brutality in general and 'bad patriotism' in particular: *intolerance*, which all too often leads to zero-sum politics and consequent violence against the 'unpatriotic' or 'alien' other.

Finally, I offer some normative and practical advice, to scholars, teachers, decisionmakers and citizens in general, on how to encourage, nurture and uphold the best, most decent and noble kinds of patriotism i.e. loyalty to one's home, community, people and state—which in the end amounts to loyalty to mankind and all other sentient beings within and beyond one's home.



### Defining patriotism—and any concepts and phenomena

Simply put, *patriotism* is one's readiness to defend or otherwise maintain and secure the peace and prosperity of one's home—ranging from one's personal and family homestead to one's village or regional community, all the way up to the homeland i.e. the (nation-)state one happens to live in. One's patriotic duty to defend one's chosen home and homeland may concern one's place of birth—but not necessarily so. It may concern one's loyalty to a newfound host home, nation or other locality after for instance emigration and intermarriage.

Therefore, patriotism may, but may not necessarily, equal tribalism, ethnicism and/or nationalism and statism; these concepts are distinct, even if these often refer to empirically overlapping phenomena—and thus typically have similar, overlapping definitions. For instance, the Collins Dictionary circumscribes *patriotism* as “devotion to one's own country and concern for its defence” (the word patriot derives from the Greek terms *pater* (father) and *patris* (fatherland; native land) ); it circumscribes *nationalism* as “a sentiment based on common cultural characteristics that binds a population” together (the word nation derives from the Latin *natio* (birth; tribe) )—but also as “loyalty or devotion to one's country; patriotism”.<sup>2</sup>

Be as it may, in my view patriotic identity may concern loyalty to a home, locality, tribe, nation and/or state other than one's own by birth. Essentially, patriotic loyalty may concern the host nation and not one's original fatherland or motherland.

In essence, patriotism, good patriotism, is all about repaying the hospitality of the place one happens to live in by defending that place with one's life if need be from internal and/or external aggression and other dangers (terrorism, gangsterism, etc.). Therefore, in my arguments, observations and research, I apply the following definitions of these distinct if often intertwined concepts:

*Patriotism*: the belief that it is one's duty, irrespective of one's motive—love, sense of obligation, sense of self-respect i.e. honour, or even self-interest and opportunism—to defend or otherwise maintain and secure the peace and prosperity of one's home—ranging from one's personal and family homestead to one's village or regional community, all the way up to the homeland i.e. the (nation-)state one happens to live in, not necessarily one's place of birth.

*Nationalism*: the belief that a nation i.e. a (supposedly) homogeneous people with common characteristics—shared history, territory, culture, religion, language, ethnicity (actual or perceived common ancestry; tribal if dispersed, clannish if geographically concentrated), race, etcetera—should have its own state i.e. system of rule. When a national people attain a state, i.e. governing authority, its rights are paramount over any other people residing within its territory.

*Irredentism*: the belief that a nation i.e. a territory with a supposedly homogeneous people with common characteristics—shared history, culture, language, ethnicity, etcetera—should have its own state, including territories of other, neighbouring states where (the majority of) people with the same characteristics reside. When a national people attain a state, i.e. governing authority, its rights are paramount over any other people residing within its territory.



*Statism*: the belief that the territory of a region, republic or any other unity should have its own state. Such a state does not necessarily have to be based on a homogeneous people of one race, ethnicity, or other common characteristic. Its citizens may belong to heterogeneous communities, yet they in principle hold the same rights of citizenship (*Expansionism*: parallel to irredentism).

Therefore my definition of patriotism is broader than most, as it may concern one's identification and sense of duty to one's personal homestead or locality, as well as to an overarching homeland, be it a recognised nation-state or another entity. One reason for this wide definition is to encapsulate also identities and sentiments equivalent to those patriotic feelings towards one nation and state, like so-called 'primitive', 'tribal', 'traditional', 'pre-state' or 'pre-modern' identities and sentiments—as these exist among many or most Albanians and Chechens towards one's family, extended family and clan to this day.

Naturally, all definitions are imperfect, and arbitrary in the sense of its demarcations and delineations due to either implicit, perhaps subconscious assumptions, or preferably explicit, well-argued suppositions. Nevertheless, I have developed the following conceptual principles in circumscribing and distinguishing all kinds of phenomena, which I proposition in my forthcoming book *Conceptualising Brutality and Violence* as follows:

It is best to a) base primary concepts on observable actions by humans and other (sentient) organisms that may occur at any point in time; b) base secondary concepts on observable actors i.e. individuals and groups of humans or other sentient beings; and c) base tertiary concepts on more elusive and fluctuating drives, motives and beliefs of actors across certain points in time—even if the latter two categories involve deeper analysis of the reasons why 'action-phenomena' occur.<sup>3</sup>

As a rule of thumb, (and again I quote from *Conceptualising Brutality and Violence*) "I classify phenomena of action, like the *methods* of violence regarding tactics and techniques, and *means* of violence regarding targets and lethal and non-lethal use of weaponry, as main or primary *universal concepts*; phenomena of actor-identity, like the *forms* of violence regarding rebel, other non-state, semi-state, state and other actors, I classify as intermediate or secondary *structural concepts*; and the more elusive phenomena of actor-contemplation, like the *ends* of violence regarding drives, motives, long-term goals and short-term objectives, I classify as sub-typical or tertiary *empirical concepts*".<sup>4</sup>

At first sight, patriotism as defined by me appears to be a 'mere' tertiary concept of motive—an elusive one indeed, for so far one hardly ever fully can know, grasp or prove the sentiments, motives and drives of any human being for his or her particular actions.

However, one may redefine patriotism as an *observable action* of defence, maintenance and furtherance of one's home or homeland, and thereby turn it into a primary concept. Or one may turn the conceptual hierarchy upside down, and deem human motives like patriotism as love for one's home or homeland to be primary concepts, and human actions to be tertiary



concepts; after all, many, most or even all human actions ultimately derive from human drives, needs and motives, hopefully in the form of well-reasoned, thought-through justifications of certain actions. The reason why I generally prefer and apply an action-actor-motive hierarchy of concepts above a motive-actor-action one, is because the first hierarchy follow or should follow a descending degree of provable observability.

### Distinguishing good and bad patriotism: brutality versus decency

More often than not, patriotism is based on ethnic, civic and other nationalist self-identifications with one's place of birth. This often leads to intolerance, discrimination and excessive violence against the internal and external 'other' in either defensive or offensive (including across-border aggressive) operations. Such extreme, bad patriotism, whereby the end supposedly justifies the means, is a typical cause and manifestation of brutality and *brutalisation* i.e. increasingly resort to terrorism, 'brigandry' (brigandage), gangsterism and other forms of violence<sup>5</sup> violating local and/or international norms—norms that are ultimately based on conscience, empathy and honour.

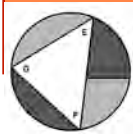
In my current research, I am developing an ethical model based on the 'triangle of goodness': any decent person feels, thinks, and acts or should feel, think and act through a) *conscience*, the sense of responsibility and the capacity to feel guilt and make amends towards one's fellow beings and other sentient, intelligent beings; b) *empathy*; the sense of identification and sympathy with or at least tolerance of other human beings and other sentient beings outside one's self-identified group and community; and c) *honour* or self-respect regarding oneself, one's own group and any wider community.

One's decency is best maintained if all these three human characteristics—conscience, empathy and honour—are present and fully alive within one's psyche and personality. Yet one is still able to remain decent and act decently if just one of these characteristics is alive and well.

For instance, one is still a moral being if one feels empathic towards the suffering of others, and is willing to help them—even if one's sense of direct or indirect responsibility for what is happening is weakly developed, or if one lacks the self-confidence and self-respect to act decisively to help those in need. In short, the heart is in the right place, but the necessary decisiveness and courage tends to be lacking.

Or one has become so weary, jaded and cynical, that one hardly feels empathy any more—perhaps even the capacity to feel guilty about anything has diminished or become fully subconscious. But so long as one retains a strong sense of honour, one is able and willing to stand up for oneself and help others, even rescue others in dire need. More importantly, a truly honourable person refrains from brutal violence against anyone, even against those whom he or she despises or cares nothing about.

Perhaps a minimal, basic degree of conscience is required for anybody to feel empathy or act honourably. After all, sociopaths without empathy and psychopaths without conscience and



empathy hardly ever act decently or with any honour. Still, in principle one is able to be and remain decent if just one of the three human conditions is strongly present in one's psyche and personality. One can only be a true patriot, or a patriot in the best sense of the word, if one possesses and retains at least one of these conditions.

For my current research on armed conflict and other forms of personal and political violence, I already have constructed a *Brutalisation* theory combining theorising elements from disciplines ranging from cultural anthropology to military psychology; a broad, multi-disciplinary approach has the best chance to significantly enhance one's comprehension of armed conflicts and their morally corrosive effects.

I have sought to falsify i.e. test the theory by exploring the values (norms, customs, beliefs), aims (objectives, aspirations, ideologies), and methods (tactics, techniques) and means (targets, weaponry) of violence by, for example, Chechen and Albanian separatists between 1979 and 2001, covering the crucial late Cold War and early post-Cold war periods. The theory's main variables are, which I normally depict as interconnected factors in a revolving cycle of violence:

- i) intolerant *violence-values* (norms of 'good' and 'bad' violence);
- ii) *conflict-inducing motivations* (grievances, 'greeds' or avarices<sup>6</sup>, interests and ideologies) i.e. motivations that cause or contribute to the conflict;
- iii) *combat-stresses* (stress-responses like shock, fear, fatigue, rage and consequent trauma among combatants); and
- iv) *conflict-induced motivations* (grievances, avarices, interests and ideologies) i.e. motivations that occur during the conflict and exacerbate it (particularly revenge born out of conflict).<sup>7</sup>

Undeniably, 'bad' and even 'good' forms of patriotism, nationalism and other kinds of collective identities and group bondings can be seen, or manifest themselves through, violence-values, combat-stresses, grievances, avarices, interests—and last but not least, ideologies.

Be as it may, these variables, their theoretical and disciplinary backgrounds, and preliminary findings on the values, aims and methods among Chechen and Albanian insurgents, already are described in my "How to Feud and Rebel" Series in the peer-reviewed journal *Iran and the Caucasus* (Ten Dam, 2010, 2011, 2012).<sup>8</sup> The overarching study *Ways to Rebel* is in essence an expanded, updated and more detailed and complete exposition of the analysis and findings presented in the said Series.<sup>9</sup>



My present reflections on patriotism eventually will become part of my ongoing and future research projects, including the large, long-term *Brutalities in Anti-Imperial Revolts* project with Prof. Tomasz Polanski<sup>10</sup>, on rebellion, banditry and other forms of violence that may or may not be inherently brutal.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, the pessimistic brutalisation theory would posit that patriotism, as an ideology, grievance or any other motivational mindset, could all too easily lead to and justify atrocious behaviour toward the 'unpatriotic' or 'counter-patriotic' other.

Given the Brutalisation premise, the focus is on international and codified norms of good behaviour that safeguard and respect the life, integrity and dignity of the person. That is why one should focus on gross human rights violations (GHRVS)<sup>12</sup> that endanger life and integrity of the person in order to detect any 'bad' and ignoble forms of patriotism in their actions, methods of violence and kindred manifestations.

Still, for instance militant nationalism is not always bad patriotism, as long as it refrains from human rights violations—and from violating any other local and/or international norms of good behaviour. Conversely, even defensive patriotism may have a just cause but vilifies, effectively betrays, that cause if it employs brutal, arguably immoral means. For instance, a foreign aggressor may have an unjust cause (and thus no proper *jus-ad-bellum*, justice of war) but may fight decently according to the laws of war (proper *jus-in-bello*, justice in war).

The defender thus certainly has a right cause—defence of the home(land) against any form of unwarranted aggression—but may use wrong means, like executing, mistreating or torturing prisoners of war. By now it should be obvious to the reader, that I essentially argue that the end does *not* justify all possible means: cruel and other arguably immoral means sooner or later vilify even the noblest end.

### Good and bad patriotism: empirical examples and observations

In the preceding part, I introduced my hierarchical typology of conceptualisation: actions, actors, motives. However, this typology by itself does not guarantee scientific objectivity, certainly not in the practice of research on national or any other kinds of group identity. When scholars and observers lose their ability and willingness to be fair, even-handed and honest to themselves and others, even the apparently simplest, easiest observable and recordable acts in past and present become contentious, liable to different interpretations, or fall victim to embellishment, manipulation and downright forgery.

Indeed, throughout the known centuries, overeager, opportunist or doctrinal self-declared patriots and nationalists have resorted, both deliberately and subconsciously, to distort or invent facts for the supposed good of their own people and to the detriment of all others and supposed 'never-ending enemies'. Thus in almost every single country in Europe and beyond, so-called 'nationalist historians', all too often have resorted to myth-building and invention of 'facts'.



Even serious, less biased and less partisan historians may tend, either consciously or subconsciously, to downplay or deny the misdeeds of their own group, nation or people—and (over)emphasise the misdeeds of ‘other’ groups, nations or peoples. To put it simply, and bluntly: it is always the other who has been aggressive and has enslaved or otherwise mistreated one’s own people; never has one’s own people been guilty of the same crime(s) against others.

A typical example of a somewhat biased or partisan account of a people’s origins and history is Clarence Manning’s *The Story of the Ukraine* published in 1947. I happened to come across this book by this professor of East European Languages at Columbia University in New York, at an antiquarian bookshop in Leiden, the Netherlands. Bear in mind that this book came out just at the time when the Cold War was beginning between the Soviet Union and the United States (the copy of the book actually contains a stamp “Compliments of the Pan American Ukrainian Conference”—and a postage card of the same organisation).

From the very start, Manning’s account exhibits clear anti-Communist and anti-Soviet perspectives—perhaps also anti-Russian and even anti-Polish sentiments. It certainly aims to prove the Ukraine as being a people, country and culture distinct from Russia from the very start (i.e. the ninth century AD). Thus the Introduction contains the following passage, regarding the demise of the early Ukrainian state from the early thirteenth century onwards, ever since the heyday of King and Saint Volodymyr (or Vladimir), baptized by the Patriarch of Constantinople in 989 AD:

It was the tragedy of Ukraine that this collapse came at the very period when the countries of the Roman Catholic West were struggling to their feet. Those years when the Middle Ages were at their height formed the darkest and most hopeless years in Ukrainian history. It was the time when the old nobility were largely lost to the life of the people and when in large numbers they accepted the Polish language and Polish customs (Manning 1947: 11).

So, this passage seems to imply that the “darkest and most hopeless years” for the Ukrainians occurred when they adopted the “Polish language and Polish customs”—and when many switched from the Orthodox to the Catholic faith as well. Now, one could wonder whether the Ukrainians had fared that badly under the Poles. Anyway, this seems a barb directed at the Poles—and other neighbouring states and peoples—as aggressors and occupiers, imposing their language, religion and culture on the hapless Ukrainians. It is undoubtedly true that (and I quote) by “the end of the fourteenth century, the old state of Rus’ had lost all its independence. It was formally divided between Poland, Lithuania and Hungary, and the rulers of these countries fought over its possessions” (Manning 1947: 43).

However, these and other observations by Manning suggest that others states and peoples were invariably the aggressors, expending their territories at the expense of the Ukrainians, or occupying and ruling over the Ukrainians directly. But whenever the Ukrainians expanded or occupied territory, Manning is loath to use the pejorative terms of “aggression” and “conquest” to characterise such events. Thus in the ninth century, the “Rus’ of Kiev” were





“finally able to extend their control over the other Slavonic tribes and to organise the new state” (Manning 1947: 32). But it seems highly unlikely that this consolidation happened without any violence against and suppression of other indigenous people living within the wide expanses between the Dniester and Don rivers.

Therefore, the origins of almost any ‘nation’ and nation-state is based on some aggression and territory-grabbing against other inhabitants and neighbouring peoples; most ‘founding fathers’ of most nations effectively started out as robber barons, usurpers or even bandits. These ignoble pasts should be recognised, acknowledged.

So I tell here a secret, that according many should remain a secret (i.e. a taboo): practically *every* people, whether as an ancient, semi-mythical tribe or as a more or less homogeneous nation(-state) in recent centuries or decades, has, at least during one time in history, committed aggression against another distinct, identifiable people, whether in the form of temporary conquest of territory or semi-permanent colonisation.

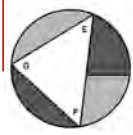
On the other hand, many other events and periods of a people’s past can rightly be described as noble and patriotic in the best sense, even if it concerns sacrifices that pragmatists might regard as futile, misguided and self-defeating. A clear example of patriotism based on self-sacrifice, even if born out of desperation rather than hope, is the seventh and most recent case in the first phase of our *Anti-Imperial Revolts* project mentioned in the preceding section: the Polish armed resistance against Nazi rule and subsequently Soviet and Polish-communist rule in the period 1939-1953.

The Polish resistance during and after WWII was arguably justified, and at the very least understandable, as manifestations of sincere, true patriotism. The Polish guerrilla and other resistance fighters directly fought colonial occupiers—the Nazis and the Soviets—in their country from 1939 until 1945 (we also refer to anti-Nazi resistance in our research, though our present focus is on anti-communist resistance).

From 1945 until around 1953, Polish guerrilla and other types of undoubtedly patriotic resistance—led or at least dominated by the underground and exile remnants of the former Polish state<sup>13</sup>, particularly the Union of Armed Struggle (*Zwiazek Walki Zbrojnej*, ZWZ), renamed the Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*, AK) from 1942 onwards—primarily resisted the imposition of ‘indigenous’ Communist rule, and thus was not an anti-colonial struggle in the narrow sense.

As so often the case, a patriotic urge to defend the homeland does not preclude diversity, disagreement and even factionalism amongst all those who consider themselves patriotic. Thus in Poland during WWII and the early post-war years there were serious disagreements within the exile government and the Home Army, and rivalries and even downright military confrontations with other resistance movements and political factions, like the Peasant Battalions (*Bataliony Chlopskie*, BCh) initiated by the (former) Peasant Party (*Stronnictwo*





*Ludowe*, SL), and the People's Army (*Armia Ludowa*, AL) formed by the Comintern-directed Polish Workers' Party (*Polska Partia Robotnicza*, PPR) (see e.g. Prazmowska 2013a, 2013b).

Even so, most Polish resistant fighters opposed the ideology and consequent state-system of Communism, and rightly saw the domestic regime as dependent on that of the Soviet Union. In that sense, the latter was the true colonial power they opposed, and the refurbished Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP; *Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza*, PZPR) was just the 'Soviet vassal' they despised and sought to overthrow.

As a form of colonial rule, the PUWP-regime was not that much different from the British *Raj* ("reign" in Sanskrit) in India until 1947—even though Poland was an informal Soviet 'satellite' in the Eastern Bloc, rather than a formal colony or province in an Empire. Therefore, these two cases present anti-colonial revolts in the wider ideological-cultural sense.

All in all, the Poles could be generally proud about their WWII and post-WWII-resistance. Ultimately, this culminated in the rise of the Solidarity (*Solidarność*) self-governing trade union movement in the 1980s, whose crucial role in the overthrow of Communism in and beyond Poland, and of the end of the Cold War and the Iron-Curtain division of Europe, was and remains a shining example to the world.

However, the Poles should be ashamed and embarrassed about some of the things that happened in their country and in their name prior to, during, and after the Second World War. Thus the treatment of minorities was often harsh, even brutal—particularly against the Jews. And such mistreatment was not only meted out by the occupying authorities of foreign powers and their collaborators, or by the newly Communist authorities after the war—but also by common citizens. In his seminal work *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, the historian Tony Judt observes that after "a series of post-war pogroms in Poland many of the surviving Jews left for good: 63,387 Jews arrived in Germany from Poland just between July and September 1946" (Judt 2005-2006: 24).

The Jews fared hardly better in most other European countries after the war—but one should not point to the misdeeds of others in order to belittle, ignore or deny one's own misdeeds or those committed by compatriots in one's own name, that is to say in the name of one's own country and nation. Thus one must face up to and deal with the sensitive question whether anti-Semitism has been as widespread in one's own country as in for instance Germany, France, Poland and Russia.

Can the Dutch be equally proud as the Poles of their overall role in crucial events and periods of their history, like during the Second World War or the more distant past? I wonder. My own country, the Netherlands, has been a colonial power for centuries in diverse places across the globe. The Dutch suppressed the local, indigenous people whenever they rose up in arms or even peacefully demanded their rights, and were one of the very last Western-European countries to give up the slave trade (in 1814) and abolish slavery in the East Indies in 1860 and in Surinam in 1863—while Denmark already abolished slavery in 1803.



Oddly (or perhaps not as strange if one thinks about it more closely), the Dutch hardly kept slaves in their own country (slavery within Holland itself effectively disappeared by the early seventeenth century)—slaves were concentrated in the colonies, or were traded with other nations, primarily in the New World (the Americas).<sup>14</sup>

Dutch slave traders were actually among the most ruthless and notorious. This may be one reason why the Abolitionist movement in the Netherlands was not as strong as in for instance Britain, where its own slave trade much more frequently reached its own shores. Dutch citizens or “burghers” hardly ever saw slaves with their own eyes, which once more supports the adage “*out of sight, out of mind*”.

Or think of the dubious, even evil role played by hundreds of thousands of my countrymen during the Second World War, passively or actively cooperating with the Nazi occupiers—in much higher numbers and degrees than, for instance, in Denmark, where most Danish citizens under Nazi occupation started to wear the Jewish Yellow star in order to protect their Jewish compatriots. We, the Dutch, should have adopted the same measure and exhibited the same kind of defiance back then. Instead, innumerable Dutch Jews were deported to concentration camps, in one of the highest percentages in the Nazi-occupied countries.

True, the high deportation rate was partially due to factors like the splendid infrastructure in the Netherlands—making it rather quick and easy for the Nazis to gather and deport Jews—and to the fact that most Jewish communities in the Netherlands were of the lower or middle-class, and thus did not have the money and connections to either flee before the outbreak of war, or minimally protect themselves during the occupation.

Even so, most departments and other structures of the Dutch state were kept in place—Queen Wilhelmina and the Dutch Cabinet were in exile in London—and most (non-Jewish) officials and civil servants, including the police, actively collaborated with the Nazis and pro-Nazi administrators (bureaucratic culture in the Netherlands had become surprisingly docile and servile during the preceding decades). Moreover, most Dutch resistance groups were relatively small, ill-armed, amateurish and splintered, certainly when compared to the massive underground resistance armies and governments in central-European countries like Poland and eastern-European countries like the Ukraine.

Thus the overall role of the Netherlands during WWII is hardly one to be proud of. Neither can one be proud of the generally indifferent and harsh treatment by particularly Dutch bureaucrats of Jewish survivors after the war, most of whom found it extraordinarily difficult or downright impossible to regain their homes or any properties that had survived the war.

Still, among the Dutch there were brilliant examples of heroism and humanity, like:



The Jewish girl Anne Frank and her world-renowned diary (*The 'House at the Back': Diary letters 12 June 1942—1 August 1944*) which survived the Second World War and her own death in a Nazi concentration camp;



Law professor Rudolph Cleveringa and his daring speech at Leiden University on 26 November 1940 protesting the dismissal of Jewish colleagues by the Nazi occupiers (Cleveringa was imprisoned half a year later and remained so during the entire occupation);



Dutch resistance fighters like Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema, whose book about his WWII exploits and those of his comrades, *Soldier of Orange* (1970), became famous, even more so after it was made into a war movie in 1977 by Paul Verhoeven with Rutger Hauer in the lead role.

Now, particularly the latter two cases exhibit some mild, benevolent degrees of embellishment and myth-making in Dutch secular hagiography or pantheon (adulatory history of famous persons); still these examples are grounded in facts—facts and examples that any Dutch patriot can be rightly proud of.

Am I a true patriot, a Dutch patriot? Perhaps, and if so rather sparingly and intermittently given my cosmopolitan outlook—and above all my moral universalism. I believe that patriotism can be a great good, but ultimately must be subservient to and accord to universal norms of human rights and good behaviour, sustained by conscience, empathy and honour. I would not support—indeed, would actively oppose—the Dutch state or Dutch society if either or both commit GHRVS against supposed ‘traitors’ or ‘enemies’ of the nation, either at home or abroad.

Even so, I can be proud of my own country. A good example is the angry yet dignified response by the Dutch people to the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine on 17 July 2014, and the terrible events that followed. The relatives and friends of the 298 victims need all the strength they can muster in coping with this loss. Among the 298 victims (all passengers and crew perished) there were 196 Dutch passengers.

MH17 was reportedly shot down by a Russian-built rocket from an anti-aircraft battery in the hands of pro-Russian rebels. Be as it may, one ultimately must identify and prosecute, and take (further) sanctions and other punitive measures against, those directly and indirectly responsible for the downing of MH17. And if Russian President Vladimir Putin is somehow responsible for this tragedy—as he certainly is, at least to some degree, for the conflict in Ukraine (and annexation of Crimea)—his personal assets abroad must be frozen as well.



### Patriotism vis-à-vis tolerance and pluralism

Many countries in turmoil, all too often in the shape of violent, brutal armed conflict, exhibit failing or faltering attempts at liberation, emancipation and democratisation. What would be the right, best kind of patriotism in those situations? This failure or faltering of processes that ought to be beneficial to the populations concerned, as shown in the present stage of the so-called Arab Spring, primarily happens because most or all of the opposing parties refuse to recognise the other's grievances, interests, demands or even right to physically exist. Typically, these parties concern the supposedly or (f)actually repressed communities and other (interest) groups in revolt against the supposedly or (f)actually repressive communities and groups in power.

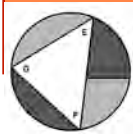
This refusal to understand, accept or accommodate the other is, often but not always, based on true grievances about brutalities and other injustices perpetrated by the other in the distant or recent past, or even during the present confrontation or violent conflict. Such feelings, motivations and consequent enmities among the opposing parties tend to solidify an already existing culture of mutual intolerance. This intolerance is above all exhibited by a *zero-sum politics* of seeking a total victory over i.e. total defeat of the other at the expense of the other's position, privileges and rights, or even physical survival: think of mass murder and genocide.

The lack of a true non-zero sum game, cooperative politics based on consensus seeking, consociational power-sharing, mutual tolerance and the willingness to compromise, makes any newfound democracy a hollow one, even if the formal instruments of democracy—elections, referenda, parliamentary control over the executive branch of government, and so on—seem to function freely, fairly and lawfully.

Therefore, zero-sum enmity and intolerance between different social and political groups and communities appear to typify the tense stalemates in many divided societies. Think of the stark, often violent divide between the anti-regime, often Salafi (extremist Sunni) insurgents and the pro-regime, generally pro-Shi'ite and Alawite forces of the re-elected President Bashar al-Assad in Syria; between the supporters and opponents of the now banned Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt under the new President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi; between the mainly rural 'red-shirt' supporters and urban 'yellow-shirt' opponents of the deposed Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra in Thailand; between the 'pro-Western' supporters and 'pro-Russian' opponents of Ukraine's new President Petro Poroshenko and the current government in Kiev under Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

All sides in each of these countries in turmoil exhibit, in higher or lesser degrees regarding severity and scale, intolerance and brutality towards the other—even if one side can be deemed most responsible for the outbreak and/or continuation of the conflict.

In my ongoing and future research, I try to ascertain and explain, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the intermittent, persistent or increasing brutalities i.e. violations of local and/or international violence-norms, like in Thailand, Ukraine, Egypt and Syria. Generally, I posit that an intolerant zero-sum mindset essentially accounts for the lack of true



democracy, the sad absence or marginalised existence of true, honourable patriotism, and due to these and other reasons, the tendency towards endemic brutalisation in these countries. I will also try to offer suggestions on how to counter and curtail intolerance and brutality, and build truly civic, patriotic and pluralist societies i.e. truly functioning democracies in these and any such countries.

### Conclusion: promoting good patriotism in education, politics and research

Summing up, the main principles that teachers, scholars, politicians and citizens of any country or political and territorial entity should be aware of and uphold, are the following:

- Be aware, sceptical and critical of any written and oral accounts of a homeland or people that tend to adulate the positive, benign achievements and good deeds of only that homeland or people, and belittle, ignore or deny any factual, observable and proven misdeeds by its members.
- Be aware, sceptical and critical of any written and oral accounts of a 'foreign' or 'alien' homeland or people that tend to stress or exaggerate any factual, observable and proven misdeeds by its members—and ignore or deny any positive, benign achievements and good deeds by the latter.
- Be aware and (self-)critical of one's own assumptions and prejudices regarding one's own home, homeland and people and those of others: stimulate students and any other audiences to be aware and (self-)critical in this manner.

Therefore, any true patriot needs to be self-critical, about his or her own convictions, assumptions and perspectives. Thus one must be honest and *unsparing* about any misdeeds committed by one's home or homeland, and in one's name, whether these happened in the distant or recent past, are happening in the present, or may happen in the immediate and foreseeable future.

*Caspar ten Dam Leiden, November 2014*

### Endnotes

1. This Editorial consists of excerpts from my Keynote Speech, titled *Patriotism, Loyalty and Honour: Normative reflections on forms of patriotism, and their interrelationships with ethnic and civic nationalisms and other forms of collective identities*, held on 10th October 2014 at the conference "Patriotism and the Problem of Education and Teaching", at Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Poland, on 10-11 October 2014. I wish to thank Dr. Agnieszka Ziętał for inviting me and taking care of practical matters, Bruno Wojtasik (PhD History, Kielce) for providing the translation in Polish during my speech, and Prof. Tomasz Polanski for his hospitality during and after the conference. The keynote paper eventually may appear in a book on the main contributions to the conference, or be published in another form in another publisher or journal.



2. Patrick Hanks, William T. McLeod, Laurence Urdang et al. (eds.), *Collins Dictionary of the English Language* Second Edition London/Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co., 1986 (1st Ed. 1979).
3. Citation from Introduction in C. ten Dam, *Conceptualising Brutality and Violence: How to Define, Grasp and Deal with Terrorism and Other Forms of Violence in a Post 11 September World* Cambridge Scholars Publishing (CSP), forthcoming.
4. Ibid.
5. I will extensively discuss and defend my definitions in future publications, notably in my *Conceptualising Brutality and Violence* (CSP, forthcoming).
6. The term 'greed' as a noun does not have a recognised equivalent in the plural tense, i.e. 'greeds'; yet I have not come across a better term to contrast it with the term 'grievance' and its plural 'grievances'. The best alternative or substitute term for greed I consider to be 'avarice'—as it has a recognised plural, 'avarices'.
7. From 2005 till 2013, I have described my Brutalisation theory, with some modifications, as "a cycle of violence involving four main variables: "values on "good" and "bad" violence (variable 1); *grievances* leading to armed conflict (variable 2); *combat stress* leading to atrocities (variable 3); and *new conflict grievances* emanating from such atrocities (variable 4), spawning counter-atrocities and eventually hardening or debasing the original violence-values (the cycle returns to the first variable)" (Ten Dam, 2010: 332). Since then, I have widened and reformulated the theory's variables, so as to more equally represent different motivations as explanations of brutal behaviour.
8. This Series will include at least one more article: C. ten Dam, 'How to Feud and Rebel: 4. Conflict(-Induced) Motivations among the Chechens and Albanians' *Iran and the Caucasus* (forthcoming).
9. C. ten Dam, *Ways to Rebel: Values, Aims and Methods of Violence—Testing a Theory of Brutalisation on the Chechen and Albanian insurgents, 1979-2001* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, forthcoming).
10. Prof. T. Polanski worked at the Institute of Classical Philology at Jagiellonian University between 1998 and 2008 (Head of the Department of Greek and Latin Language), and since then heads the Department of Ancient History at the Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce, Poland.
11. C. ten Dam, with T. Polanski, *Brutalities in Anti-Imperial Revolts: Commonalities and Differences in Distinct yet Overlapping Forms of Violence by Peripheral Ethnic-Indigenous Communities and Imperial Powers in Classical, Medieval and Modern (Industrial) Times* Leiden/Cracow, July 2013, unpublished manuscript. I presented an earlier version of this paper at the conference "Ethnicity, Culture, Politics: Mutual Dependencies" at Jagiellonian University of Cracow, Poland, 18-19 April 2013. An expanded version of it may appear in a book on contributions to the conference.
12. Treaties nor jurisprudence come up with a single formulation of 'gross', 'severe', or 'massive' HRVS.
13. According to Tomasz Polanski, "the Polish resistance in 1939-1945 developed the civic structures which were parallel to the military structures. They had their 'parliament' in conspiracy, their charity structures, fiscal system, and education. Remnants of those structures survived to 1948-49. ... It was a state in conspiracy, based on the experiences from the anti-Russian uprising in 1863-64" (email-communication, 18-07-2013).
14. See e.g. Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Dutch Royal Library), 'Afschaffing slavernij (Abolition slavery)', <http://www.kb.nl/dossiers/geschiedenis/afschaffing-slavernij-1863> (acc. 7-10-2014).

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\_\_\_\_\_, 'How to Feud and Rebel: '3. Combat-stress and Violence-values among the Chechens and Albanians' *Iran and the Caucasus* Vol.16 No.2, July 2012, pp.225-245.

NB: do you have any comments on Caspar ten Dam's extensive Editorial? Please send these to [info@ethnogeopolitics.org](mailto:info@ethnogeopolitics.org), or through the contact form at <http://www.ethnogeopolitics.org>.

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