Samuel Bogumił Linde’s *Słownik języka polskiego* (Dictionary of the Polish Language) published between 1807 and 1814, yet capturing the state of language awareness of the Polish tongue in the latter half of the eighteenth century, offers a single-word definition of “patriotyzm” (patriotism)—“obywatelstwo” (citizenship)—and exemplifies it with the following statement derived from a text published in an early-nineteenth century periodical: “From enlightened valor stems patriotism, which breathes solely the common weal, and heroism which devotes itself to it”. In turn, according to the above-mentioned Dictionary, a “patriota” (patriot) is the “citizen [who] cares for his homeland’s welfare with zeal, abiding by his homeland as if it were his own property.” This denotation is exemplified with a quotation from the magazine *Monitor*: “Patriot, the citizen who persistently contributes to the common weal of his homeland with all that he can contribute and all that is of service to it.” The main recurrent motif in both definitions is the “common weal” (the welfare of one’s homeland) which constitutes the main determinant of patriotic attitude. However, this is quite a general formulation calling for a more precise description and more explanations. Therefore, the question arises: What does the good of one’s homeland mean? Who is the addressee of the requirement of strivings for its implementation? Finally: What are the motivations behind the inclination to show patriotic attitude?

It is known that in early modern Poland, the duty to strive for the well-being of one’s fatherland rested primarily with the nobility—the members of the “political nation” who were supposed both to protect by force of arms the country against enemies and to offer advice and participation in building its prosperity. At the onset of the Polish Enlightenment we find attempts to change the composition of the social circle of the people charged with the requirement of demonstrating patriotism.
In 1761, Tobias Bauch, a burgher hailing from Toruń, and Wawrzyniec Mitzler de Kolof, also a middle-class townsman who had come to Poland from Württemberg, started a weekly which bore the highly significant title: *Polak Patriota* (The Polish Patriot). Mitzler was a well-educated philosopher, physician, musicologist and publisher whose many-faceted activity made him an important protagonist of Polish Enlightenment culture; he was raised to nobility for his service and enjoyed the respect of a number of distinguished contemporaries.

*The transformation of the understanding of patriotism in mid-eighteenth century periodicals*

*Polak Patriota*—being an implementation of the model of a moral periodical, so characteristic of the Enlightenment age—was addressed to the middle-class townsfolk whose professional occupation was also regarded as work for the common prosperity and well-being. Issue number two of the magazine included an article to explain the nature of its title and the meaning of the word patriot, defining him as an individual “who not only wishes the welfare of his beloved homeland in every respect but also works towards such welfare as far as he can.” It also emphasized the need for a broadly defined active attitude, a commitment to work for the benefit of one’s fatherland. The periodical was supposed to pursue educational goals by teaching middle-class townsfolk to regard their respective occupations in this light. At the same time, it sought to bring home to other social strata the importance and significance of the achievements of middle-class burghers in promoting the welfare of their fatherland. “The Polish Patriot” reinforced the notion that hard work and honesty are the main virtues of the middle-class burgher class, and emphasized the importance of

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2 For more on him see Mieczysław Klimowicz, “Mitzler de Kolof, redaktor i wydawca” [Mitzler de Kolof—editor and publisher], in Roman Kaleta and Mieczysław Klimowicz, *Prekursorzy Oświecenia* [Precursors of the Enlightenment] (Wrocław: Zakład Imienia Ossolińskich, 1953), 221–308.

3 For an extensive discussion of the periodical, see Roman Kaleta, “Monitor z roku 1763 na tle swoich czasów” [The *Monitor* of 1763 against its contemporary background], in Kaleta-Klimowicz, *Prekursorzy Oświecenia*, 76–92.