

## **Abstrakt**

The goal of this essay is to illustrate what was the role of Polish nobility and its culture in the process of forming the Polish nation. The Polish nobility and its culture have been seen as unique in comparison to other European countries. Based on estimates of various researchers, the nobility in the Polish society at that time oscillate between 9-10 %. This fact had to form an extraordinary influence when creating a nation-wide Polish culture. We will focus our attention on the formation of the noble democracy itself, with regards to myth and tradition of Polish nobility. According to Walicki, not only the noble democracy had a strong influence on Polish patriotism, but also romanticism. We will mention the basic concepts of the formation of the nation as well. The purpose of this thesis is then to observe the early stages of the formation of the Polish nation. With regards to the importance of nobility culture, 19th century had a principal significance. In these times, we can see a modernization of some of the key elements, which are an inheritance of the nobility. These have then been absorbed and have become part of the new nation-wide culture. In conclusion, we will also introduce the longest lasting elements of noble culture and their presence in Poland during the 19th and 20th century. Based on the importance of the role of the national culture, resp. nobility culture, the thesis will attempt to confirm or decline the cultural conception of the process of forming the Polish nation.

**Keywords:** polish nobility, nation, polish culture, tradition, noble democracy, patriotism, romanticism, inheritance of the nobility, 19th century