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Celebration of 11 November in the Republic of Poland

Streszczenie: W 2018 r. w Polsce świętowano nie tylko 100-lecie zakończenia I wojny światowej, ale przede wszystkim odzyskanie niepodległości po 123 latach zaborów. Artykuł prezentuje różne formy czczenia pamięci, które miały miejsce w przeszłości i są kultywowane współcześnie – składanie kwiatów w miejscach pamięci, sadzenie dębów pamięci, biegi i marsze niepodległości, konkursy i pokazy pieśni patriotycznych, modlitwa ekumeniczna w intencji Ojczyzny etc. Wspominana jest też postać św. Marcina, która przywołuje dawne tradycje ludowe zwiastujące nadejście zimy. Do dziś kultywowany jest zwyczaj spożywania 11 listopada gęsiny oraz słodkich rogali św. Marcina. Artykuł pokazuje jak zwyczaje ludowe, patriotyczne i sfera sacrum przenikają się w Polsce w dniu upamiętniającym odzyskanie niepodległości.

Słowa kluczowe: 11 listopada, Dzień Niepodległości, św. Marcin z Tours, zwyczaje patriotyczne, zwyczaje ludowe

The annual celebration of the National Independence Day on 11 November is the holiday of all Poles, regardless of their age, sex, education, profession, views and incomes. Thanks to ancestors who valued their roots, our values, traditions, culture and language have survived for 123 years of partitions (1795–1918), which shows how important it is to take care of our heritage with a view to maintaining the identity of the Nation. Therefore, by enjoying here and now and looking forward to the future, it is essential that we remind ourselves about the past rooted in hearts of ordinary people who did their best to look after the tree of freedom by cultivating customs of the ancestors living in these lands.

Pieces of history which created the Independent Poland

For 100 years Polish people have been living in the independent country which after the period of partitions made by its neighbors – Russia, Prussia and Austria – is now again in the map of Europe. It was a gradual process preceded by issuance of the act promi-

sing the emergence of the Kingdom of Poland by the German and Austrian-Hungarian authorities on 5 November 1916, and in effect commencement of Provisional Council of State (Provisorische Staatsrat im Königreich Polen), on 14 January 1917, which was responsible for preparing organizational bases for Polish administration and cooperation with the supreme commanders of allied superpowers aimed at winning favor with Poles who joined their army. What is more, on 7 October 1918 the Regency Council operating from 27 October 1917 announced the independence of Poland and on 11 November 1918 handed over the power over its subordinate army to Józef Piłsudski¹ who came to Warsaw on a preceding day. On the same day, 11 November 1918, the armistice in Compiègne² was made to end World War I. The capitulation on the western front and final defeat for Germany allowed Poles to escape the reign of partitioners, that is Austria, Prussia and Russia. On 14 November 1918 the Regency Council was dissolved and handed over the rights to Józef Piłsudski. On 22 November 1918 a decree on systemic foundations of the Polish country was signed. The situation of the country stabilized. It was not affected even by the outbreak of Wielkopolskie uprising in Poznań which commenced on 27 December 1918 and which was a rebellious bid for independence in Poland³. From that moment the Second Polish Republic started to exist.

National celebration

People were so happy with the independence that regaining was commemorated as early as in the first anniversary, yet due to ongoing fights for borders, the full and official

¹ Not a long before, on 23 October 1918, Józef Świeżyński's government was formed and on 4 November dismissed by the Regency Council. At the turn of 6 and 7 November 1918 the Provisional People's Government of the Republic of Poland was created with Ignacy Daszyński as a leader who handed in his resignation to Józef Piłsudski on 11 November 1918.

² The armistice ending World War I was arranged between the Triple Entente and German Empire on Monday, 11 November 1918 at 5:12 am and signed at 5:30 am in the railway carriage in Compiègne forest. The leader of the Allied was the supreme commander in chief, marshal Ferdinand Foch, whereas Germans were represented by Matthias Erzberger. Other members of the German truce team were Alfred von Oberndorff, cdr Ernst Vanselow and gen. Detlof von Winterfeldt. In accordance with the suggestion presented by marshal Foch, both parties agreed to put their signatures at 5:00 am. The truce came into force on the same day at 11:00 am of Paris time, that is 6 hours after communicating the conclusion time. The armistice conference in Paris confirmed the terms of truce through the Treaty of Versailles dated 28 June 1919 which became effective on 10 January 1920. H. Zieliński, *International situation and reconstruction of independent Poland. Armistice in Compiègne*, in: *History of Poland, vol. IV: 1918–1939*, Warszawa 1984, p. 88; N. Best, W. Jeżewski, *Most important day in history. How World War I ended*, Warszawa 2008, p. 135.

³ On 26 December Ignacy Jan Padarewski, on his way to Warsaw, came to Poznań to deliver a speech in front of the group of people gathered before Bazar hotel. Insurgents who requested the lands taken by Prussians to return to the Republic of Poland soon took over the entire Poznań Province, except for its northern and south-eastern areas. The uprising ended on 16 February 1919 with a truce in Trier on the basis of which Germans were required to stop aggressive actions against Poles, and a demarcation line was established. Z. Grot (ed.), *History of Wielkopolska in readers*, Warszawa 1963, p. 255–256; A. Czubiński, *Wielkopolskie uprising 1918–1919: genesis – character – meaning*, Poznań 1988, p. 25 n. See also: J. Pajewski, *Role of Wielkopolskie uprising in reconstruction of Poland in 1918*, Scientific Journals of UAM, History 1970, vol. 10.

commemoration of the independence day fell on 14 November 1920⁴. This is when Józef Piłsudski officially received a marshal's baton from Jan Żywek from the 5th Infantry Regiment of the so-called "Courageous", the youngest commander of the Order of Military Virtue⁵. In the years 1919–1936 the ceremony took a form of a military celebration. It was held in Warsaw, usually on the first Sunday following 11 November.

From 8 November 1926 a circular letter, issued by Józef Piłsudski, applied and established the day of celebration of the independence as the day off work for state officials; six years later the Minister of Religious Beliefs and Public Enlightenment defined this day as the day off school. During celebrations on 11 November 1932, the Aviator Monument in Warsaw was unveiled.

The Independence Day was assigned a title of the national holiday by way of the act dated 23 April 1937⁶. It was however repealed by way of the act of the State National Council on 22 July 1945⁷, and reinstated again in the political transformation period in 1989⁸. Until the outbreak of World War II the national celebration took place twice: in 1937 and 1938. During German occupation in the years 1939–1945 the open celebration of Polish national holidays was not possible, although every year monuments were decorated with white and red flowers and pennants, and near 11 November patriotic inscriptions showed up on walls and fences, such as „Poland is alive”, „Poland is going to win”, „11.XI.1918” and from 1942 also an emblem of Polska Walcząca [*Fighting Poland*] in the shape of the anchor whose element in the form of „P” letter stands for Poland, while arms as „W” – fight or „anchor” – symbol of hope for regaining independence by Poland occupied by Nazi Germans⁹.

In 1945 the Independence Day was substituted by the National Day of Rebirth of Poland celebrated on 22 July on the anniversary of the announcement of the Manifest of the Polish Committee of National Liberation¹⁰. For this reason in the Polish People's

⁴ M. Jarosiński, *90 years ago Piłsudski received the marshal's baton*, <https://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/90-lat-temu-pilsudski-odebral-bulawe-marszalkowska>, (20.11.2018).

⁵ Ibidem. On the occasion of the ceremony, the mass was celebrated by Stanisław Gall, a field bishop, while cardinal Aleksander Kakowski blessed the baton. The speech was given by the oldest general of the Polish Army – Karol Durski-Trzaska, the former chief of the Polish Legions on behalf of Austria. W. Jędrzejewicz, *Józef Piłsudski 1867–1935. Life history*, Warszawa 2002, p. 75.

⁶ Journal of Laws of 1937, no. 33, item 255.

⁷ Journal of Laws of 1945, no. 32, item 194.

⁸ The act dated 15 February 1989 on establishing the National Independence Day (Journal of Laws of 1989, no. 6, item 34).

⁹ Pursuant to the art. 1 of the act dated 10 June 2014 on the protection of Fighting Poland Emblem, the sign being the symbol of Polish nation fight against German aggressor and invader during World War II is an all-Polish heritage and is subject to protection of legacy of the Republic of Poland. The act dated 10 June 2014 on protection of the Fighting Poland Emblem was signed by the President of the Republic of Poland – Bronisław Komorowski – on 30 July 2014 in the Freedom Park by the Warsaw Uprising Museum during the meeting with insurgents on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of fights. Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1062.

¹⁰ The Polish Committee of National Liberation was formed in Moscow on 21 July 1944 and published its manifest on the following day.

Republic commemoration of the anniversary of regaining independence of 11 November was organized illegally by pro-independence groups, which was repressed by the state apparatus. In the years 1980–1981, thanks to „Solidarność” [*Solidarity*] trade union, the remembrance of the Independence Day celebrated on 11 November was restored. In the 1980s delegations of central government laid wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Heroes for the struggle for independence were honored in other places of resemblance throughout Poland.

When the act dated 15 February 1989 reinstated the National Independence Day, on 11 November 1997 the Sejm passed a resolution stating as follows: *This ceremonial anniversary encourages us to reflect on half century in which liberty- and democracy-related aspirations of Poles were suppressed by Nazi and Soviet invaders and then – foreign to our traditions – communist authorities subordinate to the Soviet Union*¹¹.

At present the main ceremony attended by the most prominent state authorities is held in Warsaw in Piłsudski Square, before the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

On this day churches deliver services – often of ecumenical nature – and masses for the Homeland. These masses are attended by delegations with representatives of state authorities, color parties of various organizations and guards of honor.

As part of the celebration, Warsaw has been organizing the annual Independence Run since 1989, the Independence Concert held in the Warsaw Uprising Museum since 2009, occasional scientific lectures, historical staging, patriotic concerts and parades of the so-called historical reenactment groups – among others the Independence March in Warsaw, Patriots’ March and Festive Independence Parade in Wrocław, Independence Parade in Gdańsk.

In 2018 100 years passed after signing the armistice in Compiègne and returning to the political maps of the world. This year the commemoration was exceptionally joyful, yet remembering about certain reverie on the history of our country which experienced days of glory and fall. This in turn corresponds to Zofia Kossak’s words reminding us that „every anniversary is a shortcut, synthesis of a certain period of time. From this perspective we can look at our history as a tree deprived of branches, showing afflicted storms, disasters, falls, healed wounds and recurring growth”¹². These ideas referred to patriotic songs contests and concerts, staging and marches of reenactment groups as well as exhibitions and occasional publications organized on the occasion of 100 years of independence. The polonaise dance was organized¹³, the record in the number of people singing

¹¹ Monitor Polski [*Official Journal of the Republic of Poland*] 1997, no. 82, item 793.

¹² Z. Kossak, *Rok Polski. Custom and faith*, Warszawa 1958, p. 153–154.

¹³ *Joint Polonaise in Pasłek for the Independent*, [brak inf. o aut.], <http://dziennikelblaski.pl/548693,Wspolny-Polonez-w-Pasleku-dla-Niepodleglej-film-zdjecia.html?fbclid=IwAR2hrOBWDlhJtnlFX XUYNOcWpql7uUHx8Z3t38O99r0TAIbIdqsLOEbxiw>, (20.11.2018).

together „Rota” created in 1908 by Maria Konopnicka was beaten¹⁴. On 11 November 2018 an initiative called „The Independent for Anthem” was organized as well. It was concerned with joint singing „Mazurek Dąbrowskiego” by various communities from cities and countryside at midday¹⁵. In view of diverse enterprises referring to the 100th anniversary of regaining the independence, the website niepodlegl.gov.pl was created and allowed coordinating participation in specific events.

The memento of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of regaining the independence is to be time capsules with wishes for future generations which were handed to the Copernicus Science Center¹⁶ and Wawel¹⁷. Similar capsules which included letters and photographs were prepared on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of regaining the independence by Poland in Ustka¹⁸, Trzebież¹⁹, Cieszanów²⁰ and many other towns. With future generations in mind, also the so-called trees of memory were planted. On 16 November 2018, as part of commemoration of the 100th anniversary of regaining the independence by Poland, the soldiers from the Military Preparedness Center for Foreign Missions in Kielce planted 1000 oaks in Bilcza; the same happened in Witkowo in the area of Mircze Forestry Commission²¹. The initiative of planting 100 trees was also organized in other towns²². If at least half of them live long enough to see the celebration

¹⁴ S. Malicki, *The record has been beaten! This is how Elbląg celebrated*, <https://www.portel.pl/wiadomosci/rekord-pobity-tak-swietowal-elblag/108425>, (20.11.2018).

¹⁵ *The celebration of the 100th anniversary of regaining independence: joint singing of the anthem, dances, concerts, parades*, [brak inf. o aut.], <https://www.pap.pl/aktualnosci/news%2C353071%2Cobchody-100-lecia-niepodleglosci-wspolne-spiewanie-hymnu-potancowki>, (20.11.2018).

¹⁶ *Wishes for Poland. Time capsule will be handed to the Copernicus Science Center*, [brak inf. o aut.], <https://www.tvn24.pl/polska-i-swiat,33,m/zyczenia-dla-polski-kapsula-czasu-trafi-do-centrum-nauki-koper-nik,882524.html>, (20.11.2018).

¹⁷ 100 letters on the 100th anniversary of the independence was in the time capsule which was then buried in the premises of the Wawel Castle in Kraków. The authors of letters are winners of the contest entitled „Letters to future” attended by over 12 thousand students from 279 primary schools. A time capsule with „Letters to the future” was placed in Wawel, [brak inf. o aut.], <https://www.tvp.info/39842334/na-wawelu-zlozono-kapsule-czasu-z-listami-do-przyszlosci>, (20.11.2018).

¹⁸ *Time Capsule in Ustka on the 100th anniversary of regaining independence*, [brak inf. o aut.], <https://gp24.pl/kapsula-czasu-w-ustce-na-100lecie-odzyskania-niepodleglosci-zdjecia/ga/13657954/zd/32185130>, (20.11.2018).

¹⁹ The buoy caught in the Szczecin Lagoon will be placed in the park in Trzebież and will decorate the town. M. Jaszczyński, *Trzebież. The time capsule was closed in the historic buoy for 100 years*, [brak inf. o aut.], <https://gs24.pl/trzebiez-kapsule-czasu-zamkneli-na-100-lat-w-zabytkowej-boi-zdjecia-film/ar/13657058>, (20.11.2018).

²⁰ *Time capsule*, [brak inf. o aut.], <https://wiadomosci.tvp.pl/39921246/kapsula-czasu>, (20.11.2018).

²¹ M. Dudek, *Kielce. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of independence, soldiers will plant 1000 oaks*, <https://echodnia.eu/swietokrzyskie/kielce-zolnierze-na-stulecie-niepodleglosci-posadza-1000-debow/ar/13668836>, (20.11.2018); *1000 oaks for the 100th anniversary. They planted the forest for the Independent Poland*, [brak inf. o aut.], <https://www.kronikatygodnia.pl/wiadomosci/13023,1000-debow-na-100-lecie-posadzili-las-dla-niepodle>, (20.11.2018).

²² On 27 October 2018 at midday at ul. Zaporębie on the border of Branice and Przylasek Rusiecki a ceremony dedicated to planting 100 noble oaks on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of regaining independence and liberating Kraków from partitioners was conducted. *100 oaks for the 100th anniversary of independence*, [brak inf. o aut.], http://krakow.pl/aktualnosci/224351,1915,komunikat,100_debow_na_100-lecie_

of the 200th anniversary of regaining independence, further generations should enjoy a beautiful forest reminding those who planted it.

Saint Martin's celebration

Parallel to national and patriotic celebrations of 11 November, Polish people remember about a bishop St. Martin of Tours (who died in 397) remembered by the Catholic church on 11 November and associated with many customs cultivated by communities²³. Although the church remembers John the Merciful²⁴ on the same day, nothing can be

niepodlegosci.html, (20.11.2018); P. Goszczyńska, In Bilcza soldiers planted oaks on the 100th anniversary of regaining independence, <https://echodnia.eu/swietokrzyskie/w-bilczy-zolnierze-sadzili-deby-na-100lecie-odzyskania-niepodlegosci/ar/13670586>, (20.11.2018).

²³ Saint Martin of Tours was born between 316 and 317 in Pannonia (in Hungary) as a son of Roman legionary who with time gained the title of tribune. In Pavia, where the family moved to along with father's garrison, Martin became a legionary and at the age of 17 swore an oath. At this time he joined the group of catechumens to discover the Christianity but due to his father's objection accepted Christianity at the age of 23. In 338 Saint Martin's garrison was relocated to Gaul in the area of Amiens, where according to life-span he met a half-naked beggar and gave him half of his coat. At night, when he was sleeping, he saw Christ wearing his coat and allegedly said to angels: "Look how Martin, a catechumen, clothed me!". In 354 Martin accompanied Konstans, an Arian emperor, in his journey against German Allemans at Rhine. There he asked for dismissal from the army but angry commander arrested him and guarded. Back then Martin demanded allowance to stand in the first row during the battle, but he without any weapon will fight with the sign of cross. This is what happened, but the enemy asked for truce. Thanks to this event, Martin was released from the army and returned to Hungary where he converted his parents. Going back to Gaul, he visited Milan where he started counteracting Arians who pushed him out of the town. From there he moved to Poitiers where a bishop Hilary gave him a hermitage in the nearby Liguge in which Martin stayed with other companions, and because of this he became a father of monastic life in France. When in 371 a bishop of Tours died, on 4 July 371 a godly Martin took holy orders and was anointed bishop. His term of office in the bishop's capital lasted 26 years. At this time he was almost always on the way, participating in synods and visiting neighboring bishops (among others Saint Ambrose). Paulin from Nola and Wiktoryn. At the distance of about 14 km from Tours, in Marmoutier, he founded a monastery in which he enjoyed staying by leading a ascetic life of a monk. He defended Priscillian sentenced to death by Maximilian, an emperor, in Trier (384), which won him enemies and slanders on supporting heretics. He died on 8 November 387 after mitigating the dispute between Candes clergy and the faithful. The tomb of Saint Martin was visited by the kings: Clovis, Clotilde and almost all Merovingian dynasty. The life of the bishop of Tours was prepared by Sulpicius Severus (+ ca. 420) who added 3 letters and 3 books of Dialogues about Saint Martin. With time Saint Martin was granted a title of the „national” saint of France. His name was borrowed by about 700 towns in France. His relic was laid in 470 in the apse of Saint Martin's basilica above his grave which is now in the crypt of this basilica under the main altar, in Tours. W. Zaleski, *Saints for all days*, Warszawa 1997, p. 706–710.

²⁴ Whereas the memory of Saint Martin is obligatory, John the Merciful (ca. 550-ca.619) remains in the shadow, although he, similar to the Saint from Tour, bore witness to the mercy in the old Christianity period, which is proved also by his nickname „Almsgiver”. He was born probably in Amathone, in Cyprus, as a son of one of the most prominent residents of the town. He got married early but during pandemics lost his wife and children, which led him to lead an ascetic life, and after the death of Teodor, an Alexandria patriarch, was nominated to the empty capital. In Egyptian church he counteracted monophysitism, advised to allocate food for the needy, founded shelters for the sick, homeless and orphans. When Persians invaded the Holy Land (611–614), John organized help for the Christians by sending food and money to affected churches to the patriarch of Jerusalem and particular bishops. He died in Cyprus, in Amathone on 11 November 619 or 620. He was buried in the tomb of St. Tikhon. Afterwards he was moved to Constantinople. He created St. Tikhon's life, an Alexandria patriarch”. Ibidem, p. 710–711.

better than goose meat and St. Martin Croissants in Polish kitchens. ... And this is all because as early as in the Middle Ages Martin was one of the most popular saints on Polish lands, which can be confirmed by as many as 196 churches erected to honor him (in the Middle Ages there were 220) and 77 towns whose name derived from the first name of the saint. Also remains of numerous folk customs on the occasion of the St Martin's Day survived. Many towns adopted a 40-day fasting before the Advent as the equivalent of the Lent before the Easter. It followed St Martin's Day, that is commenced on 12 November.

The popularity of Martin is also proved through commonly known folk sayings, such as „Like Martin, like winter”; „If St Martin's Day is dry, then Christmas will be foul”; „Young like a bilberry after Saint Martin's Day” (which means old); „St. Martin rides a white horse”; „When Martin's goose is wet, Christmas will be snowy”; „For Martin's wedding, goose and jug of wine”²⁵.

Long time ago on the St. Martin's Day, peasants paid duties to their masters in manor houses. As Zbigniew Kuchowicz says: „this day was a day off household duties, windmills and mills stopped working, and people went to manor houses to pay duties and rents. Many communities ate goose meat and did breast bone readings”²⁶. This is confirmed by Jan Bystron who claims that in the past „people foretold the forthcoming winter on the basis of the looks of spleen of dead hog in autumn and also breast bone of the goose served on the occasion of the St. Martin's Day, even in the richest household”²⁷. This day was commonly thought to be the outset of winter and therefore filled with fortune-telling about winter weather. J. Bystron wrote: „They use St. Martin as a forecast – says Haur – not only through the goose breast bone which heralds snow gravity through whiteness, severity of frost through redness, but when the day is dry and, the winter will be harsh; if the wind is not stable, the winter will not be stable as well. On this day it was common to serve geese, and the breast bone was used to tell fortunes. „If Martin's goose breast is white, the winter will be mild”, says Rzechowski in his print entitled Paschal candle or Condiment dating back to 1666. (...) Cook a fat goose, we will use it to tell the

²⁵ J. Krzyżanowski, *Mądrzej głowie dość dwie słowie. Two new centuries of Polish proverbs*, Warszawa 1960, p. 451.

²⁶ Z. Kuchowicz, *Old Polish Customs in XVII–XVIII century*, Łódź 1975, p. 409. Similarly, J. Bystron says: „11 November was a St. Martin's day. It was an important day which concluded the period of autumn field works, and the deadline for duties and rents, etc. „It is the Martin's day when the winter starts”, writes Gos-tomski in Manorial Economy as of 1588. „The purse will change its shape at the alderman's after Saint Martin's Day when it comes back from the manor house”, writes Rej, referring to customary duties. (p. 68) Close to Saint Martin's Day peasant duties are to be chosen – writes Haur – that is cocks, geese, game, hen's eggs, grains... rent in cash, guard's charges, forester's charges, lease, inn's charges, fish charges and honey charges. (...) The Saint Martin's Day was off household chores; a special attention was paid to suspend mills' work. Czecowic of Epitomium in 1583 recalls that Catholics force St. Martin to the mill so that he prevents millers from doing their work, otherwise he may break their fingers if they dare to work... a miller said that his father, a miller, had told him that wheels had broken when they dared to work on this day”. J. S. Bystron, *History of customs in old Poland*, vol. 2, XVI–XVIII century, Warszawa 1960, p. 68.

²⁷ J. Bystron, *History of customs in old Poland*, vol. 1, XVI–XVIII century, Warszawa 1960, p. 279.

future about winter, it will be either wet or cold, Do not spare a vessel of good thought: wine! This is what a loyal crew demands from you, rhymes Gawiński”²⁸. To recapitulate, we can say that St. Martin’s Day and accompanying cold and end of field works as well as goose meat and croissant on the table gave rise to the period of rest and winter joy.

Up to this day we can watch the figure of St. Martin in coat of arms of some Polish towns, e.g. Pacanowo and Jawor²⁹. Martin is also famous in Poznań, where the tradition of baking St. Martin’s croissants for 11 November started in 1860 when the oldest advertisement of St. Martin’s croissant, the main baking during celebration of the Saint Martin street day in this city, was published in „Poznań Journal”.

The legends hold that the aforesaid tradition dates back to pagan times when people made an offering in the form of ox or, alternatively, cake rolled in ox’s horns to the gods during their autumn holiday. The Latin church took this habit over and associated it with St. Martin. The shape of the cake was interpreted as a reference to horseshoe which was allegedly lost by the Saint’s horse.

Another popular legend says that the tradition of baking the croissant in the current shape emerged in November 1891. When Saint Martin’s Day was getting closer and closer, the parish priest of the St. Martin’s parish – Jan Lewicki – appealed to the faithful to follow the patron and do something good for the poor. Józef Melzer, a pastry cook, who attended the mass and who worked in the nearby cake shop, convinced his boss to revive the old tradition. Rich residents of Poznań bought this delicacy and the poor got it for free. The tradition of baking in 1901 was taken over by the Association of Pastry Cooks. After World War I, Franciszek Rączyński decided to provide the poor with the baking again and Zygmunt Wasiński prevented the croissant from being forgotten. To make sure the cake shop is allowed to use the name „St Martin’s croissants” or „Martin’s croissants”, it must obtain the certificate from the Traditional St. Martin’s Croissant Chapter emerged on the initiative of the Guild of Pastry Cooks and Bakers in Poznań, Chamber of Craft and City Hall of Poznań.

By way of the resolution of the Commission (CE) no. 1070/2008 dated 30 October 2008 the name „St. Martin’s croissant” was entered into the register of protected designation of origin and protected geographical indication in European Union, which makes celebration of 11 November a unique event combining patriotic values with folk traditions.

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²⁸ Idem, *History of customs in old Poland*, vol. 2, XVI–XVIII century, p. 68–69.

²⁹ W. Zaleski, op. cit., p. 706–710.

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Celebration of 11 November in the Republic of Poland

Summary: In 2018 the Poles celebrated not only the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I but above all regaining of independence after 123 years of partitions. Revering the memory of our fathers, sons and grandfathers who shed blood for Polish lands, flowers were led in the commemoration places, oaks were planted, independence runs and marches were organized, patriotic contests and shows were held. 11 November also witnessed ecumenical prayers for the homeland which recalled St. Martin. This figure recalling former folk traditions which forecast the approach of winter is still associated with obligatory consumption of goose meat and sweet St. Martin's croissants.

Keywords: 11 November, Independence Day, St. Martin of Tours, patriotic customs, folk customs