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Transformation in the Polish Festival of Harvest

Abstract. The festival of harvest, called *dożynki*, is celebrated locally throughout Poland when all crops have been harvested from the fields, usually at the end of August or beginning of September. This tradition has been kept up for centuries in Poland, and although the core of the celebration has remained the same, there have been some changes of various kinds influenced by ideologies as well as technologies and global processes.

This article is a follow-up to my research on the celebration of *dożynki* in Poland in the 1950s, the results of which are presented in the publication *Politics, Feasts, Festivals* (2014). This time, I concentrate on the celebration of *dożynki* in recent years. I describe all parts of the celebration, indicating the changes that have occurred and comparing it to the celebration in the 19th century, each stage of which is described in detail by Zygmunt Głogier. The research is based on folklore sources, materials transmitted in the mass media, and my interviews with people who took part in such festivals, as well as on my own personal observations as a participant.

Keywords: bread, crops, *dożynki*, festival, harvest, parade, Poland, wreath.

Description of the sources

The earliest folklore source that gives a fuller insight into the celebration of the festival of *dożynki*¹ belongs to the second half of the 19th century. It was delivered by the Polish folklorist Zygmunt Głogier (1845—1910). We find some references to the festival in Polish literature from before the 19th century, although there is no consensus among researchers on the reliability of this material (Krzyżanowski 1965: 87). They might not be dependable sources, therefore, for evaluating the exact course of *dożynki*. They might, however, be taken as proof that as far back as those times the festival was indeed celebrated in Poland, otherwise, how would the authors have known about it? One of these documents (*Pieśń świętojańska o Sobótce*—

St. John's song about Midsummer Day's bonfire) was written by Jan Kochanowski, a Polish poet from the 16th century. Although the title of the work would suggest a different type of festival, namely midsummer, we do find references there to harvest time and the rituals typical for *dożynki* (Kochanowski 1955: 356—357). The oldest description of the festival of harvest in Poland is ascribed to the Polish writer Ignacy Krasicki, who placed it in his work, *Pan Podstoli* (Mr Podstoli),² written in the second half of the 18th century (Krasicki 1927: 90—91).³

The material for the celebration of the present-day festival of *dożynki* comes from my direct, personal observation. I participated in several festivals in various places. I also spoke with people who took part in such events. But still, this did not give me the full picture of the celebration of *dożynki* all over Poland. I hoped to find material, as rich as in the case of the festival celebrated in Poland in the 1950s, in newspapers. I looked through a range of five different newspapers in print. In one daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Electoral Gazette)⁴ in the whole period 2012—2014 I found, only in one issue (2014), one mini poster with an invitation to and a short programme about *Dożynki* of the Province⁵ of Małopolska. In another daily newspaper, *Gazeta Krakowska* (Cracower Gazette),⁶ in 2014, again only in one issue, there was just a short note (Gospodarze z Małopolski 2014: 7) about *dożynki*, again in the same province, with a small coloured photo of a parade attached. In 2013, I found four notes—short reports about *dożynki* in this newspaper. They referred to *Dożynki* of the Gmina (Perfect w niedzielę 2013: 5), *Dożynki* of the Province (Satała 2013: 6; Małopolskie dożynki 2013: 6) and to the Presidential *Dożynki*⁷ in the village of Spała (Province of Łódź). In 2012, I found in *Gazeta Krakowska* one short article and one note on *dożynki*. The note does not refer directly to *dożynki*, as it provides information about a competition to find “An idea for a local product 2012”, announced during *dożynki*. There is also information on a wreath contest and a parade led by a brass orchestra (Gmina Wieliczka 2012: 7). In the article, *dożynki* were used as an occasion to mention the financial problems faced by small gminas and farmers with small farms—such lands are not worth cultivating, as they are not financially viable (*Dożynki są jak zawsze* 2012: 7).⁸

The daily newspaper *Dziennik Polski* (*Polish Daily*)⁹ has published much more information on *dożynki*, although mainly in the form of notes, as I noticed going through the publication for 2014. There were 19 notes and articles usually supplemented with a photo of *dożynki*. There is no word about *dożynki* in 2014 in the daily newspaper *Rzeczpospolita*¹⁰ or in the weekly newspaper *Tygodnik Powszechny* (General Weekly).¹¹ It is surprising that there is no mention of the all-Poland *dożynki*¹² at the monastery on Jasna Góra in Częstochowa, the centre of the Marian cult in Poland, especially since the second newspaper is a Roman Catholic magazine.

It might be argued that nowadays more information can be placed online. However, when I ‘googled’ “Tygodnik Powszechny, dożynki”, I found only a few items. Generally, googling the term *dożynki* on the Internet will get you notes containing information on the place and time of the celebration of the festival, as well as a list of main accompanying events, sometimes also full programmes of the festival, but usually there are plenty of photos from the festival. More information, which varies from place to place, can be found on websites of local administrations and other organisations. However, it must be said that in small communities, news and information are spread in traditional, rather than electronic ways.

***Dożynki* in the 19th century as described by Zygmunt Gloger**

Although Gloger remarks that the customs he writes about concern the upper river region of Narew, he adds that these rituals are known all over the country, albeit they might vary slightly. During harvesting the most important person was the *postatnica*¹³—a female reaper who was the fastest person at work. It was her privilege to wear the wreath during the festival of harvest. The second fastest female reaper was called *postacianka*.

The main ceremony of *dożynki* began in the field with the singing by reapers of a long *dożynki* song, which consisted of two-line stanzas after each of which there was a refrain: *Plon niesiem, plon* (Crop we are carrying, crop). This was on the day when the wheat was finally reaped and the harvest was finished. The fourth line (*Do jegomości w dom*—To the landlord, to his house) appeared very rarely. The song referred to the harvest itself and anything and anybody related to it

in any way. While singing, the reapers formed a kind of parade to the manor, led by the *postatnica* and *postacianka*. The *postatnica* wore on her head a wreath, plaited by girls, from ears of rye and field or garden flowers. Sometimes viburnum berries, red apples and nuts were added, and a wheat cake or gingerbread placed on the top of the wreath. All these elements symbolised the abundance of all kinds of fruit from the fields, gardens, apiary and forest (Gloger 1972: 31). The *postacianka* held in her hand the *równianka*—a small sheaf of grain, the stalks of which were all cut to the same length (hence the name *równianka* from the verb ‘to equal’—Polish *równać*), so it looked like a small broom, or three bunches of grain tied up with straw at the end of the stalks, just before the ears begin. These would be sheaves or bunches of wheat if the wreath was made of rye, because both crops had to be used as a sign that the harvest of all the winter crops was finished. The *postatnica* had to be an unmarried girl. At the gate to the manor’s courtyard boys poured water on the *postatnica* and her wreath, in order to ensure enough rain for the next year’s crops and, as a result, their abundance.

In front of the porch, the crowd sang about the landlords and their children. Then, either the landlord took the wreath off the *postatnica*’s head or she gave it to him herself, wishing him and his wife good health in order to celebrate the next year’s harvest. In turn, she would receive a coin or some coins. The *postacianka* gave the landlord the *równianka*, for which she also received a coin.¹⁴ The wreath and the *równianka* were hung in the manor and kept till the following year. The seeds from them were thrown into the soil at the time of the first sowing.

The reapers were invited by the landlords to have a meal at the tables arranged in the courtyard. The dinner was followed by a dancing party, which was opened with the first dance performed by the landlord together with the *postatnica*. Because the feast very often lasted till dawn, *dożynki* were organised on Saturdays. Gloger does not mention clergy blessing the crops, but it is highly probable that such a ritual was present. When Gloger wrote about *dożynki*, the ritual according to which a village administrator would offer best wishes to the landlords on behalf of the whole community was already disappearing (Gloger 1867: 275—285).

It is obvious that making the wreath and handing it over to the landlord was the most important ritual of the festival of harvest. The wreath was shaped like a crown. It was a symbol of the crops and the crowning of the farmer's whole year's work (Gloger 1972: 31). The feast marking the end of the harvest was also organised on the 15th of August—the day of 'Our Lady in Harvest', in Polish called the day of God's Mother of Herbs (The Assumption of the Virgin Mary).

Dożynki in the 21st century

At present, *dożynki* can be celebrated at any level of the administration division.¹⁵ Even if cities or towns happen to host them (they might choose a place for the festivities in the outskirts – as in the case of the Municipal *Dożynki* of Kraków in 2014, celebrated in the part of the city that once was a village, but which was incorporated into Kraków in the 1940s) the festivals will still retain their traditional, rural character. It should be added that *dożynki* might be celebrated in towns because of the administration division—villages are in the administration precincts of towns and their administrators (local governments) are modern equivalents of the landlords from earlier centuries, like the landlords from the above account by Gloger.

Dożynki at the higher administrative level are expected to gather more people,¹⁶ but that does not necessarily mean that they are organised with greater splendour or are richer in tradition. *Dożynki* follow more or less the same pattern everywhere, although minor differences can be observed locally. The festival with its programme is always announced, mostly on posters and in the mass media, some time before it takes place. On the day of the festival, in response to a special order, a parade is formed in a certain place (e.g. at the headquarters of the local government). Usually, it is led by an orchestra (e.g. the brass band of a coal mine, depending on the local industry or tradition. After that comes a succession of different groups—standard-bearers (e.g. of fire-brigades, coal-miners, the Polish Peasants' Party, bee-keepers, hunters), officials (representatives of local governments, organisations and institutions, including sporting and cultural ones),¹⁷ delegations from local rural organisations or folk groups with *dożynki* wreaths and bunches of cereals and field flowers, invited guests, riders on horse-back, ladder-like carts

with vegetables and fruits, agricultural machines, fire-engines, other representatives of local crafts, and miscellaneous other people. The most prominent place among the officials is taken by the *dożynki* foreman and forewoman, who are very often the best farmers in the area. They travel in the gigs or carriages. In the villages and small towns, they might ride in the ladder-like cart. The parade marches to the church or a site designed for the solemn field mass, which is very often concelebrated, with a leading priest who holds the position of dean of the district in which *dożynki* are taking place. In the church, the wreaths and sheaves of cereals, the fruits and vegetables, together with other products, such as butter, cheese and honey, are placed on and beside the main and side altars or at the podium on which the field mass is celebrated. Later on, all crops are blessed by the priest, who may be offered some “*dożynki* gifts”.

The people gathered in the church are welcomed by the priest, who in the homily gives thanks to God for “all fruits of labour”, as well as to those who worked to produce all those goods (farmers, gardeners, orchardists, beekeepers, owners of allotments and so on). In 2014, during the *dożynki* mass in the town of Brzeszcze (Province of Małopolska), the priest referred to the commonwealth, the division of labour and the sharing of the products of labour. During *Dożynki* of the Province of Małopolska, the bishop talked about the farmers’ attachment to the motherland. In the same year, during the *dożynki* mass in the village of Bestwina (Province of Śląsk), the dean talked about respect for “the everyday bread” which all may enjoy, thanks to the hard work of farmers, which is not rewarded appropriately, something which is reflected in the economic situation. The liturgy of the mass may be accompanied by a local folk group (Zużalek 2014), a local brass band and a choir (*Dożynki to święto* 2014). After the mass the parade, joined by clergy¹⁸ and accompanied by a playing orchestra, marches to a site (e.g. a local stadium or recreational area), where the official and cultural/artistic parts of the festival take place.

The venue where the festivity takes place is always decorated properly for the occasion. There are elements associated with straw and crops, like figures and baskets of fruit (Małopolskie *dożynki* 2013: 6). In 2014 in the village of Krispinów, where *Dożynki* of the



Fig. 1. Dożynki in Brzeszcze, 2014. Photo: Bożena Gierek

Gmina of Liszki took place, straw figures and other *dożynki* decorations could be seen at almost every house on the road leading to the village (Chociaż rolnictwo 2014: B6). At the site of the festival, little ears of cereals pinned together with colourful ribbons are distributed among all guests. The officials take their seats in their appointed place. An organiser, moderator or compere invites the host¹⁹—usually a president or a mayor of the city, town or village—to open the festival. In 2014 during *Dożynki* of the Gmina of Bestwina, a member of the regional group officially opened the festival, speaking in the local dialect. After the formal opening and welcoming of guests, the “*dożynki* call”, a poem and/or *rota* (a type of oath) might be recited or sung. After that, the host introduces the *dożynki* foreman and forewoman. There are official speeches and the Polish national anthem might be sung. In 2014, during *Dożynki* of the Province of Małopolska, one of the officials read a letter from the President of Poland (*Dożynki to święto* 2014).

While the *dożynki* foreman and forewoman walk towards the host with *dożynki* bread, the traditional *dożynki* songs: *Otwórz gospodarzu szeroko wrota* (Host/Farmer open the gate widely) and *Plon niesiem, plon* (Crop we are carrying, crop) are sung. While the host divides the bread,²⁰ to which all participants of the festival are then treated, folk groups might sing the song *Dzielmy ten chleb* (Let's divide this bread). In 2014, during *Dożynki* of the Gmina of Osiek (Province of Święty Krzyż), after receiving *dożynki* bread the mayor gave a speech in which he reminded everyone of the meaning of the tradition of *dożynki*:

"With great gratitude and respect, I receive this dożynki bread. It is a symbol of your hardship, your sweat and the work you have contributed, but also a significant symbol of love for the soil, and moreover, it is the reason for your pride, Dear Farmers! The beautiful Polish tradition requires the sharing of bread. This gesture is an expression of brotherhood, friendship and a willingness to offer support to others. I also want to share this bread with all the inhabitants of our gmina and the guests who came to us" (Dożynki Gminne 2014 2014).²¹

The next important element of the festival is the presentation of *dożynki* wreaths and "*singing and dancing around them*". Very often there is a competition for the most beautiful wreath. Usually, the jury evaluates originality and aesthetics. The most important thing should be the use of natural elements: cereals, flowers, vegetables. But in 2014 in Osiek (Province of Małopolska), there was a competition for the two best *dożynki* wreaths: traditional and modern (Dożynki to święto 2014). The wreaths and bunches of cereals are presented to the officials by the delegates of the groups that made them. In those gminas where cereal crops are not produced the usual wreaths are replaced by other crops cultivated there, for example by baskets of vegetables (Nie wszędzie rolnicy 2014: B8).

The official part can comprise a ceremony of giving awards (e.g. statuettes, badge of honour for "Meritorious for agriculture" conferred by the Minister for Agriculture and Countryside Development and diplomas for outstanding work—for the best farmer (a man and a woman), the best Circle of Women Farmers (Małopolskie dożynki 2013: 6; Satała 2013: 6; Zużalek 2014).



Fig. 2. Dożynki in Skidzin, 2009. Photo: Danuta Bielenin

The official part of the festival is followed by cultural events. On a specially decorated stage, folk songs and dances are presented, poems are recited and traditional harvest rituals are performed by folk groups. An interesting phenomenon that might occur is a modern adaptation of an old element. Gloger recorded that in the 19th century a crowd of reapers sang about the landlords and their children, and during *Dożynki* of the Gmina of Czernichów in Przegonia Narodowa farmer's wives composed and sang a song that was a kind of tribute to the village mayor for having laid down a pavement for them to jog on (Dożynki Gminy Czernichów 2014: B6).

There are exhibitions of various kinds (machines and crops, including vegetables and fruits, gardening, ceramics, knitting, painting, bee-keeping products etc.); stands with homemade cakes and traditional food, beverages and handicrafts are located at the site. In small towns and villages, it is common to make some food (e.g. *goulash* and stewed potatoes) on the bonfire at the site. In 2014, the biggest

culinary attraction in Osiek (Province of Małopolska) was the spicy carp soup prepared at the site by professional cooks (Dożynki to święto 2014). Stands with toys, fun-fairs and playgrounds for children might also be seen. In addition to folk concerts performances by famous pop stars and cabaret acts are becoming a part of the artistic programme of *dożynki*. Dancing parties are held late into the night. Various skills, such as a fire rescue, may be demonstrated during the festival and there are also firework displays.

Very often *dożynki* are an occasion to celebrate an anniversary, e.g.: 750 years of the village (Hołuj 2014: B7); 15 years of the Association of Women (Wspólne obchody dożynek i jubileuszu 2014: B6); 130 years of the local Agricultural Circle, 30 years of the local folk group.

There are also other new events during *dożynki*, like a competition for the biggest korpiel²² and an exhibition entitled "*From a seed to a korpiel*" showing how the korpiel is grown (Dorośli zachęceni 2014: B7). Traditional *dożynki* are more often linked with or even replaced by another festival such as the "*fruittaking*" (*owocobranie*) festival or fairs dedicated to traditional local produce (Sadownicy i gospodynie 2013: 5). Local produce was always available during *dożynki*, but in this case we have separate events with their own names, like the Fair of Traditional and Regional Food, the Cistercian Fair with fruittaking (Jarmark cysterski 2013: 5), the Apple and Pear Festival with a competition for the best apple cake (Jabłkowe smakołyki 2014: B7), the Dried Plum Festival (Marcinkowski 2014: A6), the Days of Cabbage with a competition for the Cabbage Man and Woman of the Year (Uchto 2014: B8). But there are also places, where the old-style festival of *dożynki* has been revived, as in the village of Kryspinów, where in 2014, after a gap of 20 years, *dożynki* were organised once again (Chociaż rolnictwo 2014: B6).

Conclusions

As we can see, *dożynki* are celebrated throughout Poland at the same time of year, i.e. after harvesting, as they were celebrated centuries ago, and retain, more or less, the same pattern and elements as recorded in the oldest Polish folklore materials.²³ It would be impossible today to start marching from the field with crops to call on the *dożynki* host, as there are now many different fields and many farmer-owners (unlike

the old days of a single landlord or land owner), even in the smallest village, where farmers also finish harvesting at different times. Of course, it could be done symbolically by choosing one field and one time after everybody has finished harvesting. In Gloger's description the singing crowd was led to the manor by the fastest female reapers, today the parade is led to the *dożynki* host, a chief official from the local government, by the best female and male farmers. The symbolism of the crops given by them to the host with their good wishes is still the same. The receiving of all kinds of rewards by the best farmers today can be seen as an equivalent of the coins received by the *postatnica* and *postacianka*. It is remarkable that the old *dożynki* song (*Plon niesiem, plon*) has survived right up to the present day. Some stage performances mimic aspects of harvest ritual, such as the ritual of pouring water over the girl leading the procession at the gate to the manor's courtyard. The difference is our belief that the latter example, unlike the first, was considered to be a magical act, although with elements of fun, while the first are only components of an artistic programme performed on the stage. However, it should be pointed out that the apparent lack of magical rituals during the modern festival of *dożynki* does not mean that farmers do not perform them individually in their homesteads. We can assume that the blessing of crops by clergy, as we know it today, although not mentioned by Gloger, also took place at the time he was describing the festival. Feasting, with the consumption of food and dancing, is an important element of the festival today as it was in earlier times.

It should be added that this tradition is unbroken at least from the 16th century if we consider Kochanowski's source as referring to *dożynki*. Certainly, the festival has been and still is influenced by the changes in epochs and ideologies, but this is inevitable, hence, for instance, concerts of pop stars that are there to "add splendour" to the feast. At least, this is how one might interpret it while reading the many announcements about *dożynki*, in which this information is exposed. Very often it looks as if those concerts are more important than the *dożynki* festival itself. The various exhibitions of agricultural, or in a wider sense, rural items, including those connected with horticulture, apiary and so on, are a very important element of present-day *dożynki*. These exhibitions show contemporary items connected with crops, implements and machinery, together with old

ones from various centuries. The latter, in particular, belong to the rural heritage and might be perceived as the embodiment of the continuity of the old tradition. An excellent example of the influence of ideology on the festival are the *dożynki* (without the participation of the Church²⁴) used for communist propaganda and which were included in the ritualisation of political behaviours (Gierek 2014). Nowadays also *dożynki* can be used for propagating various ideologies, not necessarily political. Like any kind of mass gathering, they provide a forum for the expression of views on different current topics. For example, during *Dożynki* of the Province of Małopolska in 2014 the organisers announced that the festival was to popularise knowledge about environment protection and to form a pro-ecological attitude (*Dożynki to święto* 2014).

The programme and decorative aspects of the festival of *dożynki* depend on the people who are involved in its organisation. *Dożynki* organised on a bigger scale (like the Presidential *Dożynki* or all-Poland *dożynki* on Jasna Góra) might get better publicity in the nationwide mass media, but very often it is those smaller, local, Catholic communities that feel more motivated and engaged in it, and their festival is more traditional with less modern elements and artefacts.

I would like to stress once again that, despite all the changes in the present festival of *dożynki*, which is now celebrated also in towns and cities, it still retains its rural character. This is demonstrated not only by the old tradition with the crops themselves but also by the fact that these crops have been produced by the people who present them, applying the techniques and technologies shown at the festival. They might be marching in a parade in the city, but they are real farmers, producers, and just because the venue for the festival is different, it does not mean that its character is also different. The fact that the all-Poland *dożynki* are celebrated in the city of Częstochowa does not mean that they have an urban character. Farmers from all parts of the country come to Częstochowa to give thanks for their crops because the biggest site of the Marian cult, Jasna Góra, is located there. Of course, it may happen that in some cities the festival does not have anything or little to do with traditional *dożynki*, but these are exceptions. It is obvious that the external elements had to change, as the times have changed, but the core of the festival is still

the same. Despite all the changes in present-day Poland that have influenced agriculture²⁵, in many ways very negatively, it does not look as if the festival of *dożynki* is going to die in the near future.

Notes

1. The noun *dożynki* (pl.) comes from the verb *dożynać*—‘to reap up’ with a sickle—in this case, wheat and rye (winter cereals) (Gloger 1867: 286). As the final result of this action, it means ‘to finish harvest.’ On the term *dożynki*, its equivalents and the earliest folklore materials about the festival I write extensively in my article (Gierek 2014).
2. In past times, the *podstoli* was an administrator at the court. He was the assistant of the *stolnik* (the noun derives from *stół* ‘table’), who supervised the preparation and serving of the meal on the festive table. From the 14th—16th centuries he held the post of an honourable land administrator.
3. For more on these two literature sources see (Gierek 2014: 175—176).
4. A multi-section nationwide daily newspaper with its headquarters in Warsaw and with local editions; published since 1989 as a result of the Polish Round Table Agreement between the communist government and the Solidarity movement; circulation approx. 190 000.
5. By the term “province” I mean the Polish administration unit of the highest level called *województwo* (pl. *województwa*). A *województwo* consists of several *powiats* (pl. *powiaty*, sing. *powiat*) while a *powiat* is made up of a number of *gminy* (pl. *gminy*, sing. *gmina*). A *gmina* may contain a few towns and/or villages. The term “region” is used in Poland usually when referring to a geographical or historical part of the country.
6. A regional (Małopolska) daily newspaper, published since 1949. Between 1975–1980 it was known as *Gazeta Południowa* (Southern Gazette); circulation approx. 25 000.
7. For the first time, they were organised by President Ignacy Mościcki in 1927. Before they ceased with the outbreak of World War II, they took place in 1928, 1930 and 1933. They were restored by President Aleksander Kwaśniewski in 2000. In 2006–2008, they had only a regional character. Their presidential character was restored by President Lech Kaczyński in 2009. At present, they are celebrated for two days (e.g. 12—13.09.2015). As the presidential *dożynki*, they have a national dimension. Representatives of all the Polish provinces attend, bringing their wreaths and produce (Dobrzyńska 2013: 7).
8. The title of the article indicates its content (*Dożynki Are as Always, but There Are Less and Less Farmers*). The problem of a diminution in the number of cultivated fields and its effect on *dożynki* is also tackled in the articles: *Chociaż rolnictwo w gminie zanika, dożynkowa tradycja przetrwała* (Although Agriculture in Gmina Vanishes, Tradition of *dożynki* Has Survived) (2014: B6) and *Ziarno*

ładne i... tanie (Grain is good and... cheap) (Gąciarz 2014: B8). The article *Żniwa obfite, ale trudne* (The harvest is abundant but difficult) (Ciryt 2014: B6) deals with other problems affecting farmers.

9. A regional (Małopolska) daily newspaper, published since 1945; circulation approx. 55 000.

10. A national daily (except Sundays) newspaper with its headquarters in Warsaw, first issued under this title in 1920; circulation approx. 94 000.

11. A nationwide Roman Catholic weekly newspaper with its headquarters in Kraków. Published since 1945, it covers social and political issues; circulation approx. 36 000.

12. Called *the Feast of Crops of Jasna Góra*. It has been organised since 1982 on the first Sunday of September. In 1989, the Polish Government stopped organising the national secular *dożynki* and took part in the feast on Jasna Góra instead. It is estimated that 100 000 people gather for this festival every year.

13. In other parts of Poland, she might be called *przodownica* ('leader'), *postawnica* (from the noun *postawa* 'posture') or *postadnica*.

14. Adam Fischer (1934: 194) noted that in the regions of Wielkopolska and Mazowsze instead of wreaths people brought landlords bunches of crops which they called *pęпки* (sing. *pępek*). In the districts of Sandomierz, Radom and Lublin the *postadnica* was called *sternica*. The noun *sternica* probably comes from the verb *sterować* ('to steer').

15. Described earlier.

16. For example, in 2013 *Dożynki* of the Province of Małopolska gathered approx. 2000 people (Satała 2013: 6).

17. In 2015 during *Dożynki* of the Town of Ustroń, the officials did not march in the parade; they sat in the bleachers at the end of the parade's route, admiring the representatives of various professions marching in the parade.

18. If the mass is held in an open space, the clergy joins the parade from the beginning.

19. Sometimes there can be more than one host. In this case, each of them receives *dożynki* bread.

20. During *Dożynki* of the Gmina of Liszki celebrated in the village of Kryspinów the bread was divided by the foreman and forewoman (Gąciarz 2014: B8).

21. Unless indicated otherwise, all translations are by the author of this article.

22. This is a local name for rutabaga, which is generally known as *brukiew*.

23. See Gloger's description (Gloger 1867).

24. Although they were kept locally, especially in villages.

25. The share of agriculture, along with forestry and fishing, in the gross domestic product of Poland in 2013 was 2,9% (Rocznik statystyczny 2014: 706).

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