

Commemorations of important political, social, and events, and people, important for the given community or nation, is has long tradition in Silesia, as well as throughout whole Poland. Their genesis traces back to the medieval times, and their establishment should be associated with graduate strengthening of the power of Christianity and public institutions. In the first chapter of the present publication, which is a joint publication prepared by researchers from Institute of History at Opole University, Beata Gaj describes the celebrations of patronage holidays in Silesia and other European regions in late Medieval Ages and at the beginning of the Modern Age. These cultural (social and literary) events, which date back to ancient times (especially Hellenistic period), due to the rise of Christian cult, became an important element of European culture. In the second chapter, Tomasz Ciesielski presents the ways of celebration of traditional courtly holidays, connected with the monarch and his family - election anniversaries, coronations, decorations, birthdays and name days, during the Wettin times in Poland. Due to the pompous character of these celebrations, which were held not only in royal, but also baronial courts, in the times of tribunal institutions' ruling, during the times of Augustus III of Poland they gained quasi national character. Officially, their status was not recognized before the year 1792 – the anniversary of the Constitution of May 3 adoption. The character of this holiday, and the way its celebrations were changing, from the 18th century to the present times, is described by Antoni Maziarz. Two chapters are devoted to presentation of International Worker's Day, falling on 1st May, and Month of Deepening the Polish-Soviet Friendship's celebrations in Opole Silesia in years 1949-1956. Adriana David and Mariusz Patelski draw attention to the traditions which played an important role in strengthening of communistic power in Poland, and the stereotype of Polish-Soviet friendship. In the last chapter, Marek Białokur describes how the personage of Polish national hero was created and rooted in Polish historical consciousness due to celebration of birthdays and death anniversaries of Napoleonic army's marshal – Józef Poniatowski. The work was prepared in English and its aim is to present the way Polish people celebrate national anniversaries to the international audience.



# ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN POLAND AND SILESIA