ŁÓDZKIE STUDIA ETNOGRAFICZNE

THE CULINARIES

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THE CULINARIES

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The Realm of Things Culinary. Anthropological Recipes

Abstract: The text is a presentation of an anthropological project of research on culinaries constructed in such a way to be accessible also to practitioners of other disciplines of the humanities. The proposed range of topics was embedded in four general discourses: the temporal discourse, the spatial discourse, the discourse of identity and the discourse of cultural trends. These discourses may fulfill the role of cultural categories (as interpreted by Gurevich),and thus be descriptive and interpretative tools. Investigation of the cultural phenomenon of things culinary does not pertain only to those them; it also reveals various "faces" of culture in the era of fluid modernity.

Key words: culinaries, discourse, cultural category, cultural trends, identity.

We anthropologists are aware that nowadays to speak of food while

> avoiding banalities is nearly impossible, since the topic is discussed by everyone. We talk about food, we read about it, we make it the subject of reflective thought and scientific analysis, we advice one another and seek guidance as to what should be eaten and what should be avoided, how to prepare meals and how to serve them, where and from whom to buy foodstuffs. Food slowly ceases to serve as the means to appease hunger, and begins to fuel thought [Krajewski 2006: 69].

The post-modern era has shaped the realm of things culinary into one of the most powerful cultural trends. This has happened because, as Mircea Eliade asserts, the *Zeitgeist* always manifests itself in artistic and cultural fashions. Yet

> for a particular theory or philosophy to become popular, to be à la mode, *en vogue*, implies neither that it is a remarkable creation nor that it is devoid of all value. One of the fascinating aspects of the "cultural fashion" is that it does not matter whether the facts in question and their interpretation are true or not. No amount of criticism can destroy a vogue [Eliade 1978: 3].

He also asserts that that various cultural fashions he mentions "are not to be considered equally significant. One of them, at least, may very soon become obsolete". Nevertheless, concludes the phenomenologist, "[f]or our purposes, it does not matter" [Eliade 1978: 8]. This is fortunate indeed, because we, too, have fallen prey to the sin of submitting to fashion.

Polish ethnographers have repeatedly returned to the topic of food, especially in monographs [cf. Nowina-Sroczyńska 2009: 12]. Their accounts were primarily idiographic in character; they focused on presenting the fare of a given region, devoting the most attention to the taxonomy of the mundane vs. festive dishes. Following the lead of Kazimierz Moszyński, scholars adapted and utilised research methods and ways of presenting the results, and focused, in turn, on food acquisition, methods of preparing dishes, cooking utensils and the issues related to the availability of comestibles. Victuals were included in the category of the so-called material culture; hence, until the 1980s, the absence of research pertaining to food as a symbolic code. At the time of the political transformation in Poland, a new focus on the cultural significance of all things culinary caused the field of analysis to expand; today we may risk the statement that many topics have moved into popular culture, transforming food into a "folklore ornament" [*Od jadła chłopskiego…* 2014: 27].

We know that food is an ubiquitous social act which may become the core for the creation of many meta-languages related to history, sociology, cultural anthropology, political sciences, philosophy, cultural studies, geography, economy, medicine or biology. Discourse pertaining to all things culinary can be conducted on different levels, as it reveals much about human beings, their individual and group imagery, emotions and choices.

We, the anthropologists from Łódź, were approached with the proposal to construct a project of cyclic seminar meetings devoted to things culi-

nary.[1] We concluded that scholars in the humanities may find themselves confronted with intriguing cognitive prospects:

> the tale of food may become the story of the development of certain images or ideas and thus reveal changes in meanings that constitute a function of the deep transformations of cultural paradigms, ways of interpreting the world and legitimising its appearance [Łeńska-Bąk 2007: 9].

Foodstuffs, as well as the manner of their preparation and consumption, are aspects of everyday life and festive occasions. They may act as symbols, *topoi* or allegories, or point to values and social stratification. The realm of cuisine used to, and still does, delimit worldviews and acquire an ontic, ethical and aesthetic significance.

The project we have proposed, entitled *Licking fingers? Cultural adventures of things culinary* [http://palcelizac-spotkania.blogspot.com/] is based on four types of discourse essential for understanding food as a cultural phenomenon, but also for understanding the modern interest in cuisine. Thus, the humanist perspective guiding us in planning the meetings would take into account the following types of discourse: the temporal and spatial discourse, the identity-related discourse and the discourse pertaining to cultural fashions, which should be regarded primarily as fields of research and subjects of critical analysis and interpretation. Creating the catalogue of issues, we selected those that reveal the potential of things culinary in expressing and shaping human identity, systems of values and modern aesthetic preferences. Time, space, identity and cultural trends are also **categories** that may compose a substantial part of the semantic "inventory" of contemporary culture. Preserved in language, art, science and religion,

1 For many months now, Professor Maciej Kokoszko, a specialist in Byzantine Studies, has been combining extracurricular lectures on food in Byzantium with the preparation and communal consumption of dishes made according to ancient recipes; time and again, these "tasty studies" would captivate the senses of both students and teachers of the Faculty of Philosophy and History of the University of Łódź. The idea that scholars representing various branches of the humanities interested in investigating culinary issues should join forces originated with Professor Kokoszko.

> these universal concepts are interrelated in every culture, creating a specific "model of the world", a kind of a "coordinate system" through which people perceive reality and construct an image of the world based on their identity [Gurevich 1985: 17].

The involvement of specialists in various fields of the humanities inevitably leads to differences in methodology, means and techniques of investigation used in various combinations depending on the space, time and nature of their research.

We do not aspire to follow the example of Roman Jacobson, who postulated the idea of writing a culinary history of various cultures and different epochs [cf. Łeńska-Bąk 2002: 27], but we nonetheless intend our analysis to be multiform and to reveal universal meanings, as well as cultural differences and the transformations of cultural meanings. The pleasure of participating in seminar debates and enquiring into the proposed fields of humanistic exploration will perhaps inspire detailed studies, such as, for instance, The Anthropological Culinary Book or The Archaeological, Historical or Philological Culinary Books.

The initial aim was modest: communal preparation and sharing of foodstuffs were to be accompanied by an analysis of these actions, reminiscent of a monastery refectory, where one member of the religious community reads to the others during meals. Our basic objectives included group integration, education and the popularisation of science. The widespread acceptance of this form of culinary meetings, the willingness to continue the discussion and the declarations of involvement coming from specialists in various fields of the humanities made us expand the project's goals to include documentation of, for instance, modern attitudes, views or actions, and investigation. Each of the proposed seminars may tackle a group of subjects encompassed by the given category, or alternatively focus on a chosen specific aspect (e.g. food as a spectacle; culinary tourism; the culinary realm vs. gender distinctions).

The culinary realm – the temporal discourse

- mundane/festive fare (daytime/night-time; annual festivities; celebrations related to the life cycle; state holidays);

- comestibles in relation to types of cultures; food in relation to the seasons of the year;
- raw/cooked food;
- the order of myth: mythical origins of foods and beverages; ritual "devouring" in mythical narratives; the metaphorical consumption of a deity; food and drink of the gods;
- the culinary realm and periods of passage (culinary prescriptions and proscriptions);
- food as a symbolic offering; sacrificial foods;
- food as a magical substance; food as medicine;
- taboos: fasts, religious ascetic practices, food-related aversions, the principles of purifying the body;
- feasts and their significance in culture and religion;
- hunger/overabundance of food (symbolic aspects);
- meat and the Polish issues; alcohol and the Polish issues;
- culinary traditions and knowledge (cook books, old advertisements);
- the culinary jargon (historical aspects, political discourse);
- the senses: history and modernity.

In this discourse, the basic research category is time. A potential starting point for the discussion may be the fundamental dichotomy of raw and cooked dishes described by anthropologists. As Piotr Kowalski put it,

> In the most general terms, it is the juxtaposition of what is "wild", unprocessed, and what is prepared and thus organised. There is a radically perceptible boundary between the two: eating cooked foodstuffs locates a person within the safe, orderly world of culture; raw foodstuffs send one back to the *orbis exterior*, to the realm of wildness, chaos and death [Kowalski 1998: 5],

and thus to the realm of ambivalence of the sacrum. Myths relate that the beginnings of all things were marked by great feasts: the first beings consumed the wind, water, earth, to spew it all in a new form, processed for the universe in the making. This birth is associated with consumption;

at the dawn of things there are gods who die so that plants may sprout on their bodies and gods who die tragically, dismembered, so that the world may be reborn. Myths teach us that the transformed divine bodies would then be consumed, in a symbolic and metaphorical gesture, and this act will carry a sacral significance.

Sustenance is the structure of "lasting existence". This type of discourse refers to ancient existence – the magical, symbolic *imago mundi* subject to changes depending on the type of context. The category of time, and the experience of time in cultural terms, coexist with another highly significant phenomenon: space.

The culinary realm – the spatial discourse

- the category of a place (a house, a garden, a restaurant, an allotment garden, the street, the theatre, the cinema, the car, eating in front of the TV set, a prison, a cemetery);
- comestibles and the issue of open/closed spaces; private/public spaces; old/new spaces;
- around the table: mundane vs. festive foods, methods of preparation, recipes, foodstuffs, the etiquette, taboos, aesthetics, tableware, social stratification; Polish traditions associated with the table;
- feasting in dreams; feasting in the afterlife;
- religious/metaphorical foodstuffs (olive oil, bread, wine).

Spatial experiences may be analysed with a view to the following categories: the centre vs. the boundaries (being beyond the boundaries of our world; place vs. non-place; parts and/or vicinity). Locations may be understood as specific beings infused with collective and individual presence and marked by creative actions. The culinary spectacle may be played out in public or in intimate space; the changes in constructing the space for the culinary realm need to be noticed and analysed. Space, also the "space for eating" has always been filled with meanings and connotations specific to the era, and thus belongs to "us", i.e. specific cultures [Buczyńska-Garewicz 2006: 13]. Space – also space subjected to humanist analysis – refers to a direct, existential experience; it is formed and remembered owing to sensations,

moods or actions. This is an existential relation. Both the discussed types, the temporal and spatial discourse, may be regarded as coexistent and mutually explanatory.

The third type of discourse should analyse the relations between the culinary realm and identity. The paradigm for this investigation is the opposition: familiar versus alien.

The culinary realm – the discourse of identity

- eating as a communal activity;
- national and regional culinary traditions;
- cuisine and ethnic stereotypes;
- cuisine as a quantifier of homeliness/alienness; familiar/alien food;
- accepted/ridiculed food;
- food and the contestation of tendencies towards globalisation;
- the culinary realm and religious systems;
- food and gender distinctions (a female, a male, a child);
- subcultures and culinary preferences;
- the culinary realm and ideology (political parties and culinary preferences);
- hunger and social mechanisms of integration/destruction.

The importance of the issue of familiarity and alienness was noted by Krzysztof Varga:

> Walking the streets of Warsaw I also notice that the sushi bars are fewer in number and less populated, and I see more and more eateries serving *pierogi* or, most of all, a profusion of the increasingly fashionable establishments of the "pork jelly and a shot" kind, as if we were just witnessing another great Polish uprising, this time one culinary in its nature; we are observing a great counteroffensive of *pierogi*, steak tartare and jellied pigs' feet; the gastronomic invaders from Japan are retreating in panic. This is all fascinating, since it is more than simply the matter of the cost; I suppose, or rather believe, that we are experiencing a cultural change, that it is increasingly a disgrace to gobble up raw fish with rice, that the nation is returning to what is familiar and making a fashion of it [Varga 2013: 3].

Feasting, once a symbolic and ritual action, has changed its function; it is now difficult to ascertain at what point in the history of Europe vanished the sacral experience associated with the preparation and consumption of food [Kowalski 1998: 6]. Desacralisation – one of the aspects of "dispersed systems" – extends to the realm of festive and everyday behaviour. According to many anthropologists, contemporary culture is no longer characterised by fear of breaking a taboo; the apprehension of breaking a social convention is enough. "Nowadays, the world is no longer experienced holistically, but divided into pieces and tasted bit by bit; currently, this is not even tasting, only consuming" [Łeńska-Bąk 2002: 17]. Fixed mealtimes which used to be strictly adhered to; the order of meals; the unbreakable rules of when to talk at the table and when to stay silent, when and how to render assistance to the ladies, which subjects are appropriate for conversation at the table – these cultural models are slowly forgotten; to modern people, the ritualisation of life is an element of social oppression.

These days, it is not shocking to see someone speak with their mouth full, drink from the bottle or reach for anything they fancy; it is not rude to sit at the table for less than half an hour. Modern people seem to have developed an impatience syndrome. Progress is identified with "taking shortcuts", with the general availability of items we once had to make ourselves. Fast-food products for immediate, convenient consumption were invented to save time and effort [Bauman 2006: 89]. Caroline Mayer, a Washington Post journalist, discovered that a growing percentage of American children considers eating an apple to be an exertion, too great a strain for the jaws and teeth, and an action decidedly too time-consuming for the amount of pleasure it offers [Bauman 2006: 89].

Lifestyles created by the mechanisms of globalisation and Americanisation have brought many changes in various aspects of the culinary culture. Perhaps the most noticeable manifestation of Americanisation is the ubiquity of loanwords related to the culinary realm. The Polish language has adopted the names of foodstuffs (e.g. *popcorn*, *hot-dog*, *chips*, *ketchup*, *sandwich*), types of meals (e.g. *lunch*, *party*, *catering*, *grill*), places of purchasing or consuming food (e.g. *food court*, *pub*, *supermarket*), utensils

for food preparation (*mixer*) [Skowroński 2007: 369]. This trend goes hand in hand with certain culinary customs, such as chewing gum, eating in a hurry, consuming food in a standing position, including lunch breaks in the daily schedule.

Modern consumerism is about experiencing varied sensations; consumerist life is a "never-ending sequence of initiating novelties" [Bauman 2008: 33]. For instance, eating has become one of the most popular types of tourist attractions. Anthropologists suggest that after the grim era of the People's Republic of Poland we are witnessing the birth, or rather the rebirth, of the phenomenon that may be labelled "culinary tourism". Travellers expect to experience exotic flavours or blissful familiarity. Many tourists consider entering an inn to be tantamount with taking a step back in time. Inside, they see a regional display:

> the eclectic interior décor and even the inn's location and architecture are a compound of elements derived from various spatial arrangements – a shepherds' hut, a highland cottage, a hunting lodge, an inn or a bar. All this is done in order to follow the principal trend in post-modernist tourism: to step "outside" history and thus to discover pristine nature and the authentic primitiveness of local culture [Golonka-Czajkowska 2007: 337].

In modern times, the notion of food has a number of fundamental aspects [Krajewski 2006: 69–70]. The first one is the obsession with safety. The appreciation of healthy food possessed of various certificates has almost become a form of worship, "we turn the naturalness of food into a fetish, we buy overpriced products grown using archaic, eco-friendly methods not so much to feel better, but to feel a degree of control over our fate" [Krajewski 2006: 70]. The second aspect is another obsession, this time related to the appearance of one's own body. The various diets are, most of all, an expression of the ideals of the human body. What I eat defines me, "because today the body is the most important medium of our identity" [Krajewski 2006: 70]. The third aspect of food is the modern obsession with fulfilling one's desires. We wish to know and try everything; what is experienced through eating is the diversity of the world.

What remains to be said is that in the currently predominant behavioural models and the spreading cultural trends the culinary realm is increasingly associated with the public domain, since food has become one of the most attractive aspects of popular culture and is over-utilised by its participants. Thus, the topic may also be presented in another type of discourse, depicting the culinary realm in relation to cultural trends. This perspective draws attention to new situations influencing culture, new models of behaviour, new meanings revealed by the changes in cultural, social, political and ideological contexts. This type of discourse may focus on the following topics.

The culinary realm in cultural trends

The culinary realm and fluid modernity

- globalisation, consumerism, McDonaldisation;
- the social differentiation of taste; the culinary realm and social status;
- the body within the culture of fluid modernity (gluttony, asceticism, hunger); eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia, orthorexia); diets, dietary norms, healthy lifestyle.

The culinary realm – the aesthetic discourse

- the aestheticisation of the culinary realm (press, advertising, other media);
- literature, theatre, painting, photography, film;
- aesthetic snobbism; culinary hedonism, ostentatious wastefulness;
- new interiors (kitchen, dining room), new tables; the rhetoric of interior design magazines;
- exotic cuisine; old and new spices; new beverages.

Culinary art as a spectacle (culture as a show)

- urban, local, regional, religious, national spectacles (e.g. the harvest festival); open-air events, culinary festivals; television programmes; the internet;
- the culinary realm in visual representation (advertising, photography, installation art, performances);
- an inn as a stage (food as a regional spectacle).

The culinary realm and tourism
- exotic tourism;
- the rhetoric of guidebooks;
- culinary stereotypes, reinforcing and overcoming (?) them;
- global folklorism; the folklorisation of urban food; traditional fare vs. regional fare; menus as texts of culture.

The culinary realm – the discourse of contestation
- ideologies (vegetarianism, veganism);
- dietary habits in relation to worldviews;
- subcultures – taboos, food-related aversions;
- the cultural trend for culinary art as a remedy against the communist era;
- nostalgic returns to ancient traditions; the revitalisation of ceremonies, tastes, dishes etc. as acts of the remonstration of McDonaldisation and globalisation.

The first two seminars were dedicated to the issue of cultural trends, the third was related to the topic of Christmas – the discussion focused on holiday foods from various countries and religious systems. We are living in a time of fluid modernity; in a fragmentary, episodic and variable time that refuses to be limited to a specific shape. a considerable instability of cultural forms and a fragmentation of identity are accompanied by an increase in the significance of visuality, aestheticisation of the everyday, and ludicity [Dzięcielski 2014: 6]. For this reason the meetings focusing on the modern-day aestheticisation of things culinary and on the perception of the culinary realm as a spectacle or the culinary issues as a peculiar identity marker of the counter-culture groups will be particularly important to us, the anthropologists. Developing the project and proposing the fields for humanistic analyses, we have attempted, on the one hand, to consider the most important cultural categories, i.e. those of time, space and identity, and on the other to proceed to universalise the range of problems under consideration. We are aware that, despite our best efforts, the project bears the stamp of anthropology; in our place, archaeologists, historians, philosophers or philologists would have referred to concepts

from their own fields as the principal ones and would have left their own authorial signature on the project. Our proposal is based on the key concept of ethnology/anthropology, i.e. the concept of **culture**, with its claim to universality and to a supra-individual, unifying, systematic and typifying dimension [Czaja 2002: 6].

We are aware that our meetings follow the current trends in culture and that we run the risk of being reprehensibly banal. The culinary madness has indeed reached our country: many Poles – sneers Krzysztof Varga – are fascinated with *Kitchen Nightmare*s, adore cooks, obsessively bombard the Internet with "photos of the dishes they have just prepared or are just eating in a momentarily fashionable establishment" [Varga 2013: 3]. I am personally inclined to agree with Varga's perceptive comment that the subject is, in itself, endless and that describing all food-related emanations in culture is a task simply impossible to achieve.

> For a time now I have devoted more and more thought to this culinary madness, this fashion for sophistication, for gastronomic peregrinations; I am pondering whether this is a question of compulsive compensation for our former culinary poverty, or perhaps a symptom of normality; in any case, I suppose that at the moment nothing is quite as fashionable as food and writing about it; gastronomy has fully replaced culture. There are no great ideas, no groundbreaking debates, no mutinous counter-culture, no spates of literary masterpieces – what we are having instead is a cosy sybaritism which evokes some unpleasant associations with all the epochs preceding revolutions.

Further on, Varga conveys a sarcastic warning:

> I remind you that a great number of historical disasters and revolutions was preceded by a spectacular efflorescence of hedonism, and when culture focuses primarily on consuming, it is a clear sign that something terrible is about to happen. [...] In a nutshell: excessive interest in gastronomy always had disastrous results for the civilisation in question, since a focus on food usually signifies ideological decline and degeneration [Varga 2013: 3].

In my estimation, however, Varga's witty remarks do not undermine the relevance of the issues outlined above; the ironic poetics of the talented columnist should not obscure the significance of the issues discussed during our seminars.

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Food Expenses in the Rhythm of Daily Life. An Analysis of Household Accounts

Abstract: The subject of detailed analysis presented in the article is the daily shopping and food expenses incurred by a single family resident in a large Polish city in the period of the People's Republic of Poland. The source material for the analysis is the ledger of daily food expenses originating from a set of household accounts in the household of a female clerk in Łódź, which in its entirety covers the period from August 1952 to August 2004. The analysis presented herein, however, is based on a detailed analysis of records pertaining to only three selected months of the autumn of 1960, that is expenses dated from 1st September to 30th November 1960. The main aim of the analysis is not to exhaustively document the specificity of the period of the People's Republic of Poland, but only to present the source material and its interpretative capability, as well as to show a small section from the picture of daily life revealed by one family's three-month expenses. The author demonstrates that a detailed description of the daily shopping may constitute a very clear illustration of the specificity of private life in the given time and cultural space, as well as a reflection of not only the socio-economic, but also the political conditions in which the shopping is done.

Key words: culture of daily life, food expenses, household accounts, People's Republic of Poland, family life in Poland.

Buying food belongs to the most basic procedures in the framework of the daily shopping practice. Regardless of the particulars of time and socio-cultural space, it is linked with the process of satisfying elementary physical needs; diversity in this type of shopping appears only on the level of detail, pertaining to the purchased items, their number or quantity, their price and place of acquisition. Only when this need is satisfied is it possible to think of the necessity of buying other items that enable a person

to function normally in a given socio-cultural space, such as the items of hygiene, medicines or the necessary clothing. In general, it may be assumed that daily shopping, understood as an element of routine cultural practice, belongs to procedures that are trivial, characterless and of little import (on condition that the financial situation is favourable), and that are accomplished without much reflection. Having no marked connection with the issue of product branding or the contemporary consumerist hedonism, this kind of shopping constitutes a type of existential necessity and a daily chore to fulfil virtually regardless of the time on hand and the buyer's enthusiasm for the task. At the same time, however, a detailed description of the daily shopping may constitute a very clear illustration of the specificity of private life in the given time and cultural space, as well as a reflection of not only the socio-economic, but also the political conditions in which the shopping is done; this kind of shopping may also be perceived as the actual content of the ordinary human existence.

The subject of analysis undertaken herein is the daily shopping and food expenses incurred by a single family resident in a large Polish city in the period of the People's Republic of Poland. The source material for the analysis is the ledger of daily food expenses originating from a set of household accounts in the household of a female clerk in Łódź. The entire set covers the period from August 1952 to August 2004; the current reflections, however, are based on a detailed analysis of records pertaining to only three selected months of the autumn of 1960, that is expenses incurred from 1st September to 30th November 1960 (the cycle of full months applied here results from the method of recording the expenses in the ledger, where the unit of one month is of fundamental importance). The fact that records pertaining to just three months were selected results not only from this publication's limits of space, but also from the desire to present no more than a sample from source materials which are currently undergoing a comprehensive and detailed scholarly analysis. This three-month accounting period falling on a single season is also relatively uniform with regard to food expenses, which makes it possible to conduct a coherent and objective analysis. The month of December with its Christmas shopping and the summer months of July

and August, when purchases reflect the character of another season and differ as to the available selection of foodstuffs, have been deliberately left outside the current analysis. The main aim of the analysis is not to exhaustively document the specificity of the period of the People's Republic of Poland, but only to present the source material and its interpretative capability, as well as to show a small section from the picture of daily life revealed by one family's three-month expenses. It is crucial that, while being aware of some very few details pertaining to the life of the author of the accounts, I focus my analysis solely on the ledger of expenses and a variety of detailed data it contains.[1]

It is also worth noting that descriptions of daily life in various periods in the era of the People's Republic which are available in specialist literature are usually constructed on the basis of analyses of various consciously created texts of culture, such as press releases [Muszyńska, Osiak, Wojtera 2006], cinematic works [Pełczyński 2002; Talarczyk-Gubała 2007] or materials recorded in the authors' own memories or collected from other people's accounts. Such texts, however, in themselves constitute a certain proposal for an interpretation of some phenomena of social life, and hence they go beyond the ordinariness and banality of daily life. In the face of similar descriptions, the question posed by Georges Perec remains absolutely valid:

> What's really going on, what we're experiencing, the rest, all the rest, where is it? How should we take account of, question, describe what happens every day and recurs every day: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual? [Perec 1989].[2]

1 I received the entire set of household accounts from the author's family for the purpose of scholarly analysis, with a clearly expressed wish for full anonymity. Hence I limit the information to the fact that the author worked in a state office, not giving any additional details as to her education, workplace, position etc. The author and her family remain virtually anonymous to myself, too; hence my analyses are undertaken mainly from the position of a reader of the text.

2 French text of the essay *Approches de quoi?* available at: http://remue.net/cont/perecinfraord.html; English translation: http://www.daytodaydata.com/georgesperec.html.

The answer is not easy, but this does not mean that it is entirely impossible. It requires access to a record of quotidian life produced by an author who was not consciously creating any image of the world; a record that was produced in a spontaneous or indeed natural manner and not subjected to that scrupulous process of correcting the message which in some cases may extend over several stages.

The selected source material is rather unusual in its nature; this results from the genre features of a set of household accounts, which in general can be typified as intimate documents, yet in their form and content refer to trade-related registers, inventories or summations. Among the models for such records are the so-called household books, *livres de raison* in French, which were especially popular in Europe in the late 17th and 18th century [Foisil 1989: 327]. Citing a late 17th-century source, Madeleine Foisil writes that a *livre de raison* is "a book in which a good householder or merchant writes down what he receives or spends, keeping a systematic record of all affairs" [Foisil 1989: 327].[3] Above all, however, household books are characterised by the fact that they are written from day to day and thus constitute a direct, ongoing record arranged according to a simple pattern: the rhythm of daily life and its most trivial aspects and actions. Household books constitute thus a type of direct documentation of mundane life understood as routine, repetitive actions associated with ordinary existence. It is also worth noting that intimate records of this kind, in contrast to, for instance, memoirs or diaries, are not intended for reading, and consequently they do not have the classical narrative form. In the majority of cases, the volume appears at the first glance to be essentially an ordinary account ledger (one is tempted to say: a revenue and expense ledger); even if occasionally it is more extensive, more scrupulously kept and richer in information, its topic is nonetheless related to accounting, to revenue and to everyday

3 The fact that the author of the accounts discussed herein for many years scrupulously fulfilled the duties of a clerk in a Łódź branch of a large state enterprise and at the same time was responsible for running a household is not without import to the analysis of the collected material.

expenditure noted down mainly in order to carefully control and wisely plan the household budget.

In what is one of the most singular novels of the past century, Georges Perec describes in great detail the universe of the residents of a tenement at rue Simon-Crubellier 11 in Paris; *Life: A User's Manual* contains a comprehensive, almost indexical description of their routine behaviour and habits [Perec 1978]. In this and in his other works,[4] Perec, considered to be the creator of a bizarre version of the anthropology of everyday, conducts a detailed, all-inclusive description of everyday life, perceived not as momentous events reported in newspaper headlines, but rather a collection of objects, facts, actions and personages who transpire as entirely banal and, as Dariusz Czaja writes, belong entirely to the domain of unimpressive mundanity [Czaja 2004: 86]. A similar image and quality of everyday life, with special attention to food expenses, is revealed by the records under analysis. Scrupulously, day after day, they document events linked with the stark reality of the ordinary day; in this light, their analysis is an attempt to come as near as possible to the living substance of ordinary life. It might be said that household accounts present time, and the commonplace action of buying, as a succession of events whose minimum unit of duration is one day (sometimes divided into two or three entries of expenses), the average units are weeks, months, quarters and years, and the maximum unit is the lifetime of an adult. Shopping turns into a fundamental event of daily life, while household accounts amount to shards of reality in which the author and her family truly lived, and which in the absence of these records would have been forgotten and socially annulled.

In addition, routinely purchased foodstuffs are components, in a sense, of the taste, colour and smell of everyday; comprising the given family's menu, they also make it possible to imagine its way of life, the

4 Georges Perec was also the author of a text published in 1976 entitled *Attempt at an Inventory of the Liquid and Solid Foodstuffs Ingurgitated by Me in the Course of the Year Nineteen Hundred and Seventy-Four*, in which he meticulously recorded all that he had eaten and dunk that year. In *Je me souviens* [1978] he attempted to render an account of his memories from ordinary life in the years 1946–1961, putting down a few hundred sentences all composed according to one pattern, starting with: *I remember…* [Czaja 2004: 86].

diet its members favoured or the culinary customs they observed. The role of food in the cycle of daily life is elucidated by the very arrangement of the accounting entries, showing the division of expenses in relation to the consecutive days of the week, and hence perfectly illustrating the rhythm, weekly distribution and frequency of various forms of everyday behaviour. For instance, it is evident that small-scale shopping for food was done each day except Sundays; a double entry usually appeared of Friday or Saturday, which is linked with the organisation of the Saturday and Sunday celebration time and the need to store food for a few days; shopping done on a Sunday usually concerned foodstuffs typical to a work-free day, for instance sweets. Simple, terse manner of expression based on repeated formulas, characteristic to record-making, is naturally typical to the accounts under analysis. Entries are divided into successive months; each entry begins with a date (day, month and year), followed the sum total of expenses incurred on that day; afterward, in parentheses, comes a detailed record of shopping with the sum noted in *zł* (abbreviation for *złoty*) and *gr* (abbreviation for *grosz*), and the type of item purchased. By way of an example, the following is a weekly record dating from September 1960:

19.09.60 41.35 (2.50 rolls, 2 zł cigarettes, 6 zł sugar, 2 zł knife sharpening, 12 zł tights repair, 1 zł borscht, 50 gr matches, 6 zł ice-cream, 5 zł milk, 1.85 bread, 2.50 rolls)
20.09.60 18.40 (12 zł sausage, 1 zł rolls, 5.40 minced sausage)
20.9.60 39.85 (1.85 bread, 1 zł half-moon roll, 37 zł vodka)
21.9.60 8.50 (1 zł rolls, 2 zł pears, 50 gr tramway, 5 zł Janusz)
21.9.60 36.95 (19 zł meat, 4 zł cabbage, 3.70 zł bread, 5 zł milk, 5.25 zł plums)
22.9.60 27.75 (9 zł sausage, 6 zł Cracow sausage, 50 gr large roll, 1 zł rolls, 5 zł milk, 1.85 zł bread, 1.40 zł puddings, 3 zł cocoa)
23.9.60 68.85 (2.50 zł rolls, 5 zł Janusz, 2.50 zł milk, 1.85 zł bread, 50 gr bułka, 4.50 zł cottage cheese, 7 zł sour cream, 3 zł apples, 7.50 zł plums, 1 zł tramway, 18.50 vodka, 15 zł meat)
24.9.60 18.35 (4.60 cigarettes, 8.75 butter, 3 zł apples, 2 zł pears)

24.9.60 101.40 (12 zł sugar, 5 zł milk, 7.40 zł bread, 36 zł beef, 9.50 zł fatback, 18 zł sausage, 6 zł brawn, 3 zł cocoa, 4 zł apples, 50 gr large roll)
25.9.60 16.00 (9 zł candy, 7 zł Janusz)
Altogether: 377.40 zł [*Budżet domowy…* 1.09.1959–1.12.1960[5]].

In addition, completing the material and further increasing its value, at the top of the page, before the record of expenses for each month, there is usually a record of the household members' salaries, compensations and bonuses due in that month, occasionally some extra earnings, and often a sum left over from the preceding month. Expenses are summed up every week, before the following Monday's heading. In addition, at the bottom of the page at the end of each month, there is a sum total of all expenses: the overall sum spent in the given month. It is divided into the basic cost of household maintenance, described as the so-called "living expenses", and other expenses, that is those going beyond the elementary daily needs. It may be said that this is a record of private life depicted in dates, numbers, and thus in money. Genre features of this text alone point out a definite manner of not only reading, but also interpreting and analysing it. It is to a great extent the numbers that are the main markers of routine everyday practices; the specific image of a social universe is here constructed on the basis of numbers.

In the analysed household accounts, food expenses belong to the most elementary daily expenses; they appear in the entries for every single day and definitely predominate over other costs of maintaining a household. An analysis of the accounts makes it possible to determine the entire inventory of foodstuffs used in the framework of everyday life, which in turn may potentially reveal the characteristics of the daily menu of the author and her family, as inhabitants of Łódź, a large Polish city, living in a two-person household. The analysed accounts supply also the prices of particular foodstuffs in a Polish city (i.e. Łódź) in 1960. Regrettably,

5 This set of household accounts in manuscript form remains the property of the author's family; it was made available for scholarly analysis, after which it is going to be donated to the Marshal Piłsudski Regional Public Library in Łódź.

they do not include the amount of purchased items; mainly the value of single items can be ascertained. Baker's goods are the basic item in the inventory of purchased foodstuffs, including bread (1.85 zł/loaf), usually bought daily or every second day in the quantity of two to four loaves, rolls (0.50 zł each), usually bought once or twice a week in the quantity of three to five, and sporadically a half-moon roll (1 zł each). Second in importance are eggs and dairy products, that is milk (2.50–2.70 zł),[6] usually bought three to five times a week, cottage cheese (4.5 or 9 zł), eggs (3.80 zł), usually bought by five or ten twice a week, and the sporadically purchased butter (8.75–19 zł) and sour cream (14 zł). Meat and cold cuts appear quite often, being bought two or three times a week; prevalent is the general entry "meat" without description, bought for 15–19 zł each time, but other relevant entries mention beef (15.50 zł or 36 zł), spare ribs (5 zł), minced meat (9 zł), belly meat (13 zł), sometimes pork loin (26 zł), very occasionally veal (30–40 zł). In addition, meat product include fatback (ca. 3.30–8 zł) and lard (9.50 zł), liver (16 zł), broth meat (13 zł) or bones (2–4 zł). Cold cuts, bought on the average three times a week, include the most generally bought sausage (za ok. 9 zł), mortadella (6.40 zł), frankfurters (19 zł), pâté sausage (5.40 zł), brawn (6 zł) or buckwheat sausage (7.50 zł), sometimes also smoked ham (11.80–18 zł). The period under analysis contains a single entry recording the purchase of a cockerel (30 zł), noted one Friday in October, probably in connection with the well-established Polish culinary custom of serving broth on Sundays. It is also worth mentioning that "home-style cooking" was highly valued in the era of the People's Republic of Poland; making use of self-grown crops and home-raised animals, or buying such products from private retailers bringing them from villages to town marketplaces, were also considered essential [Brzostek 2010: 131].

Vegetables were an important element of the daily diet as ascertained on the basis of these household accounts. Those included potatoes (1.50–5.60 zł), cabbage (1.80–4 zł), carrot (0.70 gr), onion (0.60 gr), peas (6 zł), cucumbers (3 zł) or mirepoix (1.50 zł). Fruit were mainly seasonal; in

6 Prices given in the parentheses are average prices of the given product bought at one shopping trip.

September those were apples (3–4 zł), pears (2 zł) and plums (5.25–7.50 zł), as well as wild mushrooms (6–8 zł). Frequent purchases include also sugar (3–12 zł), usually bought in larger quantities, groats (12.80 zł), flour (6.70–12.70 zł), rice (8 zł), breadcrumbs (3 zł), pudding (0.70 zł–1.40 zł), borscht (1 zł), vinegar (7.55 zł) and, sporadically, oil (16–18 zł). In the entries under analysis, fish are represented only by herrings (10.80–12 zł). The taste of the everyday food was enhanced with salt (1.20–3.60 zł), horseradish and mustard (3.90 zł), while the prevalent spices were pepper (7 zł), allspice (0.70 gr) and bay leaves (0.60 gr). The monthly record included also expenses for ice-cream (6–8 zł), candy (3–9 zł), waffles (3.60 zł) and cakes, like poppy seed cake (14.80 zł), usually bought on Sundays as a special treat. The basic menu was complemented with beverages: tea (2.85 zł), coffee, (0.65 gr), vodka (18.50–37 zł) and beer, concealed in the records under the entry *2 zł Janusz*.[7] Much more expensive coffee (23.50 zł) is also recorded, but with a note that it had been bought as a gift for a person from outside the family. Vodka often appears in a similar role, bought for various persons who assisted or supported the author in household chores or professional work, bought in recompense, so to speak, for their services. It needs to be added that coffee promoted in the period of the People's Republic of Poland was mainly the so-called "national coffee", that is grain coffee; it was a substandard ersatz, but it was also linked with the official propaganda, promoting appreciation of Polish agriculture, products of which were supposed to be valued more highly than imported products [Brzostek 2010: 75–76].

On the basis of information contained in the accounts it is easy to recreate a range of tastes of home cooking of that time and place. Nevertheless, all the above food expenses depended on the availability of products on the market, and above all on the monthly budget; the household's income was based on the salaries of the author and her husband. It is worth noting, however, that with respect to household expenses, the author's average weekly expenditure in the autumn of 1960 amounted to ca. 300 zł, whereas the sum total of the income of both household mem-

7 The meaning of this entry is clarified by records dating from other years.

bers ranged from ca. 2700 to ca. 3000 zł per month. An analysis of the accounts reveals that each month, food expenses amounted to well over a half of monthly expenditure; residence cost was relatively low (e.g. ca. 20 zł for rent on the apartment), and average outgoings for various industrial goods (e.g. clothing), cleaning products and detergents reached one-fourth of the total expenditure. Interestingly, research on household budgets in post-war Poland reveals that the best part of acquired remuneration was expended on foodstuffs, and the increase of income in later years did not cause the decrease of food expenses in relation to other daily expenses [Beskid 1977: 101]. This discovery points to the importance attached to eating in the Polish society of the second half of the 20th century – a society much affected by war experiences and the shortages of the era of the People's Republic; yet it also reveals that prices of various industrial goods, especially clothing and furniture, were high in relation to incomes, and hence they were perceived as luxury goods and bought only occasionally [Brzostek 2010: 214].

It is also worth emphasising that the records pertain to the period of the People's Republic; that the author of the records, being female, was the organiser of household life, the chief shopper and the manager of household purchase accounting, is natural. The patriarchal family model, in which the woman was expected to cook and take care of the proper nutrition of her nearest relatives, whereas the man's share in household life was limited to carrying coal, firewood or water, was very markedly predominant in Poland of the second half of the 20th century. The male role in daily culinary practices was therefore negligible.

Perusal of these accounts justifies the assumption that all foodstuffs bought by their author were used in household cookery which, the era of the People's Republic, was a crucial counterbalance to the generally promoted mass catering associated with canteens and the so-called "milk bars"; basic, unrefined food was served there to the "populace" only with the intention to assuage hunger. Housewives who cooked at home tried to live up to their families' culinary expectations, even though, considering the limitations of the era, maintaining a household demanded much restraint. Official popularisation of the principles of "rational" nutrition was

intended to influence culinary preferences of the Polish society; the task of the new cookery was to replace old culinary traditions and to introduce a new, ideological approach to food. Collective catering gained scientific foundations in the 1950s and, as alleged by the official propaganda, its ingredients were based on calculations of "balanced meals" carried out by physiologists and economic coordinators [Brzostek 2010: 19]. The approach central to collective catering was rationalistic, not sensualistic, which went very much against the principles of traditional Polish cookery. It was proposed that eating – an action so deeply rooted in the sphere of social life – ought to change so as to involve mainly the satisfaction of physiological needs. Vegetarian cuisine, as well as such foodstuffs as fish, fruit and vegetables, were promoted in connection with the country's economic situation and in particular with the shortage of meat. Yet throughout the entire period of the People's Republic home cooking offered an escape from mass catering; the favoured menu was as fatty, and as clearly connected with the Polish culinary tradition, as it was only possible. Poles preferred to eat at home and sample dishes based on recipes circulated among friends; even in those difficult times Polish home cuisine clearly referred to old culinary models.

All in all, regardless of the shortcomings of the source material under analysis, it is quite evident that food expenses in the analysed period were the foundation of the costs of everyday living. The analysed material does not provide direct data regarding the amount of acquired foodstuffs or the places of their purchase; no data are available regarding the dishes prepared from these products, the manner of their serving, the time of day or conditions in which they were eaten, or descriptions of the emotions or actions of the people who stand in the background, so to speak, of these records. However, the fact that biographical experiences of the author and her family, the specificity of her environment, or various complex social situations that constitute the cultural foundation for the recorded food expenses are not directly taken under consideration here, does not mean that those aspects of reality were entirely overlooked. On the contrary, it may be said that they were concealed between the lines, just suggested to the reader, thus creating a very dense undercurrent of meanings. In the analysed

material, generally speaking, the richness of contents is contrasted with the modesty of form; also intriguing is the density of all data contained in the records (e.g. in the form of underlines, diverse annotations, graphic abbreviations or mathematical calculations). Hence this "literature" must be approached with great caution and analysed most meticulously and with utmost care. Repeated references to foodstuffs, their prices and the time of their purchase constitute a very peculiar illustration of the practices of everyday life which resulted from, and were directly dependent on, the character of the historical period in which they occurred, the lifestyle of a typical Polish family of the era, and the level of social aspirations of its members. It is also necessary to consider the fact that the author of these records hailed from Łódź, and hence was an inhabitant of a concrete city space; this is of considerable importance with regard to the period in question. In a different cultural scenery, in a different historical period, or in connection with a different lifestyle of the author, these records would simply illustrate a different image of everyday behaviour. Yet regardless of all these reservations, the most important aspect is undoubtedly the fact that this is a record of quotidian life in its stark, direct, tangible dimension; the record of, to quote Dariusz Czaja [2004: 86], "life as itself", which in so many other analyses of mundanity is shown already shrouded in the cloak of cultural interpretation.

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When Salt Turns Bitter and the Tablecloth Must Be Blue. On Food in Autism

Abstract: The article presented herein forms a part of the broad and rich trend of anthropological research on corporeality. The detailed problem undertaken by the author is the issue of eating disorders evinced by people with autism. Food is understood here as a broad and diverse set of practices, reactions and forms of behaviour. The topic is discussed from the perspective of an anthropologist, with reference to concrete examples derived from several sources, i.e. selected biographical/autobiographical reports concerning the question of living with autism, materials collected during field research conducted since 2013 in the "Jaś i Małgosia" Foundation in Łódź and the author's personal contacts with people with autism spectrum disorders. The reflections focus on the influence of the senses on the autists' consumption practices, considering that autists certainly overstep the limits of the culture of food consumption accepted in their community, undermine the normative order of this culture and develop their own eating-related forms of behaviour and rituals, which are often undesirable from the point of view of the community in general.

Key words: autism, eating disorders, diet, senses, the autists' consumption practices.

Human existence is very strongly linked with the body; after all, the body is a person's first tool for acting in and experiencing the world. At the same time, the *soma* is inseparable form the subject: it develops, grows old and dies with it. Hence, corporeality constitutes one of the most crucial facets of the human condition. For this reason it was noticed and valued in anthropology already at its beginnings as an autonomous research

discipline and branch of science.[1] The current article is situated within the broad and prolific trend of anthropological research on corporeality. The detailed subject analysed here is the issue of eating disorders presented by persons suffering from autism, a condition which constitutes one of the major contemporary plagues and which afflicts people of all races, ethnic groups and cultures of the world. With regard to terminological precision, it is necessary to begin with the clarification that, recently, the term used in speaking and writing about this condition is not so much 'autism', but 'autism spectrum disorders' (ASD). In my text, I shall nevertheless use both terms interchangeably, treating the first as a convenient abbreviation for the second. I shall also use such descriptive terms as 'a person with autism', 'an autistic person' etc. as interchangeable and equal. I treat these terms as identical for stylistic reasons; yet it is worth emphasising that they are not wholly parallel semantically or culturally. The difference is lucidly explained by Daniel Mont:

> 'People with autism' denotes that autism is separate from what makes them a person; it is an add-on type of thing. Many autistic people prefer simply being called 'autistic people' because that usage implies that autistic is the type of person they are, not something they have [Mont 2002: 175].

The choice of a verbal label is thus an issue of individual preference and is strongly linked with individual identification processes and with the perception of oneself as a person.

Features which today are associated with ASD have most probably been encountered since time immemorial. For instance, the figures of weird children and changelings found in the folklore of many countries – strange, fey, touched with madness, bewitched, enchanted, possessed by demons etc. – may be an echo of such experiences and observations [Brauner, Brauner 1986:15-40]. Yet autism was only relatively recently described as a separate diagnosis; this was done independently by two Austrian psychiatrists, Leo Kanner and Hans Asperger, in the mid-20th

1 The classic text by Marcel Mauss, *Les techniques du corps* [Mauss 1936], is a telling example.

century [Kanner 1943; Asperger 1944]. The cultural history of autism lies outside the scope of the present text, even though it is an exceedingly interesting topic for anthropological reflection. Suffice it to mention that a clear increase in the "moral suffering statuses" [cf. Charmaz 1999: 362–382; Zierkiewicz 2012: 32] ascribed to this disorder has recently been observed. An increasing number of people have admitted publicly to suffering from autism themselves, or having the nearest relatives who are autistic; also, it has increasingly often been a topic of media releases, works of art, published pathographies, remarks on various forums or internet blogs. A growing number of disclosures and self-disclosures of the disease and ways of coping with it has helped to overcome the taboo and to tame autism, although it must also be noted that these communications may help to make this disorder an ideological issue and to mythologise it.

Contemporary definitions and descriptions of autism lay the greatest emphasis on the characteristic triad of symptoms, encompassing (a) deficient social and emotional abilities and the presence of asocial reflexes, (b) difficulties with interpersonal communication, and (c) inflexible, repetitive and stereotypical behaviour. In addition to the above, however, it must be remembered that eating, understood as a broad and varied spectrum of practices, reactions and behaviour forms, presents a significant problem in ASD.[2] Problems associated with this sphere may reveal themselves in many different ways, since autists are a large and heterogeneous group.[3] What is more, a person with ASD may pass through various phases of functioning with respect to the sphere of eating, which may be conditioned by bio-psychological or socio-cultural factors [Cornish 1998: 506]. In general, however, the most frequently mentioned of the range of eating disorders noticeable in people with autism are breastfeeding problems, the

2 This was stressed already by the pioneer of research in autism, Hans Asperger [Kalyva 2009: 480]. To clarify, it must be added that autism is, of course, not the only one, but one of very many disorders associated with eating problems.

3 Empirical researches on autists and comparative analyses in which autistic and healthy people participated have both shown that eating in ASD has some specific features [Schreck et al. 2004; Williams et al. 2005; Fodstad, Matson 2008; Kalyva 2009; Martins et al. 2009]. Problems are particularly acute in childhood, when the nervous system is still developing, but may also be present at the later stages of life.

lack of appetite, food refusal or obsession, selective eating, the distrust of new things (the so-called neophobia),[4] food cravings, fits of hunger, overeating, an imbalance in the frequency or number of meals, an abnormal eating tempo (too slow or too fast), holding morsels of food in the mouth for interminably long periods, trouble with biting, chewing or swallowing food, a preference for liquids, consumption of half-processed or inedible products, as well as numerous sensory preferences (partiality for dishes having a particular appearance, taste, aroma, consistence, temperature etc.) [Cornish 1998: 501–506; Nieminen-von Wendt et al. 2005: 3–7; Johnson et al. 2008: 437–446; Kuschner et al. 2005; Keen 2008; Kalyva 2009: 480; Martins et al. 2009: 1878–1879, 1882; Gale et al. 2011: 1383–1393; Rogers et al. 2012: 20–21, 25–28]. These disorders may result in serious health problems [Shreck et al. 2004: 433–437; Gale et al. 2011: 1383]. A large part of those diagnosed with ASD have also various problems with the digestive tract, all of which may, of course, reflect negatively on the sufferers' attitude to eating and their feeding practices, in many cases leading to anorexic behaviour and attempts to relieve hunger by drinking liquids [Schreck et al. 2006].

Special diets are often prescribed in autism as a medicinal measure. These diets are usually based on the elimination of three basic substances: glucose, gluten and casein from the sufferer's menu [Strickland, McCloskey 2009]. Various dietary supplements are prescribed to counter nutritional or vitamin deficiencies or to improve the functioning of the nervous and digestive systems [Cornish 1998: 501–502]. The organism's response to the diet and supplementation varies; it may be spectacular, but occasionally it is only vestigial. Some autists react to changes in everyday menu relatively fast, others very slowly and only to a small degree. The developmental dynamics of a child, who may radically change his/her eating habits, is an additional difficulty. It does happen that a relatively normal eater suddenly starts refusing food, at the same time losing the already acquired abilities regarding other spheres and showing a cognitive deterioration [Cornish 1998: 506]. Such a situation presents a great chal-

4 This refers to the foodstuffs themselves as much as to their "cultural" form, e.g. the visual aspects of packaging or the format or size of food portions.

lenge, because, as the child becomes increasingly less communicative, emotionally difficult and barely approachable, it is hard to motivate him/her to eat. In addition, the caregivers not always know how to deal with the negative behaviour patterns that accompany the sufferer's meals. These may include screaming, crying, self-harm, aggression, the refusal to sit at the table, throwing, smearing or spitting out food, hurling the plate against the floor, flinging cutlery off the table or abrupt turning the head away during attempts at feeding [Gale et al. 2011: 1386; Rogers et al. 2012: 26–27]. Behaviours situated at the other end of the spectrum are, of course, equally problematic, for instance eating too many meals a day, unstoppable gluttony or hiding away food and eating it compulsively in seclusion [Nieminen-von Wendt et al. 2005: 3–7]. Persons who function in this way certainly overstep the limits of the culture of food consumption accepted in their community, undermine the normative order of this culture and develop their own eating-related forms of behaviour and rituals, which are often undesirable from the point of view of the community in general. This is, obviously, not a deliberate and calculated way of acting, but an uncontrolled surrender to the oppression imposed by the disorder, as the sufferer follows an irrepressible need, fascination or obsession. In addition, the lack of awareness that other people are watching and evaluating him/her, which is characteristic to autism, may prevent even the so-called high-functioning autists from internalising elementary principles associated with food ingestion. Insensitive to the presence and opinions of others, they may behave in a manner that infringes cultural taboos: slurp, chew with an open mouth, put elbows on the table, eat greedily or noisily, neglect to use the proper utensils or disregard the fellow eaters (e.g. by sitting at the table or leaving it abruptly, acting against all norms of courtesy and social etiquette). Various autistic compulsions and mannerisms may be equally shocking to onlookers, for instance the urge to pedantically arrange food on the plate or an inability to conclude the meal if any food is left, even if the sufferer is not hungry. It has already been mentioned that problems with interpersonal communication, mutism and the impaired use of language, which are frequent in ASD, certainly diminish the efficacy of actions undertaken to correct the undesirable forms of behaviour during

food consumption. After all, how does one explain to a child that he/she should eat and drink regularly in order to live and grow up healthy, if that child does not speak, avoids contact and has problems with catching the meaning of a statement? A situation when a child is not developing correctly always causes pain and anxiety; but when that child is deeply immersed in him/herself and well-nigh inapproachable, this situation may unfold in a truly dramatic way.

The above description, although brief, demonstrates that eating in ASD is a complex and multifaceted topic that presents an anthropologist with a broad range of issues for analysis. In the current article, I have decided to develop this topic with reference to examples derived from several sources, i.e. selected biographical/autobiographical reports concerning the question of living with autism, materials collected during field research conducted since 2013 in the "Jaś i Małgosia" Foundation in Łódź and my personal contacts with people with autism spectrum disorders. Considering the framework of this publication, it has been necessary to limit the range of issues to be discussed. Therefore, since eating is a decidedly sensual experience, these reflections shall focus on the influence of the senses on the autists' consumption practices.

At the outset, it is necessary to recollect that a classification which is firmly set in our culture divides the senses into the so-called higher (i.e. sight and hearing) and lesser ones (i.e. smell, taste and touch). The sense of sight enjoys the position of a favourite. Ewa Rewers notes that the ability to see has long been considered privileged owing to, among others, the Aristotelian classification of the senses, in which sight was perceived as superior because, in Aristotle's view, it enabled the highest degree of cognition. The sense of touch was at the very bottom of this sensual hierarchy because, according to Aristotle, it was the most primal form of a sensory experience, which linked human beings with animals, and it constituted the most elementary type of human experience, differing from the others in the fact that it required personal contact [Rewers 2006: 61]. This cognitive model was considered valid throughout the ages; currently, however, it is increasingly often questioned. Numerous researchers distance themselves from the Aristotelian typology and argue for the importance of all

the senses in the process of the reception of reality [*Spektakle zmysłów* 2010]. The anthropology of the senses is one of the areas in which the hegemony of sight is questioned and the intersensuality of human perception and cognition is pointed out [Krupa 2010: 164; Howes 2012]. Sensory universes of people suffering from various disorders are an important topic of studies undertaken with this perspective in mind; the attempts at analysing them more closely have led to the conclusion that these universes differ considerably from those inhabited by healthy individuals. This, of course, refers also to autists [Kojder 2002; Rzepkowska 2012]. For instance, the nervous system that is atypically formed and develops differently causes children with ASD to learn to use the so-called higher senses later than their healthy peers. The consequences of this fact are evident also in the sphere of consumption practices. These children sniff vigorously at their food, because the sense of smell is their fundamental navigation tool; it helps them to conquer the unfamiliar areas of culinary reality, to identify and evaluate various products and dishes. To refer to a concrete empirical case: a male with Asperger's syndrome (a mild form of autism) whom I personally know throughout his entire childhood used to sniff very carefully at the contents of his plate before he started eating. A positive outcome of this test resulted in an enthusiastically celebrated consumption; but if the message coming from his nose was negative, the boy firmly refused to eat. The second scenario was more frequent, so as a child he was considerably underweight.

Occasionally the overvaluation of the sense of smell by ASD sufferers leads to their eating substances that are normally considered inedible in a given culture. A while ago I observed how a small group of autistic children, lured by the smell of fresh paint, attempted to ingest it. The caregivers intervened before anything more than a harmless lick or two could take place, but if not for their quick and decisive action, the children may have wanted to eat more of this "delicacy".

With time, as their brain matures, the sense of smell usually grows less important to the development of the autists' consumption practices. Regardless of the phase of life, however, the action of the senses very greatly influences what they eat, when and in what amount. In the milieu,

the tales of children with autism who ate only products in definite colours have by now acquired an anecdotal status. I have met a girl who, although very picky and capricious regarding her menu, is happy to eat anything that is green: chives, parsley leaves, green peppers, broccoli, lettuce, spinach, cucumbers and suchlike. The ASD sufferers' sensitivity to colours makes the hue of everything that accompanies the act of consumption, like the crockery, table decorations or dining-room décor, equally important. Similar preferences are manifested with regard to other senses as well; their under- or over-sensitivity may lead to practices and habits which seem bizarre from the point of view of neuronormativity. An obsessive desire to cling to routines and order, which is typical to ASD, may cause the sufferer's absolute intolerance to any changes in the preferred sensory landscape. In that case, an attempt to introduce a change in that landscape may bring about fits of anger, acts of aggression or self-aggression and an unyielding refusal to eat. Hence eating out, be it at a barbecue or a picnic, in a random bar or restaurant, is such a huge problem for people with ASD [Mont 2002: 109–110]. In such a place, everything is unfamiliar and untamed; this very strongly upsets ASD sufferers. The dishes served there are burdened with the risk of newness, and thus of causing the sufferer a traumatic surprise. The interview with an autistic woman [Legge 2002: 115–122] reveals how difficult an experience this may be. The interviewee, now an adult, is rather emotional in disclosing how very much she used to be afraid of new food in her childhood – not so much of its taste, but of the feeling caused by its presence in her mouth. In addition, she was scared of the sound of food being bitten off or chewed, because sounds that were too loud overloaded her brain and constituted a psychological burden. Many of her childhood phobias and obsessions have persisted into adulthood. She still dislikes too-crunchy foods, as well as culinary surprises that occur when a producer modifies the recipe and a given product begins to taste differently. To her, the new version is never as good as the original one. She is also very sensitive to the temperature of food; she will not tolerate anything hot. Hence, when she prepares food herself, she only heats it up to being lukewarm, and when eating out, she patiently waits until the dish cools down. Combinations of various ingredients, their textures and

consistencies are also problematic and anxiety-generating. For instance: she has nothing against minced meant and mashed potatoes, but their combination on a plate is entirely unacceptable to her. Eating foodstuffs that change their taste, consistency or sound during biting or chewing is an equally unpleasant experience. Sweet buns with a fruit filling are a case in point. This product has a layered structure: the soft and fluffy dough conceals a portion of gooey filling, so, while eating, the interviewee experiences radically different sensations: the delicate taste of the dough is combined with the sensation of the viscous goo gushing in her mouth. What is more, tiny fruit seeds emit a sound similar to the grating of sand, which irritates her. Some of fruit fillings have a special tart taste, which makes her think they are fermented, gone bad. Hence the interviewee consistently avoids all contrasting textures; this is because tasting them threatens her with the feelings of the loss of control and a sensory chaos. In addition, she does not eat things which do not look natural (e.g. have a too-intense, synthetic colour) or which have changed their structure during culinary processing (e.g. she would be happy to eat a raw apple, but apple mousse, compote or pie are unthinkable). The smell exuded by food is not without importance either; she likes mild, unobtrusive aromas. Her greatest enemy when it comes to smell is cinnamon; since her earliest childhood she has found its heavy, spicy odour revolting. She also avoids lumpy foods, because she is afraid of it sticking in her throat. For the same reason, she finds swallowing pills problematic. When she was little, her father would crush them for her between spoonfuls; now she crunches them in her mouth and then gulps water.

Yet the assorted obsessions and compulsions regarding food and its consumption are not the interviewee's only problem. Troubles with digestion caused by the fact that autists have a slightly different physiology constitute a separate issue. In principle, she should not eat foodstuffs containing gluten and casein; she does not follow this diet, however. Since she was little she has loved bread, pastas and chocolate, and she feels unable to renounce them. Alas, indulging her senses in this way, she increases not only her digestive problems, but also her psychological and emotional difficulties: she grows more erratic, is irritable and suffers

mood fluctuations. The fact that she does not follow her diet exposes her acquaintances to various vexations, as they have to bear with her caprices and outbursts of anger; yet the asocial personality traits related to ASD make her insensitive to other people's feelings and reactions.

The same traits – to pass on to the following stage of this analysis – make it difficult to motivate an ASD child to eat. A strategy which is deeply rooted in culture relies on such arguments as: "Eat this, or else mummy/daddy/granny will feel miserable"; but it fails completely when applied to people with autism. Their relations with others are usually purely pragmatic, based on shared occupations or interests, not on emotional closeness. The adults' "ritual lamentations", which constitute an attempt to arouse an empathic reaction in the child, do not work in their case. A person with autism spectrum disorders does not aspire to making other people happy; their feelings and experiences are not entirely comprehensible to him/her. Hence, it is pointless to expect an autist to be concerned with the feelings of fellow eaters or (this is especially important to an anthropologist) to adhere to the limitations imposed by the system of values and norms referring to food ingestion. These essential skills are usually acquired in the process of enculturation/socialisation; their expression is, for instance, the prescribed order of precedence during consumption. This order was clearly defined already in ancient Greece, where it depended on gender and the individual's place in kinship structures [Węcowski 2011: 61–69]. In spite of the ongoing processes of democratisation and increased equality, in contemporary Western culture it is still accepted that a woman takes precedence while ordering a meal and that a man should be courteous and attentive to her. The ASD community is essentially insensitive to such cultural suggestions and directives. I discovered this myself, having gone to a restaurant with my acquaintance who suffers from Asperger's syndrome. Entirely heedless of my presence, he ordered his meal, abruptly dismissed the waitress, ate the food he had been served, and exited from the premises, leaving me at the table – alone, hungry and quite disconcerted.

Eating communal meals belongs to primary rituals, which fundamentally influence the essence of a group or community – its life, structure, continuity etc. This idea, very deeply rooted in the symbolic layer of culture, is

nevertheless at odds with the autistic experience of the world and finds no understanding in this group. This is confirmed by stories I was told by parents of children with ASD. One of the mothers confided that her son usually strove to eat his meals alone, and when there were other people at the table, he disregarded their presence. The boy was also in the habit of mixing, in the course of one act of consumption, dishes having diverse tastes, aromas, consistencies and temperatures; this goes entirely against the conventions accepted in our culture. As a result, his meals were a true symphony of diversity, as they might combine noodles, chips and various types of meat, sauces and liquids, including Coca-Cola with ice or hot tea. It must be added that the same boy was a very poor eater at the young age, and that his current problem is the speed of eating: he eats too fast and greedily. Almost all his senses are constantly focused on food. He usually does not hear when he is directly addressed,[5] but immediately reacts to all sounds associated with food, like the rustling of candy wrappers or noises from the kitchen. Whenever any family member goes to the kitchen, the boy follows at once, greedily looking for a snack.

Naturally, the above examples do not exhaust the broad spectrum of eating preferences associated with autism. The literature on the subject is full of accounts about ASD sufferers who, for example, eat only liquid or only dry foods (i.e. they shun sauces, dips, toppings, soups etc.), or accept only hard and crispy foodstuffs (cookies, crisps, fish fingers, cornflakes, meat in breadcrumbs) or soft and mushy ones (jellies, puddings, mashed potatoes). Some like their dishes to have an intense aroma, others do not tolerate culinary smells to such an extent that no food can be cooked when they are at home; otherwise they suffer from nausea or vomiting fits. What is more, some ASD sufferers experience a phenomenon known as sensory amalgamation, which occurs particularly when they are tired or overloaded with amassed sensory impulses. In these circumstances, an autist may have considerable problems with ordering and processing sensory data: tastes, smells, tactile sensations etc. Salt in food may seem bitter, or freshly brewed tea – ice cold. Thrown into confusion, his/

5 Deficient or selective attention (looking, listening etc.) is a typical symptom of autism.

her senses no longer convey correct information concerning the ongoing experience.

It is thus obvious that somatic and sensory functions of the organism that are peculiar to autism powerfully influence the sphere of consumption practices. As a result, eating may bring about the state of utmost disorientation, acute suffering or supreme pleasure; it may cause the sufferer to select his/her food rigorously, to display anorexic or orthorexic behaviour, to hoard food or to eat with unstoppable greediness. It may also arouse surprising, and even socially undesirable reactions; this aspect is worthy of an anthropologist's attention. It is obvious that solutions embedded in culture usually quite precisely determine the ways of allaying appetite or hunger, which are regulated by means of the current economic system and through the consistent and organised patterns of behaviour referring to this area of life. People tend not to grab food or snatch a friend's sandwich, even if they might be inclined to do so, and taking a thing from a shelf in a shop or a stall without paying is strictly censured and considered unethical. Our cultural system offers various principles of exchange which may be used in such situations, such as asking or attempting to negotiate for the desired food [Ziółkowska-Kuflińska 2010: 63]. Autists occasionally do not heed these forms of cultural actions. A favourite colour, taste or aroma of food may provoke them to stealing the desired morsel from other person's plate[6] or to eating an amount of the given dish that shocks the onlookers. For the same reason, it is difficult for autistic people to respect cultural obligations such as periodical fasting or other restrictions in the menu required by ritual.

In addition, problems with the senses have significant consequences to the health of ASD sufferers. In order to avoid related health problems, it is advisable to attempt to develop proper eating habits and appetite control mechanisms, starting from the sufferer's earliest age. Thanks to this, he/she may later avoid serious health complications, such as being under- or overweight, obesity, growth retardation, eye diseases, caries, anaemia, diabetes, rickets and many others [Schreck et al. 2004: 433–435;

6 The concept of ownership is an advanced social notion. People with ASD occasionally evince problems with understanding and internalising it.

Gale et al. 2011: 1383]. But how is this to be done? How to protect from harm a human body which is possessed by a disease and, in addition, to do this by means of culture, i.e. various tricks, techniques, long-term preventive and correctional strategies etc.? The possibilities are many; the size of this article prevents me from presenting them all, especially since their list is continually growing. The ASD milieus are constantly seeking, and finding, new ways of solving the dietary problems of ASD sufferers. Nevertheless, some fundamental principles regarding this issue are worth pointing out, for instance:

– autists are more willing to try new food when they are feeling unconstrained, safe and relaxed;
– autists may be tempted to eat a new foodstuff if they see other people eating various dishes, if they are invited to try a morsel from someone else's plate, or if the foodstuff is left in plain view so that they can get used to it;
– a novelty may be effectively introduced by mixing well-known food with unfamiliar one (e.g. favourite fruit with a new yoghurt or cream) or by serving dishes which resemble the familiar and accepted ones (e.g. potato purée may be a friendly path to vegetable purée; cooked cauliflower may be replaced with soft broccoli);
– language is always helpful in the process of getting used to the world and taming unfamiliarity; hence it is necessary to describe new foodstuffs in terms that are intelligible and pleasant to the autist, and to praise him/her after they are eaten;
– in order to overcome the narrow colour preference, it is worthwhile to introduce products in which the favourite hue is dominant, but with a touch of another hue (e.g. a red apple with a yellow or bright-green spot, broccoli covered with a slice of tomato, an orange jelly with a dollop of whipped cream);
– the resistance to change and sensual distrust towards new foodstuffs may be surmounted by serving variants of favourite dishes (e.g. many flavours of yoghurt, a range of cheeses, chips in varying temperatures, shapes and degrees of crispiness);

– if the fear of a given foodstuff is strong, it is worthwhile to start with presenting it in other contexts (as a decoration, a gift, a plaything, a forfeit in a game); it is also useful to place small amounts of the disliked foodstuffs on the autist's plate and never to force him/her to eat, but to encourage him/her to look at it, smell it, cut it in pieces, lick or touch it;
– if a foodstuff proves too difficult to ingest, the caregiver should help the sufferer to remove it from his/her mouth and to rinse the mouth with water [Cornish 1998: 506–507; Williams, Wright 2004: 206–208].

It is very important to ensure that such sets of cultural tools (handbooks, companion books, various compendia and other sources of information) helping in the therapy of eating disorders in autism are prepared and broadly circulated. This is important not only for medical, but also for social reasons. In fact, we may risk the opinion that this practice has contributed to transforming the "ontology of the disorder" existing in culture and the symbolic status of the sufferer which resulted from it. On the one hand, due to an improved standard of everyday functioning, the sufferers are no longer doomed to isolation and stigmatization and they are prepared to deal with various social situations associated with eating. On the other hand, the application of tools that explicate and normalize the disorder helps the neuronormative environment to understand the specificity of ASD better; thus, instead of reacting to an autist's behaviour at the table with consternation or disgust, people are more ready to assist and support him/her. Some time ago, the sight of a screaming autist child who hurled away the plate and vomited was (to refer to a phrase used by Edyta Zierkiewicz) a source of "psychological and aesthetic horror" to me [Zierkiewicz 2012: 34]; now, however, as I understand the aetiology and mechanism of such reactions, I try to act in a logical and constructive manner instead of giving in to emotions and escape instincts.

In conclusion, two observations. In contrast to an illness, health is something we do not experience explicitly. As observed by Immanuel Kant, "as a matter of fact well-being is not felt" [Kant cited by Canguilhem 1991: 141]. Empirical material referring to sensual aspects of eating in ASD, which has been presented above, demonstrates that in this disorder the

transparency of experiencing the body is distorted. To the sufferer, his/her body becomes above all a subject, not a background to everyday functioning [Karczmarczyk, Nowakowski 2012: 62]. People with autism often live in the state of oppression exerted by their own bodies, which, controlled by alien forces, condemn them to suffering. The bodies distort or remove the sufferers' appetites, doom them to serious digestive problems, lower their psycho-motor skills, cause compulsions, obsessions and phobias.

On the other hand, the specificity of ASD makes the sufferers' somatic and sensory experiences somehow more individual, and their biological needs, including the need to obtain nourishment, are to a lesser degree transformed by culture. Joanna Femiak and Piotr Rymarczyk note that, in the contemporary Western culture, "corporeal-sensual experiences are perceived instrumentally, in a techno-manipulative way, and they serve to control compliance of bodily 'parameters' – both inner and experienced – with the established standards" [Femiak, Rymarczyk 2012: 86]. According to Richard Shusterman, promotion of false images of the body which underlies those phenomena is rigorously subordinate to the interests of the capitalist advertising industry and to political propaganda. Alienation and reification of the body are the consequences of this approach. The body is thus treated as "an external means and mechanism that is anatomized into separate areas of intensive labor for ostentatious measurable results" [Schusterman 1999: 305]; hence our preoccupation with the proportions and condition of our bodies, with the slimming or rejuvenating diets, dietary supplements and new culinary trends [Schusterman 1999: 305–306; cf. also Bauman 1995: 89, 95, 97]. It seems that autists, being less interested in self-promotion, following fashions or gaining social acceptance than the neuronormative majority, are also less susceptible to similar manipulative and objectifying influences of the post-modern culture. Subordinate to an ailment, and thus to the power of nature, the body becomes more resistant to pressure exerted by culture. This is actually a very peculiar paradox, because, in the absence of etiologic cures to autism, culture remains the chief mechanism applied in the therapy of this disorder, including the area of culinary practices and food consumption.

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Celluloid Flavours. A Brief History of Food in Film

Abstract: The aim of the essay is to analyse selected images and the ways in which food functions in films. The author attempts to demonstrate how durable and intense are the connections between food and film. The text constitutes a type of a catalogue presenting examples of culinary meanings in film, which are as diverse as possible, although the provided examples certainly do not exhaust the topic and their selection is to some extent subjective. The text is written from the perspective of film studies, with some important consequences thereof. Primarily, description decidedly dominates over analysis and interpretation, the possible directions of which are only signalled. The author demonstrates that culinary issues in films often carry a metaphorical and symbolic potential, thus becoming a carrier of information regarding the cultural and socio-political context in which the film was made. As a film specialist, she is interested in the manner in which culinary themes (i.e. food and various actions related to it) constitute an element of a film's narration by defining the presented world, providing the characterisation of the protagonists and their interrelationships, creating moods, evoking emotions etc. Both types of filmic culinaries, i.e. those inside and outside the film itself, are described and signalled in the context of concrete films (or scenes).

Key words: cinema, food in film, culinary motifs, the "food-dependent" genres.

Depiction of culinary motifs in cinematography has a long history. One fact that may be considered symptomatic in this context is that the first public screening of projected motion pictures by the Lumière brothers (on 28th December 1895 – a date referred to as the symbolic "birthday" of cinema) took place in the basement of a Parisian coffee-house called the Grand Café. The outrage of modern cinema-goers against eating during a show is seems unjustified indeed.

The present article is an attempt to enumerate examples of food-related images in film and their various functions. As it undertakes to demonstrate the long history and the intensity of the relationship between the culinary and the cinematic, the article contains references to the very beginnings of cinematography. Thus, it may be regarded as the author's personal catalogue of varied examples of the significance of culinary images in film. The list is by no means complete, nor does it exhaust the scope of the subject, while the choice, though based primarily on the cinematic canon, is to some extent subjective. Most cinema-goers probably remember a favourite (though not necessarily tasty) dish from the big screen: the gazpacho from *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* by Pedro Almodóvar (1988), sultan's cream from *Dziewczyny do wzięcia* by Janusz Kondratiuk (1972), the blue leek soup from *Bridget Jones' Diary* (2001, directed by Sharon Maguire)… It may be hoped that the list of delicacies presented below might constitute a good starting point for further discussion on the various flavours of cinema.

The article was written from the point of view of film studies and, as it has been stated above, it presents a kind of a list. Such an assumption has a number of significant consequences. First of all, description must take precedence over analysis and interpretation, the possible course of which shall only be suggested. Thus, the article mentions a large number of subjects, which could become the basis for separate articles. These motifs may be divided into two groups: those referring to non-cinematic contexts and those strictly related to the world as presented within the film. The present article shall repeatedly demonstrate that culinary elements in cinema production often have a symbolic and metaphorical potential and convey various information about the cultural, social and political context in which the film was made. As a specialist in film studies, I am also, or perhaps primarily, interested in the methods in which culinary motifs (eating and the related activities) are woven into the narration of films: they define the world depicted in the movie, outline the personalities of the characters, help create a certain mood, stir emotions etc. Both of the mentioned types of the aspects of food-related motifs in film (touching on the inner and outer context) shall be delineated and identified in the framework of specific movies or scenes.

The inventors of the cinematograph, the Lumière brothers, created very short movies which focused primarily on documenting actual events: scenes from their own everyday life and snippets from the life of the city and its inhabitants. It was therefore natural that the subject of food should arise. One of the first moving pictures by the Lumière brothers, shot in their family garden in the spring of 1895 (i.e. before the cinematograph was introduced to the general public), shows a scene related to eating: Louis Lumière filmed his brother Auguste having a meal with his wife and infant daughter. The general term 'meal' is used here for a reason, as the specific type and hour of the said meal is difficult to specify. In Polish terminology the movie is referred to as *Śniadanie dziecka* (*The baby's breakfast*), while in the catalogues of the Lumière brothers it appears as either *Repas de bébé* (i.e. *Feeding the baby*) or *Le Déjeuner de bébé* (*The baby's lunch*). The nature of the meal aside, the movie unquestionably focuses on food. Thus, the subject of eating entered the big screen, although it must be emphasised that the entry was not particularly splendid. The inventors were simply exploring the potential of their device by filming, so to speak, at random. Their brief movies depicted scenes from everyday life. The content was decidedly less important that the actual possibility to immortalise a snippet of reality in the form of a moving picture.

Arguably the first movie to feature food in a more meaningful way was *How Bridget Served Salad Undressed*. Various versions of it were made by different film studios (e.g. the American Mutoscope Company, 1898, Biograph, 1900), and numerous remakes of it appeared very soon (e.g. *Serving Potatoes Undressed*, 1902). The plot was based on one of the series of anecdotes popular in the United States at the end of the 19th century, focusing on the adventures of one Bridget McKeen, an Irish immigrant working as a servant. These took the form of jokes as well as cartoons printed in newspapers and on postcards. Bridget was not possessed of a sharp intellect and thus repeatedly found herself in awkward or troublesome situations, inflicted damage or put herself in danger. In the case of *How Bridget Served Salad Undressed* the humorous situation stems from a verbal misunderstanding. Bridget is asked by the master of the house to serve the salad *undressed*, upon which she brings the dish being un-

dressed herself.[1] The funny little film about the servant is of significance in the context of the relations between food and cinematography, because it was probably the first instance of a food-related situation being used as a reference to a particular social and cultural context. The risqué joke carries a number of implied information, e.g. concerning the stereotypical views, the attitudes towards immigrants and the characteristic features of American humour in late 19th and early 20th century.

The depiction of food was also involved in the history of film censorship, due to one particular work of the pioneer of British cinematography, Charles Urban, a movie entitled *Cheese Mites* (1903). Less than a minute long, the film (a part of a series entitled *The Unseen World*) shows bacteria crawling on a piece of stilton, as viewed through a microscope. The film was deemed to be "gross" and to discourage people from eating cheese, which, predictably, elicited a nervous reaction from cheese producers afraid of a downturn in sales. Due to their protest, *Cheese Mites* was banned from cinemas. As Sarah Smith ironically observes: "One of the first films to be banned in Britain contained neither sex nor violence, but cheese" [Smith 2005: 18].

Food and eating started to be associated with certain movie genres as early as in the days of silent films. According to Rebecca L. Epstein, the "food-dependent" genres included the western (with the saloon as one of the major locations), slapstick comedy (with their famous cake fights) and the horror, which typically breaks the culinary taboos [Epstein 2007: 219].[2] It must be emphasised that early attempts at filming food were plagued

1 This movie is only one of the many based on the same series of anecdotes. Other examples include *The Finish of Bridget McKeen* (1901), in which Bridget (played, incidentally, by a sturdy male – a fact which, in turn, reflects the stereotypical image of the physique of Irish women) causes a fire that proves fatal for her. It must be added that at the end of the 20th century, a similar series of jokes appeared in the United States (and was to some extent reflected in cinematic imagery), this time featuring an intellectually limited immigrant from Poland [cf. Musser 1991: 45].

2 In this context the author mentions contemporary movies – *The Silence of the Lambs* and *Alive*, yet similar examples may easily be found among silent films. Everybody seems to remember the scene of the first dinner in the castle of Count Orlok (*Nosferatu – a Symphony of Horror*, 1922, directed by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau), during which the guest injures his finger and is disturbed by the way the host reacts to the drop of blood falling down the hand.

with problems of a strictly technical nature, related to the lack of colour and sound. This subject is discussed in more detail e.g. by Steve Zimmerman in his *Food In Films. A Star Is Born* [Zimmerman 2009: 26–28]. In the age of silent cinema, the depictions of food were limited to black and white images lacking any aural effects. Can a silent colourless film scene convey the sensuality of the moment of biting into a juicy apple? It is due to such technical limitations that culinary scenes were rather scarce in silent movies and did not have the potential of metaphorical images. The sole purpose of the food fight scenes mentioned by Epstein was to create a humorous effect and to spur the audience into laughing. "[…] Comedians did use food in their films, but mostly to create sight gags, and in those instances the focus was on the joke, not the food", writes Zimmerman [Zimmerman 2009: 26].

There were, naturally, exceptions to this rule. These include Charlie Chaplin's *Gold Rush* (1925). One fact that is important in the context of the present discussion and of which most viewers seem unaware, is that the director drew inspiration from actual experience related to food (or, more precisely, the lack thereof). Chaplin admits in his autobiography:

> I read a book about the Donner Party, who, on the way to California, missed the route and were snowbound in the Sierra Nevada mountains. Out of 160 pioneers, only 18 survived, most of them dying of hunger and cold. Some resorted to cannibalism, eating their dead, others roasted their moccasins to relieve their hunger. Out of this harrowing tragedy, I conceived one of our funniest scenes [Chaplin 1964: 299].

The scene he refers to is of course the one in which the hungry Tramp decides to serve his own shoe as a meal for himself and his companion. It must be added that this is done for a special occasion – Thanksgiving. The scene, filmed in extraordinary detail, became a part of the movie canon, not only due to the exceptional comicality, but also the meticulous presentation (the shoelaces arranged like spaghetti, the nails licked and sucked on like bones) that is highly evocative of the feeling of hunger experienced by the characters in the movie. Humour goes hand in hand

with drama. Thus, Chaplin's movie becomes a unique statement for all the abused and the maladjusted living on the margins of the American social system. The hunger felt by the characters in *Gold Rush* is manifested in yet another scene, in which Big Jim in hunger-induced hallucinations mistakes Tramp for a large chicken, which he decides to hunt and eat – nearly killing his friend. Thus, the film touches, albeit delicately, on the issue of potential cannibalism.

Chaplin's works would indubitably constitute a crucial turning point in narratives referring to the topic hunger. Especially since – as Steve Zimmerman observes – *Gold Rush* is not the only movie in which the master of slapstick comedy utilises the motif. The author of *Food In the Movies* emphasises that there was a significant autobiographical aspect to such scenes:

> During Chaplin's successful twenty-year career of making silent films, food and eating scenes (especially those portraying hunger and abandonment) play an important role which, given his Dickensian childhood, is not that surprising. Living from hand to mouth as a child in the care of mentally ill mother, their condition aggravated by the death of his estranged alcoholic father, undoubtedly left a vivid and lasting memory [Zimmerman 2010: 135].[3]

The third food-related scene in *Gold Rush*, more poetic and metaphorical than the other two, is most often referred to as the "Roll Dance".[4] Tramp, who has tragically fallen in love, is waiting to receive his sweetheart for New Year's dinner. The girl plays a joke on Charlie by making him believe she would spend the evening with him. Weary with the long wait, Tramp finally falls asleep and dreams that his beloved and her friends have come to visit. Tramp tries to be a good host and invents various ways to entertain his guests. Finally he forks two rolls and uses them as puppets in an

3 The connection between Chaplin's interest in depicting hunger and his difficult childhood marked with poverty was noticed also by other authors [see: Boyer 1993: 25–26].

4 It should be added that although the roll dance is uniformly associated with *Gold Rush*, it was not Chaplin who devised the scene. It was borrowed from a movie called *The Rough House* (1918) by Fatty Arbuckle.

elaborate dancing show. The girls clap their hands in applause. Tramp then wakes up to realise his actual situation – the girl had not come and the moment of happiness was only a dream… The authors of numerous analyses emphasise that the dreamed-up dinner conveys more than just illusory happiness. Eric Reinholtz suggests that the "roll performance" is a manifestation of the need for independence: "the lone prospector breaks the etiquette of formal dining by transforming the function of forks and rolls in order to win the attention of his female dining companions" [Reinholtz 2004: 269]. Ian Christie, in turn, perceives this scene as "a metaphor which elegantly and suggestively links food with sex" [Christie 1998: 188].

Chaplin was not the only slapstick comedian to realise that food and eating offered more than just the hilarity of a cream cake splashed over somebody's face. Eric Reinholtz offers a food-oriented perspective (especially in relation to social rituals connected with eating) on the works of another master of slapstick, Buster Keaton, in which "the ritualized consumption of food serves as the springboard for a highly nuanced representation of inter- and intraclass relations that is as astute as it is humorous" [Reinholtz 2004: 268]. It must also be emphasised that significant scenes featuring culinary motifs appeared also in other genres of silent cinema. The wedding dinner from Erich von Stroheim's *Greed* (1924) is a good example.

The real breakthrough in culinary imagery in movies came only in 1960s, for a variety of reasons. The first of those was related to the mentioned technical aspects of movie-making – the development of new technologies offered increasingly better possibilities of representing reality. No less important was the cultural and social context, notably the growing interest in cuisine. The credit for this change goes to Julia Child, an ordinary American woman, who decided to turn her passion for cooking into a way of life. In 1951 she was the first woman in history to graduate from the prestigious French school of culinary arts Le Cordon Bleu; ten years later the first issue of her influential cook book *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* was published in the United States. In February 1963 the Boston-based public television station WGBH started to broadcast her own cooking show entitled *The French Chef*. The "message" Julia Child

conveyed was very simple and unpretentious: cooking is a lot of fun. In her television performances in the kitchen she was always natural and charming, and happened to make mistakes; this gained her many fans and became a sort of a personal trademark as well as an asset. She was not a distant, inaccessible star; she'd spill liquids or drop appliances, she even managed to burn a dish or two. In her interpretation, French cuisine – associated with elegance, refinement and luxury beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen – became more "homely", yet did not lose any of its fleeting culinary beauty or flavour. Frances Short notes that Child was "famous in part for the numerous errors she made on television" [Short 2006: 109]. Watching *The French Chef* still is an extraordinary experience, both on terms of cuisine and entertainment value. Despite the passage of time, Julia Child still inspires and fascinates, while in early 1960s she was one of the absolute icons of American (pop)culture. Steve Zimmerman argues that it was this renewed interest in cuisine and cooking that effected the change in the way food was treated by movie-makers [Zimmerman 2009: 28]. It began to appear more frequently on screen and, more importantly, acquired a meaning beyond that of a prop or an element of the stage design. Obviously, this tendency was observable not only in American cinema. Examples of movies and directors that accentuated food are numerous indeed. One European movie-maker whose works include deeply significant and meticulously planned scenes involving eating was the Italian master Luchino Visconti. His culinary discourse with the audience was conducted with exceptionally sophisticated cunning. In his analysis of the movie *The Leopard* (1963), Steve Zimmerman draws attention to the fact that although the crucial scene of the feast is beautifully filmed and elaborately staged, food as such is not the point of focus. This is all the more surprising given the fact that the director employed actual chefs to prepare all the dishes according to traditional recipes. One may therefore speak of a significant absence of food on the screen (even though the dishes were laid out on the tables during the filming of the scene) coupled with an exaggerated focus on the actions connected to consuming, including the relations, emotions and interpersonal ties defined through these activities:

> Visconti never mentions what is on the menu, never shows any kitchen scenes of cooks preparing the food, and with one exception there are no close-up shots of any of the plated dishes or of people enjoying their dinner. The single exception, cleverly symbolic, shows Don Fabrizio, at the beginning of the meal, cutting through an unidentified three-tier baked Italian delicacy, of which one of the guests remarks, "Different layers in keeping with tradition". […] At the scene progress, we see guests helping themselves to food served from platters held by servants, then subsequent shots of them cutting their food, taking bites and chewing, but the food itself is hidden behind candles, flower arrangements, drinking glasses, or otherwise too far removed from the camera to be recognizable. The emphasis is more on the refined behavior and hushed confabulation of the guests, the crisp efficiency of the inconspicuous waiters, all carefully arranged with a painter's eye for detail and lighting captured in luxuriant Technicolor by cinematographer Giuseppe Rotunno [Zimmerman 2010: 219].

Another turning point in the history of cinematic food depictions came in the 1980s with what some scholars call the emergence of an entirely new genre: the *food film*.[5] This term describes a specific group of movies in which food and eating are not only present on screen, but become a key element in the plot and narration – they define the characters and the relations between them, expresses emotions, delineates the world portrayed in the film, etc. Ann Bower describes the characteristics of a *food film* in the following manner:

5 Scholars specialising in film studies still cannot agree on whether *food film* constitutes a separate genre, or is simply a descriptive category. I decided to spare the readers the nuances of specialist discussion, noting merely that I myself am inclined towards the former viewpoint. In my estimation, *food film* clearly has the potential of a separate genre, especially since it possesses the necessary semantic basis (this term is, of course, used in relation to the semantic/syntactic/pragmatic approach to film genre as described by Rick Altman), which includes the typical locations (the kitchen, the dining room, a restaurant, a food market, etc.), elements of the stage set and props (kitchen appliances, dishes, the table, plates and, naturally, food itself), as well as the personality of the main character (a cook or a gourmet – and usually both). Movies that focus on food also offer a specific type of syntactic structure (e.g. a meal is the climax of the story) and film pragmatics of a certain kind.

> The camera will focus in on food preparation and presentation so that in close-ups or panning shots, food fills the screen. The restaurant kitchen, the dining room and/or kitchen in home, tables within a restaurant, a shop in which food is made and/or sold, will usually be central settings. And the film's narrative line will consistently depict characters negotiating questions of identity, power, culture, class, spirituality, or relationship through food [Bower 2004: 5–6].

Rebecca Epstein adds another significant and distinctive feature: "Over the past few years, food films have been making moviegoers salivate" [Epstein 2004:195].

The title of the first fully mature *food film* is usually given to *Babette's Feast* (1987) by Gabriel Axel.[6] The story takes place in the late 19th century in a small fishing town in Jutland. Life there is slow and filled with religious worship, quiet contemplation and asceticism. Or was… as the local situation slowly but surely begins to change following the arrival of Babette, who fled the revolutionary turmoil of Paris. The woman takes up work as a servant in the house of the local minister's daughters, where she cleans and cooks – and all that have tried her cuisine must, if unwillingly, admit that it is a source of pleasure. In the puritan world of the village the sensual joy of eating inevitably brings shame, as all worldly pleasures are spurned as sin. One day Babette wins the lottery and decides to spend all the money on a feast for everybody. The dinner she cooks becomes a sort of a rite of passage for the locals. At first everyone is eating silently and meditatively, and slightly embarrassed (since Babette's dishes are sinfully delicious), with time the guests begin to smack their lips and lick their fingers more and more openly, and even start to smile and talk to one another. In the words of Mariola Marczak, "Babette's feast revived the community that had been in pieces" [Marczak 2000: 172]. The same author also emphasises the exceptional metaphorical potential of the movie, which transcends the realm of culinary literality – and consequently categorises the film as religious, due to, among other things, the theological symbolism of a feast, the references to biblical parables introduced into the plot

6 The script for the film was based on a novella by Karen Blixen.

and, naturally, the presence of religion within the world portrayed in the movie (the story takes place in a Lutheran settlement; the main characters include a minister and his two daughters) [cf. Marczak 2000: 173–175].[7]

The examples of *food films* are numerous. These tell very different stories and may be categorised as belonging to different traditional genres (*Chocolat* is a melodrama, *Vatel* a historical movie, *Simply Irresistible* a romantic comedy), but nevertheless share basic common features which make them into a characteristic and recognisable group.

An interesting step in the history of the *food film* genre was *Julie & Julia* (2009) by Nora Ephron. The plot is based on a culinary project (later turned into a book) by one Julie Powell, who challenged herself to spend one year to cook all five hundred and twenty four recipes included in the already mentioned famous book by Julia Child. Accounts of her progress and experience were regularly posted on her blog. Nora Ephron shows how cuisine may become a link between the stories of two very different people living in very different times.

Nora Ephron's movie may be considered a model example of the "genre confusion" surrounding *food films*. It is evident even in the material to be found on the producer's website, the movie's own web page and on the IMDb portal. The movie is described as a: biography, drama, romance [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1135503/],[8] the poster primarily invokes associations with biographical movies (the slogan reads: *Based on two true stories*). On the other hand, the food-related motifs are also emphasised, not only through the references to the profession and interests of the two main characters (the mentioned poster shows both of them in the kitchen). The producer's promotional materials describe the movie as a "delicious comedy about joy, obsession and butter", whereas the summary is con-

7 It must be noted here that the direction of Mariola Marczak's analysis is no exception. The author herself refers to many other scholars looking at the movie from a similar perspective (e.g. Dariusz Czaja, *Moment wieczny. O Uczcie Babette*; Wiesław Juszczak, *Dzieło a „granica sensu"*; Zbigniew Benedyktowicz, *Maria i Marta (Uwagi o Uczcie Babette)*; all of the works were published in: "Polska Sztuka Ludowa. Konteksty", 1992, no. 3–4). However, Marczak's analysis does not employ the term *food film*.

8 A similar Polish-language portal categorises the film as: biography, drama, comedy [http://www.filmweb.pl/film/Julie+i+Julia-2009-465594].

cluded with the exclamation "Bon appétit!", aimed at encouraging viewers to see the movie [http://www.sonypictures.com/movies/juliejulia/]. Related websites also include recipes for the dishes prepared by the characters on-screen and give viewers the opportunity to share their own culinary ideas (dubbed *food-spirations*). A noteworthy aspect of this discourse is the tendency to use wordplay and references to the terminology connected strictly to cooking and eating. Thus, although the term *food* is not featured anywhere as such, one can get the impression that it becomes a kind of a supra-category, in terms of which the movie is to be categorised. Another element that appears significant is the attempt at embedding the plot of the movie within a broader context of the discourse related to culinary art (as exemplified by the mentioned possibility of trying the same recipes or sharing one's own ideas). All materials related to *Julie & Julia* suggest that it is a biographical drama, but a "slightly different" and unique one, because it is so steeped in the culinary arts. The story exhibits food as a sort of a determinant, an absolutely indispensable element of the plot. In other words, the so-called commutative test,[9] known e.g. from semiotic analysis, if applied to this example, would certainly show that the elements related to eating are crucial for the story and changing them to any other would require a change in the meaning and the structure of the entire work. The modification would be more profound and consequential that a simple alteration of the characters' jobs and interests or the key locations, as it would have to encompass the very methods of conveying meaning within the work.

The important conclusion to be made here is that *food film* proves to be a category that exists above typical classifications (or perhaps *in spite of* them). Its representatives are found mainly in feature films, but there are also examples of animated movies – such as *Ratatouille* (2007, directed by Brad Bird) or *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* (2009, directed by

9 As explained by John Friske, the commutation method (also known as the commutative test) "involves changing a unit in the system and assessing the change in meaning, if any, that has occurred", which in consequence makes it possible "to identify significant differences" and "to help us define that significance" [Fiske 1990: 109]. Rick Altman refers to the commutative test as a possible preliminary (though not fully satisfactory) method for a pragmatic analysis of film genres [see: Altman 1999].

Chris Miller, Phil Lord) – as well as documentaries. It is an outstanding example of the latter category that shall be discussed below.

The idea behind Peter Kerekes' *Cooking History* (2009) was to access the story of the most important armed conflicts of the 20th century, so to speak, through the kitchen door. For the protagonists of the movie he chose military cooks. The concept of food as life-giving is transformed into the image of food as a bringer of death – as soldiers are to be fed well in order to have the strength to kill. In Kerekes' film, food and the activities connected with it become a form of communication, a language shaping wartime memories and the opinions expressed. For the cooks serving in the military, cuisine develops into a means to fight the enemy, and not only due to the fact that they feed the army of soldiers. Sometimes the chefs find themselves at the frontlines of "culinary wars". One such situation is recalled by Branko Trbovic, who used to be the head chef cooking for Josip Broz Tito. He describes the fiasco of diplomatic talks as follows:

> The leaders of the state were working on a plan to preserve the integrity of Yugoslavia. They met for the first time on 28th of March 1991 in Split. Franjo Tudjman invited them for lunch, and immediately nationalist games begun. He served Dalmatian ham with olives, Croatian dumplings and Dalmatian meat stew with vegetables. Only Croatian dishes, which Serbs eat very seldom. […] In Belgrade the Serbs issued a counterattack. Slobodan Milošević and his wife organised a typical Serbian lunch, to settle the score with the Croats. […] The third meeting took place at Alija Izetbegović's. He served Balkan cake, a Turkish soup with okra and roast lamb, and finally *tufahije* – a Bosnian dessert made of apples. The state of negotiations was clearly visible in the menu. In every successive meeting there was more and more nationalism and less and less hope for Yugoslavia as an entity.

Throughout the film Peter Kerekes uses the principle of culinary discourse very consistently. Food-related imagery appears not only in the accounts of the interviewed chefs, but also in the scenes devised by the director himself. Let us focus once again on the Yugoslavian part of the story and look at the manner in which Kerekes constructs the analogy between food and dictatorship. Branko Trbovic describes, among other things, the

special "culinary connection" he had with Tito: "I had to know what he liked and know him well. I may have had a different taste, but I got used to his preferences. Perhaps I did not like the same things, but I made an effort to make food appeal to him". Listening to this passage, it is hard not to get the impression that in this context the meaning of the word 'taste' reaches beyond the scope of culinary connotations. The dictator's cook recounts: "Tito was sophisticated. Tito was a gentleman. Everything had to be top-notch. The menu, the dining room, the service". As background for this part of the interview, the audience sees a peculiar scene: a naked woman is lying on the table and two cooks are arranging cold meats, vegetables and other snacks on her body. From a person she is transformed into a dish for the dictator, who – figuratively, of course – consumes his supporters. An image comparing totalitarianism to cannibalism (and the dictator to a cannibal) is, of course, disquieting, but also disturbingly accurate, owing to the context created by Kerekes' movie.

Continuing the subject of cannibalism, one is tempted to mention a characteristic tendency that has long been apparent in the history of food in film. Although "tasty" representations are prevalent (even the shoe in *Gold Rush* is portrayed from the perspective of the characters as a treat), there exist significant exceptions to this tendency. One example is the already mentioned disgusting portrayal of a slice of stilton cheese; yet in this case the image was not meant to convey any metaphorical message. One of the first instances of a "signifying" presentation of repulsive food is the scene from *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) by Sergei Eisenstein, in which the officers instruct the sailors to eat rotten, maggot-filled meat in order to humiliate them and demonstrate their power and authority. An excellent anti-culinary scene appears in *The Phantom of Liberty* (1974) directed by Luis Buñuel. A married couple invites some guests to visit on a lovely afternoon. The guests in smart attire approach the table, the lady of the house assigns the seats. There is only one detail that stands out in an otherwise ordinary space of a Parisian apartment – the table is surrounded by toilet bowls instead of chairs. The guests pull their pants down or gather their skirts and settle down; their defecating does not hinder the casual conversation on topics suitable for an elegant gathering: that

someone went to the opera, somebody else visited Spain (Madrid did not win their approval as the air was filled with the stench of – begging your pardon – food). The most engaging discussion arises around the subject of defecation and attempts to estimate the daily norm in this respect. Significantly, the course of the debate resembles conversations on the so-called pressing problems of modernity, such as famine. The meeting does not go without a social blunder, as at one point the daughter of the hosts loudly exclaims that she is hungry. Only sometimes one guest or other sneaks out surreptitiously to a quiet spot in order to eat something, which they do quickly and with apparent embarrassment.

Finally, there are movies in which the negative associations connected with food become the basic principle of the world as portrayed in the work. These might be dubbed *anti-food films* or *reverse food films*.[10] As with the previously discussed category, food and eating constitute a key element of the plot and acquire a metaphorical meaning, yet these are not "tasty" movies and, to refer to the already mentioned description by Epstein, they do not make moviegoers drool, but provoke quite different physiological reactions, which mostly involve the gag reflex.

Arguably the first *reverse food film* in history was *Le Grande Bouffe* (1973). Marco Ferreri tells the story of four friends who go to a villa in the countryside with the intention to gobble (the colloquialism here is intentional) themselves to death. *Le Grande Bouffe* is a disgusting and perverse tale that places emphasis on the physiological issues related to this manner of committing suicide. It is a veritable spectacle of vomit and excrement, yet, of course, the movie conveys a deeper metaphorical message about the modern world consumed by a crisis of overabundance. Another example of *anti food film* is *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (1989) by Peter Greenaway. Almost the entire plot plays out in an elegant restaurant, yet food evokes decidedly unpleasant associations – most often it becomes the tool of humiliating or even inflicting emotional pain on a person. In the final scene the wife forces her husband to eat the body of her lover, whose

10 Since the issue of *anti food films* is discussed in a separate article, the present text will only briefly present the most important points and conclusions based on this analysis. For more detailed information see: Drzał-Sierocka [2014].

assassination he had paid for. Compelling a person to commit an act of cannibalism becomes a sort of a punishment, all the more sophisticated as it adds to the previous offence of manslaughter. It should be added that, similarly to *food films*, *reverse food films* transcend typical classification. Examples of such movies may easily be found among documentaries. There is a numerous amount of socially involved documentaries which showcase the inadequate conditions of food production (growing crops and rearing animals), as well as the economic, social, political and health-related consequences of the state of affairs. Examples include *Food, Inc.* (2008, directed by Robert Kenner), *Super Size Me* (2004, directed by Morgan Spurlock), or *Food Beware. The French Organic Revolution* (2008, directed by Jean-Paul Jaud). In these cases the message (the content) is usually regarded as more important than the form of the movie, and the directors of such documentaries are activists rather than film artists.[11]

Naturally, in modern cinema food and eating also appear in movies that cannot be categorised as *food films*. In many cases, "significant" eating is presented only in a single scene, e.g. the memorable cake scene from *Once Upon a Time in America* (1984) by Sergio Leone, or the funny and terrifying execution scene from Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* (1999) featuring a big Kahuna Burger. On the other hand, *food film* crosses the boundaries of cinema to enter other types of audiovisual media. A good example of this expansion is the television series *Hannibal* (NBC, 2013) which utilises a fictional character named Hannibal Lecter, known from a series of movies, especially *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991, directed by Jonathan Demme; the television series maybe regarded as a prequel to the movie). Although *The Silence of the Lambs* cannot be classified as a *food film* (even if culinary preferences do constitute a crucial element of the personality of the protagonist), the subject of Hannibal's tastes are expounded on in the television series – each episode features scenes of preparing dishes and eating; the images of meals carry more than just extraordinary meaning, not only in terms of metaphors (references to the Eucharist; defining the nature of the relations between characters etc.)

11 More information on such works may be found e.g. in: Drzał-Sierocka [2013].

but also emotions (not least because none of the characters beside the main protagonist are aware of what kind of meat is being served). This aspect is particularly significant from the perspective of the specificity of response. The audience and the protagonist know that the food on the table contains human meat, while the guests on Hannibal's feast become cannibals unwittingly. One may therefore speak of a unique communion based on a shared secret, and thus of an act of violence, not only literal, but also symbolic (from the point of view of the protagonist, inviting people to his dinners and feeding them human flesh is an act of dominance and a manifestation of power). The receptive situation is peculiar indeed. The audience sees artfully arranged and elegantly served dishes; the food looks very appetising. One is almost willing to be able to taste it. On the other hand, we know what the ingredients are. Would we really want to partake in such a meal? Consciously, we would probably refuse to taste human meat (as it is prohibited, disgusting, barbaric etc.). But if we had the chance to try it without knowing what is being served? There is something entrancing in the scenes of eating with Lecter, something that borders on the metaphysical and may evoke associations described by Jolanta Brach-Czaina:

> The everyday activity of eating is an essential occurrence that conveys information about our fate and ought to make its participants aware of the peril and the gravity of the situation. Is it not strange that upon eating flesh we should experience the pleasure of taste, and not the feeling of gratitude, and never consider that we are witnessing a terminal event? By partaking of the flesh of another creature, we effect the transformation of death into life [Brach-Czaina 1999: 169].

Cinema offers more than engaging stories; it also provides us with thousands of recipes and formulas. All cinema-goers may find something for themselves, whether they be vegetarians or meat-eaters, lovers of sweets or spices, organic food activists or people who appreciate a wholesome burger. Despite the fact that taste and smell are not among the senses that cinema may influence directly, film artists learnt to stimulate them with other means: colours, shapes, associations. Some movies (or scenes) may be smelt and tasted. Such is the magic of the cinema…

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Common and Foxtail Millet in Dietetics, Culinary Art and Therapeutic Procedures of the Antiquity and Early Byzantium

Abstract: Common millet (*Panicum miliaceum* L.) and foxtail millet, also known as Italian millet (*Setaria italica* P. Beauv.), are among crop grasses that in the Antiquity and the early Byzantine period were grown on a relatively large scale. Yet although the sources indicate that they were among popular crops, they were neither as widespread not as highly regarded by consumers as wheat and barley. Views pertinent to the dietetic doctrine with regard to those to plants evolved before Galen's lifetime and were very consistent, considering that they did not change over the period from the 2nd to the 7th century. This doctrine pointed to the less beneficial qualities of both these crop plants in comparison to the most highly values grains used in bread-making, especially to wheat. Also, common and foxtail millet were constantly present in the cuisine of the period in question, both being used as food in the rural areas rather than in cities. They were usually put in boiled dishes, because millet bread was unpopular owing to its brittleness and disagreeable taste.
Both common and foxtail millet were included among the *fármaka* used in the period between the 2nd and 7th century, although they certainly were not as favoured in medicine as wheat and barley. Common millet was more often mentioned in the healing role. Both grains were used in medical procedures as components of healing diets, especially foods helpful in alleviating gastric disorders. Flour ground from common millet was applied as powder, whereas the grain itself found use as a component of warming cataplasms and poultices which usually had a drying quality. In addition, millet to was considered to be an efficacious antidote against poisons.

Key words: ancient Byzantium, nutrition, culinary habits, medicine, millet.

Common millet (*kenchros*) and foxtail millet (*elymos/meline*). A brief history

The subfamily of *Panicoideae* includes many species of plants belonging to the family *Poaceae* (Barnh.) also called true grasses (*Gramineae* Juss.). Apart from many wild-growing grasses, the family includes a number of domesticated grains which have played a significant role as staple foods in the history of mankind. The most important of these is common millet (*Panicum miliaceum* L.) and, beside it, foxtail millet also known as Italian millet (*Setaria italica* P. Beauv.) and its subspecies: moharium (*Setaria italica* ssp. *moharium* Alef.), Japanese and Indian barnyard millet (*Panicum frumentaceum* Rott. or *Paspalum frumentaceum* Rott.), large crabgrass, also known as hairy crabgrass (*Digitaria sanguinalis* L.), pearl millet (*Pennisetum glaucum* L., sometimes referred to as *Panicum spicatum* L.) and finally the numerous species of sorghum (e.g. *Sorghum halepense* Pers.). This diversity was not unknown to the ancient Greek and Byzantine authors writing in Greek, who often described many *Panicoideae* grasses together, but nevertheless identified the differences between them. They used a variety of terms; common millet was most commonly described as *kenchros*, *kerchnos*, *kenchrion* or *kenchris*, while foxtail millet was referred to as *elymos*, *elyme*, *elymion*, *meline*, or *melinos* [see Witczak 2003: 77, 85; *A Greek-English Lexicon* 1996: 538, 933, 1097; *Lexicon zur byzantinische…* 2001: 486, 817; *Słownik grecko-polski* 1960: 106].

Bearing in mind the variety and the sheer number of species belonging to the *Panicoideae* subfamily, as well as the large area of their cultivation, the authors of the present article wish to focus solely on the types grown in the Mediterranean in the relevant period of time (2nd–7th century A.D.) and the species that, although cultivated in other regions, still elicited the interest of the Greek-speaking writers in this period.

The *Panicoideae* plants were among the earliest crop grasses domesticated by man. To our knowledge, *kenchros* began to be purposefully grown presumably around 7000 or 6000 B.C. in northern China or in the Caucasus, from where it spread in all directions, reaching the Iranian Plateau, India and Europe. Only in the 1st millennium B.C. did it appear and achieve the status of a cultivated crop in the Middle East [see Watson

1969: 398–399; Zohary, Hopf 2000: 80; Dalby 2003: 218; Strzelczyk 2003: 9]. The other important ancient Mediterranean variety, the *elymos/meline*, became the subject of interest later in the Neolithic period, namely around the 6th or 5th millennium B.C., and was domesticated in late 5th or early 4th millennium B.C. in the region that today is northern China. In Europe the species has been grown at least since around 2000 B.C.; in the Middle East it most probably appeared in the 1st millennium B.C., a little later than common millet [Zohary, Hopf 2000: 219]. The origins of cultivation and the channels of dissemination of other species of millet throughout the so-called Old World (i.e. Africa, Asia and Europe) were different, but since these grains did not play a role in the agriculture of the Greco-Roman lands of the Mediterranean and beyond, the present study shall not dwell on the issue of their provenance, domestication or scope of expansion.

As regards the relevant area, millet was well-known not only in ancient Greece and Rome, but also in other regions later encompassed within the borders of the Imperium Romanum. The Hellenes certainly grew it in the northern parts of their homeland, in the areas neighbouring Macedonia and in Thessalia. Millet was also a popular crop in Laconia, where it was considered a traditional staple. It was used to prepare various types of food, mainly gruel, pottage or mush, and also to produce leaven that was consumed throughout the year. It could also serve as the grain from which to bake bread, especially if there was a shortage of wheat, although its low content of gluten made making bread from it difficult [Hesychios 2005: 2229, 1; Dalby 1996: 46, 90; Forbes 1964: 97]. Although millet was unable to compete with wheat and barley preferred by most Greeks, it was recognised as a crop with many advantageous qualities: high tolerance to drought and a relatively short growing season [Isager, Skydsgaard 1992: 42].

Millet was sown in the fields of Italy, and it appears that harvest was particularly abundant in Campania and Cisalpine Gaul (in the latter mainly in the Po Valley) [André 1961: 55; White 1970: 67; Braun 1999: 37]. In many other places it presumably was a valuable supplement to the dominant crops and provided a security measure against famine, if the harvest of wheat or barley (the crops most valued in the ancient Mediterranean world) failed catastrophically. When the population was not threatened by such

dire prospect, foodstuffs made of millet joined oats and other less valued grains as the usual fare of the less affluent and the people living far from the administrative centres who could not afford to consume wheat [Erdkamp 2005: 148, 157–158]. The inhabitants of Italy ate millet in the form of bread (usually with some legumes added to facilitate baking) or gruel; millet bread was considered more tasty than barley bread, and bread made of foxtail millet was valued even higher [Galen 1823a: 524, 9–10; Pliny 1938–1963: XVIII, 10, 54; André 1961: 66]. The grain was also used as fodder for farm animals; it is, however, hard to ascertain the extent to which it was utilised to feed the livestock and not people [Katon 1895: 54, 4; cf. White 1970: 324].

As noted above, the peoples known to Greeks and Romans, which came into contact with them and ultimately were incorporated into the population of the Imperium Romanum, also grew various types of millet, and in these regions this crop often had far more importance. The inhabitants of Pannonia, for instance, were wont to imbibe a drink made of barley and millet, as did the Paenionians [Dzino 2005: 59]. Millet also held some significance in the diet of the inhabitants of the western part of Roman Europe; it is known to have been successfully cultivated by the Gauls from beyond the Alps, especially in Aquitaine, and by the Gaulish inhabitants of the Po Basin [see Polybius 1998: II, 15, 1; Pliny 1938–1963: XVIII, 25, 101]. In Asia Minor, millet was particularly cherished by the inhabitants of Caria, even though this crop did not grow very well in the local conditions [Galen 1823a: 524, 8–9; Suda 1928–1935: 300, 1–2]. Common millet was also known to the barbarians from the lands outside the Roman rule, e.g. the Sarmatians. According to Pliny, they were prone to mix unprocessed (i.e. wholemeal) millet flour with mares' milk or blood let from a horse's leg [Pliny 1938–1963: XVIII, 24, 100] to prepare a nutritious gruel. Foxtail millet was grown and consumed mainly by peoples living by the shores of the Black Sea [Pliny 1938–1963: XVIII, 24, 101].

In the Byzantine period, the role of millet remained mostly the same. As it has already been mentioned, in the areas which in addition to Greece proper constituted the heartland of the Eastern Empire, i.e. in Asia Minor, plants from the *Panicoideae* subfamily had already been grown for a long

time and the local population was fully aware of their properties [Baltensperger 1996: 182–190]. The crops were also cultivated far in the hinterland of Constantinople, i.e. in Thrace (Bulgaria). They were most probably not held in high esteem, however. The common opinion, indubitably influenced by the views of their Greek ancestors repeated from generation to generation, was that these plants were less valuable than wheat and barley. Here, too, a portion of arable land was apportioned to millet out of common sense and as a precaution against the failure of other crops [Lefort 2002: 250–251]. The situation remained basically unchanged until the ultimate fall of the Byzantine Empire, though it may be surmised that an increasingly large proportion of the harvest was used as animal fodder, while on most people's tables millet was gradually replaced by other grains [Laiou 2002: 326].

It must also be noted that the appearance of Turkish peoples closer to, and later also within the borders of Byzantium coincided with an increase in the popularity of a light alcoholic beverage (known and produced independently in Anatolia, most probably since ancient times) the contents of which included millet. The drink, called *boza* by the newcomers, was well-liked not only in Asia Minor, which was penetrated by Turks, but also in Bulgaria. It did not, however, win the approval of Byzantines and did not reverse the tendencies specified in the previous paragraph. Still, it seems certain that the subjects of the Eastern Roman emperors were familiar with *boza*.

Another notable factor that helped to popularise millet (and presumably foxtail millet) in the Roman and Byzantine world is the fact that during the entire history of the Imperium Romanum a thick soup of boiled millet was used to feed the legions: it was the staple food of the army [Winniczuk 1950: 232–233]. This continued in the times of the Byzantine Empire, when the soldiers' fare included a dish called *puls* in Latin and *poltos* in Greek, a type of porridge made of millet groats called *píston* [Dalby 1996: 197]. The popularity of this dish as the means to feed an army on the move may be explained by the fact that, according to Pliny, one sixteenth of a *modius* of millet flour/groats soaked in water was enough to make a *modius* of *puls* [Pliny 1938–1963: XVIII, 10, 54]. Millet was obviously a very cost-effective staple.

The ancient categorisation of millet (and foxtail millet) is as follows. The works of Galen, which for centuries served as a canon of Hellenic medical knowledge, so to speak, and profoundly influenced the art of medicine in Byzantium, the Latin-speaking West and the Arab world, contain a double classification of both these grains. Galen includes both common millet and foxtail millet in the group of *sitera geumata*, i.e. foods produced from cereals, or *sitoi*. He also claims that the term *sitoi* is most often applied to wheat, barley and emmer, and explains that this name is sometimes expanded to include all of the "gifts of Demeter", i.e. lentils, lupine, broad beans, green peas, foxtail millet, common millet and also other crops [Galen 1914: 454, 10–16]. Apart from the above classification (presented, *nota bene*, in *In Hippocratis de victu in acutorum commentaria*), Galen's works include a different manner of categorisation. In *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis ac facultatibus* foxtail millet was classified among the *ospria* [Galen 1923a: 875, 6], i.e. legumes (in the narrow understanding of the term) or plants whose grains are not fit for making bread (in a broader definition). Such double classification is not uncommon in Galen's works; oats and rice, for instance, were also treated in this manner.

The evaluation of nutritional properties

Information on the dietary characteristics of millet is difficult to find in *Corpus Hippocraticum*, yet this does not mean that the work does not mention any. One particular fact worth mentioning in this context is that Hippocrates described it as a very cooling foodstuff [*De morbis popularibus vel epidemiae* 1840, 1841, 1846: VI, 5, 15, 9–10]. This is the only remark that can be interpreted as a clear reference to the nutritional properties of this type of grain. *De diaeta in morbis acutis*, in turn, mentions *pyriai*, warming poultices of millet, and describes this cereal as light and having a delicate influence [*De diaeta in morbis acutis* 1840: 7, 15–18]. Most probably, however, Hippocrates was not referring here to the general dietary characteristics of the cereal, but rather to its effectiveness as an ingredient of the *pyriai*. Finally, *De diaeta* discusses the properties of cooked millet referred to as *kenchroi hephthoi* [*De diaeta* 2003: 45, 10], and declares

that the dish is not easily processed by the digestive system [*De diaeta* 2003: 45, 10–11]. This opinion was reflected in later descriptions of the properties of millet as such, e.g. in the works of Galen.

Dioscorides described these products in more detail. He declared common millet to be less nutritious than other cereals [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 98, 1, 1]. He did not state, however, that millet was unfit to be consumed; on the contrary, he mentioned millet bread and a type of boiled pottage or soup called *poltos* [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 98, 1, 1-2]. He also claimed that both the bread and the pottage stop the process of digestion [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 98, 1, 2] and increase the production of urine [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 98, 1, 2–3]. Dioscorides counted foxtail millet among staple foods [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 98, 1, 1–2]. In his opinion, this cereal was similar in its properties to *kenchros*, i.e. common millet, but even less nutritious [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 98, 1, 3] and less compressing [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 98, 1, 4] than *kenchros*.

More thorough than his predecessors in enumerating the properties of common and foxtail millet, Galen compiled a number of descriptions. Some of these referred to both types, while others discussed the properties of each of the grains separately. These descriptions may be found in several of Galen's treatises. A rather exhaustive specification is included in *De victu attenuante* [Galen 1923b: 52, 1–3]. The overall summary states that foxtail millet and common millet do not contain beneficial juices, and thus cannot be included in the category of *euchyma*. Moreover, they were deemed to cause wind and to be hard to digest [Galen 1923b: 52, 2–3]. On the other hand, they dried the excess of juices in the digestive system and could also cause this effect to occur in other parts of the body [Galen 1923b: 52, 2]. It must be added that their ability to dehydrate was important and used in medicine, and as such it was mentioned once again by Galen in *De sanitate tuenda* [Galen 1823b: 351, 2–11]. Despite the fact that in the latter treatise only the properties of common millet are mentioned in this context [Galen 1823b: 351, 5], it may be supposed that the conclusion is also applicable to foxtail millet, as it too was classified as desiccating in *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis ac facultatibus* [Galen 1923a: 732, 5–6].

What is more, a thorough description of the properties of foxtail millet may be found in *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis ac facultatibus* [Galen 1923a: 875, 5–9]. The famous physician asserted there that this type of grain was similar to common millet both in its outer appearance and in its qualities. As such, he considered it not very nutritious, and also dehydrating [Galen 1923a: 875, 7]; he recognised its ability to remove excess juices from the digestive system [Galen 1923a: 875, 7–8]. Used as a cataplasm, foxtail millet was thought to have cooling and astringent properties [Galen 1923a: 875, 8–9]. Galen's analysis suggests that in his dietary doctrine he recognised some differences between the two types of millet. In his opinion, foxtail millet was decidedly less beneficial; in *De rebus boni malique suci* he explicitly warned his readers against consuming the grain [Galen 1823a: 791, 7–8].

An overall description of common millet was also included in Galen's *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis ac facultatibus* [Galen 1923a: 16, 3–13]. According to the information included in the treatise, common millet had cooling and dehydrating properties [Galen 1923a: 16, 3–5]. Its pulp was composed of small grainy particles [Galen 1923a: 16, 5–6] which suggested that the cereal was not very nutritious [Galen 1923a: 16, 6–8]. Consuming millet could lead to an excessive dehydration of the digestive system. Used externally, millet was suitable as the main ingredient of warming poultices called *pyriai*, which dry the skin surface without damaging tissues [Galen 1923a: 162, 9–11]. The cereal could also be used to make moisture-absorbing cataplasms but, since its structure was not internally cohesive, such poultices were difficult to apply [Galen 1923a: 16, 11–13]. In *De rebus boni malique suci* Galen categorised common millet as less harmful than foxtail millet [Galen 1823a: 791, 9–10]. When used by this particular physician, the statement means that this product is simply better than the other. It transpires from *On the Properties of Foodstuffs* that common millet has a more pleasant taste and is easier to digest, being less constipating and more nutritious. It must also be noted that Galen mentioned another author, Herodotus of Attalia, who regarded common millet as a foodstuff with contracting properties [Galen 1923a: 441, 18–442, 1].

Processed grains retain their initial characteristics. Galen reported that common and foxtail millet was sometimes used to bake bread, but in his opinion this occurred only in times when other cereals were not readily available. Such bread was not very nutritious, had cooling properties, was brittle and not cohesive, as it did not contain any adhesive or cementing substances (in *De rebus boni malique suci* Galen graphically compared its structure to that of sand or ash [Galen 1823a: 782, 4–6]). Such bread could be used to dehydrate a digestive system containing an excess of humours [Galen 1823a: 523, 10–14].

Millet could also be ground to produce a type of flour called *aleuron*. As has already been mentioned above, it was sometimes used to bake bread. Galen also attests that poor farmers [Galen 1823a: 782, 9] cooked it to prepare a type of pottage with some added fat (olive oil, lard etc.) [Galen 1823a: 782, 6–9] or milk [Galen 1823a: 524, 2–3]. Fat improved the inner cohesion of the dish, while milk was added to augment its humoural balance, which was relatively poor to start with. It also improved its digestive qualities and aided bowel movement, as well as added to the taste of the food, making it more pleasant to consume.

Texts by Oribasius also provide some information about the two types of millet under analysis. The overall description of common and foxtail millet [Oribasius 1928–1933: I, 15, 1, 1–4, 4] included in his *Collectiones medicae* was borrowed from Galen or, more specifically, from *De alimentorum facultatibus* [Galen 1823c: 523, 9–524, 10]. The only element that is absent is information regarding the areas of the ancient world in which these cereals were cultivated; in Galen's treatise these data appeared at the end of the relevant paragraph [Galen 1823c: 524, 8–10]. It is difficult to ascertain why Oribasius decided not to include these facts in his *Collectiones medicae*; it may be supposed that, being the personal physician to Emperor Julian, he aimed at presenting generalised data for the entire Mediterranean region, whereas Galen's *De alimentorum facultatibus* only pertained to Asia Minor and Italy. Yet even despite the lack of information on territorial distribution of these crops, the reverence with which Oribasius treated the opinions of his predecessor confirms the claim that Galen's conclusions were treated as medical dogma in the latter half of

the 6th century, and that his doctrines were consistent with the conditions of some 200 years later.

Oribasius' text contains not only a general characteristics of the grains (with emphasis on the properties of common millet), but also a separate description of foxtail millet, repeating the already mentioned set of assumptions [Oribasius 1928–1933: XI, 10, 1–3]. In accordance with his writing practice, both types of millet are also mentioned in book III of the *Collectiones medicae*, where all the important foodstuffs are grouped according to their alleged properties. These characteristics were also included in his later treatises, namely *Synopsis ad Eustathium filium* and *Libri ad Eunapium.* The *Collectiones medicae* contain the information that common millet belongs to the category of products that do not provide wholesome nourishment to the body, and foxtail millet is even less nutritious [Oribasius 1928–1933: III, 14, 7, 3]. Similar statements may also be found in the work Oribasius wrote for his son [Oribasius 1964b: IV, 13, 6, 3] and in the treatise dedicated to Eunapius [Oribasius 1964a: I, 30, 6, 3]. In Oribasius' *opus magnum* both common and foxtail millet are counted among the group of foods labelled as the *kakochyma* [Oribasius 1928–1933: III, 16, 9, 1; III, 16, 8, 3]; this categorisation is maintained in *Synopsis ad Eustathium filium* [Oribasius 1964b: IV, 15, 9, 1] and in *Libri ad Eunapium* [Oribasius 1964: I, 33, 6, 2]. The entire body of Oribasius' work contains numerous mentions of the fact that these types of grains are difficult to digest [Oribasius 1928–1933: III, 18, 11, 3; Oribasius 1964: IV, 17, 9, 3] and carminative [Oribasius 1928–1933: III, 23, 1, 1; Oribasius 1964: IV, 22, 2, 1] and that their consumption slows the process of digestion [Oribasius 1928-1933: III, 30, 9, 1-2; Oribasius 1964: IV, 30, 13, 1-2]. Moreover, both these cereals are described in *Collectiones medicae* as having cooling properties [Oribasius 1928–1933: III, 32, 1, 1]; the author noted that common millet has a first-degree cooling effect [Oribasius 1928–1933: XIV, 20, 1, 1]. The same description (i.e. common and foxtail millet being counted among cooling foodstuffs [Oribasius 1964: IV, 32, 1, 1] with common millet mentioned as cooling in the first degree [Oribasius 1964: II, 8, 1, 1-2]) appears in the text Oribasius compiled for his son [Oribasius 1964: I, 48, 1, 1] and later in the treatise for Eunapius. The latter

work also states that common and foxtail millet have a drying and cooling effect if applied externally (as a cataplasm) [Oribasius 1964: II, 13, 1–14, 1]. The extracts forming Oribasius' *opus magnum* also contain the information that common millet belongs to the products that soak up water without damaging tissue [Oribasius 1928–1933: XIV, 24, 3, 1], yet it is stated there that it possesses this quality in the second degree [Oribasius 1928–1933: XIV, 26, 1, 4]. A similar body of information can be found in other works by Oribasius; in the treatise for his son he counted millet among the substances that desiccated tissues without damaging them [Oribasius 1964: II, 12, 1, 8], while in *Libri ad Eunapium* he stated that both common millet and foxtail millet absorbed moisture when applied internally or externally [Oribasius 1964: II, 1, 12, 1-13, 1], and described them as desiccating without damaging tissues [Oribasius 1964: II, 6, 1, 11]. Lastly, it must be noted that the *Collectiones medicae* contain the information that millet is composed of very small particles [Oribasius 1928–1933: XIV, 33, 9, 19].

Some two centuries later the properties of common and foxtail millet came to the attention of Aetius of Amida. In describing the latter of the grains, he followed in the footsteps of Galen and Oribasius, not altering the image of it built by his predecessors [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: I, 142, 1–4]. The same tendency is observable in his description of common millet [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: I, 188, 1–6]. Particular characteristics were later repeated in Book II, which (similarly to the third part of Oribasius' *Collectiones medicae*) presents a list of foodstuffs grouped according to their significant properties. Aetius [1935–1950: II, 204, 2] lists common millet among the products with a first-degree cooling effect [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 204, 1–2] (he also states that both types of millet under analysis [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 268, 1–2] belong to products with a cooling effect [Aetius of Amida1935–1950: II, 268, 1–13]). He included *kenchros* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 208, 8] in the list of products that dry the tissue without damaging it [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 208, 1–15] (this particular property was emphasised in the excerpt from Archigenes [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 42, 33], in which the author of *Iatricorum libri* quoted information about the millet *poltoi* as a very effective exsiccator [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 42,

65–67]). What is more, common millet was described as composed of small particles [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 218, 7]. Aetius classified both common and foxtail millet [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 251, 8] as members of the *oligotropha* group [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 251, 1–20], yet foxtail millet was described as even less nutritious than common millet. Both grains [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 253, 14] were also classified as members of the *kakochyma* group [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 253, 1–37]. Furthermore, Aetius categorised common and foxtail millet as indigestible foodstuffs [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 255, 19] (this characteristic was also mentioned in Book IX, in the passage describing the *poltoi* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 35, 180–181]). He included common millet and foxtail millet in the category of carminative products [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 259, 1]. Finally, both these types of cereal were classified as slowing the process of digestion [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: II, 266, 20]. All in all, the views presented by Aetius did not differ from the canon established by Galen and continued by Oribasius.

A Latin work by Anthimus *De observatione ciborum* written in approximately the same period of time as the treatise by Aetius of Amida contains little information on common or foxtail millet. According to Anthimus, both the former (*milium*) and the latter (*panicum*) have properties very similar to those of rice, especially with regard to the effect they have on patients with dysentery [Anthimus 2007: 71]. This conclusion, though seemingly limited in its significance, suggests that the author of this concise work shared the views of his predecessors in terms of the basic properties of the two types of millet, particularly their exsiccating and constricting effect.

The Medical Compendium in Seven Books compiled in the 7th century by Paul of Aegina contains all the basic information on both common and foxtail millet known from the works of Galen and Oribasius. The data is presented in the from of three descriptions – a general characteristic [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: I, 78, 1, 18–19], a description of common millet [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: VII, 3, 10, 107–109], and, lastly, a specification of foxtail millet [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: VII, 3, 5, 73–75]. Since the work does not add any new information to the characteristics enumerated in the previously mentioned sources, it needs not be discussed in detail.

The last treatise to be analysed in the present article, namely *De cibis*, presents mainly information that accords with the views expressed in the works of earlier dieticians. The short list of the properties of *kenchros* included in this book states that this type of grain is exsiccating [*De cibis* 1963: 2, 22] and nourishing for the body [*De cibis* 1963: 2, 22–23]; it also decelerates the processes of digestion [*De cibis* 1963: 2, 23]. This description is included in the section pertaining to foodstuffs produced of seeds or fruits [*De cibis* 1963: 2, 22–31] and is in agreement with the doctrine presented e.g. by Galen. The part of the treatise listing various groups of edible products according to their most important properties, the foodstuff called *kenchros* [*De cibis* 1963: 13, 14] was, once more, counted among the foods that slow digestion. Both common and foxtail millet [*De cibis* 1963: 14, 20] were mentioned in the category of foods whose juices were not very beneficial to the body. The treatise also contains a warning that common millet [*De cibis* 1963: 19, 2] may have a harmful influence caused by the emergence of raw, undigested juices within the body [*De cibis* 1963: 19, 1–7]. In a different chapter of the same work common and foxtail millet [*De cibis* 1963: 22, 8] are included among foodstuffs with little nutritional value; common millet alone was listed as a cooling product [*De cibis* 1963: 26, 2].

The evaluation of culinary properties

Medical works that constitute the *Corpus Hippocraticum* do not contain much information on the preparation of dishes from common or foxtail millet. The two cereals are mentioned as the basic ingredient of medicinal soups or gruels of varying consistency, boiled with added water and with very little spicing or with no spices at all. Such dishes were recommended as suitable for people suffering and recovering from various ailments. A detailed description of these gruels will be given in the section pertaining to the relevant afflictions. It ought to be noted, however, that *De diaeta* mentions boiled millet, referred to simply as *kenchroi hephthoi* [*De diaeta* 2003: 45, 10], perhaps meaning a dish similar to the *pyroi hephthoi*, but made of boiled millet groats. It is described as food that is not easily processed by the digestive system [*De diaeta* 2003: 45, 10–11]. Remarks in Galen and Oribasius, specified below, may refer to this culinary practice.

The meagre information on culinary uses of these two cereals included in the works by Dioscorides suggests only that common and foxtail millet were prepared in a very similar manner [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 97, 1, 2–3]. The grain was ground and the flour [Dioscorides 1906–1914: V, 3, 3, 4] was used to bake bread [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 97, 1, 1–2] or make *poltos* [Dioscorides 1906–1914: II, 97, 1, 2]. Another dish that included millet flour were fried pancakes with raisins, eggs and honey [Dioscorides 1906–1914: V, 3, 3, 4–6].

Relatively numerous clues as to the culinary uses of common and foxtail millet may be found in Galen's writings. He stated [Galen 1823c: 510, 8] that common millet was ground into flour (presumably coarse one) and kneaded (but not baked or boiled) with liquids: water, but also wine or grape must [Galen 1823c: 510, 2–3], most probably to produce a dish similar to the barley *madza* [Galen 1823c: 510, 6–11]. The dish was commonly known long before Galen, i.e. in the times of Philotimus and his teacher Praxagoras, to whose conclusions Galen was referring in his *De alimentorum facultatibus* [Galen 1823c: 509, 14–16]. In this treatise, flour made of common or foxtail millet is called *aleuron*. Galen also states that peasants working in the fields used these types of flour to prepare a dish similar to the one made of ordinary (i.e. wheat) *aleuron*, to which they added some pork fat or olive oil [Galen 1823c: 523, 14–15]. In a different treatise, *De rebus boni malique suci*, he returns to the subject and informs his readers that both common and foxtail millet were used to cook soups, or rather dense gruels, such as *lekithos* and *etnos*. To prepare them properly, fatty products and enough adhesives had to be added to make the dish stick together. The most commonly used fat was pork lard, goat tallow or olive oil. Sheep or cow milk was also added. The author states that such gruels were usually eaten in the field during breaks from work [Galen 1823a: 782, 6–9], which means that they belonged, *ex definitione*, to the category of simple and cheap dishes that were easy to make. Galen also mentioned *aleuron* made of common millet in his *De rebus boni malique suci*, in the section enumerating the methods of improving nutritional properties of milk [Galen 1823a: 767, 11–16]. He claimed that such flour was added to milk during the process of boiling [Galen 1823a:

767, 14–16]. Milk must have been a typical addition to such dishes, as it is mentioned in the context of preparing millet [Galen 1914: 897, 9–10] in *In Hippocratis de victu in acutorum commentaria* [Galen 1914: 897, 5–11].

Sometimes common and foxtail millet were used to bake bread. Galen suggests that both these cereals were processed in this way only in times of a shortage of other grains from which bread was normally made. This was because bread of millet flour was very brittle, which Galen attributes to the absence of viscous substances [Galen 1823a: 523, 10–11]. The physician also stated that such dishes were consumed mostly by country folk [Galen 1914: 876, 1–2]. This suggests that the bread could be made in relatively crude conditions and that the price of the finished products and the ingredients were low – provided that such bread ever made it to city markets. The recipe is unknown, yet it may be surmised that the general process was the same as in the case of the already mentioned wheat bread.

Some indication on the methods of preparing common and foxtail millet for consumption may also be found in the works of Oribasius. The recipes combine culinary information and strictly medical knowledge. His writings clearly suggest that both grains were used primarily to prepare liquid foods, which fall into the general category of soups, as well as certain types of groats. As regards the first group of dishes, parts of the *Collectiones medicae* (which, incidentally, consist of excerpts from the works of Dieuches) contain the following prescription: in cases of serious illness, millet should be cooked to a thin soup or a mush, based, as Oribasius adds, on mutton broth or other types of stock [Oribasius 1928–1933: IV, 7, 10, 1–5]. The same passages of treatises by Dieuche also contain a recipe for an apparently uncooked, but nutritious beverage made of the types of cereal under analysis here, recommended for patients suffering from problems with digestion [Oribasius 1928–1933: IV, 7, 15, 1–18, 1]. Dieuches writes that if the husks are removed, common and foxtail millet grain is suitable for patients whose digestive system contains an excess of bile, making their stool watery. To prepare a remedy for this affliction, it is necessary to grind the grain finely in water (taking at least one *oxibaphon* of water per person) and strain the mass through a cloth, mix the liquid with a *cotyla*

of water and add some dry wine before giving it to the patient to drink on an empty stomach. The same author states that before grinding foxtail millet and common millet, one may also add some Euboean nuts (i.e. chestnuts) without removing their inner husks, crush and strain them, and use the liquid as a remedy for fever. The *Synopsis ad Eustathium filium* also contains excerpts from Dieuches' work [Oribasius 1964: IV, 35, 16, 1–19, 1], yet with some important changes. The latter text advises to boil [Oribasius 1964: IV, 35, 18, 1] the liquid resulting from the processing of millet; thus, in the light of this new information, the finished product should rather be considered as a broth or soup. It ought to be mentioned that the latter variant is included in a section of *Synopsis ad Eustathium filium* entitled "On the preparation of broths", which logically corresponds to the information on the boiling of the liquid produced by straining millet, thus confirming the correctness of the reading of the passage from Dieuches' work incorporated into this treatise by Oribasius. Another reference to methods of millet processing included in *Collectiones medicae* [Oribasius 1928–1933: IV, 8, 6, 2], also borrowed from Dieuches, appears in the chapter devoted to the *amylon*, or starch. It contains the information that dried *amylon* may be mixed with broths given as medication to patients suffering from gastric problems. Thus, it was added to boiled millet, bread boiled to a pulp, *ptisane* and *hepsemata* of legumes [Oribasius 1928–1933: IV, 8, 6, 1–7, 2]. No details are given, yet the context suggests that the mentioned dish of *kenchros* was liquid and could be compared to a soup or gruel.

When discussing the recipes for preparing millet, it must be remebered that the physician to whose work Oribasius referred mentioned cooking millet in the form of groats. In his opinion, it was not suitable as food for people burning with fever or suffering from digestive problems. According to Dieuches' recipe, an *oxibaphon* of millet (previously soaked in water, strained and crushed in a mortar) was to be cooked in ten *oxibapha* of water spiced with dill and salt. Soft, strained millet could be added not only to lentil soup (called *fake*) or barley soup (*ptisane*), but also to other liquid dishes. The treatise states that such an addition served as a substitute for olive oil. Dieuches also writes that *fake* could be enriched with raw cucumber seeds, while *ptisane* sometimes included pine nuts (soaked in

water, mashed, cooked and strained), referred to as *strobiloi*, or "nuts from Pontus" (hazelnuts) or "nuts from Thasos" (almonds) [Oribasius 1928–1933: IV, 7, 25, 1–27, 1].

Lastly, it should be noted that Oribasius' work also includes excerpts from another celebrated dietician, namely Philotimus. It mentions two recipes for preparing millet. The first method is to boil fine-grained groats [Oribasius 1928–1933: IV, 10, 1, 1–2, 1], the second, described in much less detail, also involves cooking groats, but much more coarsely ground [Oribasius 1928–1933: IV, 10, 2, 1–5]. As noted by Philotimus himself, the latter recipe was much more popular, probably due to its simplicity. The first recipe advised that raw millet should be preliminarily crushed, then ground and pulverised after adding some water. Then it was time to strain the groats and cook it until it became sticky like cooked flour. At this stage, according to Philotimus, the groats would start to taste a little acrid. The physician attested that this dish was a preventive measure against a blockage of the digestive system. Cooked wholegrain millet, a more popular foodstuff, was deemed to be harder to digest, but to remove concretions from the digestive duct and cause minor changes in the appearance of the stool. It also produces a sweet juice with contracting properties.

Another treatise under analysis here, the *Iatricorum libri* by Aetius of Amida, does not contain much information about the methods of preparing common or foxtail millet. It may nonetheless be concluded that this work does not contradict the general tendencies outlined by the previously mentioned physicians. Aetius confirmed that in his time the *aleuron*-type millet flour was still being made [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VI, 47, 13–16]. Millet was also ground to produce groats with larger grains. Aetius testifies to the fact that such ground and purified grains of *kenchros* were used to prepare medicinal soups referred to as *rophemata* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 31, 18]. These were not recommended for the *koliakoi* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 35, 1–203], i.e. patients suffering from digestive ailments called colic, since millet processed in this way was considered to be too hard to digest and to cause harmful juices to be produced in the body [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 35, 180–181]. Aetius' treatise also states that millet was used to cook thick soups or

gruels called the *poltoi*, which removed excess moisture [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 42, 34] from the abdominal cavity more effectively than *poltoi* made of rice [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 42, 65–67]. It contains the information that common millet was cooked together with the famous medicinal soup called *ptisane* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 69, 86] as a remedy against stomach hemorrhage [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 69, 67–70].

Therapeutica by Alexander of Tralles tells us very little about the culinary practices related to the cereals under analysis. The physician mentioned a thick soup called *poltos* made of millet that was cooked for a long time (i.e. softened) [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 407, 23–24]. He also stated that this grain was still traditionally mixed with milk [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 209, 27]. Foxtail millet [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 219, 20] was mentioned as an additive to poultry broth [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 219, 7–10], which most probably gave the liquid the thick consistency of modern barley soup.

Additional information on millet processing can be found in the works of Anthimus [2007: 71]. He mentions a type of a soup made of wholegrain millet; the recipe is detailed enough to have inspired Mark Grant to attempt to recreate the actual dish [Grant 2002: 40–41]. First, the cereal was to be boiled in fresh hot water, and when the grains started to break open, they were heat-processed (in water) with some goat's milk. This had to be performed slowly and carefully, just like with rice [Anthimus 2007: 70]. The passage describing the latter grain contains a warning that rice that is too hard or was prepared without due care becomes harmful for the body.

The treatise by Paul of Aegina does not constitute a good source of information about the processing of common millet and foxtail millet as a foodstuff; his compendium is practically devoid of such details. On the other hand, general information about the features and medical applications of both grains indicates that the theory and practice professed by this celebrated physician differed in this respect from that of his predecessors and successors. It might, however, be added that some data about the types of food produced of the two cereals can be found in non-medical sources from Byzantium or ancient Greece and Rome. The information

they contain constitutes an interesting supplement to the data included in the medical treatises mentioned above. For instance, in his *Deipnosophistae*, Athenaeus of Naucratis mentions the content of the works of the logographer Hecataeus of Miletus. Among other things, he described an alcoholic beverage called *parabie* [Athenaeus of Naucratis 1887–1890: X, 447d] produced in Paeonia. The drink resembled beer, but was made of millet and knotgrass.

The lexicon written by Hesychius of Alexandria contains some useful information on the culinary uses of common millet. Data suggests that it was cooked to prepare a type of gruel or a thick soup, sometimes referred to as *kenchrine* [Hesychius 2005: κεγχρίνη, κ, 1969, 1]. Millet was also an ingredient of a dish especially popular in ancient Laconia [Hesychius 2005: ἔλυμος, ε, 2229, 1], which has already been mentioned in the introductory section of the present article. Moreover, the cereal was used to produce a type of groats called *alphita*. Hesychius confirms that it was white in colour. [Hesychios 2005: λευκὰ ἄλφιτα, λ, 721, 1]. Millet could also be made into *aleuron*. When ground into a very fine flour, it was called *paipale* [Hesychios 2005: παιπάλη, π, 94, 1].

The *Suda* describes one more type of groats made of the cereals under analysis. Called *chidron*, it was produced of foxtail millet or unripe barley [Suda 1928–1935: Χίδραν, χ, 300, 1–2]. It was relatively fine-grained, which may be surmised from the fact that the author of the lexicon compares it to the *semidalis* flour [Suda 1928–1935: Χίδραν, χ, 300, 1]. The encyclopaedic work also suggests that such groats was popular in Caria in Asia Minor [Suda 1928–1935: Χίδραν, χ, 300, 1–2]. It should be added that the same lexicon repeats the information that a finely-ground flour of the *paipale* type is a kind of *aleuron* made of millet or barley [Suda 1928–1935: Παιπάλη, π, 886, 1–3].

Finally, the *Geoponica* provides an insight into another group of culinary procedures intended not to satisfy sophisticated tastes, but rather to protect against the adverse effects of eating some foodstuffs. Book XIV of this 10th-century collection of agricultural lore includes a passage stating that millet, or most probably millet groats, was cooked together with quails. This was done not so much to influence the flavour, but to avoid unpleas-

ant medical conditions that could occur if these wild-living fowls had fed on black false hellebore or white false hellebore (*Veratrum nigrum* L. and *Veratrum album* L.). If prepared otherwise, the fowl dish could induce food poisoning with symptoms such as headache and swooning [*Geoponica…* 1985: XIV, 24, 2]. Millet was also made into a decoction, presumably thin and resembling the cereal gruel that is given to patients with stomach diseases even today. It was recommended if there was a suspicion of food poisoning, especially caused by eating the meat of wild fowl that had fed on false hellebore [*Geoponica…* 1985: XIV, 24, 2]. Similar references may be found in *De observatione ciborum*, where Anthimus mentions wild pigeons [Anthimus 2007: 25], as it was believed that these birds could also dine on false hellebore. The plant was one of the stronger *farmaka* known in the Antiquity and in the Byzantine world, used for a number of purposes, e.g. to treat psychological disorders [Dioscorides 1906–1914: IV, 148, 162; cf. Dalby 1996: 174–175; Kokoszko 2006: 96]. Both Anthimus and Didymos (the latter was quoted in the *Geoponica*) claimed that if a turtledove had fed on this dangerous plant, its meat became poisonous. According to the author of *De observatione ciborum*, eating it would lead to symptoms such as vomiting, internal haemorrhage and diarrhoea. He also stated that he personally encountered a case of severe food poisoning caused by turtledove meat. The treatment of the two patients, both of them peasants, involved giving them mature wine and warm olive oil to drink slowly. These antidotes were said to alleviate the effects of the poison; Anthimus says nothing about the possibility of using millet to this effect. It should also be noted that he recounts a similar tale about the dangers of eating starlings [Anthimus 2007: 26] that used to feed on hemlock and caused food poisoning in people who consumed their meat. What remains to be said about the *Geoponica* is that according to this compendium of knowledge, *aleuron*-type millet flour was still commonly produced in the 10th century. It was used not only as foodstuff, but also to sprinkle inside boxes that held bunches of grapes [*Geoponica…* 1985: IV, 15, 9]. Millet was ground to make edible flour, used primarily to bake bread, which was recommended as a very effective protective measure against poisoning [*Geoponica…* 1985: XIV, 24, 4].

The role of common and foxtail millet in medical procedures

The final subject that shall be analysed in the present article is the use of common and foxtail millet in medical procedures described by the authors of medical works mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. First, it must be emphasised that although *kenchros* and *elymos/meline* were mentioned in medical treatises included in the *Corpus Hippocraticum* mostly as a foodstuff, the existing data also indicates that these grains could be used – as a part of a patient's diet – as a type of a *farmakon* or a medicine, *boethema*, employed by the ancient physicians for a number of purposes. The sources also suggest that common millet was much more popular as an element of medical procedures, as most of the remarks (save one included in *De mulierum affectibus* [1853: 110, 28]) refer to the beneficial effects of this type of grain. As regards the presence of common and foxtail millet in the diet recommended for patients, it should be emphasised that all the millet dishes enumerated in the *Corpus Hippocraticum* as elements of medicinal diet are somewhat similar in form. The more seriously ill were mostly fed with various types of soups, usually rather thin, presumably based only on water and with other ingredients limited to the necessary minimum. Such practice reflected a tendency present in the medicine of the time, which is now identifiable since *De affectionibus* strictly advises that the gravely ill be nourished and medicated mostly with soups or cereal decoctions, including millet pottage. As fever is a symptom of many ailments, it does not come as a surprise that the author of this treatise prescribes the same measure for patients suffering from fever only [*De affectionibus* 1849: 40, 1–2]. He explains that such dishes are suitable for the ill, as they belong to the category of light foods, i.e. ones that do not overburden the system of digestion and food absorption [*De affectionibus* 1849: 41, 2–3].

The list of maladies treated with a diet that included millet begins with illnesses that, in the words of the author of *De morbis*, spread from the head [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 12, 1–45; II, 19, 1–19; II, 22, 1–18]. A patient suffering from one of the first type of medical conditions in this group was to be fed millet that was ground so finely that it could be consumed by licking the spoon [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 12, 31]. For other illnesses of this type, physicians strongly recommended millet in liquid form. The

context suggests that in terms of consistence and properties the dish was similar to *chylos ptisanes* [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 22, 17], i.e. a watered-down gruel. In the final stages of an affliction called *pleuritis* (pleurisy) [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 44, 1–21] the patient was given, initially with every meal, a beverage consisting of one-fourth *kotyle* of a thin and cold millet broth, to which the author refers as *kenchrou chylos*, lightly sweetened with honey [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 44, 13–14]. After the fever had gone down, the patient was given a presumably more nutritious millet soup and beetroot twice a day [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 44, 16–17]. Finally, in the latter stages of recovery, it was recommended that millet should remain the main foodstuff eaten as the first meal [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 44, 19–21] and that the amount of cereal products included in the ordinary diet should be reduced. It might be added that patients suffering from another type of pleurisy [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 45, 1–9], were given *chylos kenchrou* twice a day [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 45, 6–7]; in yet another type of the same illness [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 46, 1–15], after fourteen days physicians recommended a diet in which morning meals consisted only of millet, while the evening ones included poultry in broth and only small quantities of commonly eaten cereal products [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 46, 12–15].

As noted above, millet dishes were prescribed for patients with high temperature. It is perhaps advisable to list some examples of the uses of such dishes found in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*. In a section of *De morbis* concerning fevers induced by an excess of bile [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 40, 1–25], the author mentions feeding patients with a thin soup of *kenchros* [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 40, 16–18]. A similar diet [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 42, 7–8] was recommended for three-day fever [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 42, 1–9]. In *De affectionibus*, in turn, a watered-down millet decoction or gruel [*De affectionibus* 1849: 14, 10–11] was recommended as basic sustenance in the period of high fevers (this meant the three- and four-day fever), which usually came around harvest-time [*De affectionibus* 1849: 14, 1–21]. Similar prescriptions were given for other ailments in the same group. In cases of illnesses accompanied by hiccough, referred to as *pyretos lyngodes* [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 64, 1–21], the author of *De morbis* suggested that in the period of recovery, i.e. from the tenth day

after contracting the disease onwards, the diet of the patient should be based on *ptisane* or on a similar dish made of *kenchros* [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 64, 7–10]. Further on, the author stated that people suffering from the so-called lethal fever, *pyretos phonodes* [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 67, 1–22], from the seventh day onwards should be fed some millet in a form that may easily be licked off the spoon [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 67, 13–14]. Again, it may be supposed that this dish had to be liquid, since in this form it would be easiest to consume for a person weakened by the affliction. Most probably the author is referring here to a soup with the consistency of a syrup, which may be eaten without exertion. After the critical period had passed, the patient was still advised to eat millet as the first meal of the day [*De morbis I–III* 1849: II, 67, 16–17]. Sadly, there is no information about the consistency of the dish, yet it might have been slightly thicker and thus more nutritious. It must be remembered that *kenchros*, in the form of *boethema*, was also used to warm up the body parts affected by illness. Warming poultices of millet, usually called *pyriai*, were recommended already in *De diaeta in morbis acutis.* The treatise deems their effects to be mild: they softened swollen tissue and alleviated the pain [*De diaeta in morbis acutis* 1840: 7, 15–18].

According to Dioscurides, the main remedial use of products made of common and foxtail millet lay in their ability to combat afflictions of the digestive tract, especially those accompanied by stomach-ache and diarrhoea. The grains could be used as a remedy due to their contracting properties and the ability to slow down digestion. Dioscurides prescribed *kenchros* [Dioscurides 1914: II, 51, 2, 5] as an element of the diet of people suffering from gastric problems and dysentery [Dioscurides 1914: II, 51, 1, 1–2]. The patients were given a medicinal *poltos* made of common millet (but also of *elymos/metine*) [Dioscurides 1914: II, 51, 3, 4]. The same author stated that a certain type of pancakes of millet flour [Dioscurides 1906–1914: V, 3, 3, 4] with raisins [Dioscurides 1906–1914: V, 3, 3, 1], eggs and honey could be used to remove excess phlegm from the body [Dioscurides 1906–1914: V, 3, 3, 5–6]. The treatise entitled *De materia medica* contains the information that common millet, roasted, reheated and placed on a sore spot as a *pyria* was an effective measure for treating

bowel obstruction or other painful afflictions [Dioscurides 1906–1914: II, 97, 1, 3–4]. A similar remark may be found in *Euporista vel de simplicibus medicines*: that *kenchros* [Dioscurides 1914: I, 234, 1, 4] and *elymos/meline* [Dioscurides 1914: I, 234, 1, 5], or salt mixed with the grains, is a remedy against sciatica and other types of pain [Dioscurides 1914: I, 234, 1, 1–2].

Galen was also one of the physicians recommending millet as an ingredient of *pyriai*, the warming poultices. Such *boethemata* including *kenchros* were said to have a mild effect. Another type of *pyriai* to be used was composed of a mixture of common millet and salt [Galen 1914: 525, 6–9]. Galen prescribed warm poultices of the grain in question [Galen 1825: 867, 13–14] to treat painful ear and eye infections [Galen 1825: 867, 11]. This use had been known for a long time, since excerpts from Archigenes' works pertaining to the treatment of *otalgiai* which appear in Galen's treatise [Galen 1826–1827: 620, 5–624, 14] mention the very same remedy [Galen 1826–1827: 621, 4–7]. It must be added that other prescriptions mentioned by Archigenes and included in Galen's works also mention warming poultices of *kenchros* [Galen 1826–1827: 862, 14–864, 11] as a remedy for toothache [Galen 1826–1827: 862, 14–863, 1]. Furthermore, in the descriptions of *kenchros* and *elymos/meline* quoted in the previous sections of the present article, Galen mentioned their use in cataplasms with a drying and cooling effect, although he did not specify which afflictions were to be treated with such measures. Such lack of information may suggest that the use of these remedies was relatively common. What is more, in other passages derived from Archigenes' work, this time pertaining to treating surgery wounds and head injuries [Galen 1826–1827: 576, 6–579, 3]) which were incorporated into *De compositione medicamentorum secundum locos* together with the other excerpts, Galen recommended *aleuron kenchrinon* to be used as powder to cover open wounds of the skull that exposed the injured dura mater [Galen 1826–1827: 577, 8–10]. Finally, *kenchros* was mentioned as a recommended foodstuff [Galen 1914: 897, 9–10] in Galen's commentary entitled *In Hippocratis de victu in acutorum commentaria* [Galen 1914: 897, 5–11], with the suggestion that in this case millet was to be cooked with some milk [Galen 1914: 897, 10].

The data included in the works of Oribasius suggest that in the period when, as the personal physician to Emperor Julian, he was compiling his treatises, millet was still being used as an ingredient of warm poultices. In *Eclogae medicamentorum*, *pyriai* made of *kenchros* [Oribasius 1933: 74, 4, 28] are prescribed for example as a remedy against sciatica. The same treatise mentions warm poultices of *kenchros* [Oribasius 1964: IX, 13, 6, 1–3] as a medicament to treat *teinesmos* [Oribasius 1964: IX, 13, 1, 1–6, 3], i.e. prolonged constipation. Finally, the treatise dedicated to Eunapius contains the information that *pyriai* were prescribed by physicians to alleviate toothache [Oribasius 1964: IV, 59, 3, 1–2].

Moreover, Oribasius' works indicate that both foxtail and common millet were ingredients of various cataplasms. *Libri ad Eunapium* inform us that both grains have a drying effect [Oribasius 1964: II, 1, 12, 1–13, 1], and thus, when applied to the body, they remove excess liquid and cool the surface [Oribasius 1964: II, 1, 13, 1–14, 1]. In accordance with this general principle, sections of the *Collectiones medicae*, which are, incidentally, taken from Book I of Antyllus' *Peri boethematon*, mention millet cataplasms applied to the body to rid the intestines of excess and harmful juices [Oribasius 1933: IX, 24, 14, 2–3]. General recommendations given by Antyllus were supplemented by a recipe for a poultice devised by Lycus. The physician quoted by Oribasius called the millet-made remedy *epiplasma* [Oribasius 1933: IX, 33, 1, 1]; the treatise describes it as an effective for gastric problems, including the resulting swelling [Oribasius 1933: IX, 33, 2, 1–3, 1]. Adding pitch to this poultice made it a remedy for sciatica [Oribasius 1933: IX, 33, 3, 1–4, 1]; water, vinegar or a mixture of the two cold also be added to transform the poultice into an effective treatment for centipede bites [Oribasius 1933: IX, 33, 4, 1–2]. According to Lycus, the medicine was prepared in the same way as poultices of flax seed [Oribasius 1933: IX, 33, 1, 1–2, 1]: ground millet seeds (of a similar consistency as *aleuron*) were tossed into boiling honey [Oribasius 1933: IX, 29, 2, 2–3].

Common and foxtail millet were also recommended by Oribasius as remedies for specific afflictions, mostly gastric in nature. As has been mentioned above in the section describing cataplasms, foxtail millet was

considered fit not only for external use (as a means of drying the surface of the body), but also as a foodstuff that removes excess liquid from the gastric tract [Oribasius 1964: II, 1, 12, 1–13, 1]. The same properties were ascribed to common millet [Oribasius 1964: II, 1, 13, 1]. Physicians adhered to the already mentioned principle that the seriously ill and feverish patients should be given millet or foxtail millet in the form of a liquid, while groats can be included in their diet during the period of recovery. Prescriptions pertaining to this rule may be found for instance in the works of Dieuches, whose teachings were recounted by Oribasius in Book IV of the *Collectiones medicae*. Oribasius' famous predecessor claimed that people whose health had been weakened by a grave illness were unable to consume ordinary products, and should therefore not be given any solid foods [Oribasius 1933: IV, 7, 1, 1–3]; they ought to be fed foodstuffs that had been boiled soft into an emulsion or a soup suitable for drinking [Oribasius 1933: IV, 10, 1–5]. The already mentioned problems with digestion were usually explained in terms of imbalance of the humours; information on the use of millet as a remedy for afflictions resulting from the accumulation of excess juices [Oribasius 1964: V, 6, 3, 3–4] may be found in a passage of the *Synopsis ad Eustathium filium* discussing the treatment of the youngest patients. When it comes to determining the humour responsible for these problems, it should be noted that Dieuches recommended eating common and foxtail millet in cases of afflictions caused by an excess of bile [Oribasius 1933: IV, 7, 15, 1–18, 1]. When the health of the patient began to improve, it was time to introduce some groats to their diet. The recipe for the medicinal dish appearing in Oribasius' work is also borrowed from Dieuches [Oribasius 1933: IV, 7, 25, 1–27, 1]. Groats was also mentioned by Philotimus [Oribasius 1933: IV, 10, 1, 1–2, 5], who claimed that well-cooked groats prevents blockages from forming in the patient's digestive tract.

The encyclopaedia compiled by Aetius of Amida also provides some information about the use of foxtail and common millet in treating afflictions occurring in 6th-century society. The grain known as *kenchros* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: XI, 35, 40] was mentioned as an ingredient of a very effective (as the author of the recipe affirms) medicine ensuring potency

[Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: XI, 35, 38–47]. Aetius borrowed the formula for this medication from Philagrios [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: XI, 34, 1]. In Book VI of *Iatricorum libri* Aetius quotes Galen (who in turn took his information from Archigenes) on the issue of treating ailments related to mechanical injuries of the head [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VI, 47, 1–16]. The section mentions sprinkling open-tissue injuries with fine-grained flour of the *aleuron* type made of common millet [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VI, 47, 13–16]. Supplementary measures included a decoction of catmint, as well as butter, rose oil and pork lard. In several passages of his treatise Aetius talks of millet *pyriai* as a product with a warming effect, which could alleviate pain resulting from various afflictions. He mentions poultices of *kenchros* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VI, 39, 29] in Book VI of *Iatricorum libri*, where he quotes Archigenes' prescriptions regarding cases of tetanus. The same warming poultices of millet [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 30, 40–41] were recommended as a remedy for stomach pains resulting from the excess of cold juices amassing in its cavity [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 30, 28–29]. In Book VIII of his compendium, he also prescribed using warming millet poultices as an anaesthetic for toothaches resulting from a cold [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 30, 39–41]. Finally, it must be remembered that Archigenes, whose advice is also quoted in Book XII of *Iatricorum libri* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 30, 39–41], mentioned *pyriai* made of *kenchros* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 30, 39–41] as an effective measure against the pain caused by sciatica.

When it comes to medicinal diet, the works by Aetius of Amida contain the information that millet was used for more than just an external anaesthetic in cases of periodontosis and dental caries. Patients suffering from such afflictions were also advised to eat various types of soups (of bread, rice etc.), which included a *rophema* made of *kenchros* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 31, 17–18]. Common millet cooked together with *ptisane* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 69, 86] was deemed a suitable dish for people who occasionally experienced stomach haemorrhage [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII, 69, 67–70]; this information may be found in Book VIII of *Iatricorum libri*, which discusses the methods of treating patients after the bleeding was stopped [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: VIII,

69, 1–89]. Moreover, it was thought that in some cases millet should be eliminated from daily diet. The prescriptions written down by Aetius suggest that the already-mentioned Archigenes was not an advocate of including *kenchros*-based soups into the diet of patients who had a tendency towards digestive problems, i.e. belonged to the group of *koliakoi* [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 35, 1–203]. This view was justified by the fact that millet is hard to digest and causes harmful juices to form within the body. However, in another excerpt from Archigenes, this time discussing foodstuffs suitable for patients with problems of the abdominal cavity resulting from an excess of juices in the digestive tract [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 42, 34], Aetius mentioned millet *poltoi* as a very effective means of drying up the humours [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: IX, 42, 65–67]. Lastly, in Book III of *Iatricorum libri* the author states that *aleura* of common millet are among foodstuffs that facilitate the production of women's milk [Aetius of Amida 1935–1950: III, 142, 1–9].

The works of Alexander of Tralles provide very limited information regarding the use of common and foxtail millet in medicine, which in addition is relatively similar to the data presented above. For patients suffering from the so-called dysentery of the liver caused by a cold *dyskrasia* [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 407, 5–409, 16], he recommended including *poltos* of long-cooked millet into the diet [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 407, 23–24]. This choice was most certainly dictated by the intent to dry up the unwanted juices that induced the affliction. When patients coughing up blood started to excrete a juice referred to as a humour with acute characteristics [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 201, 28–209, 30], he prescribed drinking milk [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 209, 22–27] cooked together with foxtail millet. It might be added that *elymos/meline* [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 219, 20] was also mentioned as an additional ingredient of poultry broths [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 219, 7–10]. Such food was also recommended for people suffering from internal bleeding manifesting itself by the presence of blood in the saliva [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 219, 14–20]. Alexander recommended *kenchros*-based poultices for different types of medical conditions. He prescribed millet *pyriai* for patients whose health was jeopardised by some juice that has lingered

in one part of the body for too long. If the humour in question had the features of blood, the physician had to apply diaphoretic measures that dried the body but did not heat it up too much. According to Alexander, millet poultices possessed such properties [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 233, 9–12]. The recommendation is found in the passage discussing the treatment of pleurisy (*pleuritis*) [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 229, 1–235, 15]. What is more, the physician recommended applying *pyria*-type poultices of *kenchros* [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 343, 10–11] after a visit to the baths [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 341, 19–345, 28] and as a treatment for pain caused by an excess of gas in the abdominal cavity [Alexander of Tralles 1963: II, 361, 18–27].

Another 6th-century physician, Anthimus, did not contradict the instructions of earlier dieticians and claimed that millet and rice, when properly prepared (i.e. cooked in water with an addition of goat milk), were suitable foods for people suffering from dysentery [Anthimus 2007: 71]. This is the only mention of the use of *kenchros* in the medical procedures described in Anthimus' work.

The legacy of Paul of Aegina is equally uninformative with regard to the use of common and foxtail millet in medicine. He considered both grains to be *hapla farmaka*, since this is the category in which they appear in the relevant list in Book VII of his work. On the other hand, only common millet was included in the diet, i.e. the feeding pattern, suitable for children suffering from various afflictions. *Pyriai* with millet were mentioned in several sections of the *Epitome*. Paul prescribed giving *kenchros* [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: I, 6, 1, 10] to children that had developed skin eruptions [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: I, 6, 1, 1–11] and presented with excess juices in the digestive tract [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: I, 6, 1, 10–11]. He did not, however, specify the form in which the grain was to be served. Logic dictates that his prescription most likely refers to liquid foods, i.e. soups or gruels based on millet. As regards warming poultices of millet, Paul of Aegina [1921–1924: III, 9, 3, 19–21] considered them useful in treating lethargy [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: III, 9, 3, 1–38]. He also knew of using *pyriai* made of the grain in question [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: III, 33, 2, 11] as a remedy for pain [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: III, 33, 2, 9–10] applied

after bloodletting, which was sometimes considered a necessary medical procedure in cases of pleurisy [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: III, 33, 2, 1–32]. Lastly, he recommended hot poultices [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: III, 38, 1, 13] to alleviate pain of medium intensity that was sometimes associated with afflictions caused by residual gas in the digestive tract [Paul of Aegina 1921–1924: III, 38, 1, 1–25].

What remains to be mentioned are the non-medical sources referred to in the section pertaining to the culinary uses of millet. The *Geoponica* contains the information that the grain in question was considered an antidote for at least some poisons, notably hellebore. A decoction of millet was similarly effective, and could also be used in treating mushroom poisoning. The author of the work also claimed that millet bread could make a person immune to all kinds of poison if consumed right before coming in contact with the harmful substance [*Geoponica…* 1895: XIV, 24, 2–4].

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FIELDWORK

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On the Appetite Trail[1]

Abstract: The article recounts actions oriented at experiencing and reliving culinary traditions, undertaken by the Local Action Group of the "Mroga" Society for the Local Community Development.
The Society operates in five communes: Koluszki, Brzeziny, Dmosin, Jeżów and Rogów, located in the north-eastern part of the current Łódź voivodeship, east of the city of Łódź. In the past, this area, which bordered regions whose characteristic features indicated their distinct regional identities (the Łęczyca Land and the Łowicz Principality from the north, the Rawa Land from the east, the Opoczno and Piotrków Lands from the south, and Łódź from the west), was devoid of definite features typical to folk culture. Currently it is still an area which, due to the absence of a consistent and enduring cultural foundation to refer to, cannot be described in the categories of an ethnographic or geographic region. By following the tourist trail laid by the Society, known as the "Appetite Trail", I reconstruct the vision of what the community resident in the five communes covered by the activity of the "Mroga" Local Action Group defines as the region's culinary tradition, and I deconstruct the Group's actions that reduce the tradition to the level of a tourist attraction.

Key words: culinary tradition, regional product, the past and local remembrance.

1.

Anna Wieczorkiewicz observes that

> Tourism […] relies not only on a variety of actions of a commercial nature, but also on a peculiar ideological framework encompassing things described as "historical", "national", "natural" and "traditional". Cultural resources undergo selection and appropriate processing. Local matter

1 The current text is an extended and translated version of my article *Tradycje kulinarne "Na szlaku łaknienia"* [Karpińska 2013].

> is broadcast globally; this matter often returns to its original environment in a new version, applied as some group's mark of identity. Elements of tradition are reconstructed for the use of the tourist industry; afterwards, those reconstructions are imitated again and again, until the reproductions grow perfect enough to appear purer and more perfect than the original. It is precisely in this area that some phenomena can be observed in condensed, exceptionally clear forms, as if in a laboratory [2008b: 205].

Further on, she maintains that these phenomena exist due to the fact that people change their location in space, and that boundaries are invariably important in the process of establishing those social practices, because tourism needs them; it feeds on "the concept of differences between environments and cultures, as well as on the potential of making use of environments, people and cultures for specific purposes" [Wieczorkiewicz 2008b: 205–206]. In other words, tradition is here reduced to the level of a tourist attraction. In order for it to bring appropriate profits, it is transformed into a sign by being suitably costumed, included into diverse contexts and used to various ends. The following article focuses on the ways of transforming tradition into a sign on the example of actions oriented at experiencing and reliving culinary traditions undertaken by the "Mroga" Local Action Group of the Society for the Local Community Development.

The Society operates in five communes: Koluszki, Brzeziny, Dmosin, Jeżów and Rogów, located in the north-eastern part of the current Łódź voivodeship, east of the city of Łódź. In the past, this area, which bordered regions whose characteristic features indicated their distinct regional identities (the Łęczyca Land and the Łowicz Principality from the north, the Rawa Land from the east, the Opoczno and Piotrków Lands from the south, and Łódź from the west), was devoid of definite features typical to folk culture. Currently it is still an area which, due to the absence of a consistent and enduring cultural foundation to refer to, cannot be described in the categories of an ethnographic or geographic region.

Geographers identify the area of the Łódź voivodeship (both the current one and the one instituted after the 2nd World War) as the 'Łódź Region'. Ethnologists and historians are of the opinion that this term is

difficult to define and that the name has no grounding in history. Kazimiera Zawistowicz-Adamska emphasized that the 'Łódź Region' was in reality an economic region that emerged in the 1820s, and that, forming as an manufacturing district under the influence of industrial development, it absorbed "some areas of the ethnographic territories of Łęczyca, Sieradz and, to some extent, Mazovia and Greater Poland, and influenced them in a very definite way" [Zawistowicz-Adamska 1962: 4]. Regardless of whether our topic is the Łódź voivodeship or the Łódź economic region, it is necessary to be aware that, firstly, it is a transitional area encompassing parts of Mazovia, Greater Poland, Lesser Poland and Silesia, which absorbed the once visibly separate ethnographic territories of the Łęczyca, Sieradz, Łowicz, Opoczno and Rawa Lands, and, secondly, that both the boundaries of this area and the cultural phenomena occurring therein are fluid. The area's specificity results not only form complex historical processes, but also from its modern-day status.

In the years 2004–2006, the "Mroga" Society for the Local Community Development issued a call to the local residents to submit recipes and descriptions of culinary products that might apply for inclusion in the register of traditional products of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Of the forty-two items identified by the Society's staff as traditional products from the area of the Mroga and Rawka rivers and the Łódź Heights, some were entered into the Ministry's register, others were classified by the Marshal's Office in Łódź as traditional local products. Also, within the framework of the "Museum in Space – Multicultural Roots of the Łódź Region" project carried out since 2009 by the communes of Koluszki, Brzeziny, Dmosin, Jeżów, Rogów and the town of Brzeziny, the Society laid several tourist trails, including the culinary trail known as the "Appetite Trail". The following data about the trail are found on one of the many information boards placed in the villages:

> The 71-km-long Appetite Trail is dedicated to the region's culinary tradition. It runs in the vicinity of many gastronomic establishments that specialize not only in traditional Polish dishes, but also in foreign cuisine. Traditional fare most often includes *żurek* [sour soup], broth, tomato, pea and beetroot

soups, dumplings with various fillings, diverse chicken dishes and pork cutlets. Besides these, on offer are locally produced honey, traditional smoked meats and cheeses. Traditional dishes produced by local residents and village housewives' societies are also available within the "Museum in Space".

2.

In the present-day colloquial discourse, the noun 'tradition' and the adjective 'traditional' are commonly used labels. Applied in various contexts, they give shape to certain "commonplace images of tradition", that is to "tradition which is the subject of public interest" [Kajfosz 2009: 79, 70] and assumes the form of named and defined phenomena. In addition, owing to the fact that attributes carrying positive or negative associations are ascribed to them, those labels help to evaluate phenomena [Gomóła 2011: 177–178].

Phrases similar to those used on the information boards: "culinary tradition", "traditional dishes", "traditional smoked meats", current in the social discourse, carry positive connotations, all the more so since tradition and homeliness are in vogue in the contemporary culture. Also, culinary products may become an identity symbol as "a focus for practices integrating groups that otherwise differ in character" and an emblem "potentially applicable in creating self-image" [Wieczorkiewicz 2008a: 279]. This is due to the existing conviction that traditional cuisine is a value in itself and – because tradition is identical to what is old, constant and unchangeable, to all that "realizes" and "materializes" the past and attests to rootedness – that cultivating this cuisine lies in the interests of both the society and individuals [Studnicki 2009: 30]. The phrase "the region's culinary tradition" promises products and dishes which the depositaries of the culture of some region (in this case, the communes of Koluszki, Brzeziny, Dmosin, Jeżów, Rogów and the town of Brzeziny) consider to be theirs, historically associated with their space, even though varying degrees of localness: the regional, familial or Polish one, are ascribed to those items. The local identity label not only makes the offered products more attractive, but also hints at a conception of life in which traditional cuisine is a synonym of a tasty and healthy product. In

this way, tradition undergoes the process of mythologizing; this is attested to by actions conferring previously absent meanings on facts, objects, or even words (for instance words found on the information boards placed by the "Mroga" Local Action Group in a few communes near Łódź), which prompts a redefinition of reality [cf. Barthes 1991: 109–127, Sulima 2001: 102–103]. The usual situation is that as long as people live within a certain tradition, they do not know it. Anthony Giddens points out that even though oral cultures are the most traditional of all, tradition as such is unknown to them [Giddens 1996: 37]. Waldemar Kuligowski explains: "Final decades of the last century caused tradition to become a familiar topic; […] human societies reached the conclusion that without tradition they would not be themselves" [Kuligowski 2007: 79]. And so they resort to tradition in various circumstances, including the culinary matters. Speaking of traditional cuisine or traditional dishes, they express their need of "an image of the past materialized in the form of a myth" [Studnicki 2009: 31], with the proviso that "the past" is imprecisely defined and its image is situated in opposition to the present time, that is to modernity; this is considered to be a reaction to the social and cultural condition of the present time. Thus the past undergoes a procedure that is called distortion and deformation by Roland Barthes [Barthes 1991: 128], and invention by Eric Hobsbawm [2003].

3.

Tradition has an important role in the process of searching for, constructing and reinforcing regional and local identity. It is used, indeed overused, by informal groups to increase the attractiveness of a given area or to invigorate civic participation of local communities who create tourist products on the basis of tradition. Culinary products have for some time been a cultural product, as well as an attractive indicator of a region's cultural distinction. It might in fact be said that culinary products are the foundation for building a region's brand. According to sociologists, this makes sense only in the conditions of globalisation; "in autarkic societies, local specialties were […] not created, because the global counterpoint was absent" [Nieroba, Czerner, Szczepański 2010: 60]. However, the scholars warn that "it is currently anachronistic to simply juxtapose tradition versus modernity, or

the global versus the local aspects" [Kuligowski 2007: 107]. Tradition is a global concept today because everyone wants to be different from everyone else, and in addition it is viewed as "a source of exclusive knowledge and tangible financial profits" [Kuligowski 2007: 80].

Marek Krajewski [2005: 86] assumes that the explosion of diversity, which has been evident for a long while now, adds dynamism to culture, forcing it not only to adapt to new conditions, but also to redefine the foundations of identity and relationship to others. In his opinion, some elements of culture are transformed into a folkloristic ornament that becomes a commodity on the one hand, and a requisite "for the process of constructing and manifesting one's self" on the other [Krajewski 2005: 87–88]; it is then helpful in building a tradition that attests to uniqueness and distinctiveness. Food – an inherent part of culture and a crucial "element of identity games" [Burszta, Kuligowski 2005: 90] – being transformed into a local specialty and the traditional national/regional/local cuisine, is a perfect example of this phenomenon.

This brings us to the point where it is necessary to focus on local foodstuffs produced by the residents of communes included in the actions of the "Mroga" Local Action Group of the Society for the Local Community Development, and on their example to investigate how culinary traditions are materialized in order to satisfy market demand.

4.

The communes covered by the "Mroga" LAG boast, among others, the following traditional products: goat-milk cottage cheese from Eufeminów, sourdough bread from Dmosin, smoked sausage from Jordanów, traditionally smoked sausage from Nadolna, potato doughnuts from Zalesie, *pyza* dumplings from Przecław, the round village bread from Kołacin, and *czarne*, that is blood sausage, from Marianów Kołacki.

In their Polish-language names, all these delicacies have either an adjective referring to a particular village or the name of the village itself. This is a way of demonstrating their distinctiveness, but also their belonging to a very definite space in the rural landscape. According to Tim Edensor, rural landscapes are "charged with affective and symbolic meaning", since they

> come to stand as symbols of continuity, the product of land worked over and produced […], so that to dwell within them, even if for a short time, can be to achieve a kind of national self-realisation, to return to 'our' roots where the self, freed from its inauthentic – usually urban – existence, is re-authenticated [Edensor 2002: 40].

It is precisely this kind of landscape that provided the context for the activity of local groups in Poland: firstly, it is a manifestation of space that shapes the feeling of belonging and, ant the same time, distinctiveness; secondly, it is used in the practice of creating myths and various visual phenomena, and also as a source of timeless values from which it is possible to draw in order to preserve local identity. The information board put up in Wola Cyrusowa, one of the villages on the "Appetite Trail", is an illustration to this realization:

> In the nearby villages, housewives still prepare various traditional dishes, the recipes for which have been passed from generation to generation. […] Residents of the nearby Nagawki greatly contribute to the preservation of the region's culinary heritage. No less than five of the dishes and beverages they prepare are now in the register of traditional products from the area of the Mroga and Rawka rivers and the Łódź Heights. These are: the Nagawki apples baked in juice, the ever-fresh bread from Nagawki, the Nagawki butter […]. The Nagawki butter. In the past, butter was usually made only to be used in the household. It was in general use, both in peasant cottages and in the mansions of the gentry. The traditional way of churning butter from cream relies on the fact that, in the process of agitating, globules of fat amalgamate and turn into butter grains. The grains were removed from buttermilk and rinsed, and subsequently kneaded together to remove excess liquid.

The above text is quoted here in order to illustrate the manner in which the group attempts to convince an outsider that the given product constitutes its property and it authentic. Products offered by the villagers are also a "local attraction"; homely cuisine with simple recipes may thus be juxtaposed to "the refinement of foreign cuisines […] that have recondite technological procedures" [Łeńska-Bąk 2010: 125]. Also, the quoted passage shows that

the local residents perceive and interpret reality in traditional categories and do not sense a fracture in the continuity of cultural meaning.

Marcin Kula used the term "syncretic tradition" to describe situations when the tradition of a given group is fused with elements deriving from a different culture or from another place [Kula 2003: 163–183]. In social memory, syncretic tradition functions in the form a network of symbolic references, resulting in the emergence of new perceptions concerning the group's tradition. Products registered as traditional in the Łódź voivodeship: goat-milk cottage cheese from Eufeminów and the ginger-and-lemon liqueur known as the "tears of St. Euphemia" [http://lodzkie.ksow.pl/fileadmin/user_upload/lodzkie/pliki/publikacje/Kulinarne_Szlaki_Regionu_%C5%81%C3%B3dzkiego.pdf] are examples of that. Description of the Eufeminów goat-milk cottage cheese found in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development website is preceded by information regarding cheese making in the Łowicz region:

> Goat-milk cottage cheese from Eufeminów began to be made in Łowicz voivodeship after the 2nd World War. The land was devastated due to the war and farm animals were scarce. Residents of the Łowicz region soon began to prepare the soil for various crops, and more and more animals appeared in the farms. Those animals were chiefly goats, which adapted to difficult conditions very well and were often the family's "sole providers". Their milk was turned into enough cheese to satisfy the needs of the family; surplus cheese was sold at the market […] [http://www.minrol.gov.pl/pol/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych/woj.-lodzkie/Kozi-twarog-z-Eufeminowa].

And the following is written about the liqueur:

> Some village farms produced high-proof spirit. The ginger-and-lemon liqueur is made from lemons, ginger, spirit diluted with water, honey, sugar and cardamom, according to a traditional recipe. Water used in the making of the liqueur is drawn from wells owned by the residents of Eufeminów, and honey is produced locally […] [http://www.minrol.gov.pl/pol/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych/woj.-lodzkie/Nalewka-imbirowo-cytrynowa].

These descriptions are an example of a "deft imitation of an ostensibly traditional original" [Burszta, Kuligowski 2005: 116] assessed in keeping with the obligatory evaluation scale, where the highest marks are given to products that are "ours" and old, preferably having a long history. Barbara Szacka observed that oldness is "one of the factors that have the power to sacralize. Whatever has a past, especially a long past, is perceived as worthier than all that has no such past. The long past is a synonym for durability and, indirectly, justifies the right to exist" [Szacka 2006: 48]. Descriptions of "traditional" products present a mythologized image of the village, an image that reinforces the tradition and imbues it with more value and prestige. This prestige is expressed by the absence of distance between what "is" and what "was"; selective ascription of cultural contents to territory is its characteristic feature. After all, as anthropologists constantly remind us, the Polish countryside was not "a land flowing with milk and honey", where liqueurs were served and the diet was enhanced with lemons, sugar, ginger or cardamom [Burszta, Kuligowski 2005: 116–118]. As amply attested by memoirs of Polish peasants, only very rarely would such products appear on a peasant table, and in a poor household – never. Thus their perception as ingredients of "traditional rustic fare" is "an interpretative figure playing upon a certain exoticism and the aura of homeliness, rather than a historical truth" [Łeńska-Bąk 2010: 125]. In reality, what is sold under the label of homeliness and village-ness is "what used to be characteristic to the elite culture, not to the rural population" [Łeńska-Bąk 2010: 127]. For instance, propounding goat-milk cottage cheese as a "traditional" Polish village product, and moreover one typical to the Łowicz region, results in a deformed image of the past. Firstly, just for the record, Eufeminów was never located in the Łowicz region; the village was detached in the early 19th century from the Bedoń estate belonging to the Brzeziny commune. Secondly, as confirmed by ethnographers specializing in research on foodstuffs, cheese in Poland was made from cows' or sheep's milk, goat-milk was used very rarely, and when it was, it would be mixed with cows' milk [Kowalska-Lewicka 1973: 197]. The Łowicz regional cuisine did have its distinctive features, but these never included the use of goat-milk. Thirdly, aware that "oldness" in cuisine evokes particularly favourable emotions,

leaders of the "Mroga" LAG accentuated the community's durability by giving notice that goat-milk cottage cheese began to be produced after the 2nd World War, that is well over fifty years ago. In this way, they were constructing "oldness" in accordance with the current requirements: only products made for over 25 years can be entered into the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development register of traditional products – but, let it be underlined, this is "oldness" which is not "true history" or "historical awareness", but a commodity supplied for entertainment and consumption [Krajewski 2005: 210].

In constructing the local culinary specificity, members of the "Mroga" LAG resorted to the Łowicz region – a space of stereotypically perceived "folk" and "Polish" culture – and came up with products intended to reinforce the local/regional identification (e.g. the goat-milk cottage cheese or ginger-and-lemon liqueur). Such actions, not at all unusual in the current reality, are facilitated by, among others, the unhampered flow of information and commodities of which local communities may avail themselves regardless of their religious, ethnic or national identity. This case perfectly illustrates the view of John B. Thompson, as quoted by Elżbieta Nieroba, Anna Czerner and Marek S. Szczepański, that "in imparting meaning on the world and creating the sense of belonging in themselves, individual people increasingly often rely on a mediated and non-localized tradition". Tradition separated from a context that was single and localized (i.e. embedded in a concrete physical space and social relations), was remodelled and adjusted to the new context of everyday life by some group of people; this is possible due to the interlinked processes of globalization and mediation [Nieroba, Czerner, Szczepański 2010: 44].

In the context of the above example, it is necessary to emphasise (as many scholars have long been doing) the fact that cuisine is especially susceptible to innovation and outside influence. Traditional products promoted by local groups are cultural constructs, no more than elements selected from an available range [Burszta 2004: 112]. This phenomenon, associated with commodification of heritage resulting from the development of tourism, may be included into the category of "invented tradition" proposed by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. As noted by Marcin Lubaś, in

the conditions of enormous transformation of social relations, caused by, among others, increased mobility, emergence of new technologies, and the expansion of free market, tradition becomes the object of particular attention and is subjected to various processes aimed at imparting a reflective quality upon it [Lubaś 2008: 42–46]. Lubaś states that imparting a reflective quality upon tradition is closely linked with the process of traditionalising which is unavoidable and present in every society, that is with a conscious effort to selectively entrench some cultural content and forms. "By way of the process of traditionalising, traditions are formed and modified" [Lubaś 2008: 46] according to the needs of the moment. It might be said, quoting Jerzy Szacki, that the past as a culinary tradition is only invented

> as a result of complex processes of remembering and forgetting, selecting and rejecting, affirming and negating, and even perhaps simply confabulating, and of repeated again and again attempts at establishing it – processes, with which the most familiar are not so much the experts on how things really were, but researchers of the contemporary society and its constantly fluctuating culture and politics [Szacki 2011: 25].

This does not mean that an invented tradition is not a tradition at all. The observation made by Edward Shils is worth recalling: that traditions have a specific, sequential social structure; they require neither the identicalness of contents nor the continuity of transmission, they can alter and they can be referred to:

> It is not the intertemporal identity of beliefs or actions which constitutes a tradition; it is the intertemporal *filiation* of beliefs which is constitutive. […] Filiation entails not only handing down but receiving as well. […] We often speak of the traditional acceptance of a belief as an *unthinking* acceptance of a belief previously accepted by others. The unthinkingness of the acceptance might be tantamount to the acceptance of the model of the already existent as a whole. Alternatively the model might be accepted after scrutiny to determine whether it conforms with certain criteria which are themselves unthinkingly accepted. Or again it might entail the

> discovery of a new pattern of belief by the application of criteria which are unthinkingly accepted. In any case, a fully traditional belief is one which is accepted without being assessed by any criterion other than its having been believed before [Shils 1971: 127–128].

This means that even if the views on cuisine, and the cuisine itself, are not really identical to the views held and dishes eaten in the past, they are nevertheless thought to be traditional and perceived as such, and this precisely because (and *only* because) they originate from the bygone days.

5.

The product's packaging is not without its influence on the materializing of culinary traditions. Appropriately packaged, it becomes a sign founded on homeliness, localness and tradition, that is on the signal that the given foodstuff is "Polish", "regional", "peasant" or "from here": from Eufeminów, Nagawki or Jordanów. In addition, it is important to indicate that the product obtained an award at some national or local culinary contest, or used to be an important element of some holiday, celebration or the village/parish/regional feast.

> *Gołąbki* [cabbage-leaf rolls] and cabbage-and-peas are worth mentioning among the traditional delicacies prepared in Osiny. *Gołąbki* are distinctive due to their taste, unique ingredients and simplicity of preparation. In the vicinity of Dmosin, cabbage-and-peas is an obligatory Christmas Eve supper dish, and it is served as an accompaniment to meat dishes on ordinary days. Cabbage-and-peas won the 1st award in the "Regional cuisine – a development opportunity" contest celebrating the 600th anniversary of Dmosin,

states the information board in Koziołki near Cyrusowa Wola. The inn in Buczek, in turn, is very proud of its *łódzka zalewajka* soup. In front of it, another information board announces:

> The taste of traditional *zalewajka* and many other traditional Polish and regional dishes can be enjoyed in the Summer Inn of Inter-Solar Co. in

> Buczek. The "Zalewajka Feast" is organized here every summer on the first Sunday of July. Inter-Solar Co. participates also in the Festival of Christian Culture in Łódź and is the organizer of the (whole!) ox-broiling event during the art workshops section of the "Colours of Poland" Festival.

And the producer of the ginger-and-lemon liqueur boasts:

> The ginger-and-lemon liqueur is presented at the annual feast in Eufeminów celebrating the martyrdom of St. Euphemia. The patroness of the village, who died for her faith in the Roman Colosseum on 16th September 304, is given flowers and loaves of bread by the residents, and the feast is accompanied by promotion of local products. The highlight of the feast is the liqueur contest [http://www.minrol.gov.pl/pol/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych/woj.-lodzkie/Nalewka-imbirowo-cytrynowa].

Tourist trails laid by the "Mroga" LAG within the framework of the "Museum in Space – Multicultural Roots of the Łódź Region" project carried out in the communes of Koluszki, Brzeziny, Dmosin, Jeżów, Rogów and the town of Brzeziny create an interlinked network. According to an information board in Cyrusowa Wola,

> the largest villages, administrative centres with many interesting monuments, are crucial to the entire network of trails […]. The trails' key points are the Living Skansen – Polish Folklore Centre in Nagawki, The Jurassic Botanic Park, the Rogów Arboretum, the Rogów Narrow-gauge Railway and the 1st World War cemeteries, some of which include also graves from the 1939 September Campaign.

In the intention of the creators of the project, these places are to be a target of tourist pilgrimages. According to Tim Edensor, such spots are ideologically charged so strongly that they may actually affect the sense of identity [Edensor 2002: 40]; in addition, they are a heritage that incontrovertibly emphasises the sense of belonging to a place. From the standpoint of the group, they are what Edensor terms "iconic sites",

that is "highly selective, synecdochal features which are held to embody specific kinds of characteristics" connoting or commemorating historical events, or providing evidence of past cultures [Edensor 2002: 45]. They are significant as distinctive points in a land "etched with the past, so that 'history runs through geography'" [Edensor 2002: 40]. In the case under discussion here, their connotation is reinforced by the appropriately packaged "culinary tradition of the region", which is an inseparable element that organizes the Society's tourist project. Looking from the economic perspective and recalling Rosario Scarpato's statement as interpreted by Anna Wieczorkiewicz: that "food is treated as the expression of culture, and culture as the expression of food", it might be said that there are some places where cuisine is used as a marketing tool for tourism, and there are those which use tourism to promote cuisine [Wieczorkiewicz 2008b: 213].

The above examples demonstrate that what we are dealing with is the process of creating a myth of the place and of local tradition. Members of the "Mroga" LAG come to stand as the opinion-forming authority: they explicate and reproduce tradition, they indicate things that are worthy of remembrance, they suggest appropriate symbolism to link with a given historical event, and they determine which elements may become the hallmark of a given locality. Apart from constructing the region's specificity (the 1st World War cemeteries, the arboretum), their actions shape new phenomena inscribed upon local traditions (cuisine, the skansen, i.e. the open-air museum). It is upon their initiative and due to their actions that the myth of a community emerged, and this community is now applying it in order to construct its own identity. Localness based on mythical foundations causes

> characteristics of people and objects to be perceived as resulting from the influence of a given place' it is the place that imbues them with specific features that constitute their distinguishing mark. Yet mythical awareness does not look for justification for these emergent features […]. In mythical awareness, these physical, material, economic and social determinants are less significant than the special metaphysics of a place; it is the latter that determines the properties of elements belonging to the given local system [Wadowski 2011: 235].

6.

Tradition is not static; it is susceptible to change, and, as argued by Giddens, innovations are an element of every tradition. Durability of a tradition is not the same as durability in the objective sense [Kajfosz 2009: 81]. Katarzyna Łeńska-Bąk observed that the market selects whatever is attractive from Polish tradition, and afterwards

> conveys it to the current time but, of course, without situating it in the context of the bygone culture; from then on, the market utilizes only labels or, at the most, memories of the culture of the past, but they are by then devoid of their proper sense, meanings, and functions, and located in an entirely different discourse. In fact, quite contrary to the consumers' perception, the process does not consist in discovering the Polishness enclosed in tradition, but on presenting another commodity in the supermarket of culture, to be neatly displayed and selected by the buyer [Łeńska-Bąk 2010: 127],

commodities from the range of culinary tradition are, of course, included. As it has been shown here, they can be combined, fused, remodelled in any possible way, and even fabricated, with no great consequences [Kajfosz 2009: 87]. Local features are underlined for economic reasons, but also from the feeling of belonging to a given place. Speaking about „the past and culinary tradition" and actions which Paul Willis terms "creative cultural practices", which "produce something that was not there before, at least not fully or in the same way" [Willis 2000: xiv] add colour to the community, at the same time constituting the "object of consumerist pleasure" [Krajewski 2005: 210] and the "core of consumerist attractiveness" [Nieroba, Czerner, Szczepański 2010: 60]. In addition, they are used to structure the world into the "us" and "them", and to construct fresh cultural identities which others would recognize.

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Tasty Events. On Culinary Events in the Silesian Voivodeship

Abstract: The topic of reflection undertaken herein are public events having an evident culinary character. In the first part of her essay, the author proposes a typology of culinary events, with special focus on those events which appear in the public space the most often. Their number and considerable complexity are associated with the target participant group, the current patterns of consumption, gastronomic styles, and finally with functions which have been ascribed to those events. In the second part, she discusses selected culinary events organised in the Silesian voivodeship which have characteristic dishes (e.g. *wodzionka*, *moczka*, *kołocz*) associated with the local cuisine as their Leitmotif. These events are usually in the form of open-air festivals with contests for the best-prepared dish as their regular feature.

Key words: culinary events, Silesia, tradition, regional cuisine.

"The pleasure of eating is the actual and direct sensation of satisfying a need. The pleasures of the table are a reflective sensation, which is born from the various circumstances of place, time, things and people who make up the surroundings of the meal" [Brillat-Savarin 2009: 189–190]. This passage from *The Physiology of Taste*, written almost two centuries ago, express the essence of culinary sensations, at the same time accentuating the fundamental and unchangeable truth: food and pleasure are inseparable. The range of circumstances in which food may be enjoyed is nowadays broader than ever and it constantly expands, determining new forms of activity and spending free time, shaping new lifestyles. Food has acquired new kinds of meaning, expressing not only human needs

and desires, but also cultural changes, consumption trends and access to foodstuffs as such. Lastly, the pro-food fashion arrived at the academic world (*food studies*), becoming the subject of inter-disciplinary scientific discussion [e.g. Curtin, Heldke 1992; Sutton 2001; Ashley, Hollows, Jones, Taylor 2004; Freedman 2007; Belasco 2008].

Culinary events – a proposal for a typology

It does not take an expert to notice – if only on the basis of observation conducted in one's closest environment – that cuisine often becomes the *Leitmotif* for many events or, strictly speaking, celebrations and festivals. It adds splendour to gatherings of varying formality; from local initiatives on football pitches or culture centres to large projects sponsored by government institutions. Food itself, and its abundance and variety, are a magnet which draws people of diverse social backgrounds, professions and ages. Eating is arguably the best attraction; Anna Wieczorkiewicz discusses this issue in relation to tourism and travelling:

> National cuisines [...] can be considered convenient props used in creating the realm of tourist attractions. Culinary attractions are created in order to enhance the tourist assets of a given place. Notes about local dishes, regional markets where local delicacies can be bought, culinary fairs or wine trails are often included in tourist information folders, along with descriptions of cultural events and historical monuments [Wieczorkiewicz 2008: 208].

These observations refer directly to culinary events, where a significant portion of the participants are, in fact, tourists visiting the place of the "gustatory spectacle". Europe offers a wide range of culinary festivals, e.g. the truffle fair in the Italian city of Alba, the Oktoberfest in Munich, La Tomatina in Buñol in Spain, the Festival of New Beaujolais (Beaujol'Ympiades) in Lyon and Les Sarmentelles in Beaujeu [Sawala, Krawczyk, Bednarski 2005]. Outdoor events are organised in such a way that anybody can participate, even tourists from halfway across the globe, who are unfamiliar with the place and come there precisely to have fun and spend their time in engaging and new ways [Świtała-Trybek 2007: 348].

Events centred around food, or with culinary aspects "in the background", may assume forms that are as numerous as they are diverse. The typology presented below is based on a preliminary analysis of the phenomenon. It focuses primarily on the events that are most often observable in the public space. Their profusion and complexity is related to the location, the target group of participants, the predominant consumer models, gastronomic styles, and finally the functions ascribed to them. Some may be open (for all participants), others are targeted at a specific group of designated consumers; the duration varies from one day to a longer period of time (a week, a month). The majority of "festivals of flavour" is organised on non-working days or on the so-called long weekends (when bank holidays fall on a Monday or Friday), which has a direct influence on the turnout of visitors [Turkiewicz 1997: 25].

The first category of food-related events are **fairs of traditional and regional products**. The principle behind them is to promote produce characteristic for a given place (region or town).

> The place of origin and production is a highly important feature of regional and traditional food. Its unique, specific quality results from the local climate, tradition, as well as the natural, cultural and culinary heritage, the skills and knowledge passed from generation to generation. All of this creates an unbreakable bond between the product and the region, often accentuated in the name of the food [Byszewska, Kurpińska 2012: 10]

Events of this type feature stalls selling cold cuts, bread, cheese, fruit preserves, honey, beer, liqueurs, wine etc., as well as folk art and craft products. The delicacies on offer at Polish fairs may be local, but some events also include products from other European countries; for this reason several events have been renamed "international fairs" (e.g. *Międzynarodowy Jarmark Produktów Regionalnych w Grodzisku Mazowieckim* – The International Fair of Regional Products in Grodzisk Mazowiecki). These are organised by open-air museums, town halls, commune authorities, local associations or shopping malls. However, it must be emphasised that nowadays the majority of such events organised on a regular basis (usu-

ally on a single weekend each month) takes place out of the initiative of supermarket chains. The malls offer their customers the possibility to shop for (or get familiar with) regional produce. Many such events are organised in the summer and autumn or shortly before Christmas and Easter. In the latter case, the stalls sell a larger assortment of goods, including prettily wrapped gift sets for children and adults and seasonal products made for the occasion, e.g. baked goods and sweets typically associated with Christmas or Easter, such as gingerbread, marzipan, the Easter shortcake *mazurek*, cheesecake, lambs and bunnies made of sugar, etc.

The **Christmas markets** constitute a special subcategory of regional fairs. They are organised in the Advent, following the model of similar fairs in Germany, Austria, Belgium or France, and usually in large cities. It is now hard to imagine the cityscape without the characteristic wooden stalls decorated with colourful lights, ornaments and presents, standing in market squares and the streets leading to them, or in centrally located piazzas. They draw the eye with their inviting outlook, the smell of fresh food, their warm atmosphere. In a word, they are a "feast for the senses".

With their spectacular visual setting, Christmas markets have become desirable tourist attractions visited by millions of people. The ones with the longest tradition, organised for centuries (e.g. in Vienna, Augsburg and Frankfurt, as well as the *Striezelmarkt* in Dresden named after the characteristic Christmas strudel), attract crowds of visitors from all over the globe. Fairs of this type are popular in Poland as well; organised e.g. in Wrocław, Warsaw, Cracow (in 2008 "The Times" listed the Cracow Christmas Market as one of the best in Europe) [http://www.witajwpodrozy.pl/inspiracje/jarmarki-bozonarodzeniowe.html], Łódź, Toruń, Gdańsk and Olsztyn. It must be added that, in many towns in the Opole Silesia region, fairs of this specific type, involving the sampling of homemade cakes, pea soup and beverages such as mulled wine and beer, are instituted and organised by the local German minority institutions and German teachers from schools of all levels [Smolińska 2011: 194–195].

Taste festivals form another distinctive category of culinary events. Organised with much flair, they attract large groups of people interested not only in eating, but also in the methods of preparing various dishes and in

taking part in various cultural activities. The largest festivals in Poland take place in cities, including Cracow (*Małopolski Festiwal Smaku*, "Małopolska Taste Festival", since 2005), Gruczno (*Festiwal Smaku*, "Taste Festival" since 2006), Ostrzeszów (*Ogólnopolski Festiwal Pasztetników i Potraw z Gęsi*, "National Festival of Pastry Makers and Goose Dishes", since 2006), Poznań (*Ogólnopolski Festiwal Dobrego Smaku*, "The Festival of Good Taste", since 2007), Lublin (*Europejski Festiwal Smaku*, "The European Festival of Taste", since 2009), Wrocław (*Europa na Widelcu*, "Europe on the Plate", since 2009), Warsaw ("Good Food Fest", since 2012) and in the Silesian Voivodeship (*Festiwal Śląskie Smaki*, "Silesian Tastes", since 2006, annual events in different locations). The fashion for taste festivals has been present in Poland for only a decade; it may be surmised that the trend will develop, as it did in Western Europe.

The appeal of taste festivals is slightly different than that of the Christmas markets. The term 'taste' used in the name serves as a pretext to discuss food in a broad context, offering the visitors not only the chance to buy a given dish, but also to take part in cooking shows (usually presented by renowned chefs familiar from the mass media), workshops and contests for children and adults, conferences, film screenings, meetings with the authors of books on culinary subjects, concerts and other attractions arranged by the festival bodies. The idea of such events falls within the scope of the term 'festival', defined as "a cyclical event composed of artistic performances (often also contests) and meetings, allowing the participants coming from different places to establish cultural, and sometimes even political contacts" [http://www.slownik-online.pl/kopalinski/0B0086BD59031BC7412565CB0079CA6D.php].

Another popular type are **thematic culinary events**. They are centred around a single ingredient (e.g. potatoes) or a specific dish (e.g. *pierogi*, *bigos*). In fact, any foodstuff may become the subject of attention; all that is needed is for its potential to be fully utilised. Field observation and materials presented in the social media (e.g. advertisements and invitations for culinary events) suggest that the initiators and organisers of such "gustatory projects" normally choose a product that is in some way connected with a given place (a commune, a town, a region), for instance:

– **a type of vegetable or fruit growing in the area** (e.g. *Święto Truskawki*, "The Feast of the Strawberry" in Buczek; *Święto Jabłka i Gruszki*, "The Feast of the Apple and the Pear" in the Raciechowice Commune; *Charsznickie Dni Kapusty*, "Charsznica Cabbage Days"; *Szparagowe Święto*; "Asparagus Festival" in Trzciel; *Winobranie*, "Grape Picking" in Zielona Góra, etc.);
– **locally bred species of animals** (*Święto Gęsi*, "The Feast of the Goose" in Biskupiec Pomorski; *Święto Karpia*, "The Festival of the Carp" in Zator; *Święto Pstrąga*, "The Festival of the Trout" in Złoty Potok, etc.);
– **characteristic dishes and products prepared in a traditional manner** (eg. *Święto ciapkapusty*[1] in Kochanowice; *Święto Ciulimu*[2] *i Czulentu* in Lelów; *Święto Kartacza*[3] in Gołdap, *Święto Kiełbasy Lisieckiej* – "The Feast of Lisiecka Sausage", etc.).

Another group that can be distinguished are the so-called **universal** products, often appearing as the *Leitmotif* of culinary festivals. The most popular vegetable is unquestionably the **potato** (the oldest potato fiesta in Poland has been organised in Mońki since 1979; other events include *Dzień Kartofla* in Chorzów, *Kartoflada i Winnetou* in Chudów, *Kartofel Fest* in Świętochłowice, *Kartoffelfest* in Cyprzanów, *Święto Ziemniaka bez GMO* in Oleśnica, *Święto Pieczonego Ziemniaka* in Tomaszów, etc.), whereas the title of the most acclaimed meat dish goes to **pork knuckle** (*Święto Golonki* in Bielsk, Częstochowa, Crackow, Szczyrk, etc.). The immense popularity of these two foods is certainly related to the significance these products have enjoyed in Polish cuisine in the last few centuries. Potatoes began to be grown in Poland on a large scale only in the latter half of the 18th century and were popularised in the reign of Augustus III (1734–1763). In the 19th century, potatoes joined soups as the basic element of everyday fare, the "trademark" of plebeian cuisine. Their suc-

1 *Ciapkapusta* is a Silesian dish of mashed potatoes and cabbage (translator's note).
2 *Ciulim* is a dish of potatoes, meat and spices similar to the Jewish cholent (translator's note).
3 *Kartacz* is a type of dumpling made of diced potatoes and stuffed with minced meat (translator's note).

cess was due to the fact that they yielded large crops, were easy to store (in clamps) and could be used for many different purposes: as food for people and fodder for animals, or for the production of alcohol. Potatoes were eaten almost daily, on weekdays and special occasions alike. They were the staple of nearly every meal and also became the basis for new, distinct dishes [Szelągowska 2008: 255]. Nowadays, the consumption of potatoes in Poland is steadily decreasing, yet they still constitute, along with red meat, the most common component in the menu of an average Pole. In the recent decade the farm yield of this vegetable has also shrunk; in 2000 it amounted to 1360 kilograms per hectare, in 2005 – 652 kilograms per hectare, while in 2010 – only 528 kilograms per hectare [*Rocznik Statystyczny Rolnictwa* 2011: 145].

The latter dish – pork knuckle (*golonka*), full of fat and rich in calories, is a delicacy mostly preferred by men. Ham hock has a high energetic value; in Poland it is often served with cooked sauerkraut or with cabbage cooked with peas, sometimes with mustard or horseradish as seasoning. In Polish cuisine, fatty and abundant meals were for a long time considered the most appropriate; the relatively high status of pork knuckle as a dish is partly a result of this thinking. The appeal of the dish is determined not only by its taste, but also by the fact that it is often consumed on special occasions, usually with friends or family. One example of such "meetings in a closed circle" are the beer feasts, organised for miners on the day of their patron Saint, Barbara [Świtała-Trybek 2011: 236].

A separate category in the typology of events centred around food is reserved for **culinary contests**. Competitions aimed at selecting the best recipe for a given dish, cake, etc. are held for example during the already mentioned taste festivals, often becoming their main event. The contests tend to focus not on rivalry, but on entertainment. The people "battling" for the title of a master chef are mayors, community leaders, school principals, in other words, important personages well-known in the local circles. Contests addressed to country clubs, whose members include professional cooks, are more serious in nature. In this case, the requirements the participants need to meet are steeper, while the jury assesses the dishes not only in terms of their taste. The majority of the

contests are related to the cultural heritage of a given region; the organisers emphasise the need to preserve and propagate knowledge about the daily fare of our ancestors.

National contests, sponsored by institutions or even the government, are slightly different in character. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Voivodeship Marshals have sponsored a contest named *Nasze Kulinarne Dziedzictwo – Smaki Regionów* (Our Cultural Heritage –Flavours of the Regions) since the year 2000. It is organised by the Polish Chamber of Traditional and Regional Products in cooperation with the Association of Polish Voivodeships. The contributing partners of the event include marshal offices and agricultural advisory centres in various regions. The aims of the project include

> the identification of regional products and their promotion, [...] preparing producers for integration into food quality systems both on the national level and within the EU. The contest also attempts to encourage inhabitants of rural areas, especially those with adverse economic conditions, to seek alternative sources of income [http://www.produktyregionalne.pl/nkd.html].

The contest is open; any maker of regional and traditional products may become a participant. It consists of two stages. At the end of the first stage – the regional finals – the jury selects winners in four categories (products of animal origin, products of plant origin, beverages and mixed products), as well as the best regional and traditional dishes. In the second stage, the National Chapter of the Contest chooses the best among the products regionally nominated for the prestigious "PERŁA" award, which is presented at the Grand Finale of the contest, during the Polagra International Trade Fair for Food in Poznań. The regional finals, usually held in institutions concerned with documenting cultural heritage (e.g. open-air museums) or in highly accessible public spaces (e.g. pedestrianised streets, market squares) make the events very popular among food lovers.

Another category on the list of culinary events are **attempts at breaking food-related records**, i.e. preparing a dish in a size (or weight, volume, length) appropriate for it to be listed in the Guinness Book of Records.

Similar events involve **record-breaking consumption** of a given dish or beverage. Such projects are usually initiated by trade companies, restaurants, confectioneries, bakeries or, less frequently, by private individuals. For example, in 2011 the warehouse chain MAKRO Cash & Carry and the restaurant **Magillo entertained the inhabitants of Cracow with an attempt to break the world record for the longest pizza (ultimately the piece measured 1 kilometre 10 metres and 28 centimetres)**; Krzysztof Górski, the chef from the Łódź restaurant Teatr Kulinarny, made the largest amount of tomato soup in the world – twice (3500 litres of hot broth in 2002 in Wisła, and 3680 litres in 2013 in Dwikozy); in 2011 in Rzeszów the owners of the confectionery **Orłowski&Ra baked the largest pyramid-shaped gateau in the world (it graced the 5th International Ecological Food and Products Fair "Ekogala" in 2011)**. Each attempt at breaking a record is attractive enough to draw crowds of people willing not only to witness the making of the unusually large dish, but also to have a taste of it.

The typology of culinary events presented above reflects the increasing interest in food expressed by various institutions, companies and private individuals who attempt to utilise its potential to organise a food-centred event aimed at the larger group of consumers possible. A brief analysis of the closest environment will reveal an increase in the number of "gustatory events". On the one hand, this signifies the existence of a trend directed at sensations and experiences connected with food, but unrelated to satisfying hunger; on the other – food is a subject with which every person is familiar and therefore constitutes relatively easy "material" that may meet the needs of the organisers of various initiatives.

Culinary events featuring food from Silesia

The Silesian Voivodeship boasts a varied cuisine, partially due to the fact that its present borders encompass not only the historic region of Upper Silesia, but also the western part of Malopolska, including the Dąbrowa Basin, the Cracow Basin (Jaworzno), the Żywiec region and the Częstochowa region in the north. In the course of the last centuries, each of these areas has developed its own culinary heritage. It must also be noted that with the development of industry the regions experienced an influx of immigrants,

who brought their own food-related customs. The present article focuses on a selected number of events centred around dishes associated with Silesian cuisine that took place between 2006 and 2013, the majority of which the author of the present article has attended.

Wodzionka and *żur* – nutritious soups at the foreground

Two soups feature prominently in the fare of Silesian people: *wodzionka* and *żur*. The former is also known as *zupa z chleba*, *brotzupa*, *sznelka*/*szelka* and, in older sources, as *kura górnicza* (literally: "miner chicken"; it was treated as a substitute for chicken broth, as it was as fortifying as chicken soup and contained both fat and garlic). *Kura górnicza* is mentioned already in documents dating from the late 18th century [Szromba-Rysowa 1978: 108]. The basic ingredients for this soup are hot water, diced stale bread, garlic, fat (traditionally tallow, nowadays usually smoked speck or butter) and salt; in modern times it is also seasoned with Maggi or a similar sauce. *Wodzionka* is considered a nutritious dish; it is often consumed together with roast potatoes (*bratkartofle*). It might be added that in the past, the soup was believed to have medicinal properties. It was recommended for the sickly and for women in childbirth (99 bowls of the soup had to be eaten "for strength"). The popularity of the dish has not wavered, especially among the middle-aged and the elderly.

Since 2007 the town of Świętochłowice holds a *wodzionka* festival, which takes place in the summer (late June/early July). The cyclical event is organised by the town authorities and staged in the local Sports and Leisure Centre "Skałka". The soup is prepared by chefs from local restaurants competing for the title of the "*Wodzionka* King". Each year the event includes a demonstration of cooking this traditional soup. *Wodzionka* also became the *Leitmotif* of the culinary event entitled *Wieczór z Wodzionkom* (An Evening with *Wodzionka*), organised in 2008 in the Municipal Culture Centre in Ruda Śląska – Bielszowice. A year earlier, this same institution held a meeting entitled *Bon na żur* (A Voucher for *Żur*), dedicated to another soup popular in Silesia and in other parts of Poland. The frequency of *żur* consumption was noticed by German scholars at the turn of the 20th century; they remarked that it was a typical dish enjoyed by Silesian

people [Szromba-Rysowa 1978: 71]. There were two traditional ways to serve this soup: *żur żeniaty*/*żonaty* (the "married" *żur*) contained potatoes (diced in large cubes) and some greaves of speck or bacon (nowadays the soup is usually cooked on smoked ribs and some sausage is added), while *żur samotny* (the "lonely" *żur*) was served with cooked potatoes and greaves on a separate plate [Sztabowa 1990: 81]. The soup is still highly popular today; in many Silesian families it is eaten on Saturdays for dinner. The Silesians are also familiar with the saying: *Z żuru chłop jak z muru* (A man who eats *żur* is [strong] as if made of brick), which is often quoted to confirm the nutritional properties of the aromatic soup.

It must be noted that the initiators of these two festivals strove to make them more attractive and paid attention not only to gustatory sensations, but also to the decoration of the interiors where the meetings were held. The rooms were deliberately furnished to resemble traditional Silesian kitchens: *bifyje* (dressers) with old porcelain stood all around, the shelves were full of small *boncloki* (clay pots for leaven), old coffee mills and pepper grinders, as well as other utilitarian dishes, the walls were adorned with tapestries with characteristic mottoes. The participants of the event were presented with little books containing the recipes for preparing *wodzionka*, *żur* and other Silesian dishes. The sampling was accompanied by a varied artistic programme. The aim of the meeting was clearly defined in the interview given by one of the organisers:

> It was to make people aware of old Silesian traditions: of what dishes were cooked, how the kitchen looked like, what was inside it. Since *wodzionka* and *żur* are the most popular soups in Silesia, we wanted to show their traditional flavour to the people. A *żur* based on leaven, which must be put away for a few days to mature, tastes differently than the soup one may buy at a huge shopping mall. Our leaven was made by an elderly, experienced cook from Sośnica. We took care to gather a team of people who still remember the old ways of cooking *żur*. We wished to consolidate and renew young people's memories of ancient practices and customs. Each of our participants was given printed cloth and little books with recipes for Silesian dishes.

> We sent our invitations to the inhabitants of the city; we were curious who would come and whether such a form would be effective. The outcome surpassed our expectations. A lot of people showed up; entire families with children. This reassured us that such events are needed, that people wish to participate in them.[4]

Żur became the centrepiece of yet another cyclical open-air festival organised in Stanica (Gliwice County) since 2010. The event, entitled *Festiwal Żuru*, features a contest for making the best *żur*, open to members of country clubs. The winning team is awarded with a Golden Ladle and the title of the First Żur-maker.

The festival of *makówki*

Makówki is a type of a dessert served on Christmas Eve. The ingredients include ground poppy seed, white bread (challah, buns or hardtack) and dried fruit [Sztabowa1990: 24–26, Świtała-Trybek, Świtała-Mastalerz 2010: 107]. An event called the Makówki Festival (*Święto Makówek*) has been organised in Czerwionka-Leszczyny since 2009, shortly before Christmas. Several dozen kilograms of the sweet delicacy are prepared by the members of country clubs from various towns and villages (Czuchów, Przegędza, Bełk, Stanowice, Dębieńsko, Książenice) and subsequently eaten by the visitors at the festival.

> We are always making one and the same type of *makówki*. We hear, when people come to our stand, they say "you've got the best ones, after all". I don't know, but that's how it is. Maybe the other ladies cook the poppy for too long and it's a bit burnt, and then it tastes different? Our *makówki* are like this: poppy in milk, butter, raisins, nuts, almonds, we add honey and maybe it is because of the honey that they say that these *makówki* are so delicious. This is our secret.[5]

4 Genowefa Gawlik, a former director of the Municipal Culture Centre in Ruda Śląska – Bielszowice, interviewed in March 2014.

5 A member of the Country Club in Przegędza, recorded in 2013.

Ladies from the country clubs also prepare other holiday specialties (gingerbread, crumb cake, *strucla* with poppy, cinnamon cookies, etc.) and various Christmas dishes (cabbage with peas, cabbage with mushrooms, fried carp, etc.); they also make folk art and craft products (holiday ornaments, table cloths). Aesthetically arranged in the stalls, these items may be purchased by the visitors at the festival. The profit is donated to charity, e.g. to finance the treatment of children with cancer.

Each year the Makówki Festival abounds in all kinds of entertainment – there are concerts and contests for children and adults, and a Christmas-tree giveaway. The exact location of the festival has been changing in recent years; due to the large number of visitors, the event is now organised in the market hall in Leszczyny.

Cakes for special occasions

Since the year 2004, the Commune Culture Centre in Zebrzydowice holds a "Regional Contest for Baked Goods for the Carnival and Easter, *dorty*, *kołocze*, *krepliki* and other cakes" (*Regionalny Konkurs Wypieków na Zapusty i Wielkanoc dorty, kołocze, krepliki i insze placki*). According to the organisers, the contest is intended to promote "our cultural heritage and to present and describe baked goods from our region, especially the ones prepared on the basis of old, disappearing recipes" [an excerpt from their information leaflet, 2012]. This "sweet festival" takes place directly before Easter and draws a large crowd of visitors. Most of the contestants are members of country clubs from the Cieszyn region of Silesia (from Ustroń-Centrum, Kończyce Małe, Zebrzydowice, Ustroń-Lipowiec, Marklowice, Cieszyn-Mnisztwo, Łączka, Zaborze) and the Czech Republic (e.g. from Bohumín, Karviná, Pétrovice), who prepare a dazzling variety of holiday dishes. The jury appraises two categories of specialties: the Easter table (baked goods: layered cakes – made of potatoes or carrots, of the *tort szlachecki* type, etc.; cakes – *babka*, *strucla* with nuts, Czech braided cakes, Easter lambs and wreaths; donuts) and the Easter basket. The festival was where the author of the present article had the opportunity to see and taste traditional *murzyn* cake, layered cake made of bread, Easter pie with cabbage, spiced carrot cake and many other regional specialties.

The *kołocz* cake a particularly important element of Silesian cuisine. Along with the popular dinner set of white dumplings, beef roulades and red cabbage, it is included in the foods served at festive occasions celebrated in a family, town or the entire region. It is a type of yeast cake baked in rectangular forms (traditionally the forms were round, hence the name *kołocz*, derived from the word *koło*, wheel). It has four basic variants: with *posypka* (crumbles) or with a filling of quark, poppy seed or apple. All of these varieties are equally valued; favouritism towards any of them results only from personal taste [Wijas-Grocholska 2013: 50].

Kołocz is a cake with a ritual significance. In Upper Silesia, custom still dictates that an engaged couple visit their relatives and acquaintances, regardless of whether they had been invited to the wedding or not, a few days before their marriage ceremony, carrying a *kołocz*. The tradition is called *chodzenie z kołoczem* (walking with *kołocz*) or *noszenie kołocza* (carrying *kołocz*). The couple calls upon the persons they or their parents feel to be worthy of being honoured [Gerlich 1984: 62; Wesołowska 1989: 234; Simonides 2007: 139]. *Noszenie kołocza* is an example of gift-giving [Maj 1986], it facilitates the emergence of basic social bonds, it is a "symbol; a sign of affection, respect, interdependence" [Zadrożyńska 2002: 55]. The act of gift-giving belongs to the so-called cultural universals [Grad 2004: 33]. As with other customs, this practice is governed by the principle of reciprocity, i.e. it is expected that the person thus endowed will return the gift of *kołocz* when they enter into matrimony themselves. The cake is also served at First Communion feasts, funeral wakes, during church fairs and harvest festivals, at Christmas and Easter.

In 2007, Silesian *kołocz* was added to the List of Traditional Products; it was also the first local specialty from the Opole region registered in the European Union as a product with a "Protected Geographical Indication" (2011). Twelve manufacturers from the Opole Voivodeship have obtained the certificate which allows them to produce the cake according to the legally registered recipe. Since 2011, *kołocz* has its own festival, namely the *Festiwal Kołocza Swojskiego* organised in mid-September in Żory. The idea for the event was put forward by Senator Adam Zdziebło, the Vice-Minister of Regional Development; it is organised by the Municipal

Culture Centre in Żory. The organisers intend "the Festival to be an event which unites generations and, above all, promotes Silesian culture and regional tradition" [excerpt from the festival poster]. The event is divided into two parts: a contest for members of country clubs from the Silesian Voivodeship (the jury appraises the cakes and the most elegant-looking stall) and a party with folk concerts, comedian performances, games for children, etc. The popularity of this culinary event may be illustrated by the fact that while in 2012 the contestants included twenty two country clubs, a year later the number had risen to thirty.

Conclusion

The constraints of the present article make it impossible to enumerate all culinary events taking place in the Silesian Voivodeship. It may certainly be assumed, however, that many of them invoke the local culinary heritage, which the organisers regard as an exceptional value which, on a larger scale, needs to be remembered, practiced and popularised [*Slow Food. Collected Thoughts on Taste…* 2001]. It is noteworthy that the drive towards presenting aspects of the "homely" culture corresponds to the trend observable in other parts of the world. The practice is aimed, among others, at preserving the ancestral legacy through the development of local initiatives. In Europe, the origins of the fascination with culinary heritage may be traced back to the 1990s, when Sweden and Denmark introduced and implemented a project of popularisation and stimulation of the development of regional culinary identity. The European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage is currently composed of 32 regions, including nine Polish ones: the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, the Pomeranian Voivodeship, Warmland – Mazuria – Powiśle, Kuyavia and Pomerania, Greater Poland, Mazovia, Lower Silesia, the Opole Voivodeship, the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship. The status of a member may be obtained by producers of primary commodities in agriculture, horticulture and fishery, food processing factories, restaurants and other gastronomic establishments, hotels, wholesalers and retailers.[6]

6 The members of the network are entitled to display the logo of Culinary Heritage, recognisable in the entire Europe (a cook's hat with a knife and a fork against blue background and the

In most cases, culinary events spring from local and regional initiatives triggered by the social demand for such entertainment (as may be surmised from the large number of participants and visitors). They combine cultural and culinary enterprises and are perceived as a type of entertainment, i.e. a pleasant way to spend free time. "In the collective view, entertainment is regarded as a luxurious addition to the plainness of everyday life; it is synonymous with affluent, stabilised life in which there is time for small pleasures, for 'normality'" [Falkowska 1992: 201]. In the recent years, the "gustatory events" have been increasingly present in that "normality"; they allow people to fulfil their needs. Due to the positive associations which it evokes, food draws attention, intrigues, engages, and ultimately confirms the well-known truth that

> Essentially, people have always consumed food in the company of others; it was hardly ever done in solitude. Even in offices, boarding schools, eateries, company canteens or homes, other people are encountered during a meal. [...] In feasting, people have used the mundane action of eating and culinary pleasures for social purposes, and – through this – for family, relaxation or even sexual purposes, or to manage economic and political matters [Zwoliński 2006: 326].

On the other hand, the issue of the authenticity of dishes and the phenomena that surround them cannot be overlooked. Questions about the authenticity of a observed or experienced phenomenon dominated the humanities in the second half of the 20th century. Never before had the striving for authenticity been so pronounced. It is certain that the culinary realm belongs to the category of phenomena subject to various methods of **increasing its authenticity** and, as a result, their **attractiveness**. As Anna Wieczorkiewicz concludes,

> the culinary heritage has a different quality that the heritage embodied by material relics of the past. It is strictly related to cultural life, incorporated

inscription "Culinary Heritage"), thus reassuring the customers of the quality of their service. Owing to the initiative organised by the appropriate institutions, culinary heritage trails have begun to be laid. See: http://www.culinary-heritage.com/index.asp?sprakid=4#.U3o94ShNjhs.

> in social practices, susceptible to external influence and to innovation introduced within a given group. Its authenticity or originality is, in fact, problematic, just as the issue of the property rights of a given region to certain elements of the culinary tradition [Wieczorkiewicz 2004: 205].

Yet references to ancestral heritage and culinary traditions are so common nowadays that

> even if the views on the culinary matters, and the dishes themselves, are not truly the same as they used to be, they are still regarded and perceived as traditional simply (and solely) due to the fact that they are derived from the past [Karpińska 2013: 326–327].

Thus, only time will tell which new forms of culinary fascinations related to tradition we might still experience and observe.

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REVIEW ARTICLES

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The Taste Remembered. On the Extraordinary Testimony of the Women from Terezín

Abstract: The article presents an attempt to combine *food studies* (also termed the anthropology of food) with scholarly reflection regarding memory. The analysis focuses on the book entitled *In Memory's Kitchen. A Legacy from the Women of Terezin* [ed. Cara de Silva 2006], containing recipes for Jewish dishes written down by women from the Teresienstadt ghetto. But some dozen recipes that have survived do not make it a cookbook, which is essentially meant to be functional. It is more of a remembrance, a testament, and also a source of knowledge of culture at a given point in time. It is also a testimonial document. Recipes collected by de Silva tell much about their authors. They define their roles as wives and mothers. In addition, the Terezin notes point to a culinary heritage, the religious principles of food preparation and the social and economical conditions that shaped the culinary preferences and the diets of women locked in the ghetto. The article demonstrates that the actions of preparing and consuming food are a constantly repeated practice, which is connected in a network of relationships with other practices. This practice it is anchored in the everyday life, embedded in the family's biography and fused with childhood memories. Food is presented as a sign of identity, the social bond and the community of family and friends, and also as a gift that serves to uphold these ties.

Key words: Theresienstadt, food and memory, recipes, heritage.

Terezín is the name of a small town and a military fortress situated ca. 60 km north of Prague. The construction of the fortress began in 1790 by order of the emperor of Austria Joseph II, known for his many reforms. Named after the emperor's mother Maria Theresa, the stronghold had a defensive purpose. However, it lost its strategic importance after 1879,

when a secret treaty was signed between Austria and Prussia. The fortress was never under siege. In the mid-19th century it was transformed into a jail for political prisoners. In December 1914 three members of the Young Bosnia movement responsible for the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo were incarcerated there. World War II brought the darkest time in the history of Terezín, since in 1939 the town became a part of the German-occupied Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The urban structure of Terezín was composed of two elements: a sizable walled town and the so-called Little Fortress incorporated into the system of the walls. In 1940, a transit camp (Familienlager Theresienstadt) was set up in the citadel. It held members of the resistance and the elite, priests and war prisoners. The majority of the inmates were Czech, but there were also some citizens of Poland, Yugoslavia, Italy, France, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. In the course of its existence the camp processed more than 32,000 people. Most of them did not stay long, but were sent on to concentration camps, e.g. Auschwitz-Birkenau. The camp claimed 2600 lives; most victims died as a result of poor sanitation, hunger and disease.

The Little Fortress was the stage for two overlapping tales: first it held the heroes of the liberation movements of the Spring of Nations, and then the prisoners of World War II. The entire compound spreads over the area of several hectares and comprises low, sturdy buildings of red brick arranged in a symmetrical polygonal shape. To the left of the entrance there is a gate crowned with the inscription *Arbeit macht Frei*, leading to the main camp grounds. During the war, this part contained office buildings, the perpetually overcrowded cells, a model washroom (built to prove that the camp maintained a high standard of hygiene), an infirmary, a dispensary and a solitary confinement cell. Behind a low gate leading beyond the primary walls there is the execution ground, where prisoners were shot without trial, with a gallows that was used only once. It must be mentioned that the compound contained also a cinema for the personnel, a swimming pool, military barracks for the SS, rooms for the camp commandants and jail guards, and workshops where the prisoners worked. The furthest courtyard to the east, built by the Nazis in 1943, was surrounded by group and solitary cells.

For three years after the war, the Little Fortress served as a prison for war criminals and as an evacuation camp for Germans expelled from Czechoslovakia. Later it was used as barracks for Czechoslovakian soldiers. For a long time the existence of the camp was hidden from the general public.

The other part of Terezín, that is the walled town, has a different history. In the 19th century, it served as a garrison town with some 7,000 inhabitants. Heinrich Himmler ordered the town to be converted into a Jewish ghetto (Ghetto Theresienstadt) in November 1941. Jews, initially brought there only from Bohemia and Moravia, and later also from Germany and other German-occupied territories – the Netherlands, Denmark, and in the final stage of the ghetto's existence also from Slovakia and Hungary, were accommodated in the former barracks. Very soon there was not enough room for newcomers, so in 1942 the non-Jewish residents of the town were evicted and the entire area was converted into a ghetto. The internal affairs of the ghetto were managed by a Jewish "self-government", which had some, albeit very narrow and constrained, authority over selected aspects of everyday life. This made it possible to organise a limited mutual-help network and equally limited education system for children and to create some religious and cultural life for the community. Although men did not live together with women and children, it was possible for family members to meet. The inhabitants of the ghetto were allowed to keep their hand luggage and wear civilian clothing. They did not have to shave their heads and could receive letters and packages.

For foreign relation purposes and in national propaganda, Theresienstadt was presented as an "exemplary ghetto", the model for a new type of a Jewish settlement: a family camp. The Western public was to receive a very clear message that Jews were not being mistreated; that they could work as usual, send letters at the post office, do shopping, attend concerts. The delegation of the International Red Cross that inspected Theresienstadt in 1944 noticed neither the overcrowded dormitories where Jews were dying of exhaustion due to the ruthless work and starvation, nor the side track built in 1942–1943 and used to transport Jews to death camps situated in Poland and Germany, or the fact that the park, the children's

playgrounds and the cafés were simply elements of a purely propagandist campaign of the so-called beautification and that they were very far removed from the awful living conditions in the ghetto. Theresienstadt was the stage set for propaganda movies that expertly handled the carefully manufactured props – one of the buildings acquired a signboard with the inscription "School". Since the interior featured neither desks nor blackboards, another signboard was hung next to it. It read: "Winter break".

The final weeks of the ghetto's existence were tragic. While food delivery became scarce and irregular, Theresienstadt had to accommodate 15,000 new prisoners arriving on the so-called Death Marches; they were evacuees from camps towards which the front line had advanced. On 3rd May 1945, Theresienstadt came under the control of the Red Cross; the inmates were finally freed on 8th May, when Soviet troops entered the city. In the four years of the ghetto's existence, 87,000 Jews had been transported from it. Less then four thousand of them survived the war [see e.g. Brenner 2009; Lederer 1983; Troller 1991].

Many members of the Jewish community were well aware that the ghetto in Terezín was only the first stage in the chain of atrocities that awaited them. Their only weapon, and a means to maintain some semblance of normality, was art. Literary works, poetry, drawings, theatrical plays and music scores created by the prisoners have survived to become an extraordinary testimony of their experience. Documents, notes, diaries, letters and chronicles saved and discovered by a lucky chance are, to paraphrase the title of Ruth Thomson's book, "voices from Terezín" [Thompson 2013]. They contain unique stories that show the strength of human will [see e.g. Dicker-Brandeis 1991; Greek 1978; *I Never Saw Another Butterfly…* 1994; Karas 1985; Schwertfeger 1989; *We Are Children Just the Same…* 1995; Willoughby 2003; Wix 2010; Zapruder 2002].[1]

One of these is the story of a Czech Jewish girl from Brno, Dina Gottliebova. Formerly a student in the academy of fine arts, she painted Snow White and the Seven Dwarves on the wall of a barrack in Terezín. Her

1 A sizable collection of documents related to the functioning of the Terezín ghetto and the live of its inhabitants may be found in the museum in Terezín, which is also a memorial site, Památník Terezín [http://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/cz].

life became the subject of Lidia Ostałowska's documentary entitled *Farby wodne* (Watercolours) [Ostałowska 2011]. Dina was transported from Theresienstadt to the concentration camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau. There, initially ordered to paint numbers on dormitory walls, she became a portrait painter instead. She was commissioned by Dr Mengele to record the faces of the "gypsy crossbreeds" on whom he was conducting research. After the liberation of Auschwitz, her watercolours came to a young girl named Eva, a Hungarian Jewess. The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum bought all these paintings from her in 1963. A few years later their author was discovered. Dina Gottliebova had survived the war and was living in the USA married to Art Babbitt, a famous artist from the Disney Studio.

Another artist that came to live in Theresienstadt was Helga Hošková, a very talented twelve-year-old from Prague, who was transported to the ghetto with her parents. Helga had been drawing and painting from early childhood, so it comes as no surprise that she began to record the reality of the lives of Czech Jews, following in this her father's advice: "Paint what you see" [Veissova 2013: 4]. She abandoned imaginary childish subjects and started a unique chronicle, drawing in her school notebooks with pencil, crayons and paints which she managed to smuggle in or get hold of later. She painted people queuing for bread, the primitive washrooms, a girl suffering from tuberculosis, the crowd at the surgery. One of the drawings shows the birthday of Francka, a friend whom Helga knew from before the war. Subsequent pictures show both girls as small children in 1929, then together on a bunk bed in 1943, then finally walking with baby strollers in 1957. Alas, the last scene was only a wish; Francka died in Auschwitz before her fifteenth birthday.

In Theresienstadt, it was forbidden to take photographs or paint genre scenes, yet the Germans did not notice what the slight teenager was doing. In September 1944, it was announced that 5000 men were to be sent away to build a new ghetto. A few weeks later Helga and her mother also left the camp. At the last moment the girl managed to give her diary and her drawings to her uncle, who walled them up in one of the barracks. Helga went through three camps in succession: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Freiberg and Mauthausen. She had no way to draw anymore there, but she

survived to become a celebrated painter. Many years later her memoirs and drawings were published as *Helga's Diary. A Young Girl's Account of Life in a Concentration Camp* [Veissova 2013]. Helga Hošková explained in the foreword that although the diary was written in the language of a child, full of mistakes, lengthy and extremely naive, she specifically asked for no editing corrections to be made, since any alterations would be to destroy the authenticity of her tale, which she considered to be of the utmost importance.

Another book written with the emphasis on authenticity is *In Memory's Kitchen. A Legacy from the Women of Terezín* [2006]. It contains recipes for Jewish dishes. It is not an ordinary cookbook, however, but a unique testimony created by women from the Theresienstadt ghetto. Rona Kaufman states that "what we […] know about these recipes is that they are the recipes of ghost – women who are no longer alive, and were barely alive when they wrote, but who speak to us through the language of food" [Kaufman 2004: 427].

This rediscovered tale of Terezín women features one important character, Mina Pachter, who was sent to Theresienstadt in 1942 at the age of 70. She died of hunger and malnutrition two years later, on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, one of the most important Jewish holidays. Mina's daughter, Anny Stern, managed to escape to Palestine with her husband and their son. It was Mina Pachter who collected the recipes written down by the women in the ghetto. Aware that she was about to die, she asked one of her friends to take the recipes to her daughter in Palestine. The man survived, but was unable to find Anny. On his deathbed he entrusted this unusual task to another person. In 1969 in her Manhattan apartment Anny Stern received a phone call from a stranger who told her: "I have a package for you from your mother" [*In Memory's Kitchen…* 2006: xxv]. "After all those years, it was like her hand was reaching out to me from long ago", recalls Stern [*In Memory's Kitchen…* 2006: xvii].

Mina's daughter decided to publish the recipes. She described the project to no less than thirty-five publishing houses, none of which seemed to be interested. The editors and publishers did not know how to market such a book and were appalled at the prospect of combining the cookbook

genre with the traumatic stories of the Holocaust.[2] Finally, the book, edited by Cara da Silva, was published under the title *In Memory's Kitchen. A Legacy from the Women of Terezín* [2006].

The inmates of ghettos and concentration camps were starving to death, and Theresienstadt was no exception. Hunger was a permanent feature of life; thoughts of food became an obsession. In her book *Women of Theresienstadt. Voices from a Concentration Camp*, Ruth Schwertfeger writes: "Food, memories of it, missing it, craving it, dreaming of it, in short, the obsession of food colours all the Theresienstadt memoirs" [Schwertfeger 1989: 38]. The author cites one of the survivors, who admitted: "We had the largest imagination about what we would cook. I don't think I ever became so good a cook as I was in my mouth" [Schwertfeger 1989: 38].

The women writing their recipes down were dying of hunger; they knew they would never be given another opportunity to prepare or eat any of the dishes they learnt to cook from their mothers and grandmothers. They hoped, however, that their legacy would survive in these recipes and that their grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be able to find it a source of pride and say: "This is a strudel made according to my grandmother's recipe". Thus, the culinary recipes are an attempt at salvaging a fraction of the atmosphere of the pre-war household, and also at preserving certain skills. They contain the memories of happier days and lavishly laid tables, as well as the dream to be able to feed their families once more; they are an expression of love of food and of the people for whom the dishes were made. The recipes for chocolate cake, plum strudel, goose breast and other dishes were jotted down on scraps of paper, wood bark, onion and potato peels.

Rona Kaufman suggests how this book should be read:

> I tend to see these recipes not as useful, practical guides but as testimony. I'm tempted to call these recipes *sacred text* – therefore untouchable, unusable. I want these recipes to be as sacred as other texts in Judaism – the

2 At least several books dedicated to eating and cooking in the time of the Holocaust have been published so far [see: *Recipes Remembered…* 2001; *Holocaust Survivor Cookbook…* 2007].

> *Torah* in the ark, prayer scrolls in mezuzahs – texts that are meant to guide the everyday certainly but are always encased behind protective and ornamental shields. Read and honor – but do not touch [Kaufman 2004: 428].

The several dozen recipes included in the publication do not make it into a cookbook designed to be functional. It is rather a memory, a testimony, a statement of strength and will to live, as well as a source of information on the culture of a given period. This is a publication that should be placed in the *Judaica* section of a bookshop, not among books on the culinary art. In his introduction to *In Memory's Kitchen…*, the director of the United States Holocaust Research Institute Michael Berenbaum wrote:

> This work – unlike conventional cookbooks – is not to be savored for its culinary offerings but for the insight it gives us in understanding the extraordinary capacity of the human spirit to transcend its surroundings, to defy dehumanization, and to dream of the past and of the future [*In Memory's Kitchen…* 2006: xvi].

Shoshana Felman referring to Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* emphasises that a testimony – and the recipes from Theresienstadt may be perceived as one – means responsibility for the truth. She adds, however, that sometimes providing an inside testimony is impossible.

> The inside cannot testify on its own because it cannot speak its trauma in a language the outside can hear or understand, because as the witness has been deemed other, all sounds are heard as "mere noise". […] It is impossible to testify from the inside because the inside has no voice. […] The outside, however, cannot testify because it cannot know the truth of the trauma. But the two can work together – must work together – to articulate the horror. The inside and outside need to be set in motion and in dialogue with one another. […] Testimony from within needs a framework to be heard as testimony [Felman 1992: 231–232].

De Silva and Berenbaum wish for their book to be a document and a testimony, which is why they added a foreword and many footnotes. Presented

without the additional framework of its context, the testimony would not be understandable; it would not give the trauma its proper name. It would not speak: "This is what happened". The reader needs a guide that will indicate, explain, delineate the background. If it is so, however, who controls the assigning and deciphering of meanings? Wolfgang Iser suggests that in every case the readers themselves negotiate between the ideas conveyed by the text and the realm of their own knowledge and views; it is what he calls the *wandering viewpoint*. But the act of reading always occurs on the terms set forth by the text [Iser 1978]. The editors working with the culinary recipes from Theresienstadt tried to keep the translations literal, they did not interfere with the original wording or correct grammatical mistakes, and placed all explanatory comments in brackets.

Thus, the recipes collected by de Silva indicate much about their authors. They define their roles as wives and mothers. In Jewish culture a woman is perceived as a guardian of the household, who protects tradition and teaches her children about the principles of culinary arts and the laws of *kashrut*. The notes from Terezín also contain suggestions pertaining to the culinary heritage and the social and cultural conditions that shaped the tastes and the menus designed by the women imprisoned in the ghetto. One of the most important aspects in the life of orthodox Jews (somewhat less emphasised by the more progressive communities) were the numerous dietary laws. Meals had a religious significance and as such had to be preceded and followed by ritual actions and gestures. According to Alan Unterman, recipes specifying the dietary norms constituted an element of human life in general, of the transformation of a human being into "a sacred work of God" [Unterman 1999].

As a result of living in a diaspora and constant wandering, Jewish cuisine adopted many features and products known from the cuisine of other nations. Hence the recipes of the Theresienstadt women include surprisingly exotic combinations of flavours and spices, but also qualities common for most types of Jewish fare, especially dishes served by the Ashkenazi Jews from Northern Europe: the liberal use of certain spices (nutmeg, cloves, saffron, caraway), frequent use of onion and garlic, employing poultry fat as a substitute for the non-kosher (*treif*) lard, adding

sugar or honey to meat or fish dishes, and a preference for certain preparation methods such as grinding or grating. Not all dishes included in the book comply with the laws of *kashrut*. Their authors may have come from Moravia or Bohemia, as the Jewish communities living in these regions at the time were the ones most assimilated with the local population.

The practice of cooking constitutes a complex nexus of circumstances and objective data, where necessity meets flexibility, resulting in an unpredictable and constantly changing amalgam which spurs the invention of new tactics, the creation of new pathways and the individualisation of methods of action. Each of the women writing down her recipes undoubtedly had a repertoire of specialities, prized dishes for special occasions and ones that she herself liked to eat; each had her own set of skills, culinary superstitions, failures, tricks and routines. It is difficult not to interpret their writings in a broader context, since preparing any dish on the basis of the recipes would be challenging indeed. Some ingredients are missing and the preparation procedures are often given in the wrong order. In her recipe for *Gefüllte Eier* Mina Pachter writes simply: "Let fantasy run free" [*In Memory's Kitchen…* 2006: 52].

Making Milk-Cream Strudel according to the recipe provided would prove impossible, because the book never mentions flour. The imprecise formula for making a Linzer Torte is clearly directed at people with much culinary experience:

> Milk-Cream Strudel
> Filling: ¼ liter cream, 2 eggs yolks, 6 decagrams blanched, ground almonds, sugar to taste, 1 roll soaked in milk, 4 decagrams butter, all beaten. 2 whites snow [stiffly beaten egg whites]. Sprinkle with raisins, bake lightly. Pour over sugared milk. Let it evaporate. Bake in casserole [baking dish] [*In Memory's Kitchen…* 2006: 59].

> Linzer Torte
> 20 spoon flour, 8 spoons sugar, 4 spoons vinegar, 2 eggs, 10 decagrams margarine, 1 [packet] baking powder, some milk. Fill to your liking [*In Memory's Kitchen…* 2006: 60].

The non-kosher recipe for a goose might be a memory from the times of freedom and prosperity:

> Breast of Goose. Pommern Style
> From a heavy goose, take [remove] the beilik [breast]. Cut the meat from both sides, rub it with mashed garlic, some salt, ½ half sugar cube, a little ginger. Pound it [the mixture] in well with [your] bare hand and let it stand. Now take the nice skin, place the [seasoned] beilik on the skin and tightly sew the goose skin around. Put it into the glazed earthenware pot, sprinkle it with a little salt, potassium and saltpeter. Cover the breast with a plate and weights and let it lay in the bring for 4 weeks, turning it daily. Give it to the selcher [pork butcher/sausage maker] for 2 days [to put in] the smoker. One can also bring the goose breast to the pork meat butcher and let him cure and smoke it until it is nicely brown [*In Memory's Kitchen…* 2006: 29].

The following recipe probably comes from a family that cherished tradition:

> Cheap Real Jewish Bobe
> Make a plain loose yeast dough. When it is risen, place dough on a noodle board. Roll it out. Grate several potatoes onto dough, sprinkle with a lot of sugar and cinnamon, about 2-3 spoons cold goose fat. Fold and roll dough exactly 3 times. Put [half] in cake [pan]. Top it half with prune butter and half with a good poppy seed filling. Top tightly with dough cover. Spread it with fat and bake it in a medium hot oven [*In Memory's Kitchen…* 2006: 55].

Food is a symbol of identity, a sign of social ties, the bonds between family members and friends. It is also a gift that maintains there relations. Planning meals, preparing food, sharing recipes, feeding others – these were the focal points of the women's lives before they came to the Terezín ghetto. For this reason alone, the form of the testimony they left behind should not come as a surprise.

Luce Giard writes about restoring and cultivating the memory of tastes and culinary experiences in the following words:

> Perhaps that is exactly what I am seeking in my culinary joys: the reconstruction, through gestures, tastes, and combinations, of a *silent legend*,

> as if, by dint of merely living in it with my hands and body, I would succeed in restoring the alchemy of such a history, in meriting its secret of language, as if, from this stubborn stomping around on Mother Earth the truth of the word would come back to me one day. […] As long as one of us preserves your nourishing knowledge, as long as the recipes of your tender patience are transmitted from hand to hand and from generation to generation, a fragmentary yet tenacious memory of your life itself will live on. The sophisticated ritualization of basic gestures has thus become more dear to me than the persistence of words and texts, because body techniques seem better protected from the superficiality of fashion, and also, a more profound and heavier material faithfulness is at play there, a way of being-in-the-world and making it one's home [de Certeau, Giard, Mayol 1998: 154].

The activity of preparing and consuming food is a practice consistently repeated, forming a net of intertwined relations with other practices, rooted in everyday life, incorporated into family biography, linked to childhood memories. As Giard continues further on,

> This women's work has them proliferate into "gesture trees" (Rilke), into Shiva goddesses with a hundred arms, who are both clever and thrifty: the rapid and jerky back and forth movement of the whisk whipping egg whites, hands that slowly knead pastry dough with a symmetrical movement, a sort of restrained tenderness. A woman's worry: "Will the cake be moist enough?"; a woman's observation: "These tomatoes are not very juicy, I'll have to add some water while they cook". A transmission of knowledge: "My mother (or aunt or grandmother) always told me to add a drop of vinegar to grilled pork ribs". A series of techniques [*tours de main*] that one must observe before being able to imitate them: "To loosen a crêpe, you give the pan a sharp rap, like this" [de Certeau, Giard, Mayol 1998: 157].

Women who cook have a memory for gestures and consistency; the ones that wrote their recipes down in the ghetto were no exception. Such women can estimate the time of preparation and cooking, arrange the dishes in the right serving order and decide which one should be heated at which moment in order to be warm when placed on the table. They rely on their

senses; rather than following the prescribed baking time, they prefer to pay attention to the smell exuding from the oven or observe the look of the crust. Their ingenuity allows them to reuse the leftovers and employ mini-strategies if they suddenly find themselves without some ingredient.

> Every alimentary custom makes up a minuscule crossroads of histories. In the "invisible everyday", under the silent and repetitive system of everyday servitudes that one carries out by habit, the mind elsewhere, in a series of mechanically executed operations whose sequence follows a traditional design dissimulated under the mask of the obvious, there piles up a subtle montage of gestures, rites, and codes, of rhythms and choices, of received usage and practiced customs. In the private space of domestic life, far from worldly noises, the Kitchen Women Nation's voice murmurs that it is done this way because it has always been done more or less like that […] [de Certeau, Giard, Mayol 1998: 171].

The testimony of the Theresienstadt women preserves also the memory of gestures which constituted the system of culinary practices observed in the kitchen. Such gestures live and die. They never last longer than their usefulness maintained owing to the re-actualisations made by their users and to their interrelations. Such actions are repeated only as long as they are deemed effective.

> Ordinary language is unambiguous on this point: one does it that way "because we've always done it that way", besides, "you have to do it that way", and finally, "you have to follow custom". Deserted by the strength of belief, abandoned by necessity, the technical gesture withers and dies [de Certeau, Giard, Mayol 1998: 203] – the authors concludes.

Culinary legacy has a distinctively different quality that the heritage embodied by material objects of the past. It is tightly bound to cultural life, incorporated in social practices, susceptible to external influences and to innovations emerging within the given group. Writing on the subject of authenticity and originality of dietary traditions, David Bell and Gill Valentine note that

> The history of any nation's diet is the history of the nation itself, with food fashions, fads and fancies mapping episodes of colonialism and migration, trade and exploration, cultural exchange and boundary-making [Bell, Valentine 1997: 168–169].

Hence, they point out, the equation mark placed between food an nationalism is a fallacy, and the concept of "national foods" is a fiction. Even when considered typical to a given locale, food is always a sign of motion, mutation and the mixing of peoples and customs. This also relates, naturally, to family culinary traditions, recipes passed down and inherited, as well as preferences. The landscapes of flavours a person experiences and stores in his/her memory are therefore full of disorder, smaller and greater revelations and disappointments. They do, however, influence the choices and decisions made in later life. Gaston Bachelard wrote a somewhat poetic account of the rehabilitation of the sense of taste, arguing that a very important part of sensual education and the development of motor functions takes place in the kitchen:

> To remove a child from the kitchen is to condemn them to exile distancing them from dreams they will never know. The oneiric value of food awakens during the process of its preparation […]. Happy is he who as a child wandered around the kitchen [Bachelard 2002: 86].

The scientific discourse too, has responded to this assumption. In her essay on the so-called "lower" senses, Mădălina Diaconu offers a detailed analysis of experiencing and remembering taste:

> Already the incompleteness of the haptic, olfactory, and gustatory representations suggests the importance of time in the experience of these senses. The memory of haptic qualities, odors, and flavors is mostly nonverbal and diffuse, imbued with affective impressions and synaesthesias. We recollect odors and flavors spontaneously and involuntarily, as a blissful kairós, or only at the end of an often long and painful process of deliberate search. It is well-known that the modern Western philosophy has held memory to be one of the key-factors in the constitution of the personal

> identity (or rather, following Ricoeur, "ipséité"). Intentional remembrance connects the actual stimulus to the past moment when we have felt something similar, finding a place for it in the subject's continuous life-thread. To be a self means to become one, by identifying the present ego with/as the old one, thus by bringing together dispersed biographical episodes into a coherent story. On the contrary, in spontaneous recollection the past itself returns, as if the temporal strata (Schichten) of the ego were suddenly levelled and condensed into a story (Ge-schichte). A single scene concentrates one's life essence, time flows no more, but is somehow overcome (aufgehoben) [Diaconu 2003: 5].

The memory of taste is also mentioned by Kelvin Low:

> Oftentimes, the study of social memories divides its approach based on social groupings, such as working class memories, collective memories, gender memories, or on individual life histories/stories, usually with a concern for traumatic memories such as the Holocaust, or the Second World War. Instead of locating social memories through such groupings, or events-based trajectories, my works ruminate on the role of smell and taste in one's recollection of the past, and how such recollections may have bearings on one's experiences in the present. Hence, I add to the plethora of social memory and emotion scholarship by including the sensorial aspects linked with one's remembrance of the past, which is often neglected in these studies. In this way, I argue that the study of remembering the past, needs to locate the embodiedness in which the past is being recollected. The embodiedness alerts us to the ways in which our feelings and bodily sensations, generated in the past, help to interpret that past [Low 2013: 669].

David E. Sutton's book *Remembrance of Repasts: an Anthropology of Food and Memory* constitutes an attempt to combine the study of food with scholarly reflection on memory and the mechanisms of recollection. Sutton argues that this area is a fertile field for ethnographic studies and lists a number of significant aspects of marrying food with memory.

> Food has structure in both quotidian and ritual context – across days, weeks, and years – which facilitates remembering [Sutton 2001: 28–29].

> The structure and repetition of meals aid in remembering the past and contribute to prospective memory […] [Sutton 2001: 19]. Food memories constitute a form of historical consciousness [Sutton 2001: 26].[3]

Flavours are a key the lack of which would hinder the unlocking of the door to the past; they resemble the "seeds of lasting sentiment" [Tuan 1977: 143]. Once entwined in everyday life, unquestioned and unrealised, they come back suddenly, bringing with them the experiences, contexts and situations imprinted in a person's memory. This "sensory nostalgia", as Kelvin Low [2013] puts it, appears unexpectedly. A sudden stimulant, for example the taste of yeast cake, reinforced by the passage of time, makes it possible to recognise the value and the significance of the memory it evokes. Most often the stimuli are the tastes of childhood: cream horns sold by a friendly, round-faced lady at a funfair; juice bought during Sunday walks on the main street; unripe wild gooseberries picked straight from the bushes growing near the school building. Childhood memories, made of the coincidence of sensations, events, people and objects, are also filled with flavours. Thus constructed is "the vast structure of recollection" remarked on by Proust. A seemingly insignificant shard of memory, the taste of a biscuit, may become the starting point for a detailed vision of days gone by, for capturing their special colour:

> And suddenly the memory appears before me. The taste was that of the little morsel of madeleine that on Sunday mornings at Combray (because on those mornings I did not go out before the time for mass), when I went to say good morning to her in her bedroom, my Aunt Léonie used to give me, dipping it first in her own cup of real or of lime-blossom tea. [...] And just as the Japanese amuse themselves by filling a porcelain bowl with water and steeping in it little bits of paper which until then are without character or form, but, the moment they become wet, stretch themselves and bend, take on color and distinctive shape, become flowers or houses or people, permanent and recognizable, so in that moment all the flowers in our garden and in M. Swann's park, and the water lilies on the Vivonne and the good folk of the village and their little dwellings and the parish

3 See also Holtzman [2006].

> church and the whole of Combray and of its surroundings, taking their proper shapes and growing solid, sprang into being, town and gardens alike, from my cup of tea [Proust 2013: 53–54].

The memories of sensory experience may seem trivial; they may be soothing, but sometimes bring back something unwanted or disliked; they are usually highly emotional. After the people had died, the objects had been destroyed, the places had vanished and not much is left of one's childhood, only the sounds, smells and flavours – more fragile and less material, but more lasting and more faithful – will keep reminding us of that time. The flavours of childhood allow us to return to the good, tasty and happy days, when Mother used to call us for dinner. Perhaps this was the thought that inspired the women writing down their favourite recipes in the Terezín ghetto.

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Researchers of Culture Confronted with the "Treasures of Culinary Heritage" in Upper Silesia as Described in the Most Recent Cookbooks

Abstract: Considering that in the last few years culinary matters have become a fashionable topic, the author is making a preliminary attempt at assessing many myths and authoritative opinions related to it. With respect to this aim, she has reviewed utilitarian literature, to which culinary handbooks certainly belong ("Concerning the studies of comestibles in culture"). In this context, she has singled out cookery books pertaining to only one region, Upper Silesia. This region has a complicated history, being an ethnic borderland, where after the 2nd World War, the local population of Silesians acquired new neighbours: repatriates from the Eastern Borderlands annexed by the Soviet Union, settlers from central and southern Poland, as well as former emigrants coming back from the West ("'The treasures of culinary heritage' in cookery books from Upper Silesia"). The author discusses several Silesian cookery books which focus only on the specificity of traditional Silesian cuisine, the Silesians' curious conservatism and attachment to their regional tastes and culinary customs, their preference for some products and dislike of other ones. From the well-provided shelf of Silesian cookery books, she has singled out two recently published, unusual culinary handbooks by the Rev. Father Prof. Andrzej Hanich (*Opolszczyzna w wielu smakach. Skarby dziedzictwa kulinarnego. 2200 wypróbowanych i polecanych przepisów na przysmaki kuchni domowej*, Opole 2012; *Smaki polskie i opolskie. Skarby dziedzictwa kulinarnego. 2500 wypróbowanych i polecanych przepisów na przysmaki kuchni domowej*, Opole 2014), which have become a culinary bestseller in Upper Silesia. The author perceives these books as an interesting and unusual example of a monothematic "collective lecture" pertaining to the multi-cultural character of Opole Silesia, the noticeable foreign influences and the globalisation of culinaries. In her opinion, these books constitute a very rich set of materials pertaining to the present-day culture of consumption in Poland, with a discernible emphasis on Opole Silesia.

Key words: food, culinary handbooks, Upper Silesia, Opole Silesia.

Introduction

Since the emergence of our species, an interest in food has been one of the most basic human initiatives and needs. The progressive development of culinary recipes which introduced a degree of variety into the diet has also been the *conditio sine qua non* for human life and development. The more or less dynamic modifications in this respect are directly linked to changes in social customs and culture; they are also dependent on the geography, economy and demographic of a given region, as well as on its political situation. In recent years, many scholars have conducted research into things culinary, making them the subject of monographs and popular science publications; this must be emphasised, as it is of crucial importance to the present analysis. The authors of such works, which may often be regarded as interdisciplinary, are recruited from specialists in the humanities and social sciences, which category, in turn, includes ethnographers (ethnologists), experts in culture studies and folklore studies, as well as historians. As a result, the subject is discussed not only at scientific conferences, but also at culinary fairs. One popular aspect of such activity is the unprecedented development of one specific type of literature: utilitarian publications such as culinary guidebooks. Popular initiatives brought about an unparalleled increase in the number of culinary vernissages on national, regional and local level, often partially financed by the European Union. Various culinary events are organised with the intention of promoting the given commune, county or region in terms of its "cultural and regional heritage".[1] In describing the dominant position of culinary issues in modern culture, the numerous food-themed internet

1 Some of the cuisine-related events held in only one region, i.e. Upper Silesia, are "Dzień Kartofla" (Potato Day), "Kartoflada" (Potato Feast), "Święto Pstrąga" (Trout Fête), "Święto Czekolady" (Chocolate Fête), "Od żymloka do krupnioka" (celebration of regional blood sausages) [for more, see Świtała-Trybek 2007]; the "Smaki Śląskie" Festival; the "Opolskie Smaki" Festival; food stations organised by bloggers from Opole Silesia; Easter fairs in Silesian open-air museums; "Nasze Kulinarne Dziedzictwo – Smaki Regionów" (Our Culinary Heritage – Regional Tastes); "Kiermasze Jesiennych Smaków Domowych" (Home-made Autumnal Food Fairs) and "Wojewódzka Wystawa Stołów Wielkanocnych" (Voivodeship Easter Table Exhibition) organised by the Silesian Countrywomen's Association / Verain Schlesicher Landfrauen).

blogs and television programmes must also be mentioned.[2] The instigators of the above initiatives in Poland – i.e. not only scholars, but also cultural managers, master chefs and more or less talented amateurs – create an optimistic and colourful picture of the interdisciplinary interest in the culinary realm in modern science and culture. A special place should perhaps be awarded to interdisciplinary monographic studies on the role of the feast, and feasting, in the culture of the Polish gentry and in modern culture [see: *Oczywisty urok biesiadowania* 1998; *Smak biesiady*… 2000; *Miejsca biesiadne*… 2007]. Attempts to promote the so-called new gastronomy are an example of a type of research already fashionable in Western Europe and the newest manifestation of such pioneering initiatives in Poland. The interest that experts in cultural studies take in the new methods of food production, the quality of meat and cold cuts, the need to limit the use of nitrites and nitrates in meat preservation and other related issues, and the resultant consultations with veterinarians, are certainly worthy of special attention [Gomóła 2011].

Concerning the studies of comestibles in culture

In the context of such unambiguous preference towards culinary issues in science and in modern culture, one finds it difficult to agree with the criticism raised by scholars who claim that "thus far neither ethnographers nor historians of culture in Poland have taken the issue of food seriously enough to make it the subject of a thorough analysis, even though such research has already been conducted abroad" [Łeńska-Bąk 2010: 11]. Naturally, my disagreement with this diagnosis stems simply from the history of research in ethnic studies conducted in Poland in the previous centuries; it is justified by earlier research objectives and the development of folklore studies, ethnography and ethnology, since the shape and direction of the work conducted in the past was indubitably deter-

2 It is worth noting that the first culinary shows to be seen on television, in Poland as much as worldwide, were based on a simple principle: a renowned cook is televised cooking a tasty dish and shares the recipe with the viewers. Currently, this type of culinary show, which has a cognitive value, has a rival in culinary entertainment shows, which the experts categorise as a type of reality show.

mined by historical and political factors. This aspect has frequently been emphasised in the history of cultural studies, particularly in the research related to folk culture, showcasing all that has so far occurred "between ethnic studies and anthropology". I am equally disinclined to agree with the opinion that the research on comestibles conducted nowadays is of meagre scientific value; even though scholars such as Katarzyna Łeńska-Bąk express their disapproval of the conference publications ("the fruit of scholarly meetings"): "[…] the aim of the organisers is to deepen the participants' interest in the issue, yet their promises are never fulfilled, and the volumes issued after the meetings do not offer a thorough analysis of the subject" [Łeńska-Bąk 2010: 21]. I am also critical of the opinions offered on the public arena by the media-employed culinary expert, who display a regrettable lack of knowledge of fields other than their own by claiming that "[…] Polish ethnography is remarkably silent on the subject of food. Sometimes I even think that Polish ethnographers must have come from underprivileged families and thus the thought that food might be an important issue did not even occur to them" [*Co nam zostało…* 2009: 12]. The present article is no place to list the achievements in this field of research. It is the view on the culinary realm taken by historians that seems relatively one-sided, as they focus mainly on the cuisine of the elite classes: the royalty, the magnates or the gentry, in other words, on court cuisine. The scope is sometimes broad enough to include monastic fare, but peasant food has for many centuries remained outside the interests of historians. Jarosław Dumanowski, a historian specialising in comestibles, offers some self-criticism:

> Although eating certainly has a history, understood as past events that took place at a given point in time, historians did not always consider such prosaic and mundane action to be worthy of their attention. When, bored by traditional political event-centred history, scholars turned to the history of nutrition, it was still limited to an aspect of economic history [Dumanowski 2010: 121].

The same author makes another accurate conclusion, stating that the marginalisation of the culinary issues was still commonplace among historians

in the 1970s, when the works of "most scholars dealing with the history of comestibles applied the economic and statistical approach employing the terms of the old Annales School […] Thus, the primary question is how to measure a phenomenon we know practically nothing about" [Dumanowski 2010: 121]. In this context, not only historical examples of cookery books (e.g. by Stanisław Czerniecki, Wojciech Wincenty Wielądka), but also the culinary best-sellers published after the Second World War (e.g. the ones edited by Lucyna Ćwierczakiewiczowa) are worthy of discussion.

It must be emphasised that not only popular publications still promote and repeat many culinary myths related to the culture of the magnates and the gentry. In the past, court and peasant cuisine were, in fact, aspects of two different cultures. As many scholars rightly observe, "the life of the court revolved around food" [Byszewska, Kurpińska 2012: 15], meals were hearty, the dinners prolonged, the tableware made of porcelain, the recipes – in accordance with the fashion of the day – written down in French and the pantries were always well-stocked. Sometimes the trends dictated that French cooks be employed; a custom registered by a perceptive chronicler from the era of the Wettin dynasty from Saxony: "since the deluge of French cooks reached Poland and our compatriots honed their skills in the culinary art, the natural dishes have vanished, replaced by a most sophisticated fare […]" [Kitowicz 1970: 425–426]. In this context, Zofia Szromba-Rysowa offers an accurate description of the general character of peasant cuisine:

> the properties of traditional folk foodstuffs were a result of the social and economic conditions in the villages; the level of economic self-sufficiency determined the quality and composition of dishes, adding a local tinge to the fare. Food consumption was dependent primarily on the production capacities of the farms and the existing models of behaviour [Szromba-Rysowa 1978: 40].

The extent of the differences between the two types of cuisine is delineated in a more recent publication by Krystyna Bockenheim, who recollects the "forgotten recipes" ("two hundred years ago already forgotten") such

as baked capons, cooked turtles, partridges made of salted fish, moose muzzles, bear paws etc. [Bockenheim 2003: 192–201].

As researchers of culture aptly observe, "modern cookery books are very different from the ones written in the previous century, because the repertoire of dishes and indispensable ingredients has changed, along with the kitchen utensils and appliances, dietary norms, standards of taste and culinary customs" [Bednarek 1998: 173]. Which is not to say that in modern times no attempts are made to review old cookery books and to evaluate them from the perspective of our current ethical and aesthetic sensibility; this approach might lead us to perceive olden-day cooking instructions as "dispassionate, objectifying to the extreme and treating the animal technically as the stuff for producing sophisticated dishes" and to accuse the authors of being oblivious to the "problem of animal suffering" [Łeńska-Bąk 2005: 62]. The viewpoint of modern culture studies on the numerous descriptions of putting animals to death found in the old "course-books in cookery" [see e.g. Bednarek 1998: 173–177; Łeńska-Bąk 2005, 2007, 2010: 211–251] is very clear:

> Anyone trying to use such examples to argue that these books were barbaric would probably be wrong. The cooks of the 19th century performed their duties in good faith and according to the principles of the art, making sure that the final product satisfied even the daintiest of palates [Bednarek 1998: 175].

I am convinced that the scholarly assessment that in modern times "the two spheres – killing and ingestion – have been separated" [Łeńska-Bąk 2010: 251], as the "end user has no contact with the slaughtered animal" [Łeńska-Bąk 2007: 208; see also: Łeńska-Bąk 2005: 75] may calm the conscience of modern consumers of meat and its derivatives, but is only relevant in urban reality, where animal products are purchased in a shop. In the rural context, the situation may be perceived very differently: there, every person knows that animals are reared for a specific purpose; potential consumers are habituated to slaughtering livestock from a very early age and very often have very direct experience with ruthless killing not

only of poultry and small animals, but also of larger beasts, the popular custom of pig-slaughter being just one example.

"The treasures of culinary heritage" in cookery books from Upper Silesia

The numerous cookery books that have so far appeared on the Polish market describe only the features of traditional Silesian fare, the peculiar conservatism and the locals' attachment to familiar tastes and culinary preferences causing them to favour some products and shun others. The examples include such texts as *Kuchnia śląska* by Emilia Kołder [two issues; Ostrava 1972; 1976]; *Kuchnia śląska. Wybrane przepisy kulinarne* by Adolf Balcerowski [Warszawa 1980]; *Ślońskie parszczynie* by Elżbieta Łabońska [Chorzów 2001]; *Kuchnia śląska z przyprawami leczniczymi* by Barbara Jakimowicz-Klein [Wrocław 2003]; *Tradycyjna kuchnia śląska* by Joanna Baranowska [Chorzów 2007] and *Kuchnia śląska. 171 potraw* by Ewa Krasnopolska [Łódź 2007].

Out of this abundance of cookbooks from Upper Silesia, four are, in my estimation, deserving of a special mention due to their particular emphasis on the traditional culinary heritage of the region: *Nowa kuchnia śląska* edited by Otylia Słomczyńska and Stanisława Sochacka [five editions, first edition Opole 1985]; *Śląska kucharka doskonała* by Elżbieta Łabońska [two editions: introduction by M. G. Gerlich, Katowice 1990; introduction by D. Simonides, Katowice 1996]; *Krupnioki i moczka, czyli gawędy o kuchni śląskiej* by Wera Sztabowa [three editions; first edition Katowice 1985]; *Śląska spiżarnia. O jodle, warzyniu, maszketach i inszym pichcyniu* by Joanna Świtała-Mastalerz and Dorota Świtała-Trybek [two editions, first edition Koszęcin 2008].

The authors of *Nowa kuchnia śląska* (the title meaning *New Silesian cuisine*) emphasise that their publication is not "a guidebook to a rational diet in the professional sense of the term" and add that it was

> designed as a selective collection of recipes for older and more modern dishes served in Silesia, provided by experienced Silesian homemakers, taken from the authors' own collections or acquired from hobbyists

interested in cookery. In many cases the authors made use of the listed external sources [*Nowa kuchnia śląska* 1985: 9].

As a result, the book captures – as the title suggests – not only the "characteristic features of traditional Silesian cuisine", but also the process of changes that stem from contemporary demographic, cultural and sociological factors; i.e. the *novum* signifying the emergence of inter-group influences (immigrant population versus the locals) and the growing influence of urban culture on the rural parts of Silesia. The recipes for specific dishes (1528 in total) are preceded by a comprehensive section entitled "*W kuchni śląskiej*" (*In Silesian cuisine*) which offers a synthetic description of the characteristics of Silesian culinary heritage.

The other above-mentioned publications share the same manner of organisation. Interestingly, the recipes are grouped and presented according to the ritual and liturgical calendar. *Śląska kucharka doskonała* presents "*kuchnia na beztydziyń*" (cuisine for weekdays) and "*kuchnia na niedziela*" (Sunday cuisine). It also distinguishes the dishes for "the period of fasting and for the hungry gap", for holiday periods and "all other celebrations and meetings" (e.g. the All Hallows, the day of Saint Barbara, church fairs, parish indulgence days), as well as for family occasions (e.g. the wedding and day-after-wedding parties, baptism feasts and celebrations of the child's first birthday, the First Communion, birthdays, wedding anniversaries and "*polywanie skórki*" which literally means "sprinkling the skin", i.e. funeral banquets). The characteristics of Silesian cuisine as presented by Elżbieta Łabońska are complemented by a section describing the pantry and the process of gathering supplies, including "pig slaughtering and meat processing". A similar focus on ritual calendar, annual and family celebrations in Upper Silesia is found in the cookery book by Wera Sztabowa and the joint publication by Joanna Świtała-Mastalerz and Dorota Świtała-Trybek. Sztabowa's collection of regional and local recipes, as well as her knowledge of traditional beliefs, customs and rituals in Silesia and the changes that have occurred in them, are most impressive indeed. Her extraordinary book reads like an essay addressed to the general public and pertaining not only to the cultural heritage of Upper Silesia, but also to the cultural

legacy on the sub-regional level, e.g. in the region of Cieszyn, Racibórz, Opole etc. As noted by Sztabowa, Silesian cuisine is an amalgam of "culinary influences from many parts of the world: Slavonic, German, Austrian, Czech, Italian and even Turkish. [...] However, as I was repeatedly told, these recipes were always altered to fit the local familiar style" [Sztabowa 1985: 6–7]. Cultural characteristics of Upper Silesia are also emphasised in *Śląska spiżarnia* in its respective chapters: "*Kuchnia na beztydzień*" (Weekday Cuisine), "*Kuchnia świąteczna*" (Holiday Cuisine), "*Zaproszomy na maszkiety*" (Invitation to *maszkiety*; it is a Silesian term for sweet treats), "*Od piwa głowa się kiwa. Alkohole*" (Beer Makes the Head Wobble. Alcohols), "*Ogóreczki do krauzeczki, a do buncloka kapusta z pola. Przetwory*" (Cucumbers into the jars, cabbage from the field to the pot. Preserves.), "*Tuste z gynsi najlepsze na kaszlanie i smarkanie. O domowych sposobach leczenia*" (Goose fat is best for coughing and snivelling. About home remedies). The character of regional dishes in this book is additionally accentuated by the presence of dialect introduced to the narration by the authors, or rather by the providers of the recipes. For this reason the cookery book is supplemented with a dictionary of dialectal terms. Some of the recipes are noted down in verse, e.g.:

Ciastka ze szkwarek III
Składniki i przygotowanie:
Po świniobiciu przeważnie przed świyntami
były w komorze garce ze wyskwarzonymi szpyrkami.
Z tych szpyrek pyszne ciastka pieczono
i zaroz opowiem, jak je robiono:
– trza zemleć ćwierćlitrok szpyrek wytopionych,
– na miska wsypać pół kilo maki przesionej,
– dodać 8 łyżek cukru miałkego,
– wbić 2 jajka i nie zapomnieć cukru waniliowego.
Prędko z tego ciasto zagniyjść do kupy,
nie wyrobiać tak dugo, jak nudle do zupy.
Na godzinka wynieść do chodnej komory,
a potym przez maszynka robić różne wzory.
Takie ciasteczka upieczone w piekaroku na złoto,

chrupiące, pachnące kożdy zjy z ochotą.
Na choince tyż się takowe wieszało,
a po świyntach z chyncią zjodało [*Śląska spiżarnia…* 2008: 147].

Crackling cookies III – Ingredients and preparation: After pig-slaughter, mostly before a holiday, pots of roasted crackling stood in the pantry. Delicious cookies were baked of this crackling, and I shall tell you now how they were made: a quart of crackling must be minced; half a kilo of flour sifted into a bowl; 8 spoonfuls of caster sugar added; 2 eggs poured in; vanilla sugar must not be forgotten. The dough must be worked quickly, not kneaded for as long as soup noodles. The dough must be taken to the cold-room for an hour, then cut with a wee gadget into various shapes. Baked golden in the oven, crunchy and fragrant, everyone will gladly eat such cookies. They were also put on the Christmas tree and eaten with much pleasure after the holiday.

In my private view, a popular cookery guidebook enhanced with wide-ranging information on the role of tradition in Silesian life and the preservation of this tradition is a perfect example of a harmonious combination of scientific value and science popularisation. The authors of *Śląska spiżarnia* not only display intimate knowledge of traditional Silesian cuisine, but employ this medium to introduce the reader to the realm of everyday life in the region – the varied types of annual and family-related celebrations, household remedies and treatments, mutual borrowings and civilisational changes, as well as magic, symbolism, religious factors – in other words, the cultural heritage of the native inhabitants of the industrial areas in Upper Silesia (as defined by the contemporary administrative division of Poland; Silesian Voivodeship). The book will be of interest not only to experts and teachers, but also to enthusiasts of regional history and culture who are keen on popularising them. The cognitive value of this cookery book manifests itself in yet another important aspect: the authors conducted field research (surveys, interviews, participative observation, contest organisation) in more than ten communes in Silesia as a project for the Lokalna Grupa Działania "Spichlerz Górnego Śląska" foundation. Edited and enhanced with comments, empirical data gathered using ob-

jective methods were included in the cookery book. The interviewees' statements were treated with due diligence and the authors' arguments are supported with numerous quotations, which adds to the authenticity of the publication. Another element worth mentioning are the carefully chosen sayings and proverbs used as mottoes to respective chapters. The combination of all these aspects makes for an admirably thought through, well-organised and scientifically accurate work on traditional and contemporary Upper Silesian cuisine. This well-made, cleverly structured and academically valuable cookery book truly deserves praise. It proves how much is yet to be learnt about Silesian cuisine.

Another book which ought to be mentioned in this context is *Kuchnia raciborska. Podróże kulinarne po dawnej i obecnej ziemi raciborskiej* by Grzegorz Wawoczny [2005]. The author, who is a lawyer, the owner of WAW publishing house and news agency in Racibórz and the editor-in-chief of the "Nowiny Raciborskie" weekly, reveals that "the subject matter tackled in *Kuchnia raciborska* is presented in a time frame spanning from the Middle Ages to modern times" [Wawoczny 2005: 9]. Fascinated with the archival research query of source materials pertaining to the sub-region of Racibórz, Wawoczny aspired to writing a historical study. The result is an original culinary monograph comprising three parts. It may be argued that the centre of gravity in this monograph, labelled by its author as having a "conventional title", lies in its first part.[3] This section (which, surprisingly, does not bear a title) presents an almost overwhelming amount of facts and data taken from an impressive list of external sources [see the literature at the end of the section] both in the author's own rendition and as direct citations. The first part (containing 24 "essays") is *sensu stricte* culinary in nature, yet it also contains a profusion of data on local and regional history. The opening "essay" presents the history of Racibórz through the ages,

3 This part contains "sketches dedicated to fishing, butchery, baking, grain-milling, gingerbread-making, pastry-making, bee-keeping, agriculture, gardening, hunting, herbal medicine, water supply, great feasts in the principality of Racibórz, local culinary specialities in the 19th and 20th c., kitchen utensils, beer brewing, wine-making, spirit distillation and stimulants such as coffee, tea, snuff, cigars and cigarettes; not omitting issues concerning poisons, such as mushroom poisoning" [Wawoczny 2005: 7–8]. Each section of this part could, in fact, become a separate monograph.

whereas the string of chapters on "strong liquors", "in-town breweries", "the castle brewery", "distilling spirits" and "coffee and other stimulants" is interrupted (or perhaps complemented) by a long section describing inns, hotels and restaurants in Racibórz and its vicinity. Part One closes with two distinctive "culinary" chapters, which also present selected facts from the history of Racibórz and the surrounding region, and of Upper Silesia against the background of European history [see: the chapters entitled "*Wojskowy prowiant*", i.e. military provisions, and "*Od głodu uchroń nas Panie*", Deliver us from famine, O Lord]. Part Two, entitled "*Obrazy z minionych lat…, czyli podróż w zapomniany świat z przedwojennych raciborskich reklam, anonsów, pocztówek, unikalnych zdjęć archiwalnych, pięknie zdobionych rachunków i kolorowych opakowań po wyśmienitych miejscowych wyrobach*" (Images from a time gone by... or a journey into the forgotten world of pre-war Racibórz advertisements, notices, postcards, unique archival photographs, beautifully decorated bill notes and colourful packaging for delicious local products) contains an impressive number of illustrations with much cognitive value. The most interesting photographs are presented with notes on their provenance, but, unfortunately, the vast majority of images lack any comment regarding their origin. Part Three, "*Kulinarne podróże po współczesnym Raciborzu i okolicach…, czyli o: miejscowych wypiekach, wędlinach, dziczyźnie, miodzie, zupach dodatkach do dań oraz słodkościach, a także wyposażeniu kuchni*" (Culinary journeys around contemporary Racibórz and its vicinity... or a description of local baked goods, cold meats, game, honey, soups, garnishes and sweets, as well as kitchen utensils) presents the results of the author's field research. The project focused on cookery in a broad understanding of the term; research results also provide valuable information. This section of the publication is a cookery guidebook *sensu stricte*, offering recipes for specific dishes typical for the Racibórz sub-region. It is supplemented with data regarding the informants, their photographs and illustrations of specific dishes.

Silesian cookery books edited by experts on the region of Upper Silesia or hobbyists whose family history is linked to the region present a very different academic level than the two more general guidebooks pertaining to the same issue: a volume entitled *Śląsk*, edited by Marta Orłowska

as a part of a commercially successful series *Regionalna kuchnia polska* [Kielce 2007]; and *Kuchnia śląska* compiled by Tadeusz Barowicz for an equally commercial monograph *Polskie kuchnie regionalne* [Warszawa 2007: 9–38]. The dishes in Orłowska's publication are divided into typical categories known from non-regional cookery books (appetisers, soups, main courses and garnishes, cakes and desserts); everyday fare is interspersed with holiday and ritual dishes not only from the various subregions of Upper Silesia, but also from Lower Silesia – a region distinctly different in terms of culture [see e.g. beef roulades with cabbage in the Świdnik style]. The regional nature of selected dishes often seems to be determined by the adjective "Silesian". Recipes included in this publication are taken from various volumes of "Polish Cuisine" and "Traditional Polish Cuisine" or selected from "newspapers and magazines" and Internet resources; the most authentic ones come from the cookery book by Elżbieta Łabońska. Unfortunately, the names of some dishes contain spelling inaccuracies, e.g. Silesian "*szałot kartoflany*" (a type of potato salad) is labelled "*szalot*", while "*ajntopf*" (one-pot dish) is spelt "*ajntop*" [cf. Łabońska 1990: 101, 184]. Orłowska attempts to introduce supplementary data in sections entitled "*Czy wiesz, że…*" (Did you know...), e.g. informs the reader that Silesia, "usually perceived as the land of coal and steel covering a very limited space" is, in fact, "a large region";[4] yet in doing so she seems to identify Silesia mostly with its industrial part.[5] All too often she perpetuates stereotypes not only with regard to the cultural characteristics of Upper Silesia, but also to folk and traditional culture. To name but two examples: many dishes she associates with the region of Silesia were actually known in the peasant community of all parts of Poland;[6]

4 According to Orłowska, this region "stretches on both sides of lower Oder and Eastern Neisse, encompassing the entire Silesian Plain and Upper Silesian Coal Basin, the latter reaching Beskid in the south" [2007: 84].

5 See e.g. "Czy wiesz, że…": "The 'peasant food' [dish] is nothing else but a Silesian version of scrambled eggs enhanced with many high-calorie ingredients, because Silesians, the men being mostly miners, need a nutritious meal after hard work" [Orłowska 2007: 6].

6 To give an example of Orłowska's banality: "At harvest and during periods of intensive work in the fields the Silesian menu was special" [2007: 8]. It must also be pointed out that (a) generally known harvest-time customs were observed not only in the Opole and the sub-Beskid region (i.e. the Opole Silesia) [2007: 16]; (b) "periods of fasting were observed

and it was not only Silesian women who "had an extensive knowledge of herbs and believed in their beneficial properties in the treatment of various afflictions" [Orłowska 2007: 97]. Many oversimplifications pertain to the varied forms of annual religious celebrations and family rituals, which have, in fact, been practised in the entire Poland.[7] The section containing practical advice (a peculiar *silva rerum*) Orłowska not only enlightens the reader as to the reason why "aluminium dishes cannot be used for cooking sour dishes" [2007: 72], but also includes a portion of stereotypical information on the Silesian population (often untrue or relevant only in reference to a given sub-region), as well as a bizarre typology of Silesian festivities, for instance: "one of the most important festive occasions for the Silesian people is the last day of carnival called '*śledź*'" [2007: 12]; "pig-slaughter was a veritable holiday for the Silesian people, an occasion for family meetings" [2007: 33]; "the day-after-wedding party in Silesia can stretch over two or three days" [2007: 34]; "the most important elements of decoration on the Easter table in Silesia were [...] a wreath [...] and a basket [...] of painted eggs, sometimes in a stack of several dozen, or even a hundred" [2007: 20]; "the kitchen, a symbol of the family, is the focal point in all Silesian households. It is associated with the warmth of the stove, the smells of the various dishes and the bustling life of the mistress of the house" [2007: 29]; "Easter has always been the greatest culinary feast in Silesia" [2007: 78]; "on the day of the wedding all kinds of ceramic pots were smashed in front of the bride's house" [2007: 83].[8]

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in Silesia", but definitely elsewhere as well, and similarly "evenings of communal feather-plucking and spinning" [2007: 40] were not an exclusively Silesian tradition; (c) bread was revered not only in Silesia, but in the peasant culture in general; (d) soups were "the Silesian breakfast staple in days gone by" [2007: 10], but they were eaten for breakfast elsewhere as well; (e) pickled cabbage was made not only "in Silesia – Cieszyn Silesia, Upper Silesia and Opole Silesia alike", with the additional observation that Cieszyn Silesia and Opole Silesia are sub-regions of Upper Silesia.

7 By this I mean such celebrations as All Hallows (according to Orłowska, an occasion for "special gatherings of Silesian families" [2007: 64]), the Christmas Eve ("a special day to Silesians" [2007: 80]), the First Communion ("celebrated by Silesians with great solemnity" [2007: 54]) or a funeral wake ("In Silesia, a sumptuous banquet is given" [2007: 22]).

8 For more on this topic, see Smolińska [2004: 80–82 (*Polterabend jako przedweselny zwyczaj trzaskania skorup*)].

Given the growing interest in regional cuisine and the development of agrotourism (with farms offering local dishes as one of the attractions of the sojourn), the primary aim behind T. Barowicz's monograph entitled *Polskie kuchnie regionalne* (apart from Silesian cuisine, the work also showcases the cuisine in the mountain regions, in Greater Poland, Kashubia, Podlachia, Warmland and Masuria, the Eastern borderlands, Galicia/Lesser Poland, Mazovia and Kuyavia) was to "save the delicacies of various local cuisine from oblivion and to popularise them. The opening of Poland to the world means that we should care for our cultural heritage like never before" [Barowicz 2007: 8]. His popular collection of Silesian dishes (53 recipes, from soups to the "foreman's beverage") contains no source material data and is preceded by a brief introduction, which is not free of stereotypical generalisations (e.g. regarding the typology of noodles and their names; the sub-regional nature of the *kołocz* cake; the recipe for Easter eggs in caraway brine).

The class of "tasty reading matter" (a term used by the marshal of the Opole Voivodeship Józef Sebesta to describe culinary folders) includes, among other things, "publications describing traditional products originating from ancient culinary traditions" of Upper Silesia [*Produkty tradycyjne Śląska Opolskiego* 2009: 2].

The collection of interesting and richly illustrated culinary folders that have been issued in recent years in the region as an element of promoting and the so-called identification of traditional regional products would in themselves deserve a separate analysis. They constitute extraordinary promotion material; many such folders are financed from the resources allocated by the EU to the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development in the years 2007–2013 and by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.[9] Another category of "tasty reading matter" for the general public are culinary calendars published by various Upper Silesian regional

9 See e.g. *Opole w czterdziestu smakach. Czyli 40 przepisów opolan, zebranych podczas V Festiwalu Opolskich Smaków, przyrządzonych przez opolskich blogerów*, published in 2014 by the Promotion and International Cooperation Bureau of the Opole city council; *Produkty tradycyjne Śląska Opolskiego 2008* published by the Opole Voivodship Marshal's Office; also, cookery book *Przepis na piętnastkę* published in 2014 by the pupils, parents and teachers of primary school no. 15 in Opole.

associations,[10] sometimes as a part of trans-border initiatives and Silesian binary projects[11] (i.e. ones organised both in the Polish and Czech parts of the region). These wall calendars serve to promote regional dishes by presenting the recipes in both Polish and German or Polish and Czech. They might also feature Silesian and German culinary sayings or showcase restaurants, chefs or confectioneries.

A monograph that stands apart from all the above cookery books is Marek Szołtysek's *Kuchnia śląska. Jodło, historia, kultura, gwara* [2003]. Its author manages to explain the reason for the "originality" of Silesian cuisine. He presents the Silesian culinary tradition as very distrustful of culinary novelties and closed to external influence. He calls Silesian cooking an "extraordinary culinary phenomenon". He also identifies a problem with the nomenclature of Silesian dishes, which are gradually becoming Polonised. Attempts at the ideologisation of culinary characteristics of Upper Silesia would require a separate analysis and evaluation.

The growing variety of Silesian cookery guidebooks will soon be joined by a new monographic publication by the members of the Silesian Women's Association. As I established during my field research, the book will feature recipes "for traditional Silesian dishes prepared by *mamy* and *ołmy* [moms and grandmothers] in the olden days and now rather forgotten", which will be presented in the form of scanned manuscripts.

In the context of the distinct Silesian preferences in the cookbooks published thus far (and, as demonstrated, also the ones being prepared for publication), there are two recent cookery guidebooks that deserve a special mention: *Opolszczyzna w wielu smakach. Skarby dziedzictwa kulinarnego. 2200 wypróbowanych i polecanych przepisów na przysmaki kuchni domowej* [2012] and *Smaki polskie i opolskie. Skarby dziedzictwa kulinarnego. 2500 wypróbowanych i polecanych przepisów na przysmaki*

10 See e.g. *Śląsk smakuje / Schlesien schmeckt* [wall calendar for the year 2010]. Conception by Klaudia Kluczniok. Published by Związek Śląskich Rolników / Verband Schlesischer Bauern.

11 See e.g. Podróże kulinarne po Euroregionach / Kulinářské cestováni po Euroregionech: Gogolin – Jablunkov [wall calendar for the year 2010], published by the Gogolin town council and Městský úřad Jablunkuv. The project was financed from the "Crossing the Borders" European Regional Development Fund and from state funds.

kuchni domowej [2014], edited by Father Andrzej Hanich rector of a parish in the suburbs of Opole, historian specialising in Church history and professor at the State Research Institute, the Silesian Institute in Opole. The long evolution of a cookbook as a utilitarian text meant to "provide help in solving problems" [Żarski 2008: 92] is amazing indeed, considering the continuing success of *Kuchnia polska* [first published in 1955] issued by Państwowe Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, in which the "dominant, organising discourse is academic". This cookery book, written as a collective effort of expert engineers and professors whom Anna Jaroszuk established to have been "acting on behalf of the National Institute of Hygiene (Food Safety Department) and the Medical Academy, and later of the National Food and Nutrition Institute", is considered by scholars to be "the guidebook to human nutrition" [Jaroszuk 2012: 232].

Before presenting the evaluation of the two original cookery books from the Opole region of Silesia edited by Father Hanich, I must add that mentioning the source of and foundation for the ethnic diversity of the region's population is important, in fact indispensable, to the assessment of the author's idea for culinary guidebooks in a "multi-taste" aspect. Hence, I shall begin the discussion of these two serviceable monographs with the issue of the complex ethnic and demographic conditions of the region in question.

The multi-faceted nature of the ongoing scientific and political discussion regarding the history of Upper Silesia, the national identity of Silesians and the region as an ethnic and cultural borderland and a "little fatherland" for many regional and national groups is very interestingly revealed in the academic works by specialists representing various fields of research and branches of science, such as history, political science, sociology, ethnology, folklore studies and linguistics. Emotional responses and the rekindled (or continually present) stereotypes related to issues of national identity and ethnic affinity in the Opole region of Silesia bring about the need for detailed studies of history and cultural tradition, not only regarding the "salt of the earth" in the region, i.e. the indigenous population, but also the immigrants who came to Silesia after 1945. An evaluation of the changes in traditional Silesian culture in the face of post-war and modern social,

economic and political transformations cannot ignore the consequences of the social and cultural migration movements that took place after the Second World War. The resettlement operation begun in February 1945 brought a wave of new immigrants to Upper and Lower Silesia. As a result, the local population acquired new neighbours: repatriates from the Eastern Borderlands annexed by the Soviet Union, settlers from central and southern Poland, as well as former emigrants coming back from the West [see e.g. Szmeja 1997; Dworzak, Goc 2000; Dworzak, Goc 2008; *Pamięć o kresowych korzeniach tożsamości* 2010; *Kresowianie na Śląsku Opolskim* 2011]. Officially, the mass resettlement operation ended in 1948, but spontaneous and vigorous migration movements continued for many years afterwards. The first comprehensive statistical data quoted by specialists date from 1950. Scholars analysing national identity and the essential terminology associated with this subject devoted much attention to the social and cultural categories of "alienness" and "familiarity", which are crucial to the phenomenon in question. Popular opinions on other national and ethnic groups constitute an important argument in a person's national identity, self-awareness and national identification, resulting as they do from the close presence of other cultures clashing or intertwining with one another, as well as from the experience of multiculturalism. Negative images of Poland's neighbours converged in the post-war reality of the so-called Recovered Territories. Silesia was the part of Poland inhabited not only by settlers who came there of their own volition, but also people uprooted from their homeland "by a twist of fate", "not by their own choice". As noted by Adam Wierciński, these reluctant settlers were forced

> to live among other groups, together yet separately, to coexist and mutually wonder at each other [...]. – So many varieties of Polish-ness. And so many paradoxes [...] Chaos and confusion. And mistrust towards anything that came from the outside. And jokes as a form of defence against persuasion [Wierciński 1992: 54–55].

The post-war mass migration brought cultural models of various ethnic groups together and resulted in a process of integration that is still ongoing.

It has had a significant influence on the cultural tradition of both the native and the immigrant populations. It must be emphasised that in the early post-war period the indigenous Silesians and the immigrants adhered to their respective ritual calendars, with differences not only in the external form of festive activities, but also on the level of beliefs and magic. The majority of the surviving traditional recipes are for distinctive dishes, associated not only with a specific holiday (the Christmas Eve, Easter etc.), but also with everyday fare (e.g. dumplings, cabbage rolls, borscht) and with culinary preferences brought over from the Eastern Borderlands and other regions.

Another aspect that deserves analysis (and is significantly present in Hanich's book) is related to pop-culture, i.e. the mass media, advertising, fads for specific dishes or materials and changes in traditional culinary habits. Direct examples thereof are found e.g. in the local newspaper "Nowa Trybuna Opolska". It features an emblematic (read: currently fashionable) regional thematic section entitled "*Opolskie smaki*" (The flavours of Opole), which allows readers to recommend and describe recipes preferred by their families but very different from typical Silesian fare in terms of their origin. Some of these dishes are, in fact, typical of ethnic groups which settled in the region after 1945, witness "dumplings with lentil filling", "dumplings with sweet cherry filling", "*cepelinai* from Podlachia", "*fuczki*, the Ukrainian pancakes" or "fish with onion, Volhynian style" to name but a few. Other recipes come from ethnically distant cultures and represent culinary tastes arrived from other parts of Europe (or other continents) as a result of the development of new culinary habits in the region, e.g. "an easy recipe for home-made pizza", "lasagne – an Italian classic", "lasagne in the Silesian style", "spaghetti with tuna", "*penne al pomodoro*" (pasta with tomatoes, cheese and herbs), "an Italian delicacy for supper" (a salad in the colours of the Italian flag), "French buns", "beans from sunny Greece" (a white bean soup), "Bulgarian fare for an afternoon snack" (Bulgarian salad), "Saint Patrick's Irish stew", "delicious brownies", "a *tajine* made to suit our taste" (an Arabian dish with couscous), "Oriental-style courgettes", "home-made sushi", "essential dipping sauces". It is apparent that the appetites of the contemporary residents of the Opole region are not limited

to the local dishes proposed for the EU list of traditional products, i.e. the *kołocz* cake (with all the related not-entirely-scientific discussion on whether this product is specific only for the Opole region or for the entire Upper Silesia) [see Wijas-Grocholska 2012, 2014], *krupniok* (a type of blood sausage typical of both the Opole Voivodeship and the Silesian Voivodeship) or wine from Winowo near Opole. We are witnessing the development of an original "festival of Silesian tastes" both in the literal sense ("Silesian Tastes" is the name of an annual culinary contest organised by local government institutions, regional initiatives, museums etc.), and, more importantly, understood as an opening of the borders to let in unfamiliar culinary influences and to supplement traditional regional fare with new dishes [see e.g. *Pokarmy i jedzenie w kulturze…* 2007; *Historie kuchenne…* 2010; *W garnku kultury* 2014]. Scholars are not indifferent to the ubiquitous and varied promotion of traditional regional cuisine described by the umbrella-term of "regional products". All too often the fashionable "regional tastes" become nothing more than a folklore decoration that only seems to "document" a "mythologised image of rural culture" for the general public [see e.g. Burszta, Kuligowski 2005; Karpińska 2014]. The globalisation of modern culture, including its culinary aspects, is an irreversible process, noticeable also in the cookery guidebook *Opolszczyzna w wielu smakach* (The Opole region in many flavours). The issue of the constancy vs. mutability of culinary preferences is a complex one, not only in the case of the Opole region. However, the phenomenon of cultural identity (which includes the distinctness of the culinary tradition) in the region is currently subject to irreversible influences of other cultures, sometimes very exotic and distant from the native one. In the words of one historian of culture,

> We are looking for new attractions, having no interest in peculiarities, meanings or values. Apart from the most general information (pizza and pasta is Italian, frog legs are French, blini are Russian, kebab is Turkish) we do not know and do not wish to learn about what constitutes the actual determinants of a given foreign cuisine. We accept the signboards and the Europeanised dishes modified to appeal to our preferences. The Chinese

> cuisine served in our country may have as much in common with China as the Polish "coffee in Turkish style" has with the preferences of Turks [Łeńska-Bąk 2010: 97].

It must also be emphasised that the modern unified market provides an increasing number of semi-finished products and ready-made dishes usually marketed as "traditional". Unfortunately, such dishes are hardly evocative of original and natural tastes unspoilt by artificial preservatives.

In this context, *Opolszczyzna w wielu smakach* may be perceived not only a cookery book presenting dishes typical of various ethnic groups, but also as a type of a monothematic collective "lecture" on the multiculturalism of the Opole region of Silesia and the noticeable influence of other cultures. The author of the book acquired an impressive amount of culinary recipes from master chefs and published, to use his own words, "2200 tested and recommended recipes for homely delicacies". This culinary collection constitutes the best description of the characteristic features of the region's cuisine; it presents a direct insight into the culinary context of the culture of the local population. It testifies not only to its conservatism and stability, as well as the existence of an unbreakable bond between the locals and their original cultural heritage, but also to the contamination, integration and influence of other cultures and the modern consumer culture. The book offers the readers culinary data for comparing and contrasting, characterised by distinctive features and national or ethnic autonomy on the one hand, and on the other by instances of modern symbiosis and the cultural unification of the recipes for specific dishes. The "many flavours" of the Opole region are not only beneficial in terms of taste, but also possess social, integrative, educational, cognitive and advertising value, in a broad understanding of all these terms. The table set with dishes "of many flavours" becomes an asset in promoting the region. It is known that cookery guidebooks (as an example of literature intended for practical purposes) can be viewed as a special type of a manual, teaching readers and shaping their views and preferences. Hanich's cookery book was certainly designed to serve that purpose. Its emphasis on the multicultural values of traditional and contemporary "homely cuisine" may thus be considered pioneering.

As to the content of the cookery book under analysis, it is divided into twenty-nine basic compositionally arranged units.[12] The supplementary parts include the "(Selected) Bibliography", the "Culinary Lexicon" and two indexes – "The Dishes in Alphabetic Order" and "The Authors of the Recipes".

Hanich's book has yet another admirable and noteworthy quality: it makes the perpetuation of stereotypes impossible and disproves a number of existing ones. As it has already been mentioned, the Opole region of Silesia, and thus the cuisine of its native and immigrant inhabitants, constitutes an example of an interaction between many different cultural influences. As a result, I find it difficult to agree with the opinions perpetuated by some scholars and spurred by political factors, for instance that in the post-war period the "central management of gastronomy has led to the unification of recipes and resulted in the fact that no matter whether one was eating in Silesia, Mazovia or Greater Poland, everything everywhere smelt of pork cutlets with cabbage" [Adamczewski 2007: 418]. The author of *Opolszczyzna w wielu smakach. Skarby dziedzictwa kulinarnego* argues that the inhabitants of the region prefer and cultivate the smell of their own fare; these preferences have been changed neither by poverty nor by the

12 These being: "Starters" (Jellies, Sandwich butters and pastes, Pastes, Lards, Other starters); "Soups and creamy soups" (Cold soups, Creams, Soups, Side dishes for soups); "Flour, groats and rice dishes" (Flour dishes, Noodles); "Veal"; "Poultry"; "Game"; "Lamb and kid meat dishes"; "Pork"; "Beef"; "Pâté and meatballs"; "Mayonnaises and sauces" (Mayonnaises, Purée, Hot sauces, Fruit sauces, Cold sauces); "Semi-meat dishes" (Meat-and-veg dishes, Casseroles); "Fish" (Stuffed fish, Cooked fish, Baked fish, Fried fish, Smoked fish, Herrings); "Cooked and casseroled vegetable dishes"; "Vegetables and salads"; "Mushrooms"; "Egg dishes"; "Tarts and pizzas"; "Desserts" (Puddings, candies, chocolates; Desserts, Fruit salads, Alcoholic deserts, Cocktails, Soufflés and waffles, Coffees, Teas); "Cakes" (Basic recipes, Brioches and fruitcakes, Sponge cakes and gateaus, Yeast cakes, Nut cakes, Fresh fruit cakes, Gingerbreads, Apple cakes, Poppyseed cakes, Cheesecakes, High-fibre cakes, Other cakes); "Cookies and biscuits" (Cookies, Muffins, Doughnuts, Fried dough pastries, Profiteroles and éclairs, Other cookies served warm); Yeast and non-yeast breads and pastries"; "Cordials, wines, liqueurs, vodkas and other alcoholic beverages"); "Christmas Eve dishes"; "Easter dishes"; "Home-made cold cuts"; "Home-made preserves" (Fruit preserves, Vegetable preserves, Jams, Marmalades and mousses, Juices, compotes and beverages); "Home-made medicines"; "Diabetes" (Cakes, Cookies, Desserts, Meats; Fish, Vegetable dishes, Salads, Soups, Others). They are translated here to give the reader an idea of the book's range.

political and economic transformations, not even by the democratic system; which is not to mean that the locals are not open to external influence [see e.g. Part XVIII: "Tarts and pizzas"].

Father Hanich's text presents multicultural "treasures of culinary heritage" and testifies to the fact that – despite the many transformations which the culinary aspect of Silesian culture underwent in the course of the centuries as a result of various external influences and fashions – modern Silesian cuisine constitutes a solid base for the cultural identity of the native and immigrant inhabitants of the region. The guidebook implies that the current state of the culinary art in the Opole region is still indicative of a degree of cultural diversity.

Cuisine may be perceived as a very interesting topic not only in the context of the modern era. The book under analysis aptly defines the subject matter as "The Opole region in many flavours. The treasures of culinary heritage" and adds a forthright sub-heading: "2200 tested and recommended recipes for homey delicacies". My positive assessment of this book ought not to be construed as a diplomatic contestation, since it is obvious that, given the multitude of cookbooks published in recent years, it is currently very difficult to impress the readers with new material.

The analysis of the second book by Father Hanich should perhaps begin with the phrase "the appetite grows with what it feeds on". Two years after the first monograph appeared in print, the author treated his readers to a new volume containing an even larger number of recipes. This time the dishes come from a less defined region, stretching far beyond the borders of Poland. The book, entitled *Smaki polskie i opolskie. Skarby dziedzictwa kulinarnego. 2500 wypróbowanych i polecanych przepisów na przysmaki kuchni domowej* (The flavours of Poland and Opole. The treasures of culinary heritage. 2500 tested and recommended recipes for homely delicacies) introduces dishes from a number of ethnic groups. It may be regarded as an interesting example of the still-apparent culinary identity of Poles, the characteristic nature and the openness of Silesian cuisine, the multiculturalism of the contemporary inhabitants of the Opole region of Silesia and the increasingly prominent influence of other cultures, including non-European ones. The author acquired his recipes from ex-

pert cooks specialising in homely cuisine, some of whom are currently living abroad. The sheer number of recipes – 2500 – is remarkable. This collection appears to be the best testimony not only to the preferences and inclinations of the people who recommended specific dishes, but also to their open-mindedness and interest in various, sometimes quite exotic culinary novelties. It must therefore be added that a cookery book composed in this way provides a direct insight into the culinary aspect of Polish culture, demonstrating the existence of not only conservative tendencies, stability and lasting connections with the original cultural heritage, but also the presence of contamination, intermingling and the influence of various other cultures. All this leads to a single conclusion: the book presents an image of the contemporary consumer culture in Poland with a clear focus on one region – the region of Opole. My own assessment of the presented material is positive. The publication provides the reader with invaluable culinary data for comparing and contrasting, characterised by distinctive features and national or ethnic autonomy on the one hand, and by instances of modern symbiosis and the cultural unification of the recipes for specific dishes on the other. The "treasures of culinary heritage" are not only beneficial in terms of taste, but also possess social, integrative, educational and cognitive value; They are also valuable for advertising, as they promote Polish cuisine in general and the Opole region, which has original dishes and remarkable flavours to offer, in particular.

Another significant phenomenon which is apparent in Father Hanich's book and deserves analysis is directly related to the mass migration to the West. The already-mentioned social, economic, cultural and political phenomena have had much influence on the changes in traditional customs, habits and culinary preferences in contemporary Poland. As it has already been said, direct empirical examples of these tendencies may be found in cooking shows, culinary sections in many newspapers. Father Hanich's cookery guidebook takes into account all of these culturally varied, old and new authentic "flavours of Poland and Opole". This fact contributes greatly to the originality of this publication.

The two publications under analysis have yet another significant aspect that proves the methodological value of the research tools and techniques

employed by the author. In recent years, Father Hanich has been conducting exhaustive field research (surveys, interviews, participative observation) in the Opole region. In the Introduction to his first cookery book, he admitted that for this purpose he

> […] accessed [...] gourmets and housewives living in various parts of the Opole Voivodeship [...] including those employed at parsonages and both male and female monastic houses […], members of farmer's wives' associations and the Union of Rural Women of Silesia, and the members of hunting clubs located in the Opole region [Hanich 2012: 5].

Empirical data gathered using objective methods were presented in the reviewed publications along with a brief analysis, in which the author explained the principles behind editorial work on his books, the scope of his research and the techniques employed in field studies. The book is supplemented by a basic bibliography and indexes (of dishes and the authors of the recipes). The informants, whom Hanich described as the "enthusiasts of cuisine" or "practitioners of cooking", were treated with due respect – each recipe features the name of the person recommending it, adding to the authenticity of field research. The reader is provided with a well thought through, well-organised and scientifically accurate work on traditional and contemporary cuisine in the ethnically diverse region of Opole. In the Introduction to the second volume, Father Hanich states that his "cookery guidebook contains recipes acquired from practitioners of cooking, this time not only from the Opole region, but also from other parts of Poland or Poles living across the world who sent him the recipes for their favourite dishes" [Hanich 2014: no pagination (5)]. He also notes that

> due to the influence of the mass media and also to human interaction (between family members, neighbours and acquaintances), the majority of contemporary Polish households do not follow a single, homogenous and regionally pure culinary tradition. […] The introduction of some elements of other culinary traditions into local fare leads to the emergence of a new cuisine. Many of us travel frequently, either as tourists or in search of work, which brings us in contact with other nations and allows us to borrow from

> their culinary heritage. In most of our households the elements of these various traditions are so intertwined and combined that they have evolved into a new interesting culinary art [Hanich 2014: no pagination (6)].

It should be noted that the process of rapid social and cultural changes is still ongoing, and thus in many regions of Poland meals are mostly composed of regional dishes, both on weekdays and on special occasions (e.g. the Christmas Eve in regions with a dominant presence of indigenous population, for example in the so-called east belt of Poland, in the south and perhaps also in central Poland). The process of changes ought to be studied in detail. Despite the "new interesting culinary art", regional products favoured in the countries of the European Union (with the status of a Protected Geographical Indication) still have their *raison d'être* when the need arises to prove that the product that has for centuries been known to regional communities still possesses its original features. Regrettably, the open-door policy also facilitates the proliferation of unhealthy dietary habits from Europe and the rest of the world, such as the fashion for junk food. Dieticians are already voicing their alarm, e.g. identifying obesity as a feature typical of Western societies, the USA in particular. It appears that the author of *Smaki polskie i opolskie* was not consistent in his evaluation, since he presented recipes from the multicultural Opole region as a proof of the unification of culinary traditions. It is much more likely that culinary novelties in the region were accepted not as a result of frequent travels of its inhabitants, but due to the fact that the Silesians and the immigrants to the region have been living as neighbours for nearly seventy years.

The cookery guidebook entitled *Smaki polskie i opolskie. Skarby dziedzictwa kulinarnego. 2500 wypróbowanych i polecanych przepisów na przysmaki kuchni domowej* follows the structural model of the first volume.[13] It is composed of thirty basic sections and supplemented with

13 These being: "Starters" (Jellies, Sandwich butters and pastes, Pastes, Lards, Other starters); "Soups and creamy soups" (Cold soups, Creams, Vegetable and meat soups and bouillons, Fruit soups, Side dishes for soups); "Flour dishes (noodles), potato, groats and rice dishes"; "Veal"; "Poultry"; "Game"; "Lamb and kid meat dishes"; "Pork"; "Beef"; "Pâtés and meatballs"; "Mayonnaises and sauces" (Mayonnaises, Purée, Hot sauces, Fruit sauces, Cold sauces); "Semi-meat dishes" (Meat-and-veg dishes, Casseroles, Grilled dishes); "Fish" (Stuffed fish,

a “Lexicon of Culinary Terms” containing information on selected spices and preparation methods.

In lieu of a conclusion

The two large volumes of cookery book in which the “treasures of cultural heritage” transcended far beyond the traditional understanding of the term have become best-sellers in Upper Silesia. In a journal issued by his parish, Father Hanich explained that he decided to prepare and self-publish the second volume (the first one was financed from funds allocated by the EU and published by the Marshall Office of the Opole Voivodeship) in order to meet the expectations of his readers and “remedy the disappointment of those enthusiasts of home cooking who were unable to buy a copy of *Opolszczyzna w wielu smakach*”. The precious treasures of culinary recipes inspired the priest, historian and scholar Andrzej Hanich to expand his knowledge on historical and contemporary dietary habits, not only on the regional level. They were also the direct motivation for writing the present article as an analysis of not only this cookery guidebook in two parts, but also of many other aspects of traditional and contemporary culture, the changes in the content of cookbooks and in the dietary habits of Silesians and Poles.

Cooked fish, Baked fish, Fried fish, Smoked fish, Herrings, Other fish dishes); “Cooked and casseroled vegetable dishes”; “Vegetables and salads”; “Mushrooms”; “Egg dishes”; “Tarts and pizzas”; “Cakes” (Basic recipes, Brioches and fruitcakes, Sponge cakes and gateaux, Yeast cakes, Nut cakes, Fresh fruit cakes, Gingerbreads, Apple cakes, Poppyseed cakes, Cheesecakes, High-fibre cakes, Other cakes); “Desserts” (Puddings and chocolates; Desserts, Fruit salads, Alcoholic deserts, Cocktails, Soufflés and waffles); “Cookies and biscuits” (Cookies, Doughnuts, Fried dough pastries, Profiteroles and éclairs, Muffins, Other cookies served warm); “Yeast and non-yeast breads and pastries” (Yeast pastries, Other breads and non-yeast pastries); “Cordials and other alcoholic beverages” (Cordials; Liqueurs; Other beverages); “Christmas Eve and Christmas dishes”; “Easter dishes”; “Home-made cold cuts”; “Home-made preserves”; “Home-made medicines”; “Diabetes” (with 10 types of dishes); “Health and dietary advice for anaemic and undernourished convalescents and those suffering from gastroesophageal reflux disease or diseases of the liver, the bile duct and the large intestine” (with 5 groups of “recommendations” and diets).

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