

ANNA DROŹDŹ

 [HTTPS://ORCID.ORG/0000-0002-4178-154X](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4178-154X)

ANNA.DROZDZ@US.EDU.PL

University of Silesia in Katowice

Faculty of Humanities

Institute of Cultural Sciences

# “Young people don’t even know the dish...” Disappearing day-to-day dishes in the memories of settlers in Lower Silesia Analysis of selected materials of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas

„Młodzi ludzie w ogóle nie znają potrawy...”  
– zanikające dania codzienne we wspomnieniach  
osadników na Dolnym Śląsku. Analiza wybranych  
materiałów Polskiego Atlasu Etnograficznego

**Summary:** The purpose of this article is to provide an overview of the state of knowledge of age-old foods brought to Lower Silesia after the end of World War II by settlers and resettlers from the eastern corners of the country and the Eastern Borderlands. The studied region is a post-migration area, within which – in the post-war period – there were processes of reevaluation, adopting or abandoning elements of the new and found cultural heritage. These processes also involved culinary heritage. The issue of culinary traditions surfaced quite often during conversations with elderly people, who in their recollections reached back to the pre-war period in their hometowns and to the first post-war years after resettlement. The present discussion will focus primarily on liquid dishes – soups/pottages, less often on thick and baked dishes. What distinguished them is the fact that they were still prepared a few years after resettlement, but nevertheless, gradually lost their popularity and eventually were abandoned. Interesting details on the subject are provided by source materials collected during field research, as part of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas project. The source basis will be the information obtained in the questionnaire “People’s material culture.”

**Keywords:** Lower Silesia, old dishes, pottage, soup, culinary traditions, post-migration areas, Polish Ethnographic Atlas

---

**Streszczenie:** Celem artykułu jest przybliżenie stanu wiedzy na temat potraw dawnych, przywiezionych po zakończeniu II wojny światowej na Dolny Śląsk przez osadników i przesiedleńców ze wschodnich rubieży kraju oraz Kresów Wschodnich. Badany region jest obszarem postmigracyjnym, w obrębie którego w okresie powojennym dochodziło do procesów przewartościowania, przejmowania lub zarzucania elementów dziedzictwa kulturowego przywiezionego, jak i zastanego. Procesy te dotyczyły również dziedzictwa kulinarnego. Problematyka tradycji kulinarnych dość często pojawiała się w trakcie rozmów z osobami starszymi, które w swych wspomnieniach sięgały do okresu przedwojennego w rodzinnych stronach oraz do pierwszych lat powojennych po przesiedleniu. Niniejsze rozważania będą dotyczyły przede wszystkim dań płynnych – polewek/zup, rzadziej potraw gęstych i pieczonych. Tym, co je wyróżniało jest fakt, iż jeszcze w kilka lat po przesiedleniu były przygotowywane, niemniej stopniowo traciły swą popularność, by w końcu ulec zarzuceniu. Interesujące wiadomości na ten temat przynoszą materiały źródłowe, zebrane w czasie badań terenowych, w ramach projektu Polskiego Atlasu Etnograficznego. Podstawą źródłową będą wiadomości zgromadzone w oparciu o kwestionariusz „Ludowa kultura materialna”.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Dolny Śląsk, potrawy dawne, polewka, zupa, tradycje kulinarne, obszary postmigracyjne, Polski Atlas Etnograficzny

## **Introduction. The social and political situation in Poland after World War II**

In Central and Eastern Europe, the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by several notable events that had a fundamental impact on the lives of millions of people. Allied decisions at the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences following the end of World War II resulted in large-scale population movements.

In Poland, indigenous peoples were expelled from lands that fell within its borders after the war. This applied to areas along the western and northern borders: Silesia, Lubusz Land, Western Pomerania, Eastern Pomerania, and Warmia and Mazury.<sup>1</sup> Residents from the Eastern Borderlands, primarily from Volhynia and Eastern

---

1 In the period before World War II, these territories belonged to the Third Reich. After 1945, when they became part of the Polish state, they were called the Recovered Territories – this had a propaganda dimension indicating the right of Poles to occupy and settle them. Today, the name Western and Northern Lands is used to refer to the region. See J. Jasiński, “Kwestia pojęcia Ziemie Odzyskane,” [in:] *Ziemie Odzyskane/Ziemie Zachodnie i Północne 1945–2005. 60 lat w granicach państwa polskiego*, ed. A. Sakson, Poznań 2006, pp. 15–25.

Galicia, were resettled in its place. Voluntary settlers usually arrived from the central and southern territories of the country, while forced resettlers were pressured to leave their small homelands in the eastern regions of pre-war Poland.<sup>2</sup> Various factors influenced the newcomers' decision to relocate. These were both migrations resulting from the desire to improve their material situation and forced migrations dictated by decisions of the communist authorities.<sup>3</sup>

A major change of residence, very often hundreds of kilometers away from family homes, not infrequently in localities with different histories and cultural landscapes, in the neighborhood of complete strangers, entailed socio-cultural consequences. The Western and Northern Lands, which experienced an almost complete exchange of population during this period, acquired the characteristics of a multicultural area. On the one hand, the movement of groups of thousands of people was linked to the transfer of their cultural norms and traditions to the new place of residence, on the other – the inevitable contact with the cultural heritage of others. The consequences of the aforementioned processes and the multicultural character of the regions in question were also reflected in culinary customs.

The rural culinary culture that took shape in Lower Silesia in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was distinguished by its extraordinary diversity, resulting from the fact that the area acquired multicultural characteristics during the mentioned period. It was the result of the socio-cultural transformations that took place during that time. The confrontation of the newcomers with the few indigenous people who stayed behind forced them to re-evaluate their own cultural norms, including culinary habits, and to respond to the newly learned recipes brought by others. It was during this time, in a relatively small area, that one could come across flavors representing not only most of the country's regions, but also those found beyond its borders. It was not uncommon for these to be age-old dishes. In the post-war period, for a fairly short time, the entire spectrum of these dishes existed side by side. As the living situation of settlers and resettlers stabilized, their menus also modernized and standardized.

---

2 A. Paprot-Wielopolska, *Żuławy i Powiśle. Kreowanie tożsamości lokalnych i regionalnych po 1989 roku*, Warszawa 2018; J. Misztal, "Wysiedlenia i repatriacja obywateli polskich z ZSRR a wysiedlenia i przesiedlenia Niemców z Polski – próba bilansu," [in:] *Utracona ojczyzna. Przymusowe wysiedlenia, deportacje i przesiedlenia jako wspólne doświadczenie*, eds. H. Orłowski, A. Sakson, Poznań 1996, pp. 45–74.

3 Andrew Saxon noted that migrations were diverse in nature. He lists intra- and inter-state migrations, spontaneous and organized, individual and group, voluntary, semi-voluntary and forced, permanent and temporary. See A. Sakson, "Socjologiczne problemy wysiedleń," [in:] *Utracona ojczyzna. Przymusowe wysiedlenia, deportacje i przesiedlenia jako wspólne doświadczenie*, eds. H. Orłowski, A. Sakson, Poznań 1996, pp. 148–149.

In this study, I will attempt to shed light on the memories of selected recipes of dishes and their preparation brought by settlers and resettlers from the eastern corners of the country and the Eastern Borderlands. I will focus primarily on those that were still prepared a few years after settlers arrived in Lower Silesia, which, however, in the opinion of the inhabitants of the surveyed villages, belonged to the group of old dishes that for various reasons were vanishing. These will be mostly cooked dishes – in the form of pottages/soups.

Source materials collected during field research as part of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas (hereafter: PAE) project provide interesting insights on this subject. I will analyze this issue on the basis of source materials collected in the villages that were PAE research sites, in the territory of the current Lower Silesian province, based on the questionnaire "People's material culture." These are villages inhabited mostly by immigrant populations. In only three of them did the researchers note that few indigenous families remained in place. These records are interesting in that they have not yet been analyzed in depth and with the specifics of post-migration areas in mind. Compiling the statements of the settlers reveals not only their culinary traditions brought from their hometowns, but also how they value them against foreign traditions and patterns coming from the neighboring towns under the influence of modernization.

### **Western and Northern Lands in the materials of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas**

Beginning in 1945, regular research visits were launched as part of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas project. They covered more than 300 villages in Poland within the borders established after World War II, of which about 1/3 were located in the Western and Northern Territories.<sup>4</sup> The collected material is stored in the archive of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas, which is currently housed in Cieszyn. Some of it is available on-line at <http://www.archiwumpae.us.edu.pl/>

---

4 A detailed discussion of the issues related to the emergence of the concept of atlas research and the formation of publishing plans, as well as the temporal and spatial scope of research can be found in the following texts: J. Bohdanowicz, "Polski Atlas Etnograficzny – wykładnia zadań i metod pracy," [in:] *Komentarze do Polskiego Atlasu Etnograficznego*, vol. 1: *Rolnictwo i hodowla*, part 1, ed. J. Bohdanowicz, Wrocław 1993, pp. 7–49; A. Pieńczak, Z. Kłodnicki, J. Koźmińska, *Polski Atlas Etnograficzny – historia, osiągnięcia, perspektywy badawcze*, Katowice 2017; A. Pieńczak, "The Digital Platform of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas – From Idea to Implementation", *Český lid. Etnologický časopis (Ethnological Journal)* 2018, no. 4/105, pp. 459–473. Due to the fact that there is an exhaustive literature available on the aforementioned issues, I will not elaborate on this topic here.

The premise of these explorations was the systematic collection of information that would allow the reconstruction of the successive stages of the development of folk culture in its regional variants. The collected data was also to form the basis for ethnographic mapping, showing its spatial variation. Almost every questionnaire-notebook contained instructions on how to conduct the research. According to Józef Gajek, the originator and long-time coordinator of this project, their application helped obtain results of top quality. The high degree of detail in these guidelines left no room for any dialogue with the respondent and the introduction of subjective conclusions from the interactions occurring during the interview.<sup>5</sup> The priority was to obtain such information that could be used in ethnogeographic analysis. Taking cues from the questionnaire on transportation and land communication, for example, he stressed that the following details should be included first and foremost:

The existence or absence of the phenomenon under study in a particular village a) at the time of the study, b) or in the past. This requires determining as precisely as possible: a) whether the phenomenon is old or new; b) whether it is vital or obsolete, vanishing, sporadic; whether it occurs frequently or rarely; c) details on when it appeared, began to disappear or disappeared.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to determining the origins and chronology of the appearance of certain elements, they needed to be classified and systematized,<sup>7</sup> and linguistic issues<sup>8</sup> had to be presented.

As a separate topic, the author of the questionnaire singled out phenomena occurring after World War II in the northern and western regions of Poland. Many of the questionnaires included abbreviated questions that addressed this subject, for example:

Problems in the Western Territories. The idea is, as before, to capture the phenomena associated with the great migration after World War II. Thus, it is necessary to answer the following questions: a) what were the forms and functions of the phenomena the settlers found after arriving in the Western Territories? b) In terms of the phenomenon under study, what did they bring with them and from which locations of their former residence? c) which of the found forms were adopted

---

5 For more on this topic, see: A. Drożdź, *Re/konstrukcje codzienności. Przeszłość w materiałach źródłowych Polskiego Atlasu Etnograficznego*, Gdańsk 2018.

6 J. Gajek, "Transport i komunikacja lądowa. Kwestionariusz nr 5," *Archiwum Etnograficzne* 1960, no. 22, pp. 8–9.

7 *Ibidem*, pp. 9–10.

8 *Ibidem* pp. 10–11.

a/ without change, b/ with changes – what kind of changes? d) which forms brought are preserved in the new environment – or influence the formation of new forms?<sup>9</sup>

The aforementioned regions were marked by a variety of cultural phenomena and processes resulting from their post-migration specificity. Without taking into account their contemporary socio-political context and the individual narratives of the residents of the localities under study, it was impossible to draw valuable conclusions. In turn, giving voice to the main actors of the research situation – the researcher and the respondent – negated the possibility of ethnogeographical interpretation of the information. Thus, on the maps of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas, the mentioned areas have little representation. Researchers dealt with the challenge posed by the territory in question in different ways. On the one hand, they were equipped with extremely detailed guidelines for research situations. On the other, they constantly experienced – without preparation – the peculiarities of the multicultural environment. This cognitive dissonance was reflected in the quality of the field materials. Despite a number of shortcomings<sup>10</sup> resulting largely from the methodology of the information-gathering process itself, as well as the theoretical assumptions made earlier, the source materials collected in the PAE archive still constitute an interesting and so far, under-analyzed, source of knowledge about the area in question and the processes taking place there.

This text is based on records made in twenty-one villages – research sites in Lower Silesia. These are the following villages: Poświętne (near Bolesławiec), Stary Węgliniec (near Zgorzelec), Szyszkowa (near Lubań Śląski), Górczyca (near Lwówek Śląski), Modła (near Głogów), Ogrodziska (near Lubin), Słup (near Jawor), Lubomin (near Walbrzych), Ryczeń (near Góra Śląska), Wrzosa (near Wołów), Piersno (near Środa Śląska), Książnica (near Dzierżonów), Wilcza (near Nowa Ruda), Idzików (near Bystrzyca Kłodzka), Pawłów Trzebnicki and Bukowice (near Trzebnica), Polanowice (near Wrocław), Zielenice (near Strzelin), Starczówek (near Ząbkowice Śląskie), Guzowice (near Milicz) and Zawidowice (near Oleśnica). In almost all of the above-mentioned villages, native residents were displaced. In only several of them did a handful of indigenous families remain. Successive waves of settlers arrived in their place. For the most part, these were people from eastern and central Poland (the vicinity of Rzeszów, Kraków, Łódź and Poznań) and the eastern lands of the Second Polish Republic (from the Tarnopol, Stanisławów and Lwów provinces).

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> E.g., the lack of complete information regarding the place where the respondents came from, and by extension, the region from which the tradition in question originated, or combining many statements with one/two pieces of general information, even though at the time of the research, the village was inhabited by people who came from at least several different regions.

Some of the recorded statements came from people born in Podlasie, the Vilnius area and Belarus. What characterized the villages surveyed is their great diversity. The relatively small villages were populated by families from different regions of Poland – past and present.

The field explorations discussed here were conducted between the late 1960s and 1980s.<sup>11</sup> The issue of old foods appeared during conversations with elderly people, who in their recollections reached back to the pre-war period spent in their hometowns and the period after the resettlement, i.e., the first post-war years. Less frequently, they concern reproduced memories – those of parents cited by their adult children. A peculiarity of the materials relating to the selected issue is that they come almost exclusively from resettlers who arrived in Lower Silesia from the Eastern Borderlands. They mention primarily foods cooked in liquid form – pottages/soups, and to a small extent, stews.

### **Pottages/soup in the memories of resettlers and settlers in Lower Silesia**

In the post-war period in Lower Silesia, pottages and soups were extremely popular. There was great diversity in the way these terms were defined in this area. This probably stemmed from the different culinary traditions practiced by the local population and the post-war settlers, as well as the fact that the term “pottage” (“polewka”) was disappearing and was increasingly replaced by the term “soup” (“zupa”).<sup>12</sup> The records made during the research indicated that the semantic scope of the term “pottage” was narrowing, and it increasingly came to mean inferior dishes.

These dishes existed in the shared consciousness of the region's residents both as a vivid memory of the flavors typical of the newcomers' former hometowns, and as one of the essential elements building the contemporary menu. Among the characteristics of the group of dishes in question were their great variety and the dynamics of the changes taking place within them. Despite the difficulties, it was possible

---

11 The research was conducted based on *Kwestionariusz – notatnik dla kartograficznych studiów etnograficznych: Ludowa kultura materialna (zagadnienia wybrane)*, compiled by J. Gajek, Wrocław 1964.

12 In the village of Szyszkowa, the researcher recorded that “young people don't even know what a pottage would be.” In Zielenice, on the other hand, in addition to information stating that pottage and soup mean the same dish, there were some that indicated a wide variety in this regard: “polewka – flour is poured into boiling milk; polewka – flour is fried and added to the soup with pepper and salt; polewka – grease, onions, meat from a rooster, poured with water and cream.” This leads to the conclusion that already at the time of the research, it was difficult to determine clear ranges of meaning for both terms. The clash of several culinary traditions in one place highlighted the fluidity of these meanings.

to distinguish several categories of this type of dish. The starting point was their essential ingredient: animal-based products – meat, fat, dairy; grain products, including flour and fermented flour as well as various kinds of groats; and finally, vegetables, including pickles.

The first category was pottages/soups with meat as the base ingredient. These were primarily meat stock – so-called “rosolanki”<sup>13</sup> and “juchy”/“juszki.”<sup>14</sup> It was common to use poultry for their preparation, slightly less often beef. Some dishes required the addition of milk. In Ogrodziska, respondents mentioned a dish called “maczanka,” “made of sour milk with the addition of sweet milk and cream – for soaking dumplings.”<sup>15</sup> In Starczówek, on the other hand, “borscht made from whey or sour milk” was cooked.

Another group of cooked liquid dishes called for flour and fermented flour.<sup>16</sup> These included: “zur,”<sup>17</sup> “kisiel,”<sup>18</sup> “kwasza,”<sup>19</sup> “kulesza”<sup>20</sup> and “czyr.”<sup>21</sup> Stories relating to these dishes point to their age-old character. Though consumed in Lower Silesia at the time of the research, they were starting to disappear and were mostly the culinary heritage of older resettlers and settlers.

The most common of all the dishes mentioned was “zur” – sour soup. It was known and consumed by both displaced persons from eastern and central Poland (post-war) and the Eastern Borderlands of the Second Polish Republic. In all the towns surveyed, the term “zur” was used to describe a dish prepared from sour rye flour,<sup>22</sup> less often from oat flour.<sup>23</sup> Resettlers from the Eastern Borderlands and some

---

13 Noted in the villages of: Stary Węgliniec, Szyszkowa, Górczyca, Polanowice.

14 Noted in the villages of: Lubomin, Wilcza, Pawłów Trzebnicki, Starczówek.

15 “Maczanka” was also mentioned by residents of the villages of Lubomin and Idzików.

16 The latter are usually distinguished by their sour taste, so they may also belong to the group of sour foods.

17 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Stary Węgliniec, Szyszkowa, Górczyca, Modła, Ogrodziska, Lubomin, Słup, Wrzosey, Wilcza, Idzików, Starczówek, Guzowice, Bukowice, and Zawidowice.

18 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Górczyca, Ryczeń, Piersno.

19 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Stary Węgliniec, Szyszkowa, Górczyca, Słup, Piersno, Idzików, Zielenice, Starczówek.

20 Noted in the villages of: Ogrodziska, Lubomin, Piersno, Zielenice, Starczówek.

21 Noted in the villages of: Lubomin, Piersno, Starczówek, Zawidowice.

22 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Stary Węgliniec, Szyszkowa, Górczyca, Modła, Ogrodziska, Lubomin, Książnica Śląska, Wilcza, Idzików, Pawłów Trzebnicki and Bukowice, Polanowice, Starczówek, and Guzowice.

23 Noted in the villages of Ryczeń and Wrzosey.

settlers used interchangeably the name flour borscht for this pottage/soup.<sup>24</sup> In the villages surveyed, the term "kisiel" was also used for a dish prepared with fermented flour. In Stary Węgliniec, villagers specified the difference between the aforementioned dishes as follows: "żur is thin, and kisiel is thick."<sup>25</sup> In the village of Modła, on the other hand, the researcher noted: "The elderly repatriates from the Lwow province used the word 'kisiel' instead of the word 'żur' – they think it is the same thing."<sup>26</sup> In villages where the newly-arrived population had no contact with the autochthons, respondents expressed the opinion that the latter did not know such pottage/soup and did not consume it. People who got to know the local population after arriving in Lower Silesia had different knowledge. Their narratives included information about such a dish – called "Sauerteigsuppe" – commonly consumed before World War II.<sup>27</sup>

At the time of the research, respondents living in Lower Silesian villages indicated that this dish was vanishing and was prepared increasingly less often by people of the younger generation.<sup>28</sup> More often, the dish appeared on the menus of older people who remembered foods common in their hometowns. In Szyszkowa, the researcher observed: "After World War II, settlers from Tarnopol, Stanisławów and Lwow provinces sporadically cooked żur. Nowadays they do not cook this dish,"<sup>29</sup> or in the village of Słup: "They eat it sporadically – the phenomenon is disappearing. Żur is cooked only by older housewives from Tarnopol, Stanisławów and Lwow provinces." Probably before arriving in Lower Silesia, the pottage/soup in question was customarily eaten in winter (less often in summer). This practice continued in some villages after World War II: "Żur is eaten more often in autumn and winter, about twice a week,"<sup>30</sup> "it is eaten rarely, only in winter,"<sup>31</sup> "consumption depends on individual preferences. It is eaten more often in autumn and winter,"<sup>32</sup> or "Nowadays it is eaten less and less often, in summer almost not at all, in winter a little

24 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Słup, Piersno, Polanowice, and Zawidowice – information came from settlers from Częstochowa; Pawłów Trzebnicki – information came from settlers from Łódź.

25 A similar distinction was noted in the village of Wrzosy.

26 Similar information was noted in the village of Ryczeń.

27 Noted in the villages of: Lubomin, Guzowice, Bukowice.

28 Noted in the villages of: Stary Węgliniec, Modła, Ogrodziska, Idzików, Bukowice.

29 Similar information was noted in the village of Górczyca.

30 Noted in the village of Książnica Śląska.

31 Noted in the village of Wilcza.

32 Noted in the village of Pawłów Trzebnicki.

more often."<sup>33</sup> In Starczówek, the researcher recorded that "the elderly mention that they used to eat it very often, and now, in the Western Territories, almost not at all." Respondents pointed to a few reasons for abandoning the dish. Some emphasized the change in daily practices and the direction of land cultivation. In the village of Lubomin, interviewees justified the abandonment of preparing "żur" as follows: "It was cooked more often when bread was baked at home, then sourdough was used to sour the flour. Today, żur is rarely eaten anymore." In Ryczeń, on the other hand, it was pointed out that "in the past, it was eaten often, nowadays it is not cooked because there are no oats (oats had to be ground on querns)."

As I indicated earlier, the pottage/soup in question was prepared using water and fermented flour (also known as "żur"). This essential ingredient was most often obtained by leaving rye flour, soaked in warm water, in a warm place overnight. To speed up the process, bread crust was added.<sup>34</sup> In the recollections of older respondents, a slightly different way of making "żur" is provided. It involved home-baked bread. In this recipe, "they used to sour [the flour] by adding the dough from the kneading trough or bread crusts, and garlic."<sup>35</sup> Using oat flour meant that the method of obtaining said "żur" was also different. In the village of Ryczeń, sourdough was prepared from oat flour as follows: "one boils oats, dries them and grinds them, this oat flour is poured over with boiled warm water, ensiled and strained, the husks are discarded and this white water from oat flour is boiled. One eats sour soup with bread." The pottage/soup cooked with the fermented flour was characterized by a distinct sour taste. The additives used determined whether the dish would acquire a stronger or, on the contrary, mild flavor. The former was achieved with garlic, while the latter with cream.<sup>36</sup>

Another vanishing dish, mentioned briefly in reminiscences, was "kisiel." It was a dish similar to "żur," generally prepared from oat flour, quite common in eastern Poland and the Eastern Borderlands.<sup>37</sup> Interviewees from Tarnopol and Lwow

33 Noted in the village of Guzowice.

34 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Słup, Pawłów Trzebnicki, Polanowice.

35 Noted in the village of Stary Węgliniec. A similar method was used in the villages of: Szyszkowa, Górczyca, Lubomin, Książnica Śląska, and Bukowice. In the indicated villages, the disappearance of bread baking in the new place of residence determined the abandonment of making "żur" and eating this dish.

36 In Polanowice, resettlers from the Vilnius area prepared this dish as follows: "Rye flour is poured over with water to make it sour, the sour liquid is mixed with water and poured over with cream."

37 In the past, it was prevalent over a much wider area, including Rus', as mentioned, for example, by Aleksander Brückner: "Kisiel ruski, our żur ('our żyr and ruski kisiel' in W. Potocki) made of oat flour soured overnight, somewhat thicker than żur; both fasting

provinces noted that they knew this dish, but no longer made it.<sup>38</sup> In several localities, interviewees gave details of how the dish in question was prepared. In Ryczeń, "Kisiel was made from oats in the following way: oats were thrashed in a 'stępa',<sup>39</sup> thrown into the embers, then this flour was poured with warm water, strained through a sieve and this liquid was boiled. After it was boiled, it solidified like pudding. It was sliced and eaten with pears, sometimes topped with oil." In Wrzosey, people who came from across the Bug River and from Polesie pointed out several variations of this dish: "thick kisiel – flour is poured with warm water, left overnight, water is added and boiled; oat flour is poured with warm water, left overnight, the next day it is strained and this water is boiled with salt, you eat it with milk or poppy seeds or with sweet water; 'Parysz' – rye and buckwheat flour, with a bit of rye, steeped, poured over with water. After 24 hours, boiled (sweet and sour taste)." They usually prepared this dish on their own 2–3 times a year.

Other variants of the dish in question were less common. In the recollections of settlers from Zielenice, "kisiel" was one of the dishes eaten during the fasting period before Easter. The peculiarity of this recipe was the addition of beets: "Kisiel was made of leavening from wholemeal flour; the leavening was mixed with water, passed through a sieve, and beets were added – this is never made here anymore." In Piersno, a dish with similar ingredients was called "kwasza": "rye bran and rye dough are poured over with water and left for one day. It's the base for cooking barszcz with the addition of beets." It appeared on the menu exceptionally, in situations when the farm ran out of pickled beets. Also in Starczówek, it was reported: "kisiel from beets – well-known in my hometown, but no longer made."

The sweet variety of "kisiel" was mentioned during discussions in two villages. In the village of Ryczeń, settlers mentioned that "kisiel" made from cranberries used to be consumed in Belarus. On the other hand, the narrative recorded in Polanowice was about the Vilnius area: "Kisiel – water with juice or cranberries; it is boiled and potato flour diluted in a small amount of cold water is poured into the boiling water. Together, it is boiled with sugar." As interviewees emphasized, this dish appeared on Sunday and holiday menus.

An equally old dish, known only to resettlers from the Eastern Borderlands, was "kwasza." At the time of the research, it was no longer prepared, and it persisted only in the memories of older respondents. It was noted most often by those who came

dishes and hated because of their vile taste and constant repetition." A. Brückner, *Encyclopedia staropolska*, vol. 2: K–M, Warszawa 1939, p. 585.

<sup>38</sup> Noted in the villages of: Stary Węgliniec, Modła, Ogrodziska, Lubomin, Wilcza, Pawłów Trzebnicki, Guzowice, Idzików.

<sup>39</sup> "Stępa" – an instrument for thrashing, grinding, or crushing grain, a type of primitive quern. See: <https://sjp.pwn.pl/doroszewski/stepa;5501106.html> [accessed on: June 20, 2023].

to Lower Silesia from the vicinity of Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwow and Volhynia. Settlers from central Poland and autochthons did not make such a dish at all. From the narratives of the resettlers, it appears that in earlier times (i.e., immediately after they arrived in Lower Silesia), the older housewives still made it. In Szyszkowa, the researcher observed that "they do not make it now, but right after settling, this dish was sometimes cooked." Similar information was obtained in Górczyca: "Nowadays this dish is disappearing, they hardly ever make it; right after the settlement, it was made by older housewives."

"Kwasza" was a type of pottage usually prepared from ensiled buckwheat flour,<sup>40</sup> rye flour<sup>41</sup> or a mixture: "made from buckwheat flour with the addition of half or 1/3 rye flour."<sup>42</sup> Taste-wise, it resembled "żur" or "kisiel"; also the ways to speed up the fermentation process were similar to the aforementioned dishes. An older method was to use leftover sourdough<sup>43</sup> from the kneading trough, while a slightly newer method was to add bread crusts to water and flour:<sup>44</sup> "Back in the day, for souring they used the dough from the kneading trough, but now the older housewives who do this sour the dough with bread crusts."<sup>45</sup> It can be assumed that there were more variants of this soup in the past, as may be evidenced by the descriptions, already scarce at the time of the research, that explain slightly different ways of making it. In the village of Piersno, one of the respondents "only heard her father say they used to do this: rye bran and rye dough was poured over with water and left in a clay pot for one day – you used it to cook barszcz with beets." In the village of Starczówek, on the other hand, the dish prepared on the basis of sour rye flour was sweetened.

The pottage/soup called "kulesza" was known in several Lower Silesian villages. This dish, both in terms of its ingredients and consistency, shared common roots with the southern European dish called "mamalyga." In Poland's southeastern edges, it was found, for instance, in the form of thick Hutsul "kulesza."<sup>46</sup> The tradition of

---

40 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Stary Węgliniec, and Górczyca.

41 Noted in the villages of: Lubomin, Piersno, and Starczówek.

42 Noted in the villages: Szyszkowa and Słup. Similarly, in the village of Zielenice, the following recipe was recorded: "use rye and buckwheat flours, mix, brew with hot water, put in a warm place, cover, after two days boil."

43 Noted in the villages of Szyszkowa and Górczyca.

44 Noted in the villages of Poświętne and Górczyca.

45 Noted in the village of Słup.

46 Nowadays one can find at least a few recipes on the internet for preparing this dish, such as: <https://www.hajduczeknaturalnie.pl/huculska-kulesza-mamalyga-bryndza/> [accessed on: March 24, 2023].

making it in the surveyed villages arrived there together with resettled families. Its archaic nature may be evidenced by the residual information relating to its ingredients and recipe, as well as inaccuracies encountered in this regard. According to the recorded statements, in most cases, the basic ingredient was corn flour.<sup>47</sup> Only in Ryczeń was "kulesza" called a type of "krupnik," which was cooked from barley groats. In villages where some residents probably still knew the taste of this dish, they provided details on how to prepare it. In Piersno, it was made "thick with corn flour, which was cooked in milk with salt or water." In Starczówek, interviewees reported that "kulesza" was cooked only with milk. Its ingredients were similar to "czyr," only its consistency was thicker. With regard to the dish in question, its density varied considerably. As a rule, it could be described as a type of very thick pottage/soup, while some narratives suggested that its texture was different. In Zielenice, it was described as "a thick, baked dish made of corn flour."

A fairly well-known group of dishes (to both the younger and oldest interviewees) were pottages/soups, whose distinguishing feature was the dough and so-called "lane ciasto" – dough drops cooked with water or milk. They were usually referred to by the name "zacierka" or "ścieranka." The aforementioned "czyr" also belonged to this group. In Lower Silesia, it was mentioned by interlocutors coming from the southeastern borderlands of Poland.<sup>48</sup> This dish was still cooked by the residents of the surveyed villages a few years after the resettlement, which made it possible to record several recipes. They suggest that it was a dish of a thin consistency, usually cooked in milk, with the addition of, for example, noodles (although it could be flour alone). In Zawidowice, "flour is mashed with eggs and poured over hot milk." In Zielenice, on the other hand, "czyr is noodles finely tossed into milk."

Another group of dishes was based on various types of groats cooked in water or milk. This category of dishes included "tłókno," whose main ingredient was roasted groats, which was indicated as a staple in the old Slavs' cuisine.<sup>49</sup> At the time of conducting research in Lower Silesia, knowledge of this dish was extremely rare. The method of its preparation was brought by resettlers from the village of Prużana (today's Belarus), who settled in Ryczeń. The interviewees gave the following method of its preparation: "when you make barley groats in querns, you get flour. This flour – or 'tłukno' – was poured over with water, made and eaten raw. This was known in Prużana. You ate it without any side dishes."

---

47 Noted in the villages of: Zielenice, Starczówek, Piersno, and Lubomin.

48 Noted in the villages of: Lubomin, Piersno, Zielenice, Starczówek, and Zawidowice.

49 Information on this subject can be found, among others, in: H. Lis, P. Lis, *Kuchnia Słowian. O żywności, potrawach i nie tylko...*, Kraków 2009; K. Moszyński, *Kultura ludowa Słowian*, vol. I: *Kultura materialna*, Warszawa 1967.

The most common element determining the flavor of the dish in question was a specific vegetable, somewhat less often, a whole set of vegetables (referred to as “zupa jarzynowa” – vegetable soup). In narratives recorded in Lower Silesian villages, a whole spectrum of different pottages/soups made on the basis of a specific vegetable were listed. Among those mentioned, tomatoes, cucumbers, peas, beans and sorrel appeared most often. This group also included mushroom soup, which was very popular in the studied area. However, the high prevalence of some selected vegetables in Polish culinary traditions meant that the number of cooked liquid dishes using them was somewhat higher. The vegetables in question were beets, white cabbage and potatoes. The aforementioned vegetables appeared in pottages/soups in pickled form (or were served sour), but dishes in which they were not processed in this way were equally common.

A common liquid dish made from beets was “barszcz” – borscht. It was a pottage/soup prepared using water from pickled beets. At the time of the research, it was mentioned in almost all the villages visited.<sup>50</sup> In Wrzosey, the name “barszcz” was applied to many pottages/soups with a sour taste: “barszcz – from beets; czorny borszcz – liver, a piece of meat, a little vinegar; borszcz – from potatoes; borszcz – from sorrel. Each borszcz must be soured.” Piersno villagers, on the other hand, cooked two types of “barszcz”: “Barszcz – pickled beets, water, water from pickled beets, dill, meat, fat or bones, onions, sour cream, eaten with potatoes or bread; beets have been pickled by slicing and putting them into a barrel and pouring them over with water. Barszcz – the sweet kind needs vinegar, cream, onions, and beans on the side.” The resettlement of people from eastern Poland to Lower Silesia often led to a clash of different cultural traditions, including culinary norms and traditions. In such a confrontation, some – more archaic – recipes lost their importance and gradually faded. In Zielenice, such a process took place in the case of older ways of preparing “barszcz”: “Barszcz – you pickle beets in a barrel (for 1 week), beets are sliced. Here, you don't make barszcz like this anymore. Here, you make barszcz like this: beets finely chopped, juice from pickled cucumbers or apples or vinegar, tomato, add cream, salt, water and boil. You eat it with potatoes or bread.”

Like beets, cabbage was also used for culinary purposes, in several ways. The most popular was a pottage/soup made from sauerkraut – “kapuśniak,”<sup>51</sup> somewhat less common was a dish cooked using the liquid from the pickled vegetable – “kwaśnica.”<sup>52</sup>

---

50 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Stary Węgliniec, Szyszkowa, Górczyca, Modła, Ogrodziska, Słup, Lubomin, Idzików, Polanowice, Guzowice, Bukowice and Zawidowice.

51 Noted in the villages of: Poświętne, Stary Węgliniec, Szyszkowa, Modła, Słup, Ryczeń, Książnica Śląska, Wilcza, Idzików, Pawłów Trzebnicki and Bukowice, Polanowice, Zielenice, and Guzowice.

52 Noted in the village of Polanowice.

**TABLE 1.** List of pottages/soups prepared in families of settlers who arrived in Lower Silesia after 1945

The base ingredient of the pottage/soup	Name of the dish	The locality where the dish was recorded after 1945	Place of origin of the respondents
meat	rosolanka	Górczyca	settlers – eastern Poland
		Polanowice	–
		Stary Węgliniec	–
		Szyszkowa	settlers – Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwow provinces
	jucha/juszka	Lubomin	settlers – from across the Bug River
		Pawłów Trzebnicki	resettlers – Tarnopol province, Volhynia
		Starczówek	–
Wilcza		–	
milk	maczanka	Idzików	–
		Lubomin	settlers – from across the Bug River
		Ogrodziska	resettlers – Lwow province
	barszcz made from whey or sour milk	Starczówek	–
	flour and fermented flour	żur	Bukowice
Górczyca			settlers – eastern Poland
Guzowice			–
Idzików			–
Książnica Śląska			–
Lubomin			settlers – from across the Bug River

The base ingredient of the pottage/soup	Name of the dish	The locality where the dish was recorded after 1945	Place of origin of the respondents
		Modła	settlers – Lwow province
		Ogrodziska	–
		Pawłów Trzebnicki	settlers – Łódź province
		Piersno	–
		Polanowice	settlers – Vilnius area
		Poświętne	–
		Ryczeń	–
		Słup	resettlers – Lwow, Tarnopol, Stanisławów provinces
		Starczówek	–
		Stary Węgliniec	–
		Szyszkowa	resettlers – Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwow provinces
		Wilcza	–
		Wrzosa	–
		Zawidowice	settlers – Częstochowa province
		kisiel	Górczyca
	Guzowice		resettlers – Tarnopol, Lwow provinces
	Idzików		resettlers – eastern Poland
	Lubomin		settlers – from across the Bug River
	Modła		resettlers – Lwow
	Ogrodziska	resettlers – Lwow	
Pawłów Trzebnicki	resettlers – Tarnopol, Volhynia		
Piersno	–		

The base ingredient of the pottage/soup	Name of the dish	The locality where the dish was recorded after 1945	Place of origin of the respondents	
		Polanowice	settlers – Vilnius area	
		Poświętne	–	
		Ryczeń	resettlers – Lwow province, Belarus	
		Starczówek	–	
		Stary Węgliniec	–	
		Wilcza	–	
		Wrzosa	settlers from across the Bug River and Polesia	
		Zielenice	–	
		kwasza	Górczyca	–
			Idzików	resettlers – eastern Poland
			Lubomin	settlers – from across the Bug River
			Piersno	–
			Poświętne	–
			Słup	resettlers – Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwow provinces
Starczówek	–			
Stary Węgliniec	resettlers – Tarnopol, Lwow provinces			
kulesza	Szyszkowa	resettlers – Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwow provinces		
	Zielenice	–		
	Lubomin	settlers – from across the Bug River		

The base ingredient of the pottage/soup	Name of the dish	The locality where the dish was recorded after 1945	Place of origin of the respondents
		Ogrodziska	settlers – eastern Poland
		Piersno	–
		Ryczeń	–
		Starczówek	–
		Zielenice	–
	czyr	Lubomin	settlers – from across the Bug River
		Piersno	–
		Starczówek	–
		Zawidowice	settlers – Krynica
		Zielenice	–
goats	tlókno	Ryczeń	settlers – the village of Próżana (Belarus)
pickled beet	barszcz	Bukowice	resettlers – eastern provinces of Poland settlers – Łódź province
		Stary Węgliniec	–
		Szyszkowa	settlers – Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwow provinces
		Górczyca	–
		Guzowice	–
		Idzików	–
		Lubomin	settlers – from across the Bug River
		Modła	resettlers – Lwow province settlers – Rzeszów, Kielce provinces

The base ingredient of the pottage/soup	Name of the dish	The locality where the dish was recorded after 1945	Place of origin of the respondents		
		Ogrodziska	resettlers – Lwow province		
		Piersno	–		
		Polanowice	–		
		Poświętne	–		
		Ryczeń	settlers – Belarus		
		Słup	–		
		Wrzosy	–		
		Zawidowice	settlers – Częstochowa province, Krynica		
		Zielenice	–		
		sauerkraut	kapuśniak	Bukowice	–
				Guzowice	–
				Idzików	–
				Książnica Śląska	–
				Modła	–
Ogrodziska	resettlers – Lwow province				
Pawłów Trzebnicki	–				
Polanowice	–				
Poświętne	–				
Ryczeń	–				
Słup	–				
Starczówek	–				
Stary Węgliniec	–				
Szyszkowa	settlers – Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwow provinces				

The base ingredient of the pottage/soup	Name of the dish	The locality where the dish was recorded after 1945	Place of origin of the respondents	
potato		Wilcza	–	
		Zawidowice	–	
		Zielenice	resettlers – Tarnopol province	
	kwaśnica	Polanowice	–	
	zalewajka	Bukowice	–	
		Guzowice	–	
		Idzików	–	
		Pawłów Trzebnicki	–	
		kartoflanka	Bukowice	–
			Górczyca	–
			Guzowice	–
			Książnica Śląska	–
			Polanowice	–
			Ryczeń	–
			Starczówek	–
			Stary Węgliniec	–
			Szyszkowa	settlers – Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwow provinces
	Wilcza		–	
	Wrzosa	–		
	Zawidowice	–		
jucha/juszka	Idzików	–		
	Lubomin	settlers – from across the Bug River		

The base ingredient of the pottage/soup	Name of the dish	The locality where the dish was recorded after 1945	Place of origin of the respondents
		Modła	settlers – southeastern borderlands of the Second Polish Republic
		Ogrodziska	–
		Starczówek	–

Note: In many cases, the place of origin of the respondents is not provided – this is indicated by the symbol “–”.  
 Source: Archives of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas in Cieszyn; <http://www.archiwumpae.us.edu.pl/>

In Starczówek, the ingredients of such pottage/soup depended on the season: “kapuśniak from sauerkraut, in the summer from fresh cabbage.” A similar variation took place in Zawidowice: “kapuśniak from sauerkraut (pickled in a stone pot) or sweet cabbage.”

The last mentioned vegetable – potato – was not soured, nevertheless, potato pot- tages/soups with a sour taste appeared in some of the surveyed villages. These were the so-called “zalewajki,” or dishes based on boiled potatoes soured with “zur.”<sup>53</sup> Another variant of pottage/soup with the addition of this vegetable was “kartoflanka.” Its basic ingredients were potatoes, other vegetables, fat, and meat.<sup>54</sup> In Wrzosy, “karto- flanka” was prepared as follows: “Potatoes are boiled, mashed and then poured over with milk.” Settlers and resettlers from the southeastern borderlands of Poland also recalled a pottage/soup called “jucha” or “juszka.”<sup>55</sup> Its main ingredient was also the aforementioned potatoes, nevertheless, what distinguished it was that it was served during fasts: “a thin potato soup.”<sup>56</sup>

Pottages/soups, which were common in the hometowns of settlers and resettlers, were subjected to evaluation upon arrival in Lower Silesia, resulting in a process of modification and then, in many cases, abandonment. The confrontation of differ- ent culinary traditions led to the supplanting of more archaic dishes (both in terms

53 Noted in the villages of: Idzików, Pawłów Trzebnicki and Bukowice, and Guzowice.

54 Noted in the villages of: Stary Węgliniec, Szyszkowa, Górczyca, Ryczeń, Książnica Śląska, Wilcza, Polanowice, Starczówek, Guzowice, Bukowice, and Zawidowice.

55 Noted in the villages of: Modła, Lubomin, Idzików, Starczówek, and Ogrodziska.

56 Noted in the village of Starczówek.

of ingredients and preparation), whose place was taken by dishes associated with more developed regions and urban food trends. Increasing access to store-bought food products also played a significant role.

## Conclusion

The interviews, which were conducted with residents who had arrived in Lower Silesian villages after World War II, produced interesting information, the analysis of which allows us to develop at least several interpretive threads. First of all, they indicate the great dynamics of the various processes that took place in the post-war period in the post-migration and multicultural areas, which the Polish Western and Northern Territories had become. The population arriving from various parts of Poland and the Eastern Borderlands of the Second Polish Republic was forced to undertake the task of reevaluating their own traditions and cultural norms in confrontation with the cultural differences of other newcomers and the cultural heritage of the autochthons. This process also involved culinary culture. The evaluation of recipes familiar from their hometowns in the new reality usually fell to their disadvantage. Simple dishes of few ingredients, often age-old, usually cooked, were gradually abandoned. In the first years after settlers' arrival in Lower Silesia, they were still prepared, however, over time, after adaptation to the new living conditions, they appeared less frequently on the local menu. As a rule, they were cooked by older people who knew their taste and had the skills to prepare them. In this case, one can talk about the sentimental significance of these foods. For representatives of the younger generation, who were unfamiliar with the context in which these dishes functioned, they were losing their meaning, which made it easier to phase them out.

An additional value of the collected source materials, pertaining to the issue at hand, is their comprehensiveness. Based on them, it can be concluded that many dishes of old genealogy (known for at least several generations) were preserved – until the time of the research – in the southeastern edges of the country, as confirmed by the memories of resettlers and settlers coming from those parts. Pottages/soups, cooked with just a few basic ingredients, were notable for their variety and popularity.

## Bibliography

### Archival sources

*Kwestionariusz – notatnik dla kartograficznych studiów etnograficznych: Ludowa kultura materialna (zagadnienia wybrane)*, compiled by J. Gajek, Wrocław 1964.

Polish Ethnographic Atlas

### Literature

- Bohdanowicz J., "Polski Atlas Etnograficzny – wykładnia zadań i metod pracy," [in:] *Komentarze do Polskiego Atlasu Etnograficznego*, vol. 1: *Rolnictwo i hodowla*, part 1, ed. J. Bohdanowicz, Wrocław 1993.
- Brückner A., *Encyclopedia staropolska*, vol. 2: K–M, Warszawa 1939.
- Drożdź A., *Re/konstrukcje codzienności. Przeszłość w materiałach źródłowych Polskiego Atlasu Etnograficznego*, Gdańsk 2018.
- Gajek J., "Transport i komunikacja lądowa. Kwestionariusz nr 5," *Archiwum Etnograficzne* 1960, no. 22.
- Jasiński J., "Kwestia pojęcia Ziemie Odzyskane," [in:] *Ziemie Odzyskane/Ziemie Zachodnie i Północne 1945–2005. 60 lat w granicach państwa polskiego*, ed. A. Sakson, Poznań 2006.
- Lis H., Lis P., *Kuchnia Słowian. O żywności, potrawach i nie tylko...*, Kraków 2009.
- Misztal J., "Wysiedlenia i repatriacja obywateli polskich z ZSRR a wysiedlenia i przesiedlenia Niemców z Polski – próba bilansu," [in:] *Utracona ojczyzna. Przymusowe wysiedlenia, deportacje i przesiedlenia jako wspólne doświadczenie*, eds. H. Orłowski, A. Sakson, Poznań 1996.
- Moszyński K., *Kultura ludowa Słowian*, vol. I: *Kultura materialna*, Warszawa 1967.
- Paprot-Wielopolska A., *Żuławy i Powiśle. Kreowanie tożsamości lokalnych i regionalnych po 1989 roku*, Warszawa 2018.
- Pieńczyk A., "The Digital Platform of the Polish Ethnographic Atlas – From Idea to Implementation," *Český lid. Etnologický časopis (Ethnological Journal)* 2018, no. 4/105.
- Pieńczyk A., Kłodnicki Z., Koźmińska J., *Polski Atlas Etnograficzny – historia, osiągnięcia, perspektywy badawcze*, Katowice 2017.
- Sakson A., "Socjologiczne problemy wysiedleń," [in:] *Utracona ojczyzna. Przymusowe wysiedlenia, deportacje i przesiedlenia jako wspólne doświadczenie*, eds. H. Orłowski, A. Sakson, Poznań 1996.

### Internet sources

<http://www.archiwumpae.us.edu.pl/>

<https://www.hajduczeknaturalnie.pl/huculska-kulesza-mamalyga-bryndza/>