

# History and Sociology of Food and Drink in Poland

Course objectives:

The aim of this course is to introduce international undergraduate students to food and drink in Poland from an academic point of view. This academic reflection will parallel and complement their discovery of Polish cuisine outside of the classroom. In addition to traditional teaching methods involving lectures and classroom discussion, students will be asked to select a recipe described in a local cookbook (*Zasmakuj w tradycji*) which they will translate, cook for themselves, and then describe the food, its social context, history, place in the calendar, etc to the rest of the class. The class will also be supplemented by short study trips to local food-related events. The class will end with a written exam.

## 1. Overview of class

### 2. The Agricultural calendar: What did ancient and medieval inhabitants of Poland eat (and when)?

Seasonal production and consumption. Gathering and agriculture. Goosefoot, ramsons, skirrets, alexanders, kale.

Łuczaj, Łukasz; Szymański, Wojciech M. (2007). 'Wild vascular plants gathered for consumption in the Polish countryside: a review' pp.17-22

Selections from Woys-Weaver, William (1999). *Food and Drink in Medieval Poland: Rediscovering a Cuisine of the Past*.

### 3. Grains: Kasza, bread, kwas, and beer

Important grains of the early Polish diet: millet, buckwheat, spelt wheat, rye, barley. Development of grain trade and the 'second serfdom' in Poland. Gaspard de Tende and groats. Beer and kwas as staple drinks.

Król, M. (1986). "History of buckwheat cultivation in Poland" in Proceedings of the 3rd International Symposium on Buckwheat

Davies, N. (2005) "Handel – The Polish Grain Trade" in *God's Playground*, Revised Edition, Vol.1, pp.197-224

### 4. Salt, spices and herbs

Salt production and trade. Krakow as a trade centre. The medieval reputation of Polish food as 'spicy'. Lovage, savory, nigella, garlic.

Charkot, J., Dudek, K, Gonera, M. & Wiewiórka J. "Historic salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia" in *Geoturystyka* nr 3, pp.61-70

Selections from Carter, F. (2006). *Trade and Urban Development in Poland: An Economic Geography of Cracow, from Its Origins to 1795*. "Salt" and "Spices" 118-126 & 196-214

Selections from Woys-Weaver, William (1999). *Food and Drink in Medieval Poland: Rediscovering a Cuisine of the Past*.

## **5. The religious calendar: Fasts, feasts, and holiday foods**

Meatless fasts, fish. Pattern of fasts and vigils. Feasts and holiday foods. Wigilia and Wielkanoc: the Christmas carp and the Easter egg.

Selections from Woys-Weaver, William (1999). *Food and Drink in Medieval Poland: Rediscovering a Cuisine of the Past*.

Lemnis, Maria (1981). *Old Polish Traditions in the Kitchen and at the Table*

Selection (literary description) from Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*

## **6. Vegetables, manners, and the food revolution of the 16<sup>th</sup> century**

Internationalisation of food. Imports from the New World: Jerusalem artichoke, potatoes, tomatoes, beans. The Italian influence of Queen Bona. The Civilising Process and changes to food-related manners.

Szelagowska G. "Potatoes In Traditional Peasant Food" *Lud*, 88, pp.251-274

Elias, N. (2000). "The Problem of the Change in Behaviour in the Renaissance" and "On Behaviour at Table" in *The Civilizing Process*, pp.60-109

## **7. Coffee, Tea and Cafés**

The Ottoman Empire, Poland and Central European coffee. The Russian Empire and tea. The rise of café culture.

Chudy, S. (2014). "Development Of Coffee Market And Changes In Coffee Consumption Among Poles" *Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development*, 4(34), pp.41-51

Selection (literary description) from Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*

## **8. Sweets: Honey, mead and gingerbread**

In-class meeting with a local traditional bee-keeper. Sweet root vegetables, honey, sugar. Fruit at the table. The history of gingerbread. Pączki.

Selections from: Target, Simon & Zatorska, Beata (2011). *Rose Petal Jam - Recipes and Stories from a Summer in Poland*

## **9. Distillation and vodka**

The arrival of distillation as part of medicine and alchemy. The shift to distilled beverages. Changes to technology. The importance of branding and distribution. Vodka as a symbol of Poland and Polishness. International markets.

Simpson, Scott (2010). "History and Mythology of Polish Vodka: 1270-2007." *Food and History* vol. 8 no. 1, pp.121-148

Moskalewicz, Jacek & Zielinski, Antoni 'Poland' in Dwight B. Heath, *International Handbook on Alcohol and Culture* pp.225-236

## **10. Hunting, game, meat (and snails)**

Meat-heavy diets of the nobility. Bigos. Hunting and game. Small game. Pork and other meats. Why some animals have dropped out the tradition (snails).

Czerniecki, S. (1682) *Compendium Ferculorum* (Eng. Trans. Czuchra, A & Czuchra, M., 2014)

## **11. Soup and ethnic cuisine**

Ethnic diversity within Poland. Ethnic and regional cuisines. The ubiquity of soup. Barszcz and żurek.

Applebaum, Anne & Crittenden, Danielle (2012). *From a Polish House Kitchen*, especially "soups" pp.58-93

Jochowitz, E. (2014) "Flavors of Memory: Jewish Food as Culinary Tourism in Poland" in Long, L. (ed.) *Culinary Tourism*, pp. 97-113

## **12. Food and drink under Communism**

Rural-to-urban shifts under communism. Mass production. Milk Bars and canteens. Rationing, scarcity and black-market food.

Burrell, K. (2003). "The Political and Social Life of Food In Socialist Poland" *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 21, pp.189-194

"Milk Bars – A Taste of Poland" & "10 Surprising Eating Habits of Communist Poland" from culture.pl

### **13. Globalisation, McDonaldisation, Sushi, & Kebab**

Globalisation and McDonaldisation. Convergence in eating and drinking patterns. Liquid modernity and choice. Sushi. Kebab.

Nowaczek-Walczak, M. (2011). "The world of kebab. Arabs and gastronomy in Warsaw" in Górak-Sosnowska, K. (ed.) *Muslims in Poland and Eastern Europe Widening the European Discourse on Islam* pp.108-125

Czarniecka-Skubina, E. & Nowak, D. (2013). "Japanese cuisine in Poland: attitudes and behaviour among Polish consumers" in *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, Volume 38, Issue 1, pp,62–68

### **14. Slow Food, Agrotourism, and the reflexive defence of 'tradition'**

The Slow Food movement. Protected regional designations. The invention of tradition. Ocypek – Polish mountain cheese.

Cieślik, E. (2013). "Regional Food – A New Outlook On the Mountain Areas" in *Geomatics, Land-management and Landscape*. No. 4, pp.7–19

Tyran, E. (2007). "Regional And Traditional Products As an Important Part of Rural Tourism Offer" in *Oeconomia* 6 (3), pp. 121–128

### **15. Polish food, identity and emigration**

The role of food in maintaining migrant identities. Polish food in the UK. Polish food in the US. "Polonia" versus Polish immigrants. Books and clubs maintaining 'traditional Polish food' abroad.

Rabikowska, Marta (2010). 'The ritualisation of food, home and national identity among Polish migrants in London' pp. 377-398

Zand, Helen Stankiewicz (1957) "Polish Foodways in America."

## **Full bibliography:**

- Applebaum, Anne & Crittenden, Danielle (2012). *From a Polish House Kitchen*
- Burrell, K. (2003). "The Political and Social Life of Food In Socialist Poland" *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 21, pp.189-194
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- Król, M. (1986). "History of buckwheat cultivation in Poland" in *Proceedings of the 3rd International Symposium on Buckwheat*
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- LGD 'Liwocz' (2013). *Zasmakuj w tradycji*.
- Łuczaj, Łukasz; Szymański, Wojciech M. (2007). 'Wild vascular plants gathered for consumption in the Polish countryside: a review' pp.17-22
- Moskalewicz, Jacek & Zielinski, Antoni 'Poland' in Dwight B. Heath, *International Handbook on Alcohol and Culture* pp.225-236
- Rabikowska, Marta (2010). 'The ritualisation of food, home and national identity among Polish migrants in London' pp. 377-398
- Simpson, Scott (2010). "History and Mythology of Polish Vodka: 1270-2007." *Food and History* vol. 8 no. 1, pp.121-148
- Szelagowska G. "Potatoes In Traditional Peasant Food" *Lud*, 88, pp.251-274
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