Delights of Dinners, Pleasures of Picnics in the "Make-believe": Food Fantasies of the Edwardian Children's Literature Translated into Polish[1]

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During the Golden Age of English juvenile literature – from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* – "food fantasies" and images of eating played a key role in the construction of the textual world. This chapter explores literary representations of eating in Edwardian and post-Edwardian Golden Age children's classics, focusing on "food fantasies" in works by the "Arcadians" (Carpenter 100): Beatrix Potter, Kenneth Grahame, A. A. Milne, and J. M. Barrie. It analyses the functions of food in literature, its imagery and specificity (including national and temporal), as well as its translation implications in transferring the source texts from English into Polish.

"The pleasure of the table belongs to all ages, to all conditions, to all countries, and to all eras; it mingles with all other pleasures and remains at last to console us for their departure" (Brillat-Savarin 25). Thus reads aphorism VII in Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's famous *The Physiology of Taste, or, Transcendental Gastronomy* (1825). Brillat-Savarin regards the pleasure of eating as a universal, profoundly human condition regardless of times, nationality or social status drawing also our attention to the connection between the "pleasures of the table" and other pleasures (presumably both physical and intellectual), as well as to their comforting dimension. Eating is, in this approach, closely related to nostalgia: it rekindles past sensations and serves as an impulse awakening memories, as in a famous scene from Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* in which "the taste of the piece of *madeleine* soaked in decoction of lime-blossom" (Proust 51) evokes happy memories

from the narrator's childhood.

The role of food and eating in Western culture and literature – from Homer's epics to Salman Rushdie's postmodern novels – has already been highlighted (see for example Boyce and Fitzpatrick), always including the observation that food is never just food. It organizes the collective cultural imagination and can be even perceived as culture itself (Montanari). Food generates meanings and is "not only the product of a culture but one that gives shape to the *mentalities* that structure thought and expression" (Keeling and Pollard 4). As Carolyn Daniel notes, food events are always significant, in reality and in fiction, as they reveal the fundamental preoccupations, ideas, and beliefs of society, providing us with knowledge about social and family relationships, manners, and morals of a given period (1). Mervyn Nicholson observes that while reality and biology require us to eat, characters in literature do not eat to live because they are not alive (Nicholson 38). Hence, whenever food appears in a literary work, it is always there for specific reasons.

The association of the pleasures of eating with the pleasures of reading is not new in the humanities: Terry Eagleton has compared food to post-structuralist texts that can be subject to endless interpretations, while the process of writing – creating texts from "raw" language – is often compared to the process of cooking (Shahani 2). No wonder, then, that the famous phrase from Brillat-Savarin's gastronomic meditations "[t]ell me what kind of food you eat, and I will tell you what kind of man you are" (25) has been transformed into "[t]ell me what you read, and I will tell you who you are". If we agree to see writers as cooks, translators should also be considered in this line of profession, as proposed by Elżbieta Skibińska in her book *Kuchnia tłumacza. Studia o polsko-francuskich relacjach przekładowych* [The Translator's Kitchen. Studies on Polish-French Translation Relations]:

> Among these spiritual cooks are also the translators. But they are cooks of a special kind: their role is to prepare dishes from the distant world for the feasting guests [...]; to use new, unknown, imported ingredients [...] but also, if there is no other way, to replace them with local products – which, applied in a new recipe, will reveal their hidden flavours; and finally – sometimes – to change or revive traditional dishes, either by using new ingredients or changing the way the old and well-known ones are used. (Skibińska 14)[2]

The translation of culinary nomenclature – culturally specific elements, closely linked to the realities, history and traditions of a given community and language (Dymel-Trzebiatowska 186) – is particularly demanding in the case of children's literature, where food plays an important role, but which is also characterised by readers' specific cognitive

capacities. Food translation strategies are thus situated between two poles: that of adapting to the target culture in order to facilitate their reception by the readers (domestication) and preserving their foreign flavour (foreignisation),[3] building on children's ability to absorb stimuli and rapidly expand their knowledge of the world (Paruolo 52). As Elena Paruolo notes, these two trends are often interwoven in one translated text (51).

The fact that children's literature is filled with food-related images, notions, and values was already noted by Wendy Katz in her pioneering article (192). Since then, studies on the functions of food in children's literature have developed extensively (see Daniel; Keeling and Pollard; Carrington and Harding; Keeling and Pollard). As Daniel points out, food fantasies are effective vehicles of socialisation and acculturation: literary food

> acts to seduce readers; through mimesis it 'naturalizes' the lesson being taught; and, through the visceral pleasures (sometimes even jouissance) it produces, it 'sweetens' the discourse and encourages unreflective acceptance of the moral thus delivered. (4)

The persuasive power of food descriptions invites the reader to immerse themselves in the book and identify with the characters, thus supporting its didactic message. By absorbing "nutritious" literary instructions about how and what to eat, the child – who since the eighteenth century has been perceived as a nature-bound being at a lower stage of cultural development – learns to live according to the rules of civilization, and to control carnal lusts and desires.

On the other hand, food – sweets in particular – is a favorite object of childish interest. British literature is no exception here: one of Britain's most famous works for children, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, tells the story of a girl, who finds in the rabbit hole "a little bottle" labelled "DRINK ME" and "a very small cake" labelled "EAT ME" (Carroll 9, 13). In the words of Carolyn Daniel,

> Food fantasies are a traditional ingredient in classic British children's literature. These stories often include sensuous, mouth-watering descriptions of the foods the characters eat […] lavish descriptions of food, in the context of British classic fiction for children […] have important social, cultural, and psychological functions (Daniel 62).

But children's literature was associated with food also on a higher level: in the turn-of-the-century Britain, reading was perceived as consumption according to the principle "you are what you read" (Galbraith 1), and critics and educators have attached increasing

importance to what is "good" (wholesome, nutritious) literature for children.[4] The culmination of the literary production of the Golden Age goes hand in hand with the peak of the British Empire's power and prosperity in the Edwardian era, on which George Orwell tellingly comments in *Such, Such Were the Joys* (1947):

> It was [...] the age of *The Merry Widow*, Saki's novels, *Peter Pan* and *Where the Rainbow Ends*, the age when people talked about chocs and cigs and had scrumptious teas at the Troc. From the whole decade before 1914 there seems to breathe forth a smell of [...] brilliantine and *crème-de-menthe* and soft-centred chocolates – an atmosphere, as it were, of eating everlasting strawberry ices on green lawns to the tune of the Eton Boating Song. (357)

The image of the Edwardian era – a brief but culturally intense period, beginning with the 20th century and lasting until World War I – became mythicized in later years and came to appear as a kind of "golden age," a celebration of wealth, often expressed in elaborate cuisine. Children's literature of the time undoubtedly contributed to such an image of the era and – on the other hand – reflected much of its preoccupations. For Edwardians, the idealized childhood was established as a symbol of their times and a counterbalance to the fast-changing urban life and its anxieties. It became an arcadian realm of freedom and imagination in which time flows slowly and allows for an unhurried, carefree tasting of life (Gavin and Humphries 1–19). Unsurprisingly, then, the Edwardians celebrated a "boom" of writing for and about children, in which, even more than in Victorian era, the child and the adult audiences were mixed, and the Golden Age of children's literature reached its climax (Rose 181).[5] In this chapter I will discuss food fantasies in the Edwardian and post-Edwardian children's literature translated into Polish, arranging the texts from the most realistic to the most fantastic ones: from the nature-immersed *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902) and *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin* (1903) by Beatrix Potter, through the idyllic worlds of Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908) and Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926), to the Neverland of Barrie's *Peter and Wendy* (1911).

Eat or Be Eaten: Beatrix Potter

Humphrey Carpenter calls Potter "an ironist in Arcadia" – and indeed, in the opening of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, the irony involves and directly relates to food. Mrs. Rabbit warns her children against excursions into Mr. McGregor's forbidden garden: "your father had an accident there, he was put in a pie by Mrs. McGregor" (*Peter Rabbit* 10–11). This prohibition triggers a chain of events in Potter's narrative: for Peter, the garden becomes a forbidden fruit worthy of disobedience. Just as Eve in Eden is tempted with the promise of the pleasure of eating and breaking the rules, so Peter squeezes under the gate to

savour the vegetable delights: "first he ate some lettuces and some French beans, and then he ate some radishes" (*Peter Rabbit* 23). It is worth noting here that Polish translations of this passage – by Małgorzata Musierowicz (*Powiastki Beatrix Potter*) and Anna Matusik-Dyjak (*Historyjki Beatrix Potter*) – differ in an important detail of Peter's in-garden diet. While Musierowicz retains the original vegetable, in Matusik-Dyjak's version "radishes" are replaced by "carrots" (*Historyjki* 12), probably in adherence to the stereotypical image of a carrot-eating rabbits. Such a decision may have also been supported by Potter's illustration for this scene: in the picture Peter is munching on oblong radishes, which resemble carrots in shape (only their leaves testify that they are not actually carrots). Thus, it can be considered that the translator was trying to achieve a correlation between the illustrations and the text, a quality that Riitta Oittinen pointed out as one of the most essential characteristics of translation for children (Oittinen).

Needless to say, Peter is caught in the act of damaging the vegetable beds by Mr. McGregor himself; the rabbit manages to escape, but in his panic-stricken flight he loses all his human attributes: his shoes and blue jacket. These metamorphoses of the protagonist – from the ordinary rabbit from the opening illustration, through strongly anthropomorphized character, to the re-presentation in his natural state – seem significant since anthropomorphic strategies (especially the equipping of literary animal characters with the ability to speak) problematizes Western food rules and, through empathic identification, breaks down the boundary between human and animal, subject and object, eating and being eaten (Daniel 29). The *Tale of Peter Rabbit* is governed by a fairy-tale scheme, though it is well hidden under a rural, realistic staffage: Potter follows a plot similar to that of stories about giants or that of the Brothers Grimm's *Hansel and Gretel*, in which children want to savor a gingerbread house but are themselves in danger of being eaten. In the end, Peter is punished for his disobedience and gluttony – although he manages to escape from the garden and return home safely, his experiences deprive him of his appetite and instead of supper he must take a dose of bitter chamomile tea. Potter includes a moral in her story, but also equates childish greed with animal instincts of acquiring food, thereby subscribing to the then-popular trend of approaching children as primitive beings, "wild" and, at the biological level, similar to animals.

This primordial element emerges even more strongly in *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin* (1903), a story of the squirrels setting out to gather nuts on a lake island inhabited by an owl named Old Brown, who serves in this world as a kind of a primordial deity. Each day the squirrels perform a ritual of sorts, presenting the owl with propitiatory offerings – a mole, a couple of fat mice, minnows, beetles, or a pot of honey; they feed the owl so as not be eaten themselves. However, Nutkin, the impertinent squirrel, does not adhere to this convention and prefers to tease the owl with traditional rhymes and songs, almost all concerning food. Particularly interesting is the song for the day in which the squirrels

pay the owl tribute of six fat beetles wrapped up carefully in dock leaves which were "as good as plums in *plum-pudding*" (*Squirrel Nutkin* 32) thus referring to the English traditional Christmas dessert prepared in a linen bag. On this occasion Nutkin performs a traditional rhyme about the *plum-pudding*:

> Flour of England, fruit of Spain,
> Met together in a shower of rain;
> Put in a bag tied round with a string,
> If you'll tell me this riddle, I'll give you a ring." (*Squirrel Nutkin* 32)

The rhyme is a Christmas riddle, but we can trace also references to Queen Mary's betrothal to Prince Philip of Spain in 1554 (hence the names of the two countries and the ring in the last verse, as indicated by the authors of *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (Opie 161–162). Interestingly, both Polish translators of Potter's tale retain the traditional dessert and render it in Polish as "pudding" thus adopting foreignizing strategy, but Matusik-Dyjak substitutes "a ring" for a "cream roll" ("rurka z kremem"; *Historyjki* 37), apparently unaware of the nursery rhyme's deep cultural references and in the belief that another delicacy might serve the translation well, especially in regards of the rhythm and rhyme.

Nutkin, like Peter, is punished for his disobedience – eventually, Old Brown catches the squirrel and intends to eat him, but Nutkin manages to escape leaving his tail in the owl's clutches. Beatrix Potter's tales show the harsh natural world in which chances for survival depend on one's place in the food chain: the stronger devours the weaker, and eating involves the risk of being devoured. Potter tames the realities of nature with irony, humour, and convention, but the reader can feel that this icing is thin and easy to melt away. Although concerned with the world and the laws of nature, Potter's tales are nevertheless strongly imbued with cultural signals that set them in a British context. It is worth noting that the Polish translations retain the message of the tales, but through slight lexical shifts modify this context: Musierowicz's version retains this cultural specificity, while Matusik-Dyjak's more recent translation tends to neutralise the foreignness of the texts, not least through the use of food names familiar to Polish readers.

Dulce Domum: Kenneth Grahame

While Potter's tales are stories about animals disguised as humans, Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* is rather a story about humans disguised as animals. Grahame's book is a praise of home and domesticity (see Sullivan; Wieczorkiewicz), lavish afternoons, prosperity, abundance, and comforts of life in nature – but a nature that is tamed and domesticated because it can be eaten. This approach is evident in the first description

of the Mole's encounter with the River – the river is "full-fed" (Grahame 6), filled, well-nourished; the Water Rat calls it his "food and drink", and compares the smell of the patches of mud in the spring to the smell of a plumcake (Grahame 9). *The Wind in the Willows* is an intertexture of domesticity and eating, also in the sense that the reader is constantly treated to a feast of home-made culinary delights. A taste of this is provided by the scene of a picnic to which the Rat takes the Mole, a novice to the riverside life, along with the picnic basket filled with duly cooked natural goodies:

> "He [...] climbed up into his hole above, and after a short interval reappeared staggering under a fat wicker luncheon-basket. [...]
> "What's inside it?" asked the Mole, wriggling with curiosity.
> There's cold chicken inside it," replied the Rat briefly:
> "coldtonguecoldhamcoldbeefpickledgherkinssaladfrenchrollscresssandwichespottedmeatgingerbeerlemonadesodawater—"
> "O stop, stop!" cried the Mole in ecstasies. "This is too much!" (Grahame 8)

Grahame arranges the enumeration of picnic food in a single line, without spaces, thus imitating the speed of the Water Rat's answer and at the same time putting the reader in the position of the Mole – confused, unable to follow the flow of his companion's utterance, the deluge of treats. Not all Polish translators choose to render this effect: Godlewska, the author of the first translation (*O czym szumią wierzby*, 1938), dispenses with it altogether and records the enumeration in a standard way, thus adapting it to the child readers and making it easier to understand; the authors of later versions – Bohdan Drozdowski (*Wierzby na wietrze*, 2009) and Maciej Płaza (*O czym szumią wierzb*y, 2014) – retain the original spelling. The three translators also differ in their choice of meals, which clearly shows how different types of food and drink are rooted in the given culture and the difficulties this causes in translation. "Ginger beer", for example, is rendered only by Płaza, the author of the most recent translation, presumably because this beverage has become popular in Poland relatively recently; Godlewska and Drozdowski drop the designation of the drink's type and simply translate it as "beer". Also "French rolls" ("A small crusty bread roll" – as explained by the Oxford English Dictionary) are translated in three different ways: in Godlewska's version as "paszteciki" [small pies with filling, usually meat] (14), in Drozdowski's as "paszteciki francuskie" [French small pies with filling] (16), while in Płaza's simply as "bułeczki" [rolls/buns] (14). Only Drozdowski retains the reference to the country of the rolls' origin, while only Płaza renders their correct type (French rolls are made without filling).

The riverside picnic scene fulfils the Victorian and Edwardian ideal of living (and eating) in nature (see Hunt, "Fantastic Food"), but while still at the same picnic, Mole

learns that in this Arcadian world there is a strict "animal etiquette", which forbids "any sort of comment on the sudden disappearance of one's friends at any time, for any reason or no reason whatever" (Grahame 12) – which is probably when those friends eat other friends or are themselves being devoured. The animal nature seems at times to prevail in Grahame's characters over human nature, though the amalgam of these two is otherwise quite solid. This is evident in the novel's opening scene when the Mole addresses some rabbits with the dismissive remark "Onion sauce, onion sauce". In the annotated Oxford edition of *The Wind in the Willows*, Peter Hunt explains this remark as an allusion to a popular Victorian culinary recipe for rabbit in white onion sauce from Mrs. Isabella Beeton's famous *Book of Household Management* (1861) (Grahame 148). The Mole insults the rabbits with a reference to a human dish made of them and at the same time threatens that he might eat them in the onion sauce, despite the obvious biological absurdity of this remark (moles, of course, do not feed on rabbits). This is also a very interesting moment in translation: Płaza omits "onion sauce" altogether, replacing it with the dismissive phrase "Tere-fere kuku!" [Fiddle-dee-dee!] (9), whereas Godlewska not only retains "onion sauce" but expands the phrase according to its meaning: in her version the Mole calls out to the rabbits "Zjem was w cebulowym sosie!" ["I will eat you in the onion sauce"] (7). The most humorous solution, however, was adopted by Drozdowski, who employs Polish idiom "put your nose in the sauce" i.e. mind your own business instead of others; in his translation, the Mole addresses the rabbits: "Wsadźcie nos w sos! Cebulowy zresztą!" ["Put your nose in the sauce! Onion sauce, by the way!"] (13).

In *The Wind in the Willows* food sets the boundaries between Culture and Nature: the "civilized" consuming of meals versus primordial eating of one another. For most of the story, it is Culture that seems to reign over the tamed Nature, but there are moments when the latter reveals its true self: during his lonely journey through the Wild Wood, the Mole experiences the awe and terror of Nature, which can easily devour a small and helpless animal. His adventure, however, ends well in the kitchen of the Badger's underground house – "a home from the old days", steeped in tradition, history, and sacred customs. In Grahame's description of the kitchen scene the whole space seems to come alive and join in the rituals of eating and drinking: "The ruddy brick floor smiled up at the smoky ceiling; the oaken settles, shiny with long wear, exchanged cheerful glances with each other" (Grahame 38). The house – animated and anthropomorphized – appears to be a living creature with its feelings, thoughts, and an invigorating force, which is, of course, edible goods ladening the tables and filling up the pantries.

Robert Hemmings, who analyses the fantasy of food in *The Wind in the Willows* from the perspective of nostalgia studies, emphasizes a strong connection between food rituals and domesticity. This intertwining is also noted by Frances E. Dolan in her study of domesticity and familiarity in Graham's classic in which she points to the prison scene

when the gaoler's daughter brings Toad typically English, home-cooked food: "bubble and squeak" and buttered toast, inducing in him a desire to return home:

> It was bubble-and-squeak, between two plates, and its fragrance filled the narrow cell. […] When the girl returned, some hours later, she carried a tray, with a cup of fragrant tea steaming on it; and a plate piled up with very hot buttered […] with the butter running through the holes in it in great golden drops […] The smell of that buttered toast simply talked to Toad […] of warm kitchens, of breakfasts on bright frosty mornings, of cosy parlour firesides on winter evenings, […] and the purring of contented cats […] (Grahame 82)

The typically English tastes of home, which fill Toad with comfort and happy memories, prove problematic in translation, as Polish cuisine does not have the equivalent of "bubble-and-squeak". Neither of the Polish translators of *The Wind in the Willows* proposes a Polish substitute name for this dish, but all employ a degree of neutralization (not domestication, though): Godlewska renders it as "smakołyk nielada" [a delicacy of no mean sort] (Grahame 1938: 167), Płaza simply as "danie" [a dish] (140), while Drozdowski translates it in a descriptive way as "coś, co jeszcze parkotało pod przykrywką, coś skwierczało między dwoma talerzami" [something that still bubbled under the lid and sizzled between the two plates] (111); interestingly, Drozdowski attempts to render the onomatopoeic aspect of "bubble-and-squeak" by using Polish verbs "parkotać" (to make a specific sound, e.g. when boiling) and "skwierczeć" (to make a creaking and squeaking sound e.g. when frying).

The Land of Milk and Honey: A. A. Milne

A. A. Milne, fascinated by Grahame's idyllic world, created a kind of unique extension to it. *Winnie-the-Pooh*'s safe, arcadian landscape is populated not by humanized animals, but by animated toys that have their prototypes in the childhood plays of Christopher Robin, the writer's son. Milne's Arcadia – more artificial, imaginative, and abstracted than those of Potter or Grahame[6] – is also devoid of the horror associated with the laws of nature. Here no one eats anyone, nor is the fear of being devoured evidently present. But still, the world of *Winnie-the-Pooh* constantly revolves around food, as does the mind of its main protagonist. Milne, a "Punch" humorist, builds his book's humor on the Bear's childish gluttony, as it is Pooh's appetite and honey-loving that get him into all sorts of funny scrapes. In the first chapter Pooh tries – and fails – to steal honey from the tree bees by pretending to be a cloud floating on a blue balloon; the second tells about his visit to Rabbit when Pooh eats all the supplies – then he cannot leave Rabbit's burrow and has

to wait until he loses some weight. In this scene literature (reading) and food are clearly connected: when the trapped Pooh learns that he will have to spend a whole week stuck in Rabbit's burrow, and Christopher Robin proposes to read to him, Pooh asks to be read "a Sustaining Book, such as would help and comfort a Wedged Bear in Great Tightness" (Milne 30). Irena Tuwim, the first Polish translator of Milne's (*Kubuś Puchatek*) does not render "sustaining book" literally but translates it as "książka kucharska" [a cookbook] (Milne 31), further enhancing both the humorous and symbolic dimensions of the scene.

Milne constructs humour on the theme of food, both in situations and in language: as in the chapter on the search for Eeyore's tail, when Pooh consults Owl about the best way to find the missing tail:

> "Well," said Owl, "the customary procedure in such cases is as follows."
> "What does Crustimoney Proseedcake mean?" said Pooh. [...]
> "I generally have a small something about now—about this time in the morning," and he looked wistfully at the cupboard in the corner of Owl's parlour; "just a mouthful of condensed milk or what not, with perhaps a lick of honey—" (Milne 50)

For Pooh, the formal phrase "customary procedure" has no meaning and can be only associated with eating: "crusty" and "seedcake". The importance of these food associations for the comic dimension of Milne's narrative is noticed by both Polish translators of *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Tuwim translates "Crustimoney Proseed cake" as "najgęściej polukrowane postękiwanie" (46) basing her pun on the combination of "lukier" [buttercream/icing] and "postękiwanie" [grunting/honing], while Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska, the second Polish translator of *Winnie-the-Pooh* (Fredzia Phi-Phi), proposes the phrase "Trzydżemowa Prosię¬kura" combining words "dżem" [jam], "prosię" [pig] and "kura" [hen/chicken] (44).

However, food in *Winnie-the-Pooh* serves not only to create an amusing plot but has also a symbolic dimension: Pooh's favourite "little something" is honey and condensed milk, and these dainties become symbols of a child's Arcadia, associated with the biblical "land of milk and honey", an earthly paradise in which childhood is sweetness itself. While honey is often associated with children[7], milk represents a symbol of femininity and motherhood (Boyce and Fitzpatrick 12; Daniel 87–95): two qualities of which the world of the Hundred Acre Wood seems in some sense deprived. This is noticeable in the predominance in the story of male characters who, although anthropomorphized toys, resemble English country gentlemen living in their bachelor dwellings (this is true of Winnie-the-Pooh, Rabbit, Piglet and especially Owl); the element of femininity and motherhood only arrives in the Hundred Acre Wood with Kanga, but it is treated

ironically and exaggerated somewhat grotesquely, further emphasizing the masculine nature of the world. Even more so, in *Winnie-the-Pooh*, the taste for sweet, condensed milk can be seen as a nostalgic desire to return to maternal care and love that would be pure and essence-like, but at the same time devoid of entanglements in the difficulties of real relationships. Perhaps, then, Milne points to the impossibility of fully returning to childhood even through literature, which resembles condensed milk: it is an improved but artificially produced substitute for the real thing, the real experiences of childhood.

In the Polish versions of *Winnie-the-Pooh*, both translators retain honey, but condensed milk was not introduced in Poland until the 1960s. While Adamczyk-Garbowska, who was working on her translation in the 1980s, had no trouble finding an equivalent for this sweet treat, Tuwim, who translated Milne before World War 2, opted for "sweet cream" (Milne 47), losing the association with artificiality or industrial production that – if we agree with the interpretation discussed above – would be crucial to the book's symbolism. The symbols of milk and honey in *Winnie-the-Pooh* are charged with nostalgia: artificial, processed milk and literature are the only food available to those who, from within the bitter experiences of adulthood, long for a return to the honey-sweet past and the nourishing milk of maternal care. The sweetness of childhood proves to be tinged with bitterness, and the paradise becomes a lost paradise since childhood always remains in the shadow of adulthood.

Bitter-sweet: J. M. Barrie

The dichotomy between sweet childhood and bitter adulthood reappears in Barrie's *Peter and Wendy* (1911) – the most far-reaching in the realm of fantasy of the analyzed works and at the same time the only one in which the theme of eating seems deliberately marginalized. Food and consumption are not a central or even vital motif in the story. The theme of food is shortly represented in the first description of Neverland, in which Barrie describes a child's imagination as consisting of two overlapping maps: fantasy and reality. Significantly, the only example of food here ("the chocolate pudding") is placed on the side of reality, not fantasy. The story begins with the medicine (i.e. not exactly food, something connoting bitterness and distastefulness, in opposition to sweet treats) that Mr. Darling applies to his youngest son Michael. The boy is only persuaded to follow his father's instructions when he promises to take his own medicine at the same time:

> Michael took his medicine, but Mr. Darling slipped his behind his back. [...]
> 'I have just thought of a splendid joke. I shall pour my medicine into Nana's bowl, and she will drink it, thinking it is milk! (Barrie 32)

Mr. Darling tricks his son into obedience through cunning, power and, authority: the

adult is thus presented as the one who uses coercion and deception in the area of eating, manipulating food to his own ends. Similarly, Captain Hook (a sort of Neverland double of Mr. Darling, usually performed in the stage play by the same actor), intends to use food to destroy Peter Pan and the Lost Boys. First, he plans to smuggle them a poisoned cake:

> [To c]ook a large rich cake of a jolly thickness with green sugar on it. [...] They will find the cake and they will gobble it up, because, having no mother, they don't know how dangerous 'tis to eat rich damp cake. [...] Aha, they will die! (Barrie 75)

When this plan fails, Hook adds poison to Peter's medicine, thus repeating the opening scene of the novel and confirming himself as the "dark double" of the father.

During the flight to Neverland, Peter Pan feeds Wendy, John, and Michael with "food suitable for humans" (53) plucked from the beaks of passing birds. However, in Neverland, meals are not always real, and they depend on Peter's whim:

> Their chief food was roasted breadfruit, yams, cocoa-nuts, baked pig, mammee apples, tappa rolls and bananas, washed down with calabashes of poe-poe; but you never exactly knew whether there would be a real meal or just a make-believe, it all depended upon Peter's whim. He could eat, really eat, if it was part of a game, but he could not stodge just to feel stodgy, which is what most children like better than anything else [...]. Make-believe was so real to him that during a meal of it you could see him getting rounder. (Barrie 90)

Maria Tatar notes that this contamination of various tropical fruits and exotic foods (mammee apples are from South America, while poe-poe is a Hawaiian food made from the corm of the taro plant), including non-edible products that can stimulate the reader's imagination (tappa rolls – rolls of unwoven cloth made from the paper mulberry tree in Polynesia), does not place Peter Pan's island in any particular geographical space (90), thus serving not so much to concretize the narrative as to further its fictionalization. This is also an interesting moment in translation: while Polish translators (those who render this passage at all)[8] have no trouble with cocoa-nuts or baked pig, other elements of the Neverland menu seem problematic. In the latest 2015 translation by Andrzej Polkowski (*Piotruś Pan i Wendy*), mammee apples are replaced by "rajskie jabłka" [paradise apples] (i.e. the Polish customary name for crab-apples), an interesting translational choice insofar as it indicates the tropical, paradise-like character of the island and at the same time carries a biblical connotation of original sin and the "lost paradise" of childhood;

inedible tappa rolls, on the other hand, in Polkowski's version are translated as "naleśniki z dżemem morwowym" [mulberry jam pancakes], indicating the translator's attempt to render the botanical specificity of Peter's island. In Maria Czerwinska's translation (*Piotruś Pan i Wendy*), the exotic dishes are simplified and domesticized: instead of yams the translator employs plain, local "ziemniaki" [potatoes], breadfruit and mammee apples become pome-granates and mangoes (still tropical fruit but more familiar to the readers as they can be easily bought in Polish groceries) while mysterious poe-poe is replaced by simple raspberry juice (122). The results of the best translational research, however, are presented in Maciej Słomczyński's 1991 version (first published in 1958 without the passage on Neverland food), in which the translator proposes the archaic form "kalabasy" (84) – the exact equivalent of original "calabashes." He also translates "mammee apples" as "owoc przesłoczy"; "przesłocz" is an old term for the mammee tree, which appears in Ignacy Rafał Czerwiakowski's *Botanika szczególna* [A Peculiar Botany] (volume five published in 1860 in Kraków). Such archaic and "exotic" names – especially in the ears of contemporary young readers – perfectly fulfil the function of Peter's menu designed by Barrie: food in Neverland is something extraordinary and mysterious, something that belongs to the realm of fantasy rather than reality.

All in all, this is the only passage in the entire novel that discusses food more broadly – a notable absence of this theme was noticed also by reviewers of the play *Peter Pan, or the Boy Who Would Not Grow Up* (1904); a few days after the premiere, L.F. Austin of *The London Illustrated News* wondered:

> What do the children in Peter Pan [...] live on? [...] My belief is that they eat nuts all day, for the only visible game consists of wolves, an ostrich, and a crocodile, animals not mentioned in any cookery-book. (Austin)

However, Neverland is not free from the terror of being eaten, which interestingly does not apply to Peter Pan or any other child protagonists but to Hook, whose chopped-off right arm Peter once used to feed a crocodile: "It liked my arm so much, that it has followed me ever since [...] licking its lips for the rest of me" (Barrie 74) – as Hook confides in Smee. The crocodile has also devoured the clock and its sound warns the pirate of the approach of the hungry beast: the ticking crocodile is clearly a symbol of passing time and impending death, as is the food itself, linked to the biological need for nourishment inseparable from growth and development. In *Peter Pan*, food is not presented as a symbol of pleasure and fulfilment, but rather as a suspicious, ambiguous and threatening feature: a symbol of death and an instrument in the hands of adults who feed children to deprive them of their childhood, since the need to eat leads to growing up and adulthood.

In Conclusion: What's Eating?

Food fantasies in Edwardian classics serve different purposes: on the one hand, they can tell a story about reality, revealing the truths of nature and at the same time providing a moral, as in Beatrix Potter's tales; on the other hand, they serve as a line of demarcation between Nature and Culture, the human and the animal in *The Wind in the Willows*, or as an element that evokes humor and nostalgia, an important determinant of the Arcadian world and the sweetness of childhood, as in *Winnie-the-Pooh*. These three examples may be called real "food fantasies", in which food is valued positively and occupies a central position. They are clearly distinguished from Barrie's *Peter and Wendy* "food dystopia", where eating is placed on the margins and food becomes a tool through which adults manipulate the child's world, as well as a symbol of growth and death.

Food is an indispensable ingredient of almost every textual world – especially in children's literature; it also builds our language, best witnessed in phrases and idioms, "metaphors we live by" (Lakoff and Johnson) that revolve around food. What we eat is ultimately "eating us" in some sense – as in the phrase "What's eating you?", exactly the same in Polish "Co cię gryzie/zżera?". On a textual level, "eating passages" are often a challenge for translators, since almost always the subject of food is specifically linked to the realities of the presented world and is an important transmitter of tradition, place, and time. They can refer to stereotypes (like carrot-eating rabbit in the Polish translation of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*) or history (*Squirrel Nutkin*), nostalgic link between food and home that turns out to be untranslatable (onion sauce and bubble-and-squeak in *The Wind in the Willows*), or seemingly insignificant details, all the more important in the co-creation of the symbolic dimension of the presented world ("condensed milk" in *Winnie-the-Pooh*, tropical fruit in *Peter and Wendy*). In all these cases every choice of the translator – whether domestication, neutralization or foreignization – will be fraught with consequences for reading and interpretation. Ultimately, it is only fair to say that in children's literature, especially the classics, it is most frequently the food that is eating the translators away.

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Notes

[1] This chapter was written as a part of the OPUS 21 grant of the National Science Centre, Poland, project no. 2021/41/B/HS2/00876: *Half a Century of Children's Literature in Poland. Texts for a Young Audience in the Context of Cultural Production and Power: The Recipient of Literature – Literature as a Recipient.*

[2] See also Chiaro and Rossato 238.

[3] Lawrence Venuti, who introduced the terms "domestication" and "foreignization" to Translation Studies, defines the former as "an assimilative approach to a foreign text, appropriating it to support native canons, publishing trends, political alignments", and the latter as "motivated by the impulse to preserve linguistic and cultural differences by departing from dominant national values" (Venuti "Strategies of Translation" 420; see also Venuti *The Translator's Invisibility*).

[4] Catherine Keyser points out that in the late nineteenth century, which "saw the advent of industrial food, artificial flavours, […] and nutrition science, major transformations in food substances and systems that made food ever more available and yet potentially treacherous", children were seen as the most vulnerable consumers, whose proper diet should be particularly cared for (Keyser 146–147). This can also be said of the child book-consumers of the period, whose proper intellectual diet was of particular interest to authors and critics (see Stevenson 2011).

[5] For various periodisations and canons of the Golden Age of English children's literature, see Green, Carpenter, Gubar, Sorby.

[6] This artificiality is explicitly marked by the novel's composition, based on storytelling; throughout the book, the narrator repeatedly reveals his presence, drawing the reader's attention to the textuality and artificiality of the presented world.

[7] As noted by Daniel, sweetness (especially the sweetness of honey) connotes in everyday speech feelings of love and tenderness, often directed towards children. Daniel also notes the linguistic equating of the subject (children, loved ones) with food objects, but also with animals; see Daniel 34.

[8] In two versions – by Michał Rusinek (*Piotruś Pan i Wendy*, 2006) and by Władysław Jerzyński (*Piotruś Pan i Wanda*, 2014) – it disappears altogether, most probably due to the fact that these translations were based on the New York editions of 1911 or subsequent ones, in which the eating scene is also missing.