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Child and childhood in the collections of the Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska Ethnographic Archive, Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Łódź

In this paper, I focus on child and childhood related research that over the years has been carried out at the University of Łódź. I review, in chronological and thematic order, the materials kept as part of the Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska Ethnographic Archive of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Łódź. The idea for this paper emerged while I was working on the book *Dzieciństwo w rodzinie robotniczej międzywojennej Łodzi. Perspektywa etnograficzno-pedagogiczna* (“Childhood in a working family of interwar Łódź. An ethnographic-pedagogical perspective”; the book co-authored with Joanna Sosnowska). I then discovered that part of the considerable collection of research material on the workers’ culture in Łódź, consists in memoirs addressing the subject of child and childhood, which had never been properly analysed. This begged the question whether the same might apply to the rest of the data collected in the archive? Here, I therefore review all the field material in the archive, in an attempt to trace relevant research on and with children.

The current Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska Ethnographic Archive was established in 1945 on the initiative of Prof. Kazimiera Zawistowicz-Adamska, as she set up the Department of Ethnography at the University of Łódź.¹ During her pre-war travels to Scandinavia, professor Kopczyńska-Jaworska had

¹ It was expanded into a fully-fledged Ethnography Department as early as 1952, then, in 1990, renamed the Department of Ethnology, and later, in 2005, it became the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Łódź.

the opportunity to visit the impeccably organized folklore archives in Estonia and Finland (Kopczyńska-Jaworska 1995: 115). It gave her the impulse to advocate for the creation of such ethnographic archives. As early as in the 1930s, she sought to create a Central Folklore Archive at the Polish Radio. She was convinced that “documentation compiled by an ethnographer constitutes not only the basis for individual interpretation, but also a source of imperishable historical value” (Kopczyńska-Jaworska 2001: 69). She argued that such documentation kept in a special archive should be universally accessible.² Therefore, after the war, she called for institutional archives of field research material to be set up in museums and within academic institutions. When she took over the Department of Ethnography at the University of Łódź in 1945, she set up an archive of field material there. As there were no universally applicable, uniform rules for archiving ethnographic fieldwork documentation, she adopted her own way of categorizing ethnographic sources, consisting of the so-called primary documents, i.e. records of interviews and observations from fieldwork, and photographic documentation of behaviour and effects of human creative activity. As they were setting up the archive, Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska and Teresa Zakrzewska also developed their own system of cataloguing and storing material, and a custom-made browsing system for research documentation.

An ethnographic archive

A basic item within the “interview and fieldwork observations unit” in the archive at the Department of Ethnography, University of Łódź is composed by an interview with one interlocutor, addressing one major (and often some minor) or specific topic or material, based on observation by one researcher. Depending on the subject, these materials can range from one to as many as several dozen pages. The basic data collection technique is interviewing, and specifically: questionnaire-based, open-ended interview based on specific guidelines, and narrative or biographical interview. Participant observation was another, concurrent method. The records are arranged in chronological order – based on the date they were filed. Mostly, these are handwritten notes, though the oldest materials, containing the most valuable material, were later typed. The more recent materials consist of printouts of transcriptions typed digitally by research participants, while the material currently collected is stored in digital format. Most of the materials are also recorded by means of index cards specifically developed by Zawistowicz-Adamska for the purpose of archiving.³

² As Kopczyńska-Jaworska noted, in the interwar period ethnographers’ scholarly publications were based on private field notes not shared with others (Kopczyńska-Jaworska 2001: 69).

³ The index cards are divided into two parts, the upper one for information about the time and location of the interview, informant and researcher details, the topic of the interview, page number and inventory number. The bottom part contains the interview transcript and comments. The A5 cards fit into filing cabinets drawers, making the index easy to browse.

All metadata are stored in the interview and observation inventory, which includes: inventory number, filing date, subject, number of pages, area (i.e. place of data collection), date of interview, informant information, researcher information and comments. Until the 1990s, the researchers updated a topographical catalogue to facilitate browsing. In 2017–2018, the archive developed a Virtual Map of Ethnographic Fieldwork, serving as a thematic and topographical catalogue for research carried out between 1945 and 2017.⁴ Currently, it includes 20 362 inventory units.

The *Visual and Audio Material Section* of the archive contains 22 348 photograph items along with negatives and digital photographs taken in the course of fieldwork, which are either directly related to the relevant subject matter or which illustrate the folk culture of the given area. Prints reproduced from all photographs have been pasted onto index cards, along with a catalogue number and a brief description. The cards are arranged in a chronological order. Digital photographs are stored in their original format, with no printout copies. Photographs are listed in an inventory that includes the following data: inventory number, subject, locality, date when the photograph was originally taken, photographer, film number (not applicable to digital material).

The above items (interviews, observation notes and photographs) constitute a basic source material for scientific research, including BA, MA and PhD dissertations. The archive's *Dissertations Section* includes 1466 items.

Looking for materials on children and childhood I searched all available inventories of field materials and the surveys and questionnaires section, selecting those most likely to contain such data. I looked for materials whose name (stated topic) included the following keywords: child, childhood, family, girl, boy, birth, churching of women after childbirth, baptism, lullabies, family rituals, toy-making, play, school, kindergarten, upbringing.

In this text, I discuss these materials in chronological order, starting from the earliest. To fully convey the nature of these materials and themes therein, it is necessary to describe the specific way of working adopted by the ethnographic team at the University of Łódź, which had an impact on the type and character of the collected ethnographic material and provides an important context for this research.

Zawistowicz-Adamska developed her own methodological approach based on teamwork. The team always focused on a defined common research problem, although it took into account the broad spectrum of individual team members' interests. Due to the commonality of the research problem, team members could use materials comparatively and exchange materials, observations and experiences with each other. Despite their different research interests and publication focus, they were able to mutually benefit from each other's research output (Kuźma 2011: 48). The field research procedure developed by Zawistowicz-Adamska involved fieldwork in individual villages selected following a specific design.

⁴ Since 2023, due to changes related to the Multiportal implementation at the University of Lodz, the map has been suspended. There are now efforts to reinstate it.

This ensured that the materials sourced through fieldwork were comparable and homogeneous. The fieldwork was carried out by academics and students collecting data for their dissertations. Such design had an impact on the fieldwork material that was collected and subsequently archived.

Mutual aid and collaboration

The overarching topic in K. Zawistowicz-Adamska's work was socio-economic relations within the Polish rural areas from the mid-19th century to the present. Issues that were brought to the fore related to group work arrangements, their basis and justification in various circumstances and types of production, i.e. mutual aid and cooperation. Studies covered the manual labour activities in which rural populations were involved: main (agricultural), auxiliary – including types of economy specific to certain areas (riverside lowland pastoralism, high mountain pastoralism, fishing), additional (handicrafts) and seasonal (rafting). Research was conducted in the following areas: Beskid Śląski, Łowicz region, Opoczno region, Orawa, Rzeszów region, Sądeczczyzna, Sieradz region, Warmia and Mazury and Żywiecczyzna. Apart from the main topics of inquiry, researchers also focused on side topics, mainly emerging during student fieldwork and student camps, as minor contributions (Kopczyńska-Jaworska 1964: 13; Zakrzewska 1975: 88; Zawistowicz-Adamska 1975: 8–9).

It is noticeable that research on children and childhood was not of particular interest for Łódź ethnographers at that time. However, the inventories indicate that, at least as a side topic, these were also addressed, probably due to Zawistowicz-Adamska's postulate to always encompass the entire culture of the area. Thus, in the archive, we find material discussing the following issues: pregnancy⁵, childbirth⁶, churching of women⁷, postpartum gifts⁸, birthing chamber⁹, baptism¹⁰, lullabies¹¹, children¹², illegitimate children¹³, gifts for children¹⁴, child labour¹⁵, children's education¹⁶, child up to fourteen¹⁷. The material on pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period, as well as baptism, stems from the usual ethnographic interest in birth customs categorised as family rituals, and linked to the main theme, by investigation how mutual aid and assistance played out

⁵ AZE A 242, 249, 662.

⁶ AZE A 234, 242, 257, 641, 662.

⁷ AZE A 186, 248.

⁸ AZE A 94, 271.

⁹ AZE A 2720.

¹⁰ AZE A 55, 199, 214, 255, 271, 553, 554, 575, 577, 632, 635, 644, 662, 783, 1086, 1101, 1254, 1465.

¹¹ AZE A 223, 256, 270.

¹² AZE A 1460, 2417, 2923-2969.

¹³ AZE A 1432.

¹⁴ AZE A 2338.

¹⁵ AZE A 2380.

¹⁶ AZE A 2628, 2629, 3303, 3304, 3366.

¹⁷ AZE A 2721-2725.

at childbirth or baptism. Lullabies are found in data related to songs in general. One interview in which we find information about gifts for children points to moments in the ceremonial year when adults give children gifts. Material about child labour and education is based on the achievements of the interviewees' children, both in school and at work, and on all kinds of responsibilities. Such information was collected by women researchers during interviews with adult women who recounted their own experience or those of their community.

Among the material derived from fieldwork designed for archaeology students¹⁸, we find interviews conducted with adults talking about their children under the age of fourteen. One student interviewed research participants about: how children's diseases were treated, care and hygiene, upbringing, daily routine, school and home duties, children's games. There is also a description of a day at nursery school and of school activities. Interviewees included parents, a nurse from the health centre, the principal of the kindergarten and a teacher from the primary school.

The second outstanding collection is the research material collected for the master's thesis titled *Dziecko w rodzinie wiejskiej. Na podstawie własnych badań terenowych w powiecie radomszczańskim* ("Child in a rural family: Based on own field research in the Radomszczański District") (Matczak 1962). The source material was collected during the student's summer internship at the Ethnographic Museum in Łódź, an institution which in 1960–1962 was tasked with research focusing on the culture of the rural populations in the Radomszczański District. The student collected data on all aspects of children's lives within the family and rural environment. The resulting extensive scholarly dissertation includes rich illustrative material – photographs taken by the author, who discussed beliefs and magical procedures, the physical and mental development of the child, care and upbringing, educational institutions, learning, the child's participation in the family's production activities, games, rituals and social life, as well as issues relating to learning and education in rural areas. The material is an evidence of scholarly interest in childhood and a holistic approach to the topic. The author interviewed adult women, men (parents, grandparents), some of whom were school managers, managers of a children's home, or kindergarten teachers. The publication also provides the first instance in the archive, in which children acted as informants – it included two interviews with a record of children's games.¹⁹

Research in the Gramada village

Between 1966 and 1968, Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska was part of a Polish-Bulgarian monographic study focused on a selected local community. After a pilot study, the team chose Gramada village, where Kopczyńska-Jaworska, G. Michajłowa

¹⁸ In 1950–1955 and 1963–1971 no students were admitted to study ethnography. During that period, the Staff at the Department of Ethnography were teaching courses as services provided to other university departments.

¹⁹ AZE A 2924 – girl I.10 and AZE A 2968 – schoolchildren.

and M. Pokropek conducted research on living conditions and the culture of day-to-day life (Kopczyńska-Jaworska 1971a: 35–37). The researcher investigated rapid transformations in the life of rural families (i.e. including the situation of children as part of the family). She started by reconstructing the image of a family at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to arrive at the characterisation of the main features of a modern family (Kopczyńska-Jaworska 1971b: 41–42). Her main source material were individual fieldwork interviews, available in the archive under the theme of family and living conditions (with the following side themes: school, education, medical treatment of children, childcare, family planning)²⁰.

Research with KBRU

Year 1963 marked the beginning of research in the Bełchatów Industrial District that proved impactful for the development of the Department of Ethnography at the University of Łódź. It was carried out in agreement with the Industrial Regions Research Committee (KBRU) within the First Department of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. The need for this type of research arose along with the opening of a large lignite mine and power plant. The researchers were interested in the changes occurring in the overall folk culture of the area due to its industrialisation. From the ethnographic perspective it was a diverse and transforming field that had also been poorly researched, hence the focus was on the study of the economic aspects (not very popular in ethnographic research until then) and the related labour, production, manufacturing or exchange relations (Kuźma 2011: 60). Research also focused on the changes taking place within traditional rural culture (initiation rituals, performance and ritual arts, building and interior design, weaving), on family and leisure time among the rural youth (Zakrzewska 1975: 85–88). Collaboration with the KBRU also included ethnographic research in the Łęczyca area, started in 1967 (institutions in village life), and in 1969 in the Włocławek area (villagers' attitudes to land).²¹ The research involved both staff and students, collecting material for their respective dissertations.

The research inventory includes the following topics: childbirth²², illegitimate children²³, infant care²⁴, child²⁵, toy making²⁶, school²⁷, family²⁸. We learn about illegitimate children from one interview in a study carried out in Włocławek,

²⁰ AZE A 2792, 2794, 2804, 2886–2898, 2996–2999, 3003, 3006, 3009, 3014, 3015, 3016, 3018, 3021, 3024, 3025, 3026, 3027, 3028, 3029, 3030, 3035, 3144, 3145, 3147–3150, 3152, 3155–3159, 3166.

²¹ For more extensive information on the field research material held in the archive (interviews up to No. 3389), see the article by T. Zakrzewska (1975).

²² AZE B 5, 10, 11, 12, 32, 43, 44, 53, 54, 71, 72, 76, 77, 92, 93, 104, 126, 128, 154, 155, 161, 180, 195, 197, 229, 250, 288, 289, 290, 292, 295, 296, 297, 303, 333, 413, 414, 438, 526, 527.

²³ AZE B 991, 992, 1178.

²⁴ AZE B 486–507.

²⁵ AZE B 796–798, 800–805, 851–852.

²⁶ AZE B 55, 82, 352, 611, 612, 614.

²⁷ AZE B 29, 89, 799.

²⁸ AZE B 267–275.

where the respondents talked about views and aspirations of young people. The issue of illegitimate children is also included in the material collected for Maria Wieruszewska's doctoral thesis on social control and public opinion (Wieruszewska-Adamczyk 1970). Infant care was part of the research for the master's thesis *Higiena i lecznictwo we wsi Łękawa pow. Bełchatów* ("Hygiene and folk medicine in the village of Łękawa, Bełchatów County") (Jędruch 1965), where the author addressed the topic of children and childhood by discussing issues related to the ways in which people provided care to infants and washed the children's bodies, hair and teeth. Toy-making was discussed within the broader context of folk art and plastic arts among village people. Questions related to shrines and crosses erected by roads, to sculpture, painting, basketry, plaiting, papermaking, blacksmithing, folk artists, Easter eggs, chamber decoration and folklore, also included those on toy-making. Under the 'school' label, there is information on the organisation of school and education in individual villages, including school premises. Childbirth (i.e. pregnancy and birth) is included in the research on family customs, with particular reference to the following issues: social and matrimony-related relations, weddings, age limits and gender as determinants of social structure, legal customs concerning inheritance and transfer of property between generation, as well as funerals. Passages about age and gender limits seem particularly interesting, indicating from what age and what kind of work could children do. Such materials were collected for the master's thesis titled *Obrzędy recepcyjne wieku dojrzałego w Bełchatowskim* ("Mature life initiation rituals within the Bełchatów Area") (Wieruszewska 1965). Research focused specifically on children was undertaken by Elżbieta Kornicka, who conducted interviews during a summer camp in Łękawa, addressing the following topics: upbringing within families, child within the rural community, upbringing at home, upbringing at school, upbringing ideals, work and play, religious upbringing – [the first] communion. Interviews included under the heading 'family' barely ever addressed the subject of children. Some were part of B. Jewsiewicki's research on the family, carried out in Dworzowice Kościelne, which included nine interviews describing family history and family life, farm life, education, family gatherings, child rearing, religion, relationships within the family and with neighbours. Other interviews were part of Jadwiga Kucharska's research on the family and related social ties. Among the material collected in 1964, there are also two sets of statements made by pupils schooled in Woźniki. Sixth-grade primary school pupils²⁹ provided written answers to the question: *What did I do on Saturday and Sunday?* The collective title for the collection of their written contributions – *Children's helping in families* suggests that Kucharska was not in fact interested in children's own interests but in their chores. Fifth-grade pupils,³⁰ apart from providing accounts of how they spend their time on Saturdays and Sundays were also asked to describe their grandparents. The title of this document suggests that researchers were keen

²⁹ AZE B 457 (29 responses).

³⁰ AZE B 457 (26 descriptions).

to learn about the children's attitudes towards their grandparents and how they helped with the chores.

As part of research in the Włocławek area in 1972, Władysław Baranowski, PhD did a questionnaire-based study in a school in the Śmiłowice village.³¹ Children attending grades 4a³², 7a³³, 8a³⁴ answered a set of six questions. The first two related to the respondents themselves and their peers: *Who are your friends? Who do you trust (admire) most in your class?* The researchers were interested to see if the peer relationships among school children reflected the rural area's social structure: divisions based on traditional ownership, occupational differentiation (farmers and landless labourers).³⁵ They checked whether the social categories operating among parents were also replicated among children, which was addressed through the question about land ownership and the parents' professional activities outside agriculture.³⁶ The fourth topic was: *Write who among the neighbours are helping your father at work and who gets his help*, whereby the researchers explored links predicated on neighbourhood assistance, tenancy and mutual labour exchanges.³⁷ The last two questions related to annual festivals, rituals and customs associated with them. In addition to questionnaires, the source material includes ten descriptions provided by the students.

Research in Kashubia

As part of extensive research in Kashubia³⁸ carried out over the years by Jadwiga Kucharska, several Master's dissertations focused on families, children and childhood. The dissertation *Dziecko w rodzinie kaszubskiej* ("Child in a Kashubian family") aimed to explore the situation of children between the beginning of the 20th c. and the 1980s (Gilewska 1985), with specific focus on the Chmielno village.³⁹

³¹ Questionnaires are kept in the *Questionnaire Section*, the publication AZE B 1243-1244.

³² 20 survey responses.

³³ 21 survey responses.

³⁴ 17 survey responses.

³⁵ AZE B 1244.

³⁶ As the questions for the surveys are missing and not all of them were written down by the child-respondents, the prompts were reconstructed based on answers and other studies mentioned above.

³⁷ AZE B 1243.

³⁸ Kashubia was Jadwiga Kucharska's research focus throughout her scientific career. First, as part of the research on mutual aid funded through the Department of Ethnography in Łódź, she studied traditional fishing (Kucharska 1950, 1961), then broadened the scope to include social and vocational changes in rural areas (Kucharska 1971). In the 1970s she shifted her focus to the entire Kashubian population (her research laboratory since), including emigrants to Canada (Kucharska 1985, 1986, 1993). From the 1970s onwards, she carried out research together with undergraduate students.

³⁹ The village was chosen for the study because it included the so-called *wybudowania* or extensions, i.e. individual homesteads or groups of buildings located outside the compact, core part of the village.

Gilewska collected twenty three⁴⁰ accounts spanning three generations, where she looked especially at three periods in a child's life: fetus and birth (pregnancy and related beliefs, birth, baptism); infancy, post-infancy and pre-school age (nursing and care, child's daily routine and upbringing within the family, games and toys, kindergarten); school age (school, children's participation in farm activities and household chores, upbringing within the family). The researchers taking part in the Kashubian studies have also looked into the topic of baptism.⁴¹ The source material addresses the topics of pregnancy, childbirth, magical procedures, baptism and the selection of godparents. Research conducted in 1980 for a master's thesis *Tradycyjny model wychowania w rodzinie kaszubskiej okolic Bytowa* ("Traditional upbringing in a Kashubian family in the Bytów Area") (Szczęśniak 1982).⁴² The researcher reconstructed the model of traditional upbringing within Kashubian families in the Bytów area and compared it with the national model of upbringing in rural families described in the *Rodzina* ("Family") articles (Szykiewicz 1976). There was also research focusing on family rituals – part of the master's thesis *Stare i nowe tradycje w obrzędowości narodzinowej mieszkańców południowych Kaszub* ("The old and new traditions in childbirth rituals of the inhabitants of Southern Kashubia") (Michalak 1989).⁴³ Another author's dissertation, based on research focusing on leisure activities in rural families in Kashubia⁴⁴, included descriptions of children pastimes and leisure activities (Nadaj 1988).

Research on the Łódź workers' culture

For Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska, research on the workers in Łódź constituted a breakthrough. It was also the first team research she carried out as the head of the Ethnography Department.⁴⁵ As she recalls in a biographical interview: „When I had completed my habilitation procedure, I no longer had to be involved in the Carpathian research, the professor had retired, and I started my independent work at the university, so I started to arrange more extensive research on the workers' culture. We designed the study, we secured appropriate funding, we published a number of publications, and Professor Karpińska's doctoral dissertation and the publication for her habilitation was written as part of this team” (quoted after Karpińska, Kuźma 2018). The professor became the core of a team of researchers and students with whom she conducted extensive research on the working-class culture in Łódź. Children and childhood were addressed as part of the following

⁴⁰ AZE B 3032-3041, AZE B 3270-3282.

⁴¹ AZE B 3371-3379.

⁴² AZE B 2492-2516.

⁴³ AZE B 4624-4638.

⁴⁴ AZE B 4182-4201.

⁴⁵ Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska became the Head of the Department of Ethnography in 1970. In her work, she continued the tradition of team research developed by Kazimiera Zawisowicz-Adamska.

topics: care, hygiene, child health in a working-class family⁴⁶, mother and child in a workers' family in the interwar period⁴⁷, children's games play in workers' families in Łódź (1918–1939)⁴⁸, children's and youth's games and play in 1918–1939 in workers' families⁴⁹, rituals and customs related to childbirth and upbringing⁵⁰, games and play among children in the city of Łódź⁵¹. In addition to publications, this research resulted in about thirty master's theses, of which only a few focused on the child and the working-class family: *Gry i zabawy dzieci w środowisku robotniczym łódzkim w okresie międzywojennym* ("Children's games and plays in the workers' community in Łódź in the Interwar Period") (Jacuk 1979), *Opieka, higiena, zdrowie dziecka w rodzinie robotniczej w Łodzi w okresie międzywojennym* ("Care, hygiene, and health of the child in the workers' family in Łódź in the Interwar Period") (Stępień 1979), *Wierzenia i zwyczaje związane z narodzinami i wychowaniem małego dziecka w rodzinie robotniczej w okresie międzywojennym* ("Beliefs and customs related to the birth and upbringing of a young child in a workers' family in the Interwar Period") (RADIUSZKIN 1981), *Gry i zabawy dzieci łódzkich (Zmiany wzorów kulturowych)* ("Games and plays of Łódź children. Changes in cultural patterns") (Muras 1989). The last dissertation stands out among the others in terms of the choice of respondents. In her study of the transformation of cultural patterns related to the games and play of children aged 6–12, she recruited a heterogenous age group as her interviewees. The first group included people whose childhood spanned the years before the Second World War. The second were those, who were children in the early post-war years, the third – the first half of the 1970s, and the fourth – in the second half of the 1980s, i.e. they were children when the research was conducted. Child and childhood have also been included, as part of the overall research topic, in other research projects focusing on the culture of working-class inhabitants of Łódź: the workers' mores (Pażik 1980),⁵² women's social standing at work and within the family (Węglińska 1982),⁵³ on the vestiges of traditional culture in workers' families (Lipiński 1964).⁵⁴

The basic method used in the research among workers in the city of Łódź was open-ended interview based on a questionnaire, which was a set of research instructions. Separate questionnaires were developed for each topic, most of which have been preserved as appendices attached to dissertations. In each case, there was also a description of the interview circumstances to contextualize research situation. Photographs from private archives shared by the respondents were also part of research material. Some of these were made available and are attached to master's dissertations.

⁴⁶ AZE B 1896-1908, 2051-2062.

⁴⁷ AZE B 1909-1917.

⁴⁸ AZE B 1933-1943.

⁴⁹ AZE B 2064-2069.

⁵⁰ AZE B 2483-2491.

⁵¹ AZE B 4414-4429.

⁵² AZE B 1575-1627.

⁵³ AZE B 2392-2395, 2584-2592.

⁵⁴ AZE A 2805-2849, 2900-2906.

In addition to the above-mentioned source material, the Workers' Research Collection also consists of memoirs sent to the "Łódź Workers' Folklore" competition and collected by the Lodex – Łódź Workers' Folklore Association within the Polish Folklore Society.

This entire source material was created outside of the specific context of research on children and childhood and thus sources related to these topics were later retrieved, selected and published as *Dzieciństwo w rodzinie robotniczej międzywojennej Łodzi. Perspektywa etnograficzno-pedagogiczna* ("Childhood in a worker's family of interwar Łódź. An ethnographic and pedagogical perspective"; Deredas, Sosnowska 2022).

Research in central Poland

In 1976–1981, the Department of Ethnography at the University of Łódź was involved in research on the role of tradition in the regional culture of Central Poland. The former Ducatus Loviciensis was chosen as the research area, since the boundaries of this region seemed to be very clearly defined by group awareness (Nowina-Sroczyńska, Baranowski 1984⁵⁵). The long-term project involved the participation of the departments' staff and groups of students, who year after year did their fieldwork internships, part of their study programme. This research included the following relevant topics: childbirth⁵⁶, child upbringing⁵⁷, family rituals⁵⁸, initiation rituals within families⁵⁹, family model⁶⁰, magic (mother and child)⁶¹. Source material on childbirth describes parents' views on gender and number of children, customs and beliefs related to pregnancy, childbirth, churching of women and baptism. It was collected during undergraduate field research and elaborated in the master's thesis *Elementy recepcyjne w obrzędowości rodzinnej gminy Głuchów* ("Initiation within family rituals of the Głuchów Municipality") (Płusa 1980). In the thesis, the author included a sub-chapter on birth rituals, for which she used field material catalogued under the following: family rituals, magic (mother and child), initiation rites in family rituals. Other student projects generated source material discussing the family model, including information on children's chores, parents' views on gender and number of offspring, upbringing: punishments and rewards. Similar data can be found in interviews on child-rearing (childcare, games, upbringing, leisure time, participation in religious life, annual and family rituals, school, punishments and rewards, responsibilities). Most of these interviews served as source material for the master's thesis *Wychowanie dziecka w rodzinie*

⁵⁵ For more details related to this research see other papers published in *Łódzkie Studia Etnograficzne* Vol. 23.

⁵⁶ AZE A 4241-4251.

⁵⁷ AZE A 4184-4189, 4691, 4726-4737, 4767-4784, 4805-4807, 4913-4916, 4902, 4920-4922, 4986.

⁵⁸ AZE A 3983-3986, 3989, 3992-3997, 4001, 4002, 4006, 4030, 4032-4034.

⁵⁹ AZE A 4856-4879.

⁶⁰ AZE A 4597-4613.

⁶¹ AZE A 4809-4831.

wiejskiej (na przykładzie wybranych rodzin wsi Michowice, gm. Głuchów, woj. Skierniewickie) ("Childrearing in rural families [based on selected families in the village of Michowice, Głuchów, Skierniewice region]") (Pająk 1980). For the author, raising a child constitutes a fact of cultural transmission. By means of questionnaire-based interviews, she collected data on problems related to the family model and its child-related functions and intra- and intergenerational relations; child and youth care, the process of upbringing; the family as a bearer of certain patterns and children's participation in annual and family rituals; the family's reaction to outside interference in the upbringing process. In order to verify the information obtained from adults and to check the effects of upbringing, the author also interviewed children covering the following topics: children's participation in annual and family rituals, their knowledge of rituals, children's daily life, work, study, play, wartime. The research also generated source material on various aspects of family life.⁶² These were the basis for the following master's theses: *Wpływ parafii na życie społeczności wiejskiej ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem rodziny (na przykładzie parafii Wysokienice woj. skierniewickie)* ("Influence of the parish on rural community life with special focus on the family [on the example of the parish of Wysokienice in Skierniewice Voivodeship"] (Chlebowska 1979), *Wpływ pracy w zespole folklorystycznym na życie rodziny wiejskiej na przykładzie Lipiec Reymontowskich* ("Impact of participation in a folklore performance group on the life of a rural family – the example of Lipiec Reymontowskie") (Gaul 1977), *Poglądy na miłość, małżeństwo, rodzinę, mieszkańców wsi Zabostów Duży* ("Views on love, marriage, family within the village of Zabostów Duży") (Gawrońska 1981).

Other research

In 1985, the student summer fieldwork in Piotrków focused on family rituals: birth, wedding, funeral. The researchers conducted fifteen interviews with women and men aged 50 and over, collecting information on: pregnancy, its course, customs, prohibitions and orders, the course of childbirth, and baptism. In 1986, source material was also collected in Łódź on Jewish family rituals, resulting in the master's thesis *Żydowskie obrzędy rodzinne* ("Jewish family rituals") (Parada 1987), that included data on: circumcision, marriage, funerals.⁶³

Departure from team research

In the 1990s, along with an increase in the number of students, there was also an increase in the number of staff within the Department of Ethnology at the University of Łódź. As a result, the Department was divided into sub-departments,

⁶² AZE A 4107-4121 (no source material), AZE B 1368-1379 (no source material), AZE A 5087-5106.

⁶³ AZE B 3727-3740.

each specialising in specific research problems (Baranowski, Jagiełło, Sadowska 2009). There was a move away from team research involving all staff and students of the Department and towards focused research within the sub-departments. Students continued to take part in research during fieldwork, but their choices of thesis topics, for the most part, were no longer directly linked to research pursued by staff members. With more supervisors available, there was greater freedom in the choice of research topics.

In 1990, Ewa Majchrzak conducted research on child upbringing within urban families, as part of her master's thesis (Majchrzak 1991).⁶⁴ The author looked into the bipolar models of upbringing ('intelligentsia' and 'working class'), comparing their formation, differences and different types of personalities that develop as a result of such upbringing. The respondents were girls attending secondary schools in Łódź, who talked about their upbringing and their parents' attitudes towards their children.

The summer fieldwork conducted in Supraśl in 1993, brought about narratives about children's folklore.⁶⁵ Noemi Modnicka interviewed three informants aged 9, 10 and 11. She asked about children's songs during play, songs related to holidays school celebrations, rhymes or the custom of children doing rounds at Christmas.

Year 1996 marked the publication of the master's thesis *He-Man, Barbie i Transformers – świat dziecięcych bohaterów. Ujęcie etnologiczne* ("He-Man, Barbie and Transformers – the world of children's action heroes. An ethnological approach") (Jagiełło 1996). In four chapters,⁶⁶ the author described fictional characters relevant to children in the 1990s. Her study included 42 children (20 girls and 22 boys),⁶⁷ third-grade pupils from three different primary schools in the city of Łódź, who named their favourite cartoons, TV series, movies, books and toys. The children were also asked to indicate which literary and film characters they considered positive or negative. The surveys and interviews were conducted in three stages. The first was a pilot survey, probing children's tastes and preferences. The second survey aimed to gain a more detailed insight into children's interests. Research was carried out in the family homes by an adult researcher. The author's reflection on her research method is noteworthy. "A weakness of the interview conducted by an adult with a child in the child's own home was that the situation was unfamiliar, which seemed to embarrass the children and made them provide succinct, monosyllabic answers to questions and only very brief elaboration of topics that interested them. It also seemed that the children, either left in a room with a complete stranger or supervised and even corrected by adult family members, tried to provide answers that they thought were in line with my expectations. The questions in my questionnaire covered a wide variety of areas related to play

⁶⁴ AZE B 4884-4905 (no interviews).

⁶⁵ AZE A 6165-6167.

⁶⁶ Chapters: 1. Play and toys – historical review, 2. In the world of Barbie and Superman. Description of selected toys, 3. Children's perspectives on toys, 4. Child protagonists in the context of selected pop-cultural issues.

⁶⁷ Study material archived under AZE A 6924-6936.

and leisure activities, supplemented by topics improvised in the course of the conversation, provided that the child showed interest in a specific issue. All of this made interviews time-consuming and tired children became distracted, shut down, and brushed off questions with random answers” (Jagiello 1996, 63). In the third stage of the research, the researcher decided to change her strategy. She divided the children into small groups with a single interviewer asking questions about how particular toys are used in play, about the course and themes of these games, the influence of toys on the formation of judgements about different areas of life. Such a collective interview with children has its pros and cons: “A positive aspect of such a study design was that the children were more adventurous in answering the questions and felt more relaxed, because they outnumbered the single interviewer. Working in a group provoked discussion, which made the answers more complete. On the other hand, despite the interviewers’ efforts and instructions such as «write down your answer on a piece of paper», children tended to form their opinions as a group” (Jagiello 1996: 64).

In 2006, Professor Ewa Nowina-Sroczyńska, as part of a student summer fieldwork in Gliczarów, conducted research on women and children.⁶⁸ The emphasis was on women and their role as mothers and all aspects related to that role, i.e. number of children, girls’ puberty, pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum period, as well as related health considerations, prohibitions, injunctions and magical procedures, the mother’s role in raising the child, baptism, etc. Interviews were conducted with adult women, mothers.

In 2008, also as part of the student summer fieldwork, but conducted in Ochotnica, students under the supervision of Paweł Schmidt, PhD were involved in biographical research on childhood and youth.⁶⁹ The respondents were the oldest village inhabitants (men and women), who recalled their youth and their earliest memories. Another biographical study was the master’s thesis *W czasie wojny byliśmy dziećmi. Analiza z zakresu antropologii pamięci* (“We were children during the war. A study in an anthropology of memory”) (Rembowska 2012). The author conducted six interviews with people whose childhood coincided with the Second World War.⁷⁰

In 2014, there was another BA dissertation *Dziewczynki i kobiety w świecie gier komputerowych. Próba antropologicznej analizy wybranych aspektów socjalizacji płci*. (“Girls and women in the world of computer games, an anthropological analysis of selected aspects of gender socialisation”) (Wawrzyńska 2014). The author interviewed young women gamers with childhood experience of gaming.⁷¹ In 2010, one of the students conducted research⁷² leading to a master’s thesis *Lektury z dzieciństwa. Studium z zakresu antropologii literatury* (“Childhood readings – a study in anthropology of literature”) (Sobótka 2010). The author studied the phenomenon of children’s

⁶⁸ AIEiAK 10176-10188.

⁶⁹ AIEiAK 13269-13317.

⁷⁰ AIEiAK 11791-11796.

⁷¹ AIEiAK 13062-13066.

⁷² AIEiAK 11084.

and young adults' literature understood as a cultural fact. She interviewed young adults (university students or recent graduates, avid readers in their childhood, for whom books are important as an identity-forming element of cultural transmission). In 2015, another student worked on her master's thesis *Codziennosc z dodatkowym chromosomem. Zespól Downa a funkcjonowanie rodziny. Szkic do antropologii medycyny* ("Everyday Life with an extra chromosome – Down syndrome and the functioning of a family. A contribution to medical anthropology") (Borczyńska 2016) and conducted thirteen interviews with parents of children with Down Syndrome⁷³. Her aim was to investigate the concept of the disease among parents of children with Down Syndrome, and the daily life of families living with their child's condition.

Visual and Audio Section

The Visual and Audio section comprises photographs taken during the field research, including images of children from the study area in various contexts. There are photographs of: children in folk/regional/festive costumes,⁷⁴ children's hairstyles,⁷⁵ women with children,⁷⁶ children at work,⁷⁷ different kinds of cribs,⁷⁸ places where children spent summer days as part of collective care arrangements in the village when parents were working the fields.⁷⁹ There are also photographs depicting respondents and their families: with their child/grandchild/family,⁸⁰ or families.⁸¹ The largest collection includes photographs titled children/girls, usually depicting the respondents' children without mentioning their names.⁸²

Another resource consists of photographs and reproductions (from books, newspapers, museum and archive collections) related to research on the culture and history of the city of Łódź. This thematic collection illustrating the culture

⁷³ AIEiAK 13934-13946.

⁷⁴ K 15/L.15, 16/L.16, 17/L.17, 26/B.1, 217/L.142, 218/L.143, 219/L.144, 220/L.145, 251/L.168, 252/L.169, 309/L.209, 310/L.210, 311/L.211, 392/L.172, 1289/L.1069, 1290/L.1070, 3543/L.3043, 3544/L.3044, 3545/L.3045, 3546/L.3046, 3547/L.3047, 3548/L.3048, 3619/L.3119, 3620/L.3120, 3621/L.3121, 3622/L.3122, 3623/L.3123, 3625/L.3125, 3626/L.3126, 3627/L.3127, 4695/L.4050, 4730/L.4085, 4731/L.4086, 5242/B.741, B 6170/L.5883, 6171/L.5884, 6172/L.5885, 6417/L.6085, 6498/L.6196.

⁷⁵ K 1118/L.898, 1119/L.899, 1129/L.909.

⁷⁶ K 30/B.5, 257/L.174,258/L.175, 444/L.244, 604/B.206.

⁷⁷ K 259/L.176, B 6506/L.6177, 6507/L.6178, 6508/L.6179, 6509/L.6180, 6752/L.6406.

⁷⁸ K 4543/B.604, 1317/L.1097, 1318/L.1098, B 5352/L.5224.

⁷⁹ 6613/L.6267, 6614/L.6268, 6615/L.6269, 6616/L.6270, 6617/L.6271.

⁸⁰ K 3576/L.3076, 3577/L.3077, 3578/L.3078.

⁸¹ K 432/B.199, 437/L.237, 438/L.238, 2637/L.2307, 4483/L.3936, 4484/L.3937, 4835/L.4190, 4972/B.689, 4982/B.699.

⁸² K 118/B.37, 1286/L.1066, 1718/L.1498, 2151/L.1931, 2150/L.1930, 3160/L.2716+a, 3579/L.3079, 3592/L.3092, 3599/L.3099, 3599/L.3099, 3809/L.3309, 4977/B.694, 4979/B.696, 4980/B.697, B 5356/L.5228, 5768/L.5625, 5889/B.1183, 6032/L.5795, 6034/L.5797, 6035/L.5798, 6036/L.5799, 6037/L.5800, 6129/B.1263, 6131/B.1265, 6183/L.5896, 6184/L.5897, 6314/L.6028, 6428/L.6099, 6430/L.6101, 6457/L.6128, 6458/L.6129, 6496/L.6167, 6411/L.6182, 6512/L.6183,6513/L.6184, 6524/L.6195, 6525/L.6196, 6561/L.6215, 6562/L.6216, 6736/L.6390, 6750/L.6404, 6767/L.6415, 6762/L.6416, 6909/L.6491, 6951/L.6532, 6952/L.6533.

of working-class Łódź, presents districts and housing estates, home interiors; streets and city squares, photographs of public institutions, shops; organised events, political parties' celebrations, societies, factory buildings, images of factory owners, workers, children and young people; photographs of family celebrations and leisure activities. The collection also includes reproductions of name day postcards popular among the local community. Photographs related to children and childhood depict: children/girls/boys, families, a nursery, boy and girl scouts, schoolchildren, summer camps, the „Drop of Milk” campaign, healthcare, an orphanage, holidays, school, a hospital, May Day holiday, clothes, the first communion, a childcare facility, a facility for youth presenting challenging behaviour.

Survey and Questionnaire Section

The Survey and Questionnaire Section comprises several surveys and questionnaires not included in the field material inventories. The Child Study Questionnaire, consisting of eight typewritten A5 pages, includes questions grouped into five categories: upbringing of the child within the family, upbringing in school, religious upbringing, upbringing ideals, and the child within a rural community. Information about the questionnaire's authorship and the related research is missing. Questionnaires from c. 1945–1989 (no date is provided) focus on Łódź, development and needs of the city inhabitants. These include seventeen questionnaires, filled in by pupils in the seventh grade of primary schools in Łódź. All responses originated from people inhabiting one neighbourhood, Grembach. Assisted by adult carers, the children answered questions about their family's social and professional situation, the topography of the city: neighbourhoods, streets, shops, parks, churches, cinemas, leisure time. Although Agnieszka Poźniak's thesis was not included in the archive, there are one hundred and four filled survey forms from her fieldwork. Girls and boys aged 10–12 answered questions about their favourite fairy tale, favourite fairy tale characters, reading, watching, truthfulness of fairy tales, and specific questions about Alice in Wonderland and Harry Potter.

Dissertation Section

The Dissertation Section also includes master's and bachelor's theses that address the topic of child and childhood, for which fieldwork material has not been deposited in the archive. In her thesis *Księdzem, kupcem, rolnikiem lub żołnierzem – pierwsze urodziny dziecka, dzień wróżb na przyszłe życie* (“Priest, merchant, farmer or soldier – the first birthday and divination of future life”) (Kijewska 1999), the author shows healing and magical procedures to ensure a child's safe growth, focusing especially on the first birthday, as a rite of passage. In another master's thesis *Śmierć w oczach dziecka – studium z antropologii kultury* (“Death in the eyes of a child, a cultural anthropology study”) (Chlebowska 2000), the author addresses

the topic of death through children's perceptions and experiences. She is interested in children's perception of death, the extent of their participation in the funeral rites and the related beliefs and images of which children are aware. Her primary sources come from fieldwork in three villages near Łódź, and involved twelve children participants (aged 6.5 to 12 years) and adult women (mothers or grandmothers of the youngest interviewees). In another master's thesis „*Magia rzeczy*” – reklama a dzieci, antropologiczna refleksja na temat dzieciństwa (“The magic of things – advertising and children, an anthropological reflection on childhood”) (Gańko 2002), the author traces the process of the ‘becoming’ of the child in culture, the emergence of the phenomenon of mass culture, and advertising of children's products (child-related advertising) and its specific characteristics. Another master's thesis *Aniołowie w wyobrażeniach dzieci łódzkich przedszkoli* (“Angels in the perceptions of children attending kindergarten in Łódź”) (Talarek 2004), investigated children's knowledge of angels and related imaginaries. The participants were 44 preschool children from five kindergartens located in Łódź, aged 4 to 7. Interviews with children were conducted in pairs, while children drew angel figures – selected drawings are included in the dissertation. Yet another master's thesis *O narodzinach dziecka. Studium z antropologii współczesności* (“On the birth of a child. A study in the anthropology of modernity”) (Frontczak 2005), researched contemporary customs and behaviours related to childbirth searching for traces of archaic rituals. The work includes illustrations provided by the respondents. In the thesis *Funkcje społeczno-kulturalne Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Dzieci (na przykładzie Oddziału w Grodzisku Mazowieckim)* (“Socio-cultural functions of the children's friends society: The example of the Grodzisk Mazowiecki branch”) (Gradkowska 2006), the author presents the history and social and cultural functions of the Children's Friends Society operating in Grodzisk Mazowiecki – in historical, ethnological, pedagogical and sociological terms. In the master's thesis *Dzieci i starcy jako postacie medialne w kulturze typu ludowego* (“Children and old people as media characters in a folk culture”) (Kozłowska 2006), the author reconstructed the folk image of children and old people and pointed to their media functions within culture. In the master's thesis *Pamięć dzieciństwa. Antropologiczne wędrówki po Podhalu* (“Childhood memory: Anthropological wanderings in Podhale”) (Kałęcka 2006), the author analysed the extent to which childhood in Podhale has changed over the years. Her reflection is based on the forms of memory and the ways in which it is being processed, as well as the factors that emerge during our childhood and that influence our adult life. The author of the master's thesis *Zabawa w świecie form, czyli o dzieciach i placach zabaw* (“Playing in the world of forms – children and playgrounds”) (Jankowska 2009), conducted dozens of interviews on playgrounds with children aged 4–7 and their caregivers, investigating whether children mostly play at home or in playgrounds. The master's thesis „*Chtopskie Dziecko*”. *Studium etnologiczne pisma społeczno-kulturalnego* („«The Peasant Child». An ethnological study of a socio-cultural magazine”) (Mróz 2010), focused on the magazine published between 1947 and 1949, which in the post-war period of national reconstruction was intended to introduce a new model of upbringing in rural areas and familiarise rural population with

the new arrangements. In the master's thesis *Euro-sieroty. Społeczno-kulturowe skutki emigracji rodzin czasowo niepełnych* ("Euro-orphans. Socio-cultural consequences of emigration of temporarily incomplete families") (Strzelecka 2013), the author conducted a study among 23-25-year-olds whose parent had gone abroad to work during their childhood. She was interested in the effects that such situations had on the lives of the respondents in terms of their social, cultural, and educational upbringing. The master's thesis *Autorytet w rodzinie mieszkającej na wsi. Relacje rodzice – dzieci* ("Authority in a family living in a rural area: Parents-children relationships") (Kaszuba 2013), was based on seven interviews with three families (both children and parents of which only one child was aged 8, the others were teenagers or young adults), inquiring if and what children teach their parents, and how authority was distributed within the family. For the thesis *DDA – Dorosłe Dzieci Alkoholików. Antropologiczna analiza ich opowieści* ("DDA – Adult Children of Alcoholics. An anthropological analysis of stories") (Partyka 2014), the author interviewed respondents and analysed their contributions them in terms of how the narrative of a difficult childhood tames both that past and the present.

Apart from scholarly publications that directly address the topic of child and childhood, the archive also includes works where these topics are addressed indirectly: those related to families, situating the child in the context of family life and his or her role in it (Krawczyńska 1952; Karwowska 2015), or works focusing on family rituals and children in their context (Domienik 1980; Mączewska 1985; Hendzlik-Dondziło 1997; Pająk 2015).

Conclusions

Within the academic centre focusing on ethnographic research at the University of Łódź, throughout its existence and until the present day, studying children and childhood has not formed the mainstream scientific interest. However, these topics have been addressed, to various extent, in different contexts. Most often, the topic of children was included in considerations of family rituals, and as part of focus on families, their functions, reconstructions of the traditional image of the peasant family and analyses of family transformations over time. Against this background, the research and master's theses by Stanisława Matczak, Ewa Gilewska and Elżbieta Pająk are of particular value, as well as those by Bożena Jacuk, Teresa Stępień, Lidia Radiuszkin and Barbara Muras, which stand out among the studies of workers in Łódź. In this approach, the focus is on the child, understood to be a research object, about which the researchers collect information from other people, i.e. adults. Gradually, since the 1960s, there emerged studies in which children become active participants and interlocutors, as in the case of the study by Jadwiga Kucharska conducted in 1964. These are not yet studies in which the researchers are interested in the children's own interests or needs, but focus on their place within the family system. Although Władysław Baranowski's research in Włocławek area, among the schoolchildren takes into account children's

needs and relationships, the researcher was not interested in schoolchildren's relationships per se, but in seeing if they reflected the social structure of the village. Only at the end of the 1980s (with the exception of the two interviews with children that we find in Stanisława Matczak's work) children became both the subject and object of research and its active participants, as evidenced in Barbara Muras's work on the games and play of children living in Łódź, which not only focused on a subject directly related to the lives and interests of children, but also included data sourced directly from children. Other works of this kind include texts by Elżbieta Pająk, Ewelina Kaszuba and Dorota Jankowska. Ewa Jagiełło's work deserves a special mention here, since the scholar not only directly asked children what they liked, but perhaps more importantly also offered her reflections on the methodology applied to research with children – which makes it one-of-a-kind study in the collection presented here. Starting with research on the workers' culture in Łódź, where material on childhood memories was collected by Barbara Muras and Bożena Jacuk, researchers increasingly opted for biographical research, in which interviewees reached back in memory to their childhood years and, at the request of the researchers, reconsidered relevant aspects of childhood. This is the case, e.g., of Paweł Schmidt's research in Ochotnica and dissertations by Joanna Rembowska, Justyna Wawrzyńska, Anna Sobótka, Anna Kałęcka, Patrycja Strzelecka and Anna Partyka. At the beginning of the 21st century, there emerged studies in which researchers examine how certain phenomena are perceived by children, where children are research subjects, but research topics are not strictly related to children and childhood. Examples include: Barbara Chlebowska's research on death and Małgorzata Talarek's research on perceptions and imaginaries related to angels. There is a noticeable shift in focus of research in the context of child and childhood. Children are increasingly perceived by scholars as fully fledged participants in culture and the society, affected and concerned with the same issues as adult research participants.

tłum. Katarzyna Byłów

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SUMMARY

Child and childhood in the collections of the Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska Ethnographic Archive, Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Łódź

The article presents the history of research on children and childhood undertaken in the academic centre in Łódź and collected in the Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska Ethnographic Archive of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Lodz. Ethnography as a field of study and a research department was established at the University of Lodz in 1945. Since then, the scientific archive of this unit has been collecting materials from field research as well as its effects, i.e. diploma theses and publications. The analysis of these sources allowed to see how the issues of child and childhood research look in the long term (from 1945 to 2022). In the article, the materials are presented in chronological and thematic order. At the same time, the methods of working with diverse source material are shown. The text is also an attempt to answer questions about the thematic areas related to childhood undertaken by ethnographers and about the positioning of the child in ethnographic research practice.

Keywords: child, childhood, ethnographic archive, ethnographic fieldwork, fieldwork materials