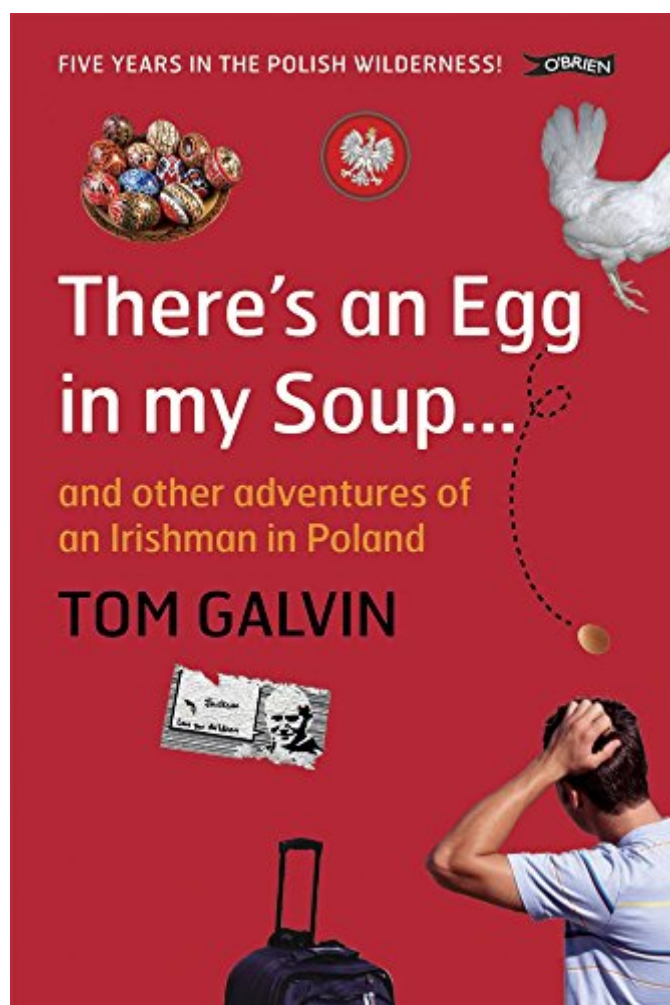


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# There's An Egg In My Soup: ... And Other Adventures Of An Irishman In Poland



## Synopsis

Five years in the Polish wilderness. Queues for groceries, unfathomable bus timetables, inexplicable traditions and truly bizarre soup – this is Poland in the mid-1990s, where Tom Galvin innocently went as a trainee teacher. Without a word of Polish, he is plunged into a strange and rapidly changing culture, as the country shakes off its troubled and complex past and faces the challenges of being a part of modern Europe. Tom spent five years dealing with long and freezing winters, lack of good food, loneliness and hardship, as he discovered the misery as well as the joy of Polish life. He returned in 2007, to find surprising changes to the country that had been his home for the first years of his working life. An interesting and amusing account of living and working abroad, which documents a unique period of Polish history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There's an Egg in my Soup (2007) by Tom Galvin is an account of living in a rural town 40km East of Warsaw in the mid 1990s. Galvin went there on a scholarship to teach English and the book is his memoir of what the town and his stay was like. It's not a brilliant book by any stretch but it is quite

interesting. Poland 20 years ago was still recovering from Communism and Soviet occupation. It wasn't clear in the early 1990s whether Poland would stay poor and depressed. Today Poland looks rich, successful and dynamic and is one of the great success stories of the end of Soviet Occupation. Galvin's book describes Misk Mozowiecki and his time in the school fairly well. He paints a fair portrait of what the place was like and the way the people were. It's quite warm and funny in parts. It's not a hilarious memoir but nor is it without feeling. If you're interested in Poland and how Eastern Europe fared after the fall of Communism it's worth a read, it's not great literature but it's light, entertaining read.

Tom Galvin really captures life in the eastern part of Poland and I was surprised to open the cover and read where he lived since I had been a Peace Corps Volunteer very near his area in Siedlce. For someone who has never been there, he really captures the experience of the rural Polish town. I especially related to the contrasts of the somewhat solitary existence, the long, harsh winters, the homesickness but also the warmth and curiosity of the people, the sense of the incredible history that was not long ago but unlike some parts of Western Europe, feels like yesterday. I laughed out loud with his telling of the herring in oil accompanied by vodka shots which he politely consumed. As he states, these destinations aren't likely to appear in Lonely Planet anytime soon but he combines the stories of his daily life with lots of historical, political, economic, and social factors to tell an entertaining and, I feel, and very accurate picture of life in an area our group referred to as "the Kansas of Poland."

Clearly this book makes no great claims for itself and is not abounding in literary ambition, but, by being held out for sale, it calls for the opinion of the marketplace. In physical terms, it is poorly produced on shoddy paper that is a disgrace to publishing. The text is poorly proofread, if at all. The content is, shall we say, idiosyncratic and open to challenge on many fronts. Taken together this is a work to avoid. A stenographic record of someone on a long bus journey recounting to a captive fellow passenger their trip abroad would just about give a sense of the level of narrative sophistication and energy to be found between these covers. Yet it seems some have detected humour in it.

That me and J.J are the only two folks to post a review about this man's book. It is perhaps one of the funniest books that I have ever read and gives valuable insight in to what life was like for millions of Eastern Europeans after the fall of communism. It paints these Poles as the complex characters

that they are in real life. A sort of traditional people with a very modern outlook. Thanks Mr. Gavin for writing this awesome book.

A great read and an easy read. Entertaining and engaging I learnt a lot about the country. Funny in places, miserable in others and obviously where the guy lived (somewhere in the East of the country) it wasn't always a smooth ride. Quite a personable style of writing, human and uplifting. Thoroughly recommend it.

Although the book is humorous the content referring to the description of the country and the culture is not accurate. While there is some truth, it's intertwined with stories that range from questionable to clearly incorrect producing a skewed picture of reality. Multiple obvious mistakes in the descriptions of food items and spelling errors in a large number of Polish words, cities and names mentioned in the book (including the misspelled name of the current Polish president!) add to the overall feeling that the book was written without much care, research or desire to stick to the facts. This book might be an entertaining read but is not an honest depiction of the country it tries to describe.

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