

The Practice of Taste

The Aesthetics of Food in 19th- and 20th-Century Culinary Writings

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This article explores the phenomenon of the practical aesthetics of taste. The author analyses three culinary works from the perspectives of pragmatic aesthetics (somaesthetics) and the aesthetics of education. The following works are reviewed: Grimod de La Reynière's the *Almanac des gourmands*, *The Spirit of Culinary Art* by von Rumohr, and the Soviet recipe book *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food*. The work explores the intersection of the aesthetic, ethical, and political dimensions of taste: from practices of improving the body through nutrition and cultivating attitudes toward food to the ideological normalisation of taste preferences. Furthermore, the article demonstrates how these works anticipated contemporary discussions about food. | *Keywords: Gustatory Aesthetics, Aesthetics of Taste, Practical Aesthetics, Aesthetic Education, Somaesthetics*

1. Introduction

Over the past few years, the aesthetics of the 'lower senses' has become firmly established in Western academic discourse and continues to gain recognition in the philosophical community. On the one hand, this is due to the deconstruction of the hierarchy of senses in Western aesthetics; on the other, it is due to the expansion of the concept of aesthetic experience beyond art (Dewey, 2024) and academic interest in the aestheticisation of everyday life. One of the sought-after areas of the aesthetics of the 'lower senses' is gustatory aesthetics, or the aesthetics of taste. Philosophers' investigative attention to food crystallises in the so-called culinary turn.

The term *culinary turn* is introduced in the book *Culinary Turn. Aesthetic Practice of Cookery* (van der Meulen and Wiesel, 2017) to highlight the convergence of gastronomy and art, as well as how cooking permeates various spheres of life. The authors of the articles examine artistic and design techniques, gastronomic performances, ways to enhance flavour, and the interaction of taste with other levels of sensory perception, demonstrating that food is notable in art for more

than just its visual component. Food consumption is, first and foremost, part of the art of living and an aesthetic practice that permeates the fabric of our everyday lives. Furthermore, the authors emphasise the social and political dimension of this shift, as food consumption correlates with ethical issues of food distribution and sustainable development, environmental concerns, and animal rights.

The interweaving of ethical and aesthetic components in the aesthetics of taste is reflected in the field of gastrosophy. This relatively young term lacks a strict definition, being more of an approach. Within this framework, one of the leading German gastrosophists, Lemke, rejects the understanding of taste as a 'lower sense' and insists that taste is a philosophical faculty of cognition (Lemke, 2007, p. 14). The gastrosophical concept of taste presupposes its training and cultivation, a continuous expansion of gastrosophical knowledge. This forms a kind of gastrosophical intelligence. For Lemke, the specificity of gastrosophical intelligence includes not only sensory education, but also the practice of ethically correct life (Lemke, 2007, p. 180), which is called the art of living well. This concept of the art of living is well developed, above all, by Lappé. She conceptualises nutrition as an ethical, political, and aesthetic practice. The researcher approaches the issue from a socially critical perspective: Lappé advocates a shift toward plant-based protein sources and a reduction in food waste. At the same time, the proposed transformation of nutrition is not ascetic; the construction of this model is based on the aesthetic pleasure derived from food.

The aforementioned terms *culinary turn* and gastrosophy lack strict definitions. However, within the topic being researched, it is not the strictness of the terms that is important, but their very appearance. The necessity of their use reflects the desire to capture changes in the philosophical field. Whatever we call this turn or shift, it is clear that the emergence of such terms reflects philosophers' keen attention to food as a practice and as part of the art of living. Thus, the conversation about food is moving from the margins of philosophy to one of the most relevant topics of recent decades, located at the intersection of aesthetics, ethics, social and political philosophy.

The studies presented above highlight not only the transformation of food discourse but also the particular importance of a practice-oriented approach to the study of taste. Abstract theoretical research is giving way to the study of specific mechanisms of taste formation, developments in its cultivation and practice in everyday experience. A striking example of this research lens is Perullo's concept of *episthenologia*. *Episthenologia* is not a theory that seeks application. It is, first and foremost, a practice related to the art of living (Perullo, 2021). Perullo's main idea is the need to restructure the conversation about wine. In place of an analytical approach, the Italian researcher introduces a formula of knowledge-with, through which knowledge about wine is constructed not by catalogues and tasting instructions, but based on the individual's unique experience of interaction with wine. Perullo thus seeks to cultivate a new attitude toward wine culture. This new attitude, which goes beyond subject-object dualism, fosters a deeper understanding of the surrounding world, particularly food, and one's bodily and sensory faculties.

The idea of a practical side to aesthetics has a long history. In the 18th century, the importance of the practical register of aesthetics was emphasised by Baumgarten, who initially divided the aesthetic project into theoretical (general, clarifying, and instructive aesthetics) and practical parts (Baumgarten, 2021, p. 44). However, the second part was never realised. Presumably, practical aesthetics, according to Baumgarten, is aimed at improving taste. In the mid-19th century, the concept of practical aesthetics was more firmly established by the German art theorist Semper, who understood practical aesthetics primarily to include architecture, textile art, and ceramics. As the goal of practical aesthetics, Semper identifies the nationwide education of taste, which must be carried out through examples and practical teaching methods, and not through lecturing (Semper, 1970, p. 83). In contemporary philosophy, Radeev and Di Stefano address the distinction between the theory and practice of aesthetics. Radeev, in particular, focuses on the difference between practical aesthetics and aesthetic practice. Aesthetic practice is opposed to a purely contemplative approach to reality and is carried out by everyone, as it involves experiencing aesthetics within the context of everyday life. Practical aesthetics, in turn, encompasses both aesthetic practice and an understanding and explanation of the mechanisms of this practice. This line of research can be complemented by Di Stefano's reflections on the so-called new aesthetics, which stands at the boundary between theory and practice and is particularly evident in spheres oriented toward the corporality (e. g., fashion and cosmetics) (Di Stefano, 2012, p. 49). According to her, philosophers cannot ignore the gap between aesthetics 'from above' and aesthetics 'from below', which is why scholars such as Böhme and Shusterman fill the gap between theory and practice in their research.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the primary form of practical aesthetics was aesthetic education, aimed at cultivating feelings and taste. As Radeev notes, today, practical aesthetics manifests itself in such contemporary fields as experimental aesthetics, design, pragmatic aesthetics (somaesthetics), the aesthetics of atmospheres, and a number of others (Radeev, 2025). It is important to note that all these fields are not isolated and intersect, with elements of aesthetic education evident in most of these trajectories. Thus, within the philosophy of taste, the interpenetration of aesthetic education and pragmatic aesthetics is most evident. Due to the limited scope of research articles, this work focuses on this latter aspect: aesthetic education and pragmatic aesthetics as practices for self-improvement.

Three texts representing different cultural and historical models of cultivating (gastronomic) taste were selected for this study: Grimod de La Reynière's *The Almanach des gourmands* as a project conveying norms of hospitality, 'enlightened' taste and seasonal consumption; von Rumohr's *The Spirit of Culinary Art* as a practical guide to aesthetic education in relation to gastronomy; and *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* as a political project to normalise Soviet taste. The goal of this article is to identify how these three projects implement educational and pragmatic

components and how these works anticipated contemporary discussions of food within the framework of practical philosophy. To this end, each text highlights specific mechanisms of aesthetic education and improvement, aimed at constructing a certain ideal model of the 'gastronomic subject'.

2. The *Almanach des gourmands*: Between Journalism and the Aesthetics of Taste

The *Almanac des gourmands* by Alexandre Balthazar Laurent Grimod de La Reynière¹ (1758–1837) is more than just a source on everyday culture; it is one of the first projects for a practical aesthetics of taste. This practical focus is reflected in the following mechanisms: establishing norms for seasonal consumption and constructing the figure of the 'enlightened gourmet', as well as cultivating the perfect Amphitryon.² Within the context of contemporary discussions about taste, this text is notable for its contribution to the formation of a concept of 'proper' food pleasure, based on knowledge and discipline.

Modern views on food seasonality have been developed primarily by the Slow Food movement and research promoting a mindful approach to food. However, the first attempts to normalise seasonal food consumption can be found in the first volume of the *Almanach des gourmands*, which contains twelve chapters corresponding to the months of the year. These chapters provide recommendations on which foods to eat according to the season and holidays of the month. More than just a list of shopping tips, Grimod de La Reynière focuses on the potential of each product, allowing one to maximise health and physical benefits, as well as enhance gastronomic enjoyment by adhering to seasonal recommendations. Grimod de La Reynière's attention to biological and natural rhythms, as well as to food quality, anticipated the modern principle of the art of living well, as described by Lappé and Lemke.

The art of living well depends not only on the nutritional value of a dish, but also on its aesthetic pleasure. Grimod de La Reynière's bold move was to legitimise gastronomic pleasure. In the pages of the *Almanach*, the author writes about the enjoyment of food, making it a social norm: "Of all the mortal sins that man commits, gluttony seems the most innocent and the least burdensome to his conscience" (Grimod de La Reynière, 2014, pp. 114–115). Grimod de La Reynière thus rehabilitates the concept of gourmandism and clearly distinguishes it from gluttony: "A gourmand is one in whom the aforementioned virtues are combined with enlightened taste" (Grimod de La Reynière, 2014, p. 409). In other words, a gourmand is a person with a certain gustatory discipline and knowledge.

¹ The *Almanach des gourmands* was published from 1802 to 1812 in eight volumes. At the beginning of the 19th century, this work provided information on gastronomic establishments and dining traditions relevant to the French capital. Furthermore, the *Almanach des gourmands* was published in other countries, such as the Russian Empire, serving as a practical guide to visiting Paris, including for foreigners.

² Amphitryon is a character from ancient Greek mythology whose name has become synonymous with hospitality.

The next important part of the *Almanach*, as an example of practical aesthetics, is the guide for Amphitryons. Grimod de La Reynière's Amphitryon serves as a model of hospitality, a bearer of the norm, and an organiser of aesthetic pleasure. Wealth and generosity are by no means sufficient for this status. The main virtue of the Amphitryon is its common sense (Grimod de La Reynière, 2014, p. 354), which consists of the proper preparation and presentation of dishes, as well as the creation of the necessary conditions for the meal. This section, devoted to the organisation of the dining environment, is largely consistent with the modern aesthetic theory of atmosphere developed by Böhme and Griffero. In general, the theory states that, in addition to the classical relationship between subject and object, there is a third factor – atmosphere – that influences these relationships. According to Grimod de La Reynière, one of the fundamental conditions for a comfortable atmosphere is consideration of the activities and interests of the participants in a gastronomic event. Proper seating arrangements for guests influences the overall mood. Furthermore, Grimod de La Reynière dwells in some detail on gourmet morality. In these notes, we learn about the proper behaviour of Amphitryons, including consideration for timid guests, rules for invitations, and punctuality. Ignoring the mood of the participants and the atmosphere of the meeting distorts the impression of the dishes consumed and hinders the achievement of a complete aesthetic experience, which is the key goal of gourmandism and part of the art of living.

An unrealised practical component of Grimod de La Reynière's project was the idea of organising a so-called *Gourmet Newspaper*, which would promote the development of gastronomy, the etiquette and rules of hospitality, and communication between gourmets from different regions. The newspaper was never published, but was partially embodied in the *Almanach des gourmands*. The *Gourmet Newspaper* was one of the ideas that illustrates the scope of Grimod de La Reynière's gastronomic project. However, his thoughts were not without a touch of utopia. As the Russian scholar of everyday culture Milchina notes, disillusioned with the revolution, Grimod de La Reynière replaced the real social world with a gastronomic one, in which he sought to establish order and embody a spirit of brotherhood that is born more readily in an exemplary shared meal than in a republican system (Grimod de La Reynière, 2014, p. 516). Thus, the French gourmet sought to construct a strict system and, on its basis, cultivate the perfect steward of the meal and its participants, whose harmonious interaction could contribute not only to the enjoyment of food but also to a certain unity and social equality built on a shared interest in gastronomy. In this aspiration of Grimod de La Reynière, one can discern the modern gastrosophical principle of a just and harmonious society.

Thus, the *Almanach des gourmands* pursues both the pragmatic and educational trajectories of practical aesthetics. The pragmatic trajectory manifests itself primarily in caring for the body through quality nutrition. This attention to food quality is complemented by the cultivation of an enlightened palate and the ability to experience gustatory pleasure, which corresponds to the modern gastrosophical concept of the good life. The continuation of this

line of aesthetic education is embodied in the *Amphitryon* manual and the rules for organising meals, which also contribute to a full aesthetic experience.

3. The Gastrosophy of von Rumohr: A Synthesis of Theory and Practice

Other early attempts at practical aesthetics include *The Spirit of the Culinary Art*³ by Carl Friedrich von Rumohr (1785–1843). Furthermore, this work is notable for being the first⁴ to postulate food as a fully-fledged subject of aesthetics within the context of Western philosophy. The German art historian developed a comprehensive project for the practical aesthetics of taste, in which cooking is presented as an art and a tool for harmonising the physical and moral spheres. On the one hand, Rumohr offers specific recommendations for preparing nutritious food that would promote health and well-being. On the other hand, part of his work is emphatically educational: the author introduces a list of habits and manners necessary for cooks and diners, combining prescriptions for physical and behavioural practices with the education of the soul.

One of the goals of Rumohr's work is to draw attention to the products of the German land, which should be used not so much for fleeting pleasure as for the sake of strengthening health (Rumohr, 2026, p. 14). "The entire culinary art would likely become a useless construct if it did not serve the goal of enhancing and long-term maintaining a healthy sense of life," asserts Rumohr (2026, p. 210). According to Rumohr, it is primarily the ability to maintain a sense of life that defines cooking as an art. Culinary art, unlike many others, is both useful and enjoyable. It is useful because it pursues the goal of nourishment and delight. It becomes enjoyable for two reasons: first, nutritious and healthy dishes are generally tasty; second, culinary art, by adding appropriate seasonings, gives nutritious dishes a pleasing appearance. The book thus integrates with somaesthetic thought about improving the body.

However, reflections on culinary art are not limited to theory alone. Part of the work is devoted to elevating the practice of preparing and consuming food to the rank of art; it also explores how to excel in it. Rumohr views cooking primarily as the art of creating nutritious dishes. Beginning with detailed recommendations for the minimum list of necessary utensils, as well as the quality of the stove and fuel, Rumohr moves on to identifying so-called

³ The work *The Spirit of the Culinary Art* was published in 1822. Its title perfectly reflects the cultural context of the Romantic era and the state of German philosophical thought, clearly alluding to Hegel's philosophy. However, researchers of Rumohr's legacy believe that the author used the concept of *Spirit* more to attract attention and did not see *The Spirit of the Culinary Art* as his life's work: Rumohr was known as a fine art critic, so the first edition of his work was published under a pseudonym in case such a specific work was rejected by critics.

⁴ It is worth noting that in 1814, Beauvilliers (1754–1817) published a book in France titled *L'Art de cuisinier* (The Art of the Chef), or *The Art of French Cookery* in English. A successful restaurateur, Beauvilliers wrote a fundamental guide for the early 19th century, for both restaurateurs and housewives, who could find a systematic collection of recipes with precise instructions and recommendations for housekeeping. However, Beauvilliers does not explain why cooking is an art, what purpose it pursues, or what effect it has on a person, beyond the opportunity to "enjoy the delicacy of our senses" (Beauvilliers, 1827, p. III). Thus, for Beauvilliers, cooking takes on shades of craft rather than art.

nutrient activators, which he includes fire, salt, and water. It is with these basic elements that the German gastrosophist suggests starting to organise the hearth. The German romanticist doesn't provide a list of specific recipes with strict cooking instructions, but he does highlight the most common categories of dishes (roasts, boiled meat and fish, soups, baked foods) and offers general tips for increasing the nutritional value of a dish. This is precisely how the goal of culinary art is achieved. It is noteworthy that Rumohr does not include the visual component, which often defines the enjoyment of food as a kind of still life, in culinary art. Rumohr, on the contrary, argues that embellishment should be avoided. It seems that avoiding visual excesses enhances the perception of pure taste. Rumohr's mentioned recommendations go beyond the scope of household instructions: the author develops a specific program for caring for the body and health, focusing not on pleasure but on the quality of the food. Similar tendencies can be found in the works of Lappé, whose views evolved from adherence to ascetic principles in food to the need to make food not only high-quality and healthy, but also aesthetically pleasing.

The second significant focus of *The Spirit of Culinary Art* is aesthetic education. Here, several approaches can be identified in Rumohr's reasoning: cultivation of culinary masters, table etiquette, and the moral education of individuals. Overall, this body of thought lies at the intersection of aesthetics and ethics, clearly emphasising the convergence of the two disciplines and allowing us to view *The Spirit of Culinary Art* as a precursor to modern gastrosophy.

The elements of aesthetic education are presented in the work as follows. In training culinary masters, Rumohr considers collaboration with other sciences an important tool. Masters must educate their minds through natural science, history, and mathematics, which can provide knowledge applicable to cooking (Rumohr, 2026, p. 207). In turn, Rumohr presents table manners as part of the aesthetics of everyday life, but this fragment differs from a strict set of rules. Rumohr analyses the transformation of table etiquette and offers only a few tips on how parents should regulate children's behaviour at the table. Rumohr postulates gluttony and sweet tooth as two moral vices. Therefore, to avoid them, Rumohr calls for the cultivation of a mindful attitude toward food: parents need to instil moderate eating in their children. As noted above, Rumohr does not focus on the enjoyment of food. First and foremost, a gastrosophist strives to prevent wastefulness and opposes random indulgences. Rumohr insists that greed for any food should be replaced by a desire for its nutritional and quality properties. The German Romantic complements his moral principles regarding food with warnings against states of mind in which one should not eat. Rumohr refers to irascibility, anger, irritation, drowsiness, and intoxication, since, according to him, they have a negative effect on the digestive organs. Throughout his work, Rumohr balances between two poles: he does not reduce food consumption to a dietary practice, but at the same time defines a number of rather strict ethical principles that align with the program of modern gastrosophy.

Thus, *The Spirit of the Culinary Art* is not simply an art historical approach to food. Rumohr substantiates the need to develop the art of cooking to extract

maximum benefit from the human body. At the same time, the art of cooking is not limited to a physiological function: the attitude toward food and products must be accompanied by the cultivation of discipline and moderation. Food can certainly be enjoyable, but it's important to maintain a balance, not reducing the art of eating to mere pleasure or gluttony. Rumohr's ideas on moderate and healthy eating, as well as adherence to certain ethical principles regarding food, align with modern strategies of gastrosophy and the somaesthetic practice of body improvement. In turn, the development of taste is possible only within the framework of certain moral foundations, which must be instilled from childhood.

4. The USSR's Gastronomic Policy: *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* as a Soviet Gastronomic Canon

A large-scale project of practical aesthetics, in which taste became one of the tools of ideological construction, is embodied in *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food*,⁵ first published in 1939 in the USSR. In this recipe book, the aesthetic education of taste emerges as a distinct direction of state policy and the industrialisation of everyday life. Explanations of the origins of products and recipes, introduced hygiene standards, and recommendations for serving shape a new type of subject: 'the new Soviet person' must combine a rational approach to nutrition with the enjoyment of food. In *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food*, the aesthetics of education, somaesthetics, and politics are closely intertwined: this manifests itself in the formation of new habits, care for the body, and the construction of an image of Soviet gastronomic culture for the productive construction of a communist society. *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* acted as an instrument of ideological propaganda through 'soft power'. Thus, this monument of Soviet culture is an excellent subject for modern gastrosophical research.

Being a normative canon for education and a tool for restructuring everyday life, *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* was supposed to act as a mechanism for creating something, in Anderson's terminology, an imaginary community – to instil a sense of belonging to a multicultural Soviet society. This situation correlates with the next episode of Italian history. Studies of the Risorgimento era often cite the idea that Artusi's *Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well* did more to unify the country than Manzoni's *The Betrothed*. This recipe book, found in every household, helped consolidate the Italian literary language across all regions and introduced the cuisines of the various regions of the Apennine Peninsula. A similar significance attaches to *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food*, as it incorporated culinary traditions from various regions of the world's largest country and served as the 'culinary bible' of Soviet citizens for 50 years. Furthermore, its colourful illustrations, in the spirit of "Stalinist

⁵ *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* was published on the initiative of Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan (1895–1978), who held the position of People's Commissar of the Food Industry of the USSR in the 1930s. A team that included chemists, biologists, engineers, doctors and housewives worked on a collection of recipes for the largest cookbook, designed for the widest segments of the population. This book has been reissued many times: the first was realized in 1939, the last adaptation, already with a reference to Brillat-Savarin, and not on Stalin and Mikoyan, published in 2025. In this article the author will refer to the classic versions of 1939 and 1952 (Molchanov, 1952).

baroque” (Glushchenko, 2010), and the list of diverse ingredients sought to evoke in the reader the impression of a superior, culturally rich, and abundant country. Even simply leafing through or examining the book became a source of aesthetic pleasure. Thus, Shusterman calls this one of the dimensions of the art of food: “Many people enjoy reading food writing and looking at food images (in magazines or on screen) without actually eating the dishes presented” (Shusterman, 2016, p. 262).

The ideology of socialism sought to create a new person through the introduction of new aesthetic practices. This required a tremendous amount of work, overturning the layers of everyday life that had been built up over centuries. The initiator of *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* project, Mikoyan, sought to change the tastes of the Soviet people: “The most important task is to awaken new tastes in the population, [...], to cultivate new needs, a craving for new products, a new assortment” (Khudyakov 1939, p. 24); “We must actively break old habits. [...]. This is that part of the work of remaking man that falls to the food industry” (Khudyakov 1939, p. 24). In this case, taste is perceived as plastic and controllable; it is not revealed, but rather constructed anew through institutional practices. Here, a parallel can be drawn with the revolutionary gesture of the Italian Futurists Marinetti and Colombo (Fillia), who, in addition to art, sought to radically change everyday life, including the rejection of retrograde food, and to cultivate a new, dynamic Italian (Sokolova and Di Santo, 2018). Similarly, the content of the Soviet recipe was built on the opposition of the good Soviet and the backward bourgeois.

We previously noted the pragmatic aspect in the works of Grimod de La Reynière and Rumohr, but in the Soviet recipe, the idea of self-improvement through food practices is even more poignant. In Soviet politics, the body serves as the material for the creation of a new Soviet person: in 1939, Soviet authors were convinced that new gastronomic habits would create the healthiest and strongest generation of people, capable of building a communist society.

To substantiate this position, the recipe book included explanations for thematic sections with recipes. Commentary on the recipes was necessary for the successful introduction of new ingredients from the Central Asian republics; products and combinations introduced by Mikoyan after his trip to the United States (for example, cornflakes and tomato juice); as well as canned goods and industrially processed meat products. The nutritional properties of the products were explained through explanations and calorie tables.

It is worth noting that the policy of introducing canned and semi-finished products correlates with gender issues. Traditionally, cooking was considered a female activity. In modern studies, cooking is viewed as a creative and active process in which both men and women can realise their potential (Lemke, 2007). However, at the time *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* was written, women’s liberation from cooking was perceived as an act of emancipation. Written in the spirit of social change, *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* presents cooking as a process that needs to be optimised to free women from

kitchen work. Of course, the ideological underpinning of this aspiration was somewhat different: it was about relieving women from household chores so that they could devote that time to working for the good of the country. As a result, *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* sought to justify the advantages of industrially produced products for the sake of temporal rationalisation of Soviet life, which left an imprint on the taste preferences of the inhabitants of the USSR.

The aesthetic education of the new Soviet man is clearly expressed in the formation of his ideas about the value of food, as well as the transformation of household and hygienic habits. An important element in the development of a new taste was concern for pleasure. The early post-revolutionary period did not involve a focus on gustatory pleasure: the state, exhausted by wars and revolution, sought to provide workers with minimal nutritious food. However, Stalin's famous words in 1935 that life had become better and more fun heralded a new turn in Soviet ideology, which is perfectly captured by the title *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food*, which was approved after Mikoyan's lengthy polemics with other party members. Mikoyan insisted that pleasure should become an integral part of the new Soviet cuisine and this should be reflected in the title of the culinary collection (Glushchenko, 2010, p. 139). The first introductory articles are devoted to proper nutrition and how important it is for a person's performance, his cheerfulness and the prevention of aging (Khudyakov, 1939, p. 5).

The project of a new Soviet cuisine, aimed at building a harmonious society and a new type of person, is certainly utopian in many ways. For example, some recipes or serving tips don't meet the original purpose of *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* which was to save time. This raises the question: how closely did homemakers follow these instructions? Clearly, they did not. Moreover, the availability of many ingredients is questionable. It is important to note that the list of ingredients and dishes was adjusted in different years of publication depending on the political and economic situation: for example, in the 1980s, during a period of shortages, references to salmon were reduced. These problematic aspects indicate that *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* was a kind of idealised image of the new taste preferences of the Soviet people and served as a normative guide for their tasting practices and the organisation of a 'proper' meal.

Thus, in the light of practical aesthetics, *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* is an excellent example of the intersection of aesthetics and politics: through aesthetic education, the state attempted to shape a new type of person. This goal entailed the introduction of highly nutritious dishes, ready-to-eat foods, and semi-finished products that, in addition to maintaining physical health and a strong body, were intended to be a source of aesthetic pleasure. *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* is, on the one hand, a utopian project, and on the other, a practical, working guide. However, this project can be considered fully realised, as its result was the emergence of Soviet cuisine as a phenomenon. Its traditions continue to form the foundation of Russian gastronomic culture and that of many post-Soviet countries.

5. Conclusion

This article examines culinary works from the 19th and 20th centuries, which serve as resourceful sources for studying practical aesthetics in light of the culinary turn. As noted at the beginning of the article, practical aesthetics not only proposes certain practices but also justifies them. The analysed works reflect this strategy: they set standards for aesthetic practices of food, arguing their necessity. All three works are united by their embeddedness in contemporary trends such as aesthetic education and pragmatic aesthetics. Furthermore, the study highlighted areas of intersection between aesthetics and ethics, as well as politics within tasting projects, consistent with current gastrosophical discourse.

The section devoted to the *Almanach des gourmands* reflects the practical aspect of aesthetics, highlighting the following manifestations of the aesthetics of education and somaesthetics. Menu planning in accordance with seasonality, which maintains health and enhances the aesthetic enjoyment of food. Cultivating an enlightened palate based on an understanding of how to enhance the pleasure of food without crossing the line between indulgence and gluttony. A guide for Amphitryons, which employs an atmospheric approach: for a complete tasting experience, not only the quality of the dishes is important, but also concern for the comfort of the gourmets. Overall, Grimod de La Reynière's program is in line with the principle of the art of good living developed by Lemke and Lappé.

Secondly, the same principle of the art of living well is revealed when examining Rumohr's work. The section provides a rationale for why cooking is an art, and also identifies the basic elements for developing this art. It demonstrates that an important component of the book is aesthetic education with pragmatic elements: this applies both to master chefs and basic rules of table manners, as well as to a person's moral character. Morality in the context of the aesthetics of taste manifests itself in the cultivation of discipline and moderation, which promote self-improvement and quality self-care.

Thirdly, the purpose of *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* is revealed: to create a new type of Soviet person. Of particular scholarly interest are the recipe explanations and introductory articles on aesthetic education. The recipe commentaries aim to cultivate Soviet citizens' loyalty to new nutritious foods necessary for the perfection of the Soviet body. In turn, the fragments on aesthetic education reinforce the recoding of the tastes of Soviet society in the 1930s: new gastronomic habits should include not only a commitment to nutritious and quickly prepared dishes, but also new hygiene practices, serving methods, and, most importantly, the enjoyment of food, in order to nurture the strongest generation of the socialist state.

Expanding the geographic scope of the study, as well as taking into account contemporary digital transformations in the world of gastronomy, appears to be significant in terms of future prospects.

1) Identifying major national recipe collections similar to *The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food* could contribute to the construction of a typology of 'recipe-instruments' that influence the formation of national taste under different political regimes. This could be a valuable resource for current gastrosophical research focused on the intersection of aesthetics, ethics, and politics, and will deepen our understanding of the mechanisms of taste formation in various political and cultural contexts.

2) Expanding our geography can involve not only analysing other national recipes but also exploring other projects of practical gustatory aesthetics that extend beyond Western European and Russian cultures. For example, understanding Eastern practices of aesthetic education and body improvement through nutrition can significantly enrich the established philosophical discourse on food, which has been developed primarily by Western European scholars. It appears that the aesthetic education of taste in the Eastern tradition is directly linked to religious and ritual systems (for example, the Japanese tea ceremony as a model for the discipline of taste and behavior, or Islamic norms of nutrition and hospitality as aesthetic and ethical practices).

3) The digitalisation of gustatory aesthetics and the implementation of AI in terms of body improvement, health care, and taste development require special attention. In this case, two directions can be identified. First, the mechanisms of taste construction in the digital environment can be examined: how digital platforms and social media create perceptions of healthy, wholesome nutrition and aesthetic presentation, and how this differs from classic recipe books. Second, discussions with students during lectures on everyday culture revealed that AI is regularly used for meal planning and food preparation. One of the main constraints of the prompt is the limited number of products available at any given time. Another popular constraint is the emphasis on healthy eating. At the same time, traditional recipe books or YouTube videos are losing their relevance. This trend can be analysed from the perspective of how AI embodies a new institution for the regulation of taste.

The general conclusions from this and similar studies can significantly complement and refine the analysis of the foundations of aesthetic education and body improvement (somaesthetics) within gastronomy. This analysis could be used to develop courses and modules on aesthetic taste education within aesthetics and cultural studies programs, culinary schools, or museum educational projects.

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