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Romantic Gastronomies

About This Volume

This volume of *Romantic Circles Praxis Series* includes an editor's introduction by Denise Gigante and essays by Michael D. Garval, Carolyn Korsmeyer, and Joshua Wilner.

Romanticism may be associated with gusto, but it has hardly been recognized—at least within literary circles—as the period that saw the invention of the restaurant and a unique, comic-philosophical genre of writing about food. But in fact Romanticism was coterminous with, and in many ways emblematic of, the culture of sophistication and social positioning we associate with modern gastronomy.

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Romantic Gastronomies

Romantic Gastronomy: An Introduction

Denise Gigante, Stanford University

. . . we are, literally speaking, a small party of friends, who meet once a week at a Round Table to discuss the merits of a leg of mutton and of the subjects upon which we are to write. This we do without any sort of formality, letting the stream of conversation wander through any grounds it pleases. . . . After dinner, if the weather requires it, we draw round the fire with a biscuit or two, and the remainder of a philosophic bottle of wine . . .

—Leigh Hunt, *The Examiner*; January 1, 1815

1. Romanticism may be associated with gusto, but it has hardly been recognized—at least within literary circles—as the period that saw the invention of the restaurant and a unique, comic-philosophical genre of writing about food. But in fact Romanticism was coterminous with, and in many ways emblematic of, the culture of sophistication and social positioning we associate with modern gastronomy. On the heels of the French Revolution, gastronomy developed as a self-conscious aesthetic, modeled on the eighteenth-century discourse of taste.¹ The gastronome around the turn of the nineteenth century began to make a fine art of food just as his better-known peer, the dandy, would do of fashion. Both were French-influenced phenomena, figures who crusaded for the value of the aesthetic in an age of increasing consumerism. The dandy famously flouted bourgeois ideals of common-sensical economy, insisting on pleasure as a path out of the everyday into the more elevated pleasures of the imagination. So too did the Romantic gastronome, a strangely forgotten figure, help prepare the way for today's *haute couture*.
2. The current shift in attention across academic disciplines from the high to the low, from "The Sublime to the stomach" as Harold Bloom remarks (xiv), prepares us to consider the fate of the aesthetic connoisseur—the prototype, after all, for today's critic—as he navigates the shift from a rarefied, abstracted appreciation for the fine arts to the more full-bodied experience of gusto. William Hazlitt remains our spokesman for this distinctively Romantic aesthetic, first outlined in his 1816 essay "On Gusto." Originally published in *The Examiner* as part of "The Round Table" series, Hazlitt's essay defines gusto as "power or passion defining any object" (4:77). The work in the Round Table was explicitly modeled on the early periodical essays of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, and Hazlitt is remembering the analogy Addison makes in *Spectator* #409 between a "mental" taste for fine writing and a "sensitive" taste for things perceived physically through the palate (450). Addison had compared the art connoisseur to a consumer of tea with a superbly refined palate, able to discern among several different blends, but Hazlitt takes the analogy further. Far from the disinterested attitude of the Enlightenment critic, who would strive to discern particular "beauties" or "defects" in the aesthetic object of contemplation in order to pronounce definitive taste judgments, the Romantic "Man of Taste" calls the full range of his faculties and senses into play. In the experience of gusto, "the impression made on one sense excites by affinity those of another" (4:78).
3. With the Romantic revision of taste as gusto, the sense of sight is dragged down from its lofty eminence at the top of the hierarchy of the senses to a thoroughly physiological position in which the eye itself, in Hazlitt's words, may "acquire a taste or appetite for what it sees" (4:78). Such appetite is precisely what eighteenth-century taste theory had sought to exclude from aesthetic experience. Sight

had always been privileged among the senses for the cognitive distance it was thought to maintain from the object, and the space it therefore allowed for the mediating work of representation. In his opening paper on "The Pleasures of the Imagination," Addison could thus confidently assert: "Our Sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our Senses . . . and may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive Kind of Touch, that spreads its self over an infinite Multitude of Bodies, comprehends the largest Figures, and brings into our reach some of the most remote Parts of the Universe" (460). Despite the prevalent view that aesthetic perception of the Romantic period is also marked by this "diffusive" touch—as in Wordsworth's disembodied portrayal of the mind that "feeds upon infinity" in *The Prelude* and "draws its nourishment imperceptibly" from nature in *The Excursion*—the Romantic writers for the most part sought a more proximate taste experience.

4. Hazlitt admires Milton for his "double relish" of the objects his imagination calls into account, and in his essay "On Reading Old Books" insists on the necessary ingredients of "the pleasure of imagination and of a critical relish" (5:221). Relish (a food in its own right) refers specifically to the physical act of degustation and signifies the distinctive taste or flavor of an object. In the act of re-reading (seeking that *double relish* from the printed text), Hazlitt's seasoned eye works to "retrace the story and devour the page," often discovering thereby a "different relish" from the previous occasion (5:222). Hazlitt's ideal reader does not merely consume a text; he registers its flavors, an effort that requires (as the food or wine connoisseur will explain) both olfactory sensation and oral degustation. Smell registers flavor, and Hazlitt involves the two most subjective sensations (considered chemical rather than mechanical in contemporary physiology) in the act of mental taste when he suggests that in an inferior reading experience, the "sharp luscious flavour, the fine *aroma* is fled, and nothing but the stalk, the bran, the husk of literature is left" (5:225). The harvest is done and the squirrel's granary is full, but we must feel as sick as the knight in Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" if we cannot relish the pleasures of the imagination with all our five senses.
5. A book, like fine wine, requires time to age in order for its fullest flavor to emerge, and the quintessential Romantic critic finds it difficult to confront the dizzying array of print culture ready for immediate consumption. "There is a want of confidence and security to second appetite," Hazlitt complains. "New-fangled books are also like made-dishes in this respect, that they are generally little else than hashes and *rifaccimentos* of what has been served up entire and in a more natural state at other times" (5:221). Hazlitt is at once having fun with the metaphor of taste and working hard to make the case for *gusto*, a term that had been in use on the continent before British taste philosophy stripped it of its lustier pleasures and abstracted it into aesthetic disinterestedness. In this, Hazlitt, like his fellow knights of the Round Table, was in tune with the post-revolutionary, gastronomical Spirit of the Age.
6. In his introductory paper to *The Round Table*, Leigh Hunt reconstructs the Arthurian locus classicus as a gathering place for Romantic knights errant, crusading for the value of aesthetic pleasure in an age of consumer materialism. Yet the idealism implicit in his project, which, I have suggested, runs parallel to dandyism, is complicated by the awareness that the Round Table is also a dinner table. Hunt promises to keep the "long train of romantic associations and inspired works connected with it" fresh in his periodical, just as he "shall keep the more familiar idea of the dining Table before us" (2:9). When he proposes to meet weekly with other members of the Round Table "to discuss the merits of a leg of mutton" as well as other subjects worthy of critical reflection over "a philosophic bottle of wine" (as in the epigraph), he captures the flavor of gastronomical writing from France. Writing "On the Progress of Culinary Art in the Nineteenth-Century" in 1812 (modeled on the more typical essay on the progress of the fine arts, such as that by David Hume), the French father of gastronomical literary tradition, Alexandre Balthazar Laurent Grimod de la Reynière (1758-1837), claims that "The Dining Table has become the linchpin of political, literary, financial, and commercial matters" (40). For him, this is evidence of the great strides the culinary arts had made into the province of the fine arts and *belle lettres*.

7. Napoleon, at the height of his empire, was no gastronome, but he too recognized the power of the table as an engine of state and emblem of cultural prestige. Besides the sumptuous table of his arch-chancellor Jean-Jacques Cambacérès, to which he would dismiss emissaries with an appetizing flourish, Napoleon profited from the exquisite taste of his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord. Prince Talleyrand held a daily conference with his chief officers of the kitchen, at which the assembled artists of his staff would submit their culinary proposals for the evening's meal. Often this involved exquisite taste tests, with Talleyrand sampling particular ingredients and sauces, conferring on their merits, and pronouncing judgment. All provinces of France were tributaries to this crowning event of the gourmand's day. An Englishman recollecting his travels through France from 1802-1805 observed that French gastronomy, as treated in Grimod's *Almanach des gourmands*, "embraces one branch of luxury, but a branch particularly cultivated by the new rich; whose cellars and larders are far better replenished than their libraries. This taste has become so general, that many booksellers have become *traiteurs*, and find the corporeal food far more profitable than the mental" (Pinkerton 2: 196). By January of 1817, the English Prince Regent (or future George IV), would score his own coup by luring Carême, head of the Romantic school of cookery, to Brighton to prepare hundred-dish dinners for his guests, transforming the royal summer seat into an international resort, and introducing British palates to cutting-edge French cuisine. France had sparked a culinary revolution in Britain, where new institutions, including dining clubs and restaurants, were meeting the lifestyles and tastes of the rising middle classes. By the time Hunt and Hazlitt had sat down to *The Round Table*, the Parisian high style of dining had swept over London.
8. While some scholars of late have wanted to downplay the influence of the French Revolution on the rise of the restaurant as a public forum for discretionary dining, there is little doubt that, in its modern instantiation, the restaurant is a result of revolution. The political events of the 1790s released the best French chefs from aristocratic patronage into the open market of Paris, where they set up as restaurateurs in abandoned hotels or in the arcade of the Palais-Royal. With the aristocrats having escaped to other cities in Europe, these talented culinary professionals found themselves catering to a new bourgeois clientele, the *nouveaux riches*. Whereas Addison and Steele had mingled with wits, scribblers, politicians, and other members of the growing bourgeoisie (financiers, bankers, lawyers) over stimulating cups of coffee in the coffeehouses that spread from Paris in the 1680s, the birth of the restaurant following the French revolution was a phenomenon distinct from the coffeehouse culture that helped shape intellectual life of Enlightenment Europe. The key difference between the coffeehouse, where information and conversation were exchanged (contributing to the formation of the so-called public sphere), and the restaurant of the Romantic period, was that the former did not feature food as its primary concern. While refreshments and pastries had been served in cafés, and even more substantial victuals in some of the British coffeehouses, conversation political and cultural, not food, was the focus of attention. This all changed once the restaurant spurred by talented French chefs encouraged the application of aesthetic principles to the culinary arts.
9. In the culture of gastronomy that soon spread to England, food was taken seriously as an object of appreciation, offering an occasion for aesthetic judgment and the exercise of the higher mental faculties, much like other forms of art. Grimod de la Reynière thus spoke of syrups "*considérés philosophiquement*," just as his pseudonymous British imitator Launcelot Sturgeon wrote "*On Mustard, Philosophically Considered*." In explaining the purpose of the *Round Table*, Hunt takes up the same tradition when he observes that

the most trifling matters may sometimes be not only the commencement, but the causes, of the gravest discussions. The fall of an apple from a tree suggested the doctrine of attraction; and the same apple, for aught we know, served up in a dumpling, may have assisted the philosopher in his notions of heat; for who has not witnessed similar causes and effects at a dinner table? For my part, a piece of mutton has supplied me with

arguments, as well as chops, for a fortnight; I have seen a hare or a cod's-head giving hints to a friend for his next essay; and have known the most solemn reflections rise, with a pair of claws, out of a pigeon pie. (2:11)

There is a world of difference between the prototypical apple, appealing to Eve from the forbidden tree of knowledge, or knocking Sir Isaac Newton on the head with the theory of gravity and other weighty matters, and that same apple cooked and "served up in a dumpling." From the raw to the cooked is the path civilization is supposed to have taken, and Norbert Elias has left us a helpful road map of that "civilizing process" in Europe. Whereas the biblical apple has produced a world of theological exegesis, as sizable as the scientific commentary on Newton's law of attraction, Hunt finds—and this is not all facetious—that the roasted hare or stewed cod's head can also provoke critical reflection.

10. Hunt could write philosophically about mutton, hare, or cod's head in much the same manner as his friend, Charles Lamb, who was originally supposed to have taken part in the literary enterprise of the Round Table. Lamb's praise of pig is familiar to lovers of literature, but his delightful discernment of fish, though more obscure, contains the same tenor of self-conscious insight about food as an aesthetic object of judgment. There are numerous distinctions, he suggests, between the golden haddock and a magisterial fish such as the turbot: "it hath not that moist mellow oleaginous gliding smooth descent from the tongue to the palate, thence to the stomach &c. as your Brighton Turbot hath, which I take to be the most friendly and familiar flavor of any that swims" (*Letters* 3: 253). The turbot may be a fine fish for John Bull, but it lacks the heightened sensibility Lamb associates with cod's head: "nor has it on the other hand that fine falling off flakiness, that obsequious peeling off (as it were like a sea onion) which endears your cods head & shoulders to some appetites, that manly firmness combined with a sort of womanish coming-in-pieces which the same cods head & shoulders hath" (*Letters* 3: 253). Lamb's fictional Elia was a "true son of Epicurus," a literary pose in which to approach the world as a "judicious epicure" (*Works* 1:124). While his devotion to crackling, derived from suckling pig, has been memorialized in the gastronomical ejaculations of Elia, Lamb himself was capable of choosing his friends for their gastronomical acumen: "I like you for liking hare. I esteem you for disrelishing minced veal. Liking is too cold a word, I love you for your noble attachment to the fat unctuous juices of deers flesh & the green unspeakable of turtle" (*Letters* 3: 254). If Hazlitt describes the concept of gusto in relation to the fine arts, Lamb brings it to life in everyday matters with no small dash of culinary expertise.
11. It may be odd to consider that the British Romantic essayists, along with their literary peers, have yet to be read within the gastronomical genre that flourished in London from the 1820s. It was only one month after his trip to Paris with his sister Mary that Lamb published his best-known essay, "A Dissertation Upon Roast Pig" (1822). In a letter of September of that year to Barron Field, with whom he shared more than one fried eel pie, Lamb recognized the degree to which a trip to France will leave its mark on one's literal and literary palate: "I & sister are just returned from Paris!! We have eaten frogs. It has been such a treat! You know our monotonous general Tenor. Frogs are the nicest little delicate things—rabbity-flavoured. Imagine a Lilliputian rabbit! They fricassee them; but in my mind, drest seethed, plain, with parsley and butter, would have been the decision of Apicius" (*Letters* 3:253). Lamb admired the work of the Roman chef Apicius, whose sixteenth-century annotator, Gabriel Hummelberger (Humelbergius) staged a comeback in 1829 as "Dick Humelbergius Secundus." Humelbergius's *Apician Morsels; or Tales of the Table, Kitchen and Larder* has been attributed to the Gothic novelist William Beckford (though I myself suspect the hand of Richard Chenevix, reviewer for the *Edinburgh Review*), and it announces "a New and Improved Code of Eaties," with "Select Epicurean Precepts," and "Nutritive Maxims, Reflections, Anecdotes . . . illustrating the Veritable Science of the Mouth." In addition to original essays on various aspects of cookery and good-living, Humelbergius takes his "Nutritive Varieties" (without attribution) from Grimod, along with other treatments of meals, invitations, and *bonne chère*.² If he were not in fact its author, Lamb owned a copy

of *Essays, Moral, Philosophical and Stomachical on the Important Science of Good Living* (1822) by one "Launcelot Sturgeon," which also plagiarizes Grimod de la Reynière. For these Romantic writers, "The Cook, the Author, and the Bookseller" formed a venerable gastronomical trio.

12. The preceding paragraphs have tried to suggest some of the myriad ways in which the early nineteenth-century culture of gastronomy influenced artistic production of the Romantic period. At a time when aesthetics reflected the transition from abstracted taste to gusto, the idea of disinterestedness gave way to an imperative to show *interest* in all matters gastronomical. The French connoisseur Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin could thus claim, in his 1826 *Physiologie du Goût*, that a lack of interest in food (formerly the poor cousin of the arts) was evidence not of aesthetic disinterestedness but of "culpable indifference" (198). Lest scholars of Romanticism be accused of such indifference, this special issue of *Romantic Circles Praxis* assembles original work by authors from different disciplines who have been influential in defining the culture (and cultural limitations) of nineteenth-century gastronomy.
13. Carolyn Korsmeyer, author of *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy* (1999) and *The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink* (2005), opens the volume with a philosophical consideration of "Tastes and Pleasures." She considers how, "even as gastronomers advance their case for both the aesthetic and artistic standing of cuisine, philosophers continue to exclude taste from the aesthetic senses and cuisine from the arts." She provides a careful analysis of 1) the nature of the sense of taste and its alleged limitations by way of contemporary science and the work of Brillat-Savarin; and 2) the arguments for and against the status of the pleasure received through this sense (and its cousin smell) to qualify as aesthetic pleasure or value. The question driving the essay is whether or not, given the recent emphasis across the disciplines on the body, or somatic part of subjectivity, we have reached a perspective from which we might legitimately obfuscate, even obliterate, the longstanding distinction between gustatory and aesthetic taste pleasures so central to Western philosophical tradition.
14. In "Economies of Excess in Brillat-Savarin, Balzac, and Baudelaire," Joshua Wilner, author of *Feeding on Infinity: Readings in the Romantic Rhetoric of Internalization* (2000), examines the legacy of gastronomical writing in the work of Honoré de Balzac and Charles Baudelaire. He shows how these nineteenth-century French authors polemically engaged the Romantic Gourmand, Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, on his culpable indifference toward wine, a focal point in food connoisseurship today. Together, Balzac's supplementary commentary on Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du goût* and Baudelaire's 1850 essay "Du Vin et du haschisch compares comme moyens de multiplier l'individualité" comprise a counter-discourse of gastronomy that tips moderation into excess and sobriety into sublimity.
15. Swerving from theory to praxis, Michael Garval, author of "Grimod de la Reynière's *Almanach des gourmands*: Exploring the Gastronomic New World of Postrevolutionary France" (2001) and "Grimod's Gastronomic Vision: The Frontispieces for the *Almanach des Gourmands*" (2004) as well as translator of Grimod's *Almanach des gourmands* and *Manuel des Amphitryons* (2005), introduces us now to "Alexis Soyer and the Rise of the Celebrity Chef." Whereas gastronomers beginning with Grimod and Brillat-Savarin established their reputations as Men of Taste based on the analogy between culinary and textual consumption—the pâté posed in place of the poem, the pen in place of the knife for these Romantic geniuses of the gullet—culinary artists had less experience navigating the divide between the fine and practical arts. Here we see how the French émigré chef, Alexis Soyer, with a penchant for dressing like a dandy, modeling himself on Romantic celebrity figures such as Lord Byron and Napoleon, rose to fame as a high-cultural icon in a series of publications from the mid-nineteenth century. Garval provides an analysis of Soyer's role in Victorian fiction, as well as his own self-representation through text and almost three-dozen images, that reveals the many ways in which this enterprising celebrity-chef challenged the cultural and philosophical prejudices discussed by Korsmeyer from the ground up.

16. Far from attempting an exhaustive survey of Romantic Gastronomy, this special issue of *Romantic Circles Praxis* aims to suggest how attention to this topic may help us begin to reevaluate many longstanding assumptions about the nature of pleasure and its relations to the arts and sciences in British and French culture of the early nineteenth century. If it accomplishes little more than revealing the range of and quality of scholarship that has already been devoted to the topic, whetting the appetite of readers for further research, it will contribute toward this broader objective. In the current configuration of Romantic studies, a number of critical concerns meet at the nexus of nineteenth-century gastronomy. These include, but are hardly limited to, the dietary politics of Romantic writers, including the discourse of vegetarianism and colonial food products; questions of gender related to domestic economy, food preparation, and the professionalization of the culinary arts; and the literary-critical principles of gastronomy as a genre on the margins of nineteenth-century prose intersecting with the novel, antiquarian and miscellaneous writings, historical fiction, and the anthology. Above all, Romantic Gastronomy lends itself to praxis, "call it the Romanticism of the restaurant-bookstores, which increasingly surrounds us" (Bloom xiv). It is my belief that an exploration of this unique brand of aesthetics, with a preference for the outré and modes of expression often verging on the pornographic, may offer a promising road not (hitherto) taken for Romantic studies.

Many thanks are due to Emily Allen for her helpful commentary on the essays in this volume.

Notes

¹ For a fuller explication of this argument see my introduction and final chapter of *Taste*, and the introduction to *Gusto*.

² Robert Cruikshank engraved two illustrations for the volume, one of which, titled "The Roman Senate Debating on the Turbot," is copied from the frontispiece to Joseph Berchoux's 1803 poem, *La Gastronomie*, from which the word gastronomy itself derives. Also borrowed from Berchoux is a "Prayer of a Half-Starved Hungry Poet."

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Romanticism and the New Deleuze

Alexis Soyer and the Rise of the Celebrity Chef

Michael Garval, North Carolina State University

Alexis Soyer [was] as kind a hearted Christian as you might find, an admirable cook, an inventive genius, a brave, devoted, self-denying man, who served his adopted country better in the Crimea than many a starred and titled CB [Companion of the Order of Bath] He had no call to be a quack; there was no earthly reason why he should inundate the newspapers with puffs, and wear impossible trousers, or cloth-of-gold waistcoats, cut diagonally. The man had a vast natural capacity, could think, ay, and do things; yet he quacked so continually, that many people set him down as a mere shallow pretender, and some even doubted whether he could cook at all. He was, nevertheless, a master of his difficult art

—George Augustus Sala (1859, 382-383)

1. Alexis Soyer (1809-1858) was a colorful character, one of the most famous chefs of his day, and a key precursor of our modern celebrity chefs. While largely forgotten today, he has nonetheless been the subject of three recent titles: a children's book, Ann Arnold's *Alexis Soyer: The Adventurous Chef* (2002); and two biographies, Ruth Brandon's *The People's Chef: The Culinary Revolution of Alexis Soyer* (2005), and Ruth Cowen's *Relish: The Extraordinary Life of Alexis Soyer, Victorian Celebrity Chef* (forthcoming, 2006). Soyer does merit a closer look—in particular, at the role he played in the broader evolution of the chef as a public figure. But, before this, some more general background is needed.

The Chef as man of letters

2. Antonin Carême (1783-1833) was, arguably, the *first* celebrity chef. Yet, in the best-known portrait of him, the Blanchard engraving after the Steuben painting [fig. 1], nowhere to be seen are the chef's toque, or any other culinary attributes. Instead, with unruly hair, broad thinker's forehead, dark eyes gazing into the unknown, and body wrapped in swirling drapery, Carême appears a Romantic genius—a Lord Byron perhaps, or a young Victor Hugo. But why should this be?
3. The now international phenomenon of the celebrity chef—which has found its most emphatic expression in the largely Anglo-American model of television chefs like Julia Child, James Beard, Graham Kerr, Emeril Lagasse, or Nigella Lawson—originated in post-revolutionary France. Across the nineteenth century, and into the twentieth, in concert with the rise of culinary nationalism in France (Ferguson), French chefs achieved unprecedented prestige and authority, both at home and abroad. Yet, from Antonin Carême through Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935), famed culinarians were rarely depicted as chefs. Rather, the various portraits, frontispieces, and prefaces constructing their public image would invoke well-worn paradigms of literary distinction—for example, highlighting Carême's signature and pen, his accomplishments as a writer, and the monumentality of his creative aspirations (Ferguson 49-82). Likewise, if Carême's portraits recall a young Victor Hugo, then Escoffier's cast him as an older Hugo, minus the trademark white beard but with a Clemenceau-like moustache: a paradigm of grandfatherly authority, and universal ambassador of French culture. Even in a frontispiece portrait commemorating the silver jubilee of his culinary career [fig. 2], Escoffier strikes a contemplative pose, surrounded with conventional writerly paraphernalia—pen, paper, inkwell, books, desk. Rather than

seasoning a sauce, he seems to ponder his next sentence.

4. Such contradictions point to an underlying dilemma: how to envision this new category of public figure? Mentalities often lag behind innovations, and we see new things in terms of older ones, making sense of novelty through reassuring precedent. Much as early automobiles resembled horse-drawn carriages, the apotheosis of the writer in France, from Voltaire through Hugo, was modeled largely on pre-existing paradigms of military and aristocratic glory; in turn, chefs' new-found fame emulated established modes of literary renown. Under the ancien régime, chefs had long been lowly, largely itinerant domestic servants, giving rise to a persistent vision of them as comical, subservient figures, which survived well into the post-revolutionary period, in popular and humorous contexts, like this 1898 illustrated menu [fig. 3]. Casting chefs as monkeys implies clownish behavior, subhuman status, and ability only for clumsy imitation, far from the transcendent culinary artistry posited by gastronomic writers from Alexandre-Balthazar-Laurent Grimod de la Reynière (1758-1838) onward.¹ In order to be seen as important personages and artists in their own right, figures like Carême and Escoffier would be styled, and style themselves, as great men of letters. Indeed, by the middle of the nineteenth century, chefs' writerly pretensions were so familiar that they became the butt of satire. In Briffault's *Paris à table* (1846), for example [fig. 4], illustrator Bertall puts the would-be cook of letters back in his place, in the kitchen, an ill-fitting chef's uniform accentuating his ungracious form, the toque turned into a nightcap, pulled down over the forehead for a more neanderthal effect, his brain taxed by the effort of composing a treatise on "the influence of foodstuffs upon the dispositions of the soul." If a chef could be lampooned for trying to be a writer, so too could a writer for trying to be a chef, guilty not of aspiring beyond his station, but rather of stooping below it. So it was for Baron Léon Brisse (1813-1876), a provincial aristocrat, former bureaucrat, and minor man of letters, who achieved notoriety late in life by publishing recipes, menus, and gastronomic advice: his culinary dabbling made him a favorite target of contemporary caricaturists, dismissed by Lemot as a third-rate *rôtisseur* [fig. 5], and quite literally roasted by Gill [fig. 6].²
5. As Baron Brisse's example suggests, gastronomic writers and professional chefs were closely interrelated, but not parallel public figures. This is all the more apparent in the *Galerie des Gastronomes et Praticiens français, de Brillat-Savarin à nos jours*, a revealing collective portrait in Chatillon-Plessis's *La Vie à table à la fin du XIXe siècle* (1894) [fig. 7]. The title appears to promise equal treatment, and gastronomic writers and chefs do stand together in the print, but all styled as debonair men of letters at an elegant garden party. With nary a toque nor skimmer to distinguish practitioners from theoreticians, chefs seem subsumed into the domain of writers.
6. Despite its focus on personalities since Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826), the *Galerie* includes statues of the medieval chef Taillevent (Guillaume Tirel, 1310-1395) and renaissance writer François Rabelais (1494-1553), both placed in the garden, as well as of the seventeenth-century *officier de bouche* François Vatel (1631-1671), installed beyond them, on the balustrade.³ Seeking prestige and legitimacy through venerable predecessors, revered all the more emphatically through public "statufication," the print indulges in a combination of self-serving strategies — genealogy and monumentalization — not limited to, but particularly characteristic of nineteenth-century French literary culture (Garval 2004a). Among the precursors invoked and honored here, there are two hands-on culinarians, and only one man of letters, which might seem to suggest the primacy of praxis over commentary, at least historically. Among the moderns however, writer Brillat-Savarin, not chef Carême, is highlighted as number one, both in the print and in its numerical key [fig. 8]. Indeed the whole composition, and particularly this detail, recall Nadar's 1854 pantheon of literary luminaries, where Victor Hugo plays the equivalent starring role (Garval 2004a, 17-19). The *Galerie* offers chefs a place of honor within an analogous gastronomic pantheon but, alongside this consecration, it also reveals the limits of their new-found status for, nearly a century after Carême rose to prominence,

chefs' fame was still filtered through the lens of literary renown.

7. Unfortunately, there has been little critical reflection on how chefs from Carême to Escoffier, as well as self-styled public gastronomes from Grimod de la Reynière to Curnonsky (Maurice Edmond Sailland, 1872-1956), shaped the development of the modern celebrity chef. But, as Chatillon-Plessis's *Galerie* suggests, chefs long remained formulaic and fundamentally conservative in their relationship to fame: content to continue emulating men of letters; reluctant to abandon this flattering literary guise. On the whole, gastronomic writers proved more daring and entrepreneurial vis-à-vis their public image, as evidenced for example by the provocative and self-promoting frontispieces to the eight volumes of Grimod's ground-breaking *Almanach des gourmands* (Garval 2004b), or by Curnonsky's much-touted election to the fanciful post of "Prince des Gastronomes" (Vrinat). Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about the extraordinary Alexis Soyer is that, while he too fashioned himself a man of letters, he would also transcend the constraints of this literary model and, far ahead of his time, prefigure the flamboyant personas of today's celebrity chefs.

Fame à la zoug-zoug

He wore a kind of paletôt of light camlet cloth, with voluminous lapels and deep cuffs of lavender watered silk; very baggy trousers, with lavender stripes down the seams; very shiny boots and quite as glossy a hat; his attire being completed by tightly-fitting gloves, of the hue known in Paris as *beurre frais*—that is to say, light yellow. All this you may think was odd enough; but an extraordinary oddity was added to his appearance by the circumstance that every article of his attire, save, I suppose, his gloves and boots, was cut on what dressmakers call a "bias," or as he himself, when I came to know him well, used to designate as *à la zoug-zoug*. He must have been the terror of his tailor, his hatter, and his maker of cravats and underlinen; since he had, to all appearance, an unconquerable aversion from any garment which, when displayed on the human figure, exhibited either horizontal or perpendicular lines. His very visiting-cards, his cigar-case, and the handle of his cane took slightly oblique inclinations.

—George Augustus Sala, on meeting Soyer in the Hungerford Market (Sala 1894, II, 240-241)

8. Alexis Soyer was born in France and raised there, first in Meaux-en-Brie—known for its cheese—then in Paris. During the Revolution of 1830, he was working in the kitchen at the Foreign Office, when it was attacked by angry insurgents. He ended up singing, not for his supper, but for his life:

The cooks were driven from the palace, and in the flight two of Soyer's *confrères* were shot before his eyes, and he himself only escaped through his presence of mind, in beginning to sing '*la Marseillaise*' et '*la Parisienne*;' when he was in consequence carried off amid the cheers of the mob. (Volant and Warren, 6)

Soyer soon fled to England, where he would make his reputation, notably as chef of London's prestigious Reform Club from 1837 to 1850. But his close call during the July Revolution remains an oddly revealing point of departure for his later, successful career. Casting him in the suggestive role of the faux-revolutionary, it already offers a glimpse at his general propensity for theatrics; his talent for rallying the public, and for making the most of unlikely opportunities; as well as his ambivalent class status and loyalty. A modestly-born opportunist, slaving away in service to the upper crust, and belting out Rouget de Lisle's or Casimir Delavigne's rabble-rousing lyrics at gunpoint, he appears at once a man of the people and lackey of the elite.

9. Soyer was, in so many ways, a study in contradictions, "who drew the breath of his being from the French Romantics and who won the respect of Victorian England for his practical resourcefulness and powers of administration" (Morris 1). He served refined food to the rich and powerful, and strained to ingratiate himself to them as well. But, amid the social and intellectual ferment over the problem of poverty, in the years surrounding the Revolution of 1848, he also put his skills to more humanitarian and egalitarian use. He toiled to feed Ireland's poor in the 1840s, or starving British soldiers in the Crimea a decade later, and published invaluable information to help the needy better feed themselves: first in a booklet, "The Poor Man's Regenerator" (1847), from each copy of which he gave a penny to the poor; then more extensively in his *Shilling Cookery for the People* (1854). A versatile, compassionate, and inventive cook, he was a prolific inventor as well—of bottled sauces and drinks, culinary gadgetry of all sorts [fig. 9], numerous innovations in the Reform Club's celebrated new kitchens, and many other things, including an excellent field stove [fig. 10], a variant of which, still called the Soyer stove, was used by the British army through the first Gulf War (Brandon 241).
10. Soyer was known for his exuberance, and eccentric style. A wit, prankster, raconteur, fine singer—and not just of revolutionary ballads—his first ambition was to be a comic actor, and for much of his life he frequented theaters and theatrical performers. A dapper Frenchman among drabber Victorians, he dressed as a Romantic dandy, in a style no longer the height of fashion at the height of his career in the 1840s and 50s—and did so even in the kitchen, eschewing the conventional chef's uniform. Beyond their rich embroidery, lavish silks, and extravagant colors, Soyer's clothes were characterized by their insistent cut on a bias, "*à la zoug-zoug*" in his own coinage, an idiosyncratic rendering of "zig-zag," the English phrase itself taking on the gallic flair of its inventor. Indeed, this predilection for diagonal lines was not limited to clothing designed and worn "studiously awry" (Sala 1894, II, 241), but rather part of a broader pattern. As biographer Helen Morris notes,

Soyer's desire to be noticed, to be admired, above all to be extraordinary, grew ever more dominant. He tried not only to cook differently from everyone else, but to dress and talk and walk differently too. . . . [H]e would not wear a single garment with either horizontal or perpendicular lines. His hats were specially built so that when clapped on at any angle they slanted in a coquettish way—in his own phrase, *à la zoug-zoug*. His coats had to be cut on the cross His visiting card . . . was not a rectangle but a parallelogram; so was his cigar-case, and even the handle of his cane slanted obliquely. (25)

To this list could be added many things: advertisements for Soyer's products, like these for his Sultana's Sauce, one with the central bottle tilted diagonally through the copy [fig. 11], the other with the copy inside a parallelogrammic field [fig. 12], recalling the shape of his *carte de visite* [fig. 13]; a whimsical dish created in honor of the ballerina Fanny Cerrito [fig. 14], with wispy diagonals spiraling round a conical base, surmounted by a dancing figurine on pointe atop a thunderbolt-like stand composed of alternating angles; "a zig-zag passage," which Morris calls a "true Soyer touch" (78), leading into the model soup kitchen that Soyer designed in Dublin; his fanciful menu for a "GRAND SUPPER LUCULLUSIEN À LA ZOUG-ZOUG" (Volant and Warren 152); and, as we shall see, numerous diagonal elements in the portraits of Soyer that accompany his published work. As such varied examples suggest, *à la zoug-zoug* might best be understood as the central trope in Soyer's creative imagination, and in his dandified public persona, emblematic of his drive to distinguish himself—both to achieve distinction, and to do so by being different.

11. Soyer's position as chef of the Reform Club secured him some prominence but, in itself, does not explain the magnitude of his fame. His constant letters to various London papers, particularly the *Times*—touting his own accomplishments, promoting his latest schemes, weighing in on the questions of the day—helped keep him in the public eye. So too did the extensive marketing of his products, notably "Soyer's Sauce" [fig. 15], as well as his several successful books on food and cookery. Combined with

his flamboyant personal style, these forms of exposure made Soyer a favorite target of popular satire which, for better or worse, only increased his renown. He "figured more often in the pages of *Punch* than many a Cabinet Minister" (Morris 1), as in this rendering of his resignation as chef of the Reform Club [fig. 16]. His face remains hidden by his hand, all the better to draw attention to him, and to point up the extent of his celebrity.⁴ Soyer's face is so familiar that its features have become superfluous. Other attributes suffice to identify him: the hat rakishly askew, his chef's knives, and stylish street clothes that contrast with the ordinary kitchen garb of his staff, whose faces register varying degrees of shock and dismay at their sovereign's abdication. "King Soyer" himself stands above them, in front of an armchair throne beneath a coat of arms, with kitchen utensils replacing heraldic symbols in the quadrants.⁵ The accompanying text below the caricature mocks Soyer's "pride," his "gigantic" schemes, his supposed "genius," and concludes with a swipe at his publicity-mongering, that plays on the double meaning of "puff" as both pastry shell and undue or exaggerated praise: "As to the puffs, the loss of SOYER will not be so severely felt, as most of the puffs he was so famous for manufacturing were for his own use."

12. Other contemporary satirical treatments of Soyer include, notably, his parodic double Alcide Mirobolant, in Thackeray's novel *Pendennis* (1849). Thackeray and Soyer had known and esteemed each other since meeting at the Reform Club in 1837, and the novelist often poked fun at his friend the chef in his contributions to *Punch*, which also afforded Soyer considerable free publicity. In *Pendennis*, Mirobolant—whose surname means "dazzling" in French—arrives in a small English town to become chef to the local lord, and creates a stir among the inhabitants. Thackeray has also made him a Gascon, that legendary figure of strutting braggadocio. To wit, Mirobolant strides about town of a summer afternoon, in outlandish attire reminiscent of Soyer's:

his light green frock or paletot, his crimson velvet waistcoat with blue glass buttons, his pantalon Écossais of a very large and decided check pattern, his orange satin neckcloth, and his jean-boots, with tips of shiny leather,—these, with a gold embroidered cap, and a richly-gilt cane, or other varieties of ornament of a similar tendency . . . in which he considered that he exhibited the appearance of a gentleman of good Parisian *ton*.
(Thackeray 1898, 222; all references to this edition, unless noted otherwise)

Fancying himself irresistibly attractive, he "walked down the street, grinning and ogling every woman he met with glances, which he meant should kill them outright" (222) for, as a Frenchman, he was "accustomed to conquer" (225). Recalling Soyer's own histrionic bent, he declares "with a deep bass voice, and a tragic accent worthy of the Porte St. Martin and his favourite melodramas" that he is "a fatal man," destined to inspire "hopeless passion" (226). Mirobolant's self-proclaimed "determination to marry an Anglaise," to find a mate among "[t]he blonde misses of Albion," (225) perhaps alludes to Soyer's own marriage to an Englishwoman (cf. below), or even to the dedication of *The Modern Housewife, or Ménagère* to "The Fair Daughters of Albion" [fig. 17]. In any case, it is left to the reader's judgment "[w]hether Alcide was as irresistible a conqueror as his namesake, or whether he was simply crazy" (226). This remark calls attention to the chef's given name, which is both reminiscent of Soyer's (*Alcide-Alexis*), and echoes that of the protagonist in Jean-Baptiste Lully's opera *Alceste, ou le Triomphe d'Alcide* (1674), as well as in the lesser-known *Alcide, ou le Triomphe d'Hercule* (1693, written by Jean Galbert de Campistron, with music by Louis Lully and Marin Marais)—ironic associations for, while a conqueror of men and even of death, and despite vigorous attempts at amorous conquest, the Alcide figure in both these operas ends up unhappy in love.

13. Mirobolant harbors artistic pretensions as well:

It was a grand sight to behold him in his dressing gown composing a *menu*. He always sate down and played the piano for some time before. If interrupted, he remonstrated

pathetically with his little maid. Every great artist, he said, had need of solitude to perfectionate his works. (Thackeray 1849, I, 218)

One of Thackeray's own illustrations for the novel depicts this scene [fig. 18], with the maid scolded by the chef in his elegant dressing-gown, and diagonally-slanted cap reminiscent of Soyer's. In the Frenchman's quarters, a saucepan stands next to a couple of thick volumes, and on the wall above this hang portraits honoring two key culinary figures: Louis-Eustache Ude, the best-known French chef in England before Soyer; and, the Marquis de Béchamel, a seventeenth-century nobleman and supposed inventor of the famed sauce bearing his name. Mirobolant worries, moreover, that his "genius" is wasted upon England's "dull inhabitants": "the poesy of my art," he laments, "cannot be understood by these carnivorous insularies" (225). Indeed, so emphatic is his artistic and, with it, social affectation that, when the novel's title character calls him a cook, he takes this as an affront to his honor: "'I am Chevalier de Juillet,' said [Mirobolant] . . . , slapping his breast, 'and he has insulted me. . . . Il m'a appelé—*Cuisinier*'" (258). Others intercede to avert a duel, a possibility hinging, precisely, on the cook's problematic social status. Pendennis contends that he "can't fight a cook" (261)—a domestic, hence an inferior—and is furious that Mirobolant accosts him, as if his equal:

To be tapped on the shoulder by a French cook was a piece of familiarity which made the blood of the Pendennises to boil up in the veins of their descendant, and he was astounded, almost more than enraged, at such an indignity. (257)

In contrast, Mirobolant sees himself, not only as an exalted artist, but as a heroic insurgent, a "Chevalier de Juillet" who "killed four *gardes du corps* with his own point in the barricades" (261). This claim to glory, doubtless exaggerated in stereotypical Gascon fashion, caricatures, indeed cleverly reverses the terms of Soyer's own, far less swashbuckling role in the July Days—Mirobolant would have slain elite troops while standing his ground in the street, whereas Soyer was nearly lynched by a revolutionary mob while fleeing from a palace kitchen.

14. To be sure, Thackeray's treatment of this fictional chef—and, by extension, of his model Soyer—is hyperbolic, yet good-hearted, even tender, conceived "in the fulness of our love and respect for Monsieur Mirobolant" (212). Satirical barbs are aimed as much at the English townspeople as at the colorful Frenchman in their midst: "Not having been accustomed to the appearance or society of persons of the French nation, the rustic inhabitants . . . were not so favourably impressed by Monsieur Alcide's manners and appearance" (222). Curious little children begin to follow him, soon joined by older ones, "laughing, jeering, hooting, and calling opprobrious names to the Frenchman" who "at length . . . began to perceive that he was an object of derision rather than of respect to the rude grinning mob" (223). So too does another of Thackeray's illustrations evoke the misunderstandings between the locals and their foreign visitor, with a group of children forming behind the bizarrely-clad Mirobolant—the older ones seem amused, while the youngest, clutching her doll, appears frightened—and a young woman looks baffled and perhaps scared as well by the predatory stare he fires her way [fig. 19]. On another level, Mirobolant's misfortunes during his stroll about a small English town—his hapless pursuit of local ladies, and persecution at the hands of a juvenile "mob"—offer an ironic counterpoint to his supposed heroism on the street, in the French capital, during the July Revolution.
15. In his day, Soyer even enjoyed considerable renown in America, where his books were widely read and admired, and his various schemes, inventions, and exploits received ample coverage in the popular press. For example, a review of the American edition of Soyer's *The Modern Housewife or Ménagère*, in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, accords the author great reverence:

We sit down to discuss a volume of M. Soyer as the undergraduate rises to address an assemblage of professors and doctors of divinity; that is to say, with an unaffected sense of

our own incapacity, and an overwhelming conviction of the magnitude and difficulty of the task. (210)

Similarly, the review of Soyer's *Culinary Campaign*, in *Harper's Monthly*, declares, "Every one has heard of Alexis Soyer, the celebrated *chef de cuisine*, . . . [a] *litterateur*, as well as the greatest living master of the mageric art" (325).

16. While multiple factors contributed to such far-flung fame, Soyer's publications were the most important. Long before chefs could serve themselves up to a mass public on television, Soyer's books were both widely distributed, and offered ample opportunity for self-presentation, in prefaces and title pages, frontispieces and other illustrations, and even throughout the text, as we shall see in the case of his *Culinary Campaign*, in which he stars as the hero of this autobiographical narrative.
17. Soyer published his first book in 1845, in French, called *Délassements culinaires*, which features a ballet, "La Fille de l'Orage," dedicated to dancer Fanny Cerrito. The slim volume also includes gastronomic essays—like the recipe for *La Crème de la Grande Bretagne*, actually an elaborate compliment to British society ladies—more reminiscent however of Brillat-Savarin's entertaining "Variétés" than of the practical culinary advice Soyer would proffer, with such success, in the years ahead. Oddly enough, the part of *Délassements culinaires* most suggestive of the future course of Soyer's career is the curious frontispiece portrait of the author [fig. 20]. Like other prominent nineteenth-century figures—notably Napoleon, Byron, Hugo, P.T. Barnum, and Sarah Bernhardt—Soyer seems to have intuited much about the importance of images within the period's burgeoning fame culture. He no doubt benefited in this respect from marriage, in 1837, to the artist Emma Jones (1813-1842) [fig. 21], an accomplished portraitist, whose work he venerated, and all the moreso after her untimely death in childbirth—as in this print from *The Gastronomic Regenerator* (1846) [fig. 22], in which Emma's absence from Soyer's "table at home" is made all the more poignant by the presence of her canvases, and by the caption, with its Lamartinian undertones, deploring the barrenness of a gastronomic gathering "sans Dames." In the frontispiece portrait for *Délassements culinaires* Soyer's face appears elongated, as if distorted in a fun-house mirror. This seemingly unflattering likeness nonetheless inspired a "complimentary epistle," reported in Volant and Warren's *Memoirs of Alexis Soyer*, that ends revealingly:

Behold this phiz, of awful length,
Equipped with brains of wondrous strength,
Compared with which Carème's [sic] were dull,
And Ude can scarcely boast a skull.
Long-headed Soyer, long may thy name
Be stretched upon the rolls of Fame.—L. (57)

While in jest, Soyer's anonymous contemporary (presumably a friend, based on the familiar tone) makes a key connection between the elongation of Soyer's physiognomy ("phiz"), and his desire for renown. Aspiring to rival, even to surpass the most celebrated French chefs of the previous generation, Soyer does not hesitate to bend and stretch the lines of his portrait, to manipulate his image both literally and figuratively. We shall see how his penchant for self-aggrandizement, for diverging from constraining norms, and for reinventing himself, all in the service of his reputation, informs his later works, particularly their frontispiece portraits. But this propensity is already here, in embryonic form.

18. *Délassements culinaires* seems to have been well-received. In particular, Fayot, the editor of *Les Classiques de la Table*, who prided himself on having befriended such seminal gastronomic figures as Carème, Brillat, Grimod, and the Marquis de Cussy, congratulated Soyer at once on the work's culinary and literary merits: "Chez vous, monsieur," he wrote, "le cuisinier rempli de goût et d'une charmante

élégance, étincelle dans l'écrivain" (Morris 46). Here, if needed, was ample encouragement for Soyer to continue in this writerly path. But, in fact, his next publication had already been announced, on the last page of *Délassements culinaires*: "a work on a very different scale, . . . which was to set the seal on his reputation and give him his nickname, *The Gastronomic Regenerator*" (Morris 46). What needs to be remembered though is that writing of any sort was a dubious proposition for Soyer, whose scant formal education—typical for a chef of his generation—had left him in a state of "uneasy semi-literacy"; specifically,

He could read and write French, though his spelling was shaky and his orthography laborious. But he never learned to write English, though he spoke it, and may have been able to read it He was therefore forced to rely upon amanuenses, . . . [a] role . . . filled by his wife, . . . and after her death, by a series of secretaries. (Brandon xiii-xiv)

In short, Soyer's books were always a pose, passing him off as something that, on the most basic level, he was not: a writer. This necessarily involved wrestling with deep-rooted societal prejudices against cooks, still seen largely as lowly domestic help—indeed, "when, in the 1841 census, Soyer gave his occupation as a cook, the census-taker automatically listed him among the servants, when in fact he was the householder" (Brandon 73). So too might chefs, whatever their pretensions, be dismissed as ill-educated simpletons—like the dim-looking gent in Bertall's illustration [fig. 4]—the antithesis of the urbane men of letters whom ambitious sorts like Soyer sought to emulate. As a follow-up to *Délassements culinaires*, *The Gastronomic Regenerator* exhibits both the contradictions inherent in Soyer's status as would-be man of letters, and his efforts to make the most of this tenuous situation. *The Gastronomic Regenerator* would appear, at first glance, to be more of a challenge for his questionable literacy. It was much longer, and written in English, a language he mastered even less than his native French. Yet it was also far less literary than its predecessor, not a gastronomical essay but rather a practitioner's compendium of useful advice, that fit easily within a long tradition of similar efforts by distinguished French culinarians, from Taillevent to Menon to Carême, and continued afterward by figures like Jules Gouffé, Escoffier, or Bocuse. Despite whatever difficulties English presented—largely mitigated by the efforts of his secretaries—*The Gastronomic Regenerator* staked out familiar territory, in which Soyer could operate from a position of greatest strength. Addressing the public of his adopted land in its vernacular, and in a popular format that showcased his expertise, Soyer hit upon a combination most likely to boost his fame, but not to raise doubts about his qualifications as an author.

19. The preface of *The Gastronomic Regenerator* is particularly revealing. Soyer begins with his supposed reluctance to embark on a project of this sort, despite requests from distinguished visitors to the Reform Club, especially ladies:

Why do you not write and publish a Cookery-book? was a question continually put to me. For a considerable time this scientific word caused a thrill of horror to pervade my frame, and brought back to my mind that one day, being in a most superb library in the midst of a splendid baronial hall, by chance I met with one of Milton's allegorical works, the profound ideas of Locke, and several chefs d'oeuvre of one of the noblest champions of literature, Shakspeare; when all at once my attention was attracted by the nineteenth edition of a voluminous work: such an immense success of publication caused me to say, 'Oh! You celebrated man, posterity counts every hour of fame upon your regretted ashes!' Opening this work with intense curiosity, to my great disappointment what did I see—a receipt for Ox-tail Soup! The terrifying effect produced upon me by this succulent volume made me determine that my few ideas, whether culinary or domestic, should never encumber a sanctuary which should be entirely devoted to works worthy of a place in the Temple of the Muses. (vii-viii)

Tellingly, the idea of producing his own cookbook conjures up in his mind the most prestigious works in the British literary canon, mentioned ostensibly in contrast with culinary works not worthy of such elevated status. Yet it is precisely such a book that beckons him. Its numerous editions, its "immense success of publication," and the extraordinary fame of its author arouse his "intense curiosity," even if he feigns "great disappointment" upon discovering it to be a cookbook. Through this amusingly contrived anecdote, Soyer grapples with traditional notions of literary glory, in order to stake his own, alternate claim within the world of letters. Within this context, it does not seem coincidental that he refers to great works of literature as "chefs d'oeuvre"—he could have used the English term "masterpieces"—making "chefs" intrude into a category that would seem to exclude them. This turn of mind becomes all the clearer in the preface's concluding sentence. Having now written a book of recipes, he begs the reader to "put [it] in a place suited to its little merit, and not with Milton's sublime *Paradise*, for there it certainly would be doubly lost" (viii). This last phrase is particularly suggestive for, if side-by-side with Milton, Soyer's volume would be condemned to nether regions of literary endeavor, yet also, in the rarefied space of a baronial library, it would not be available to the far broader public it targets. Foregoing the "sublime," Soyer aims instead at popular "success." Perhaps most tellingly, and notwithstanding his pretense of modesty throughout the preface, the last line is followed by a large, bold facsimile of Soyer's signature—the graphic measure of his authorial ambition.

20. The frontispiece portrait of Soyer in *The Gastronomic Regenerator* [fig. 23] is far less unusual than the one in his first book. It is a flattering likeness, lovingly rendered by his wife, in which, with his dark eyes and sensuous mouth, he appears handsome, sensitive, thoughtful, and also younger than at the time of the book's publication (necessarily so, since Emma had died four years earlier). There is no border here, in contrast to the increasingly elaborate ones that would frame his portrait in his next two major publications, *The Modern Housewife*, and *The Pantropheon*. His attire is also more restrained than in other likenesses, though he does wear his signature cap on a characteristic diagonal—a hint, at least, of the sitter's eccentricity.
21. The frontispiece for *The Modern Housewife, or Ménagère* [fig. 24] uses the same portrait by Emma Soyer, but surrounds it with a fanciful border that combines floral garlands with other decorative motifs which, at the level of the author's head, morph into chimera-like winged creatures, likely an allusion to the flights of his creative imagination. Above his head we find a *fleur-de-lys*-like motif, perhaps betokening the author's Frenchness, and below him the border forms a frame around his signature, the quintessence of authorial identity. Already, this image tries harder to portray Soyer as an important personage and, specifically, as an author.
22. Soyer seems to have found himself increasingly emboldened by the success of these books. His authorial pose thus continues, indeed culminates in his next publication, the *Pantropheon* (1853). The frontispiece [fig. 25] offers an elaborate iconographical program, seemingly appropriate for an ambitious work subtitled "History of Food, and its preparation, from the earliest ages of the world." The central portrait of the author—again, the same one by Emma Soyer—is surrounded by a gastronomic allegory spanning food production, preparation, service, and writing, in vignettes organized clockwise, around five putti figures. In addition, parallel staffs flank the composition: at left, topped by a pineapple and hung with fowl, symbolizing hospitality and plenty; at right, topped by a trident and hung with fish, symbolizing the ocean's bounty.
23. At lower left, one putto sits wedged between a sheaf of wheat that rests upon a pile of game, and grape vines surmounted by a cluster of hanging fowl. He gazes downward at the bunch of grapes in his hands, which he squeezes into a chalice, the fruits of the natural world thus transformed by human hands. Above, three more putti display finished products, in divergent realms of gastronomic endeavor: wine and spirit-making, as the figure at left hoists a massive, crystal decanter; pastry-making, as the one at right holds up a decorative, circular confection upon a platter; and cooking, as the central putto

lifts the lid from a steaming cauldron set upon a lively fire, an archetypal *pot au feu*. There is upward movement throughout, accentuated by ardent flames and ascending puffs of smoke and steam, figuring a Hegelian *Aufhebung*, toward what Brillat-Savarin called "transcendent gastronomy." Indeed, this whole scene is reminiscent of the upper vignette in Bertall's "Les Aliments" [fig. 26], a plate for the 1846 (and then still recent) edition of Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du goût*, in which the raw is cooked, transfigured through the alchemy of fire and artistry of a professional chef, as smoke and steam billow up, into a celestial vision of gastronomic delight, crowned by a giant mouth, from which beatific rays project outward—illustrating both Brillat's concept of transcendent gastronomy, and the broader French ideal of cultural "rayonnement."

24. Returning to the *Pantropheon* frontispiece [fig. 25], the final vignette shows another seated putto, his right (and writing) hand resting upon a pile of giant books marked with the names of classical authors; his left held pensively to his mouth, pathway to gastronomic experience; his head tilted and brow furrowed, further signifying thoughtfulness; with, at his feet and alongside the oversized tomes, water running across and down, toward the lower right corner—spilling over, as it were, into the text that follows. In this way, it depicts the contemporary food writer's work, his reflections both inspired by gustatory remembrances and flowing from classical 'sources,' thus completing the sweep of this gastronomic allegory, from raw ingredients, through prepared food and drink, on to the written appreciation thereof.
25. The five putti, as well as the branch and vine motif linking them, recall another Bertall plate for the 1846 *Physiologie du goût* "Sens" [fig. 27], and through this the long philosophical and iconographical traditions of five senses allegories, so often invoked in gastronomic contexts like this (Garval 2005). In addition, the allusions here to earth, air, fire, and water call to mind allegories of the four elements. Together, the intimations of these two venerable allegorical traditions elevate the gastronomic allegory at hand, lending classical resonance and philosophical depth to the engraving and, by extension, to the work that follows. Indeed, the next plate in the volume continues in this vein, suggesting yet more emphatically the scope of Soyer's ambition. Set opposite the dedication "To the Genius of Gastronomy," the print shows the earth, floating in space, amid the brilliant rays of the sun and dramatically-shaded masses of clouds, and encircled by a giant banner inscribed with the motto "DEUS CREATOR, TERRA NUTRIX." Soyer's seemingly humble subject—food—takes on cosmological dimensions. [fig. 28]
26. But what of the central author's portrait in the frontispiece 25]? At bottom center, an antler projects into this space on a bias, directing our gaze toward Soyer, and drawing attention to the diagonal skew, not only of his hallmark hat, but also of the oval frame surrounding his effigy. These angles are likewise echoed and emphasized by those of the wheat sheaf and books below, as by the decanter and pot lid above, with the uppermost putto similarly coiffed but facing the opposite way, at once a visual counterpoint in

contrast to Soyer's marginal literacy in modern French and English) would have enabled him to handle the book's roughly 3,000 classical references. Soyer seems to have paid Duhart-Fauvet for his efforts, had the work translated into English— "misérablement traduit en Anglais par je ne sais quels manoeuvres littéraires," according to Duhart-Fauvet's hand-written notes on his copy of the book (McKirby 19)—and then he took all the credit. Perhaps, as Brandon suggests, this "one truly dishonest act of his life" can be explained through his state of mind at the time, which she qualifies as "something as near depression as was possible in so buoyant a character," following the collapse of his grandiose *Symposium of All Nations* restaurant project, in 1851 (Brandon 228). But, as the visual evidence of his increasingly elaborate frontispieces suggests, this was also a logical next step in Soyer's ongoing, authorial masquerade: to appear in the most exalted of guises, as a savant who appropriates the wisdom and prestige of the ancients. This was an ideal all the more desirable for a man with Soyer's great ambition but negligible education. After realizing it, however disingenuously, he retreated from this encroachment upon the hallowed ground of classical scholarship, and returned in short order to more familiar territory, publishing another cookbook the following year. Perhaps, a fundamentally decent man, he found it impossible to continue such a flagrant imposture. Perhaps he just decided that it didn't pay, since the *Pantropheon* sold badly.

28. In contrast to the *Pantropheon*'s arid classical erudition, the lively popularizing bent of Soyer's *Shilling Cookery for the People* (1854) made it a great publishing success. In the frontispiece [fig. 29], Soyer's portrait has, finally, been updated, and looks more like the 45-year old he had become. It does appear again inside an attractive, oval vignette, but this time standing sensibly upright, and minus the surrounding decorative and allegorical program: a more sober presentation, seemingly in concert with this work's common-sense, no-frills theme. There are still however three "signature" elements, within the oval frame, that all run on the same jaunty slant: his hallmark hat; a copy of this book, which its author holds in his hand (the spine reads "Soyer's Shilling . . ."); and, his signature itself, far larger and bolder than those, on either side, of the artist and engraver. Soyer cuts a rakish figure in this portrait, with his elaborately-knotted cravat, embroidered vest, and silk moiré-trimmed waistcoat. To be sure, there is some contradiction in such a self-presentation leading off a volume "embracing an entirely new system of plain cookery and domestic economy." Yet, while his writerly pose is less emphatic here than in the *Pantropheon* frontispiece, Soyer still aims to fashion himself in a literary mold, not so much as the author of this work, but more generally as an Author, whose *oeuvre* projects well beyond this particular volume. To this end, on the title page, his name is followed by an implicitly expansive list of his works: "Author of 'The Modern Housewife, Etc., Etc.'" Similarly, beneath this, he quotes from the *Pantropheon*:

"Religion feeds the soul, Education the mind, Food the body."

His would-be pearl of wisdom is doubly unoriginal: "Food feeds" is the most uninspired of gastronomic reflections and, like the rest of the *Pantropheon*, probably plagiarized. But, this irony notwithstanding, by citing his *Pantropheon* at the head of a new volume, Soyer points toward his larger *oeuvre* and also indulges in a quasi-Napoleonic gesture of auto-apotheosis, anointing himself as an Author and, in the original sense of the word, as an Authority. This suggests, once again, the lengths to which he might go to advance his reputation. Yet *Shilling Cookery* also found Soyer at a crossroads of distinct but related evolutions within his career. On the one hand, his literary pretensions had risen in a crescendo, from *The Gastronomic Regenerator*, to *The Modern Housewife*, to a veritable paroxysm of bad faith in the *Pantropheon*. On the other, his popularizing bent had grown more pronounced over the years as well, from *The Gastronomic Regenerator*, aimed at well-to-do readers; to *The Modern Housewife*, which targeted a bourgeois audience; to *Shilling Cookery* (anticipated by his earlier booklet, "The Poor Man's Regenerator") which catered to the working class. In short, in his ongoing quest for fame, he had already pushed his authorial masquerade to the maximum in the *Pantropheon*, and now retreated from this extreme stance; so too he had worked his way from the top to the bottom

of the social ladder in his cookbooks, striking an egalitarian note as well with his interesting though short-lived *Symposium of All Nations*.

29. Within Soyer's career there were also suggestive parallels with that of another ambitious Frenchman living in London in the 1840s: Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte. In 1846, Napoléon Bonaparte's nephew published *De l'extinction du paupérisme*, a utopian socialist tract on the problem of poverty; in 1847 Soyer did much the same, in a gastronomic register, with "The Poor Man's Regenerator." Both works appealed to the masses and, riding the wave of social unrest leading to the Revolution of 1848, cast their authors advantageously as concerned champions of the people. Louis-Napoléon's populism, which helped get him elected President of the French Republic, turned authoritarian and megalomaniac with his *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851, and ascent to the imperial throne as Napoléon III, on the coup's anniversary (these dates deliberately echoed the glory of Napoléon I, who crowned himself Emperor on December 2, 1804, and prevailed at Austerlitz exactly one year later). Soon Soyer ventured an analogous self-promotion, with the publication of his *Pantropheon* (1853), a gesture likewise imperialist in scope—covering food across the globe, throughout history—while also fundamentally bogus. But, at least at this point in history, a Bonaparte could still get away with a level of dubious self-aggrandizement that a chef, however renowned, could not. Faced with the lukewarm reception accorded his most recent work, Soyer was wise to stake his reputation instead on a more genially crowd-pleasing volume: the flatulent pretense of the *Pantropheon* thus yielded to the frank populism of *Shilling Cookery*.
30. One could imagine that a less restless, more boringly sensible sort would feel that he had found his path at last and, nearing 50, would settle down to a comfortable life writing popular cookbooks. But not Soyer. So what would this peripatetic figure do next?

The Logician as Romantic hero

M. Soyer's account of the Crimean campaign . . . magnifies his office. He has no misgiving that cookery is not the most sublime and important of professions. He has immense faith in himself and his noble art. He writes of the campaign as Lamartine writes of the last French Revolution, making himself the central figure . . .

—Review of *Soyer's Culinary Campaign*, in *The North American Review*, January 1858

31. The Crimean War offered Soyer an unexpected opportunity to try something new, to reinvent himself yet again and, in the process, to further his renown. Dismayed by the newspaper accounts of British troops starving, Soyer volunteered his expertise. He designed a superior field stove [fig. 10] and, despite the many dangers, traveled to the Crimea where, from the Spring of 1855 to the Spring of 1857, he reformed the British Army's kitchens, as well as its inefficient ways of provisioning them. While there, he also hobnobbed with British and French high commanders, and with the war's other humanitarian celebrities, Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. His efforts attracted attention in the press, and provided fodder for contemporary satirists, as in the comic sketch "Camp Cookery"—attributed to "Alicksus Sawder" and published in the humorous collection *Our Miscellany* (1856)—which poked fun at the preparations Soyer designed for the troops [fig. 30]. His work did, nonetheless, improve the plight of British soldiers, making a real contribution to the war effort.
32. When Soyer returned to London, he published an account of his adventures in the Crimea, entitled *Soyer's Culinary Campaign* (1857). Reviewers ridiculed the *beau rôle* Soyer accorded himself in these historical events, their criticisms enlivened with abundant culinary references: *The Times* of London

remarked, for example, that "Alexis the Savoury opens his box of condiments, and shows us indisputably how fields are won. Such and such proportions of pepper and salt went to make such a breach or to repulse such a night attack." *The North American Review*, while published in faraway Iowa, also refused to be duped by the famed foreign chef's visions of grandeur, and decried "this very inordinate vanity, this exaggeration of the value of his services and the importance of his reforms, this singular simplicity of egotism" (262). But, if nothing else, the book brought Soyer renewed attention—and perhaps there is no such thing as bad publicity, as P.T. Barnum is supposed to have said.

33. In his previous published works, Soyer's efforts at self-presentation were limited largely to the paratext, i.e. the prefaces, title pages, and especially frontispieces. His *Culinary Campaign* however offered Soyer an unprecedented forum for self-fashioning and promotion, turning himself into a sort of bold, humanitarian Mirobolant—the multifaceted if deluded hero of his own narrative. As the *Times* review remarks, "Soyer the Great, like the heroes and demigods of ancient mythology, . . . with his compound functions, is nevertheless a consistent personage, except where, possibly from his wanting a little medicine, he forgets for a moment that he is the centre of creation."
34. Conversely then, the paratext here is remarkably understated, giving little hint of the fanciful memoir that follows. The frontispiece [fig. 31] is sober, with no tell-tale borders, depicting "The Author" simply as the tired, aging, ailing veteran of this "culinary campaign," without even his signature cap. While the engraving of his likeness "From a Photograph" does, at this early point in the history of photography, confer upon the sitter a certain stylish and modern air, it also suggests a kind of documentary seriousness, which Soyer's grave facial expression seems to confirm. So too does the title page present the work in earnest tones, as

BEING HISTORICAL REMINISCENCES
OF THE LATE WAR.
WITH
THE PLAIN ART OF COOKERY
FOR
MILITARY AND CIVIL INSTITUTIONS, THE ARMY, NAVY,
PUBLIC, ETC. ETC. (Soyer 1857)

His "principal object," he claims in the preface, is to "perpetuate the successful efforts made by him" to improve British soldiers' diet. The preface also alludes to the book's "literary portion [which] the Author has dished up to the best of his ability," yet downplays it, allowing that readers may not "relish" this, and hoping that the work's "literary deficiencies" would be compensated for by the "succulence" of "the many new and valuable receipts, applicable to the Army, Navy, Military and Civilian Institutions, and the public in general" (Soyer 1995, xiii; all references to this edition, unless noted otherwise). His use of culinary vocabulary ("portion," "dish up," "relish," "succulent"), like the title page's qualification of him as "Author of 'The Modern Housewife,' 'Shilling Cookery for the People,' Etc.," underscore the modesty of the role he seems to be assuming, as no more than a simple cookbook author.

35. Should all this make one expect a dull treatise on mess-hall dining, the book's opening plate and opening line promise far more spectacular fare instead, in line with Soyer's well-known histrionic proclivities. "HURRAH! hurrah! Bravo! Bravo!" (1) begins the narrative, with "rounds of applause" that mark the end of a show Soyer attended at "Old Drury," making the reader wonder what other sorts of performances lie ahead. So too the opening plate [fig. 32], by illustrator G.H. Hine, on the preceding page, offers a kind of alternate frontispiece, far more theatrical, and suggestive of what is to come, than the official one, with its subdued portrait. Here Soyer stands center stage within a scene that, in concert

with the work's title, juxtaposes kitchen and battlefield. He stands in the foreground, next to one of his field stoves, from whence rise smoke and steam that mix with the surrounding battlefield haze, the literal fog of war, to form a cloud in which appear the work's title and author's name, the latter on a characteristic, sharp diagonal. At Soyer's feet lie battlefield debris, like broken wood or various-sized cannonballs, and, most prominently, next to the stove, provisions for cooking. These include a large cabbage beside a large cannonball, and smaller soup vegetables (onions, turnips) that resemble the smaller cannonballs nearby. The similar size and shape of foodstuffs and munitions, and their proximity, suggest their affinity—their parallel role in a "culinary campaign." In the hazy background we can just make out the silhouettes of two cannoneers, who load guns to be fired out, beyond our field of vision, into the battle, thus placing Soyer and his field kitchen squarely behind the lines and, paradoxically it seems—given his starring role here—behind the scenes.

36. In the middleground two soldiers carry a stockpot, suspended on a pole, toward the line of battle. A few steps away, a kneeling artilleryman lifts one cannonball from a pile, presumably to bring it to the cannoneers for loading. He faces us, his back to the hostilities, but when he has lifted the cannonball, he will no doubt turn and head the same way as his stockpot-toting comrades. In the other direction, in the space separating him from Soyer, providing a visual link between the two men and the spaces they occupy, sits an unidentified case, fitted with wooden supports to facilitate carrying, suggesting its use transporting supplies to and fro, yet the nature of these contents—culinary, or military?—remains indeterminate. Along similar lines the *Times* reviewer asks, about the "spherical objects" in this print, "Are they cannon-balls to be stewed into cannon broth, or Dutch cheeses about to be fired from a mortar? . . . the culinary and combative emblems are so mixed that our judgment is perplexed and we stumble over our history." Indeed, starting from the provisions at lower right, sweeping across and upward like the stove's copious exhaust, through chef Soyer, to the kneeling artilleryman, to the soup carriers, and on to the distant cannoneers at upper left, the composition traces a supply chain, visually compelling and coherent, yet heterogeneous, systematically mixing food and weapons. Despite the scene's apparent seriousness and sense of purpose, there also lurks, just beneath the surface, the carnivalesque spectacle of a Rabelaisian food-fight, with cabbages as cannonballs, and stockpots as war engines.⁶
37. This plate reverses conventional battlefield imagery, highlighting not some bold cavalry officer's charge into hostile territory, but rather the chief culinary campaigner's efforts behind the lines. The focal point of the composition, Soyer stands next to both his signature invention and byline writ large, his name and hat both on a characteristic diagonal, the latter less emphatically so, however, than in other portraits. Indeed, his garb is less dandified than elsewhere, and generally martial, but still with original twists—in addition to the cocked hat, his extra-wide trouser stripe, or broad, flaring lapels. "Standard issue" was just not Soyer's style.
38. The small cannonballs on the ground around him, whether stray British munitions or vestiges of enemy volleys, signal the nearness of hostilities, and thus danger to the would-be warrior-chef, who strikes an appropriately resolute pose. On some level, this may be a wishful reworking of Soyer's far less heroic stance under fire during the July Revolution. But, more than just unflappable here, Soyer appears virtually immobile. His hands are absent, lost in his pockets. His tiny feet, while signifying elegance and refinement to the nineteenth-century viewer, also seem inadequate for his well-nourished frame, offering dubious support for a man of action. These apparent handicaps only make sense within the context of his broader efforts to fashion himself an author and inventor. A man not so much of action, but of ideas—less a warrior, than a wizard—he accomplishes extraordinary things less through physical agency than through sheer force of will, as if by magic.
39. There are indeed, in this plate, intimations of something greater, grander, beyond the seemingly mundane, repetitive tasks being performed. These include the eerily bright light bathing Soyer, the high

seriousness of his facial expression, or various literary and cultural resonances—from the Rabelaisian undertones, to the message emerging from a puff of smoke, shades of Aladdin's lamp, the sorcerer's cauldron, and even the Angel of God in the burning bush. So too, in Soyer's narrative, what seems ordinary never is: thus, a ragged young stowaway, "in spite of his attire, looked as brisk and independent as a modern Diogenes" (300); or, Lord Raglan's headquarters which, while "by no means grand nor imposing," brings to mind illustrious comparisons, "Shakespeare's house at Stratford, or the humble cot of the poet Burns in Ayrshire" (124). Likewise, a visit to the hospital and barracks at Kululee, to take stock of kitchen utensils and provisions (including "some very nice calfs'-foot jelly"), and to evaluate the inefficiency of the stoves (which used "about 170 per cent. more wood than was necessary"), is framed by astonishing panoramas of Constantinople, spied from the road—first under the blazing midday sun, then by "beautiful Oriental moonlight" on the return trip—views "so sublime and picturesque . . . that in an enchanted dream alone one could hope to realize the effect of the mirage" (77-79). In Soyer's Romantic turn of mind, the sublime always looms on the horizon.

40. Much like his contemporary Victor Hugo who, in exile during the Second Empire, turned increasingly to distinguished precursors (e.g. Moses, St. John the Baptist, Dante, or Voltaire) to defend and illustrate his reputation (Garval 2004a 177-187), Soyer conjures up notable ghosts. At an unexpected luncheon encounter with "the scion of a celebrated epicure," his apostrophe to the departed *gourmand* recalls Hugo's dabbling in spiritism at the time: "Oh! Sefton, Sefton! may your noble ashes repose in peace in your tomb! The glory of your name has not faded: your grandson, the youthful Lord Sefton, is an epicure!" (284). The other gastronomic and culinary figures he invokes include the ancients Apicius (196) and Lucullus (278); his "countryman" Brillat-Savarin (166); and especially Vatel, the patron saint and holy martyr of French cuisine—actually an *officier de bouche* or steward, whom Soyer, like many others, mistakes for a *chef de cuisine*, an inaccuracy that exaggerates chefs' social status at the time: "O Vatel! my noble master . . . Fortunately you lived in an era of gastronomic grandeur, when a *chef de cuisine* bore a high rank, and had your own aristocratic weapon wherewith to do the noble deed which gilds your name" (280-281; cf. also 229). With no such weapon at hand, but likewise facing a grand dinner "in jeopardy," the incurably cheerful Soyer does not imitate his paragon's suicide; instead, he opens a bottle of champagne and, he notes, "At the second glass . . . everything appeared *couleur de rose* . . . I felt that success was certain" (280).
41. Soyer relishes basking in the reflected light, not just of such past "gastronomic grandeur" but, revealingly, of grandeur *tout court*. Napoleon, Romantic paradigm of glory, is of course an unavoidable reference. En route from Marseille to Constantinople, Soyer stops at the emperor's birthplace in Corsica, and provides an account of the visit, reproduced in his *Culinary Campaign*.⁷ Always eager to distinguish himself, he turns this by-then standard pilgrimage into an original, and appropriately culinary one: presumably mustering the same lady-killing charm as his *sosie* Mirobolant, he convinces La Signora Grossetti, the Buonaparte family's 83-year old housekeeper, to show him the kitchen, "a request having never before been made by the numerous travellers who daily visit" (40). Relating to Napoleon by examining the "ruins" of his kitchen, chef Soyer stakes out an idiosyncratic, personal connection with the now-defunct great man. He thus pens his narrative of the visit "upon the stove in this celebrated kitchen—which first alimented the brain of that great hero," and which, we infer, now inspires these lines. He lays claim to culinary souvenirs "from that epoch"—"a piece of tile from the charcoal stove, and a rough wooden meat-hook . . . found in the larder"—which he intends to place in his kitchen at Scutari. In questionable taste, but likewise revealing of this keen desire to establish an intimate link with Bonaparte, he boasts to his travel companions of his "amorous adventure with the nurse of the first Napoleon" (40-41). In the accompanying illustration [fig. 33], Soyer stands alone, peering into the shadowy opening of the stove, as if contemplating the mysteries of Napoleon's destiny, the darkness that emanates and enshrouds him suggesting both the stove's erstwhile radiance, and that of the luminary it once nourished.

42. In much the same way, Soyer takes pains to place himself in the footsteps of that other great Romantic hero, Lord Byron, epitome of passion and flair, and celebrated champion of the underdog, who wrote famously of his travels in Greece and Turkey, and perished on a mission to free the Greeks from Turkish rule. Byron, like Napoleon, was an exemplar for nineteenth-century glory-seekers, and particularly for creative figures like Soyer, but the latter's affinity for the Romantic poet and ill-starred revolutionary was especially wide-ranging and long-standing. Soyer dressed with the exuberance of the 1820s well into the sober 1850s, a dashing, Byronic character amid dour, black-suited Gladstones. His culinary campaign aided the British war effort in general, yet benefited most directly the undernourished rank and file, much like his crusade to feed the Irish poor during the Potato Famine, or like his increasingly popularizing cookbooks, which offered the masses appetizing but inexpensive recipes. In addition, Soyer's humanitarian mission to the Crimea took him to the same part of the world, and even to some of the same locales Byron had visited decades earlier; he too fell gravely ill while away and, though he did return to London, his health was altered, and he would survive just over a year, before his untimely death.
43. While Soyer's career ended on this dramatically Byronic note, it had also begun—and, in large measure, played out—in the same "key of B." Arriving in London in 1831, the strains of a fortuitously-intoned *Marseillaise* still ringing in his ears, the young faux-revolutionary took on, and took off with, the recently-defunct radical Romantic's dandified persona. Not unlike the beret-coiffed, baguette-toting American exchange student in Paris, straining to be more French than the French, Soyer came to London and strove to out-Byron Byron. And, throughout his career, Soyer's fervent emulation of the Byronic model largely defined the tenor of his fame, fashioning a figure at once endearing and ridiculous, avant-garde and retrograde, a champion of the common people cloaked in the most uncommon frippery, his extraordinary singularity served up in frenzied pursuit of mass-market ubiquity.
44. As in the case of Napoleon, Soyer's *Culinary Campaign* stresses his personal connection to Byron. He notes of his "first-class interpreter" at Scutari, Mr. Black:

. . . what was more remarkable still, he was the husband of the celebrated Maid of Athens, whose company I had the pleasure of enjoying several times; and although this interesting personage is now in her tenth lustre, some remains of the great Byron seem still engraved on the physiognomy of the once celebrated Greek beauty; and she informed me that when Lord Byron wrote his poem on her, she was but ten years of age, he at the time residing opposite the house of her parents at Athens. (75)

Here, as with Napoleon's housekeeper, Soyer makes this connection through a very old woman, who spans the generations separating him from these illustrious predecessors. Soyer even finds Byron worth mentioning when this is not really relevant, quoting his dragoman who recounts a "curious tale" about the Leander Tower, but then remarks that "it has not the least relation to the legend of the two lovers celebrated by Lord Byron, who also swam from Sestos to Abydos" (49).⁸ In Soyer's narrative, he includes as well a letter he addressed to the *London Illustrated News*, dated "ACROPOLIS, ATHENS, March 18": "At the present time," he notes, "in the ancient Parthenon, I am cooking, with my new camp-stove, on a fallen capital of the stupendous ruins, a *petit déjeuner à la fourchette*, with Greek and Sicilian wines, for my distinguished fellow-travelers" (42-43). His choice of a cook-out site is strategic, for this is not only one of the most prestigious monuments in western civilization but, more specifically, a place haunted by the memory of Byron, whose impassioned defense of the Greek claim to the Parthenon friezes so identified him with the ancient temple that it was even suggested he be buried there. The accompanying illustration [fig. 34] parallels the earlier one of Soyer at Ajaccio. As his travel companions look on, Soyer once again stands in the foreground, toward the left, facing a stove that effects his communion with the "ruins" of a distinguished past. What indeed might emerge

here from his suggestively-named "Magic Stove"? A trio of hungry officers watch and gesture at the flash of light rising from the pan Soyer heats over the stove: a vision of the fork-breakfast ahead, and perhaps also the ghostly afterglow of Byron's presence.

45. But summoning spirits is a tricky business. Implied comparisons between the great men of yore and the contemporary aspirant can backfire, as the example of Napoléon III so amply demonstrated at the time, with tragedy repeating as farce, and grandeur shrinking to pettiness.⁹ Still, the temptation to invoke the prestige of past glory can be irresistible, even for those who should know better. Victor Hugo excoriated Napoléon III for emulating an illustrious uncle, while he himself indulged in far greater genealogical pretensions, verging on messianic delusion, for which he in turn was lampooned by contemporary commentators and artists (Garval 2004a 178-179). What then of Soyer, who rivaled Hugo in his verve and hunger for fame, but without a shred of the critical perspective that, alas, would fail the exiled poet? Not surprisingly, Soyer cuts a ridiculous figure vis-à-vis his chosen exemplars. Where Vatel once brandished a sword, he wields a champagne bottle; where Bonaparte led *la Grande Armée*, he commands a field kitchen; and, where Byron leapt to the defense of the Greek people, he prepares an omelette.
 46. Soyer can seem ridiculous in many ways, both as protagonist and narrator of his *Culinary Campaign*. He cannot resist a gag or pun, no matter how awful—for instance, about Mary Seacole, a Jamaican mother figure or *mère noire*, at the Black Sea or *Mer Noire*. He also interlards his narrative with copious commercial plugs, dropped names, celebrity endorsements, and testimonials. Yet, amid such manic foolishness and puffery, there remains the admirable spectacle of a man who, in a very real way, contributed more to the war effort than the military commanders of this dismally mismanaged conflict. Since then, Soyer's innovations have also been recognized for their more general usefulness, by militaries worldwide. Already in 1861, for example, in U.S. Army Colonel H. L. Scott's influential *Military Dictionary*, the "Cooking" entry quoted 16 pages worth of Soyer's recipes, directly from his *Culinary Campaign*. Similarly, an online "Short History" of logistics, maintained by the Canadian armed forces, still notes Soyer's "quantum leap in the art and science of food services during the Crimean War [He] invented a mobile kitchen, which virtually took military cookery from the Middle Ages into the modern world."
 47. *Soyer's Culinary Campaign* is remarkable as well for the way it renegotiates his public persona and, in a larger sense, redefines prominent chefs' place in society. The book's prefatory material already resists the literary pretense so prevalent elsewhere in his *oeuvre*, the standard recourse of image-conscious chefs for a half-century already, and at least another half-century to come. Turning away from the the man of letters paradigm allowed Soyer to envision other possibilities. In his Crimean adventures, he adopts the seemingly most unglamorous role for a chef, presiding over poorly-appointed military kitchens, performing an institutional function far from the ideals of genius and artistry invoked by ambitious chefs from Carême onward, to boost their prestige and authority. It is a paradoxical, almost Christ-like ploy, embracing the most humble of incarnations, in order to propel himself to the loftiest of heights. He takes the obscure realm of the chef or logistician—behind the scenes, behind the lines, or "back of the house," in contemporary restaurant lingo—and thrusts it into the limelight. He thus emerges in a novel role, as an actor not just in the Crimean theater of operations, but on the greater stage of world events, a bold Napoleonic-Byronic man of destiny, making his mark on history. In this, as in so many other ways, Soyer was a hard act to follow, but whether or not another chef would assume such a grandiose role anytime soon is beside the point. What matters is the underlying shift here in the vision of the chef as a public figure. Soyer's example established that chefs did not have to pretend to be great writers in order to be seen as noteworthy personages. And this is precisely the change in perspective underpinning the later emergence of chefs as broadcast stars.
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Soyer's Legacy

48. Alexis Soyer was an odd, anomalous figure, reminiscent of Grimod de la Reynière in seeming at once quaintly behind and radically ahead of his time. While Soyer's ostentatious personal style struck his contemporaries as outmoded, his ideas and initiatives anticipated much of our own culinary and gastronomic modernity. His unconventional dress in the kitchen prefigured the vogue today for "non-traditional 'fun' chef's attire" (George 9). Even allowing for the ambiguities and contradictions in Soyer's relation to the masses, he had a degree of social conscience not seen again in a prominent chef before Alice Waters (who, in a book jacket endorsement for Ann Arnold's *The Adventurous Chef: Alexis Soyer*, praises "this chef who cooked with great talent and compassion"). Soyer was interested in regional and foreign cuisines and even, in his *Symposium of All Nations*, as well as in the book he did not live to write—to be called *The Culinary Wonders of All Nations*—anticipated what has come to be known, for better or worse, as "world cuisine." Likewise, long before Julia Child or Emeril Lagasse, he was an unapologetic popularizer, an enterprising promoter of his own image and marketer of associated products, as well as an extraordinary performer and impresario. Indeed, his *Symposium*, with its diverse attractions, strolling entertainers, fireworks, and other visual effects, was more than a restaurant, "it was also what would today be called a theme park" (Brandon 197). So too the contradictions of Soyer's existence as a famed French chef in Victorian England—caught between ridicule and veneration, Bonaparte and Byron, *Cailles en sarcophage* and Yorkshire pudding—already acted out something much like the "cosmic ambivalence about French culture" which Toby Miller identifies as characteristic of "Anglo-speaking countries," and central to the rise there of food television (223).
49. How then to gauge Soyer's legacy? Questions of cultural transmission and transformation become all the more thorny when dealing with such a forward-thinking figure. Much of his originality was misunderstood in his day—misconstrued as just vanity, dismissed as simple eccentricity—and largely forgotten afterward. By the 1880s, his books were out of print, and long remained unavailable. In the early years of the twentieth century, "the grandson of 'the great Soyer'" (9) did revive his ancestor's memory a bit. In a career reminiscent of his grandfather's, French-born-and-trained Nicolas Soyer rose to prominence as chef of an exclusive London club (Brooks's), and achieved considerable though short-lived renown for his popularizing efforts and technical innovations—in particular, for what he called "Soyer's Paper-Bag Cookery" [fig. 35].¹⁰ Despite the "great furor" (5) this caused at the time, the "era of Paper-Bag Cookery" (99) turned out to be brief.
50. There is, however, a suggestive if indirect connection to be made between Alexis Soyer and the stars of today's televised food shows. Like Soyer, Xavier Marcel Boulestin (1878-1943) was, for his generation, the best-loved French culinarian in England. His life also began and ended in ways that recall Soyer. He was born and raised in France (actually a native of the Périgord, thus a Gascon like Thackeray's Mirobolant); toward the end of his life, at the start of the Second World War, and in the spirit of Soyer's "culinary campaign," he petitioned the British government (unsuccessfully) to let him use his expertise to help the war effort, by reforming the country's rationing system.
51. As a young man, Boulestin came to Paris to pursue his literary ambitions, and was engaged as secretary and collaborator by Willy, husband of the novelist and performer Colette. He also performed opposite Colette, and with some success, in a couple of plays, including one by Willy "in which Colette appeared as a gigolo and Boulestin as an English barman speaking poor French" (Hooker 7). Wary though of Willy's character and motivations, he left Paris—like Soyer before him—to seek a new life in London. There, he frequented leading artists and writers of the day, and was even invited to Soyer's old haunt, the Reform Club. He tried his hand at many things, including interior decorating in the modern style, translating plays, editing and publishing luxury editions, and writing theatrical reviews and other commentary for the French and British press. In late 1922 or early 1923, seemingly in spite of himself, Boulestin stumbled upon cookbook writing. His account of this turning point recalls Soyer denying his

own interest in writing cookbooks, in the preface to *The Gastronomic Regenerator*. Boulestin had met with an acquaintance in publishing, about another matter:

Just before leaving and hardly realizing what I was saying, I said:

'By the way, you would not be interested in a cookery book, would you?'

'It's exactly what we want', answered Byard. The contract was signed there and then. Not a line was written, and I was given £10 in advance of the royalties. (Hooker 20)

Thus began a series of successful cookbooks and, with it, Boulestin's unexpected new career as an expert in French cuisine. He opened his first restaurant, the Restaurant Français, in 1925, at Leicester Square; the even more successful Restaurant Boulestin opened in 1927, in Covent Garden, with walls and ceilings painted by Jean-Émile Laboureur and Marie Laurencin, curtains designed by Raoul Dufy, and a cosmopolitan clientele of London's high society and distinguished foreign visitors. Boulestin came to be known however for his simple, unpretentious, but delicious food, and soon began disseminating his culinary ideas in various ways. He opened "X.M. Boulestin's School of Simple French Cookery" (Hooker 26), realizing Soyer's unfulfilled dream of founding a "College of Domestic Economy" (Volant and Warren 192); he wrote articles for the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Evening Standard*, *Country Life*, and *Harper's Bazaar*; he made sound recordings of cookery lessons for H.M.V.; he was featured in British Movietone News, showing how to prepare the famed *Omelette Boulestin*; and, on January 21, 1937, in a BBC studio in London, he hosted the first installment of a television series called "Cook's Night Out." Sharing Soyer's penchant for popularization, Boulestin took his message to the new media of his day, and reached an ever-larger public. He was Soyer's spiritual heir in many ways and, not surprisingly, he was the world's first television chef.

Notes

¹ Monkey, in French, is "singe," and the verb "singer" means to imitate mindlessly—as in "to ape" in English.

² The drawing, and the tongue-in-cheek commentary below it, play on the meaning of "baron" in culinary French, as a large roast, usually of mutton or lamb.

³ Steward to the Prince de Condé, Vatel stabbed himself fatally with his own sword, during a feast in honor of King Louis XIV, when an important seafood delivery was delayed. The provisions arrived soon after. (cf. Dominique Michel, *Vatel ou la naissance de la gastronomie* [Paris: Fayard, 1999]).

⁴ This is similar to Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Phryné devant le tribunal* of 1861, in which the courtesan's gesturing to cover her face, while ostensibly out of modesty, all the more surely calls attention to her resplendent nudity, and to her identity as an incomparable beauty: she was supposedly the model for Praxiteles's *Venus of Knidos*, the archetypal nude in Western art.

⁵ This is similar in conception to Marcelin's caricature "Romans populaires," which pokes fun at novelists George Sand, Eugène Sue, Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo, and Alexandre Dumas *père*, through heraldic shields displaying "not the author's coat of arms, but instead a witty emblem of the work in question" (cf. Garval 2004a, 16-17).

⁶ Cf. "la guerre Picrocholine" in Rabelais's *Gargantua*, or the conflict between the "Andouilles" and "Quaresmeprenant" in *Le Quart Livre*.

⁷ Soyer explains that this "letter to the public press" never made it to its destination, "through the mismanagement of my servant, who threw it into the post without paying the postage" (40).

⁸ This refers to Byron's poem, "Written after Swimming from Systos to Abydos."

⁹ Cf. Karl Marx's *Le 18 Brumaire de Louis Bonaparte* and Victor Hugo's *Napoléon le Petit*, both published in 1852.

¹⁰ Nicolas Soyer was the son of Alexis Soyer junior, himself the illegitimate son of the famed chef and the *parisienne* Adèle Lamain, resulting from their liaison before the former's departure for London. Alexis Soyer senior apparently did not learn of his son's existence until 1851, and recognized him officially as his child in 1853 (Volant and Warren 239-242).

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Romantic Gastronomies

Tastes and Pleasures

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1. At the advent of the nineteenth century Grimod de la Reynière confidently declared, "It is widely held to be true that all of the arts are interconnected, that they overlap, and that they are mutually beneficial . . . Chemistry, painting, sculpture, architecture, geometry, physics, pyrotechnics, all are more or less closely allied with the great art of fine dining" (qtd. in Gigante, *Gusto* 8). Great culinary accomplishment, he recognized, entails that the sense of taste is correspondingly capable of the development of "an extreme delicacy of the palate, which allows the appreciation, in tasting, of a full range of flavors" far beyond the register of basic sensation (6). Such sentiments were to be repeated and embroidered many times in the rich literature on gastronomy that blossomed in the ensuing decades (Weiss 1-15).
2. The proliferation of gastronomic literature came on the heels of a similar expansion of theoretical interest in what would seem to be a parallel subject: theories of "aesthetic" taste. For the previous century was so full of philosophical writing on taste, as well as on beauty, the sublime, and what came to be known as "aesthetic" experience, that the entire eighteenth century has been termed the "century of taste" (Dickie). As Denise Gigante puts it, "Modern gastronomy developed as an expansion of the eighteenth-century discourse of aesthetic taste, as a cultural field opening onto the material pleasures of appetite." (Gigante, *Gusto* xix) A number of gastronomic writers took their cues directly from philosophic texts, perhaps particularly from David Hume's famous essay "Of the Standard of Taste" of 1757, allusion to which is apparent in Grimod's comments about delicacy of palate. Launcelot Sturgeon mentions Hume prefatory to his own description of the sensibility of an epicure: "a delicate susceptibility in the organs of degustation, which enables him to appreciate the true relish of each ingredient in the most compound ragoût" (qtd. in Gigante, *Gusto* 83; see also Gigante, *Taste* 270-71). And an anonymous writer in an 1858 issue of *Harper's* magazine eagerly quotes philosopher Dugald Stewart's comparison between cookery and the fine arts: "*Sweet* may be said to be *intrinsically* pleasing, and *bitter* to be *relatively* pleasing; while both are, in many cases, equally essential to those effects which, in the *art of cookery*, correspond to that *composite beauty* which it is the object of the poet and the painter to create" (qtd. in Gigante, *Gusto* 249). Given the central role of the concept of taste in both philosophy and gastronomy, writers on food and eating rather naturally merged their interests with philosophical theories.
3. However, this was a one-way endeavor, rarely reciprocated by the philosophers who systematized the discipline that would come to be called "aesthetics." Despite the efforts of gastronomic writers, the two discourses never converge—even at the points where they first seem to join. Had the *Harper's* writer read more carefully, he would have noticed that in Stewart's own opinion the gustatory and artistic comparisons remain merely metaphoric. Stewart insists on the "exclusive restriction (among our different external senses) of the term Beauty to the objects of Sight and Hearing," referring to the intimate association, which . . . is formed between the Eye and the Ear, as the great inlets of our acquired knowledge; as the only *media* by which different Minds can communicate together; and as the organs by which we receive from the material world the two classes of pleasures, which, while they surpass all the rest in variety and in duration,—are the most completely removed from the grossness of animal indulgence, and the most nearly allied to the enjoyments of the intellect. (Stewart 304-5)

4. This is a typical sentiment, for the vast majority of philosophers writing about aesthetic taste dismiss or even disparage the literal sense of taste, its objects, and its pleasures, developing the concept of the aesthetic in explicit contrast to bodily taste sensation. Kant's famous distinction between the sense pleasure of eating and the aesthetic pleasure of beauty merely reiterates in his own idiom what was essentially a philosophical commonplace. As Lord Kames put it some years earlier, "The fine arts are contrived to give pleasure to the eye and the ear, disregarding the inferior senses" (Kames 6-7). Even years after gastronomy had produced volumes, the same opinion continues to be repeated. At the end of the nineteenth century George Santayana asserts:

The pleasures we call physical and regard as low ... are those which call our attention to some part of our own body, and which make no object so conspicuous to us as the organ in which they arise. There is here, then, a very marked distinction between physical and aesthetic pleasure; the organs of the latter must be transparent, they must not intercept our attention, but carry it directly to some external object. The greater dignity and range of aesthetic pleasure is thus made very intelligible. (Santayana 24)

In a mid-twentieth-century book described as "the work that was to set the tone of clarity and hard thinking for the discipline" of aesthetics (Kivy ix), Monroe Beardsley dispenses with the claims of cuisine to be an art form in a mere two paragraphs, noting dismissively that: "We are told by Fanny Farmer that 'cooking may be as much a means of self-expression as any of the arts,' but that only goes to show that there is more to art than self-expression" (Beardsley 98-99). In later works, while the difference between aesthetic pleasure in art and sensuous enjoyment of food continues to be reiterated from time to time (e.g. Scruton 1979: ch. 4), as a rule the distinction is simply presumed by the complete omission of the latter subject in most discussions of aesthetics.

5. To be sure, there are many points of similarity between the literatures on gustatory and on aesthetic taste. Perhaps the most important is that both gastronomers and philosophers endorse a hedonic foundation for the defining values of their arts. Aesthetics developed its modern iterations with the rejection of objectivist analyses of beauty and the adoption of empiricist theories of properties—according to which value-terms such as "beauty" refer to an "idea" constituted by the pleasure of the percipient, rather than to an external, objective quality. So too do gastronomers extol well-prepared foods for the refined pleasures they afford and the delicacy of palate they demand. Yet even as gastronomers advance their case for both the aesthetic and artistic standing of cuisine, philosophers continue to exclude taste from the aesthetic senses and cuisine from the arts. This essay explores the persistent division between the two sorts of taste and the pleasures they afford. There are actually three topics mingled here: the nature of the sense of taste and its alleged limits; the status of taste enjoyment to qualify as aesthetic pleasure; and the claims of cuisine to be considered an art form. I shall focus only on the first two.

The sense of taste

6. Let me review very briefly some familiar territory about the appropriation of taste as the governing metaphor—even model—for aesthetic discrimination. There is some inevitable shift of terminology in part of this discussion, for "taste" is the label for a set of receptors of the tongue and mouth, and as such it can be distinguished from smell and touch. But outside the laboratory taste almost never functions alone, and gastronomers usually use "taste" to refer to the multi-sensory experience of the flavor and texture of food and drink. I trust that context will make clear which meanings are intended.
7. Taste (narrow sense) and its cousin smell have always ranked low in the hierarchy of the senses established since classical antiquity. This assessment involves a set of charges that one finds in the philosophical literature from Plato to the present, and that may be found in scientific studies as well.

Taste is often considered a rather simple sense that performs only a basic function: to determine whether or not a substance is safe for ingestion; otherwise, it is not terribly significant (Gleitman 116). Because of their crucial role in protecting the organism, both of the chemical senses are designated as relatively "primitive" sense modalities (McLaughlin and Margolskee 538). With these perspectives, scientific approaches underwrite traditional assumptions about the built-in limits of the sense of taste.

8. Philosophically, taste is viewed as an impoverished sense on epistemic, moral, and aesthetic grounds. Taste does not furnish significant information about the external world; it delivers only bodily pleasures; and hence it offers temptations that without strict control can lead to gluttony and intemperance. The sense modality with which taste contrasts most dramatically is vision, which along with hearing cooperates with reason to develop knowledge of the world. Though touch is granted some cognitive standing coordinate with vision, smell and taste compete for last place in a hierarchical ordering that puts the distance or "intellectual" senses of sight and hearing above the proximal or "bodily" senses of touch, smell, and taste. In modern times, the distinction between "aesthetic" and "nonaesthetic" senses supplements this rank ordering.
9. The kind of pleasure furnished by taste demonstrates both its moral danger and its aesthetic limits. Experiences of the bodily senses are *sensations*; that is, they register phenomenally as effects on the perceiver's body. In contrast, the distance senses provide *perceptions*, which have no phenomenal "feel" but in their typical exercise are wholly directed outward towards their objects. (There are exceptions; extreme stimuli such as high volume or piercing light cause physical discomfort.) Enjoyment from the bodily senses is correspondingly physical and sensuous, and paradigmatic examples of those pleasures invariably refer to eating and to sex. Because the pleasures of vision and hearing normally do not arouse bodily sensations, they do not invite the kind of self-indulgence in pleasure that taste does. Aristotle is one of many who warned that the bodily senses provide appetitive pleasures that are pursued by brutes as well as humans, and he advised careful moderation in their exercise. That sensory pleasures require control is a common observation, of course, and one duly recognized by gastronomers. "Men who stuff themselves and grow tipsy know neither how to eat nor how to drink," reads one of Brillat-Savarin's opening aphorisms (Brillat-Savarin 2). But moderation addresses only excesses of bodily pleasure; it does not provide a rebuttal to the charge that the pleasure to be had from eating or drinking is simply the wrong *type* to be aesthetic.
10. All of these concerns are summed up in the common classification of taste as a "subjective" sense, meaning that it directs attention largely inward to the state of our own bodies, to our mouth and tongue and what is going on as food slides into our interiors. Therefore, taste experiences furnish the paradigm of *private* experiences that are *relative* to individuals. "One man's meat is another man's poison," as the saying goes; and *De gustibus non est disputandum*: "There is no disputing about taste." Actually, we dispute about taste all the time, but philosophy is not alone in finding taste sensations idiosyncratic and private, as these commonly quoted adages attest.
11. But of course there is another side to the philosophical story, for taste also provides the guiding metaphor used to describe the ability to discern beauty in nature and art. Given the poor reputation of the gustatory sense, one might be surprised to see it pressed into such delicate service. But several features of the sense of taste dispose it for this usage. A backdrop to the acceptance of the metaphor of taste is a deeply-rooted controversy that heated up in the eighteenth-century: philosophers were divided between those who believed that reason remains the chief mental faculty to apprehend value, and those who reinterpreted the operation of the mind and attributed evaluative function to a capacity they variously termed "sensibility," "sentiment," or "inner sense." On the whole, and especially with regard to aesthetic matters, the latter side prevailed. Therefore, to identify a sense as the metaphor for the mechanism of value apprehension suited the waning allegiance to reason as the guiding evaluative faculty.

12. Taste requires intimate, first-hand acquaintance with its objects. One cannot judge the taste of food from second-hand reports, and the same may be said of an object of beauty. Furthermore, taste is a sense that nearly always has a value valence—that is, one either likes or dislikes what is tasted. (This feature continues to be part of scientific studies of taste, which is the one sense about which researchers consistently inquire about pleasure reactions.) Because modern philosophy widely associates beauty with pleasure—indeed according to the most influential theories, such as the empiricism of Hume and Kant’s analysis of feeling, beauty is actually identical with a certain type of pleasure—the likes and dislikes that eating typically occasions are parallel to the pleasure-displeasure responses that characterize aesthetic evaluations.¹ Perhaps most paradoxically, given the dismissal of this sense for its tendency to direct attention only inward toward the body, taste was selected also for its extreme *sensitivity* to the qualities of its *objects*. Properly cultivated, the sense of taste can detect fine distinctions among different kinds of food and drink, just as the good critic is able to discern subtle qualities in works of art. Hume posits a "great resemblance between mental and bodily taste" in his famous retelling of a story of a wine-tasting contest from *Don Quixote*: According to this tale, two kinsmen of Sancho Panza possessed amazingly "delicate" taste. To test their pretensions, their fellow villagers had them assess the contents of a hogshead of wine. Very good, said one, except for a slight taste of metal; excellent, agreed the other, save for that faint whiff of leather. Everyone else laughed, for they tasted only wine; but later when the hogshead was emptied, at the bottom was found a dropped key attached to a leather thong—proof of the greater delicacy and accuracy of the taste of Sancho’s kinsmen (Hume 141-2).
13. One might expect that the widespread adoption of the taste metaphor to speak of beauty and art would repair the traditional dismissal of the literal, gustatory sense. However, many theorists were insistent—far more insistent than Hume—that "taste" is *only* a metaphor. From one point of view, philosophical stubbornness on this point might be regarded simply as unwonted conservatism, but there is far more to the story than disciplinary prejudice. Because of the radical identity thesis of beauty and pleasure, philosophers carefully stipulated the parameters of aesthetic pleasure in order to illuminate how this venerable value could preserve its importance yet lose its objectivity. That is, the subjectivity of taste suited the sense as a metaphor for aesthetic judgments—which are also subjective, as any pleasure is by definition; but the idea that there is "no argument" about taste in the absence of standards is an unacceptable extension of the similarity of the two sorts of taste. In the course of debates over the standards that could be ascertained for aesthetic subjectivity, philosophers revisited and considerably revised traditional analyses of the nature of pleasure itself—long regarded as the signal that a desire or interest has been satisfied. Hence the birth of the celebrated criterion of "disinterestedness" for aesthetic enjoyment.²
14. However urgent that agenda, even a defender of the philosophical mainstream has to admit that the nature of gustatory taste has been distorted in the contrast that it supposedly provides to aesthetic taste. Several questions need to be addressed to determine the legitimacy of gastronomy’s case for the aesthetic standing of gustatory taste. How does the sense of taste really operate? Is its alleged "subjectivity" any more private or indisputable than the experiences furnished by other senses? And what kind of enjoyment does it—or can it—furnish to the attentive percipient? One need look for answers no further than one of the foundational texts of romantic gastronomy: Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin’s *Physiology of Taste* of 1826, which Patricia Parkhurst Ferguson has called "perhaps *the* exemplary text" of this period’s culinary writing (Ferguson 31).

Brillat-Savarin: pleasure and the sense of taste

15. Just how much Brillat-Savarin was aware of either the unsavory reputation of taste in the history of philosophy or the uses of "taste" in the growing traditions of aesthetics I do not know. It seems likely

he was familiar with some of the current popular treatments of taste, such as those written by his favorite, Voltaire. Regardless of his acquaintance with predecessor literature, Brillat's book is an intriguing reflection based on wide experience from the point of view of a self-made "doctor, chemist, physiologist, and scholar," and in his eclectic ruminations he addresses many familiar issues concerning the bodily senses (Brillat-Savarin 18).

16. Brillat's focus on pleasure also steers his remarks to the chief zone of contention between aesthetics and gastronomy. Indeed, his book might have been titled "The Physiology of Pleasure," so central is that concept in his study. Pleasure, he contends, serves as a gauge indicating that the entire human machine is functioning according to plan. Pleasure is a signal that bodily indulgence has been proportionate and well-executed, just as was intended by nature and nature's Creator, "who, having ordered us to eat in order to live, invites us to do so with appetite, encourages us with flavor, and rewards us with pleasure" (151). In his view, the association of taste and sexual pleasures indicates how the senses work towards the preservation of the individual and the continuation of the species, for he classes sexual desire as a sixth sense (30). (He enthuses about this association frequently, as with his encomium to the aphrodisiac truffle.) Against over-indulgence, he sensibly recommends his own brand of Aristotelian moderation (though he may have preached this more than practiced it) (MacDonogh). "It is in the nature of things that what is excessive does not last long" he observes (2, 307-8). The motive for moderation is probably more hedonistic than moral, because gorging reduces taste pleasure; but the directive economically serves both ends. Gluttonous indulgence carries its own punishment, indicated by Brillat's piteous descriptions of those who must spend most of the day engaged in strenuous digestion.
17. Brillat distinguishes three referents for the term "taste": the sense organ, the sensation aroused, and the properties of sapid, or tastable, substances (33). Although smell and taste have been designated "chemical" senses for some centuries, the precise way that chemical action produces different tastes is only now being discovered. Therefore it would not be reasonable to expect any early insights about chemical interactions from Brillat, who does not go much beyond the ancient observation that substances need to be soluble in order to be tasted. However, some of his other comments are remarkably prescient of contemporary taste research.
18. Consider for instance his study of the tongue. The tongue is the chief organ of taste, and many have surmised that the little bumps on its surface are somehow responsible for sensations. Current physiology distinguishes four types of papillae on the tongue, three of which contain taste buds in humans. Those that contain the most taste buds are the fungiform papillae, so called because when magnified they look like little mushrooms. These are the larger of the two types of papillae that appear to the naked eye as tiny dots on the tongue's surface. Brillat (who uses "buds" and "papillae" interchangeably) observes:

Now the study of anatomy teaches us that all tongues are not equally endowed with these taste buds, so that some may possess even three times as many of them as others. This circumstance explains why, of two diners seated at the same feast, one is delightfully affected by it, while the other seems almost to force himself to eat: the latter has a tongue but thinly provided with papillae, which proves that the empire of taste may also have its blind and deaf subjects. (35)
19. In this surmise Brillat is correct. Taste researcher Linda Bartoshuk distinguishes what she calls "supertasters" from "nontasters," referring to people who are especially sensitive to certain bitter chemicals as well as to a large range of taste qualities. Supertasters are endowed with far more fungiform papillae than nontasters, she reports, as one can discover by simple experiment: Paint your tongue with blue food coloring, shine a flashlight on it, and look in a mirror. The fungiform papillae

appear rosy, and a supertaster's tongue is virtually tiled in hot pink. Lots of blue spots indicate the less sensitive nontaster (Bartoshuk).

20. Discovery of a physical reason why taste sensations can differ provides causal grounding for one aspect of the alleged relativity of taste preferences. Physical reasons for this sort of variation are hardly unique to taste, however, as Brillat notes with his comparison to variant hearing capacities (28). His analysis of the organ of taste furnishes the beginnings of an implicit rejoinder to one of the most complicated claims about the subjectivity of taste: that it is an inward-directed sense the experience of which is essentially private, and therefore about which there is no disputing. Taste is not just inwardly-directed. It registers the flavor-properties of objects just as touch informs us that a surface is rough or hearing that a sound is high-pitched; moreover, there are perceptual norms for taste sensitivity. Taste does register the properties of objects by means of sensation "of" or "in" the body, but attention is directed towards the tasted object as much as towards the site of sensation.
21. Brillat's study of taste also neatly analyzes the interaction of taste and smell, addressing certain detractors who would denigrate this sense because it is supposedly sensitive to just four qualities: sour, bitter, sweet, and salty, the rest of the taste spectrum being supplied by smell. Of course, anyone with a bad cold could tell you the same thing. But when gastronomers refer to taste they are not limiting themselves to the contribution of the tongue alone anyway, and Brillat is especially eloquent about the combination of senses that contribute to the full tasting experience. With typically vivid imagery he declares: "I am tempted to believe that smell and taste form a single sense, of which the mouth is the laboratory and the nose is the chimney" (38). He also points out that a good deal of what, strictly speaking, belongs to smell actually takes place in the mouth. For not only do vapors waft into the nose when foods approach our lips, as the chewed bites pass to the back of the throat they interact with the retronasal passages where nose and mouth connect. And after we swallow and exhale there is yet more savoring at the stage of taste he designates "reflective" (39). What is more, the vocabulary to describe arousal of the chemical senses is particularly deficient, he believes. The number of tastes is "infinite," varying with the unique properties of each substance taken into the mouth; and taste experience is further modified in combination with other foods (36-7). All the more reason to cultivate the discerning capacities of this subtle sense so that experience can be acknowledged in the absence of labels—an aspect of cultivated gustatory taste that conforms squarely with the sought-after delicacy of aesthetic taste.
22. The analysis of the physical workings of the organ of taste is only the beginning of Brillat's study of how this sense operates. He is equally attuned to the situational factors that make some people better tasters than others. The pleasures of *eating* are relatively basic, indicating the satisfaction of appetite when the organism is functioning properly; but this is little more than the human variety of an animal need — although Brillat also insists that the anatomy of humans endows them with superior taste sensitivity (43-5). Of more interest and considerably wider scope are the pleasures of the *table*, which are independent of need or appetite (Brillat-Savarin 188; Gigante 7-8). Education of this sense to make it a discerning instrument is a long-term project. Brillat suggests that it can be interrupted both for individuals, when the physical make-up of the tongue is deficient or when scarcity imposes limits, and for entire cultures when fine eating is not a social norm. He pictures the barbarians who destroyed the legendary customs of the Roman table as having "snarling mouths and leathery gullets, insensible to the subtleties of refined cookery" (307).
23. Brillat's investigation of the physiology of the tasting apparatus is as fully developed as it could have been in his time, and indeed it stands up well to its contemporary scientific supplement. His surmises about the taste properties of various foods are a bit indeterminate. On the one hand, he repeats fairly frequently the adage that about taste there is no disputing, by which he seems mainly to have meant that there are no rules governing whether one should prefer one type of food over another. "Every man

reacts differently to a thing: his fleeting sensations cannot be expressed in any known symbols, and there is no scale for determining whether a cod, a sole, or a turbot is better than a salmon trout" (91). On the other hand, his discussion of cooking techniques observes that foods have distinctive properties that behave in regular ways in their preparation and in the sensations they predictably arouse. He is absolutely clear, for example, that a well-aged partridge is better than a freshly-killed bird. Evidently, then, about some sorts of tastes there is not only disputation but also definitive resolution.

24. Where Brillat is at his most eloquent, however, concerns that most elusive feature of taste: the felt quality of the experience. He analyzes three stages of tasting: "Direct" sensation refers to the first impression that food makes when it enters the mouth. Chewing begins, releasing more flavors, and as the food slides down the throat olfaction contributes further to "complete" taste. After swallowing, the taster exhales and the final stage of taste commences, that which he calls "reflective": "the opinion which one's spirit forms from the impressions which have been transmitted to it by the mouth" (39). This final phase of taste sets the stage for the integration of subjective sensation into social rumination, for what can be reflected upon is also the subject of conversation, debate, and judgment. (Following this line of thought, other gastronomers advanced communal standards for culinary judgments with the foundation of gastronomic "juries" whose opinions stood as shared norms for gustatory taste) (Gigante, *Gusto* xxvi).³
25. But even without words, common experience can be discerned. Brillat frequently reports that he knows from their beatific expressions that others have shared his taste pleasures. Taste is thereby an eminently social sense, an observation that implicitly further discredits its alleged privacy and indisputability. That food must enter our interiors in order to register is an undeniably "subjective" feature of taste, but not one that entails relativity. Both flavor and consequent enjoyment are the culmination of shared eating experience, rhapsodically described in this report from a "gastronomical test" Brillat conducted on dinner guests:

All conversation ceased as if hearts were too full to go on; all attention was riveted on the skill of the carvers; and when the serving platters had been passed, I saw spread out in succession on every face the fire of desire, the ecstasy of enjoyment, and then the perfect peace of satisfaction (184).

26. There can be little doubt that the pleasure shared by these diners was a common experience. Now the hard question remains: does Brillat's study help to accredit the sense of taste and its objects as equal participants in the discourse of aesthetics? Or to put the question more specifically: does it serve to revise the traditional concept of aesthetic pleasure to include gustatory enjoyment?

Pleasure — concluding thoughts

27. This question is easier to raise than to answer. Pleasure is an obscure phenomenon that — despite all the attention it received in eighteenth-century discourse — was only partially theorized in the philosophical tradition within which romantic gastronomy arose. Locke called pleasure a "simple idea," by which he meant it could not be analyzed into components. Even if that be the case, however, pleasure is not at all simple in any other sense of the word, as all the stipulations that have been advanced qualifying different types of pleasures indicate (Herwitz). Once it endorsed a hedonic analysis of value, modern aesthetics concentrated on regularizing aesthetic pleasure, showing how it is "disputable" and, despite its singularity, manifests standards even in the absence of rules or principles. The contrasts between aesthetic and gustatory taste that are traditionally enlisted to illustrate this particular issue are at least partially unsound, for acute analyses such as Brillat-Savarin's demonstrate that whatever differences may obtain between the two kinds of taste, it is not that the one is purely subjective and relative and the other amenable to intersubjective discussion and agreement. Variations

in sensitivity to taste qualities have both physiological and social explanations, as is the case with the other senses as well; moreover, the discourse of gastronomy itself indicates that shared judgments and normative standards are not out of the question. Granted, the scope of this sense is limited; taste does not provide as much information about the "external world" as does either vision or hearing. On the other hand, vision and hearing are quite dumb about flavor qualities, so unless one wants to subtract them from the experience of objects altogether there is no reason to doubt a cognitive dimension to taste. What is more, taste is educable and refinable, and its use as the model for aesthetic sensitivity is fully warranted. Brillat-Savarin — and a host of other gastronomers — convincingly demonstrates that attentive savoring ought to qualify as a type of aesthetic discernment. Can we extrapolate further and erase the traditional distinction between sensory and aesthetic pleasures?

28. There is quite a lot at stake in revising the concept of pleasure, central as it is not only to aesthetic theories but also to theories of value in general. This essay has addressed the topic only as it appears in a historically restricted range of philosophies, and these final few paragraphs indicate some further paths of inquiry that remain to be pursued. The concept of disinterestedness was intended to free aesthetic pleasure from bodily sensation, to clear the way for enjoyment that is not self-directed and therefore relative to individuals, and to remove the obstacles for shared standards of taste. The latter two objectives obtain for both aesthetic and gustatory taste, reducing the contrast between the two. But there is no way to sever gustatory from physical pleasure; although one can certainly add reflection to eating and reduce its ties to appetite, one cannot uproot the pleasure of eating from sensation altogether. And indeed why would one want to? However, combining the sensory prominence of gustatory experience with a hedonic measure of value cannot but sustain one important element of the intractable distinction between gustatory and aesthetic value. Romantic gastronomy proceeds to make its case almost entirely on hedonic grounds. But there are good reasons not to identify aesthetic value with pleasure, *unless* that concept is clearly distinguished from the pleasures of sensation (Levinson). Gastronomy thus faces a dilemma: either relinquish its apparently strongest similarity with aesthetic experience (refined and discerning pleasure), or embrace it only to discover that aesthetic theories disavow the pleasure criterion.
29. I believe this rather old-fashioned problem persists to this day, despite the fact that with the passage of time the philosophical agenda that sustained the exclusion of gustatory from aesthetic taste have altered and weakened. There is now considerably more theoretical interest in bodily aspects of human subjectivity than in the past, and it might seem as if the final barriers to merging gastronomic and aesthetic projects have withered away. But far more investigation of sensation, perception, imagination, and what is meant by "pleasure" and its connection with aesthetic value is required before that conclusion can be ventured with confidence. Therefore, I do not believe that we are positioned to answer this final question without undertaking a thorough reassessment of the concept of aesthetic pleasure and the theoretical frameworks within which this discussion has taken place.
30. As traditional philosophical approaches are reevaluated, so as well should be the empiricist revolution that yielded the hedonic foundation for the concept of the aesthetic in the first place. The key point of contention, I believe, lies not with the fact that there needs to be a strict division between bodily and aesthetic experience. Insistence on that distinction not only renders aesthetic experience cold-hearted and dull, but it also fails to accommodate certain paradigmatic aesthetic affects, including the important role of emotions and their somatic register in the apprehension of art (Robinson; Shusterman). The deeper difficulty lies with the original identification of beauty with pleasure, later generalized as aesthetic value, and with the subsequent merging of artistic with aesthetic value under the umbrella of fine art. Attention to romantic gastronomy suggests a first step in this revaluation, since it demonstrates that the fundamental contrast used to articulate the concept of aesthetic taste cannot be as clearly maintained as it seemed when pleasure was first taken to be the root concept of aesthetic value.

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Notes

¹ I omit from this discussion the empiricist distinctions among primary, secondary, and tertiary qualities. While a detailed treatment of the senses would require tackling this subject, few if any aesthetic properties count as primary. Thus these distinctions will not distinguish gustatory from aesthetic taste.

² Disinterestedness originates equally as a concept in theories of moral evaluation.

³ This approach to locating standards for gustatory taste is fairly congruent with empiricist perspectives, though it cannot address Kant's theory, for which any sense pleasure lacks the grounds for the universality and necessity that he ascribes to judgments of aesthetic taste. What is more, certain of the more frivolous elaborations of gastronomic standards, such as Kitchener's insistence that particular dinner hours and styles of invitation be encoded in principles of taste, weaken rather than strengthen the formulation of standards for gustatory taste.

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Romantic Gastronomies

Economies of Excess in Brillat-Savarin, Balzac, and Baudelaire

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Water is the only drink which truly appeases thirst; and it is for this reason that one can only drink a fairly small quantity.

—Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

A man who drinks nothing but water has a secret to hide from his fellows. . .

—Charles Baudelaire

1. The pages which follow offer a preliminary inquiry into the relationship between Charles Baudelaire's writing on drugs and Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's writing on food. As we will see, Baudelaire's attitude towards Brillat-Savarin was dismissive to the point of open contempt. At the same time, Baudelaire's most sustained philosophical study, *Les Paradis artificiels*—described by Michel Butor as Baudelaire's "fundamental work on the nature of poetry"(15)—begins with a chapter on "The Taste of the Infinite" ("Le Goût de l'infini"), thus situating itself from the outset, however ironically or unintentionally, within the rhetorical field of the *Physiology of Taste's* "Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy." Without concerning ourselves with questions of influence, which in this instance are trifling at best, is there some deeper pattern of historical development we can discern in this unlikely conjunction? My argument will experiment with the idea that in both Brillat-Savarin's *Physiology of Taste's* and Baudelaire's writings on drugs, here represented by his pivotal essay "On Wine and Haschisch Compared as Means for the Multiplication of Individuality" ("Du Vin et du hachisch comparés comme moyens de multiplier l'individualité"), the consumption of substance, rather than subserving the economy of the healthy body, becomes human only insofar as it vehiculates an *excess* of desire. I would also tentatively suggest, following Denise Gigante's lead, though my story angles off in a somewhat different direction, that this progressive transformation of the consuming subject into a figure of human perversity, partially occulted in Brillat-Savarin¹, spectacularly displayed in Baudelaire, may be correlated with stages in the emergence of consumer capitalism. Coming between the two, Honoré de Balzac offers indications as to how this process happens.

Savor and Savoir

2. Though initially published at the author's expense in 1825, the *Physiology of Taste's*² quickly gained wide recognition not only as an authoritative disquisition on the pleasures of the table but also as a significant contribution to the world of letters. Thus we find Balzac writing the entry on Brillat-Savarin for Michaud's *Biographie Universelle* in 1835 and attributing the *Physiology's* rapid success—of which he was a keen and interested observer—to the "savor" of a prose style which he goes so far as to compare with those of de la Rochefoucauld and La Bruyère. As evidenced by the number of editions which appeared throughout the 1840s, Brillat-Savarin's standing as a writer continued for some time to grow apace, strengthened now in part by the association with Balzac, just as Balzac had earlier traded on the success of the *Physiology of Taste's* in publishing *The Physiology*.
3. Not surprisingly, Baudelaire did not share in the general admiration, his allegiance to the older Balzac notwithstanding, though he seems to have drawn some inspiration from Brillat-Savarin by taking him as a target of abuse. Thus his brief 1851 essay "On Wine and Hashish Compared as Means for the Multiplication of Individuality," begins with an insulting reference to Brillat-Savarin, "[a] very famous

man, who was at the same time a great dolt" (377), followed by a misquotation from the *Physiology of Taste*'s—"Noah the patriarch is said to be the inventor of wine; it is a liquor made from the fruit of the vine"³—whose banality and insufficiency he proceeds to devote several paragraphs to mocking:

And then? Then, nothing: that's it. Leaf through the volume, turn it every which way, read it backwards, upside-down, from right to left and left to right, you'll find nothing else on wine in the *Physiology of Taste* of our most illustrious and most respected Brillat-Savarin: "Noah the patriarch" and "it is a liquor. . . "

[. . .] How altogether digestive. How very explanatory [. . .] (377-78)

4. To better understand why Brillat-Savarin receives such rough treatment at Baudelaire's hands, we will first need to examine more closely the focus of his attack. Like the misquotation, Baudelaire's claim that the *Physiology of Taste* has nothing else to say about wine is something less than accurate, but neither is it entirely wide of the mark. Other references to wine do occur here and there throughout the book, usually in the course of an anecdote, but there is far less on the subject than Brillat-Savarin's reputation as the classic French authority on the pleasures of the table would lead one to expect, especially when compared with the pages devoted to such items as coffee, chocolate, truffles and turkey (a legacy of Brillat-Savarin's years of exile in America).
5. On a casual reading, the comparative omission may seem yet another reminder, if one is needed, of just how idiosyncratic and unsystematic a book the *Physiology of Taste*⁴ can be. Thus while the meditation "On Thirst" is followed, logically enough, by a meditation "On Drinks," the connection between "On Drinks" and the succeeding meditation "On the End of the World" is more elusive. Similarly, one understands why the long central meditation "On Foods" is divided into two parts, the first on foods in general, the second on special kinds of foods. But why it should be capped with a meditation on "The Theory of Frying" is more of a puzzle.
6. Examined more closely, however, the limited attention Brillat-Savarin pays to wine is an indication of the contradictory role played by excess in the economy of his discourse. On the one hand, the mere pleasure of eating, "the actual and direct sensation of a need being satisfied," which is common to humans and animals alike, must be distinguished from the specifically human "pleasures of the table," "the reflective sensation which arises from the various circumstances of occasion, place, things and persons accompanying a meal," and which emerges distinctly only once hunger and appetite are satisfied —thus, in Brillat-Savarin's analysis, typically with the second course (162-163).
7. On the other hand, "gourmandise" defined by Brillat-Savarin as a "passionate, reasoned and habitual preference for whatever is agreeable to the taste" (130), must be distinguished from sheer gluttony and voracity, with which, however, it is regularly confused, beginning with the fact that the same word is used for both.⁵ Here it is Brillat-Savarin who has consulted his references in vain:

I looked through all the dictionaries under the word *Gourmandise*, and I was not at all satisfied with what I found. There is a perpetual confusion of *gourmandise* properly speaking with *gluttony* and *voracity*: from which I conclude that the lexicographers, however worthy otherwise, are not among those amiable *savants* who nibble with grace a wing of partridge *au suprême* and then wash it down, pinky raised, with a glass of Laffitte or clos Vougeout.

They have forgotten, utterly forgotten, social gourmandise, which unites Athenian elegance, Roman luxury and French delicacy, which disposes with sagacity, executes with

As we shall see, however, in the very act of distinguishing the gourmand from the glutton, the depiction *en vignette* of the gourmand also combines savant, savorer, and Savarin in one overdetermined figure, in a process of rhetorical condensation of which the glass of wine is ultimate repository. Unlike the gross excess of the selfish glutton who eats *everything*, the "fine excess" (Keats) of the "social" gourmand is characterized by discrimination, discrimination in what he eats and in the way that he eats. Indeed, the very analysis of the act of dining into four distinct moments—disposition, execution, savoring, and judgment—is such an exercise in discrimination. These discriminations are energetic—"il savoure avec energie"—because they are the expression of a force of desire that, like labor power in Marx's theory of surplus-value, is in excess of the requirements of self-preservation, which is also why they are essentially social in character—and at risk of being confounded with gluttony. The proliferation of discriminations represents a channeling of the surplus of desire which in the glutton manifests as excessive appetitive into the work of reinforcing and elaborating a symbolic code.

8. These discriminations are also self-reflexive, "réfléchie," a feature which is the mark and mechanism of their refinement, but which also points to the fact that the gourmand's energy of discrimination is directed back on and embodied in the activity of consumption rather than being placed in the service of another aim. In partaking of his meal, the gourmand savors his own knowing exercise of taste, his *savoir* and *savoir-faire*. His powers of gustatory discrimination differ from the common not only in degree, differentiating a subtler spectrum of qualities than others are capable of detecting, but in kind, since every perception of difference is compounded with a perception of his own heightened sensibility—heightened *because* thus compounded and made available to itself for enjoyment. The activity of the gourmand transforms food into an object of refined knowledge, and the process of its consumption into the cultivation, exercise, and display of that *savoir*, but by the same token that *savoir* becomes bound up in the object of gustatory enjoyment, an inextricable part of the *savor* of food. That the gourmand, *amiable savant*, is pictured as nibbling on a partridge wing (itself related to the arm which raises it to the diner's mouth) *au suprême* (mark of invested expertise), thus with the expertly prepared food neither completely inside or outside the mouth even as it is consumed, a circumstance that works to prolong the process of eating and its attendant pleasure, emphasizes this ambiguity.
9. Just as its practice is reflexive, the *discourse* of gourmandise is characteristically the self-savoring discourse of the initiate, an expansion into the arena of linguistic performance—the realm of knowledge proper—of the specifically reflective pleasure that distinguishes the gourmand's experience of eating. To distinguish semantically between "gourmandise" in its proper application ("la gourmandise proprement dite") and the common understanding of "gourmandise" as gluttony one must partake in the gourmand's powers of discrimination—unlike the lexicographers, but quintessentially like Savarin, whose prose, in portraying the gourmand's enjoyment of his expertise, takes pleasure in itself. *Savarin sait savourer et savoure son savoir*. The circularity of this relationship can be read as both a sublimation of the pleasure of eating and a regressive transformation of the written word into a repository and source of oral pleasure. The elegantly managed glass of Lafitte or clos Vougeot with which the gourmand washes down his morsel of partridge *au suprême*, represents both the distillation of savor that defines him and the inherited threat of imbalance that accompanies it.
10. The association of wine, not simply with excessive consumption, but with an exorbitant circuit of desire that attaches to the very logic of gourmandise can also be read in the distinction Brillat-Savarin draws between "latent or habitual thirst," which serves to replenish the loss of bodily fluids and thus participates in the natural economy of the healthy body and "factitious thirst," which, like the pleasures of the table, adds a uniquely human dimension to the cyclical processes of consumption:

Factitious thirst, which is specific to the human race, comes from that innate instinct which leads us to seek in drinks a force not put there by nature, and which comes about only through fermentation. It constitutes an artificial pleasure more than a natural need: this thirst is inextinguishable, because the drinks one takes to appease it have the unfailing effect of causing it to arise anew; this thirst, which ends up becoming habitual, makes for the drunkards of all countries; and it almost always happens that the impotiation ceases only when the liquor is lacking, or when it has vanquished the drinker and put him out of action. (118)

The difference in kind, especially as it correlates with the subdivision of the section on drinks into "drinks" and "strong drinks," stands in marked contrast to the difference of degree between "appetite" and "large appetites," which latter tend to be associated not with unregulated excess but with the prowess of the "well-constituted" man (51). Neither entirely artificial, since "factitious thirst" comes from an "innate instinct," nor simply natural, since "strong drink" contains a power that is not "put there" by nature but the product of human effort, the addictive cycle which binds them together is the demonic double of the healthy reflexivity that joins the "passionate, reasoned, habitual preferences" to the objects which gratify and sustain his discerning tastes. Brillat-Savarin's analysis of "factitious thirst" registers, while localizing as a danger confined to drinking, the possibility that the cultivation of gustatory refinement, rather than constituting a distinctly human enrichment of the balanced cycles of organic life, might operate a parasitic expropriation of those processes by a kind of mechanical desire whose workings tend to exhaust and ultimately vanquish the subject.

11. Finally, that the topic of wine or, more generally, strong drink functions for Brillat-Savarin as something of a negative space within the discursive economy of the *Physiology* is also suggested by the following curious footnote appended to the title of the "Ninth Meditation: On Drinks":

This chapter is purely philosophical: the detailed enumeration of the different kinds of drinks cannot enter into the plan I have formed myself: there would be no finishing. (124)

The note is curious since no similar concern had impeded Brillat-Savarin from devoting the entirety of the sixth meditation to a long and detailed, though of course highly selective, discussion of special foods [63-111]). It is thus yet another indicator of the way in which the *Physiology's* pursuit of distinction is shadowed by a threat of excess. It also offers further evidence of how the "containing" of that threat is integral to Brillat-Savarin's establishment of the "theoretical bases of gastronomy."

Epicuri de Grege

12. An early and enthusiastic admirer of Brillat-Savarin, Balzac clearly understood his wish to divorce the theory and practice of the higher gourmandise from any association with waste and excess, though he also seems to have found it difficult to honor that wish straightforwardly. Thus, writing the entry for the *Biographie Universelle* mentioned earlier, he assures his reader in a tone of devoted and protective eulogy, "It would be far from the truth to imagine that Brillat-Savarin's gastronomic sincerity degenerated into intemperance. He formally declares, on the contrary, that those who get indigestion or become inebriated *do not know how to eat* (*aphor.* 10). He everywhere distinguishes between the pleasures of the table and the pleasure of eating." But the classical reference with which Balzac then continues, "In a word, he may take as his motto Horace's *Epicuri de grege*, but let none add to it the sad spondee which ends the hemistich," is more unsettling, since it mainly seems devoted to playing, through negation and elaborate periphrasis, with the possibility of referring to its subject as "an Epicurean pig."⁷

13. A related oscillation between homage and satire figures prominently in Balzac's supplement to the *Physiology*, his "Treatise on Modern Stimulants" ("*Traité des excitants modernes*").⁸ Solicited in 1838 by Charpentier, who had published that year a new edition of both the *Physiology of Marriage* and the *Physiology of Taste*, Balzac's treatise first appeared as an appendix to Charpentier's reprinting of the latter a year later, in 1839.⁹ In the "Treatise," Balzac pays tribute to Brillat-Savarin as "one of the first to have remarked on the influence of what goes into the mouth on human destinies" (326), and thus as having opened up the field of knowledge to which Balzac's appendix makes its supplementary contribution.¹⁰ That there is already an element of tongue-in-cheek in this way of characterizing Brillat-Savarin's enterprise would not necessarily undercut the indebtedness, since what Balzac claimed to admire *most of all* about Brillat-Savarin's writing was its combination of a goodheartedness with a comic undercurrent, "le comique sous la bonhomie" (*Biographie Universelle* 537). Indeed, the treatise as a whole may be seen as an exercise in writing in the mode of Brillat-Savarin, but in a more exaggerated fashion. Thus we find the same heterogeneous mix of philosophical disquisition; "scientific" reportage on the nature and effects of different kinds of "alimentation"; extended "illustrative" anecdotes, whether personal or on the order of "lore," (such as the story of the English convict who, in the interest of science, was given the choice of being hanged or subsisting on a diet of nothing but tea, and who, in consequence of the latter, grew so thin and diaphanous at the time of his death that "a philanthropist was able to read the *Times*, a light having been placed behind the body" [310]); and expert guidance on proper techniques for the preparation and consumption of particular foodstuffs. Throughout Balzac's treatment is sufficiently broad that his editor Charpentier feels obliged to alert the reader in a prefatory note to the fact that the treatise is a "satire" (393)—whether of contemporary manners or of Brillat-Savarin is never entirely clear.
14. The comparative exorbitance of Balzac's writing, in which ghastly burlesque supplants the diverting anecdote and the sage maxims of the gastronome take a lurid turn ("Inebriation is a temporary poisoning" [314]; "To smoke cigars is to smoke fire" [322]) is obviously of a piece with Balzac's thematic focus on exorbitant forms of consumption, that is, forms of consumption that do not subserve the economy of the healthy body.¹¹ Thus Balzac emphasizes from the start that "The excess of tobacco, the excess of coffee, the excess of opium and of spirits," the three principle subjects of the treatise, "produce grave disorders and lead to a precocious death" (308). Though the valuation remains the same—excess is bad for you—the shift in attention effectively displaces Brillat-Savarin's axiomatic emphasis on the connection between taste and good health: "Taste, which is stimulated by appetite, hunger, and thirst, is at the base of several operations whose result is that the individual grows, develops, sustains itself and repairs the losses caused by vital evaporations."¹²
15. A revisionary, critical tendency emerges as the treatise develops and further narrows its focus. Balzac announces in the beginning of the "Treatise" that he will deal with five substances: l'eau-de-vie (which he appears to equate with spirits in general), sugar, tea, coffee, and tobacco. However, sugar, which Brillat-Savarin treats at length, comes in for only scattered remarks, and the discussion of tea is limited to the story of the diaphanous convict and a more analytic paragraph at the end of the section on coffee. By contrast, several pages are devoted to coffee on which matter "Brillat-Savarin is far from complete" (404). And with regard to tobacco, Balzac finds Brillat-Savarin even more remiss:

It is astonishing that Brillat-Savarin, in taking as the title of his work the *Physiology of Taste*, and after having demonstrated so well the role in its pleasures of the nasal and palatial [sic] cavities, should have forgotten the chapter on tobacco.(411)

Both remarks obviously anticipate the form of Baudelaire's complaint.

16. As has already been suggested, the shift in focus does not simply supplement Brillat-Savarin's normal

gastronomy with an abnormal gastronomy, adding to the *Physiology of Taste* a chapter on pathologies of taste. Rather, it signals a reorientation of the discourse as a whole. The scope and basis of this reorientation are especially apparent from Balzac's introductory "theoretical" sections, which mimic in abbreviated form the "grave elubrifications" (Brillat-Savarin's phrase), which make up the first forty pages of the *Physiology*. From the start, Balzac makes it clear that *his* physiology is concerned at least as much with the production of waste as with the consumption of food:

Our organs are the ministers of our pleasures. Almost all serve a double function: they apprehend substances, incorporate them, and then return them, in whole or in part, under one form or another, to the common reserve, the earth. These few words are the entire chemistry of human life. The experts will have no trouble digesting this formula. (307)¹³

The *bouffonnerie* of these remarks notwithstanding, they prepare a line of argument that is more explicitly initiated with the dictum that, "For social man, to live is to expend oneself more or less quickly" (*ibid.*) and which is then developed throughout the treatise. Whereas for Brillat-Savarin, leisure and wealth allow for the further accumulation of gastronomic pleasure (45), for Balzac the more man is freed from serving his basic needs, the more he is *driven* to expend his surplus energies in the pursuit of excess. "The less human force is occupied, the more it tends to excess, borne there irresistibly by thought" (*ibid.*). One can question whether Balzac's theory of surplus psychic energy represents an improvement on Brillat-Savarin's psychological (and economic) ideas. What matters for our purposes is the way in which it explicitly reconceptualizes a theory of managed consumption as one of managed excess.

The Wine Talking

17. While Baudelaire makes no direct reference to Balzac's treatise, there is good reason for thinking that it served as one source of inspiration for the essay on wine and hashish (and consequently, *Les Paradis artificiels*). First of all, the mocking attack on Brillat-Savarin as a celebrated fool which launches the essay is answered at the conclusion of the same section by a sympathetic evocation of the late-earned success of "our dear and great Balzac," who had died a few months before the essay's publication (379).¹⁴ The juxtaposition of the two figures makes particular sense if we suppose that Baudelaire had the treatise in hand as he was writing, a circumstance all the more possible since they were regularly published together.¹⁵ Secondly, the association of Balzac with "modern stimulants" would have been reinforced by his presence at a hashish soirée in Baudelaire's lodgings in 1845, an occasion recalled by Baudelaire 15 years later in *Les Paradis artificiels* (438-439).¹⁶ Thirdly, and most significantly, the claim by both "On Wine and Hashish" and *Les Paradis artificiels* that drugs throw out of balance the "equation between organs and pleasures" ("Il n'y a plus équation entre les organes et les jouissances" [393, 420]) is closely related to Balzac's thesis in the treatise that "All excess is based on a pleasure that man wishes to repeat beyond the ordinary laws promulgated by nature" (307), a thesis which is explicitly identified by Baudelaire in the essay as the theme of Balzac's *La Peau de chagrin* (393).
18. Whether or not Balzac's treatise exercised any direct influence on Baudelaire's essay, it offers a valuable intermediate case for thinking about the relationship between Brillat-Savarin's writing on food and Baudelaire's writing on drugs, since it shows us the former in the process of becoming the latter. Some perspective on the larger historical context of this process may be gleaned again from Balzac's entry in the *Biographie Universelle*, where he mourns Brillat-Savarin as the representative, not exactly of the ancien régime, but of a class that preserved its memory:

Their pleasures were stamped with that *je ne sais quoi* of that earlier time which conserved

the distinction of manners and ideas, even as our youth forget everything (là où la jeunesse oublie tout); these traditions of elegant pleasure are passing away, and our current ways will not bring them back. It is thus a sad advantage to have known these old men seated astride two centuries, who have taught us all that our own has lost in amiabilities.

The nostalgia of this reflection has the same structure as Balzac's satiric gestures of tribute: it amplifies while repeating a sense of dislocation that already defines the historical situation of Brillat-Savarin, who seeks to adapt courtly distinction of manners—manners that are memories of themselves, even as he acquires them—to the context of a post-revolutionary bourgeois economy. This is the same historical moment that Denise Gigante describes in *Gusto* with a more forward-looking emphasis:

By disseminating upper-class cuisine and etiquette to an enlarged, bourgeois clientele, gastronomers in part help to maintain the elitist social codes of the ancient régime. Yet, the very publication of these taste rules performed a democratizing function, giving the nouveaux riches access to a previously exclusive sphere of cultural distinction and the cultural tools necessary to distinguish themselves with it. (xviii)

19. Yet. . . as Balzac writes in 1835, 1848 is already looming: "la jeunesse oublie tout." Brillat-Savarin preserves the memory of the ancient regime sufficiently to enact some version of its manners. Born at the beginning of the new century, Balzac only preserves the memory of Brillat-Savarin. Born a generation later (though the child of a father who was in fact Brillat-Savarin's exact contemporary), Baudelaire's stake in 1851 is in confronting the bourgeois pretensions to which Balzac retains an ambivalent attachment with claims of equality and difference so radical they simply put out of operation codes of intersubjective differentiation. Thus Baudelaire's "defense" of wine in "On Wine and Hashish" begins by addressing itself to the false feelings of superiority of which Brillat-Savarin has been made the spokesman:

Wine resembles man. We will never know how far it is to be prized or scorned, loved or hated, of how many sublime actions or monstrous crimes it is capable. Let us not then be more cruel towards it than we are towards ourselves, and let us treat it as an equal. (380)

The equating of man and wine, here based on their shared and limitless capacity for both good and evil, is a central theme of the essay. The idea is presented later in similar terms, ". . . I have said that wine is assimilable to man, and have agreed that their crimes are equal to their virtues" (382), and it underlies Baudelaire's subsequent assertion that when a "true doctor-philosopher" appears he will (in implicit contrast to Brillat-Savarin and his "false masterpiece" [378]) "undertake a powerful study of wine, a kind of double psychology in which wine and man will constitute the two terms." Developing the idea yet further, Baudelaire allows that "he would not be surprised should some reasonable minds, seduced by a pantheistic idea, attribute to wine a kind of personality" (387).

20. "Attributing to wine a kind of personality" is in fact precisely what much of the first part of Baudelaire's essay does. Thus, the admonition to "treat wine as our equal" is followed immediately by a prose rendering of the early poem, "L'Âme du vin," an extended prosopopeia in which wine, from within its "prison of glass" addresses to man, in "that voice of spirits which is only heard by spirits" ("cette voix des esprits qui n'est entendue que des esprits"), a "song filled with brotherly love" (380). To understand what happens to the identification of wine with excess in Baudelaire's essay we will need to reflect further on this figuration, which, in recognizing wine as man's equal by conferring on it the power of speech, transgresses a rhetorical limit which shapes both Brillat-Savarin's *Physiology* and Balzac's "Treatise."
21. A consideration of the next section of Baudelaire's essay, this time a prose recasting of "The

Ragpickers' Wine" ("Le Vin des chiffonniers"), can guide us in that reflection, for here again the personification of wine, and more specifically the figure of wine speaking or singing, plays a governing role, though this is not so immediately obvious. Rather than directly attributing the power of human speech to wine, the passage works by implicitly identifying the unfolding in time of the ragpicker's movement and song with the *flow* of inebriation. The ragpicker's song of triumphal progress ("Forward! march! division, head, army![. . .] Now he compliments his army. The battle is won, but the day was heated. He passes on horseback under triumphal arches." [381-2]) as he picks his drunken way at night through the debris of the city's day is not only the *effect* of wine, but the *analogue* of its transformative passage through the individual human body and the collective body of humanity. The underlying analogy approaches explicitness with the concluding sentences of the passage, where the latent figure of the voice of wine also surfaces:

Wine, like a new Pactolus, rolls through languishing humanity an intellectual gold. Like good kings, it rules by serving and sings its exploits through the throat of its subjects.
(382)

22. Wine *flows* like a transformative river,¹⁷ but also and especially it *sings* like a king through a voice that is not its own. Since the appropriated voice of the king's subject is clearly that of the ragpicker, who in playing the part of the beneficent king "swears solemnly that he will make his people happy," the entire passage becomes a different kind of dramatization of "the wine talking."
23. Coming just after the attack on Brillat-Savarin, Baudelaire's initial call for the "equal treatment" of wine seeks to reverse the condition of neglect to which it is consigned in the *Physiology of Taste*, a condition it shares with the ragpicker-king of "Le Vin des chiffonniers," obviously, but also with Hoffman and Balzac, who in Baudelaire's accounting only in their latter days began to enjoy commercial success (379).¹⁸ The underlying analogy is threefold: to consume wine or to abstain from its consumption is to welcome into or exclude from the body politic an outcast which is also to grant or deny representation within a symbolic order.
24. The manner in which Baudelaire's writing brings wine into the field of "medical-philosophical" discourse from which Brillat-Savarin had excluded it, however, goes beyond any metaphor of organic or political integration, for it is precisely because the power of wine always has the potential to exceed itself, for good or evil, that it deserves to be treated as an equal: "We will never know how far it is to be prized or scorned, loved or hated, of how many sublime actions or monstrous crimes it is capable." The prosopoeia does not transfer an attribute, voice, from man to wine, based on some stable common measure or principle of equivalence (of the kind, for example, proposed by Brillat-Savarin's famous fourth aphorism: "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are" [1]). Casting the relationship between wine and man as intersubjective gives rise to an extended series of specular reversals and equivalences summed up in the figure of the king who "rules by serving." But this same substitution by means of prosopoeia of a symmetrical intersubjective relationship for one that is precisely not intersubjective is itself an exorbitant rhetorical imposition.
25. An object-lesson in the production and management of quotidian surplus-value, the discourse of gastronomy, like its pleasures, is constituted by a tendency to excess which, at the same time, it seeks to regulate as an exercise in good taste. Baudelaire's "Essay," like Balzac's "Treatise," exposes that underlying tendency both through stylistic exaggeration and by taking the consumption of excess as an explicit theme. Unlike Balzac, however, whose satiric heightenings, however broad, remain within the limits of what Baudelaire's refers to in "The Essence of Laughter" as "signifying comedy," based on intersubjective relations of superiority and inferiority, Baudelaire's "absolute" or "hyperbolic" comedy, in transgressing those limits, holds up to the prosaic discourse of gastronomy a phantasmagoric, poeticizing, mirror in which the voice of the other talks back.

Notes

¹ Cf. Barthes's observation that ". . . *gastronomic* perversion, as described by B.-S. (and on the whole it could hardly be described better), always implies a kind of affable and accommodating acknowledgement which never departs from the tone of *good breeding*" (252).

² The full title in French is *Physiologie du goût: ou méditations de gastronomie transcendante*. Except where the French is self-explanatory, I will cite in translation, while occasionally providing the original text in a footnote or, for very brief quotations, in parentheses. With the exception of Howard's translation of Barthes, all translations are my own.

³ The passage to which Baudelaire refers actually reads as follow, "Wine, the most lovable of drinks, whether we owe it to Noah, who planted the vine, or to Bacchus, who pressed the juice of the grape, dates from the infancy of the world" (126). The suppressed phrase, "qui planta la vigne" is biblical, "Et Noé planta la vigne et connut l'ivresse," Baudelaire's "citation" accentuates the patriarchal note and flattens out everything else.

⁴ Though it is also the case that Brillat-Savarin's reserve on the subject was in some ways characteristic of the gastronomic writing of the period. As Denise Gigante observes in *Gusto*, "Despite the emphasis on wine connoisseurship in gourmet circles today, wine and other psirituous liquors came second to food in nineteenth-century gastronomy. Intoxication was thought to dull the sensibility and lessen the capacity to exercise discernment. . . Modern gastronomy rises or falls by moderation, and all writers in this tradition insist on temperance as a key to good taste" (25). As will be seen, my argument, at least in part, is that the gastronome *indulges* in gustatory discernment, making of his show of temperance a screen.

⁵ The *Dictionnaire de l'académie française* of 1832-35 defines "*gourmand*," in the first instance, as an adjective with a substantive employment signifying "*Qui mange avec avidité et excès*" ("[one] who eats avidly and in excès"). The gastronomic sense is secondary, "Il se dit queslquefois pour *Gastronome*." ("Sometimes used for *Gastronome*.") "*Gourmandise*" is defined exclusively as: "Vice de celui que est *gourmand*" ("the vice of one who is a *gourmand*"), one source no doubt, of Brillat-Savarin's complaint.

⁶ "J'ai parcouru les dictionnaires au mot *Gourmandise*, et je n'ai été point satisfait de ce que j'y ai trouvé. C n'est qu'une confusion perpetuelle de la *gourmandise* proprement dite avec la *gloutonnerie* et la *voracité*: d'où j'ai conclu que les lexicographes, quoique très-estimables d'ailleurs, ne sont pas de ces savants aimables qui embouchent avec grace une aile de perdrix au suprême pour l'arroser, le petit doigt en l'air, d'un verre de vin de Laffitte ou de clos Vougeout.

"Ils ont oublié, complètement oublié, la *gourmandise* sociale, qui réunit l'élégance athénienne, le luxe romaine et la délicatesse française, qui dispose avec sagacité, fait exécuter savamment, savoure avec énergie, et juge avec profondeur[. . .]" (130).

⁷ The proverbial expression "*Epicuri de grege*" means "of the herd of Epicurus." The unspoken "*sad spondee*" is "*porcum*." The "*hemistich*" occurs at the end of Horace's epistle to Albius Tibullus:

me pingueum et nitidum bene curate cute vises,
cum ridere voles, *Epicuri de grege porcum*.

(As for me, when you want a laugh, you will find me in fine fettle, fat and sleek, a hog from Epicurus's herd)

⁸ An earlier working title had been "Physiologie des excès modernes" (Fortassier 979).

⁹ Philippe Dubois offers a detailed discussion of the publication history in his valuable recent article, "Savarin/Balzac: Du gout des excitants sur l'écriture moderne." Dubois' more general argument is that the connection between the two texts was important in establishing the literary value of gastronomic discourse and the scientific value of novelistic discourse: "The close ties which are going to unite the "Treatise on Modern Stimulants" and the *Physiology of Taste* from this point on will bring a certain literary legitimation to the emergence of a new gastronomic discourse, while extending to the novellistic the scientific covering of a physiology it needs to establish itself as a genre" (76).

¹⁰ Thus, according to Gortassier (explaining why the treatise was published as an appendix rather than a preface), "in [Balzac's] mind, the 'Treatise on Modern Stimulants' is a complement to the *Physiology of Taste*, since Balzac addresses there material that Brillat-Savarin hadn't treated. The text thus quite logically ought to follow that the *Physiology of Taste*" (982). My argument, in part, is that the subject matter of the "Treatise" upsets the balance of Brillat-Savarin's project.

¹¹ Though they may serve other purposes. Thus Balzac devotes the most famous passages of the essay to instructions for the preparation of coffee, which he drank on a nightly basis in staggering quantities as an essential part of his writing regimen. This fact alone summarizes the exorbitant economy in Balzac which links together writing and excessive consumption.

¹² Le goût, qui a pour excitateurs l'appétit, le faim, et le soif, est la base de plusieurs operations dont le résultat est que l'individu croît, se développe, se conserve et répare les pertes causées par les evaporations vitales" (25).

¹³ In French the last sentence reads, "Les savants ne mordront point sur cette formule."

¹⁴ V. Robb, 238 ff.

¹⁵ Balzac's treatise was only published separately from the *Physiology* in 1855. While other editions of the *Physiology* did exist, Charpentier's had been reprinted frequently, most recently in 1847.

¹⁶ V. Claude Pichois;' detailed note, OC 1382-3.

¹⁷ The Sutter's Creek of antiquity, the Pactolus was according to myth where King Midas washed away his golden touch.

¹⁸ A commercial success marked in Hoffman's case by the gifts of wine with which his publishers accompanied payment (379).

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