Making Sense of Taste

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Food & Philosophy

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for David, Chris, and Jonathan

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especially trained. This is both the pleasure and the risk of interdisciplinary work. I have relied on friends and colleagues to flag missteps when I ventured beyond the edges of philosophy, and if errors remain, they are my own.

I dedicate this book to my husband, David, and our sons, Chris and Jonathan.

C. K.

Buffalo, New York

Making Sense of Taste

Introduction

This book is a philosophical investigation of the sense of taste. Usually when a philosopher addresses this subject, discussion moves rapidly to issues of aesthetic discrimination regarding objects of art and to questions about relative preference and standards for artistic judgments. But it is literal taste—that is, the kind that takes place in the mouth—that is the focus of my interest. The literal sense of taste has rarely caught the attention of philosophers except insofar as it provides the metaphor for aesthetic sensitivity. If this sense in its gustatory role is considered at all, it is only briefly, often to be dismissed as unworthy of extended examination. I intend to dispute this presumption and argue on behalf of the experiences availed by the sense of taste and its familiar but little-understood operations.

As with any functioning sense, we exercise taste daily. It affords intense and immediate sensation, and thus it can be pursued for escape, relaxation, and pleasure. This very pleasure, however, is often cause for misgiving. Not only may taste enjoyments be tempting and diverting, but tastes can be indulged, abused, depraved, and even perverted. Philosophers have generally concurred that pursuit of taste for pleasure alone seems an unfit preoccupation for a being whose higher capacities require the efforts of rationality. Moreover, it seems a frivolous pursuit permitted only a leisured few: those who have plenty to eat and to drink. For eating is a physical necessity; its privation brings death. So closely are taste and eating tied to the necessities of existence that taste is frequently cataloged as one of the lower functions of sense perception, operating on a primitive, near instinctual level. Taste is associated with appetite, a basic drive that propels us to eat and drink. Its role in sheer animal existence is one of the factors that has contributed to its standard neglect as a subject of philosophical inquiry.

By long tradition, philosophers have assumed that this sense affords little of theoretical interest. Too closely identified with the body and our animal nature, it seems not to figure in the exploration of rationality or the development of knowledge. Therefore taste is omitted from epistemology's discussions of sense perception, in striking contrast to vision, which receives a great deal of attention for its delivery of information about the world. Most ethical theories assume that taste presents base

temptations that in a moral life must be controlled. Although aesthetics exploits the metaphor of taste in theories of aesthetic perception and evaluation, the variety of preferences observable in taste choices have long served as a paradigm for subjective relativity that resists systematic understanding. "De gustibus non est disputandum," as the saying goes: "There's no disputing about taste." Of that which we cannot dispute, we also apparently cannot philosophize. Philosophers have interpreted taste preferences as idiosyncratic, private, and resistant to standards. What is more, they have not considered taste sufficiently important to worry about or to delve into very deeply. I intend to look closely at the way taste has been understood—and misunderstood—in the Western intellectual tradition. The common assumption that taste presents no interesting philosophical problems is a deep-seated error that banishes a potentially fascinating subject from the scope of philosophical inquiry.

Because as a rule what is tasted is eaten or drunk, this book is also an investigation of the objects of taste and of the activity of their consumption. We cannot fully understand the character and importance of the sense of taste unless we also consider what is tasted and the circumstances that surround the exercise of this sense. Taste, food and drink, and eating and drinking—the sense, its objects, its activities—are too complex to be considered from any single perspective, and in the course of this book I shall make use of the discoveries of both laboratory and field scientists, as well as investigate what can be learned about food from the roles it serves in visual and narrative arts. Though I shall explore ideas from a variety of disciplines, my method and focus remain philosophical. Not only does the history of philosophy harbor the roots of the way we think about taste, but established philosophical concepts concerning the senses continue to shape our understanding of taste, food and drink, and their governing appetites.

Since classical antiquity, studies of human perception have noted five external senses through which the mind receives information about the world: vision, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. The foundational texts of Western philosophy consistently rank these senses in a hierarchy of importance. Vision comes first because it is the sense considered to have the greatest significance for the development of knowledge. Though it is followed closely in the hierarchy by hearing, sight receives far and away the most attention in philosophical studies of perception. (Indeed, the very word "perception" can connote visual perception alone.) The remaining three senses, smell, taste, and touch, are treated more briefly, and the order of their importance varies according to which aspect of sense is stressed. If the role of sense in learning about the world is in question, then touch is usually seen as cooperating with the cognitive operations of vision. If the role of the senses in the development of moral behavior is under scrutiny, then both touch and taste figure as the senses that require the most control, since they can deliver pleasures that tempt one to indulge in the appetites of eating, drinking, and sex. Pleasure and pain are intimately,

sometimes inescapably, connected with the sensations delivered by taste, smell, and touch, making these senses a cause for concern because of the seductive diversions they represent.

Philosophers who study perception have concluded that the cognitive developments made possible by sight and hearing are so superior to the other senses that both may be labeled the "cognitive" or "intellectual" senses—or in short, the "higher" senses. They provide more of the sensory information necessary for the exercise of the rational faculties, and they permit the development and communication of human knowledge. Vision and hearing are senses that are less involved with the experience of pleasure and pain in their exercise and thus appear comparatively detached from experiences that are phenomenally subjective—that is, that are felt as sensations in the body. One sees a cat at a distance, not in one's eyeballs; its meow is perceived as coming from the cat. But one pats its fur and feels the softness in the tips of one's own fingers. Similarly, though odorous objects may be at a distance, smell is experienced in the body's olfactory passages. Taste requires perhaps the most intimate congress with the object of perception, which must enter the mouth, and which delivers sensations experienced in the mouth and throat on its way down and through the digestive track. The degree to which the body is experienced as involved in the operation of the senses contributes to the value assigned their objects. Sometimes we develop artifacts for delight of the eyes and of the ears that achieve the status of works of art; objects of the other senses are valued more for sensuous pleasure, such as the enjoyment of perfumes or of food and drink. For this reason, only vision and hearing are traditionally considered genuine aesthetic senses. In short, taste, touch, and smell constitute the "bodily" senses, a station that also merits the designation "lower" senses.

For all the theoretical disdain directed at taste on the part of philosophers, it affords experiences that have inspired others to sing its praises. Writing about food is so extensive that it constitutes a virtual genre of its own, including not only recipe books but also extended encomia to eating, its purposes, and its pleasures. Clearly, the caution prescribed by moral philosophy does not appeal to everyone. What is more, this writing is not merely in praise of taste pleasures, for it also takes seriously the preparation, serving, and function of food. It implicitly acknowledges what social scientists bring to light in their research: the fact that eating is an activity we freight with significance considerably beyond either the pleasures it affords or the nutritional sustenance it provides. It is an intimate part of hospitality, ceremony, and rituals religious and civic. What features of taste and eating dispose foods to be employed in these ways? Answering this question will reveal common threads between foods and cultural products customarily given greater esteem: works of art.

Although my special interest is the sense of taste, a focus on taste requires attention to the other lower senses as well. In modern (though not ancient) science, smell

is linked with taste as one of the chemical senses, and indeed it is virtually impossible to conceive of a full-fledged taste sensation that does not have an olfactory component. This coordination has led some researchers to consider taste and smell together as a single sensory operation, but we need not stop there. Touch nearly always accompanies the sensation of taste, especially if one extends tasting beyond the isolations of laboratory experimentation and considers actual eating, including biting, chewing, and swallowing. Therefore an emphasis on taste will include at least selective consideration of the other bodily senses as well. Indeed, all five senses contribute to some particularly rich eating experiences.

I start from the assumption that eating, food, and drink—and by extension the tastes of ingested substances—do indeed have an importance in life that invites philosophical investigation, whether one speaks of individual experiences of eating or of social patterns of behavior. To reveal the character of this "importance" I shall skirt the usual consideration of the sheer enjoyment of the sensations of tastes, even though most advocates of taste and of eating have standardly concentrated attention on the pleasures of the table and the development of sophisticated cuisines. Despite the undeniable appeal of gustatory pleasures, however, emphasis on this aspect of taste will not reveal what is of greatest philosophical salience for this sense and its objects: namely, tastes convey meaning and hence have a cognitive dimension that is often overlooked. Foods are employed in symbolic systems that extend from the ritual ceremonies of religion to the everyday choice of breakfast. Perhaps most obviously, eating is an activity with intense social meaning for communities large and small. A study of taste and its proper activities thus takes us into territory involving perception and cognition, symbolic function and social values. I believe that the values and meanings of tastes, foods, and eating are all around us and are readily revealed by reflection upon life, practices, and habits. A nascent philosophy of taste and of food is, as it were, already under our noses, to borrow an image from a kindred sense modality. I hope to clear promising paths along which a robust understanding of these subjects may be discovered.

The branch of philosophy that is potentially the most inviting to a theoretical understanding of taste, food, and eating is aesthetics and philosophy of art, partly because the sense of taste has long provided a provocative comparison for theories of aesthetic perception and discrimination of artistic qualities, and also because of certain parallels between food preparation and artistic creativity. Therefore, my chief frame of analysis is derived from this area of philosophy. Additionally, I consider the contributions to the understanding of taste available from disciplines such as psychology and anthropology, fields that have provided empirical understanding of taste by studying, respectively, the physical operation of the sense and the development of cuisines and eating patterns across the globe. The multiple meanings assigned to foods in visual art furnish further evidence of its aesthetic import, as do literary narratives that reflect upon the values manifest in appetite, eating, and food.

I begin by considering the reasons why the senses have been classified into higher and lower orders. In the first two chapters I examine the traditional grounds that support a distinction between intellectual and bodily senses and investigate the conceptual systems that justify and perpetuate this way of thinking. It is an excursion into some of the originary texts of Western philosophy which, in spite of the intervening centuries, continue to exercise influence over our thought because of the power they have wielded to determine issues of philosophical interest and to organize inquiry according to a recognized set of questions. Chapter 1, "The Hierarchy of the Senses," opens with a discussion of the influential writings of Plato and Aristotle, for both these giants of Greek philosophy offer an early categorization that distinguishes between the distance senses of vision and hearing and the bodily senses of smell, taste, and touch. Examining these philosophies reveals an elaborate system of values supporting a hierarchy of the senses within which one can also discover a marked gender dimension, for the higher senses turn out to be those the exercise of which develops "masculine" traits and virtues. Here we see at work a conception of philosophy itself that has precluded serious attention to taste and to the other bodily senses, in part because they have been lumped into a category of "the feminine" that traditionally has never contained much of interest to philosophers. In spite of the passage of two millennia, the terms establishing philosophical investigation that we see in ancient theories still cling tenaciously to contemporary ways of thinking and account in large part for philosophers' continued neglect of taste. Attention to gender recurs from time to time throughout my discussion, especially as the question of appetite arises, for appetite is often conceived as a twin drive for food and for sex.

Eighteenth-century theorists developed "philosophies of taste," theories of the perception and appreciation of beauty that form the foundation for contemporary philosophies of art and aesthetic value. These are the subjects of Chapter 2, "Philosophies of Taste: Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic Senses." The literature about aesthetic taste and perception again concentrates on two senses: vision and hearing. Despite the parallels between literal and aesthetic taste that prompted the choice of this sense as a metaphor for the perception of beauty, gustatory taste is expelled from formative theories of aesthetic taste such as Kant's. Taste is also excluded from among the senses that have arts as their objects. Philosophers such as Hegel articulated concepts of fine art that elevate the "arts of the eyes and ears" above the activities of the bodily senses. At the same time, the concept of aesthetic taste continues to exploit parallels with gustatory tasting to refine the notion of aesthetic discrimination. (It is interesting to note that taste serves as an aesthetic metaphor not only in European theories but also in the much longer tradition of Indian aesthetics.) Certain features of gustatory taste dispose it to comparison with aesthetic discrimination, such as the immediacy of pleasure or displeasure (dis-gust) attending experience. Paradoxically, this same feature also distances literal taste from aesthetic

discrimination because of the ties of the former to sensuous, bodily pleasure. There is thus an abiding tension in aesthetic theories between the idea of taste as a sense pleasure and taste as a discriminative capability: fine discernment is accomplished by means of the pleasure, yet the pleasure itself is too sensuous to count as aesthetic. I argue that while the tension between aesthetic and gustatory taste reveals differences between arts and foods, the tenacity and aptness of this aesthetic metaphor indicates the tremendous complexity and subtlety of the literal sense of taste and the vivacity and power latent in the bodily intimacy of this sense.

The neurochemistry of the sense of taste, mysterious until recently, is now understood in greater detail thanks to research on the part of psychologists and physiologists, whose work is reviewed in Chapter 3, "The Science of Taste." Though even scientific studies of taste have been influenced by presumptions about the hierarchy of the senses, this research provides empirical evidence for the discriminative capacities of taste and for constants and variables in its development. After presenting a sketch of how the sense of taste functions, I consider several common disparagements often directed against the acuity of this sense, including the claims that smell is the actual contributor to gustatory enjoyment, that there are really only four basic tastes, and that taste and smell are "primitive" senses. The latter charge is countered by evidence documented by sociologists and anthropologists, who have devoted much attention to the phenomena of eating and food preparation. If tastes were simply "natural," they should not vary any more than does binocular vision. But food practices and attendant taste preferences exhibit strikingly different patterns in different societies. Cross-cultural studies provide additional evidence that taste, far from being simply a natural receptivity, in fact varies in the scope of its exercise and its preferences across the globe, evidence that is inconsistent with the standard philosophical assumption that food and taste do not occasion interesting theoretical questions about the relativity and objectivity of perception. One such question examined here concerns what we might call the phenomenology of taste. I analyze the multiple components—physiological, cultural, and individual—that contribute to taste experiences. Once the components of taste are outlined, I reassess the traditional claim that this sense is too "subjective" to admit rational deliberation, criterial assessment, or philosophical theorizing.

Our understanding of the sense of taste is complete only if the full context of its exercise is taken into account. The next chapters turn attention to the objects of taste: food and drink and the circumstances of their consumption. I investigate the nature of the aesthetic value of food and of the experiences that taste provides. By "aesthetic value" I intend something of far greater scope than the usual meaning of "tastes really good" that generally attaches to the advocacy of sophisticated eating. In Chapter 4, "The Meaning of Taste and the Taste of Meaning," I argue for a cognitivist view of the aesthetic—that is, a position that holds that the appreciation of works of art and similar objects requires a certain understanding and insight that constitute

aspects of the pleasures they deliver. Food, if valued at all in aesthetic terms, is usually regarded only as a gourmet item of particular delectability. I acknowledge the powerful sensory pleasure of eating and the refined discrimination that can be developed for food and drink. As sole foundation, however, these are meager grounds on which to establish aesthetic features of tasting and eating, especially in comparison with the symbolic significance that foods and their consumption achieve. These cognitive dimensions are what actually make foods most comparable to works of art. Foods qualify as symbolic and meaningful in a host of ways, for they are representational and expressive. These functions are exploited in some of the most important social rituals, such as religious ceremonies and commemorative occasions, and we can also see their operation in the common and familiar acts of eating we engage in every day. I adapt Nelson Goodman's theory of the symbols that operate in art in support of this contention, for I claim that food (while not art itself) performs many of the same symbolic activities as works of art.[1] This enterprise is designed not to slight the pleasures of eating but to pull sensation and sense pleasures more fully into the purview of aesthetics by claiming that the pleasure they deliver is often an enhancement or even a component of their cognitive significance.

Further exploration of the cognitive dimensions—the systems of signification or meaning-making—of food are continued in the final two chapters. We can discover many of the meanings attached to tastes and foods by considering how these subjects are represented in art. Artistic renderings permit discovery of yet more dimensions of meaning that food and eating can attain, although these meanings may be only implicit in everyday practice, since the artistic presentation of taste, food, and eating often exceeds what is practical or even tolerable in acts of actual eating and food preparation. The focus of investigation now moves from philosophical texts to two venues of art: visual art, especially painting, and narratives. Chapter 5, "The Visual Appetite: Representing Taste and Food," surveys depictions of the senses and of foods and eating in visual art, where pictures indicate the potential for foods and flavors to assume an enormous diversity of meanings. The values of the sense hierarchy itself enter into the systems of signification that are reflected upon and explored in the depiction of food and, perhaps especially, of appetite, in which representations of gustatory and sexual desires impart complex gender meanings to visual art. However instinctually driven, eating and sex are activities that are inflected with social meaning. What is exploited as an apparently natural connection becomes far more than that, for both sorts of appetite are not only culturally coded but elastic in the meanings they take on in artistic renderings.

We find in paintings devoted to matters of the kitchen and the table an echo of the sense hierarchy that has demoted the sense of taste to a mere bodily necessity.

[1] Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976) and *Ways of Worldmaking* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1978).

Just as taste has been considered a "low" sense, so has the class of painting dedicated to depicting subjects such as foods—the genre known as still life—been designated a lesser form of painting among theorists of art. The history of art contains a continuous denigration of still life for being preoccupied with mundane and trivial subjects. This low esteem derives in part from the value accorded so-called history painting, which features heroic, dramatic stories and events rather than matters pertaining to everyday life. By contrast, still life painting, with its laden tables and kitchen detritus, seems to concern only mundane, everyday affairs. The art historian Norman Bryson argues against the detractors of still life on behalf of the serious moral insight and artistic profundity of that genre. Far from being occupied with trivial subject matter, he asserts, the repetitive world of necessity and bodily maintenance represented in still life is a reminder of values often denied by the more heroic concepts of art: the leveling effects of time and mortality.[2] This reclamation of value for still life painting suggests an instructive parallel for insertion of taste into philosophy. For similarly, the exercise of the bodily senses reminds us of mortal, quotidian aspects of life that have traditionally been deemed unworthy of philosophical attention.

But we may go even further, and I shall claim that the immense complexity and variety with which matters pertaining to food and to appetite have been represented in art betoken the depth and flexibility of meaning that these phenomena acquire. The depiction of food in art extends from the base and gross to the most profound spiritual dimensions, and images of foods range from the decorative to the horrible. Artists have employed foodstuffs in contexts sacred and profane; to whet appetite and to keep it at bay; to immerse the viewer in a lusty sensuousness and to catch us unawares with reminders of mortality; to tempt and to sicken. Depicted foods may lead the mind to God or to sensuous indulgence. They may mimic real meals and stun us with their illusory charm, or they may be so abstracted from actual eating as to appeal to the intellect alone. Granted, one must be cautious while navigating the similarities and differences between actual and depicted foods; nevertheless, the presence of such profusion of meanings in visual art testifies to the elasticity and richness of the roles of food and eating in our lives.

I stated earlier that the values of taste, of food, and of eating are evident all around us, whether in daily routines whereby appetite is satisfied, in customs of hospitality, or in ritual acts of commemoration. To explore this observation more deeply, in the final chapter I turn to narratives in which eating has a particular meaning, narratives that distill the messy complexities of life into stories. This method has been adopted usefully by many philosophers, especially by those inclined to explore

[2] Norman Bryson, *Looking at the Overlooked* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).

the particularities of ethical situations.[3] I find that it offers much scope for considering the values and meanings to be found in eating, though to be sure, not all those values are pleasant or easy to confront. One of the most significant roles of food is social: eating is part of the rituals, ceremonies, and practices that knit together communities. This process takes place over time, and the temporality of a narrative, whether written, dramatic, or cinematic, permits extended reflection upon the ways eating serves (or severs) communities. Because of their narrative form, stories lead the reader imaginatively to a discovery availed through a taste, an act of eating, or a reflection upon food.

This exploration begins by continuing a theme raised at the end of Chapter 5: the horrible, disgusting, and brutal aspects of eating. While eating is often praised for its role in hospitality and formation of community, the sustenance of social bonds through shared eating occurs against a backdrop of disturbing moral significance, for eating consumes its objects and appetite is a drive that must destroy in order to be appeased—a fact that Herman Melville elevates to a moral problematic in *Moby Dick*. The brutish and even predatory aspects of eating are dramatically demonstrated with Stubb's macabre feast, as the second mate of the *Pequod* competes with sharks for the best cut of whale.

More positively, and perhaps also more frequently, one finds narratives that portray the role of foods as components of civility, community, and friendship, though even these positive values, seemingly remote from Stubb's savage appetite, presume the destructive necessities he relishes. A story such as Isak Dinesen's "Babette's Feast," for example, explores the fellowship that a meal can provide, using the delectable flavors of haute cuisine as a gateway to heightened awareness of love and divine kinship in a religious community and refuting with gentle comedy the fear of bodily pleasures that permeates the sect's doctrine. A related example is the dinner party that is the centerpiece of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. The dinner party unifies, however temporarily, the affections and interests of the disparate characters and the scattered pieces of experience that would be but a jumble of sequential episodes were it not for the structure with which such a meal frames experience and memory. These and other narratives of eating, both literary and cinematic, will be used to explore the ethical and social dimensions of taste and its objects and to complete the picture of the philosophical significance that food achieves.

In effect, this book falls into three sections. The first two chapters review and analyze the historical roots of the sense hierarchy and the reasons why the sense of taste has a dubious, even disreputable standing in philosophy, reasons that have been hugely influential in the popular ways in which the bodily senses and their

[3] For example, Martha Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) and *Poetic Justice* (Boston: Beacon, 1995).

pleasures are regarded. The middle two chapters begin to repair this account of taste by reviewing how the sense actually functions and the factors that come into play with the development of food preferences and practices. Here I mount a brief for a "philosophy of food" that defends the aesthetic character of taste and eating and draws parallels between foods and arts in terms of their symbolic, cognitive functions. Having established grounds for understanding the meanings and uses of tastes and foods, in the final two chapters I pursue certain examples of art to deepen the case made earlier and to indicate the breadth and profundity of meanings that all the phenomena of eating attain. It is a demonstration of the complex world of taste and food and eating, of the meanings that we take into ourselves daily. While the middle two chapters dispute the traditional ranking of the senses and argue that taste fully qualifies as a cognitive sense of aesthetic significance, the sense hierarchy cannot simply be criticized and dismissed, for it is ingrained in the deepest conceptual frameworks with which we organize sense experience. Indeed, some of the meanings of eating depend on the hierarchy itself. The last two chapters acknowledge its influence and the ways in which its values are incorporated into the representation of foods and appetites.

Recent years have witnessed a period of revaluation of the discipline of philosophy and its traditional assumptions, and this book takes a place with others that now question the reliance of Western philosophies on the distal sense of sight and models of detachment and objectivity to characterize the ideal relationship of the perceiver to the object of perception.[4] Many philosophers have begun to turn away from their discipline's venerable preoccupation with the "mind" over the "body" and with matters of universal concern over particular experiences. Attention to the bodily bases of experience not only provides balance to the traditional preoccupation with reason and the mind that has characterized philosophy, it also quickens awareness of physical being itself. Consideration of foods and of eating, I believe, is ripe for contribution to this intellectual direction and to an increased understanding of the roles of bodily experience in knowledge, valuation, and aesthetic encounters. The experience of tasting takes us to the most intimate regions of these phenomena.

[4] Indeed, as Martin Jay has remarked, an entire generation of French philosophy can be regarded as such a critique: *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993).

CHAPTER 1

The Hierarchy of the Senses

The tradition that ranks the sense of taste as among the lowlier attributes of human beings has roots that run long and deep into the history of philosophy. Plato and Aristotle not only laid down some of the major alternatives for philosophical thinking but helped to determine the grounds on which an issue should be considered worthy of philosophical consideration at all. The sense of taste is among those subjects that have received only cursory theoretical attention on the part of philosophers. Even in earlier times when philosophy and science were indistinguishable, taste and its cousin smell were given short shrift in comparison with the "higher" senses, especially vision. This relative neglect is especially noticeable in investigations of the abilities that represent the highest achievement of human effort: knowledge, morals, and art. Taste is early placed on the margins of the perceptual means by which knowledge is achieved; its indulgence must be avoided in the development of moral character; and it perceives neither objects of beauty nor works of art. I hope to correct some of these judgments by pointing out that philosophical investigations have by and large overlooked the significance that taste and the related activities of eating and drinking actually (and sometimes rather obviously) have. The first step in this direction is to discover the origin of the conceptual frameworks that distort our understandings of these subjects.

I begin therefore by considering some of the early philosophies that examine the senses. As is the case with so many issues in the Western philosophical tradition, Plato and Aristotle are a good place to begin, not only because of their remarkable influence on subsequent philosophy but also because both left fully developed philosophies of value that underwrite the hierarchical ranking of the senses and partially account for its persistence.[1] We shall see not only how a hierarchy among the senses is early determined but also how it has helped to select the standard content of philosophy altogether, leaving taste and its bodily kin largely out of range of the philosopher's eye.

[1] This remains the case even though we are today less confident of generalizations such as that of the Grecophile Bruno Snell, who declares approvingly that "European thinking begins with the Greeks": *The Discovery of Mind: The Greek Origin of European Thought* (1948), trans. T. G. Rosenmeyer (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), p. vii.