

HISTORICAL SCIENCES

CULINARY EDUCATION IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

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By the second half of the 19th century, the teaching of the culinary art in the Russian Empire took place in several ways. The first and the most widespread method spread in the kitchens of peasant huts and houses (after all, the population of the poorest class in the Empire was in the majority). We can hardly speak here about the real training, though, but female relatives (mothers / aunts / grandmothers) taught little girls starting from 3 years old to do the housework and cook. They taught children ancient recipes that were passed down from generation to generation and were familiar within the area of their residence. From time to time, such a traditional, folk cuisine was also «shocked» by the appearance of new products that pushed the cuisine to a new, higher level, because it was the new products that set the motion for the development of folk dishes. Meanwhile, such a girl grew older and went to work as a cook in the house of middle-class people, for instance, to the family of a doctor or a merchant.

The second way of training took place in the kitchens of the noble estates. Young men-servants were assigned to the assistance or apprenticeship of the family's cooks, who, as a rule, were foreigners, especially in the capital city of St Petersburg. The French and German chefs would train a lot of disciples that led to the fact that by the end of the 19th century the majority of restaurant and tavern cooks in the capital city and the province were not foreigners, but their former assistants, or even the disciples of their assistants [2, p. 87].

The life of the court chef, a member of the Paris Culinary Association Fyodor Andreevich Zeest (1855–1945) is considered a unique history of teaching the culinary art. He was the son of the famous Petersburg restaurateur A. Zeest. At the age of 12, Fyodor became a chef apprentice at the Dusseau restaurant, which belonged to the chief maître d'of Emperor Alexander II, Charles Vavasser. At the age of 17, he became the main assistant of the Italian chef in the kitchen of the Yacht Club, and later he served as a soup cook in the Donon restaurant of the famous chef S.D. Eremeev. He studied haute cuisine with Hippolyte Fouquet, pastry art

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with Jules Guffe. In 1879, he became a chef without a salary to study with the eminent Louis Bignon (Paris), where after a while he became the head chef of the night shift. After a while he became the chef of the Duke of Leuchtenberg [3]. Zeest is the author of the famous work «The influence of French culinary art on Russian cuisine» (1897), as well as of a number of articles in the magazine «Our food» edited by Kanshin. Obviously that Fyodor Zeest who had such a unique and rich culinary experience, was eager to propagate his art and increase the number of followers. Therefore, he became one of the initiators of the dissemination of culinary knowledge in the empire, made a huge contribution to the organization and work of the first culinary school in St Petersburg (1888) and the first culinary courses (1894), for which he developed a special methodology for conducting practical culinary classes [3].

In the second half of the 19th century, educational activities in the field of culinary art underwent great changes. In Europe, the first culinary school appeared in the 19th century (England). Following this example and due to the activities of the enlighteners I.A. Andrievsky, D.V. Kanshin, F. Zeest, the doors of the first culinary school in the Russian Empire were opened in St. Petersburg on March 25, 1888. The idea of its establishing appeared in 1885, but during three years the St Petersburg mayor did not give consent to the opening of such an institution. Leading scholars of that time spoke at the school with educational lectures on healthy nutrition for both students and ordinary citizens.

It is essential to notify that both males and females could attend the culinary school. Pelageya Pavlovna Aleksandrova took the chance to become a certified culinary specialist. She completed a course at cookery school and began working at a new culinary school in St Petersburg, which was the First Practical School of Housekeeping in St Petersburg, opened in 1893 by Vera Ivanovna Gunst. She worked with F. Zeest and the owner of the pate shop L.K. Astafiev. Having received sufficient culinary training, Pelageya Pavlovna started writing articles on the topics of various dinners, with full explanations and calculations that were compiled on the basis of her lectures. The articles were regularly printed in St Petersburg journals edited by publishing houses of S. Muller and I. Bogelman. From 1894 to 1896, her work was also published in the magazine «Our Food» [4]. In addition, from 1894 to 1895, Aleksandrova lectured to the students of the Imperial Women's Patriotic Society as part of the «Practical Courses of Culinary Arts». In 1897, the world saw her great work, that is the first culinary textbook in the Empire, which was called «Guide to the Study of the Basics of the Culinary Arts» and contained 792 pages. In 1899, its supplemented version was released, which was called «Practical Foundations of Culinary Arts». The textbook rapidly became extremely popular among the culinary schools and courses, and had

11 reprints. Also, Pelageya Pavlovna wrote research articles and books subjected on vegetarianism, military food and so on. Since 1902, she signed her works as Aleksandrova-Ignatieva after she had married with one of the ideological organizers and lecturers of the culinary school of Vera Ivanovna Gunst, a court counselor and city veterinarian of St Petersburg, the founder of the unique meat pathological museum, director of the First Practical School of Veterinary Arts and Home Science Mikhail Aleksandrovich Ignatiev.

The first practical school of culinary art in St Petersburg organized by Vera Gunst was truly unique, not only because its founder and director was a woman, but also because its teaching staff was considered best. Fyodor Zeest, together with the sculptor-artist F. Schmidt, developed a collection of dummies of semi-finished products and dishes for a special method of conducting practical classes. (By the way, he had been using this technique in other culinary courses since 1894.) Also, Pelageya Aleksandrova wrote the first culinary textbooks in the Empire; Vera Ivanovna Gunst authored a number of progressive at that time educational materials on home economics and cooking, which were widely used at the school; Mikhail Ignatiev lectured on meat, and mademoiselle Adel Vatel, Alexander Rumyantsev, Evdokia Rodionova, Pavel Velesov conducted practical classes. Famous restaurateurs, chefs and scholars were invited to lecture there. Besides, the school had a free canteen for the poor that was called «Polish» and was located in Zimin pereulok 4, in Petersburg.

The Gunst school, opened in 1893, had worked until the October revolution happened in 1917, without any changes in the teaching staff. After the revolution, the school became the property of the state. But, despite the regime, Vera Gunst became the director of the First Soviet practical courses in cooking and home economics. The «school» status had been simplified to the level of the courses. Pelageya Aleksandrova continued working there after the revolution as it was claimed by Vera Gunst in 1927: thus, she had been teaching at school for almost thirty years since its opening [4]. Gunst's cooking classes, thus, are an example of one of the first successful women's businesses in the Russian Empire, and she herself is an outstanding female educator of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Society gradually, but very slowly, moved away from the idea that «if a woman cooks, it is her routine duty, she is a grumpy cook from a poor family; and if a man cooks, it is an art, especially if the cook is a foreigner, and his dishes can only be enjoyed by rich people». As mentioned above, in the last decade of the 19th century, cooking courses were taught at the Imperial Women's Society, which was also run by a female, Pelageya Aleksandrova.

In 1894, the first practical school for cooks was opened in Moscow, where the majority of students were females. This was a «complete collapse» in the

eyes of its founders, that is the Russian Society for the Protection of Public Health, who criticized the fact that a serious cook school (that is, supposed for males) had turned into a school for housewives. Because of the female contingent, they did not convert the culinary school into a «nutrition academy» and a «diet laboratory», as it had been planned on the eve of its opening. The period of study lasted for 64 days. The curriculum included 40 hours of theory: lectures on adaptation (15 hrs), hygiene (10 hrs), meat science (6 hrs), milk study (3 hrs), nutritional physiology (3 hrs), equipment (3 hrs), and practical classes: 31 soup dishes, 41 main courses, 32 sweet pastry dishes [1]. Two years later, in 1896, such schools were opened in Warsaw, Tiflis (Tbilisi), Odessa, Yekaterinoslav (Dnipro), Saratov, and Tomsk [5]. Although they did not meet all the high expectations of the founders, they made a great contribution to the dissemination of culinary and health knowledge throughout the empire.

As a consequence of development of factories, manufactories, and industries, and the invention of helpful equipment at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, many more culinary schools were organized. Some of them prepared specialists for factories, and the training course lasted for over two or three years. There was an immense growth of educational literature either.

All the things considered, since the middle of the 19th centuries, culinary enlighteners actively studied new ideas and disseminated knowledge about cooking and the importance of sanitary standards, calculating the calorie content of dishes, and proper nutrition. Women emerged into the culinary arena from the shadows and, contrary to popular belief, pioneered teaching culinary to the general public and composing textbooks and guidelines on this.

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