



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

Journal of Ethnic Foods

journal homepage: <http://journalofethnicfoods.net>

Review Article

Historical background of Turkish gastronomy from ancient times until today

Ali Batu ^{a,*}, Heysem S. Batu ^b

^a Food Science, Nutrition and Gastronomy, Konya, Turkey

^b Pamukkale University, Science Institute, Food Engineering, Denizli, Turkey

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 8 March 2018

Received in revised form

6 May 2018

Accepted 15 May 2018

Available online xxx

Keywords:

Culinary Culture

Food

Gastronomy

The Turks

ABSTRACT

This study has focused on Turkish culinary culture from ancient times until today. Horse meat and mutton were prominent foods of ancient Turks. The journey of Turkish food culture has been in continuous development from the past beginning from Central Asia, Seljuk, Ottoman Empire to Republican eras and has excelled. Today, Turkish cuisine has an important place in the world. During the Ottoman Empire, the cuisine survived and developed because of three factors: palace, mansion, and chefs in Istanbul. The culinary culture of the Ottoman Empire was divided into palace kitchens and public kitchens. Beginning with reform in the Republican period, the impact of foreign cuisine has been observed in Turkish cuisine. The food culture differs from region to region; Eastern Anatolia, South-eastern Anatolia, the Black Sea, Marmara, Aegean, and Mediterranean have their own particular food culture. In recent years, the culinary culture has been influenced by globalization.

© 2018 Korea Food Research Institute. Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Food is one of the main necessities for human beings and is essential for all living beings to survive. People require nutrition as long as they live. Since ancient times, mankind has been creating an environment of food culture. As is known, culture encompasses anything that mankind adds to nature [1]. The dining habits in Turkey vary historically and even regionally with regard to village, city, and settlements. Despite all these differences in the Turkish society, there are still common features in this subject. Turks have a long historical background, and they possess a rich culinary culture [2].

Eating habits are considered a cultural element; therefore, they differ according to the culture of a society. The taste, quality, and food types in the Turkish society are rather different than those of other societies. The Turkish nation possesses a very well-established history and high cultural structure. Unquestionably, a subelement belonging to a rich culture is also correspondingly rich. The art of cooking, imparting nutrition, cooking and storage methods, use of tools, and food and drink services show the crux of this culture. Cultures are in constant interaction with each other. Although a country's food culture is a result of accumulation of

years of knowledge transferred from generation to generation, some old habits, in complete or partial have been exterminated through the recent years' advances in technology [3].

Turkish cuisine comprises a wide variety of foods, with pastries taking the first place. Bread is the core food ingredient. A variety of kebabs and some meat dishes, including the juicy types such as *yahni* (stew), are available. Without water, onion, ground beef, meat, tomato, and vegetables are added to foods after being roasted in oil. Vegetables are consumed as raw salad. Onion and tomato paste are the primary ingredients for all Turkish dishes. Oil is given great importance in the Turkish cuisine. Lard, butter fat, or butter is used in meat dishes, pastries, and meaty or meatless vegetable dishes. Olive oil is used in vegetable dishes based on necessity and condition but is mainly used in pans. Turkish cuisine is among the richest cuisines in the world and will greatly contribute to branding of destinations with correct positioning and creation of attractive image [4]. Turkish cuisine is among the few popular cuisines in the world and is one of the three main cuisines besides Chinese and French cuisines. Undoubtedly, the richness of the Turkish culture is due to the old history of Turks, and furthermore, Turks have migrated in huge numbers from past until today. Thus, Turks own a rich culinary culture synthesized as a consequence of migration to different geographical areas and interaction with different cultures [5].

There is a very close connection between the food and nutrition culture and gastronomic values of each nation. Gastronomy is a

* Corresponding author. Yazir Mahallesi, Çamlı Köşk, Sokak Unler, Apt. No:16/8, Selçuklu 42003, Konya, Turkey

E-mail addresses: alibatu42@gmail.com (A. Batu), h.s.batu@gmail.com (H.S. Batu).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jef.2018.05.002>

2352-6181/© 2018 Korea Food Research Institute. Published by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

branch of science studying aesthetics in eating and drinking as well as seeking beauty and quality. In a broad sense, gastronomy is a field that examines the relationship between the nations' cultures and the food varieties they consume, and it also concerns the field of knowledge related to human life and food. Gastronomy science benefits from both science and social science [6]. Gastronomy examines the relationship between culture and food and is defined as the art and science of eating and drinking. Gastronomy experts refer to Turkish cuisine as one of the world's major cuisines. When we observe the relation between gastronomy and Turkish cuisine, it could be understood that the roots of Turkish cuisine date back to the Central Asian Turks [7]. The gastronomic richness of different regions was added to Turkish cuisine in the later periods, in parallel with geographic expansion of the Ottoman Empire [8]. This compilation has been done by analyzing studies on culinary culture and gastronomic values throughout Turkish history.

2. Eating and drinking habits in ancient Turks (before the Seljuk period)

Food and drinks have a significant position in beliefs of Turkish people and have been shaped based on the region they lived in and beliefs they followed. The Uyghurs, one of the Turk tribes, followed Manichaeism before Islam. They shaped up their lifestyles and eating habits in accordance with their religion. It could be easily stated that these religions affected the way of thinking, belief, tradition, customs, and culture of ancient Turks. Animal milk and milk product consumption was important because ancient Turks were mostly engaged in livestock farming. In view of that, they find mentions in Turkish mythology. Portraits of camels, cattle, sheep, and goats drawn by Turks have been seen on the rocks in their settlements. This might indicate that they had drawn the pictures of animals while they used their meat before they domesticated these animals [1].

Information in regard to the Central Asian region before the year 1037 is limited based on available evidence. Some information related to the types of food in the Seljuk period such as muffins, thin dough, bread, *halvah*, *koumiss*, buttermilk, and molasses, excluding meaty dishes, has been mentioned in Kaşgarlı Mahmud's work (book). Based on information about various food preparations mentioned in "Divanü Lügat'it-Türk", it could be understood that there was high demand for sour yogurt and sour foods mixed with ingredients such as vinegar among Turks in the 11th century. This indicates that sour foods had a special place in the Turkish cuisine and probably appeared to be a characteristic feature of Turkish cuisine after the 11th century [9].

Some information about Turkish cuisine can be found in old Turkish inscriptions written several years ago. For instance, in the Dede Korkut stories, some food items such as tumescence, stew, and *toyga soup* with additions such as skimmed cheese and drinks such as milk, buttermilk, and *koumiss* were mentioned. Some other foods of the Seljuk period such as *tutmaç*, thin dough, and *kuvat* (a kind of candy) are mentioned in "Divanü Lügat-it Türk. The other notable works of this period are Maulana Rumi's *Masnavi* and *opus Kutadgu Bilig*. Meal ceremony, meal orders, meal banquet along with table manners, and table information had more importance than meals [10].

Turkish epics are valuable resources related to lifestyles of Turks. Statements in the Oghuz epic indicate that meat held a significant place in the lifestyle of Turks. Meat, especially that of horses and sheep, was the most important nutrition source of Turks living in deserts [11]. It is understood from most Turkish epics and stories that because of the living conditions of Turks and their social life requirement, especially during war, important food items

consumed by Turks mostly originated from animals [1]. Since the Central Asian period, Turks have been consuming vegetative foods besides foods originating from animals. In Anatolia (Turkey now), especially in prehistoric excavations done in Anatolia, evidence for agricultural products and irrigation cultures has been found. Thus, it could be understood that Turks engaged in agriculture and consumed agricultural products [9]. The Huns were engaged in agricultural work alongside their nomadic lives. In the past, Turks cultivated wheat, barley, maize, corn, rice, and vetch and planted apples, grapes, watermelon, melon, and berries [1].

3. Gastronomy in the Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate

Konya cuisine was developed in Seljuk castles and shaped by customs of Mawlawi dignitaries. Other enlightening sources of food culture during Seljuk period were Maulana Rumi's works in the 13th century and then information on the ordered structured Mawlawi food table along with rules regarding table setting and meals. The Seljuk period had a significant effect on Turkish cuisine culture. During this period, meat, wheat, and fat were the main ingredients used in dishes. Many delicacies were created during the Seljuk period through a variety of cooking techniques and by addition of one nutritive element with another or mixing them up [6].

The Turks came to Anatolia in 1071 and settled down after establishment of the Anatolian Seljuk state; they established the most outstanding civilization during the period with their state capital at Konya. An excellent culinary culture evolved during the Anatolian Seljuk period, and cuisine-related information could also be found in Seljuk letters [12]. Along with the arrival of Turks in Anatolia, many important changes took place in their understanding of cuisine (Fig. 2). The people, including the Seljuk sultans, were not very much interested in showy tables and banquets. As a matter of fact, such a change could be expected because of both climatic and geographic conditions. In terms of vegetation, Anatolia is very different from Central Asia. Turks even after transitioning to settled life had not left livestock farming. Therefore, mutton was dominant in Seljuk cuisine. Provision of milk and the work done by cattle in farms prevented them from being slaughtered. None of the ingredients has been forgotten, beginning from nuts, hazelnuts to locust beans. The grape, from unripe grapes to raisins, is a fruit that is often mentioned in the Maulana's works. Foods and beverages such as thin dough, meat bread, *tandır bread*, pastries, *tutmach*, baked head, bulgur, soup, eggplant pickles, candy, sweet pastry, *kadayif*, rose jam, and zede are all dishes served at Maulana's *Masnevi* is seen [13].

Seljuks ate meals twice a day. The first meal was a "midmorning meal" and the second one was "dinner." Except during Ramadan, elaborate meals were not seen in the Seljuk state. Humble dishes, without a variety of food, were served among themselves on dining tables. Most people ate a part of meal (breakfast) at sunrise. This dish generally consisted of soup, cheese, and bread. At the end, coffee was served. During Ramadan, parents gathered together with their closest friends. Charity, philanthropy, and hospitality were not forgotten. When people came up to the table during a meal, welcoming them to the table and opening the meal was the most natural thing [15].

During the Anatolian Seljuk and Principalities period, sherbets prepared from a variety of fruit and honey or sugar were the most common type of beverages and a source of income. During these periods, wine was among the main drinks consumed widely. A drink produced from barley or wheat mixed with vinegar and

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/8588858>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/8588858>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)