

The Socio-Cultural Aspect of Food in Ceremonial Turkey

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Abstract : No matter who we are or where we live, our lives revolve around food, which is much more than a merely sustenance. As a part of the human culture, food carries complex significance and symbolic meanings. Turkish people attribute great value to food and its usage specifically tied to rites of passages of human life. Traditions, especially the ones practiced during rites of passages, such as birth, circumcisions, weddings and funerals, have always been accompanied by food in Turkish culture. Since food celebrates and symbolizes human progress in life in the culture, it also surrounds by aspects of belief, custom, magic, ritual and religion and has always been used in ceremonial context during such rites. Even though that context may be different depending on the religious, economic and social nuances of the various Turkish regions, like wheat, meat and bread, certain kinds of food play key roles during Turkish rites, generally upholding traditions. This paper highlights the sociocultural aspect of food in the rites of passages in the Turkish culture. The importance of this work also is how the ceremonial food represents the identity of Turkish people.

Keywords : food, culture, rites of passages, ritual and identity

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