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**Journal of Tourism&Management Research**

**ISSN: 2149-6528**

**2021 Vol. 6, Issue.3**

<http://ottomanjournal.com/index.html>

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## **A Conceptual Study of The Role of Ottoman Palace Cuisine on Traditional Amasya Dishes and Gastronomy Culture**

### **Abstract**

At the beginning of the Ottoman palace cuisine, it was different from today's cuisine in terms of content and taste. Parallel to the development process of the Ottoman Empire, diversity and innovations continued in its cuisine without deteriorating the traditional structure. The cuisine of Amasya was also influenced by these cultures. From this point of view, the motivation and aim of this study; written and visual sources of Ottoman and Amasya cuisine are examined in depth and the role of Ottoman Palace Cuisine on the traditional dishes of Amasya province, which is a school for the princes in the Ottoman Empire, is tried to be determined. When the traditional Amasya dishes are examined, it is seen that a limited number of dishes belonging to the Ottoman Palace Cuisine have survived to the present day. The cooks keep their recipes a secret, the information in the kitchen is usually transmitted from generation to generation orally, the cooks only give the name of the ingredients they use while giving the recipes, they do not tell the amount of the ingredients, and the recipes written in Arabic letters cannot be read after the letter reform; The main reasons for the limited number of dishes belonging to the Ottoman Palace Cuisine and the limited influence on the traditional Amasya dishes are explained in the study.

**Keywords:** *Ottoman Palace Cuisine, Traditional Amasya Dishes, Gastronomy, Food, Cook.*

**JEL Classifications:** L19, N90, Z10

**Submitted:** 10/12/2021; **Accepted:** 27/12/2021

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### **1. Introduction**

As a result of the domination of large lands during the Ottoman Empire, the food culture and eating habits changed rapidly. Turkish cuisine experienced its heyday, especially with the plants grown in the newly conquered lands and the inclusion of talented chefs of the region

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2021, Vol.6, No.3, pp. 949-959. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.6505464

into the palace kitchen. In the Ottoman period, table manners and food diversity reached the highest level. In the palace kitchen, chefs were brought from different countries of the world to serve the most special meals to the sultan and his family, and the variety of food was highly developed (Seçim, 2018). The Ottoman Palace Cuisine showed its fastest development during the reign of Mehmed the Conqueror, when the sultan built new kitchens in the Topkapı Palace in the second half of the 15th century (Güler, 2010). When examined on the basis of centuries, a number of different developments are observed in the 18th and 19th centuries. For example, beginning in the 18th century, sultans spent much less time in Topkapı Palace, visiting it often during ceremonies and opting for summer palaces on the Bosphorus beaches or elsewhere. Therefore, the kitchens of the summer palaces in question worked more actively. Again, important changes in the Ottoman Cuisine are seen more clearly, especially as a result of the influence of the French Cuisine, in the Westernization process strengthened by the Tanzimat movement in the 19th century (Hatipoğlu and Batman, 2014).

At the beginning of the Ottoman Palace Cuisine, it was different from today's cuisine in terms of content and taste. Parallel to the development process of the Ottoman Empire, diversity and innovations continued in its cuisine without deteriorating the traditional structure. Until the conquest of Egypt, the variety of spices in the Ottoman cuisine was around eight. Over two hundred spices were used in the next century. Meals were flavored with sauces made from spices. Clarified butter (melted butter removed by melting) was used in all of the meals. Olive oil and other vegetable oils were almost unused. This harmony, which was not afraid of the use of flavors that seemed to contradict each other, was perfectly achieved. For example, honey and vinegar were used together. On the other hand, it is seen that juicy dishes contain a significant amount of fruit as a sweetener. The foodstuffs available at that time could be grouped as cereals and pulses, vegetables, oils, sweeteners, meat and dairy products, and fruits in the palace purchase lists (Akkor, 2014).

In the Ottoman Empire, a simple table was usually set, and it is reported that there was a simple table setting, even in palace tables, except for important days and nights. Even in the presence of some ambassadors, it is written in the sources that they were accepted only with rice and lamb meat placed on it. At meals, a plate was placed for every four guests, except the sultan. Spoons and knives were used for meals. Everyone would take the part that fell in front of them, put it on a slice of bread and bring it to their mouth. Although music was played before and after eating, music was not played during the meal and silence would prevail in the environment (Şavkay, 2000).

While human beings used to fill their stomachs with the foods they found, they gradually started to prepare tables that appeal to the eye, give importance to the taste factor, and whose flavor is not erased from the palate. In this regard, Amasya, which served as the capital of many nations for a long time, applied these basic elements with the meticulousness of an artist, and undertook the task of a school and academy from the Ottoman Empire. Known as the city of princes, Amasya has applied these basic elements with the meticulousness of an artist, and has found unique dishes of taste, appearance and quality worthy of sultans. However, with its historical and cultural values, Amasya has started to become an important attraction center in the tourism point of the region. Gastronomic elements, which are a part of historical and cultural values, have also become more important over time.

Therefore, the motivation of this study is to ensure that Amasya, which is a developing tourism destination, comes to the forefront by combining the dishes from the past to the present with the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. From this point of view, this conceptual study aims to examine the written and visual sources of Ottoman and Amasya cuisine in depth and as well as the role of Ottoman Palace Cuisine on the traditional dishes of Amasya province, which is a school for the princes in the Ottoman Empire.

## 2. Theoretical Background

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2021, Vol.6, No.3, pp. 949-959. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.6505464

### **2.1. Ottoman Palace Cuisine**

While Şavkay (2000) defines Ottoman Palace Cuisine as “A Middle Eastern Cuisine practice that takes its most distinguished form in the capital city of Istanbul, is open to the culinary traditions of all the peoples of the empire, on the other hand, Turkish culture predominates, and at the same time contains a deep-rooted heritage from history”, Efendi (2005) defined it as “a rich cuisine formed by the blending of the Balkans, Aegean, Caucasian, Syrian, Lebanese and Anatolian cuisines” (Hatipoğlu and Batman, 2014).

When it comes to the Ottoman Cuisine that has survived until today, the first thing that comes to mind is the Ottoman Palace Cuisine, which has risen from the culinary culture of the Turks throughout history. The cuisine, which was enriched during the Karakhanids and Seljuks, reached its peak during the Ottomans. With the effect of the formation of a strong state tradition in the historical process, dominance over a wide geography, domination of various societies, therefore many cultures, and curiosity about taste play a decisive role. The Ottoman Empire, which ruled the Arabian, North Africa, Balkans, Northern Black Sea, Anatolia, Aegean Islands, Caucasus and Persian geography, knew how to reflect the wealth of all these geographies not only for state institutions but also to its cuisine. The accumulation of the nomadic Turks in Central Asia, the knowledge gained from the cultures in the places where they stayed during the transition to Anatolia, especially the Iranian civilization and an earlier component of the Arab-Islamic culture (Yerasimos, 2015).

In the Ottoman period, from the smallest kitchen to the most magnificent palace kitchen, there was a concern for order, searching for new tastes and responding to taste. The kitchen, where we can get detailed information about the culinary culture of the Ottoman period, is the Topkapı Palace Cuisine of the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Era in terms of resource richness (Solmaz, 2018). After the conquest of Istanbul, Topkapı Palace was built and the foundations of the kitchen, namely the palace kitchen, were laid in this way. Fatih gave importance to the kitchen, as he did in every area, and allowed it to occupy an important place in the palace. Therefore, the best information about the palace cuisine can be reached from the period of Mehmed the Conqueror. Keeping the kitchen accounts in that period regularly, writing down the income and expenses of the kitchen foods and even writing what the food will be used for is enough to increase the knowledge about the kitchen (Kolay, Bozkurt, Turan and Arabacı, 2016).

In the first centuries of the transition to the empire, it is seen that the Iranian and Arab cuisines were effective on the tables of the Ottoman rulers. So much so that most of the food names were either Arabic and Persian, or they were obtained by translating Arabic names into Turkish. With this; In a period of 600 years, this kitchen; It can be said that it has managed to become a cosmopolitan, creative and fine cuisine with an identity. In the cosmopolitanism in question, it is thought that the Ottoman men's marriage to women from every nationality also plays a role if they accept Islam. Thus, the Balkans' ball pastry, Cretan's herb dishes, Aleppo's baklava and Russians' kapuska are primarily dishes cooked by the spouses; Later, it was adopted and became widespread and entered the Ottoman Cuisine. On the other hand, kadıs, directors, district governors and pashas sent to cities and towns outside of Istanbul not only introduced the art cuisine around the capital and the palace to the countryside, but also added the local dishes they liked to the Ottoman cuisine (Hatipoğlu and Batman, 2014).

During the Ottoman Empire, the kitchen held an important place for the sultan and the nobility, and in the kitchens inside the palace, apart from the places where food was cooked, sections such as a halvah, a jam shop, a copper house where dishes were washed, a tin room where the pots were tinned, the cook's room, the wards, the masjid, the warehouse, and the Turkish bath were created. The people working in each part of the kitchen have separate duties. The "bird chiefs" who prepared the sultan's meal, the "has matbah cooks" who prepared the prince-sultanharem's meals, and the "matbah-ı amire" who prepared the meals of the people in the palace (Çiğirim, 2001). Matbah-ı Amire is not essentially a kitchen, it is the

name of the administrative institution that houses various kitchens, halvahane, pantry, ovens, various karhanes, mirî dairy and simidhane (Bilgin, 2000). In addition, at the origin of the Ottoman system, there was a system of separating traders according to professions and craftsmen. It was an economic system within the state administration, covering every aspect of trade and production at a micro level (Swan, 2009). It is seen that a similar situation prevails when it comes to the personnel structure of the palace kitchen. The kitchen, which was considered important enough to spread over an area of more than 5000 squaremeters in the Topkapı Palace, worked like a separate military unit and fulfilled all the requirements of the concept of gastronomy in a military discipline (Hatipoğlu and Batman, 2014).

The Ottoman Palace Cuisine, in which more than one culture-specific dishes were served side by side with the influence of the multicultural structure of the empire, was quite modest at first, but since the 16th century it has taken on a diversity that reflects the power and wealth of the country. During this period, the Ottoman state expanded a lot. Both the increase in the experience of the palace cooks and the contribution of the cuisines of the new conquered places increased the variety of dishes cooked and refined the cooking methods. A wide variety of foodstuffs from the East and the West, and the ever-increasing banquets and hospitality have accelerated the efforts to offer different and pleasing meals (Ünsal, 2011).

Looking at the literature, the dishes in the 15th century were few and simple; It is understood that he lived his most glorious years in the 16th century. This glorious period continued in the 17th and 18th centuries. Actually, II. The eating and drinking habits of the palace did not change much between the 15th and 17th centuries, apart from the interest in fish, caviar and shrimp during the reign of Mehmed, and the rarer types of poultry in the second half of the 16th century. However, there is a slight trend towards consuming more variety and larger amounts of food (Reindl-Kiel, 2006).

By the 19th century, more offal food was found; Brain pan, tripe pan, seasoned liver pan with cubed meat, kidney stew, liver kebab are among the offal dishes encountered. The change in coffee cooking pots was again in the 18th century, and it was replaced by the ewer cezve. With the European influence, the interest in tea increased in the palace from the 18th century and the samovar was used in the second half of the 19th century with the Russian interaction. Almost all of the vegetables used in today's Turkish cuisine were consumed in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine in the first half of the 19th century. As in every period of Turkish food culture, the place of soup was prominent in these periods. After the 18th century, parsley, cinnamon and mint were used in soups. In addition, soups were a great blessing for the armies, whose basic needs were met by the state during the Ottoman period. The dishes, soups and desserts that have survived to the present day have been formed by the first inventions of the Turks, changing and enriching over time (Solmaz, 2018).

From the 19th century, which was the last period of the Ottoman Empire, it began to be under the influence of foreign culinary cultures. Early 19th century II. During the Mahmut period, western cuisine culture showed its influence with table manners and eating habits. The first sultan, who ate his meals at the European style dinner table, used cutlery and preferred wine or champagne as a drink, II. It is known that he is Mahmud. In addition, it has been determined that the sultan, besides adopting the European table style, was also interested in tasting European dishes and, with this desire, sent his cook to Europe to learn western cooking methods. In the invitations given to important foreign guests in the Ottoman palace in the middle of the 19th century, the reflections of the unity of Ottoman and western cultures in food showed themselves on the menu with the Turkish and European ingredients used (Neumann and Faroqi, 2006). If we look at the food and drinks consumed by the Ottoman palace people and the sultan, we can list them in groups as follows (Olğaç, 2020);

*Soups:* Soups are generally preferred as a starter to the meal. In some records, it is seen that it was consumed last. Meat and offal soups: İşkembe, paça, ciğer ve ekşili-köfteli çorba. Yoghurt and milk soups: Ak, bozca, ayran ve düğün çorbası. Chicken soups: Pirinçli-

pirinçsiz, terbiyeli-terbiyesiz, erişteli tavuk çorbaları. Vegetable soups: Havuç, lahan, şalgam, taze bakla çorbası etc. It is one of the soup types in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. Soup is usually the first dish to start a meal and there are many varieties. Until the introduction of tomato paste into the Ottoman period, generally floury, milky and spicy soups were preferred.

*Meat Products:* Mutancana, Mahmudiye, Terkib-i Çeşidiyye, Salma Aşı, Tavşan Yahnisi, Tavuklu Yahnı, Tas Kebabı, Gömlek Kebap, Hurma Kebabı, Tatlı Et, Kadınbudu Köfte, Koyun Eti Külbastısı, are among the meat dishes in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. Meat is the basic nutritional element in Turkish culture and continued in the Ottoman Empire. Sheep and lamb meat is the most consumed meat in Ottoman cuisine. Since the Ottomans were compassionate towards animals, they were meticulous about slaughtering animals and hunting. For this reason, the consumption of camel and horse meat decreased drastically after the adoption of Islam. In addition, special care was shown in the transactions from purchasing to distribution (Yerasimos, 2002).

*Pilaf:* Piliç Herisesi, Safranlı Pilav, Yeşil Sebzeli Pilav, Sarımsaklı Pilav, Nohutlu Pilav, Yağsız Pilav, Patlıcanlı Pilav, Kubuni Pilav, Etsiz Pilav, Kestaneli Pilav, Kuzu İç Pilav are the types of pilaf in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. Pilaf, the chief dish of the Ottoman Palace Cuisine, maintained its position as the food of the elite until the end of the 17th century. Rice reached the Ottoman Cuisine from China and was influenced by the most advanced Iranian cuisine. Rice is an expensive crop that does not grow in Anatolia and was brought to Istanbul from Egypt, Plovdiv and Iran. The rice that appeals to the eye and the palate has increased so much that several kinds of rice have been consumed at once, especially in feasts. Pilafs are cooked with broth and cow fat, so they become grainy. Apart from rice pilaf, bulgur pilaf is also cooked. Bulgur is thick for pilafs and thinner for meatballs. Wheat was often used in soups and "herise" or "keshkek" dishes. There are also varieties such as bulgur pilaf with chestnut, meat and lentils. Travelers mentioned the importance of rice for Turks by saying that if there is no rice on the table, Turks do not call it food (Bilgin, 2000).

*Pastries:* Mantı, Tatar Böreği, Piruhi, Peynirli Pide, Tavuk Böreği, Fincan Böreği, Vertika, Puf Böreği, Su Böreği, Soğan Böreği are the types of pastry in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. In Ottoman cuisine, "bread" is considered a sacred food item, symbolizing loyalty and devotion. Bread is known as an important food item, which is prepared in a different way for people according to their position in the palace and accordingly, it is brought to the sultan and his family in different quality and to the servants in different quality (Neumann and Faroqi, 2006).

*Fish:* Kefal Balığı Çorbası, Uskumru Balığı Yahnisi, Papaz Yahnisi, Yaka Yahnisi, Balık Turşusu, Uskumru Balığı Taratoru, are among the fish dishes in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. Fish was not a widely consumed food item in the palace. According to some sources, it was a food that was consumed due to the fact that too many cooking techniques could be applied, and it is said that it was a favorite dish of the sultans. During the Fatih period, as a result of the conquest of the Aegean coast, fish and seafood became a part of the cuisine (Ciğerim, 2001).

*Vegetable Dishes and Stuffed Vegetables:* Sefercelliye, Keşküli Kabak, Marmarine, Patlıcan Kayganası, Medfun, Hünkâr Beğendi, Çömlek Kebabı, Terkib-i Tuffahiyye Vegetable dishes in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. Since the Turks are nomadic, they are not very familiar with vegetables and it is obvious that they adopted it after they settled in Anatolia. Local vegetables such as leeks, cucumbers, zucchini, asparagus, onions, garlic, cabbage lettuce, chard, beets, radishes, carrots, celery, black-eyed peas, broad beans and even asparagus that have been cultivated in Anatolia for centuries, eggplant originating from India via Iran and more In the late period, the Ottomans adopted the green peppers, beans and tomatoes from South America very quickly (Yerasimos, 2002).

*Dishes with Eggs:* Ispanaklı Yumurta, Taze Fasulye Mucveri, Soğanlı Yumurta, Çılbır, Kaygana, are the dishes made with eggs in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. Egg had an important place in the kitchen and was the most consumed food item.

*Salads and Pickles:* Marul Salatası, Dövmeye Hıyar Salatası, Çerkez Salatası, Patlıcan, hıyar, pancar, sarımsak, sivri biber, haşlanmış kırmızıbiber, dolma turşuları are among the salads and pickles in the Ottoman Palace Cuisine. Pickles were usually eaten sparingly during the meal as an "appetizer" in the Ottoman Empire. Pickle making has not changed much from then to now.

*Desserts and Sherbets:* Desserts made with milk and dairy products also have an important place in Ottoman cuisine. The container in which the milk is put is called "bakrac" and cow milk is mentioned as "leveni kav" in the palace book. Desserts such as milk pudding and kadayif with milk are cooked for the sultan and his entourage, and cream is also put on kadayif. Yogurt, which is also obtained from milk, is one of the main foods in both the public cuisine and the palace cuisine. Topkapı halvahanesi is known as the first kitchen in the world culinary history, where sugary products and sweets are produced, and the production area is in a physical section separate from the main kitchen where the meals are cooked (Gürsoy, 2014). On Ottoman tables, cinnamon was usually drunk in winter, and in summer, verjuice and honey sherbets. Since coffee and tea were not plentiful in the Ottoman Empire, sherbet was usually served as a beverage to the guests, and offering pomegranate sherbet to the guests was accepted as a sign of kindness. Honey and grapes, which were very common in this period, were used for more modest tables (Seçim, 2018).

There was a certain order of the table that shaped the cuisine in the Ottoman Empire. A table setting was created by laying a clean cloth on the ground, placing a not very high coffee table on it, and placing a tray called 'sini' on it, where fork, spoon and bread were placed along with the food. The quality of the tablecloth, dinnerware, coffee table and tray in the table setting has been a criterion that determines the status of the people sitting at the table. The form of feast created by social life, 'festivals' are also divided into festivities organized for the protocol and the public. The festivities organized for the protocol in the Ottoman palaces are more entertaining by being prepared with ostentatious tables. Meat dishes, seafood (such as caviar, lobster), pastries, pastries, pancakes, soups, pilafs, desserts such as ashura baklava-pumpkin dessert, various cold sherbets and compotes are on the table in feasts. Both in banquets and in daily life, the diversity of dishes is striking at Ottoman tables (Haydaroglu, 2003).

## **2.2. Traditional Amasya Dishes**

Amasya, located in the Yeşilirmak basin, has been chosen as a settlement for different civilizations throughout history due to its strategically important geographical location and fertile lands. Area; Starting from the Neolithic, Chalcolithic periods, Early Bronze Age, Hatti and Hittite Civilizations, Assyrian Trade Colonies Age, Phrygians, Scythians, Cimmerians, Medes, Persians, Mithridates, Roman Empire, Eastern Rome (Byzantine), Danishmends, Anatolian Seljuks, Ilkhanids, Ottomans It has always been an important settlement center until the State and the Republic of Turkey (Amasya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2021).

Amasya has a rich culinary culture along with a deep-rooted cultural level. Each region has its own unique dishes. Although there is information about some dishes in other regions, it is obvious that it varies in each region. One of these; In many regions of Anatolia, it is the indispensable taste of ceremonial meals such as weddings, circumcision and funerals. Keşkek is an intangible cultural heritage that is important in terms of oral expressions, oral traditions and customs, visual arts, rituals and festivals that have shaped around it from production to consumption. Keşkek is one of the main dishes of the Central Asian Turks, and by creating a revolution in the hands of masters, it has gained such a flavor that it makes people say, "Aside

from all the keşkeks, Amasya keşkek aside". Apart from this, the preparation of dried broad beans by mixing them with various ingredients, creating a wonderful harmony with meat, also revealed the "Bakla Dolması". While there are many delicious options in Amasya cuisine, from vegetable dishes to soups, from meat dishes to pastries and desserts, the tradition of using dried vegetables from summer in winter dishes is also quite common. Toyga, bıdıklı çorba, etli çiçek banya, çörek and yanuç are some examples of local delicacies of Amasya (Amasya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2021).

Zekeriya Sofrası is one of the oldest traditions of Amasya, consisting of raw food. The table is prepared for the fulfillment of a wish. According to local traditions, the person whose wish is fulfilled prepares this table again at home. No invitation is required to attend the Zechariah table. Therefore, anyone who wishes can take their place at the table. Zamzam, black cumin, dates, yoghurt, cheese, olives and pita bread are the dishes on the table. Apart from these foods, there are forty kinds of food on the table. In the Prince's Palace of Amasya, wet cake is famous and this cake became famous as "Vişneli Ekmek" with the idea of a poor family. In addition, a new type of dessert called "Unutma Beni" has emerged by not throwing away stale breads and evaluating them (Amasya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2021).

In order to keep the eating and drinking traditions alive in Amasya, together with the examples given above, some of the special day meal customs written below are still continued today (Pala and Daşkın, 2021);

*Doğum:* Giving nutritious and milk-increasing soups and sherbets to the mother who has given birth.

*Diş Hediği:* When the baby's first tooth comes out, it is sprinkled with wheat from head to toe by sitting on a cover that is laid on the ground so that the baby grows in abundance.

*Düğün Yemeği:* It is the meal served to the guests by the groom's family at the wedding.

*Gelin Hamamı Yemeği:* It is a dinner ceremony in which the brides are introduced to their family relatives in the bath and it is proved that they do not have a physical disability.

*Güvey Önü:* It is a meal prepared for the bride and groom to be eaten on the wedding night. It consists of 3 main dishes (whole meat, rice, caterpillar baklava) in a tray.

*Cenaze Yemeği:* Meals brought by relatives and close neighbors since the food was not cooked in the funeral home.

*Ölü Helvası:* Halvah that is cooked and distributed with the hope that it will alleviate the torment of the dead in the grave according to the Islamic belief.

*Sünnet Yemeği:* The meal prepared by the family of the circumcised child and served to the guests.

*Hacı Karşılama Yemeği:* It is the meal offered to the pilgrims by their relatives.

*Bayram Yemeği:* It is a meal eaten with the participation of all members of the family in the mornings of Eid, after the Eid prayer.

*Asker Uğurlama:* It is a meal organized before the farewell ceremony with the participation of relatives for young people who are going to the military.

*Adak Yemeği:* Praying for a wish that is desired to come true, and offering it to close relatives and friends by sacrificing an animal if it comes true.

*Yağmur Duası:* In the dry times, the villagers gather together to pray for rain and serve food at this ceremony.

When it comes to local dishes of Amasya, the first thing that comes to mind is; Although there are Keshk, Toyga soup, Stuffed broad beans, Amasya Buns, local dishes are of course not limited to these. The list of Traditional Amasya dishes in Table 3.1 is based on the book "Gastro-Tourism: Traditional Amasya Gastronomy Recipes" written by Pala and Daşkın (2021).

**Table 1.** Traditional Amasya Dishes.

Soups	Meat Foods	Vegetable Food	Cold Dishes	Pastries	Desserts
Bıdıklı Çorba	Amasya Keşkeği	Kabak Kabuğu	Borani	Amasya Çöreği	Elma Tatlısı
Çatal Çorba	Bakla Dolması	Madımak	Bat	Amasya Gömbesi	Hasuda
Helle Çorbasi	Etlı Çıçek Bamya	Kurutulmuş Fasulye		Sac Yağlısı	Paluze
İbikli Çorba	Patlıcan Pehli	Kuşekmeği		Erişteli Pilav	Teltel
Sakala Çarpan	Dibek Köftesi	Patlıcan Kuruşu		İşkefe Böreği	Tırtıl Baklava
Topal Börölce		Pirpirim		Kaypak	Unutma Beni
Toyga		Soğan Mihlaması		Sini Su Böreği	Vişneli Ekmek
				Yanuç	Yoka Tatlısı

### 2.3. The Role of Ottoman Palace Cuisine on Traditional Amasya Dishes

When the Ottoman Cuisine culture is examined in its entirety, it is observed that the public cuisine has undergone a rapid change and development along with the palace cuisine. Although the people living in the mansions partially acted in accordance with the palace culture, the other part of the people prepared simpler tables. As in the palace kitchen, the people offered the best dishes to their guests. In the table culture, the seating arrangement is determined according to the weight of the guests. During the Ottoman period, there was a great improvement in mass dining organizations, as food became widespread in places such as schools, inns, military camps, and lodges. At the tables arranged for the guests, it is aimed to welcome the guests in the best way, considering that the guest who comes to the house is the blessing of the house. Collective dinner tables also became a part of the culinary culture of the Ottoman Period, as meals organized in places such as dervish lodges, zawiyas, schools, caravanserais, inns, military camps, lodges, and mostly paid by the foundation. It has been determined that, in collective meals, the call to "sal ya huu" is made by the attendant at meal time and people are invited to the table and although the rules of the family table are valid at these tables, women are not included in these tables. "İmarethaneler", another communal dining table, are kitchens established to feed the poor, and the expenses of these meals were covered by foundations formed by the rich (Seçim, 2018).

While human beings used to fill their stomachs with the foods they found, they started to prepare tables that appeal to the eye, give importance to the taste factor, and whose taste is not erased from the palate. Amasya, which has been the capital of many nations for a long time, applied these basic elements with the meticulousness of an artist, and undertook the duty of a school and academy from the Ottoman Empire. Known as the city of princes, Amasya has applied these basic elements with the meticulousness of an artist, and has found unique dishes of taste, appearance and quality worthy of sultans (Bilgin, 2010).

In addition to its historical and cultural richness, Amasya has also come to the fore in fruit growing for centuries. When Amasya is mentioned, the first thing that comes to mind is lime apple. One of the features of the lime apple, which is the symbol of Amasya, is that one side is red, the other side is yellow, thin-skinned and fragrant, and that it is hard and durable. When travelers talk about Amasya, they mention forty kinds of pears, eleven kinds of



cherries, seven kinds of grapes and seven kinds of quince. It is rumored that marmalade made from quinces in Amasya was sent as a gift to the sultan at that time (Amasya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2021).

One of the main dishes of Central Asian Turks, keşkek has undergone a great evolution in the hands and brains of Amasya gourmets and families that can be called masters. They have added flavor and appearance to make one say, "Apart from all the keşkek, but aside from Amasya keşkek". The construction of the masterpiece called Bakla Dolması is as follows; Its hard and not-so-pretty shape, dried broad beans, mixed with various ingredients and creating an extreme harmony with meat, turned into a work of art, wrapped around delicate fingers. While the fresh cake eaten in the Prince's Palace in Amasya became sour cherry bread with the genius of a poor family, on the other hand, Vişneli Ekmek was not thrown away and a new type of dessert was brought to the world cuisine under the name of Unutma Beni (Pala and Daşkın, 2021).

When Ottoman cuisine is mentioned, culinary art, food culture, table richness and food variety come to mind. Regardless of the subject, a cultural accumulation that is reflected in the past, the day and the tradition points to the existence of deep-rooted societies. Food culture is one of the values that societies have, as an element of the culture whose deep-rooted traditional teachings have been established and transferred (Haydaroğlu, 2003).

### 3. Conclusions

When the traditional Amasya dishes are examined, we see that a limited number of dishes belonging to the Ottoman Palace Cuisine have survived to the present day. This situation can be attributed to many reasons. The following conclusions can be made as a result of the research; cooks kept their recipes a secret, and most of them were illiterate anyway. The knowledge in the kitchen was generally transferred from masters to journeymen, and from journeymen to apprentices, and thus transmitted from generation to generation. Most of the cookbooks written at that time were forced to print by food enthusiasts. For example, when the French kings, determined to create one of the first nation-states of Europe, thought of creating the national French cuisine, they commissioned the chefs of the palace to write cookbooks, and then they had these books sent all over the country. However, when we look at the Ottoman state, we do not encounter such a situation. In other words, we can say that no sultan has put the issue of printing a cookbook on the agenda. It is also thought that the fact that the Ottomans were multinational and had a mentality that embraced every culture had an impact on this issue (Hatipoğlu, 2014). As another reason, it was quite common for cooks to name only the ingredients they used while giving their recipes, not to mention the amount of ingredients. On the other hand, it is also important that the recipes written in Arabic letters cannot be read after the letter reform. Until 1888, recipes were written on lithography, and after 1888, we see that cookbooks were written after this date, due to the printing press. The book named "Melceü't- Tabbahin", first published in 1844, is the first Ottoman cookbook, and most of the ingredients recorded in the notebooks of the palace cuisine are included in the recipes here. During the Ottoman Empire, a culinary life far from the magnificence of the palace cuisine dominated the society, since a culinary understanding that coincides with the living conditions of the people was not adopted among the people. As a result; The situations mentioned above explain the reasons why the Ottoman Palace Cuisine had little influence on traditional Amasya dishes.

Although it seems that the Ottoman Palace Cuisine has little influence on the Traditional Amasya Dishes from the past to the present, it does not prevent the necessary studies to be carried out to apply the gastronomic elements of the Ottoman Palace Cuisine to today's Amasya dishes. Bringing the recipes of the Ottoman Palace Cuisine to the surface and bringing them to Amasya Gastronomy will create an attraction for the province of Amasya, which is on the way to become one of the important centers of the region in terms of history

and culture. In this regard, local governments, universities, non-governmental organizations, tradesmen and local people should work together to ensure that the dishes of the Ottoman Palace Cuisine are included in the restaurant menus. In order to achieve this, first of all, Ottoman sources should be examined in depth and recipes should be compiled by experts. Afterwards, local chefs should be trained for the compiled recipes and the dishes should be made widespread in restaurant menus. With the spread of Ottoman dishes in Amasya, a new image reminiscent of the Ottoman Palace Cuisine can be put forward in terms of gastronomy.

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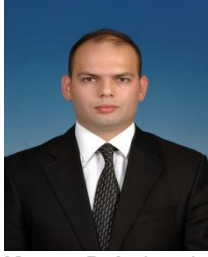
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