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## Importance of Turkish Delight and Afyon Cream from Intangible Cultural Heritage Elements for Afyonkarahisar

### *Somut Olmayan Kültürel Miras Unsurlarından Türk Lokumu ve Afyon Kaymağının Afyonkarahisar İçin Önemi*

#### Abstract

With its rich flavors and traditional practices, Turkish cuisine is integral to our Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). Our rich culinary culture, developed over centuries, has been passed down from generation to generation through regional flavors, different cooking techniques, and shared table manners. Turkish culinary culture represents a social experience along with the use of rich and diverse ingredients. This research aims to thoroughly examine Turkish delight and Afyon cream, which are ICH elements in Afyonkarahisar province, and to determine the sustainability and significance of traditional food and beverage production and social practices derived from these cultural elements in Turkish culinary culture. The study sample was selected as the gastronomy elements of Afyonkarahisar province. Secondary data sources and document archive scanning techniques were used in the research, and Tableau and Power BI programs were used for data visualization. In addition to the research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 traditional Turkish delight and Afyon cream producers. According to the results of the study, it was found that there are a total of 56 elements of Turkish culinary culture/traditional food and beverage production and social practices in Turkish and 3 of these elements are found in Afyonkarahisar. By comparing the registered ICH elements in different provinces, it was found that the quantitative difference between Afyonkarahisar and other provinces is relatively small, but it still needs to be improved despite being a gastronomy city, and the average number of elements in Turkey is three. As a result of the interviews conducted with the producers of Turkish delight and Afyon cream, it was found that sustainability and the transfer of production stages to future generations are essential priorities. At the same time, it was concluded that Afyonkarahisar, one of the gastronomy cities, needs more ICH elements related to Turkish culinary culture. Suggestions were made to diversify and develop Afyonkarahisar's ICH elements related to Turkish culinary culture. These suggestions include encouraging more traditional food and beverage producers, creating training and support programs for these producers, and emphasizing and increasing promotional activities for Afyonkarahisar's gastronomy potential in the tourism sector.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Afyonkarahisar, ICH, Turkish Culinary Culture, Turkish Delight, Afyon Cream

#### Öz

Türk mutfağı, zengin lezzetleri ve geleneksel uygulamalarıyla Somut Olmayan Kültürel Mirasımızın (SOKÜM) önemli bir parçasıdır. Yüzyıllar boyunca oluşan zengin mutfak kültürümüz, yöresel tatlar, çeşitli pişirme teknikleri ve paylaşılan sofrada kuşaktan kuşağa aktarılmıştır. Türk mutfak kültürü, zengin ve çeşitli malzemelerin kullanımıyla birlikte sosyal bir deneyimi temsil etmektedir. Bu araştırmanın amacı, Afyonkarahisar ilindeki SOKÜM unsurları olan Türk lokumu ve Afyon kaymağını derinlemesine incelemek, bu kültürel unsurlardan Türk mutfak kültürü geleneksel yiyecek-içecek yapımı ve toplumsal uygulamalarının sürdürülebilirliğini ve önemini belirlemektir. Çalışmanın örneklemini Afyonkarahisar ilinin gastronomik unsurları olarak belirlenmiştir. Araştırmada ikincil veri kaynakları ve doküman-arşiv tarama tekniği kullanılmış olup verilerin görselleştirilmesi için "Tableau ve Power BI" programlarından yararlanılmıştır. Araştırmaya ek olarak geleneksel üretim yapan 5 Türk lokumu ve Afyon kaymağı üreticilerine yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme yapılmıştır. Çalışma bulgularına göre Türkiye'de en fazla SOKÜM unsurlarından Türk mutfak kültürü/ geleneksel yiyecek-içecek yapımı ve toplumsal uygulamalarından 56 adet bulunduğu ve Afyonkarahisar'da bu unsurdan 3 adet yer aldığı tespit edilmiştir. İllerin envanterlerinde kayıtlı olan SOKÜM unsurları karşılaştırıldığında, Afyonkarahisar ile diğer iller arasındaki niceliksel farkın nispeten düşük olduğu fakat gastronomi şehri olmasına rağmen yeterli olmadığı ve Türkiye'de ortalama üç envanterin olduğu belirlenmiştir. Türk lokumu ve Afyon kaymağı üreticileri ile yapılan görüşme neticesinde sürdürülebilirliğin ve üretim aşamalarının gelecek nesillere aktarılmasının önemli öncelikleri olduğu belirtilmiştir. Aynı zamanda gastronomi şehirlerinden biri olan Afyonkarahisar'ın SOKÜM Türk mutfağına yönelik unsurlarının yeterli sayıda olmadığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Afyonkarahisar'ın Türk mutfağına yönelik SOKÜM unsurlarının çeşitlendirilmesi ve geliştirilmesi için önerilerde bulunulmuştur. Bu öneriler arasında, daha fazla geleneksel yiyecek-içecek üreticisinin teşvik edilmesi, bu üreticilere yönelik eğitim ve destek programlarının oluşturulması, turizm sektöründe Afyonkarahisar'ın gastronomi potansiyelinin daha fazla vurgulanması ve tanıtım faaliyetlerinin artırılması yer almaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Turizm, Afyonkarahisar, SOKÜM, Türk Mutfak Kültürü, Türk Lokumu, Afyon Kaymağı

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## Introduction

The development of gastronomy significantly impacts various sectors, including tourism, in Turkey and worldwide (Zengin and Gürkan, 2019: 226). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2022) report, 1.5 billion people traveled as tourists in recent years, contributing 8.9 trillion US dollars to the global GDP. Turkey ranked 5th with 15.9 million tourists and 11th with 10.2 billion dollars in revenue. According to the Turkish Association of Travel Agencies (TÜRSAB) (2014), 41 million 415 thousand tourists visited Turkey, spending 34.3 billion US dollars, with 6 billion 523 million dollars on food alone.

Gastronomy is a multidisciplinary field that encompasses various scientific domains and elevates the concept of eating to a new level by integrating it with diverse areas (Yildiz and Yilmaz, 2019: 52). Gastronomy tourism has emerged as a vital part of tourism activities, which necessitates a focus on nutrition. Travelers often explore and experience the culinary characteristics of a destination, purchasing local culinary products specific to the area (Kozak, 2012: 32). Indeed, tourists experience the culinary features of every destination they visit (Remington and Yüksel, 1998; Yüksel, 2001).

Food culture, cuisine, and eating habits are shaped by cultural geography, economy, ecological structure, and historical period in every society worldwide (Cakici and Eser, 2016). Each region also has unique products, cooking techniques, and food cultures, much like in world cuisine (Telfer and Wall, 1996: 636). Turkish cuisine is one of the most significant among these cultures (Demirgöl, 2018: 105), with a rich structure and unique characteristics (Baysal, 1993; Cihangir, Gökce and Sunar, 2017: 1374). Food plays a crucial role in maintaining social order in Turkish culinary culture, as a means of sustenance and through state administration and official ceremonies, neighbourhood relations, and hospitality activities (Simsek, 2008: 701). The beliefs and culinary culture have been intertwined with history, and the dishes prepared for special occasions have been passed down to future generations. The processes and circumstances in which meals are prepared for ceremonies and traditional days are crucial for shaping shared cultural values and facilitating cultural communication (Sandikci and Baydeniz, 2020).

Afyonkarahisar's cuisine is diverse and rich, influenced by various cultures throughout history, stretching from Central Asia to the Balkans. Due to this interaction, visitors to Afyonkarahisar can experience different flavors and unique experiences. Flour dishes and meats dominate the rich cuisine of Afyonkarahisar, with many local products, such as Turkish delights and Afyon cream, served on the table. Recently, local tourism values, cuisine, traditions, and handicrafts have included local elements in addition to traditional tourism activities. This study aims to identify the significance and place of Turkish culinary culture, traditional food and beverage production, and social practices within Afyonkarahisar, revealing its potential contribution to the development of gastronomy tourism.

## Intangible Cultural Heritage

Culture is a term that refers to the shared knowledge, interests, habits, values, attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors of a given society (Turhan, 2006: 48). It constitutes a way of life that is embraced by all members of a community and distinguishes it from others (Özsoy, 2018: 39). In essence, culture encompasses both material and non-material aspects that shape the identity of a society and set it apart from others. These elements have been transmitted from one generation to another and have endured over time (Kodas and Eröz, 2012; Sisman, 2002: 35). Cultural heritage can be defined as “artifacts and values inherited from the past and intended for a future inheritance, with material existence” (KTB, 2022a). Initially, the concept of cultural heritage aimed to protect

significant buildings with historical and artistic value, but it may encompass other cultural elements that will attract future interest (Ashworth, 1994; Hereduc, 2005; Howard, 2003). The cultural heritage of a society distinguishes it from others.

Intangible culture, on the other hand, refers to cultural aspects that are not tangible or material, such as language, hearing, vision, practice, and beliefs (Kösöklük Kaya, 2013: 130). ICH generally refers to “traditions that seek sustainability by supporting the necessary conditions for the cultural production of living traditions” (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, 2004: 53). The Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH, adopted by the 32nd General Conference of UNESCO, defines ICH as “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, and instruments, as well as the cultural spaces associated with them, as part of the cultural heritage of communities, groups, and, in some cases, individuals” (UNESCO, 2022).

The concept of ICH is gaining popularity in cultural tourism and plays a significant role in creating unique tourism products. In the context of tourism, ICH promotes culturally sensitive behavior among individuals (Esfehiani and Albrect, 2016: 12; Morozova and Morozov, 2018: 4). Programs that highlight the intricate rituals of different cultural structures are crucial in preserving and maintaining cultural heritage, and every innovative tourism program that does so is vital (Doganer, 2014: 10). Converting these cultural elements into tourism products and generating economic benefits can also benefit from the revitalization and acceptance of these values by the local population (Uygur and Baykan, 2007). ICH encompasses material elements such as rural landscapes, villages, cities, art collections, museum works, handicrafts, and immaterial elements such as dance, song, belief, tradition, ceremony, and ritual. It symbolizes the material and spiritual factors that explain a society's national identity (Oguz, 2001: 6).

The concept of ICH has gained international acceptance and was adopted by UNESCO member states at the 2003 UNESCO General Conference. Turkey's ratification of the ICH Convention also became a party to the convention (UNESCO, 2022). The ICH Conservation Convention, adopted by the 32nd General Conference of UNESCO on October 17, 2003, has brought greater attention to the concept of ICH, which has gained a conceptual dimension (Arioglu, 2006: 186). The convention stresses the importance of safeguarding values in five areas: oral traditions and expressions, social practices (rituals and festivals), knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional arts and performing arts (Ar and Celik, 2015: 1407). This convention is based on the transmission of ICH from generation to generation and the continual restructuring of it based on the interactions of communities and groups with their environment, nature, and history (UNESCO, 2022: 2).

### **Turkish Cuisine**

Turkish cuisine is a heritage passed down through generations, involving traditional cooking methods, storage conditions, and production and consumption practices that are being rediscovered and given new identities. This contributes to their inclusion in the scope of ICH. The continuity of regional dishes, an essential element of ICH, is ensured by their presence in the tourism industry, which can be considered a tool for preserving cultural values and ensuring sustainability (Capar and Yenipinar, 2016: 105).

Each region in Turkey has a unique food culture and flavors (Capar and Yenipinar, 2016). The local people's way of life, cultural identity, and beliefs play a significant role in the formation and settlement of this food culture (Cakir, Sezer and Küçükaltan, 2014: 49). Therefore, the preservation of beliefs, practices, rituals, and other intangible cultural values that shape around food and cooking contributes to the continuation of gastronomic heritage and the conservation of cultural heritage (Akdag and Üzülmöz, 2017: 306). As such, food cultures from

different societies are protected by the ICH Convention. Most of the cultural heritage values included in Turkey's ICH agreements as of May 2021 are directly or indirectly related to food culture.

Culture, geography, ecology, economic structure, and historical processes all shape the way people eat (Serceoglu, 2014: 38). Understanding Turkish cuisine requires an understanding of not only the tools, equipment, and techniques necessary for these processes but also all the practices and beliefs developed around kitchen and dining etiquette (KTB, 2022b). The richness of Turkish cuisine's diversity depends on many factors, and Turkish cuisine holds an important place in world cuisine in terms of history, culture, and society (İlban, Gülec, Colakoglu and Karabıyık, 2021: 270). Influenced by the nomadic lifestyle of the Turks, Turkish cuisine combines Central Asian, Mesopotamian, Mediterranean, South Asian, and Anatolian foods to create a rich structure (Hastaoglu and Seker, 2020: 661). The emergence of Turks on the historical scene began in Central Asia, where they adopted a nomadic lifestyle before moving to Anatolian lands, enriching their culinary cultures and changing their eating habits (Sariisik, Kizildemir, and Öztürk, 2017: 193). The variety of products offered by Asia and Anatolian lands, interactions with other cultures throughout history, the existence of new flavors developed in the Selcuk and Ottoman palaces, the presence of Anatolian cuisine of Mesopotamian origin, and other factors contributed to the formation of the color and richness of Turkish cuisine (Güler, 2010: 24). While Turkish cuisine has a rich structure, it also has some unique characteristics (Baysal, 1993; Cihangir et al., 2017: 1374).

Turkish cuisine predominantly features agricultural and livestock products. However, the dishes vary based on geographical region, social structure, special occasions, and ceremonies (Kilic Cimen and Ergün, 2018). The tradition of using bread and dough-based words is essential in Turkish cuisine, along with yogurt, herbs such as parsley, dill, and mint, and a focus on taste over appearance (Ertaş and Gezmen-Karadag, 2013). The changes in Turkish cuisine over time can be attributed to various factors, including agricultural structures, nomadic culture, influences from other societies, socioeconomic levels, regional differences in dishes, and traditions of collective feeding.

Turkey boasts a diverse culinary culture influenced by regional cuisine. The traditional Turkish table typically includes soups, meat dishes, olive oil-based vegetables, salads, and sweets (Batu and Batu, 2018). However, in today's globalized world, fast food and other culinary trends threaten preserving Turkey's gastronomic heritage. Therefore, it is crucial to maintain awareness of Turkey's culinary culture by recognizing its history, environment, culture, and heritage, encouraging its attractiveness, and transmitting it to future generations (Güler, 2010: 26; Kizildemir, Öztürk, and Sariisik, 2014: 205).

It is necessary to safeguard the historical, natural, and cultural elements to preserve the traditional fabric of the past. Utilizing cultural heritage products as an attraction and potential benefit for society is an important goal to achieve. Culture is a vital factor that shapes and distinguishes an organization through its material and spiritual values, including unique eating habits (Fieldhouse, 2013). Culinary culture is more than just a nutritional activity; it reflects a society's history, traditions, and practices. The Turkish community, one of the oldest communities of Central Asian origin, has utilized the richness of nature and interaction with society to form the present Turkish culinary culture. Today, Turkish cuisine is considered one of the world's most significant cuisines (Girgin, Oflaz and Karaman, 2017).

### Method

This study aims to evaluate the cultural significance of Turkish cuisine as an ICH element within the context of Afyonkarahisar province and its contributions to the development of gastronomy tourism. The research

sample was selected from Afyonkarahisar province, which is prominent in ICH areas in the Aegean Region. The data collection technique employed in this study was document-archive scanning, a qualitative research method that utilizes secondary data sources. In this context, the data on the websites of the Afyonkarahisar Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, the General Directorate of Research and Education of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Afyonkarahisar Governorship, and Afyonkarahisar Municipality were examined. The data obtained from the scanning between 1-27 November 2022 was converted to Excel format and analyzed through the interactive software programs “Tableau and Power BI.” Data visualization techniques such as graphs, packed bubbles, and treemaps were utilized in presenting the research data.

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with traditional Turkish delight and Afyon cream producers to gather in-depth insights into the research topic. Qualitative research methods were employed in data collection and analysis (Aull Davies, 1999:93). The interview technique, one of the most basic techniques used in qualitative research, was utilized in this study (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004). Interviews were conducted face-to-face, and each participant must sign a volunteer participant information form. The study used the maximum diversity sampling method, which involves collecting data from diverse groups based on age, gender, occupation, and active origin to explore the phenomenon in all its aspects (Creswell and Clark, 2016). Although this method does not generalize, it seeks to identify similar or diverging phenomena among diverse situations (Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger., 2005). Data saturation was achieved with 5 participants in the interview, which was conducted using a semi-structured interview format.

The semi-structured interview technique was selected for this study because it allows researchers to shape their questions according to the interview flow and obtain more comprehensive answers by examining participants' responses and asking follow-up questions. Additionally, this technique is essential in understanding the perspectives of relevant individuals and identifying the social structures and processes that underlie these perspectives. No specific number was set for the interviews, and data collection continued until data saturation was achieved between 10-25 November 2022.

The questions in the interview form were prepared based on the results of the literature research. The opinions of experts familiar with Afyonkarahisar Turkish delight and Afyon cream academic writing were consulted to ensure the comprehensibility and effectiveness of the questions. The form consists of two sections. The first section includes two questions about the participants' professions and ages. The second section contains five open-ended questions that will facilitate the examination of Turkish delight and Afyon cream ICH. The following interview questions have been answered below:

- Can you provide information about the place and history of Turkish delight and cream?
- Can you provide information about the ingredients and production of Turkish delight and Afyon cream?
- Can you provide information about the sociocultural dynamics of Turkish delight and Afyon cream production?
- What are your thoughts on the cultural value of Turkish delight and Afyon cream?
- What are your thoughts on the sustainability of Turkish delight and Afyon cream production?



### **Findings and Discussion**

Afyonkarahisar is rich in cultural attractions. Different nations have established many states in Anatolia; some historical and cultural relics of various civilizations can be found in Afyonkarahisar. In addition, the cuisine culture makes cultural tourism appeal to the province (Özdemir and Kervankiran, 2012: 136). At the same time, it has some of the critical ICH elements for cultural tourism. Among these ICH elements, Turkish cuisine/traditional food and beverage preparation and social practices are essential. The Turkish cuisine element, Sultan Divani and the healing Day of Ashura, Afyon cream, and the tradition of Turkish delight significantly contribute to Afyonkarahisar being a gastronomy city.

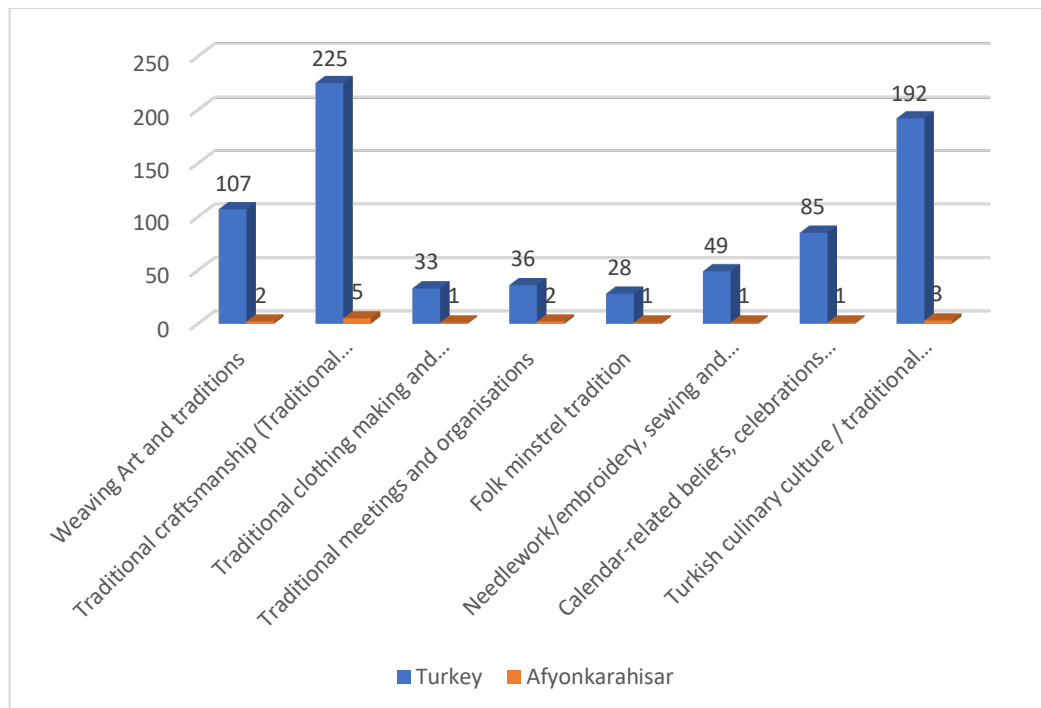
#### **Afyonkarahisar Cuisine**

The advent of agriculture and livestock farming has resulted in a proliferation of regional cuisines, as exemplified by the cuisine culture of Afyonkarahisar, which features a variety of meat, dough, and vegetable dishes. The province's culinary tradition cooks meat dishes with natural fat without adding oil. The longstanding cultivation of poppy plants in the region has contributed significantly to the diversity of words, with both poppy seeds and poppy oil commonly used as ingredients. Among the most renowned products of Afyonkarahisar are sausage, cream, Turkish delight, cream sugar, cherry, and potato. The Turkish Patent and Trademark Office offers geographic indication applications and registrations for food products that reflect the region's cuisine. Unique registered products from the cuisine culture of Afyonkarahisar province include “Afyon agziacığı, Afyon bükmesi, Afyon cream bread kadayıfı, Afyon cream, Afyon kebabı, Afyon Turkish delight, Afyon buffalo yogurt, Afyon pastırma.”

Afyon cream is a unique dairy product produced exclusively in Afyonkarahisar using buffalo milk. This type of cream is known for its superior taste and durability and is often enjoyed spread over bread, drizzled with honey or strawberry jam, among other toppings (Sandıkci and Özkan, 2017).

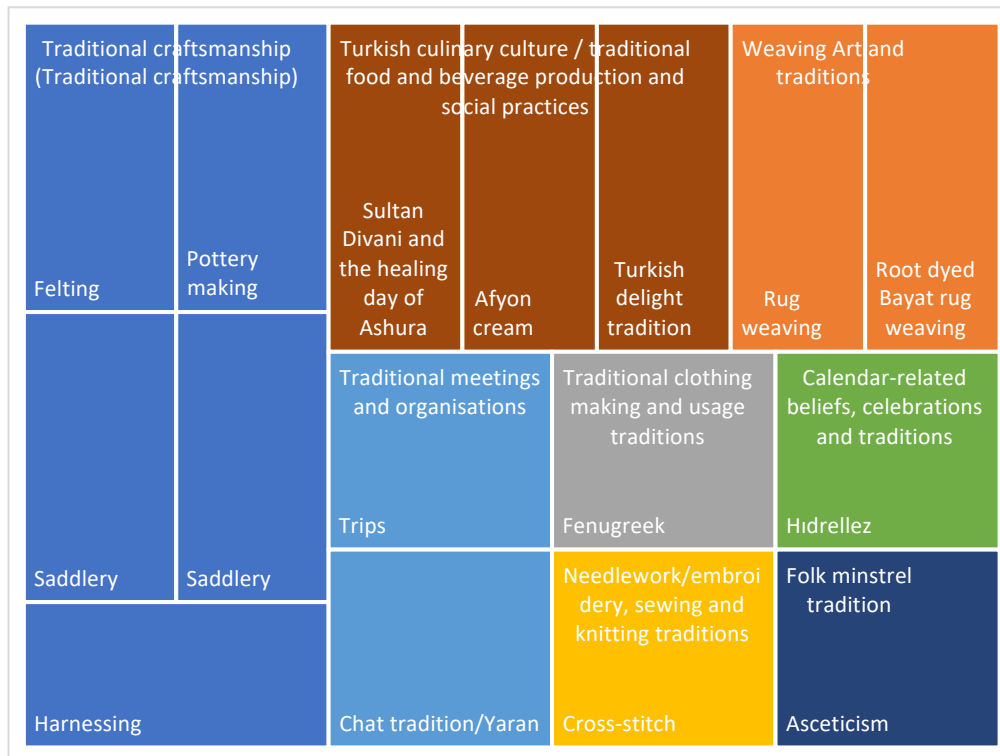
Afyon cream is a unique product originating from the Afyonkarahisar region of Turkey, derived from the sap of buffalo milk. Afyon Turkish delight, another well-known dessert hailing from Turkey, is also manufactured and marketed in large quantities in Afyonkarahisar. Its various forms include cream-filled Turkish delight, particularly well-suited to the region's culinary traditions. Among the other popular flavors of Turkish delight available in Afyonkarahisar are chocolate, pistachio, hazelnut, and walnut (Kizildemir, 2019).

**Figure 1:** The position of the ICH elements in Afyonkarahisar province in the Turkish national inventory according to their group classification.



The national inventory of ICH elements in Turkey was studied, and the ICH inventory in Afyonkarahisar was visualized for comparison. In this context, the number of ICH national inventories in Turkey and Afyonkarahisar were analyzed, and eight elements were analyzed in the data analysis. Among these elements, the most common element in Turkey is “Traditional craftsmanship” (225) and “Turkish culinary culture/traditional food and beverage production and social practices” (192). In contrast, the least common is the “Folk minstrel tradition” (28). However, the kitchen culture, which is shaped according to our culture, has an important impact on the transmission of culture. In recent years, with the increasing interest in gastronomy and globalization, tourists generally travel to explore and experience the culinary characteristics of a destination (Kozak, 2012). It can be assumed that it is easier to promote kitchen culture than other elements, so the lack of kitchen culture projects certified by the UNESCO Institute is seen as one of the reasons. In their study, Hall and Mitchell (2007) stated that three different change movements affect kitchen culture. One of these movements is the development of communication and transportation networks with increased social media use. This allows the recognition and learning of all foods and drinks in all kitchens worldwide without any time and space limitations (Kanik, 2016).



**Figure 2:** ICH elements located in Afyonkarahisar province

The ICH elements in Afyonkarahisar are shown in Figure 2. In this direction, there are 8 ICH elements in Afyonkarahisar. Among these elements, the most common is “traditional craftsmanship” at %31, followed by “Turkish culinary culture / traditional food and beverage production and social practices” at %19. The national inventory of ICH elements related to Turkey was studied, and the distribution of elements by provinces was mapped and visualized (Figure 3). The number of ICH national inventories in Turkey was analyzed in this context. The number of local inventories/local practices by provinces was determined from the element title groups of Turkish culinary culture/traditional food-beverage production and social rules. 61 ICH Turkish culinary culture regional inventory/local practices were identified. Among these provinces, Tokat has the most local inventories/local methods (19) in Turkey, followed by Şanlıurfa (13), Kayseri (11), and Afyonkarahisar (3) elements. These elements are the tradition of asure, Afyon cream, and Turkish delight culture.

Compared with the world on the cultural heritage list, four elements belong to Turkey. These elements are typical characteristics of unity, sharing, and hospitality in our community culture. When a guest arrives, Turkish coffee is inevitable. Each item is shared with more than one person. However, thousands of elements must be protected and included on the heritage list. Therefore, elements reflecting Turkish culture must be included on the heritage list as soon as possible (Keskin and Girgin, 2021).

**Figure 3.** Distribution of ICH Turkish culinary culture's traditional food and beverage preparation and social practices according to provinces in Turkey



Turkish culture has a deep structure that embraces cultural formations that are diverse in shape and content because it includes many religious systems, beliefs, philosophical thought, mystical networks, and traditional practices (Ugurlu and Koca, 2010). Turkey is making many efforts to preserve, pass on, and promote these deep structures to future generations and to market them as tourist value. At the same time, Turkey's existing ICH inventories cover the boundaries of the Republic of Turkey and all areas of ICH. Therefore, inventory studies are carried out by the General Directorate of Research and Education, coordinated by the Provincial Culture and Tourism Directorates, through Provincial Identification Commissions established in the provinces (KTB, 2022c).

#### Findings on the Opinions of Turkish Delight and Afyon Cream Producers

All participants in the study are business owners from Afyonkarahisar. The age range of the participants varies between 40 and 65. All participants are male and married.

**Q1:** Can you provide information about the place and history of Turkish delight and Afyon cream?

**K1:** “This passage states that Turkish delights, known as “delight,” in Turkish, are a traditional Turkish dessert that has been made in the same way for many centuries. The name “delight” comes from the Turkish word for “mum,” and it is typically made from ingredients such as powdered sugar, sugar, starch, or corn starch. The color, aroma, and flavors of delight can vary and can be enriched with various fruits, spices, and other ingredients. Traditional delight is usually a simple dessert with a jelly-like texture.”

**K2 and K3:** “This passage states that Turkish delights, or “delight,” is a traditional dessert of Turkish cuisine that has a history dating back to 600 BC. It is considered a dessert made by the ancient Turks and was frequently consumed in the palaces of the old Turkish rulers. Some of the most popular varieties of Turkish delight include cream delight and Afyon delight.

The cream is another ingredient commonly used in Turkish cuisine. It turns milk from water buffaloes into a creamy yogurt-like substance. Turkish cuisine commonly uses it to prepare delight, börek, and other sweets. Historically, the cream is a material made and consumed by the ancient Turks.”

**K4:** “This passage states that Afyonkarahisar is a region where the special ingredients used in producing Afyon delight are grown and produced. Therefore, Afyon delight has a different flavor and texture than other delight types. Afyon delight is typically a simple dessert that contains roasted nuts such as peanuts or hazelnuts.”

**K5:** “This passage states that during holidays, people can be seen waiting hours to get Turkish delights and cream. Afyon delight may appear as a product if a marriage proposal is not made. Turkish delights are often

served at circumcision ceremonies, weddings, religious gatherings, and as hospitality to guests in homes and workplaces.

It also mentions that once someone has tasted Afyon cream, they will not stop craving it. The cream cannot be obtained from just any place. The birthplace of cream is Afyonkarahisar. Afyonkarahisar has spread everything about cream throughout the country, from its production to its presentation.”

**Q2:** Can you provide information about the ingredients and production of Turkish delight and Afyon cream?

K1: “Traditional values are those passed down to us from the past, that have not lost their importance, that are recognized by people through their experiences and are specific to us. Foods such as Turkish delights and cream are typically cooked and stirred at high temperatures, then cooled and sliced. The ingredients used, and the correct cooking techniques can affect the quality and flavor of these dishes.”

K2: “Cream delight (Turkish delight with Afyon cream) is not readily available in stores, so it is often made to meet demand throughout the day. I would happily provide a recipe you can make at home. Mix milk, flour, sugar, and a drop of rosewater in a saucepan and cook until thickened. Remove from heat and add vanilla and butter, stirring to combine. Pour the mixture into a container with ground pistachios. Let it sit in the refrigerator overnight or for 3-4 hours. To prepare the cream, whisk together 1 cup of milk and 1 cup of heavy cream. Let it chill in the refrigerator for 1 hour or use cream instead. Then, spread the cream or cream over the mixture, roll it into a log slice, and serve.”

K3: “Whether from Afyon or not, we are a country that consumes a lot of cream delight (Turkish delight with cream). I want to offer you a recipe I have prepared carefully. For the delight, put flour and room-temperature butter in a saucepan and stir until the flour is fragrant. Then gradually add sugar, milk, and vanilla. Bring to a boil and let it thicken, then remove from heat. Let it cool slightly and spread it on a square baking dish. Sprinkle ground pistachios over the delight and smooth it out. Let it chill in the refrigerator for 6 hours, then spread the cream over it and cut it into long strips to roll it into a log.

Cream production involves straining cows' milk through cheesecloth and placing it in unique pots called cream tavas. These pots are preheated, and the milk is heated to 70-90 degrees. The milk thickens, and the process of foaming, known as göbek bağlama, takes place. The pots are removed from the heat and emptied to allow the cream to become porous, and then they are cooled. The cream is then removed from the pots, divided into pieces, and placed on a flat plate.”

K4: “Afyon cream is very famous. People of all ages enjoy eating it. It is often served with honey and bread pudding and given as a gift to guests. The production of Afyon cream starts by placing the strained milk in small pots. The pots are placed on low heat on the stove. We need to boil the milk, but not too much. It should be cooked at 70-80 degrees. We must not boil the milk too much; otherwise, the fat will disappear. The distinctive feature of Afyon cream is that it is made from fatty milk. Then, the boiled milk is put into refrigerators while still hot. The cream rests in the fridge for 6-7 hours. Finally, the cream is chilled in a freezer at -1 to -2 degrees until it reaches the desired consistency. The cream is then cut and placed on plates.

K5: “Manda cream has a thickness of 1.5 cm. It takes two days to make one batch of cream. About 330 grams of cream can be produced from 3 kg of milk. Cream production is now done locally by very few businesses. There is difficulty in finding workers. We cannot train personnel. Nobody wants to work. Cream production starts

in the early hours of the morning with cow milking. The milk is strained and put on the stove to boil, but it should not be boiled too much, or it will not become cream. It is then put in a cold refrigerator and covered with a cloth to allow it to sweat. Finally, it is served on top of sweets like honey and bread pudding.”

**Q3:** Can you provide information about the sociocultural dynamics of Turkish delight and Afyon cream production?

“It has been noted that the production of delight and cream is laborious so people would make it together with their neighbors in the past. This situation has a positive effect on neighborly relations. In the past, the family's elders made it and therefore had an exceptional value, so there was a need to continue this tradition. In rural areas, young people learn to make delight and cream from their families, and sometimes this knowledge is passed on to future generations. However, it is noted that the level of knowledge is not sufficient. It is stated that young people in big cities do not know how to make cream or delight and buy them ready-made, so they do not see the effort behind these products. It is mentioned that whether it is a delight workshop or a cream workshop, the entire staff sees each other as a family and, although not as in the past, there is also social life in the workshops. Participants have also noted that older master artisans tend to be more inclined to teach young people.” (K1; K2; K3; K4; K5).

**Q4 and Q5:** What are your thoughts on the cultural value of Turkish delight Afyon and Afyon cream? What are your thoughts on the sustainability of Turkish delight and Afyon cream production?

“Turkish delight is a beloved dessert that is often served to guests. It is known worldwide as a Turkish dessert. Upon returning home, buying a small gift package for the household or friends is traditional. Turkish delight is one of the best and most valuable gift foods that can be served. It is done at engagement parties, visits to the sick, weddings, and holidays. Participants stated that many people come to Afyonkarahisar to buy Turkish delight. It is mentioned that the traditional production of Turkish delight has decreased and that the conventional production has apprentice-master relationships. The people working in the Turkish delight workshops only work to make money, and they cannot experience this culture. The elegant crystal or glass Turkish delight dishes used to serve Turkish delight are the unchanging elements of Turkish delight service. Turkish delight is served in cafes or at home with Turkish coffee, sweetening our mouths and conversation. It is emphasized that Turkish delight has many benefits. It helps reduce inflammation of the tonsils, contains carbohydrates that are beneficial for kidney patients, and heals boils and wounds. Participants who emphasize that everything in excess is harmful warn that excessive consumption of Turkish delight causes the body to convert the components into fat in the liver.

Afyon cream is a type of cream used in Turkish cuisine. It is made by heating milk at 92 degrees for at least 2 minutes, then cooling it. The fat milk content must be at least 60% by weight. Traditional Afyon cream is used primarily as a breakfast food and a flavoring in sweets and confections. It is made from sheep's milk, which contains more dry matter than cow's milk and is therefore used to produce cream. For example, sheep's milk is higher in minerals, fat, and protein than cow's milk, which gives it a unique character and makes it suitable for use in cream.

For the cream to be porous and frothy, specific measures are taken to prevent the milk from spilling on the pans. The milk is poured into wide and deep pans from a high height. After this, the milk in the pans is cooled to a temperature of 40-45 degrees. After cooling, a second heat treatment (70-85 degrees) is applied to the pans. Then, the pans are left to rest in a cold room for 24 hours to shape the cream layer. After this process, the cream is divided into pieces using a fine needle. Thus, the cream is ready to be consumed on a flat plate. In recent years, due to the lack of production of sheep's milk and the difficulty of the traditional production method, the cream has

begun to be produced from cow's milk cream using the physical separation method. This cream differs from Afyon cream due to its raw material, product characteristics, and production method. Therefore, there are essential points to consider when comparing these two types of cream. Research in this field is necessary for future generations to be able to make the cream. Cream production takes work. There are very few businesses that still produce it traditionally. Therefore, areas should be created to address academic and business-based problems and support local producers.”

### **Conclusions and Suggestions**

This study was conducted to examine the ICH elements in the province of Afyonkarahisar, to determine the place and importance of the traditional food and beverage production and social practices of Turkish cuisine culture among these cultural elements in Afyonkarahisar, and to reveal the contributions it can make to the development of gastronomy tourism. According to the research findings, when the position of the ICH elements in Afyonkarahisar province in the national inventory of Turkey is examined according to the group classification, there are eight elements in the data analysis. Among these elements, the most common factor is “Turkish culinary culture / traditional food and beverage production and social practices” (56) in Turkey, while in Afyonkarahisar, there are “Turkish culinary culture / traditional food and beverage production and social practices” (3) among the ICH elements. When the ICH elements in Afyonkarahisar are examined, the most common aspects are “traditional handicrafts” (31%), followed by “Turkish culinary culture / traditional food and beverage production and social practices” (19%). In Turkey, when Turkish culinary culture / traditional food and beverage production and social practices are examined, 43 elements are found in 66 local inventories / local practices from 61 provinces. Among these provinces, the province of Tokat has the most local inventories / local methods (19), while Afyonkarahisar has (3) elements. These elements are the tradition of asure, traditional cream production, and Turkish delight culture. The provinces with Turkish culinary culture inventory in the ICH list have been classified. According to the research data, when the number of ICH elements registered in the stocks of the provinces is evaluated quantitatively, it is seen that the numerical difference between Afyonkarahisar and the other provinces is minimal, there are three inventories in the average of the provinces in Turkey, and Afyonkarahisar has three checklists. When the inventories of the provinces in Turkey are examined, it is concluded that Afyonkarahisar, one of the gastronomy cities, does not have enough elements for Turkish cuisine. At the same time, Afyonkarahisar's ICH elements have been examined, and suggestions have been made for their usability in the city's potential for gastronomy tourism.

Upon examination of ICH gastronomy, it is evident that the practice involves preserving and protecting commonly consumed products associated with specific celebrations and seasons and passed down from generation to generation. These products are made traditionally, using natural processing methods, and are recognized for their sensory properties. Furthermore, they are often associated with a particular local region. National dishes prepared using local ingredients are deeply intertwined with food, drinking and eating practices, socialization, transmission, identity, tradition and change, freshness, and local foods.

Taking Turkish delight and Afyon cream as examples, it can be observed that social entrepreneurship aimed at supplying, preparing, and marketing local materials has the potential to increase employment in the region and support local communities from economic and social perspectives. These products are believed to provide emotional belonging to local people and tourists. Re-examining and reviving old traditional recipes and increasing traditional production can also play a crucial role in preserving the cultural identity of local communities. Thus,

Afyonkarahisar can effectively utilize its gastronomy as a sustainable resource through ICH Turkish delight and Afyon cream. Given Afyonkarahisar's tourism potential, incorporating local gastronomy practices in preparing Turkish delight and Afyon cream is expected to foster the development of the region's tourism industry.

The Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism website features a tab showcasing the ICH elements of Afyonkarahisar. Documentaries could be produced and aired on local and foreign media platforms to promote influential Turkish culinary culture and ICH elements in Afyonkarahisar. However, modern approaches in research and study should uphold the essence of cultural transmission and harm its cultural product. Local people and tourists' cultural attitudes and perceptions in Afyonkarahisar must be studied in-depth, and research should prioritize preserving cultural values. Organizing exhibitions, seminars, and conferences related to Turkish culinary culture, traditional food and beverage production, and social practices can significantly boost the country's economy and tourism.

Additionally, tours can be organized to introduce Afyonkarahisar's cultural and tourist attractions to visitors from different countries. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism supports activities that promote the country's cultural values in advertising campaigns and events organized abroad. Partnership models are used to collaborate with relevant institutions and organizations. Cultural heritage projects and areas are determined nationally, and awareness campaigns are conducted domestically and abroad. Similarly, ICH projects and regions are also determined nationally, and adequate promotional activities are carried out domestically and internationally. The private sector, local governments, and public institutions must support preserving and promoting cultural values in Afyonkarahisar.

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