

RETHINKING THE LOCAL:
ADANA KEBAB AND ARTISANSHIP AT THE INTERSECTION OF
GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Elif Birbiri, certify that

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ABSTRACT

Rethinking the Local:

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This thesis focuses on the ‘sense of belonging’ evoked by regional and local cuisines, through the Adana kebab. It explores how ‘local’ cuisines are formed and how they find their place in national cuisines. The thesis is structured around two key foci, namely, the artisanship of the Adana kebab and the process of the standardization of the dish. The first part considers the theoretical framework of the project and offers an alternative perspective on the concept of ‘space’. In addition, it introduces the physical and human geography of the region, its history, and the regional cuisine of Adana. Next, the thesis considers the findings from fieldwork, based primarily upon 28 semi-structured interviews conducted with kebab artisans. The fieldwork addresses the dynamics of the regional cuisine around the kebab, in terms of the artisans' experience of craftsmanship, the making of the dish itself- including the ingredients and the equipment involved- and the culture around eating. After engaging with production practices, the thesis takes up a comparative analysis of the consumption patterns of the Adana kebab, both in Adana and Istanbul. Furthermore, the ensuing discussion of the ‘dining out’ culture enables an understanding of the effects of globalization, transformation and standardization of consumption and production practices. The thesis concludes that the experience and understanding of a regional cuisine, and the culture around it, cannot be reduced simply to its taste and smell. On the contrary, it should also involve a consideration of the communal socio-historical memory and cultural sensibilities of the region’s inhabitants.

ÖZET

Yereli Yeniden Düşünmek:

Tarih ve Coğrafyanın Kesişiminde Adana Kebap ve Zanaatkarlık

Bu tez, Adana kebabı örneği üzerinden yöresel yemekler ekseninde kurulan aidiyet hissine odaklanmaktadır. Yöresel mutfakların oluşum süreçlerini ve bu mutfakların ulusal mutfaklara nasıl dahil edildiğini sorgular. Araştırma, Adana kebabının zanaatkarlığı ve yemeğin tek tipleşme süreci olmak üzere iki ana başlık etrafında kurgulanmıştır. Tezin ilk bölümü araştırmanın teorik çerçevesine odaklanarak mekan (*space*) kavramına alternatif bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır. Ayrıca Adana bölgesinin fiziki ve beşeri coğrafyasını, şehrin tarihsel arka planını ve yöresel mutfağını tanıtır. Sonraki bölümde, kebab ustalarıyla gerçekleştirilen yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelerin verileri sunulmaktadır. Bu veriler kebab ustalarının zanaatkarlık deneyimi, Adana kebabı üretim ve tüketim süreçleri ve bu süreçlerde kullanılan araç-gereçleri ve gıda malzemelerini bir bütün olarak ele almaktadır. Üretim pratiklerine değindikten sonra, Adana kebabının hem Adana'daki hem de İstanbul'daki tüketim biçimlerini karşılaştırmalı olarak ele alır. Bir yandan Adana kebabının farklı yerlerdeki tüketim biçimlerini tartışırken, diğer yandan dışarıda yeme kültürünü ele alarak küreselleşen bir çağda yemeğin üretim ve tüketim pratiklerinin geçirdiği değişimi ve yiyeceklerin tek tipleşme sürecini analiz eder. Bu tezin vardığı sonuçta, yerel yemek kültürleri yalnızca tatma ve koklama duyularıyla sınırlı değildir. Aksine, yeme-içme pratikleri kolektif bir hafızaya nüfuz etmiş (şekillendirmiş) sosyo-ekonomik, tarihsel ve coğrafi olguları barındıran çokkatmanlı bir olgudur.

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*To those with whom I've had the good fortune of breaking bread and
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Identifying the research question

The culinary world includes a vast number of dishes named after countries, regions, or cities, creating a connection between the meal and its place of origin. This association is often based on either the presence of a particular ingredient, or the dish as a whole, being linked to a specific geographic location. Consequently, the popularity of a place becomes intertwined with its culinary culture, as individuals develop an imagined link between the food and the space it represents. Some familiar examples of such dishes and ingredients include Greek yoghurt, Dijon mustard, Chinese gooseberry (kiwifruit), Spaghetti Bolognese, Champagne¹, and *Kayseri mantısı* (Turkish style dumplings). However, it is important to recognize that the notion of “originality”, attributed to a geographical location, does not merely relate to its physical characteristics. Rather, there exist a multitude of contextual factors contributing to the popularity of a dish, including migration patterns, urbanization, eating out culture, ethnicity, and religion, among others.

Within societies, individuals actively distinguish certain foods as belonging to ‘us’ while excluding others as belonging to ‘them,’ with varying degrees of scale. This attribution of nationality and/or identity to a foodstuff can occur at different levels, covering both a broader national (such as Turkish coffee or Japanese rice) and a more local sense of belonging (such as Antep *baklava* or Edam cheese). This sense of belonging, in relation to food, manifests through an interplay of social and cultural dynamics. Determining the ‘belonging’ of a food to a specific place involves a

¹ Used colloquially to denote sparkling wine, whether or not it originates from the region of the same name in France.

combination of historical, cultural, and socio-political factors that shape culinary traditions and practices. These factors may include the historical roots of a dish, cultural practices surrounding its production and consumption, the influence of regional ingredients and cooking techniques, and the development of a collective culinary heritage.

Food plays a significant role in the reproduction of national and local identities. It acts as a powerful symbol that reinforces a sense of belonging, cultural pride, and shared heritage within a community. The production and consumption of certain foods as representative of a nation or locality contribute to the perpetuation and conservation of cultural identities. Through culinary traditions, individuals reaffirm their connection with a specific group and create a sense of continuity with their historical and cultural roots. Additionally, the identification of a dish with a particular place can serve as a source of cultural tourism, further strengthening the connection between food, place, and identity. How does the sense of belonging appear in relation to food? How do we determine the belonging of a food to a place? How do we decide the ‘nationality’ of a dish? Does food make us reproduce our national and/or local identity? These were the initial questions guiding my research.

This thesis examines the production and consumption practices of a dish known as the ‘Adana kebab’, both within the Adana region and in Turkey at large. The Adana kebab is a local culinary specialty that has gained widespread recognition and popularity throughout the country. The thesis aims to uncover the factors behind the naming of the dish after the city of Adana and explore its significance at both local and national levels. Through an analysis of the artisanship associated with the Adana kebab, this thesis aims to understand the craftsmanship involved in its preparation and representation. By closely examining the traditional techniques, distinctive ingredients, and cooking methods employed in its making, the thesis aims to discover

how the specific qualities of the Adana kebab contribute to its identity as a localized culinary creation. Furthermore, investigating the role of the culture of eating out in the popularity of the Adana kebab will shed light on the changing patterns of consumption, and the significance of the dish in the broader culinary landscape of Turkey. The thesis will explore the factors that have facilitated the spread of the Adana kebab beyond its place of origin, analysing the role of restaurants, street food vendors, and social gatherings in the dissemination of this dish.

Additionally, the thesis will delve into the socio-economic and ethnic dimensions of the sense of belonging associated with the Adana kebab. Adana, as a region with its own unique history, geography, and cultural background, provides a distinct context for understanding the formation of local identity. By examining the socio-economic factors that shape the production and consumption of the Adana kebab, such as the availability of ingredients and market dynamics, the thesis aims to uncover how these elements influence the perception of the Adana kebab as a symbol of the region's culinary heritage. Dolbee and Gratien's work (2022) significantly influenced the formulation of my research questions, particularly their discussion of Adana kebabs and Antep pistachios. Their study examined the dynamics of dispossession and migrant labour surrounding these food items as they transitioned from their origins in the southern region of Turkey to the cosmopolitan city of Istanbul. In their analysis, the authors briefly touch upon the historical context of the southern region, emphasizing that the distinctiveness of Adana's kebab culture derives from its multicultural composition. However, they also highlight that this very distinctiveness has led to the exoticization of kebabs, which evoke notions of difference within a nation-state seeking to foster a homogeneous national identity (p. 14).

Moreover, Appadurai's influential article 'How to Make a National Cuisine' (1988) shaped the initial conceptualization of this thesis, providing insights into the dynamics involved in the construction of a 'national cuisine.' Appadurai focuses on Indian cookbooks as written sources of food recipes, raising questions about the selection process of dishes representing specific geographical regions². He highlights the limited accessibility of cookbooks, predominantly targeting middle-class urban women, and thus excluding a significant portion of the population. Appadurai argues that cookbooks serve as sources for creating unifying myths that contribute to the formation of national identities. Building upon Appadurai's work, Csergo (1999) explores the emergence of the first cookbooks in France during the 19th century, emphasizing that these publications were the result of collaborations between professional cooks and ordinary housewives to contribute to the introduction of 'national' dishes in the country.

Cookbooks thus serve as key referents for national identities, functioning as sources that foster imagined communities based on shared stories, ethnicities, religions, and languages (Anderson, 1998). Initially, the notion of 'locality' appeared to be a compelling concept for examining regional cuisines within the context of Turkey. The primary objective was to challenge the (biased) understanding of a singular "Turkish cuisine" and explore how food is embraced (differently) at regional levels. The comparison between the Adana kebab and the Urfa kebab would serve as an exemplary case, as these dishes are named after their respective cities. However, it became apparent that distinguishing between regional cuisines could reproduce discourses of 'otherness' at a micro-level. In other words, locality does not necessarily

² In this thesis, I prefer to acknowledge Adana as a 'region' rather than a 'city'. There are both geographical and sociological reasons for that. The notion of 'city' is more related to the studies of urban places, urbanism, and urbanized lifestyles. However, 'region' includes the physical geography of a place which plays a crucial role in the food production which shapes a region's culinary cuisine.

counteract nationalism but can serve its interests. As Ferguson (2004) states, “The national and the local are as inextricable on the culinary as on the other level” (p. 127). Consequently, it became necessary to move beyond the misleading dichotomy of nationalism and locality. In relation to that dichotomy, it is essential to consider Dağdeviren's remark in his interview with Batuman (2010): “Food has no ethnicity, only geography.” While this perspective holds some validity, it is also crucial to discuss the concept of ‘geography’ from socio-economic, political, and ecological perspectives.

These initial inquiries are crucial for understanding the three main pillars of this thesis: Adana as the spatial context, covering both its human and physical geography, the significance of artisanal food production as a form of domestic know-how, and the dynamics of the sense of belonging that forms the region's food culture. A more in-depth exploration of these arguments will be presented in the following within the framework of food identities, which serves as the central concept guiding this research. First, I will tackle with the issue of ‘sense of belongingness’ by focusing on food consumption and its relation to the making of cultural identities. My primary emphasis will be on the discussion based on the creation of belongingness and how it is linked to both food production and consumption practices. Second, I will explore the role of geography in the shaping of the contours (limits, possibilities) of food-related imaginaries in relation to locality. Here I will bring in both physical and human geography and their impact on the formation of culinary culture of Adana as the region’s cuisine. Later, I elaborated on the methodology of the thesis and outline of the following chapters. The methodology focuses on the major pillars of the thesis and how they interconnect with each other while explaining Adana as the local space, kebab as the primary dish, and the experiences of the artisans as the main actors.

1.1.1 Food and belonging

While the act of food consumption serves the fundamental purpose of providing our bodies with the energy necessary for survival, food goes beyond mere sustenance and speaks to our deepest desires. It becomes a vehicle for expressing various emotions, such as love, hatred, and anger. Additionally, food serves as a means of communication within social contexts. The food choices people make, to eat some, offer others, or refrain from still others, offers insights into their culture and interpersonal relationships. Food production and consumption practices contribute to the formation of personal identities through the establishment of “ideal shared food patterns” (Brown, 1984). Food is a subject that encompasses numerous connections and dimensions, both universal and deeply individual. Rather than being contradictory, these perspectives reveal the multifaceted nature of the subject matter.

Heldke (2006) and Kaplan (2012) contribute to the philosophical understanding of food. Their works intersect in the idea that food is not solely a concrete object but also a philosophical one. Kaplan categorizes food into various dimensions, including nutrition, nature, culture, social good, spirituality (metaphysical), desideratum, and aesthetic object. In his introduction, he highlights the significance of addressing these dimensions:

Some have argued that food is eschewed because of the perception that it is too physical and transient to deserve serious consideration. Others have argued that food production and preparation have conventionally been regarded as women's work and, therefore, viewed as an unworthy topic for a male-dominated profession. Still others argue that the senses and activities associated with food (taste, eating, and drinking) have traditionally been seen as 'lower senses' and are too primitive and instinctual to be analyzed philosophically. (Kaplan, 2012, p. 2)

Heldke's conceptualization of food involves aesthetics, agriculture, hunger, ethnicity and culture, embodiment, and subject-object dualism. She argues that philosophy and food are mutually dependent, stating, “Because food, quite simply, is a primary source

of meaning and value in humans' lives, and philosophy has traditionally defined itself as a discipline concerned with exploring those sources of meaning" (Heldke, 2006, p. 203). Even the question of "What is food?" does not yield a singular answer, as the edibility of certain animals, fruits, and vegetables, may vary among individuals based on personal tastes. Kaplan contends that the nature of food poses ambiguous questions, including the distinction between natural and artificial food, the identities of food items, and the differentiation between food and animals as edible objects (Kaplan, 2012, p. 4). These discussions resonate with Douglas's seminal work on dirt and spirituality, which explores concepts of 'purity' and 'danger.' Food provides ample examples that align with her research, such as certain meats requiring ritual sacrifice before consumption or the classification of certain animals as "unclean" and therefore inedible (Douglas, 1960).

In addition to its philosophical dimensions, food encompasses the processes of production, distribution, and consumption. Food production is a vast subject that begins with the cultivation of seeds and soil and includes various agricultural production methods. The literature emphasizes both conventional and alternative food production systems, where scholars explore the distinctions between alternative food networks and conventional systems, examine the impacts of different production methods, and investigate how ethical consumerism influences producer decisions. They also examine the ecological consequences of cold food supply chains. The unequal distribution and consumption of food are extensively debated, raising questions about the actors benefiting from this inequality and the actions needed to address such disparities. Food accessibility varies among individuals, leading to different relationships with foodstuffs. For some, it is a 'necessity,' while for others, it may be seen as a 'luxury.' Regardless of that distinction, food remains "a highly condensed social fact" (Appadurai, 1981, p. 494).

Furthermore, food represents “practical knowledge” (Kaplan, 2012, p. 9) and is connected to food-related expertise. It goes beyond mere theoretical knowledge and involves the practical aspects of farming, planting, breeding, harvesting, cooking, processing, digesting, and disposing. This aspect is particularly relevant to my research as I focus on the domestic know-how associated with the processes of making the Adana kebab. I consider it as a form of “artisanship” (*zanaatçılık*), where knowledge is acquired through practice and transmission.

My approach to the topic is primarily centred around the sense of belonging associated with food, which has gathered significant scholarly attention. For example, Avieli (2016) explores the concept of “belongingness” related to hummus and its connection to the hummus wars between Israel and Lebanon. This analysis covers ethnic differentiation and the economic contexts of hummus production and marketing practices. Gvion (2012) examines the negotiation between Israel and Palestine surrounding dishes such as falafel, considering it both an “authentic” and a “Westernized” food item. The discussion delves into the dichotomies of traditional-modern, public-private spheres of cooking, and the dynamics between mainstream and minority social groups, with Israel being associated with modern falafel production and global marketing, while Palestine is linked to traditional home-cooking practices.

Another example is Fusté-Forné’s work (2020) on cheese in the city of Gouda, Netherlands. The study explores regional tourism in Gouda through its production, presentation, and attraction of tourists to Gouda cheese. Additionally, food items like cheese spark debates among nations such as France, Italy, and Turkey. These examples extend to various food items like beer (Germany and Czechia), chocolate (Belgium and Switzerland), and baklava (Greece and Turkey). However, the focus is not solely on the food itself but rather the socially constructed symbolic identities attached to it. To explore the creation of food identities, I will examine the role of

cookbooks. They serve as representatives of specific food cultures and nations, but often fail to capture the everyday cooking practices of ordinary individuals.

The cultural context of certain dishes often leads us to seek their place of origin. In the realm of food and identity, Massoth (2017) has provided valuable insights through her article on chili. She critiques the “politics of performing whiteness” (p. 45) by examining the representation of Mexican food in the United States. Massoth focuses on chili as a specific ingredient to illustrate how individuals redefine themselves through their “ability to eat spicy food” and how this intersects with class, ethnicity, legality, and mass consumption. She analyses Mexican cookbooks and their portrayal within the US context. Her argument on the construction of identity can be summarized as follows: “If we consider the nation as home and homemaking as a performance of identity, then it is clear how cooking could function in creating boundaries and performing nationhood” (ibid).

Kashdan (2017) explores notions of belonging and regional identity within the homogenized concept of Mediterranean cuisine. In various cookbooks featuring recipes from Mediterranean countries, the region is often presented as a unified entity with a shared history and an ‘imagined moment’. This creates a “myth of Mediterranean food” (p. 17) based on the imagery of the blue sea, red tomatoes, olive oil, hummus, and other iconic dishes from Mediterranean countries. However, this perspective overlooks the micro-geographies—both human and physical—as well as the historical, economic, and socio-political aspects specific to each place. Passidomo's (2017) discussion on consumption aligns with Kashdan's work, emphasizing that while consuming the food of a particular place can provide an intimate and "authentic" experience, it also risks disregarding historical and contemporary oppressions, reducing actual people and places to commodities to be consumed (p. 432).

Reconceptualizing both human and physical geography and locality is essential to address one of the core aspects of my research, which enables me to problematize the existing dualities of local and national. While doing that, Cook et al. (2006) offer an inspiring redefinition of humans, suggesting that we perceive them as “rounded human beings” rather than solely as producers or consumers (p. 662). They advocate for acknowledging the active interactions between humans and non-humans.³ This reformation of humans as ‘rounded beings’ has methodological significance, not only in relation to (non)humans but also for understanding spatial and historical experiences in a relational manner.

Initially, my understanding of locality was limited, perceiving it as a concept opposed to nationality. However, the aforementioned examples illustrate how locality operates within the contexts of nationalism and globalization. Nonetheless, locality extends beyond these boundaries. Appadurai (1995) argues that the production of locality can be seen as a "struggle" and highlights three perspectives crucial to understanding the term:

- (1) the nation-state's increasing efforts to define all neighbourhoods within its forms of allegiance and affiliation, (2) the growing disjuncture between territory, subjectivity, and collective social movements, and (3) the erosion of the relationship between spatial and virtual neighbourhoods due to the force and form of electronic mediation. (p. 217)

Hence, I refuse to reformulate locality as an element embedded in the creation of nation-states. Instead, I intend to explore the ever-changing nature of the concept and its significant social and cultural consequences. I am interested in examining the evolving definitions of locality and the ways it shapes and is shaped by society.

³ Before emphasizing the relationship between human and non-human, we need to understand the concept ‘non-human.’ The ‘non-human’ includes, but not limited to, animals, spaces, things, and human-made products. In my case, Çukurova provides a wide range of non-human actors such as the climate conditions, physical conditions of the region (e.g.: swamps), and mosquitos.

1.1.2 Food, geography and artisanal production

The concept of ‘geography’ is frequently employed to describe regional variations as well as similarities with other locations. In the context of my research, I highlight both human and physical geographies to showcase the diverse range of food products cultivated in different regions of Turkey. For instance, while the Çukurova and Izmir regions were historically associated with cotton production, the Black Sea region is renowned for its black tea and corn cultivation. Furthermore, terms such as “geographical indicators” and “terroir” are commonly used in literature to establish a connection between a specific product and its place of origin. I categorize geography into two dimensions: physical and human geography. Physical geography comprises factors such as altitude, water resources, forests, mountains, soil fertility, and animal species. Undoubtedly, these variations contribute to the diversity in food production. However, it is important to recognize that food production is not solely determined by geographical indicators, particularly in our globalized world where food travels across vast distances. Human geography, which explores historical migration patterns of a region, also plays a significant role. In this regard, it is crucial to avoid perceiving geography as a static and predetermined space, but rather to engage with its complexities.

Various conceptualizations of geography can be found in the literature, and Massey’s (2001) work holds particular significance as it challenges prevailing understandings of the term. Massey distinguishes between physical and human geography, highlighting their constant transformative interactions. She employs the term “space” to describe physical geography, which she argues is not merely a passive ground where humans, as the sole actors, shape history in a linear and progressive manner. Space, for her, is not a timeless surface but also holds memories. These memories do not derive from a singular history; rather, multiple histories exist, which

challenge the linear process of historiography. Moreover, Massey asserts that there are diverse ways to critique the notion of singularity. She not only focuses on postmodernist critiques of modernist approaches to concepts such as “space” and “history,” but also warns against postmodernists falling into the trap of perceiving space as static. To do so, she further engages with discussions on globalization and locality, asserting that globalization is not simply about traversing space, but rather the convergence of multiple trajectories, with the politics lying in the terms of their intersection (Massey, 2001, p. 16). Her perspective resonates with Appadurai's (1995) conceptualization of locality, where he argues for a "growing disjuncture between territory, subjectivity, and collective social movement" within local neighbourhoods.

While regional dishes may exhibit the variety of food geographies and ethnicities, they may also reinforce existing divisions through food. Reflecting on Massey's insights, I am prompted to ask: How can I articulate the notion of local food without complying with the traditional-modern dichotomy and viewing geography as an immutable space? Massey's perspective on geography provides a framework for recontextualizing Appadurai's notion of locality. Locality is neither the opposite of nationalism nor a concept that serves nationalism; rather, it embodies its own struggles and strengths. Additionally, when focusing on locality, one must be cautious of what Appadurai (1996) refers to as “imagining nostalgia,” wherein a desire for the past is created through nostalgia for experiences that individuals may never have actually lived through. Nostalgia is fostered through various instruments of consumerism, such as print and visual media, newspapers, social media, and word-of-mouth advertising. The aim is to create a sense of familiarity between so-called ancestors and us, ultimately transforming actual food into a commodity. Sutton (2001) explains that memories are preserved in a nostalgic sense, and this process engenders a new form of commodification. Building on this notion, Mannur (2007) suggests that nostalgia,

frequently understood as a cultural practice, can also be viewed as critical praxis—a perspective that closely aligns with the case of artisanal food production. In my research, food becomes an “authentic tradition or pure place of origin” (Maira, 2002, as cited in Mannur, 2007).

Therefore, by critically engaging with Massey's and Appadurai's perspectives, I aim to navigate the complexities of geography and locality to articulate the concept of local food beyond the confines of traditional-modern dichotomies and static notions of space. I recognize the significance of historical and socio-cultural factors in shaping food production and consumption practices, while also acknowledging the potential pitfalls of romanticizing the past and reducing food to a commodified symbol of identity.

In its close link to geography, we also need to focus on artisanal food production to understand how foodstuff has been processed in the local. The term “artisanal production” did not originally refer to food production practices. As Cope (2014) elucidates, historically, the term comprises a broad range of goods, services, and foods. Only in recent years has it been reclaimed in common usage to primarily describe food products, particularly those made using traditional methods, often by hand and with an emphasis on quality (Cope, 2014, p. 168). According to Lingham and Manning (2022), artisanal food is crafted through creativity, passion, and traditional methods using traditional ingredients (Lingham & Manning, 2022, p. 101). However, this definition raises several questions. How do we differentiate traditional methods from others? What qualifies an ingredient as traditional? Must the ingredients be locally sourced to be considered traditional? How do we determine the locality of an ingredient? Opinions regarding the definition of local food vary. Environmental debates also surround artisanal food production, specifically concerning the idea that it should be produced and consumed locally. However, in our globalized world, artisanal

food products, such as jams, cheeses, beers, and wines, are often shipped over long distances. Therefore, in this discussion, I will compare the discussions around artisanal and local foods. Plus, I will focus on the historical perspective of the making of the Adana kebab and its artisans.

In conjunction with artisanal food production, Trubek's well-known work on 'terroir' provides a valuable framework for engaging in more abstract discussions. Originally a term associated with winemaking, terroir is defined as "the taste of place" or "*goût de terroir*," closely tied to the ecology of a specific location, including factors such as soil fertility, topography, and microclimate (Trubek, 2008, p. 19). Trubek approaches the concept of terroir from a historical standpoint, starting with the formation of agrarian rural France. The notion of an agrarian rural France is relatively recent, emerging at the beginning of the 20th century when rural areas supplied food to urban centres and certain regional foods became associated with specific locales (Nizam, 2017). Both the state and its citizens were concerned with legally and politically safeguarding the "uniqueness" of French products against international competition (Trubek, 2008, p. 26). It is crucial to bear in mind Barham's (2003) argument that labelling origins is a multi-layered process, nested within multiple levels of coordination spanning from the local to the global (Barham, 2003, p. 130). In relation to these discussions, terroir appears as a recent concept which is closely linked to modernity and the globalization of the world. Therefore, it enables us to discuss how the local meets with the global in terms of the dissemination of food cultures, from local places to become world-famous dishes.

Csergo's (1999) work contributes to these discussions by highlighting the advancement of industrial and agricultural technologies in Europe, which facilitated the influence of urban lifestyles starting in the late 19th century. As Csergo explains, a new system of representations emerged, perpetuating a romanticized notion of the local as a

preserver of past sensibilities. This system glorified regional cuisines as embodiments of local agricultural traditions, commitment to rural, family, and religious customs, and nostalgic yearnings for a pre-industrial, pre-urban era (Csengeri, 1999, p. 510). In contrast, Paxson (2010) argues that the locality of food differs from terroir, asserting that the taste of a place is not synonymous with proximity alone. For the taste of place, both the geographical qualities of a region and its social characteristics are commodified within the product (Paxson, 2010, p. 453).

When discussing artisanship, it is necessary to mention Sennett's (2009) work on craftsmanship. While Sennett does not specifically address the craftsmanship of artisanal food production, his sociological perspective on craft sheds light on how the act of creating physical objects provides insight into the techniques of experience that shape our interactions with others. Sennett argues that technical expertise and imagination are intertwined, and challenges encountered in material craftsmanship, such as working with resistance or managing ambiguity, offer insights into the resistance people may harbor towards one another or the fluid boundaries between individuals (Sennett, 2009, p. 289). Drawing from this perspective, the experiences of kebab artisans are crucial in two ways. First, they provide valuable data on both individual and collective work, enabling us to explore the implicit and explicit aspects of tradition for individuals and social groups. Secondly, the experiences of kebab masters offer insights into the historical transformation of artisanal food production.

1.2 Methodology

My research methodology revolves around three interconnected pillars: Adana as a 'space,' artisanal food production as the domestic know-how of making kebab, and the sense of belonging through food as the conceptual analysis of the research. I composed the thesis in three steps, each addressing specific aspects of the topic. In the

first step, I establish the theoretical background of the research by drawing upon Massey's conceptualization of 'space.' I explore the historical background of Adana to uncover the region's physical geography, migration patterns and the transformation of its agricultural production. This historical analysis aims to provide a foundation for understanding the relationship between food and belonging. Furthermore, it is essential to investigate the socio-economic and political changes that have shaped Adana over time, as this contributes to the dynamic nature of space as described by Massey. Additionally, I examine the history of the dish to bring out the emergence of cooking techniques, usage of ingredients, and its association with kebab artisans.

Moving forward, the second step involves delving into the geography of the region to identify the ingredients available to the local population. Massoth's (2017) work on chili inspired me to focus on a specific ingredient in this research, namely the meat of the male sheep, the primary component of the Adana kebab. The unique taste and perceived superiority of the Adana kebab are often attributed to the use of locally sourced and slaughtered meat. For that reason, I make sure to inquire about the supply chain of meat during my interviews with the informants.

In the third step, I focus on the concept of 'artisanal food production' from both theoretical and practical perspectives. I conduct a literature review on craftsmanship to understand the historical evolution of artisanal practices and their connection to food. Additionally, I conduct interviews with kebab artisans (*kebab ustası*) to gain insights into their understanding and application of craftsmanship in their daily lives. The kebab artisans' perspectives and definitions of craftsmanship are considered alongside existing literature on the subject, thus enriching the analysis.

My fieldwork is based on qualitative research methods. I conducted semi-structured interviews, focusing on three main concepts: artisanship of kebab as practiced by the artisans, the culture of eating out associated with the dish in Adana,

and the production of locality through the Adana kebab. I aimed to gather demographic data, understand the social backgrounds of informants and experiences as kebab artisans, and explore how the craft has been passed down through generations. The questions also touch upon contemporary kebab consumption practices, changes in eating out culture, standardization processes, and challenges faced by small-scale kebab artisans. Moreover, I ask about the breeds of animals and how they source the meat for making Adana kebabs, including the difficulties they encounter in the meat supply process and how they overcome these challenges. Lastly, I discover the gendered aspects of making of kebabs in the public sphere. I realize that women take a part in the kebab production practices at private spheres, but they are not visible in the field as kebab artisans.

I structured the interview questions for this study to elicit valuable information from the participants. First, I gathered individual background information to obtain relevant demographic data. This includes inquiries about the duration of their experience in kebab making, the origins of their kebab cooking know-how, the challenges encountered during the acquisition of kebab mastery, and their involvement in training new apprentices. Subsequently, the focus shifts towards exploring contemporary kebab consumption practices and discerning any discernible differences compared to the past. By doing so, insights are gained into the evolving eating out culture of the city, the standardization process of the dish, and the strategies employed by small-scale kebab artisans to navigate these dynamics. Additionally, this line of questioning uncovers the distinctive characteristics of the Adana kebab and provides historical context to the dish. Furthermore, I am also interested in the type of meat they use in their kebab making. Where does this meat come from? What are the challenges they face in the meat supply process? How do they overcome these difficulties? Thus, this comprehensive fieldwork encompasses the experiences of

kebab artisans, the consumption practices surrounding the dish, and the intricate dynamics of the supply chain of the meat, which constitutes the primary ingredient.

The research starts with focusing on well-established grill restaurants (*ocakbaşı*) in Adana, renowned for their consistent and exceptional kebab quality, often carrying on traditions from one generation to another. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 2 hours. I used a snowball sampling method to expand the interview pool, enabling access to kebab artisans at different grill restaurants and exploring their relationships. This sampling technique also facilitated engagement with local butchery shops and relevant institutions associated with meat, allowing me to trace the meat supply chain and understand the characteristics of the sheep involved. These endeavours contribute to the investigation of the standardization of the Adana kebab, particularly in relation to discourses surrounding domestically sourced animals, a topic that requires further scrutiny.

1.3 Outline of the chapters

I structured this thesis into five chapters, each focusing on different aspects of Adana's locality in order to understand the transformation of its social dynamics, including culinary culture, ethnic groups, socio-economic possibilities and limitations, and geography. The first chapter serves as an introduction, setting the stage for the subsequent discussions. Chapter 2 provides a theoretical background for the research and introduces the Adana region, including its history, migration patterns, and geography (both human and physical). I explore the connection between culinary culture and the intersection of history and geography, establishing a solid foundation for the following chapters.

Chapter 3 relies heavily on fieldwork and revolves around the notion of artisanship, kebab artisans, the formulation of the Adana kebab, and local networks

within various communities. I uncover the concept of artisanship in the culinary world with a focus on the experiences of kebab artisans. Also, I examine the significance of the Adana kebab for both local inhabitants and those beyond the city, shedding light on the dynamics of creating national and local dishes. Additionally, the chapter addresses the gender debate that arises when discussing the public display of food processing practices.

Chapter 4 investigates the history of the eating out culture, examining its evolution from a global perspective to more specific contexts such as Turkey and Adana. The chapter highlights how the concept of eating out has changed over time and influenced the consumption of dishes, with a particular focus on the Adana kebab. The standardization processes of this dish are discussed, including the role of geographical indicators (GI) and cookbooks. Furthermore, I detail the socio-economic aspects of food culture in Adana, specifically examining the availability of meat for different social groups.

Finally, Chapter 5 serves as a summary of the entire thesis, analysing the multidimensional aspects of food production and consumption practices in a local context and their impact on national cuisine. The chapter emphasizes that each dish carries context-specific stories embedded in the history and geography of its place of origin.

CHAPTER 2

ADANA AS A “SPACE”

“You are from Adana, so you must consume a lot of red meat.” This is just one of the numerous cliches about the city, including others. How people always behave aggressively, they only live in large communities (*aşiret*) and eat offal every day for breakfast. Some of these may have historical backgrounds and others are just misconceptions. My intention is to explore Adana from different perspectives – history, geography, and socio-economic thought in relation to food. The major aim is to demonstrate that the food cultures of these local places are not directly linked to the concept of ‘place of origin.’ In fact, these ‘places’ are in a constant transformation with its socio-economic, political, and environmental changes. For that, I will provide significant incidents to discuss how the sociological transformations of the region shaped and reshaped the local dynamics, included regional culinary culture.

To do so, I will introduce Adana from a historical and geographic point of view, particularly human and physical geography, agricultural practices, and migration patterns throughout history starting from the 19th century. Alongside, I will engage in a conceptual discussion based on ‘space’, which constitutes the theoretical background of the research. The major concept of this thesis is ‘Adana’ as a space and how its culinary culture, particularly kebab, is formed as a part of regional cuisine. I argue that geography, history, and artisanship of food production play a significant role in the composition of regional cuisine in Adana. To this end, I show the interrelationship between these concepts through historical and geographical events – migration patterns, climate conditions, and trades.

I will discuss how Adana’s regional cuisine is produced at the intersection of history and geography, its reflections in the national cuisines in Turkey. To do that, I

first focus on the environmental and human activities in Adana which includes geographic, socio-economic, and political changes. To begin with, I ask the following questions: Where is Adana located? Who were/are the inhabitants of the city? How did socio-historical events transform the region? How do these questions speak to my research on food? To answer these, I divide the chapter into five parts.

First, I focus on Massey's conceptualization of 'space' as a central concept of the thesis. I discuss how Adana is perceived spatially from a gastronomic point of view. For that, I introduce the Çukurova region from various perspectives: agricultural practices, population, nomadic history, and culinary culture. Historicizing these topics will be useful to show the transformation of the city through sociological changes. For that, Massey's approach on 'space' enables me to reveal the interconnection between these topics.

Second, I introduce the region from a historical perspective. There were many empires, kingdoms, tribes, and social groups that passed through this geography. Each of them created a variety of social orders, ways of living, local and central authorities, and daily activities. Their relationship with Adana was not the same as we experience it today. The name of the place, its borders and the geopolitical power of the region had been transformed over time. An example to that transformation can be what Toksöz (2010) points out about the region's physical geography that the region was covered with swamps turned into a cultivation area for cotton production in the second half of the 19th century. Such transformations are directly related to the agricultural production and migration patterns of different groups in the region.

Third, I will talk about physical geography and general agricultural practices in the region. Where is Adana located geographically? How has it shaped the Çukurova's agricultural production historically? What are the impacts on agriculture of historical events that took place starting from the second half of the 19th century? That period

saw the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and the political environment was changing rapidly. There is no doubt that such changes triggered another set of transformations related to local production in the city and its surrounding region. In turn, how did both national and transnational actions reshape agriculture? What are the main products which are growing in Adana currently? These are the questions I aim to answer.

Following that, my focus will be on nomadism and human mobility in Adana. Many historians and geographers have written about nomadic tribes of the region. Also, nomads take up a large place in literary works of different periods. Dadaloğlu's works on the tensions between nomadism and the central authorities during the 18th and 19th centuries is a great example for that (Ayvazoğlu, 1991). Yaşar Kemal included elements of a nomadic lifestyle in his work, which focused on weaving social events into fictional stories in the 1950's and 60's (Şeker, 2019). In fact, human mobility was both the cause and the result of environmental factors. On the other hand, mobility was not only about nomadism, but also forced migration and pogroms of particular social groups. Yesayan (2014) unearths the ruins of Armenian quarters and villages during her visit to Adana in 1909. After bringing together historical perspectives on agriculture, geography, and nomadism, I continue with the local food culture in the region.

Finally, I will focus on food as the major subject which finds itself a place at the intersection of geography and history. Although Adana has a unique food culture, it did not receive much attention in literature.⁴ Regional cuisine is an integral part of the Adana region which reveals much of its geographical (both physical and human) and historical background. It is a major aim of this thesis to understand the reciprocal

⁴ This is not limited to the food culture in Adana region, but food as a research topic was not acknowledged by scholars for a long time. Trépanier (2014) argues in his methodology that he could trace food indirectly throughout tax collection, and memoirs from important routes such as the Silk Road and the Spice Road. Also, the daily life of ordinary people was not always considered worth writing about – therefore, we have limited resources.

relationship between regional cuisine and its socio-historical processes. To do that, I will begin with introducing the local cuisine of the region. It includes fresh fruits and vegetables, spices, meat and seafood consumption and specific recipes that are cooked in the region commonly. Afterwards, I move to the main dish of the research, the Adana kebab. I will first explain why I decided to conduct research on kebabs. Then, I will present my preliminary considerations and findings on that subject.

2.1 Rethinking ‘space’

Discussions around the concept of ‘space’ can start with a basic question: What is a landscape? How do we interact with landscapes? My initial thought was that “we look at it.” It is true, but not a complete answer. We not only see it, but we also smell, feel, hear – experience the atmosphere. People do not experience things in the same way, there are multiple ways of engagement. Consequently, Massey’s consideration of the term ‘space’ became an important aspect for my research. Taking up from that point, I will establish the theoretical background of the thesis while elaborating on the literature based on the concept ‘space’.

Space, in a most general sense, is a ground where historical events take place by humans. People do many things in these spaces. They live, eat, die, start a war, interact with others, build concrete jungles, so on and so forth. However, as Massey (1999) argues, it is not the only scenario for the ‘usage’ of space. Humans transform things, but they are being transformed by other actors too. These actors are not only other people, but other actors as well: animals, fungi, and physical and environmental conditions. To understand the interrelationship among them, Massey invites us to rethink the concept of ‘relational thinking.’ Instead of considering historical actions as single-sided and progressively shaped by humans, relational thinking gives us the opportunity to have a broader perspective on events in history. In addition, it is an

alternative method for the criticism of modernity that is based on a history as a single unit; as she puts it: “This critique of the modernist view for its singularity argues instead that there are multiple histories, multiple trajectories. But seeing space as a surface precisely deprives others of their own histories” (Massey, 2001, pp. 15-16).

The reconsideration of the term ‘space’ may prove to be useful in the research, as I examine the ways in which national and local discourses on food contribute to the creation and representation of locality and its relation to national cuisine. Plus, people also create senses of belonging to a particular place through food. Space is not only a scene where social and historical actions take place. It has its own subjectivity among other agencies. To give an example from the research, I explore the mobility of human populations in various contexts. There were nomadic communities in Çukurova during the Ottoman Empire period, as well as human migrations throughout different periods of the Turkish Republic. These mobilized communities were parts of different socio-economic settings, but they were also affected by the environmental and spatial factors of particular places.

It is important to note that these migration patterns are not simply historical events that have been experienced and subsequently left in the past. Rather, they have had a profound impact on the socio-economic, political, and cultural aspects of the region and should be considered in relation. The concept of nomadism serves as a particularly relevant example in this regard. In different periods of the Ottoman era, various nomadic groups were the target of the state. They were occasionally perceived as threats, so they had to be settled. The struggle of the Ottoman state with nomads continued to be a major concern in the Republican era. In addition, it persisted in the region for an extended period, and these groups found alternative ways of living that were familiar to them. A well-known historical sociologist, Reşat Kasaba, focused on nomads and their ever-changing relationship with the Ottoman state. Kasaba (2009)

argues that nomadism had different contributions to the Ottoman's institutionalization process. The state land was lacking "[social] boundaries and fixed categories" and nomads were to be employed at the newly conquered territories. (p.15) From the 17th century onwards, the new international system in Europe directed states to demarcate their borders clearly (Yılmaz, 2014). In this era, nomads had different functions for the state such as guards and military power. In short, the nomads/tribes had various ways of living in the empire, but the state's effort for organizing nomadic groups remained the same (Kasaba, 2009). This highlights the fact that historical events do not necessarily have clear beginnings and endings, as it is often portrayed in history books, but rather exhibit a continuity and relationality with one another.

Building on this formulation, I realized that there are various dynamics in the local (Adana) and the national (Turkey) for the creation of the notion of 'sense of belongingness' and this thesis aims to uncover how it has been done through culinary cultures in the Adana region. For this, I will focus on the aspects which makes Adana unique – agricultural production, migration patterns, and socio-historical events. On one hand, people tend to emphasize the things they do differently from others. "Being an inhabitant of Adana" means that they represent the unique features of the city, which do not exist in the other cities of Turkey. When someone asserts that he/she is from a particular city, the person also creates certain images and symbols about him/herself. Heldke (2012) refers to Royce's work about localism, which he calls 'provincialism' that generates "the love and pride which leads the inhabitants of a province to cherish their own traditions, beliefs and aspirations" (1908, p. 61). In my research, the Adana kebab appears as a symbol which encapsulates and reflects many of the region's inhabitants' traditions, beliefs, and aspirations, especially with respect to food practices. The dish is only considered as "Adana kebab" when it is prepared,

cooked, and consumed in specific ways that are embedded in the food culture of Adana.

On the other hand, we should bear in mind that the inhabitants of the region are not a uniform group. They are from different social backgrounds, and how people associate their ethnic, religious and/or social group with their ability to make Adana kebabs is a significant point. The distinction related to a sense of belonging appears at a micro level for the inhabitants of Adana (*Adanalı* hereafter). In return, *Adanalılar* is not a single group of people who share the same cultural and ethnic dynamics. There are sub-categories based on the difference, which people use to distinguish themselves from ‘others.’ For instance, there are *Nusayris*, ethnically Arab groups from the eastern part of the country such as Mardin and Kurds. However, the categorization is not limited to these groups. There are both Alewi Kurds and others, groups with Arab roots and Turkish roots, who are either Alewi or not. The disposition to be different from others is salient in the research, which I will elaborate later in more detail. In fact, people have different ways of expressing their ‘sense of belonging’ and ‘authenticity’ through food.

How is food related to these conceptual discussions? As I mentioned previously, food can be discussed from numerous perspectives. In this case, it appears as a tool to reveal socio-economic and political tensions in the practices of artisans (*usta*). Ferguson (2004) argues this empowerment of national cuisines as “not only accepted but actively promoted regional difference on the assumption that all were subsumed in the greater whole” (p. 129). However, it is not the only function of food. What a dish means locally is more than the sum of the national cuisine's parts. At local places, kebab artisans (*kebab ustaları*) contribute to the regionalization of certain dishes through their artisanal skills. They have their own ways of making kebabs, cooking techniques, and serving styles. This diversity of artisanship enables the dish to

go beyond the standardization of the recipes. In fact, the experiences of the artisans both with the dish and the region invite us to reconsider locality from a different perspective.

This perspective can be explained with a term which is offered by Edward Soja who was a political geographer and urban theorist. Soja's (2009) term 'third space' supports my argument on locality. He calls into question the very experience of existing in the world. Is it built around historicity and sociality? He argues that 'the spatial' is as important as the social and the historical and that "there is a growing awareness of simultaneity and interwoven complexity" among these three concepts (p. 261). Depending on the context, we may emphasize one over the others, but 'third space' allows us to think alternatively, to have a three-sided, instead of a two-sided understanding of the world (Ibid). In fact, 'thirdspace' is a multidisciplinary term for "making theoretical and practical sense of the world" by combining the three dimensions of the three-sided perspectives (p. 262). My take on his work is related to how a particular dish is conceived both locally and nationally. The same meal is prepared, consumed, understood, and called differently in Adana (local) and big cities. I aim to uncover ways in which people experience the dish in relation to space (physical geography), society (human geography) and history.

In addition to the discussions above, another source of inspiration for me to build my conceptual framework is hooks. Her work (1990) on lived space speaks to the work of Massey and Soja. She aims to widen the scope of spatial imagination to create new political strategies to combat oppressions around race, gender, and class. Even though she is particularly interested in women of colour, her articulation of experiencing 'space' can also be helpful for thinking of an alternative path for physical and human geographies. She invites us to explore the formation of counter-hegemonic cultural practices against oppressive boundaries of race, sex, and class domination (p.

270). The region's spatial reflections of discrimination are a great example for that. Some neighbourhoods are segregated through the ethnicity of certain groups such as Kurds and Nusayris, and others are related to class. In the northern part of the city, segregation is not based on ethnicity and/or religion, but on class distinctions. That is, the distinction between rich and poor is more prominent than other distinctions and its spatial reflections are visible.

In the research, I encountered standardization mechanisms and people's daily activities as a counteraction to that standardization. A standardized recipe and a cooking technique is created for the Adana kebab, which excludes the authenticity of different recipes and ways of making the dish. This standardization process is not only about the making of a certain dish, but it also ignores the uniqueness of the multicultural environment of Adana. Given that Massey, Soja and hooks each approach the term 'space' from different angles based on their specialized areas of interest, food steps in at this juncture, to bring together an interdisciplinary approach to the conceptualization of spatiality, and to bring together its relationship with geography, history, and society. Building on this point, I continue with the region's historical background to uncover where the city is located and how it has been experienced differently by various populations and transformed over time.

2.2 A historical overview

Adana has a unique way of blending in with its inhabitants. It is a city where social groups from different ethnicities, religions, and languages have been living together for a long time. In this section, I will provide historical background of the region, so that I can build the following discussions upon the region's past. First, I will draw a general framework of the city which has existed for centuries. I will talk about different periods of the region to show that it was a multicultural and vibrant region in

history. Then, I concentrate my discussion on the 19th century and onwards. I am specifically interested in this period to understand how the political and social dynamics of the region has reshaped the present region. In addition, I will talk about the trading activities of the region, which constitutes an important part of its history, and the products that lead to this trade – cotton and citrus fruits.

The borders of both Çukurova and Adana have changed several times, but the horizontal and vertical diversity constitutes one of the most profound examples both historically and contemporaneously in Turkey (Gümüş, 2016, p. 70). It is believed that the history of Adana goes back to the Neolithic Age. According to Yurt Ansiklopedisi (1980) the city might be built around the Seyhan River since it is a major water resource. The first written resources about Adana were found in the epitaphs of the Hittites. Also, Adana is one of the many names of the city, together with Adanos, Adanus and Adanya. It is in the southern part of Turkey, one of the central cities of the lowland, used to be called Cilicia, and a new name emerged as Çukurova by the mid-twentieth century (Gratien, 2022).

As stated by archaeological studies, there are findings about Çukurova both before and after recorded histories. Moreover, there were several states which ruled Adana, including the Luwians, Kizzuwatna, Cilicians, Ancient Macedonian Kingdom, Romans, Byzantines, Armenian Monarchy, *Ramazanoğulları* period and the Ottoman Era which shows us the dynamic historical background of the city. In an effort to learn more about the history of the region, literary works guide us since the literature about Adana is as rich as its historical past. These works include memoirs, observations, traveling notes of wanderers. Moreover, some authors focused on the human, non-human, and physical geography of the region in their writings. The clothing, nomadic culture, means of living were evoked in the works of Katip Çelebi, Marco Polo, Evliya

Çelebi, and Bedrettin El-Gazzi. Plus, they introduced structures and statues which were substantial for the city.

Evliya Çelebi (1935) touches upon the lemon and citron gardens of the city in the 17th century which reveals to us that these fruits existed in the region at that time. This is an important point to bear in mind to trace the transformation of agricultural production in the city. On the other hand, he describes one of the symbols of the city, *Taşköprü* Bridge. It is a bridge which was built as early as the 4th century and tufa, marble, and spolia materials were used. At that time, it was an important transition point to link the Mediterranean Sea to the rest of the land and Persia. These significant structures give us clues about the commercial history of the city. The bridge was built in quite early periods, but its impact is still discussed in the literature. According to Gratien (2014), it was a gathering point for the ‘labour market’ of migrant laborers to work in cotton cultivation in the mid-19th century under the rule of Ibrahim Pasha. Currently, it is open to pedestrians only.

There is much to be uncovered about the region’s history regarding its economic and commercial past, but I am particularly interested in the second half of the 19th century and onwards. This period is important to understand the making of ‘modern’ Adana. Also, this specific era serves as a pivotal juncture for illustrating that a clear demarcation between the late Ottoman era and the early republican period is absent. Instead, a discernible continuum prevails in the evolution of sociopolitical transformations. The city has been commercialized and industrialized, and we need to uncover the historical reasons behind these economic changes. For that period, the major trading activities took place around cotton production and exportation. In relation to these activities, Toksöz (2010) delves into the confrontations that emerged in Çukurova during the 1850s—between its role as a modernizing centre, the nomads, and the global trade arena. In her comprehensive work on the making of Adana and

Mersin regions, she focuses on the second half of the 19th century and early periods of the 20th century.

According to her, there are five major historical events which shaped the region: settlement, Egyptian conquest, Ottoman reforms, foundation of a port-city, and cotton agriculture (Toksöz, 2010, p.10). Amid discussions about imperial powers' activities in the region, particularly regarding cotton, known as the "white gold," she unravels the reciprocal redefinition of landscape and human geography within Çukurova. Space was not used merely as a place where the historical events took place, but “the spatial dynamics shaped the history of human-land relations over time” (p. 13). Among these events, I emphasize two of them: cotton production and settlement activities of the nomadic groups. I believe that they are supporting arguments for my thesis to introduce the region’s demographical and socio-economic transformation over time.

In the first place, I will talk about the cotton production and how it reshaped both local and global dynamics of the cotton trade. Later, I will provide a broader perspective on agricultural and industrial transformations in the region. The means of agricultural and industrial production has shifted to other hands, and this transition greatly affected the economic and social history of the region. It is essential to know these shifts in history to relate with the formation of the existing food production practices and culinary cultures in the region.

The cotton production is the most prominent practice of the 19th century which has determined Çukurova’s fate. The region was spotlighted for a long time and the demand for cotton production was extremely high. Thus, Adana received many investments from the Western world (France, Germany, and Britain) for infrastructure development, railways, and technical equipment. Its longstanding transportation routes

were developed during that period.⁵ The state was encouraged by the aforementioned Western countries both economically and politically, to build new railways around the region, so that the manufactured products could be transported easier and faster. The global demand from the Western world was a golden opportunity for the Ottoman state. In order to meet with this demand, the state drained the wide-reaching swamps of the region with the aim to open new agricultural production fields in the second half of the 19th century. Thus, the region was made suitable for large(r) scale agricultural activities.

In relation to the emergence of new lands, new property ownerships also have occurred. Plus, another type of mobility has appeared by agricultural laborers who migrated from countries such as Egypt and Nigeria. As Toksöz (2010) points out, there were not enough rural workers in the region and that much more human labour was needed. They were called “*fellah*” which simply means an agricultural labourer with Arab roots. Currently, this term is considered as a pejorative term and avoided by many scholars. The political events behind these resettlement policies should be remembered, such as the Fırka-ı Islahiye policy of Ahmet Cevdet Paşa in 1865. Towards the end of the century, the region became a fertile ground for agricultural production, which attracted both domestic and transnational companies. Although the nation faced economic and political flux at times, the region retained its importance into the early 20th century. Only after the 1950s, the cotton production was displaced to other parts of the country over time, spreading mostly to Izmir and its surroundings.

⁵ One of the most well-known investments in the region is The Varda Viaduct (also known as *Varda Köprüsü* in Turkish) which started in the first years of the 20th century. It is also known as the German Bridge since it is built by German engineers as part of Baghdad Railway. This railway was an Ottoman-German project which aimed to connect Berlin with Baghdad. To read more about it, please see: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2010/jul/18/berlin-baghdad-express-mcmeekin-review>

However, the region's primary crops remained the same during the interwar period: wheat, cotton barley, oats, and sesame (Gratien, 2022, pp.190-191).

Second, the transformation in agriculture and industry began during the Ottoman Empire and continued post the establishment of the Turkish Republic. The shift in political regimes played a pivotal role in transforming the region's socio-economic dynamics. An illustrative case is the sizable Armenian population that owned big factories. However, with the rise of the new Turkish bourgeoisie, facilitated by the Armenian pogrom and concurrent Turkification policies, these factories were taken over. The physical geography of the Adana region underwent substantial changes to accommodate new agricultural practices. The commodification of land for agricultural purposes led to redefined settlements and population distribution across Çukurova. These new production practices and political changes caused demographic changes in the city, and I will talk about it later in the human mobility section. After discussing the socio-economic history of the modern Adana region, I continue with its physical geography and agricultural production practices from a historical point of view. In doing so, I will uncover the interrelation between human and physical geography.

2.3 Geography and agricultural production

What is the first thing that comes to mind when we think of Çukurova? The answer is the Taurus Mountains for many of us. The mountains have a considerable influence on the region's climate, social setting, and human geography. Thus, its presence at the region should be considered from a historical point of view. Mountains cover 49% of Adana's surface area, with plains following at 27.6% of the surface (Yurt Ansiklopedisi, 1980). In this area, there is a population of 2.263.373 million people, with 4.871.854 acres of farming area (TÜİK, 2021). The majority of this population is

settled and living in different districts of the city. Various names are given to the mountains by the inhabitants of the region, such as *Aladağlar* for the border of Adana and Niğde cities. The political and agricultural significance of Adana is further underscored by the presence of two major waterways, Seyhan and Ceyhan. These rivers originate in the eastern Taurus Mountains, nourished by diverse water sources. Their flow rates peak during spring and wane in the summer. The soil composition is characterized by five primary types—brown forest soils, non-calcareous brown forest soils, alluvial soils, colluvial soils, and red-brown Mediterranean soils. These categories are intricately shaped by the region's mountains, water resources, and Mediterranean climate (Ibid).

Renowned for its torrid summers, the region's climate plays an integral role in shaping its inhabitants' habits. Therefore, I will highlight its climate conditions and how these conditions direct people's actions. The observations of Langlois, a French historian specializing in Armenian history and culture, offer a broader perspective on Çukurova. During the 19th century, Langlois depicted the region as "an arid plain and small hills around it" (1947, p. 62). Under the blazing sun, reed beds often led to the misperception of the area as a desert. Watercourses served as both the region's water supply and were sustained by melting snow. He also described the topographical features, including mountains, slopes, and architectural structures. The cityscape was adorned with landmarks such as mosques, covered bazaars, castles, churches, and ancient Armenian ruins.

While contemporary reliance on air conditioners is undeniable, air conditioning only gained prevalence in Turkey after the 1980s. In earlier times, the inhabitants of Adana sought refuge from the 'furnace' by retreating to the highlands during the summer, escaping the heat's grip. Conversely, they gravitate back to the city centre during the winter, a season characterized by warmth and rainfall. However, the

advent of modern systems has ushered in a transformation of these age-old practices. Nonetheless, a select group, known as the *Yoruks*, still clings to the tradition of heading for the hills during hot spells, a subject that will be further explored in subsequent sections. The region's climate adheres to the Mediterranean typology, marked by scrub plants, oak, bay trees, and an array of herbs such as thyme, mint, and lavender. Effective agricultural production hinges on the soil's fertility, complemented by irrigation, fertilization, and mechanization processes. The trend set by cotton production in the 19th century has continued, extending to the cultivation of fruits, vegetables, and grains—watermelons, citrus fruits, wheat, sesame, corn, and soybeans among them. Additionally, the prevalence of greenhouses has surged over the past four decades. Conversely, animal husbandry doesn't hold the same economic sway as it does in other parts of Turkey, such as Eastern Anatolia.

After the foundation of the republic, economic policies of successive governments had a direct impact on the modernization of agricultural output. An illustrative instance is the Democratic Party's economic and political initiatives in the 1950s. Ascending to power in 1950, the party embarked on an overhaul of international relations, notably its association with the United States in the context of the Marshall Plan. Çukurova found itself a modest part of this monumental plan, aligning with agricultural mechanization while avoiding excessive industrialization. This strategic move allowed for controlled agricultural inputs and outputs, mitigating economic competition. During this phase, both the Democratic Party and the US rallied behind Adana's farmers, offering financial aid and agricultural support. The city saw an influx of tractors, establishing it as the region with the most tractors at the time (Korhan, 2019). Furthermore, farmers were equipped with new strains of cotton seeds, ensuring maximal yield from the land. Land was allocated generously to farmers, accompanied by endorsements for agricultural production. Notably, educational

institutions were established to foster agrarian economy-based learning (Ibid). These transformations, while originating in the realm of political economy, reverberated across the socio-cultural fabric of the region. As an agrarian-based developmental path took sway in Adana, a wave of individuals migrated to the city to engage in agricultural labour.

Before the 1950s, most of the population was living in rural areas. The urban population remained below 20 per cent until 1950 (Pamuk, 2008, p. 378). Later, people migrated to larger cities with the urbanization policies of that time. After the Second World War, the industrialization process was accelerated. Although Turkey did not join the shooting-war, it was heavily influenced by the post-war trends.

The mechanization of agricultural production in Adana served as a catalyst for the emergence of class-based relationships within the region. The influx of migrants contributed to the formation of a working class, while factory owners and landlords ascended to be the new bourgeoisie. This socio-economic shift, accompanied by the resultant tensions and economic restructuring, piqued the interest of contemporary authors. Their narratives often explored class dynamics and the daily struggles of peasants and the working class. A prominent exemplar of this genre is Yaşar Kemal, whose literary works epitomize social realism. His interview compilation offers an illustrative anecdote involving a traditional wedding ceremony, underscoring the transformation of social customs in the Çukurova region. Formerly characterized by people riding their horses and javelin throw games (*cirit oynamak*), the wedding scene morphed as tractors supplanted horses. These tractors, festooned for weddings, paraded through villages accompanied by celebratory trumpet melodies (*Bu Diyar Baştan Başa*, 1971).

Moreover, Kemal's works also delve into the non-human life of geography. In his exploration of class tensions, nature isn't merely a backdrop but an active

participant. Nature's role extends beyond a mere 'setting' to becoming an influencing actor, shaping the actions of human participants while also being influenced by them. For example, it is possible to feel the presence of mosquitoes while he describes Adana's torrid summer days. Also, his emphasis on Taurus Mountains as 'majestic mountains' is worth bearing in mind. This highlights that not only humans influence the ecological, social, and economic facets of a space, but non-human agencies play a significant role as well. These agencies are often treated as sources of trade, encompassing food, textiles, forestry, animal husbandry, and agricultural production. Yet, it's imperative to recognize that these agencies have inhabited these spaces long before they were commodified as 'resources'. These reflections underscore the vital role of non-human agency in shaping environmental impacts.

I continue with a quotation from one of the informants, to give more insight about current agricultural production in Adana: "The official colours of the city are white and orange, they stand for cotton and citrus fruit." He was proudly talking about the region and what it offers to its inhabitants. Although cotton production is not a major activity anymore, it has been the economic symbol of Çukurova for a long time. Currently, there are 32.736 registered farmers in the farmer registration system (*Çiftçi Kayıt Sistemi*). Total agricultural production area is 4.869.874 decares and forest land is 5.936.600 decares. When total distribution of agricultural land and output are considered, fruit production is the winner. Among this category, citrus fruits make up a large part of total production. Adana accounts for 32% of the country's citrus production. Moreover, the 5 most produced plant products are as follows, in order: corn, potato, sunflower, peanut, and soybeans. Soy may not cover the most, but the share of production in Turkey is quite high, at 62.8%. Animals are classified into four categories—beehives, cattle, sheep and goats, and poultry. Poultry farming dominates, numbering 7,217,446 and encompassing turkey, duck, chicken, and goose. Sheep and

goats follow, totalling 1,116,289. Beekeeping occupies the third spot with 481,878 hives, while cattle, with a lesser count of 266,601, trail behind. It's worth noting that despite the favourable land for animal husbandry, Adana is not a leading hub for this practice (Tarım Orman, 2022).

Apart from the state's socio-economic policies, the political landscape played a defining role in shaping the region's social activities post the republic's foundation. Non-Muslim groups faced dispossession and forced migration, significantly altering the region's sociological fabric. Subsequently, the 1950s heralded a multi-directional wave of immigration, with Adana both attracting and releasing people. These migration patterns are crucial in elucidating the patterns of food culture in relation to the 'Adana' kebab.

In the next section, I will talk about human mobility from a historical perspective starting from the 19th century. First, I will introduce the nomadic groups. Their ethnic backgrounds, mobility patterns and social and political tensions will be considered. Second, the migration of agricultural laborers from the Middle East, known as *fellah* and *ırgat*, shows us the patterns of agricultural production, demographic change and social interaction between different groups and the state.

2.4 Human mobility

*Belimizde kılıcımız Kirmani
Taşı deler mızrağımın temreni
Hakkımızda devlet etmiş fermanı
Ferman padişahın dağlar bizimdir
— Dadaloğlu “Avşar Elleri”*

One cannot discuss Çukurova without mentioning its population mobility. In this section, I will discuss the elements which form human mobility in the region. These elements are nomadism, pogroms, and seasonal labour for agricultural production. Nomadism has a long history in the region. The nomadic groups existed in Çukurova

for a long time and had both cooperation and tensions with the Ottoman state which intrigued many scholars. Among these scholars, Gould (1976) focused on the “tribal lords who belonged to a tradition of chivalry and commanded Turkoman and Kurdish cavalry. Unlike the notables, who were primarily an urban phenomenon, their power was concentrated in the mountains” (p.486). Thus, he shows us the organic bond between nomadism and pastoral lifestyle. Also, the region’s recent past with various social groups, particularly Armenians, is worth mentioning. The political changes of that time have reshaped the population of the region through striking historical events such as pogroms and forced migration. Moreover, the region’s agricultural history should be considered together with its seasonal labourers. In fact, these groups transformed the demographics of the region.

Across history, various factors compelled people to traverse these lands. During the region's pre-settled agricultural production era, swamps dominated the landscape. Nomadic groups controlled these regions, their mobility contingent on climate, interactions with fellow nomads, and their political dynamics with the Ottoman state. These nomadic groups were intricate and diverse, representing various ethnic backgrounds. They coexisted with tensions among themselves and with the Ottoman Empire, tackling numerous challenges in their distinctive ways.

For this thesis, there are two major reasons to emphasize human mobility in the region. First, the actions of nomadic groups enable me to understand the transformation of the region over time. The notion of ‘nomadism’ has not been abandoned fully, and we still find traces of that lifestyle in the region. For instance, some inhabitants of the city still move to the highlands during unbearable hot summers and move back to the centre in winter. Although there is a shift from tents to mountain houses, some inhabitants still practice semi-nomadic lifestyles. Besides this semi-nomadic lifestyle, a ‘modernized’ way of traveling to highlands occurred in the region

and Gratien (2022) explains it as such: “Cilicia’s oldest ritual—the annual summer retreat to the *yaylas* of the Taurus and Amanus Mountains— underwent a metamorphosis. The extension of railways and automobiles into the mountains allowed locals to move through space in a new way, making the “modern life of transhumance” a reality for the region’s elite” (p.182).⁶ The sedentarization attempts took place in parallel with the rise of nation-states. The transformation from an empire to a newly established nation-state played a key role in the change of state policies towards mobility in the region and emphasized more stable social structures. Kasaba (2009) sums up this transformation clearly as:

In a world of nation-states, census taking, conscription, taxation, defence, and the maintenance of security could be carried out only by working with an easily identifiable and classifiable population within well-defined borders. On a general level, the move from empire to modern state involved a shift from a society that was highly mobile and open to one that was sedentary, increasingly fragmented, and closed. (p.123)

Second, migration patterns of various groups reveal socio-economic activities and the transformation of the population in the region. The most prominent migrants were the agricultural labourers who migrated from Egypt and Nigeria, during the 19th century. Also, the poorer groups from the southeastern part of the country migrated to Adana to work in the fertile fields of Çukurova (Toksöz, 2010). The nomadic groups in Anatolia were called “*Yoruks*.” There are particular images that we link with the lifestyles of the *Yoruks* - haircloth tents, close contact with animals and dairy products are only some of them. There are ongoing debates on the definition of “*Yoruk*” groups. Who are *Yoruks*? How are they distinguished from other nomadic groups? Some emphasize the ethnic background of *Yoruks* as Turks. Others argue that different

⁶ Since the main actors of this thesis are kebab artisans and kebabs, I give limited space to nomadism in my thesis. If you want to read the routines of the inhabitants in the region, please see the most recent work of Gratien.

ethnic groups were not necessarily distinguished clearly from each other. I believe that creating a sharp contrast among these groups may be a modern interpretation.

Kıray's (1974) work on social change in Çukurova focuses on the political and migratory events of the 19th and 20th century, which provides us with a large body of data on the geographical position of the region. As she puts it: "Although at present a fairly well-developed agricultural area, the Çukurova was, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, no more than a badly drained, fever-ridden, thinly populated country" (p. 179). Also, she mentions that there were several different groups living in the region- the Arabs, the Armenian settlements, and nomadic tribes (*Yoruks*). Her work demonstrates to us that the multicultural aspect of the city is not new to the region. There were tensions both within and between the groups which reshaped the population and the land use. The Ottoman Empire strove to settle nomadic groups, aiming to ensure land security—since these tribes posed a threat—and repurpose the land for state-directed agricultural usage. Settled populations also bolstered the agricultural workforce (Toksöz, 2010). Kıray provides us a specific example for that: "A group of Yörük, in 1887, were forced to settle by the Ottoman Government permanently in what is today the village of Karacaören" and that each household got 40 donums of land. At the end of 1940s, commercial farming was already on the rise, but the nomads gave more importance to animal breeding (1974, pp. 183-184).

In this geographical context, mountains, plains, water resources, climate, and soil types collectively weave a narrative of how the land molded socio-economic and political dynamics in the region. The physical geography stands as a pivotal determinant in the region's sociological evolution. As the state's actions came into play, the transition to "settled" agricultural production commenced in the latter half of the 19th century. However, even amid this transformation, numerous nomadic tribes continued to inhabit the mountains and plains, primarily engaged in animal husbandry.

Thus, it's incorrect to envision an abrupt shift from animal husbandry to settled agricultural practices. Both coexisted throughout history. Çukurova was still changing and adapting to its new relations between humans and the land in the early part of the 20th century, which were the last years of the Ottomans. Toksöz sums up this situation clearly: “The very basis of the uniqueness of Çukurova lies in its human geographical potential. It was this landscape that attracted people first to a life of transhumance and thereafter to settled life” (p. 20).

The story of settled and unsettled groups continued after the foundation of the Turkish state. These historical events and reshaping of the land through different migration patterns are important for the research for two major reasons. First, by unveiling social transformations, I uncover the influence of different groups on local cuisine. The variety of ingredients not only reflect what the physical environment offers, but also acknowledges the role of human geography as a determining factor. Second, the dynamic nature of both physical and human geography enables me to have a critical approach on the standardization of contemporary culinary cultures. In fact, certain dishes and ingredients are intimately linked to specific regions, and their historical contexts often go unnoticed. At that point, migrations serve as a reminder of the underlying socio-economic and political dynamics behind the formation of explicit local food cultures.

The dynamic transformation process of the 19th century continued with the establishment of the Turkish Republic. The new regime brought a great deal of changes. Among these, there are two important incidents that are important for the research. First, the means of capital passed into other hands – mainly from Armenians to the ‘new Turkish bourgeois.’ A prominent example of this switch is the ginnery factories in the region. One of the first factories, known as Gülbenkian Çırçır Factory, was established by Armenian entrepreneurs. After the establishment of the republic,

the region has been Turkified and new bourgeois, mostly Muslim and Turkish, displaced non-Turkish groups.⁷ In his work based on the industrial history of Adana, Emiroğlu (2020) points out that there were many Muslim Turkish citizens mainly from Kayseri who became the new owners of the factories, lands, and other properties by the open bidding method. Adana was a treasure for many investors of that time, and some of them are still determinants of capital in the country. Agricultural workers needed to integrate into this new landscape of capital ownership. There were new farms around and people started living in urban areas. The compelling relationship between landowners and workers was the subject of many literary works. For instance, *Hanımın Çiftliği* is a trilogy written by Orhan Kemal which deals with changing social dynamics. On one hand, there are peasants who lost their lands and became impoverished. On the other hand, there are landlords who are getting stronger and higher in the social hierarchy. Therefore, gender and class-based tensions are nothing new in this region.

Odman (2009) criticizes the situation by focusing on the discussions around the collective memory of the 1909 Cilicia Massacre.⁸ She argues that Armenians were seen as threats for the national unity of the new state. They needed to be ‘cleansed’ from the city for the sake of a pure nation. Odman points out that even the numbers of murdered people are manipulated in different archival records. In fact, many people died, and the ones remaining were subjected to forced migration. These political events reshaped the socio-economic aspects of the region. It may not be directly linked to food, but they tell us about the presence and absence of certain dishes. Many of the

⁷ At that point, it is important to note that the displacement of non-Muslim and/or non-Turkish groups are not limited to the foundation of the modern Turkish Republic. In fact, the Ottoman displaced various social groups at different periods of its era. However, the displacement practices of the republican era are significant for my thesis to point out the creation of new ‘localities’ throughout the socio-economic and political transformations of the region.

⁸ The Armenian pogroms did not start with the republican era. The discourses and contexts may be different, but they have historical background which date back to the Ottoman era.

socio-cultural aspects of that group, including food, have been forgotten in time.

That's why, for instance, I did not encounter any overtly Armenian food recipes in the daily lives of the inhabitants during my fieldwork.

Second, there were internal migrants to Adana, who came to work in the agricultural fields, called *ırgat* or farm labourer. These groups migrated predominantly from the southeastern regions such as Urfa, Siirt, Batman, Diyarbakır and Mardin. These migration patterns were driven by a multitude of complex factors. The southeastern part of the country was exposed to changes which left its inhabitants with limited livelihood options, compelling them to seek opportunities elsewhere. Some of the reasons were: the rapid deterioration of the pastoral community structure, dominant in eastern and southeastern Anatolia, under various structural effects since the 1950s, forcing many to seek alternative livelihoods, including working as laborers. Additional reasons include the decline in the significance of hair goat farming, the stricter protection of forest areas, the transformation of public areas into private properties and the continuous increase in the rural population. Conversely, the expansion of agricultural areas in fertile and wetlands under the influence of the market, the increase in agricultural productivity and the demand for cheap labour in Çukurova and Aegean regions served as additional incentives for individuals to migrate to these lands.

There are different terms that have been employed to characterize these laborers. Gümüş (2016) explains these terms from a broad perspective. They are “mobile” from an external perspective; “temporary” in terms of social security legislation, official authorities, and mukhtars; landowners consider them as “cheap” and “seasonal” workers, highlighting their economic value in agricultural production. Furthermore, they are also recognized as “wage workers” based on the social and economic nature of the work. Lastly, in the realm of human geography, they are

essentially considered as “immigrants” and “in agriculture” in terms of sectoral standpoint (p. 101). These seasonal migrants are often ignored, but they are *de facto* subjects of the region. Later, I will discuss their subjectivity within the city, particularly concerning their culinary practices, as a part of the fieldwork.

Having introduced the region's socio-historical and agricultural foundations, I will focus on how these historical and geographical elements shaped culinary habits in Adana. Before doing that, I will introduce the region's cuisine. What is cooked in Adana? How are these dishes related to the region's physical and human geography? What are the commonly used products? Which cooking methods are practiced? I will answer these questions from a broad perspective. The historical, physical, and human geography and migration patterns create a solid foundation, to understand that food, like any other socio-cultural dynamic, does not belong to any specific social group. It is not a ‘fixed’ concept. On the contrary, culinary culture transforms constantly, although it takes a long time. From this position, I will introduce the eating habits of the city. There are many resources to provide information about it such as cookbooks, oral history, and experiences of locals. I will rely on three main resources: my knowledge about Adana as a local, the know-how of the inhabitants, and interviews with some chefs and food writers.

2.5 Local cuisine

“Do you also put tail fat in a stuffed vine leaves dish? We do the same!” This is how my father reacted to a seller at a local food shop in Beirut when we had a trip there in January 2019. We found this shop while wandering around the city. They sell many dishes that were very ‘familiar’ to us. Stuffed vine leaves and cabbage, mezzes, and desserts based on semolina are only some of them. When my father reacted in this way, the conversation grew. The vendor was so surprised that we lived in another

country but ate the same food. Why are we so surprised? During the conversation, they asked us where we came from, types of food we cook at home and compared some recipes to discover how a specific dish is cooked elsewhere. Also, he pointed out that the city has many different sides to it and not everyone eats the same. He gave the example of the French quarters of the city where the food is *à la française* with foie gras, wine and cheese culture and boulangeries. It made me consider anew the complexity of food culture. Just because we live in the same city does not necessarily mean that we share the same food culture. It goes beyond the current borders of nation-states. Therefore, ‘geographical place’ does not appear as the only indicator of eating habits. If it is the case, why do we link food with certain places?

First, I offer a broad perspective on the food culture of the region – fruits, vegetables, meat consumption, mezze culture, seafood, both major and minor dishes and their place in the local cuisine. Later, I will talk about a specific dish, the Adana kebab, as the main subject of the research. I believe that focusing on a single dish will enable me to trace both the history of the food and find out where the name of the dish comes from. The reason why I chose the Adana kebab is closely linked to my experiences. I was born and raised in Adana and whenever it comes up, I am asked to describe “the real Adana kebab.” Even people who don't know my professional gastronomy background, still ask me this question. What makes a dish more ‘real’ than others? How is belonging created in relation to food? The city is known for its love for meat and barbeque, but it is not the only place with a huge consumption of meat. Why did the name of a certain dish get the name of the city, Adana, and how is it defined, produced, and presented in the region? I aim to find answers to these questions.

When Aras (2009) talks about the history of Adana cuisine, she uses the word ‘multicultural.’ It is not simply about romanticizing the making of the regional cuisine,

but to historically trace both the cultural and gastronomic impacts of different groups. Within the region, many nomadic groups, including the *Yörüks*, initially semi-sedentary, played a pivotal role. Furthermore, the region's high mobility can be attributed to the influence of various sovereign powers and empires over time. The motivations behind these groups migrating to the Adana region were as varied as the socio-economic circumstances and political tensions that propelled them. Moreover, the emergence of the modern Turkish Republic left a lasting impact on the shaping of a national cuisine. However, for the scope of this research, the focus will be narrowed to the period spanning from the 19th century to the present.

Adana boasts fertile lands that contribute significantly to agricultural production. Verdant herbs, fruits, and vegetables thrive in the city's environs. A plethora of fresh produce, such as mint, parsley, dill, watermelon, melon, tomato, peach, pepper, eggplant, and okra, abound. These ingredients aren't solely enjoyed freshly; they're also preserved using diverse methods. Adana's warm and sun-soaked climate plays a crucial role in this culinary landscape. Sunshine is harnessed for the traditional sun-drying practice, where produce is laid out on rooftops to desiccate under the sun's rays. Modern methods, including mechanical dryers, have also gained prominence. The bulk of these drying procedures transpire during the summer, ensuring ample reserves of fruits and vegetables for the winter months. A very well-known example is a specific type of eggplant (*topak patlıcanı*) which is small and round. It is dried during the summer and cooked to make a stuffed eggplant meal (*kuru patlıcan dolması*). Also, tomato and pepper are sun dried for the paste making process. The drying method is also used for bell peppers to make flaked red pepper (*pul biber*) which is extensively used in kitchens. With these products in mind, I will proceed by delving into popular products and their corresponding cooking techniques. The aim is to offer insights into the production and consumption patterns of select dishes.

The essence of Adana's cuisine can be aptly described as the harmonious fusion of Mediterranean influences with a Middle Eastern touch. *Sarımsaklı kofte*, also known as *fellah kofte*, is a great example of that. It contains both garlic, tomato, bulgur, olive oil and fresh herbs. These herbs and vegetables thrive abundantly in the region's hospitable climate and fertile soil. The wealth of fresh ingredients minimizes the necessity for drying methods. This leads us to the question: If the region supports year-round agricultural production, what prompts the need for drying fruits and vegetables? I suggest that this practice echoes a cultural adaptation stemming from both nomadic groups and Middle Eastern culinary traditions.

The roots of the drying technique trace back to ancient times, where various communities adopted food preservation methods aligned with their dietary habits. European cultures commonly dried fish, while Middle Eastern regions leaned towards preserving fruits and vegetables, including dried dates and figs. The fundamental rationale behind food drying, much like other preservation approaches, is the extension of food shelf life. Additionally, it serves as a safeguard against the proliferation of harmful bacteria and mold. In eras predating modern drying technologies, methods such as sun drying, air drying, and wind drying were widely employed to remove moisture. Middle Eastern countries, blessed with warmer climates and ample sunshine due to their geographic location, utilized these practices. Concurrently, nomadic groups incorporated dried foods into their lifestyle due to its convenience. Therefore, they preserved dried meat and dairy products – *kurut*, cheese, beef jerky, pastrami, and grains. Drying methods for these foods were different. Mostly, dry-salting and fermenting were two emphasized preservation techniques.

Therefore, the region has a wide range of dishes from lentil balls to vegetable stew, kebabs, offal dishes, seafood, and mezzes. Some of these dishes are labour intensive, others require domestic know-how, and some are homemade comfort food.

İçli köfte, also known as kibbeh, is a good example for the labour-intensive category. In my experience, women from the same family come together and start preparing the dish together for each family. For example, my mother and her aunts allocate time to buy the products, do the *mise en place*⁹ and finally start preparing for it. Each woman is responsible for her family. If five women gather, it means that five families will eat the dish. If each family gets twenty kibbehs, it makes a hundred kibbehs in total. The work is done easier and faster when it is done altogether. Also, the work is not only preparing food, but also to socialize, to have chitchats about their everyday life. It is a routine. It is not the question of “Are we going to prepare kibbeh for this winter?”, but it is more like “When do we come together for our winter preparation?”

On the other hand, barbecue culture is an integral part of the city. I can summarize the situation as follows: every time the wind blows, you can smell barbecued meat from a restaurant around the corner. Therefore, kebab appears as a common cooking technique in the region. It is possible to find kebabs and other barbecued meat at all hours of the day and night. In the morning, some people start the day by eating liver on the skewer. Tripe soup is consumed late at night. At times, a serving of Adana kebab is taken as a basis to compare the price of other dishes. One of the interviewees offered an illustrative example: “You know, why would people go out to eat a piece of steak with some vegetables for 150 Turkish Liras when they can eat a serving of Adana kebab for 60 liras, all side dishes included? It is nonsense.” So, it is not necessarily about enjoying different dishes, but to enjoy the maximum amount of food for a reasonable price. Plus, food is not always a gastronomic experience. It is more related to both accessibility and affordability. The first one, accessibility, is linked to space. Can people easily find the dish or is it limited to a certain group? Is

⁹ It is a French term meaning “put in place” which is commonly used at professional kitchens referring to the preparation of dishes and ingredients before the beginning of service.

the food available in their neighbourhood? The latter is about the price. Meat has never been in the cheap food category but used to be more accessible before. For instance, the liver was a ‘nonessential’ part of the animal, and it was thrown away. Only the poor would eat it. In time, it became a popular dish, consumed by many, and the price has risen accordingly.

Moreover, eating habits are shaped around the availability of the animal. In the region, sheep and goats are more common than cattle. So, meat dishes are based on mutton which is used for stews and kebabs. Cattle are low in number, which makes it more expensive. As it is an unaffordable piece of meat, people do not adapt to it in their eating habits. Therefore, steakhouse culture does not really exist in the city. Nobody would eat steak tartare and beefsteak. Instead, they would eat steak tartare a la turca (*çiğköfte*) which is a mixture of minced meat, fine bulgur, spices, and herbs.

Besides fresh herbs, spices are also extensively used in the cuisine. Flaked red pepper, chili powder, sumac, cumin, and thyme are only some of these spices. The region is a transit area between the Middle East and Europe. Many wanderers, missionaries, and social groups have travelled throughout the place. Both the Silk Road and the Spice Road crossed through the region. People exchanged goods and ‘exotic’ products which were unknown to them before.

Lastly, the city's location along the eastern Mediterranean ensures access to a variety of seafood, such as shrimp, blue crab, squid, clams, lagos fish, mullet, sea bass, sea bream, eel, sea snail, and certain types of caviar. Curiously, the consumption of seafood remains limited in Adana. Seafood dishes tend to be prepared simply—either grilled or fried—served with a dash of lemon. Shellfish consumption is notably modest. The reasons behind this are multifaceted, ranging from concerns over halal consumption to reservations stemming from the perceived palatability of these dishes. Interestingly, frogs were overexploited in the Çukurova region to meet global demand,

despite not being extensively consumed locally. Akçakaya, Bilgin, and Çiçek's work (2020) on the unsustainable frog harvest highlights the global popularity of frog legs as a gastronomic delicacy in various European and Asian countries. Notably, Turkey rakes in nearly \$4 million annually from frog exports, with half of the 36 million frogs originating from the Çukurova region. Besides the risk of extinction, it is also interesting that it is not consumed locally. For example, I have never seen frog legs sold anywhere. Not at supermarkets, fish markets and/or local bazaars. If one wants to find it, he/she needs to have a network to know the relevant actors. Another reason for seafood to be underrated in the region is the extensive consumption of red meat. The great variety of kebabs – veal cubes (*kuşbaşı*), liver, kofte, offal and other options of the barbecue culture overshadows the rich options of seafood.

Kebab has a unique presence in the cultural life of the region. Sundays are mostly spent around the barbecue at the parks, gardens, weekend gatherings with family and friends. It is a common social activity and a regular practice to buy the ingredients for the preparation of the dish and to either come together on somebody's balcony, at a picnic area or at the outskirts of the city. Also, families from middle- and middle-upper classes often go to grill restaurants on Sundays, which is an off day for many people. On the other hand, when friends and families from other cities visit Adana, it becomes an important duty to take them to these grill restaurants.

When discussing the prominent gastronomic aspects of Adana, it is imperative to mention the culinary festivals integral to the city's cultural traditions. Among many festivals held in the region related to cinema, nature, and music, gastronomy hold a significant place. Specifically, three noteworthy festivals are paramount in highlighting Adana's culinary culture: the Rakı Festival, the International Orange Blossom Carnival, and the International Taste of Adana Festival.

The Rakı Festival, initiated in 2010, is celebrated annually by the inhabitants of the city on the second Saturday of December. This festival is held in the historic enclave of *Tarihi Kazancılar Çarşısı*, renowned for its skilled artisans specializing in diverse craftworks including shoemaking, tailoring, carpentry, and chalcography. Adjacent to these artisanal shops, there are many grill restaurants convene and enable people to cherish the practice of commensality with their families and friends. Here, participants relish an assortment of culinary delights, including kebabs, mezzes, raki, and turnip juice (*şalgam*). In 2015, the governor of Adana announced the prohibition of the 'World Raki Festival' citing 'sensitivity' towards the consumption of alcoholic beverages, so the name of the event was changed to 'Adana Kebab and Turnip Festival'.¹⁰ Plus, the minister of interior of that time stated that “it is not compatible with our traditions” and that our culture is not represented properly.¹¹ It is worth noting, however, that the festival is inherently local in nature and does not aspire to advance any political, ideological, or ethnic affiliations within the region.

The second festival, the International Orange Blossom Carnival, has been taking place annually in April since 2013. This festival coincides with the blossoming of orange flowers in the city, imbuing Adana with an indescribable fragrance that announces the arrival of spring season. The city’s inhabitants celebrate this occasion by indulging in traditional local cuisine. In recent years, this festival has garnered substantial attention, drawing visitors from other parts of the country. Notably, the city

¹⁰ <https://www.diken.com.tr/adanada-raki-festivali-teror-nedeniyle-yasaklanmis/>

¹¹ <https://www.birgun.net/haber/soylu-iptal-edilen-kebab-ve-salgam-festivali-ile-ilgili-konustu-280069>. These explanations bring the following questions to mind: Who are ‘we’? What are our ‘sensitivities’? In order to talk about alcohol restrictions and bans, Zubaida (2013) provides us a historical perspective on that issue: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/turkey-alcohol-and-islam/>

becomes adorned with orange flower themed products and decorations in various locations.¹²

The third and final festival, the International Taste of Adana Festival, has been held since 2017. This festival is singularly dedicated to celebrating the opulence of the city's gastronomic culture. A diverse array of events is organized, including competitions for young chefs, gastronomy demonstrations by reputed culinary experts, and opportunities for people to savour an assortment of local delicacies available at stands throughout the festival area.

Considering the gastronomic abundance and extensive consumption of meat at the city, I wanted to learn more about the meat supply of the Adana kebab. I realize that the locality of the products is highlighted in current gastronomic trends and meat is no exception to that. It is assumed that it is produced, slaughtered, and consumed in the region so the taste of the meat is different from other places. Is there relevant cattle breeding in Adana? If yes, is it enough to cover the demand from grill restaurants? If not, where do the animals come from? Does the Adana kebab really taste different in Adana or is it just an assumption? Discovering the production and distribution channels of the meat will help me to answer these questions. From my point of view, current discourse on locality may be created for the commodification of such popular dishes both in regional, national, and international markets. Is the locality something that can be sold? Later, I will discuss these questions in detail. Before moving to the next chapter, it is important to introduce geographical indicators (GIs) which focus on the 'origin' of a product.

The Adana kebab has a GI from an official institution, Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, and was obtained by the Adana Chamber of Commerce. According

¹² The carnival was not celebrated this year due to the earthquake and flood disasters. To see the official announcement: <https://nisandaadanada.com/>

to Nizam and Tatari (2022), GIs are “designations that provide consumers with information not only on the origins of a product, but also the inherent qualities that link the product to its place of production. GI is a form of intellectual property that is tied to a bounded territory. It primarily promotes territorial distinctiveness of a particular product and its production techniques” (p. 144). There are different opinions about GIs. According to some scholars, they support small-scale producers and traditional production methods by creating niche markets with value-added products. However, much criticism has pointed out that GIs may amplify the current exploitation of agricultural labourers within the framework of artisanal production. In my case, it is important to learn how the officials defined the Adana kebab in terms of its ‘origin.’ According to the official documents, the chamber had applied for the indication in 2003 and it was issued a year later in 2004. The content of a GI goes as follows:

Geographical indication and designation of origin is an industrial property right describing a product originated from any region or attributable to any region due to its quality, reputation, or other characteristics. Fruit, stone, mine of any region may be different from those in the other regions or any carpet, rug, fabric, tile etc. may have attained reputation for whatsoever is the reason. Use of the name of the region with such products may be perceived by the consumers as their distinctive features from those with similar nature. The consumers may prefer the products sold with the name of such regions in lieu of the other products due to the fact that they rely on the name of the region. In this context, geographical indications and designations of origin are dimensioned in the manner that they are shaped, packaged, purchased, and sold through the traditional knowledge and they are the signs of guarantee evidencing the quality of the product, traditional production method and geographical origin. (Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, n.d.)

In their explanation, there are two important points that caught my attention: traditional know-how and local production methods. Traditional know-how is the knowledge of the kebab artisans on the type and amount of the meat for the cooking of the dish. Also, the supply chain of the meat may be a familiar subject to the kebab artisans as they possibly know the producers and butchers. On the other hand, what

marks kebab artisans as craftsmen is their knowledge of traditional production methods. It includes the usage of the right equipment (e.g.: skewer and mezzaluna) and handling of the grill.

In compliance with the explanations of the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, the meat must be from male animals, at least one year old and raised in its natural environment in the highlands. Moreover, tail fat is an important ingredient of the meal as it gives the distinctive taste of the Adana kebab. The meat and the tail fat should be mixed with some salt and red pepper flakes in a traditional mincing method with a specific chopping knife called *zırh* (also known as mezzaluna). Also, grilling is a part of this artisanal process which requires one to know how to handle the heat on the grill and to use a kind of skewer which is thicker and heavier than the commonly used ones. Plus, it is stated that an ideal portion of kebab is 120 grams.

It is important to note that kebab making skills are considered as the distinguishing characteristic of the dish as there are many kofta and kebab recipes in the country. Tan (2021) argues that the kneading process of kebab mince does not take as long as the process of kofta mince. Also, binding materials such as bread and eggs do not exist for the kebab making processes. On the other hand, handling the skewer requires a serious skill. Proficiency is equally essential in grilling, as the meat must hold together during barbecuing without losing its succulent juices or dispersing like rice. The fat should melt uniformly, preserving its full consistency (p.143). The definition of the GI has strict expectations from the artisans. However, these ‘GI rules’ should not be considered as given facts while explaining the Adana kebab and its technical requirements as a domestic know-how. In fact, the artisans may have multiple ways of doing it and that the GIs are there to commodify a product and sell these foods as value-added commodities in both the local and national markets. Besides the discussions around know-how and cooking techniques, what interests me

the most about Tan's work is what she calls a 'skill.' These skills take up prominent space in the research, under what I call "artisanal food production." Therefore, my aim is to understand how this know-how is created, learnt, and transferred to others. It will also enable me to compare learning processes of artisanal food making practices between masters, apprentices and the professional training provided by culinary schools. This will help me to understand how craftsmanship is understood and practiced today.

Before delving deeper into artisanal food production and the artisans themselves, it's imperative to explore the existing literature on Adana kebab, primarily centered around consumer practices. This body of work predominantly examines how both Adana residents and tourists perceive and consume Adana kebab in varying manners. Questions emerge: Does the dish hold significance within specific events? How frequently is it consumed? Canoğlu and Ballı (2018) delve into the factors influencing consumer preferences for kebab restaurants. These factors encompass expectations related to food quality, service, convenience, and restaurant facilities.

Simultaneously, Guler et al. (2016) probe into consumer preferences for favoured local menus. Their research uncovers Adana kebab's prominent status among other options and its popularity alongside Gaziantep cuisine. These findings contribute to understanding the rise of eating out culture, a phenomenon that has progressively gained momentum in Turkey since the 1980s. Yet, my focus lies predominantly on historical production processes. I believe that it is closely related to *Adanalılık* in two ways. First, the production practices are not independent of the physical and human geography of a region. In my case, the availability of certain animals, food ingredients and know-how are the three major reasons why people are still able to make that dish. Second, the notion of '*Adanalılık*' is not considered as a given fact, but I want to discuss how it has been understood historically. Who were *Adanalı* in history? Why

does the making of the dish 'belong' to someone from that particular place? I give priority to these questions because I find it important to learn about the historical journey of the dish before looking at the consumption practices in accordance with today's globalized eating and drinking activities.

In laying the groundwork for my research, I have introduced the region's historical backdrop, geographical features, and culinary habits. These three pillars are pivotal concepts that will anchor my exploration. In the upcoming chapter, I will delve into the essence of "artisanship" and how it materialized during my fieldwork. The chapter's dynamics encompass artisanal food production, the kebab artisans themselves, and Adana kebab as the final culinary creation. Throughout this analysis, I will provide empirical data collected from the field. What does artisanal food mean today? What does artisanship mean for the making of the Adana kebab? How do the kebab artisans experience artisanship? What does the Adana kebab mean for the inhabitants of the region and elsewhere? These are the initial questions of the next chapter, which will reveal the social, cultural, and economic aspects. Within the realm of food, numerous avenues enable a sense of belonging to a place, and I intend to explore some of these paths in depth.

CHAPTER 3

ARTISANSHIP: A VIEW FROM THE FIELD

3.1 Introduction

Having provided a concise introduction to the city, I now delve into the focal point of this research: artisanship. This chapter is grounded in the fieldwork conducted during October 2022. It initiates with an exploration of the definition of artisanship and its varying perceptions in Adana and beyond. Furthermore, I analyse the essence of being a kebab artisan in Adana, aided by data gleaned from artisans. This data encapsulates three key elements: the artisans' personal experiences, the production intricacies of the Adana kebab, and the social dynamics surrounding this dish. Let me begin by outlining the research methodology, which demonstrates how local networks facilitated contact with informants. In this context, I also present a broad spectrum of artisanal products. Subsequently, I proceed to discuss the conceptualization of artisanship within the context of the Adana kebab. By sharing demographic data and firsthand accounts from kebab artisans, I provide insights into their experiences. Alongside, I explore the evolution of the master-apprentice relationship over time.

Second, I focus on the Adana kebab as the ‘main dish’ of the argument. I describe how it is prepared, grilled, and served. Plus, I bring anecdotes from the fieldwork to show that there are multiple recipes of the dish, and that each artisan has a unique way of making it. Building from this, I start a discussion about standardization and authenticity. What are the tools of standardization? How is ‘authenticity’ understood in relation to the dish? What are the tensions between standardization and authenticity? I aim to answer these questions. Later, I reveal the gendered aspects of food production in the public sphere through the representation of kebab artisans in the city. Lastly, I summarize the chapter with the argument on how

the production practices, the culinary culture of the Adana kebab and its sociological background is perceived in the local context. Next, I elaborate more on the methodology. I provide details about my fieldwork and how I benefitted from the local networks.

3.2 A brief note about methodology and local networks in the field

I conducted 28 semi-structured interviews with kebab artisans, butchers, meat suppliers, Sheep and Goat Breeders' Association of Turkey in Adana, and Chamber of Kebab Artisans and Restaurants. The interviews lasted between twenty minutes to two hours. Some of the butchers and kebab artisans were not able to stop working for interviews, therefore I had to conduct interviews while they were handling the meat. It enabled me to see the processing of the product before it is served to guests. All the interviewees were men, which tells us a lot about the gender dynamics in the local kebab sector. The ages of the interviewees ranged from 32 to 90 and the majority were in their 50s and 60s on average. I mostly used the snowball sampling method to reach out to my interviewees. It was the most convenient method for the research as most of the kebab restaurants source meat from butchers and they have networks among different butcher shops. Also, family ties were an important component of the research. For instance, a kebab artisan's brothers were also artisans, having other restaurants around the city.

In general, I visited their workplace during off-peak hours. If the restaurants served alcoholic beverages, their peak hours start around 17:00. Therefore, my interviews took place earlier than that time. In other cases, they started serving at midday, so I had to visit the artisans before noon. It enabled me to see their *mise en place* process which includes the arrival of fresh vegetables and greens, meat and *pide* bread (unless they bake themselves). I also observed the order and hierarchical

distribution of kitchen work. Apprentices receive, wash and process greens and vegetables whereas masters focus on processing of the meat. The bread is set aside to be used while serving the dish. For butcheries, associations and chambers, there is no peak hour. Therefore, I conducted those interviews by appointment.

My initial aim was to learn about the experiences of the kebab artisans and the production of the Adana kebab. Starting with the apprenticeship, it is important for me to understand how the artisans got involved in the food and beverage sector, and their motivations to start working with kebab masters. This covers the part on craftsmanship and artisanal food production. Furthermore, I asked them for the recipe for the dish. By doing so, I found that there is no standard recipe for the dish, and that artisans may have unique recipes according to their taste and know-how.

Concurrently, I also wanted to learn more about the supply chain of meat. Most kebab artisans had limited knowledge on that topic with some exceptions. These exceptions were the artisans who used to be both butchers and kebab artisans, but they are a minority group in my research. Therefore, it was necessary to talk with different actors of the meat supply chain to trace the animals. Before moving to the discussions around the fieldwork, I will mention the local networks in the city and how it shaped my research.

How I got in touch with the actors is as important as the interviews since it heavily relied on network relationships. At the beginning of the fieldwork, I called some of the kebab restaurants to explain myself and my research to organize interviews and I was immediately refused. They were either disinterested or did not find it convincing enough. Later, I visited these places to explain myself in person and bring a written explanation of the research, so it could be more trustworthy. Some of the actors still rejected my interview proposition, while others accepted it with some hesitation. In order to be more convincing, I provided further information about

myself. I told them that I was born and raised in Adana and that I am a ‘local.’ It helped me to create familiarity with some of them as we had mutual acquaintances. However, the number of actors was limited. I needed to find other ways to reach out to more people. Then, I started asking people around me if they had any contact with kebab artisans. At this point my research turned into something completely different. I opened many doors by asking for people’s networks.

The next day, I called the first place which denied my interview and sent someone’s kind regards and re-proposed a meeting. It was immediately accepted. He reacted thusly: “Why didn’t you tell me that you know that person? Sorry for my refusal before. You are more than welcome anytime you want.” He answered all the questions I asked, offered me some black tea, and even proposed to serve the Adana kebab as a treat. I was quite surprised by how things changed. I was constantly directed to ‘someone, who knows someone.’ I used the snowball sampling method extensively to find other actors. I borrow the term ‘informal institution’ from Pamuk (2018) as he explains both formal and informal institutions from a historical point of view. It is important to clarify that ‘institutions’ are not defined as government agencies, but more like networks between individuals, social groups, and regional communities. According to Pamuk, there are three determinants of institutions which are geography, culture, and political economy. I focus on ‘culture’ which is an umbrella term in his book to cover different social groups based on religion and ethnicity.

He focuses on the impact of institutions on economic growth and human development from the 19th century. Pamuk argues that: “...many informal institutions are typically based on social networks with clearly defined borders. These borders limit the geographic, social, and political reach of such institutions, and they often tend to serve primarily the narrow interest of an exclusive group” (Ibid, p. 58). I do not

necessarily focus on the economic growth of a specific group, but his discussion is significant to show how important it is to have social networks. I often asked myself: “What would my fieldwork look like if I did not ask any contact information from local people?” I am aware that there are many limitations in my research, mostly based on gender and age. However, I also have advantages as an ‘insider’ of a regional group. My advantages are related to a particular ethnic group which is linked to religion. When I pointed out my relationship with the groups known as *fellah*, some of the informants were more forthcoming with the information they provided to me.

The fieldwork is basically divided into three parts: the experiences of the artisans, the Adana kebab, and the standardization process of the culinary culture and recipes. In the section about artisans, I will focus on the craftsmanship concept of the kebab artisans – specifically, the path they followed to become artisans, how they define artisanship, and the culinary aspects of the kebab. I also discuss the relationship between the artisans and apprentices. In fact, apprenticeship has been exposed to a change in time, and I will delve into that transformation. Moving forward, I delve into the realm of the Adana kebab, its diverse recipes, ingredients, and complementary side dishes. This section aims to capture the complete culinary experience associated with the dish. Lastly, I examine the process through which dishes, recipes, and culinary techniques undergo standardization before entering the market.

3.3 Literature review of artisanship

After suggesting the methodology of the fieldwork, I continue with the literature based on the concept ‘artisanship’. The literature and methodology are two important elements to create a solid background to discuss what fieldwork offers me. Why do I call kebab makers ‘artisans’ and consider their work as craftsmanship? They could be simply called either cooks or chefs. What are the actual differences? Does the job,

tools, size of the operation or specific knowledge make it a ‘craft’? I believe that it is the combination of all. Having these questions in mind, I focused on what the literature offers us about the term artisanship. I start with Sennett’s (2009) work which points out various uses of the word for craftsman’s labors: *Handwerk* in German, ‘artisanal’ in French, and *mastersyo* in Russian (p. 20). The term may have slightly different meanings in different languages. For instance, it can be used as an umbrella term for ‘handicraft’ in one language, whereas it can be simply ‘the work of a master’ in another. Also, ‘craftsmanship’ and ‘artisanal’ are intertwined terms. In general, an artisan is one who has mastered specific qualifications of a field with all its aspects. For food production, these particular qualifications would be to know high quality products for a dish, to know its preparation techniques in detail, usage of equipment (knife, skewer, rolling pin etc.), cooking methods, and serving a meal.

A traditional perspective on artisanal production aligns with the notion of handcrafted goods. Mastery necessitates traversing various stages, often spanning years, marked by dedicated labour within a hierarchical work environment. The proficiency is honed through practical application, rather than remaining confined to theoretical understanding. Marx (1973) explains the steps of craftsmanship from a critical perspective as such: “As master in a craft he has inherited it, earned it, saved it up, and as a youth he is first an apprentice, where he does not appear as an actual independent worker at all, but shares the master’s fare in a patriarchal way” (p. 422). His statement may be still valid, but I suggest that definitions of ‘craftsmanship’ and ‘artisanal production’ are subject to change. Although the mechanization of the production systems has changed the understanding of hand-made production, it does not fully eliminate craftsmanship. We should not limit artisanal production to pre-mechanization times; instead, we need to acknowledge the transformation of craftsmanship in time. Therefore, ‘craft’ should not be limited to a single description.

This is why I focus on the kebab artisans of the current culinary culture of the region where high volumes of kebabs are prepared, grilled, and served.

So far, the discussions on artisanship have occurred from a framework focusing on production. Alternatively, the consumers may also possess some agency in the emerging and shifting definitions of craftsmanship. Thus, it cannot solely be limited to social dynamics and relations pertaining to production processes. Rivaroli et al. (2020) provides us a discussion on consumers' perspective of foodstuff. They argue that "craftsmanship of food production" are more related to the accessibility of that foodstuff. In this sense, consumers may redefine the term according to their understanding and the artisanal food that is available to them.

However, this chapter will focus on artisans as the producers of foodstuff and there are two reasons for that. First, artisanship requires a labour-intensive work which should be primarily acknowledged in terms of its challenges, techniques, and unique stories of artisans while mastering an artisanship. Plus, when it comes to food production, an artisan does not only focus on its taste and cooking, but also emphasizes the quality of the product which will be used in the making of a dish. As you will see later in this chapter, the artisans of kebab have strong opinions about their ingredients. Second, I believe that it won't be possible to understand consumption patterns of a particular dish without discussing its first step, the production process.

While doing that, I will not engage with the 'modern' understanding of craft food products (CFPs) either since I find this labelling pretty misleading and ambiguous. Rivaroli et al. (2021) show examples from three different countries - Italy, Germany, and the United Kingdom. They aim to understand the perceptions of consumers on CFPs across "authentic food, luxury food, and natural foods." Yet, these terms, particularly "authentic" and "natural," are sufficiently abstract to elude a definitive consensus. Notably, these labels often intersect with alternative food

production and consumption networks, predominantly within the Western context. Contrarily, I contend that craft food production is an intrinsic component of a rich historical continuum.

When it comes to historicizing craft food production, I start the discussion with Traeger's (2003) argument which is related to agri-food systems in relation to territory. She focuses on what food production means for the rural development throughout history. For that, she divides production periods into three categories: pre-industrial, industrial, and post-industrial eras. She argues that in the pre-industrial era, "agrarian systems driven by needs of self-sufficiency and preservation of nutrition from locally available raw materials" (p. 94). Similarly, consumption took place near production (ibid). The comparison of industrial and artisanal that Rice draws (2015) speaks to Tregear's work: "The industrial is impure; the artisanal is pure" (p. 219). Is there such a binary between industrial and artisanal? According to Rice, artisanal breads and cheeses, farmer's markets, and local food movements are in opposition to mass produced consumer goods. We should be sceptical of that dualism as, in some cases, artisanal food production is also integrated into mass produced goods which is called 'craft washing' (Rivaroli et al., 2020). Such works in literature inspired me to go after grill restaurants with various operation sizes. It enables me to compare how different production volumes affect artisanship.

In light of these discussions, it becomes apparent that the definition of "craftsmanship" defies easy categorization. Its interpretation remains fluid, adapting to historical events, from industrialization and world wars to the post-Fordist era and neoliberalism. Moreover, how is "craftsmanship" perceived in the contemporary landscape? In my view, it interweaves with the place of production, manual labour, production scale—preferably small batches—and its role within society. Place assumes prominence, offering a dual perspective encompassing physical and human

geography. While the former pertains to sourcing raw materials and the availability of local ingredients, the latter encompasses a broader spectrum including migration patterns and the evolution and dissemination of food cultures within distinct social groups. Tregear (2003) adds that: “food usage practices are influenced by factors other than physical location of users: they are part of food culture, the dynamics of which may transcend physical local contexts” (p. 95). Her work inspired me to question the supply chain of the meat for making of kebabs in Adana since the geographical indication system emphasizes close proximity between the production and consumption of ingredients, but it may not be the case for the Adana kebab.

Treagar’s discussion is important for the research as she touches upon two important aspects of the study: geography and food culture. I am aware that industrialization processes did not take place uniformly and linearly in the world and this has implications for differences in food production practices across the world. However, we cannot deny its impact especially for the invention and use of kitchen appliances and tools. In relation to her argument, Paxson (2010) asserts that artisanal food production is not only related to human geography, but also there is a reciprocal relationship between physical geography and artisanal production of food. He argues that environmental conditions have an impact on artisanal cheesemaking (p. 444) for the milk as the raw material of the product.

In his work on artisanal cheese, Paxson (2012) offers us a definition of the ‘artisan’ on the basis of cheese making practices. However, the definition can be applied to any other artisanal food production system including kebab making: “...produced by hand, in small batches, with particular attention paid to the tradition of the cheesemaker’s art, and thus using as little mechanization as possible in the production of the cheese” (p. 298). His recognition of the term inspired me to understand the local production processes of the kebabs. I highlight ‘small batches’ as

it enables artisans to have handcraft production. Otherwise, it becomes difficult to handle large quantities of work. That is why I do not consider all my informants as artisans. Some of them only produce small quantities by hand and they do not necessarily expand the operation although the demand is high.

After focusing on the concepts which are related to forms of production – artisanship, artisans, and Adana kebab as the ‘major dish’ of this thesis, I point out that communal aspects of the culinary cultures are equally important. In fact, food plays a key role in the creation of communities. These traditions are created, learned, practiced, and passed down. This is an important point to understand the creation of discourses and practices based on cultural identity through food. When a certain tradition is created through culinary cultures, it is sometimes linked with a particular social group.

A common expression on that topic from the field is that: “The food has been prepared and barbecued in this way for years. It is a tradition. It cannot be changed.” However, the field also provides us with different ways of kebab making which gives room to discuss traditions, sociological changes, and their relation to local cuisines. This sociological perspective of the research is not limited to the traditional know-how and cultural identities of the food. It also reveals the social tensions in the operation at kebab shops. These tensions include the relationship between the artisans-apprentices and owners-artisans which I will discuss later in this chapter. Next, I put forward the first and foremost discussion of the fieldwork which is based on artisans and their relationship to the other actors.

3.4 The artisans

There are various themes that emerge from my interviews, which speak to the changing nature of artisanal qualities of kebab making. These themes are a deteriorating master-apprentice relationship, traditional knowledge of artisans for making kebabs, and artisanal food trends in the world. I find them important because they reveal how food culture is created and experienced in the local area. I will start with the notion of apprenticeship and how the artisans perceive it currently. The interviews provided me with plenty of examples on the subject, showing how apprenticeship covers an important aspect of the discussions based on artisanship. Next, I will focus on the experiences of kebab artisans. Their stories differ from each other to a significant extent, and it enables us to challenge the concept of standardization. In relation to that, I will argue that artisanal food is a remarkable trend of the day, and kebab is no exception to that.

3.4.1 The master-apprentice relationship

“Apprenticeship has disappeared, your kids won’t see any craftsmen in this sector anymore.” The concept of apprenticeship has become increasingly obsolete in the kebab artisan sector, according to many individuals I interviewed. They lament the fact that modern-day apprentices do not have the opportunity to learn from experienced craftsmen and witness firsthand the various stages of the operation. This is a sentiment commonly expressed by most kebab artisans and butchers. Although they disagree on many aspects of the recipe of the Adana kebab, they are usually in agreement on the notion of apprenticeship. To understand what they meant with the extinction of the apprenticeship, I asked about their experiences when they were newcomers. Most of them told me that they either started as dishwashers, couriers, or cleaners. From their point of view, this is how it should work. You cannot touch meat

unless you start from the bottom of the hierarchy. If one does not start from washing dishes, he would not understand what it means to be a master artisan. It is not only about making the best kebab but knowing each part of the operation. One does not get the attribution of ‘master’ for cooking skills only. He (and it is always a male, as we will see in due course) must know what anyone else is up to, in the business overall. After the basic ‘apprenticeship’ practices, there is another stage called “*zomcu*” (Dağdeviren, 2005, p. 147). In this stage, they clean and prepare the vegetables and *piyaz* for the kebab, place the tomatoes and peppers on the skewers, and grind the meat into minced meat. Their meat handling skills often get challenged by their masters in this role.

Akarçay and Güldemir’s work (2020) on the transformation of the cookery profession from ‘masters’ to ‘cool chefs’ supports the findings of my fieldwork, in revealing the changing concept of being a chef. They describe a dual structure of cookery that consists of traditional cooking as an artisanal chef, and a more standardized and alienated form of cooking that has emerged with the use of technology. For traditional cooks, the introduction of industrial kitchen solutions weakens the craft aspect of the profession and impedes their ability to take initiative. The professional practices of cookery have been significantly impacted by industrial developments, leading to a shift from a labour process that involved craftsmanship from start to finish, to a work-labour structure that relies on industrial solutions, technical opportunities, and a more technician-like labour process. As a result, the nature of cooking has undergone a significant transformation from the past to the present (p. 903).

3.4.2 The artisanship journey of the artisans

Their (the artisans) encounter with the business mostly started in two ways. It was either a family business or they were taken to grill restaurants while they were kids by their families. Fillis (2006) points out that artisans learn their skills through cultural connections that are passed down generations. For instance, one of the interviewees who is 62 years old told me that he was taken to a kebab artisan by his father and used the well-known phrase “don’t spare the rod (*eti senin kemiği benim*)” which means that the master artisan can be as rough as he wants with the new apprentice (*çırak, kalfa*). It is not only about teaching the work, but also to show the ‘rules of good manners’ as a part of their education. From their point of view, it was the only way to educate one to become a qualified and well-trained kebab artisan. This rough education included physical violence. While no form of violence can be justified in any way, using it as a training method for apprenticeship is exceptionally problematic. Nevertheless, it was considered a common practice. Some of the interviewees think that today’s apprentices are ‘lucky’ as they do not practice physical violence anymore, that they learn it from ‘easy’ ways. This simply shows how hierarchical the sector is. One must devote himself to be a respected kebab artisan. How did they do it in the past?

Notably, kebab artisans and butchers initiated their journeys from the ground up. Establishing themselves in meat processing required considerable effort and time. Remarkably, they commenced their careers at astonishingly young ages 7, 10, or 12 years old. Fifteen years old was considered 'late' to begin an apprenticeship. Presently, such circumstances would be termed 'child labour' without hesitation. The practice exploits children both physically and mentally while providing inadequate compensation under the guise of “getting training from a master artisan is already a gift for them.” Apprentices were expected to proficiently manage a range of tasks assigned to them. Failure to meet their master's expectations labelled them as ‘weak.’

The rationale behind initiating apprenticeships at such tender ages intrigued me. Two principal factors emerge.

First, compulsory education mandated by the Ministry of National Education was limited to primary school, covering the initial five years of education. By the age of 12, mandatory education concluded, allowing youngsters to transition into adulthood. Subsequently, secondary school became obligatory, elevating the age of compulsory education completion. At this juncture, individuals were generally 14 to 15 years old. Despite this, they could engage in work during summer holidays. Eventually, high school was added to the compulsory education system, compelling children to remain in school until they turned 18. Concurrently, universities proliferated across various Turkish cities, leading to increased university enrolment. Possessing a university degree believed to be a prestigious accomplishment guaranteeing employment.

Critics among kebab artisans point out that while schooling was an option, its transformation into compulsory education hindered the perpetuation of the 'apprenticeship' concept. In their perspective, apprenticeship is dwindling. Though their concerns are similar, diverse motivations underpin their early entry into the field. For example, a third-generation kebab artisan recounted that assuming responsibility for the existing family business left him with limited choice. He recounted that his input wasn't sought; the decision was either to attend university while managing the business or to exclusively delve into the intricacies of running the enterprise.

On the other hand, certain interviewees did not have the privilege of a family-run business, necessitating their engagement in the workforce from a young age due to financial constraints. In traditional family structures, preference was typically given to young sons over mothers when multiple family members sought employment. Public spaces remained male-dominated regardless of age—a trend that might persist today.

Kebab restaurants offered a potential avenue for employment, enabling individuals to earn wages and even benefit from leftover food. One of the interviewees explained it as:

There were 8 people in the family. There were some days that we could not even find bread to feed the whole family. One day, I saw that a kebab restaurant was throwing many greased bread delicacies (*yağlı ekmek*) away. I thought that if I start working there, I could take those breads with me to home, so that the family can eat something. I only wanted some bread because meat was just a dream.

Hence, not all were driven by gastronomic dreams of becoming 'the chef' or motivated to preserve local cuisine and craftsmanship for future generations. For many, the primary impetus was to support their families and secure their daily survival. Present-day romanticization of local cuisines as part of contemporary 'gastronomic values of local geographies' contrasts with historical realities. This transformation highlights the evolution of discourses surrounding food cultures within specific regions. A more comprehensive discussion on this shift will follow, specifically concerning the gastronomic dimensions of the Adana kebab. Before doing that, I will highlight an essential aspect of the fieldwork: the gender debate. The interviewees all identify as men, and it is not a coincidence that men are more often encountered in the public sphere of food production than women. My next focus pertains to gendered aspects within the local context. Considering the cooking's private-public divide, gender becomes an inevitable topic.

3.4.3 The gender debate: women as kebab makers

While I've previously defined 'artisanship' based on Sennet's work, his exploration of craftsmanship lacks a gendered perspective. While gender-based analysis isn't a primary goal of my research, I can't overlook the dearth of women in professional kitchens, typically male-dominated spaces. Hence, it's unsurprising to encounter

mainly male interviewees during fieldwork. Nonetheless, an increasing number of female chefs are entering the gastronomy realm. If this trend holds, why is the kebab artisan field exclusively male? One might speculate that it's due to the 'male domain' of meat handling. However, this isn't solely about meat; it pertains to women's presence in public workspaces. Since kebab-making expertise hinges on tradition and knowledge transfer from masters to apprentices, women were historically excluded from this sphere.

My fieldwork unveiled a distinctive gender distribution pattern within the public sphere, wherein female participants were rare during interviews. Their roles often revolved around dishwashing, cleaning, salad, and mezze preparation. I encountered no female kebab artisan handling the mezzaluna or managing an open pit barbecue. Moreover, when I inquired whether they'd pass down this craft to their children, multiple artisans responded: "I wish I could, but I do not have a son. I only have one daughter. Therefore, it is not possible." When it comes to the production, processing and consumption of meat, there are some debates around the topic. One argues that 'heavy kitchen work' belongs to the men's world. It is difficult both to process meat with mezzaluna and to manage the barbecue. It is not a 'naïve' work which is mostly related to women. In response to this, Sachs (1996) clearly identifies the active involvement and actions of women in agricultural production which is a labour-intensive work and gives examples from the field – corn, rice, coffee. Thus, I suggest that it is not necessarily about meat but the exclusion of women from public space.

Women have historically engaged in labour-intensive roles such as agricultural production, food processing, and notably, domestic work. The fact that this labour remains invisible and unpaid does not diminish its difficulty or significance. Savran and Demiryontan (2020) delve into the historical context of unpaid domestic labour,

which keeps women confined to their homes while working as an invisible labour force. Their discussion employs materialist feminism to uncover the historical foundations of male dominance, the patriarchy as a specific mode of production, and the intricate ties between domestic labour, patriarchy, and capitalism. White (2004) offers an illustrative example in this context, based on her ethnographic fieldwork among pieceworkers and family workers. She highlights that women's domestic work is highly encouraged, yet often unpaid or inadequately compensated, with minimal social security. Women become integrated into the male-dominated capitalist system, contributing from home production to the global consumption market. Women's labour force becomes exploited within the capitalist framework. I draw inspiration from such literature to explain women's roles in the kebab-making process.

When it comes to gender roles around the kebab making process, most of the interviewees had similar memories. “It was always my mother or grandma who used to make kebabs at home. I do not remember my father participating in the making of the dish. He only made a fire for the barbecue, and we ate it all together. That’s all.” Women actively partook in mincing the meat, seasoning it, and skewering it. My own experiences echo this pattern. I remember my grandaunt efficiently managing all the *mise en place* single-handedly. It's not about romanticizing women's prowess but rather acknowledging that women were indeed involved in meat production processes within the domestic context. However, women's access to the role of kebab masters in restaurants remains limited.

In her work based on taste and memory, Seremetakis (2020) supports my argument on public-private distinction: “The replacement of these local cooks by modern male chefs aiming at the re-education and modernisation of local cuisines to fit the new transnational context turned these women, along with local food varieties, into matter out of place” (p. 318). All the informants were males and there were only a

few women working at the restaurants. Some of the dishwashers were women, 3 of them were the wives of the kebab artisans. Others were responsible for side dishes, which are salads and mezzes. The main reason is that once the preparation is done, they do not have to stay at the restaurant until late. In line with societal norms, women are expected to avoid late work hours, ensuring they are at home to care for children and manage domestic responsibilities, while men are the main breadwinners. Although this trend is shifting, change is slow.

The visibility of women in professional kitchens is increasing. However, traditions are resistant to such changes and the master-apprenticeship relationship is no exception to that. The distinction between public and private life was clearly defined for gendered aspects of work. Women were pushed to private life whereas public areas were dominated by men. Thus, the issue isn't merely about separating women from meat production; it's intricately tied to spatial distinctions justified by gender roles. For instance, one interviewee claims that women find the work too demanding. He cites the size of the mezzaluna, the heat of the barbecue, the stress in the food and beverage sector, and the weight of skewers as challenges women cannot handle. On the other hand, there is nothing too difficult for women to handle when it comes to domestic work. When I asked him who does the domestic work, he replied: "Of course my wife. I am working all day long from the morning until late at night. I do not have time for it. Otherwise, I would help her. We need to share the work." In the end, women do not necessarily do the easier job, but the unpaid one. As discussed earlier, various facets emerge from the fieldwork, including artisans, meat, gendered workspaces, and local networks. Next, I will delve into the present trend of marketing 'old' traditional foods as 'new' artisanal creations.

3.4.4 Artisanal food: a rising trend

Up to this point, I focused on producers' perspective and how artisanship has been formed in the region. I continue with what has been produced in the current food market. The relationship between the terms 'artisanship' and 'handmade' will be emphasized since the marketing of handmade products is a hot topic nowadays. There are prominent examples of these products which Cope (2014) asserts when talking about artisanal foods and craftsmanship: cheese, pickles, chocolate, and spirits. She defines artisanal food production as: "A product that is made by an artisan, and most properly, something that is handmade, unique, and of high quality – the very opposite of what we mean by mass-produced" (p. 3). This definition generates an important discussion. What is understood by 'handmade' production? How is the 'quality' measured? Who determines the definition of 'quality'? What does 'uniqueness' stand for? These abstract concepts invite a context-specific debate to explore beyond mere definitions. Cope argues for 'artisanal food production' as a notion which came back as a counterculture to mass production. She suggests that we got alienated from the land and local foods. "Back-to-the land" movements emerged around the 1960s and environmental concerns were a hot topic of the early 2000s (ibid).

The landscape was further influenced by pivotal historical events, including the World Wars, The Great Depression, the integration of women into the workforce, and technological innovations like refrigeration. These factors collectively led to reduced time spent on food preparation, the emergence of diverse food preservation methods, rural-to-urban population shifts, and shifts in agricultural production. Agricultural workers migrated to urban areas, contributing to the growth of the working class. These sociopolitical developments exerted substantial influence on agrifood systems (Goodman and Redclift, 1991).

As Cope chronicles these historical shifts, she notes the emergence of social groups like hippies (akin to modern-day hipsters) seeking alternatives to mainstream food production. This manifested as small-scale, handcrafted, locally produced foods. This movement had dual objectives: mitigating alienation from food production and preserving traditional methods, while concurrently highlighting environmental concerns. A plethora of food movements emerged, with one of the most recognized being Slow Food, established around the 1980s. However, such movements faced criticism as they were “intertwined with the mainstream, the initial counterculture message becomes obscured” and that the ‘alternative’ was hijacked by big businesses (Ibid, p. 22).

Currently, the term ‘artisanal’ is used in different contexts as a marketing buzzword: “natural, local, culturally embedded, and small batch” food production. Similarly, Blundel (2016) explains that it is a relatively small-scale food production system which relies on handwork of skilled artisans over mechanized methods. (p. 42) However, it is not limited to the size of the production and the quality of the product. It is also about how these “traditional” crafts are commodified and their historical background is ignored. Terrio (1996) engages in a significant discourse concerning the commodification and dehistoricization of consumer products, with particular emphasis on artisanal chocolate. The cultivation and manufacturing procedures within the chocolate industry serve as powerful examples of ‘alienation’ as consumers in affluent and industrialized nations frequently remain uninformed about the intricate and extensive processes underpinning the production of the commodities they consume frequently.

Apart from its cultivation process in the 3rd world, she focuses on how chocolate became a “craft commodity” and tensions between France and Belgium related to the “art of chocolate.” For consumers, the production process is showcased

as artisans craft chocolates in a performative manner. At a boutique chocolate shop, an artisan may stand behind a display case, actively processing chocolate, freshly crafted for each customer. This dynamic is intertwined with the cultural commodification of social interactions within the community. To emphasize this point, Terrio (p.149) posits that: “...the politics of cultural authenticity in the globalization of markets that enables “genuine,” locally produced craft work and commodities to be maintained, revived, and/or reinvented precisely because they can be commoditized and sold as such.” (p. 149) Multiple examples of craft commodification within specific food contexts can be identified.

My analysis of the Adana kebab does not directly address mainstream and alternative food production methods. Instead, it delves into the experiences of kebab artisans in a particular locale. Additionally, I explore how the dish itself underwent commodification as it spread to various cities across Turkey. This requires a historical examination of the conceptualization of Adana kebab production within both local and national contexts. The dish has undergone significant transformations, reshaping eating habits in large urban centres. Subsequent sections provide a comprehensive overview of the dish, including its ingredients, equipment, and accompaniments. These discussions pave the way for considerations of standardization and the authenticity of the Adana kebab.

3.5 The Adana kebab

The term 'kebab' often sparks confusion. Is it exclusively associated with skewered meat dishes, or does it embody the essence of a particular region? To address this perplexity, an initial clarification is essential. I start with the official definition of 'kebab.' The Turkish Language Association (TDK) defines it as: “Meat cooked

directly on fire or in a pot with dry cooking methods.”¹³ Also, kebab can be anything that is fried or roasted. Therefore, it is not simply the name of a single dish. Instead, it is a cooking technique. The word etymologically comes from Arabic, derived from the word for “fry, fried meat” (Nişanyan Sözlük).

There are many ways of making kebabs. It can be cooked horizontally (BBQ) or vertically (doner kebab) with different ingredients and cooking techniques.

Disparities in kebabs arise from diverse factors: regional and cultural distinctions, ingredient availability, and the utilization of spices and herbs. Varied names for the dish correspond to ingredients, cooking techniques, and locations, such as: *soğan kebabı* (onion kebab), *fırın kebabı* (kebab in oven), *yoğurtlu kebab* (kebab with yoghurt), *tas kebabı* (lamb stew with vegetables), and *kuşbaşı kebabı* (kebab of meat cubes). In this section, I focus on a significant type of kebab, the *Adana kebab*, to introduce the production and consumption patterns of the dish.

In this research, I regard the Adana kebab as a 'craft product' crafted by skilled artisans. The preparation of the dish demands specific skills and techniques, necessitating patient practice by apprentices. To elucidate my conception of craft products and artisans, the insights of Arias and Cruz (2019) prove crucial. They define craft products as: “an individual occupation, a social position within communities and a lifestyle career that included apprenticeship, several years of travelling and practice to master a craft, and the establishment of a stable, independent enterprise” (p. 634). They also have a different description for ‘artisanal enterprises’ as: “Products made either completely by hand, or with the help of hand tools or even mechanical means, as long as the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most substantial component of the finished product.” (p. 633).

¹³ The definition of kebab in Turkish is as follows: “Doğrudan doğruya ateşte veya kap içinde susuz olarak pişirilmiş et.”

These definitions are linked with how the Adana kebab is made, and kebab artisanship is understood in restaurant¹⁴ operations. First, I will explain its traditional preparation and cooking methods. Then, I will discuss how artisans practice it today depending on the size of production and the implementation of specific methods. Each kebab artisan has his own recipe of the Adana kebab. Therefore, there is no single ‘master’ recipe of the dish. However, there is a traditional way of making the kebab and even the artisans, who are mostly fixed in their ways, are in agreement on that point.

3.5.1 Raw material

The raw materials of the kebab are pretty simple: minced meat, salt, and different types of pepper (chilli flakes, chilli powder and/or red capia pepper). These materials are kneaded together and form a distinctive taste of the dish when grilled. Its taste and production methods create debate on standardization and authenticity of the dish. To elaborate on the food preparation process, I delve into its ingredients and raw materials, which constitute the dish's foundation. The journey begins with the animal—specifically, a male sheep, whose meat is referred to as 'mutton.' Various sheep breeds originate from eastern Turkey, with Siirt, Van, Batman, Mardin, Diyarbakır, and Urfa being the prominent cities supplying sheep to Adana. Preferred breeds, including *hırrik* or *herrik*, *Van beyazı*, and *sarı koyun* or *sarıbaş*, belong to the fat-tailed category. These breeds are prized for their higher fat content, reduced bone structure, and substantial flesh. It's noteworthy that, for my interviewees, Central Anatolia and Thrace Merinos sheep breeds are considered unsuitable for Adana

¹⁴ I use ‘restaurant’ as an umbrella term, which covers peddlers and any type of grill restaurants with an open fire pit.

kebabs due to their lacking tails and lower fat content. Artisans prioritize fat content to attain the desired taste of kebabs.

To be consumed in its best condition, the sheep should be between 6 months to 1,5 years old. If younger, it is considered as lamb which is not suitable for the Adana kebab. If older than 1,5 years old, the flesh may be too tough to eat. The artisans should start stripping the tendons from the flesh of the animal. The deboning process of mutton already requires a specific skillset, to make sure that there is no tendon left on the flesh and the meat is not wasted. Also, some amount of tail fat¹⁵ is necessary. The amount varies depending on the recipe of the maker. The tail fat is either received as a part of a sheep or bought separately. After deboning the meat, it is chopped with mezzaluna (*zırhta çekmek*), and salt is added. Tail fat also undergoes the same process. Later, the spices of the minced meat are added to the minced meat and kneaded by hand, to make sure that the ingredients blend properly. Then, spiced ground meat and tail fat all undergo a second round of chopping. More spices can be added later, if they want to make a spicy version of the kebab (*acılı Adana*).

However, an alternative method of dish preparation involves adding spices just before placing the meat on the open-pit barbecue. The traditional recipe excludes veal, but some artisans incorporate a modest amount of veal to enhance cohesion between meat and tail fat, suggesting that: “If someone tells you that they do not add veal in their mixture, they would be lying.” Veal also makes it easier to barbecue the meat as it does not contain as much fat as mutton does, so the cooking of the dish is more ‘guaranteed’ or stable. Therefore, most artisans say that “real masters would never blend veal in their recipe, it is amateurish.”

¹⁵ It is fat rendered from the tail of a sheep.

3.5.2 The equipment

The equipment for making Adana kebabs is as important as the other components of the dish. In fact, the right equipment plays a big role in determining the quality of the final product. Cemil Gerdan, a renowned kebab artisan who also dabbled in poetry, highlights this significance. His poems were about his first love, feelings, family, and advice about life. He lost his father when he was very young and mentions that life had not been easy for him both socially and professionally as he had to learn the job at an early age. Gerdan (2019) has a poem on the Adana kebab, which occupied a large space in his life, as one who became involved in the kebab-making world from an early age. This poem consists of eleven lines which is about his passion for kebab and its recipe. In his work, he also highlights that making kebab demands certain qualifications and that it is not for everyone. I quote from his work, to demonstrate how the kebab represented in local literary work:

Adana'nın kebabı,
Öyle nefis ki tadı,
Bana ustamdan miras,
Bu yemeğin icadı.

Yassıdır kebab şişi,
Memnundur yiyen kişi.
Herkes kebab yapamaz,
Bu iş ustalık işi.

Kaburga bel etinden,
Sinirsiz bifteğinden,
Yemesi de hoş olur,
Ustaların elinden. (2019)

As Gerdan emphasizes in his poem, tools hold a crucial role in the artisanship of food. The mastery of an artisanship largely hinges on understanding the proper usage of specific tools. However, the utilization of a mezzaluna transcends mere technicality—it becomes a performative element in the craft of kebab-making. Fine (1996) explains the role of equipment as follows: “Although humans are the agents of

work, given credit for outcomes, we could not act as we do without tools, furnishings, and machines—the equipment of an occupation. These inanimate objects permit the worker to transform raw ingredients into a finished, processed product” (p. 68). He further argues that borrowing others’ equipment without permission may invite criticism. It shows that the equipment, mezzaluna in our case, is a symbol of a hierarchy in the kitchen. “One’s equipment is a mark of identity” (p. 69). Therefore, there is certain equipment such as knives, mezzaluna, apron and kitchen tongs that cannot be touched by anyone else and belong only to the chef.

Returning to the technical aspects of a specific tool, the mezzaluna, its application is closely tied to the scale of operations. Medium-sized operations, processing between 25 to 100 kilograms of meat, often employ both methods. The mezzaluna is used for the tender portions of meat, while tougher sections are ground. Importantly, many of these establishments not only specialize in the Adana kebab but also serve a range of other meat-based dishes, all requiring *mise en place*. Moreover, their focus might not solely be on the artisanship of the Adana kebab, but rather on maximizing profitability. Furthermore, distinctions among these operations are manifold. Some offer take-away services, others cater exclusively to lunchtime patrons, while a subset serves alcoholic beverages. Given the significance of these distinctions, it’s crucial to acknowledge their impact on the nature of the operation. Take-away eateries are even colloquially referred to as the "Burger King of Adana kebab," reflecting their emphasis on quantity over artisanship. Conversely, a common belief suggests that the most authentic experience of the dish is found in small-scale establishments.

Another important aspect of the Adana kebab making process is the size of the operation. The larger the operation gets, the less likely it is to have traditionally made kebab. According to most interviewees, operations which process more than 15 kilograms of ground meat per day do not use a mezzaluna but a mechanical meat grinder to accelerate *mise en place*. Since the usage of mezzaluna is labour-intensive, more artisans are needed to process large amounts of meat. This implies hiring additional staff, an expense that most managers seek to avoid. There were 17 operations in my fieldwork: some of these places were only restaurants, and others were both butchers and restaurants. The butchers sell to restaurants and retail customers. The amount of the ground meat they process depends on the demands of the day. For instance, place A processes more than 100 kilograms of ground meat. They have provided meat to multiple restaurants for years. Plus, they have their own operation which relies mostly on take-away service. In contrast, there were 8 establishments processing less than 20 kilograms of minced meat per day, providing an environment conducive to traditional Adana kebab preparation, utilizing the mezzaluna.

3.5.3 The mezzes of the Adana kebab: side dishes and spices

In this section, I will focus on the mezzes of Adana kebabs and spices that are used in the preparation of kebabs. These two are as important as the kebab itself since these foods are put together to create a whole kebab experience. When it comes to seasoning the dish, there is a huge disagreement among artisans. There are basically three types of peppers that are used: capia pepper (also known as *salçalık biber/ kapyra biber*), red pepper flakes (*yapraklı kırmızı biber*) and chili powder (*toz biber*). Salt is also added to the ground meat mixture. While some artisans use all three types of pepper, others use two of them or only one of the peppers. They have reasons for doing so, and none

of them accept other recipes. For instance, one of the artisans told me that capia pepper should not be used as it would color the meat red, which is an undesirable thing. Another artisan indicated that it gives the red colour only when they add the capia pepper too early. If they add it just before grilling the kebab, it will only add a pleasant taste without giving its red colour to the dish. A similar discourse surrounds the use of red pepper flakes. One argues that it should not be added to the dish as it burns on the grill while another artisan says that if they burn the spice, they are just not experienced enough to handle the barbecue pit. This trend continues for other ingredients, although the aim isn't to ascertain the 'true' Adana kebab recipe.

The mezzes accompanying the kebab provide insights into the competitive nature of the sector. Traditionally, Adana kebab is served with grilled tomato and green capsicum, onion salad with parsley and sumac, peddler's salad (*tablacı salatası*), and flatbread (*turnak/turnaklı pide*). The kebab is often pressed by the flatbread on the open fire, rendering the fat onto the bread—a process known as *yağlı pide ekmeği*. This bread either accompanies the dish or wraps around the kebab. The complete Adana kebab experience, with its side dishes and beverages, was once modest. However, the proliferation of grill restaurants has introduced intensified competition. These establishments strive to distinguish themselves, with some offering small portions of 'chef's special pasta' as an appetizer, while others provide small *lahmacun*.

The variety of salads and side dishes has also expanded significantly. Most grill restaurants now offer onion salad, grilled onion, seasoned salad, cabbage salad, grilled mushrooms, strained yogurt (*süzme*), and fresh parsley and mint. Traditional kebab artisans view these changes as deviating from the 'essence' of a 'real' kebab experience. Moreover, an extensive quantity of mezzes receives much criticism to

become a food waste as the whole eating experience contains too much foodstuff.¹⁶

Conversely, newer restaurateurs argue that traditional cooking is also open to evolution, particularly if it contributes innovatively and economically to regional development. A diverse range of opinions concerning kebab service and consumption prevails. In light of these discussions, the analysis continues with the standardization processes of Adana kebabs and their integration into the contemporary culinary culture of the nation.

3.6 Standardization

I have been discussing the dualities such as traditional-modern cooking techniques, real-imitation recipes, and reconstruction of identities through food. We need to distinguish between redefining the concepts and avoiding dualities, to acknowledge the multiplicities of the local. For that, I focus on two concepts: ‘geographical indicators’ and ‘cookbooks’, to discuss how the culinary culture of a particular place is created, experienced, and reformulated into a mainstream agenda. Stræte and Marsden (2015) argue that the ‘nature’ of foods is socially constructed, including the physical and technical aspects of food. They use terms such as standardization, marketing, and design, which emphasize the quality of the food (p. 272). The debate on standardization is particularly important in two ways. First, standardization is a product of the modernization process, aimed at having clearly defined recipes and standard ways of making things. It enables food to migrate and globalize in different geographies. Therefore, specific standards are established by producers, governments, or third parties (Ibid, p. 273), though reasons to standardize may vary.

¹⁶ It became a hot topic that the kebab mezzes turn into food waste:
<https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/kebablar-mideye-mezeler-cope-adanada-ayda-250-ton-malzeme-israfi-galeri-1584396?p=6>

In my case, each kebab artisan believes that their recipe was the ‘real one’ and should be accepted as the standardized recipe of the dish since the other ways were ‘imitation’ or ‘recently invented.’ On the other hand, there are market constraints for food production. The market aims to reach more consumers and for that, a standardization of a dish is needed. Doing so will enable the food processors to follow a definite recipe and to replicate the taste of a dish. In that comparison, the artisans have strong opinions about the ‘origin’ of the kebabs and how this speaks to their identities.

Their identities represent the cultural aspects of the food and therefore, they strongly deny the standardization process of the Adana kebab. By doing so, they could distinguish themselves from other regional spaces and ethnic groups. The ethnic group, *fellahins*, is a salient example in the research. An informant argues that the Adana kebab belongs to them, as they were already cooking similar kebab dishes long before it was introduced in Adana. He argues that as they migrated from other Middle Eastern countries, such as Egypt and Syria, their food and eating habits accompanied them. He asserted that: “Our ancestors invented the Adana kebab as they were already familiar with kebab as a cooking technique. They applied that technique here by using the local products and this is how the Adana kebab was created.” He also criticizes the influx of migrants from Eastern regions to Adana, arguing that these individuals attempt to replicate the Adana kebab but lack the cultural foundation of the dish.

Another interviewee talked about a kebab master who was his apprentice years ago: “Although he is from Mardin, he knows the real recipe of the dish, because he was raised here, and we educated him well according to our traditions.” For him, coming from another city was a disadvantageous situation, but the apprentice was ‘lucky’ to find a ‘real’ master to improve his skills in a traditional way. Therefore,

there are ways to be accepted in a habitus which is based on certain skills, know-how and labour.

Adana kebab is not even called ‘Adana’ in the city where it comes from. Rather, it is called “*kıyma*” which means ‘minced meat.’ Everyone in the city would understand when a person orders the Adana kebab as follows: “*Usta*, give me one portion of *kıyma*, please.” The word *kıyma* comes from the verb ‘*kıymak*’ which means ‘to mince.’ The chopping of the meat is closely linked to kebab making processes and this is how it is embedded in the local language. So, how did the Adana kebab become a dish from Adana? Why do we link places with certain places? The phenomenon isn't limited to Adana alone; there's also Ezine feta cheese, Antep pistachios, Kars gruyere cheese, Maraş ice-cream, and more. We previously discussed how the dish became synonymous with Adana upon its introduction to larger cities.

Second, the perception of standardization by governments and third parties can yield different motives and outcomes. Governments have various mechanisms to standardize the process, so that they can control and commercialize the food culture. Geographical Indicators¹⁷ are a great example. Each step from production to consumption is clearly defined and introduced to the public (Nizam and Tatari, 2022). Such a process is justified within the discourses of ‘regional development.’ If a dish belongs to a certain region, that geography can benefit from the marketing of the food. Stræte and Marsden discuss that: “Regional food, for instance, involves food products connected to a certain region, based on qualities communicated to consumers through, for example, brands/labels, design, or narratives. These qualities may be related to geographical origin and history, or to the characteristics related to the certain product. They represent a new kind of regional embeddedness, which is not, however, simply

¹⁷ More detailed information on the GI of Adana kebab can be found here:
<https://ci.turkpatent.gov.tr/cografi-isaretler/detay/37930>

built upon localism” (Ibid, p. 272). The focus here is on the standardization of the Adana kebab—how it's identified, perceived, and employed by diverse stakeholders.

3.6.1 Standardization of the Adana kebabs

In this section, I will explore the transformation of the Adana kebab into a standardized dish. Various mechanisms contribute to standardization, and I will elucidate the prerequisites for the Adana kebab to obtain a geographical indicator (GI) status. I'll also delve into how Adana kebab is depicted on both local (Adana) and national (Turkey) levels. The purpose of the GIs is to create a ‘natural’ bond between the geography and the dish, so that a sense of belonging is determined with a clear framework. I will also provide insight into cookbooks – sources that offer recipes and their connections to specific locales. However, this link does not always occur naturally, but it is created and/or imagined, to create a sense of belonging. In some cases, the regional cuisines are represented as a part of the national culinary culture. These cookbooks provide recipes of popular dishes from regional places with the aim to lump the together with territorial dishes of other places. Within the context of the standardization processes, I will discuss the role of geographical indicators and cookbooks as instruments for standardization and how authenticity is understood and practiced in the city. I'll substantiate these discussions with findings from my fieldwork, showcasing the multiplicity in recipes and dish preparation. This underscores that what is theoretically defined and standardized may not necessarily align with practical daily applications.

According to the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, geographical indicators are defined as: “Geographical indication and designation of origin is an industrial property right describing a product originated from any region or attributable

to any region due to its quality, reputation or other characteristics.”¹⁸ It emphasizes the traditional know-how based on production methods and the quality of the product. At the same time, it points out the ‘origin’ of the product and its ‘authenticity’ and ‘reliability’ are considered accordingly. The idea of the ‘origin’ is linked to the characteristics of “essentially or exclusively due to the inherent natural and human factors of a place of which the geographical boundaries have been defined. All the steps for production, processing and preparation should take place within the defined boundaries” (Ibid). This definition encompasses key terms such as 'essential,' 'inherent,' and 'boundaries,' which serve as the foundation for further discussion.

Moreover, this definition specifies that GI products must have been present in traditional markets for at least 30 years. Additionally, either production methods, processing, composition, or materials must be classified as 'traditional' to gain trademark approval. Distinct from industrial property rights, GIs protect manufacturers, preventing any individual from asserting exclusive rights over a particular product. Instead, “it grants common utilization rights.” However, these rights are extended solely to producers within the designated 'place of origin,' excluding others from the list. The patent and trademark office also provides a graphical representation depicting the number of applications and registrations for geographically marked products over the years. The graph begins in 1996, with 24 out of 25 applications officially registering as "geographically indicated products." Application and registration numbers remained low until 2017. Subsequently, there was a remarkable surge in both application and registration figures, with the highest numbers recorded in 2021, comprising 352 official GI registrations out of 577 applications.¹⁹

¹⁸ <https://www.turkpatent.gov.tr/en/geographical-indication>

¹⁹ <https://ci.turkpatent.gov.tr/Statistics/RegistrationAndApplication>

Nizam (2017) provides historical context on GI protection, tracing its origins to the European Union and the new Common Agricultural Policy. This policy shifted the focus from quantity to quality-based production. Nizam critically examines the disconnect between people and places, from conventional commodity and industrial chains (p. 5), with the emergence of new GI chains. Scholars contend that GIs “exhibit the characteristic of a collective monopoly based on membership and exclusion in the form of certain barriers to entry” (Ibid). These barriers are known to us as they were defined by the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office – specific people making specific products in specific places using specific methods. If we shift the focus from the industrial commodity chains to other, more localized chains, what do we do differently?

Adana boasts 18 geographical indicators, with kebab being one of them. Adana's Chamber of Commerce filed for GI protection in 2003, receiving approval two years later in 2005. The GI indicator offers an elaborate explanation of what sets the Adana kebab apart from other variations. The primary ingredient, meat, is sourced from male sheep raised in the region's unique highland flora. Additionally, production techniques and artisanship play crucial roles. A genuine artisan adheres strictly to the recipe's designated ingredients: paprika, chili powder, and salt. Consequently, ingredients like tomato/pepper paste, vegetables, black pepper, and tallow are excluded. The grilling process utilizes a specific skewer.

The minced meat mixture is threaded onto iron skewers measuring 0.5 cm in thickness, 3 cm in width, and 90-120 cm in length. Each kebab portion weighs 120 grams. Fire preparation and cooking are as critical as the kebab's assembly. “The fire should be flameless, stagnant, and consist of embers, without chemical additives. The charcoal fire cooks the kebab until it is done. The skewers are rotated frequently until the meat changes colour from red to dark brown. Meanwhile, pita bread is employed

to remove the fat that forms on the meat. The bread's heat is retained by keeping it near the cooking kebab.”²⁰ The explanation of ‘proper’ Adana kebab continues with how it is served. Each process is explained in detail starting from the animal, its slaughtering, processing, preparing as a meal, cooking, serving, and consuming it. It is a long operation with clearly defined steps. However, the findings from my fieldwork clearly show that the preparation, cooking, and serving processes of the dish is not limited to how the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office defines it. Next, I will rely on my findings to show that the standardization activities faced a backlash from the kebab artisans and inhabitants of the region.

3.6.2 Counterattack: kebab making practices of the artisans

If there is an attempt for standardization from the governmental agencies, there are also actions taken differently. In practice, there are different stories, recipes, and ways of doing things. I interviewed 28 kebab artisans, and they each had unique recipes for kebab making. None were identical, and each one is tasty in its own way. One of the artisans said: “I trust my own recipe as I have been making it for years. However, each artisan has their own and I am sure that they have their reasons for how they make it.” Some of the artisans did not agree with him. From their point of view, they make the best kebab as they know the ‘original’ recipe. Therefore, it is important to note that the kebab artisans are not taking an action against the standardization of particular institutions but creating their own standards for the making of the dish. Among these different opinions and ‘standards’, I will point out some of their recipes. It is not to decide which one is the best, but to emphasize the multiplicity of the recipes.

²⁰ <https://ci.turkpatent.gov.tr/cografi-isaretler/detay/37930>

For instance, artisan number 5 pointed out that he uses three types of pepper: paprika, chili powder and flaked red pepper. He believes that each of them brings a distinctive flavour to the kebab. Artisan number 11 differs in opinion- his recipe contains only paprika as he argues that flakes or powder would get burned during grilling which creates an unpleasant taste. Another kebab artisan pointed out that he adds both paprika and chili powder but excludes flaked red pepper. Plus, he asserts that paprika should be added just before the minced meat mixture is skewered. Otherwise, paprika releases its juice, which would dilute the meat and compromise the quality of the dish. The variety is not limited just to the spices that are used for kebab making, but it also applies to the type of meat, amount of fat and the way of serving the dish.

Artisan number 7 clarifies that mutton cannot be mixed with veal for the recipe of Adana kebab. He continues as: “If one adds veal to his recipe, it means that he has not mastered his skills yet. The only people who put veal in are the ones who cannot deal with the fat, which is the basic know-how of the dish.” Another artisan opposes that view. He thinks that everybody mixes veal with mutton nowadays and “if they say they don’t, they would be lying. Old artisans are gone now, so we left those habits in the old days with them.”

Another discussion takes place around alcohol as the accompaniment of the dish. More specifically, there is an ongoing discussion around the duo of raki and the Adana kebab. “Shall we drink raki while eating kebab? Is consumption of the dish limited to non-alcoholic beverages such as turnip juice (*şalgam*)? Can it be consumed with any other alcoholic beverages?” The interviewees have different opinions on that topic. Artisan number 13 argues that the Adana kebab is a dish that belongs to lunch time only. He goes further by reminding us historically kebab was consumed during the workday and therefore, should not be consumed with alcohol. People who serve

kebab for dinner at restaurants only commodify the dish and do not respect the “essence of eating kebab.” For him, kebab cannot be one of the mezzes along with raki. It is not a ‘secondary character’ of the dining experience but has its own eating culture. How he justifies a certain way of consuming kebab is important. He has been working as a kebab artisan for more than 40 years. In accordance, he associates his identity with the production and consumption practices from an essentialist point of view.

In contrast, artisan number 15 asserts that “kebab is the best companion of raki” as they are two big representations of “Turkish culture.” He noted high consumer demand for kebab during evening dining. He gives an example of a popular food order as: “Imagine a table of four people. First, they order a bottle of raki. Regardless of how much they drink, people start with mezzes as cold appetizers. We do not have numerous options like *meyhane*. Our options are limited to 4 or 5 widely known mezzes as we are a grill restaurant, and we still want our customers to consume meat. After the second glass of raki, they want to eat something warm, this is when kebab enters the scene.”

I’ve provided two distinct field examples. Despite a mere 500-meter distance between these two restaurants, their approaches to kebab-making and consumption diverge greatly. The question emerges: why should we seek a standardized recipe for an entire country? From sourcing core ingredients to serving the dish, no uniform approach exists for making, cooking, and enjoying food. All the instances I have discussed underscore the significance of multiplicity. While standardization may seem essential for ensuring food safety, it constricts the richness of daily life, both conceptually and practically. Multiplicities are filtered through standardization to generate a ‘singular truth,’ such as national cuisines. To evade the stifling weight of standardization, we should reframe our approach. Instead of seeking an absolute

'essence' and 'origin,' we can embrace diversity, even when practices differ from our own routines. In the final section, I will approach the findings from a more conceptual perspective, focusing on local tensions rooted in socio-economic and ethnic factors and how the concept of 'authenticity' is perceived locally.

3.7 Debates on local tensions and authenticity

At the study's outset, I highlighted the diverse dynamics influencing the transformation of local cuisines—factors like nation-state emergence, national-local duality, economic upheavals, and their societal repercussions. These concepts are interwoven and must be collectively considered when discussing the transformation of the place and the dish. First, I start with the debates on nationalism. I will begin with a broad perspective on debates surrounding nationalism, which holds relevance to my research. I will delve into concepts like 'micro-nationalism,' aiming to narrow down its scope. Moreover, I will discuss how cookbooks are formulated as the instruments of nationalist discourses. These cookbooks put the concept of 'national cuisine' forward and make way for the standardization of recipes. Subsequently, I will explore how these concepts intersect with ideas of belonging and authenticity.

3.7.1 Nationalism in everyday life

Nationalism has long been a focal point in social sciences since the inception of nation-states. It occupies substantial discourse with its 'grand concepts' such as nationhood, citizenship, and national borders. Scholars offer varied perspectives on nationalism, including Billig's 'banal nationalism,' Cohen's 'personal nationalism,' and Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities.' Kumar and Delanty's comprehensive work (2006) delves into multiple subjects related to nationalism, including gender, methodology, modernity, ethnicity, ideology, and philosophy. These abstract notions

are closely entwined with nationalism and manifest through everyday objects we encounter.

Examples of these include national flags, languages, and anthems, often learned from a young age. For instance, the Turkish anthem "*Milli Marş*" and national pledge "*Andımız*" serve as notable examples. During compulsory schooling, we began and ended the week with the anthem, while the pledge was recited each morning. Internalizing these concepts was expected, even if their meanings weren't fully understood. The act of burning a country's flag has been construed as an expression of hatred for that nation. Nationalist discourses, such as "whole nation as one," are prevalent in modern nation-states, and we're even 'enumerated' through our national ID cards. Additionally, crafting a nation's history is essential for any national project, even if this history is imagined, manipulated, or 'purified'.

In relation to macro nationalisms of nation-states, the concept of 'micro-nationalism' seemed necessary to discuss the exclusionary discourses in local areas. Kuyucu et al. (2006) use the term 'peripheral nationalism' to explain segregationist discourses through cultural differences as: "Peripheral nationalism occurs when residents of a culturally distinctive territory resist incorporation into a centralizing state by attempting to secede (as in Quebec, Scotland, Turkish Kurdistan, and Catalonia). It emerges when the institutions of direct rule fail to erase cultural distinctions in a state". (p. 86) Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) argue that supposedly 'intrinsically' national products do not always engender explicitly national sensibilities (p. 552). They give an example from food that 'a national dish' for one may be a simple lunch for the other. So, "... while nationally minded consumers give expression to their national sensibilities through the consumption and display of their 'own national' artefacts, others consume the same artefacts, rechristened 'world culture', to demonstrate and perform their (ostensible) cosmopolitanism" (Ibid).

Zubaida's (2000) work also speaks to the distinction of national and local: "At the same time 'the nation' in most countries comprises communal stratification or even fragmentation which defies national constructions" (p. 34).

Berber Az mı Tuz Ekmek Yedik, a project-book on the relations between different communities in the eastern part of Turkey, supports my discussion on the duality of local-national. In this work, it is emphasized that people from other ethnic and religious groups used to "break bread with each other". It is an expression used in everyday language to explain that people shared a meal together regardless of their social differences. The work mainly reminds us that different social groups, used to live together and commensality was created around food, drinks, and other daily practices of life. The borders between communities might not be as clear as they are today. In the book, Yenal's (2017) chapter emphasizes that banal nationalisms of everyday life find ample opportunity to flourish in the field of gastronomy, sports, music, folklore. It functions very effectively in the construction of borders in the minds and hearts of people and "it encourages the naturalization of borders, which are the product and carrier of the political and social domination of the nation-state over peoples" (p. 115). Another element of banal nationalism is cookbooks. They serve as vehicles for representing specific food cultures, encompassing cities, countries, broader regions (e.g., the Mediterranean), and distinct ethnic groups such as Kurds, Arabs, and Armenians. These books often provide narratives accompanying food recipes, elevating food beyond mere sustenance. I will delve into these findings shortly, but before that, I will delve into the role of cookbooks in standardization projects of 'nationalization' processes of the nation-states. In fact, cookbooks wield significant influence. While they offer a range of recipes, they may inadvertently homogenize the culinary traditions of specific regions. Subsequently, I will explore how cookbooks function as geographical and sociological indicators.

3.7.2 Cookbooks

Cookbooks can adopt several approaches. First, they may resurrect forgotten recipes. Additionally, they can serve as windows into a location's history. "Amida'nın Sofrası," written by Silva Özyerli, exemplifies this, tracing Diyarbakır's—also known as Amida, Amed, and Dikranagerd—history through its culinary culture. Conversely, some cookbooks aim to homogenize the culinary identity of specific regions, both in terms of physical geography and human population. Their intention is to establish familiarity and authenticity by associating recipes with specific countries. Numerous examples abound, linking dishes to particular countries: tikka masala to India, sushi to Japan, taco to Mexico, and croissant to France.

Appadurai (1988) sums up the situation in his well-known article on cookbooks in contemporary India. He problematizes cookbooks from two major perspectives: nationhood and class-based distinctions. India is a good example where there are subdivisions in the country based on class, gender, ethnicity, and physical geography. The availability of products is different in each region and the recipes are innumerable. The proliferation of cookbooks aligns with Anderson's concept (1998) of 'print capitalism,' facilitating the emergence of nation-states via the printing press. This concept enables standardization and nationalization, applicable not only to cookbooks but also to modern cinema, literature, art, and music. Furthermore, the target audience of cookbooks is often middle-class housewives. Given the nation's population and socioeconomic diversity, the audience remains relatively 'specific.'

Although cookbooks are not the focus of my research, I find it important to mention them, and there are two reasons for that. First, it enables me to show that cookbooks are highly symbolic materials which limit food to the imaginary borders of modern nation-states. Second, cookbooks offer us recipes with certain units of measurement – gram, pound, liter. They are also the products of the standardization

process which is a concept that is intricately linked with ‘modernity.’ This concept is in parallel with the creation of nation-statehood and therefore, related to my research. Work on cookbooks is well-represented in the literature. In his work on cookbooks in Portugal, Sobral (2014) argues that cookbooks played a crucial role for the creation of ‘Portuguese cuisine.’ Referring to the term ‘imagined communities,’ he argues that cookbooks create performative nationalization “through selection, establishing boundaries and identifying certain dishes and recipes as national.” (p. 150) By doing so, people tend to highlight certain ingredients and dishes while others are ignored for the embodiment of national cuisines.

In addition, Kashdan’s (2017) discussion on ‘Mediterranean cuisine’ is important as there are many cookbooks on that region. In these books, various recipes from Mediterranean countries are pieced together and the culinary culture of the region is considered as one. Kashdan criticizes it as a discourse of “a unified history, an imagined moment” is formulated accordingly (p. 18). “A myth of Mediterranean food” (p. 17) is created around the imagination of the blue sea, red tomato, olive oil, hummus, and other significant dishes of Mediterranean countries. In fact, what these countries have in common is the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea. It is a reductive perspective which ignores the micro geographies –both human and physical- and any other historical, economic, and socio-political aspects of these places.

Finally, Massoth’s (2017) examination of identity performance through chili is particularly enlightening. She discusses women’s cookbooks on Mexican food, by those who travelled to the US and were exposed to several changes based on the taste of Anglos. The discussion around Mexican cookbooks speaks to Appadurai’s work on Indian nationhood through cookbooks. Massoth criticizes the “politics of performing whiteness” (p. 45) and her specific ingredient is chili to show how people redefine themselves through the ‘ability to eat spicy food’ and its intersectional relations of

class, ethnicity, legality, and mass consumption. She summarizes the situation as: “If we consider the nation as home and homemaking as a performance of identity, then it is clear how cooking could function in creating boundaries and performing nationhood” (Ibid).

What about the cookbooks in Turkey? The books are mostly written by chefs, food writers, and cooking instructors. They are either titled as Turkish or Anatolian. In some cases, Turkish cuisine covers the recipes of Anatolian cuisine. In others, they appear as contrary terms – either Turkish or Anatolian. The first known published Turkish cookery book dates back to 1844 called *Melceü't -Tabbâhin* written by Mehmet Kamil. There are ‘Western’ types of recipes in the book and is considered as a guiding resource for subsequent cookbooks. The most recent Turkish cookbook, literally called The Turkish Cookbook, was written by Musa Dağdeviren in 2019 and received much attention globally. It includes 550 recipes both from ‘European’ and ‘Asian’ culinary heritages with little-known recipes with the intersection of environment, landscapes, and food market in Turkey.

Furthermore, cookbooks focusing on regional dishes are abundant. These cookbooks often emphasize the country's rich regional diversity that contributes to Turkish cuisine. Do these cookbooks accurately capture this diversity? They frequently feature numerous recipes, presenting them as 'unique,' 'authentic,' 'timeless,' or 'contemporary.' They include both well-known and lesser-known recipes, and while they may resurrect fading recipes, their core function remains constant. In his discussion on the region-nation duality, Sobral (2014) criticizes what Mintz (1996) asserted about regional and national cuisines. He contends that regional cuisines can exist, but not national cuisines (a position I second). He underscores the significance of a particular place's food culture, rooted in mutual understanding and food production practices. He justifies his position as follows:

Our assertion here is that regional cuisine is not a direct reflection of local practices; although based on these, it is constructed by restaurants, authorities, writers, compilers of cookbooks and recipes, and the like. They tend to ignore or downplay the realities of daily home cooking, and they do not refer to the foods of the poor in times of scarcity. (p. 150)

Another example is Ekrem Muhittin Yeğen's book "*Alaturka ve Alafranga Yemek Öğretimi*." His passion for food leads him to different paths – pastry instructor, restaurant owner, founder of culinary school. Yeğen does not only give recipes, but also explains table manners. His cultural capital is woven throughout the book, which juxtaposes 'European' style pasta recipes with 'Turkish' style *mantı* recipes. He aims to put the east and the west together. In the end, regardless of which cuisine they represent, cookbooks are symbolic resources which do not necessarily represent the daily cooking practices of people. They do not show the actual cooking and eating practices of communities. Rather, they represent as if we only eat festive foods at home and every day is another gastronomic celebration. Therefore, cookbooks fail to represent the multiplicity of cooking in societies. That is why they are not a reference point for my research. Instead of focusing on a 'homogenized' representation of dishes, I think it is necessary to talk about unique experiences related to the preparation, cooking, and consumption of a dish. For that, I move forward with the examples from Adana to demonstrate diverse ways of revealing power relations within the region. In this 'diversity', there are various know-hows in the preparation and consumption of the dish.

3.7.3 Local tensions over Adana kebabs

Building on this perspective, I return to my research. Adana serves as a unique example to show how segregationist discourses are reproduced in everyday life. However, explaining these discourses through 'micro' or 'peripheral' nationalisms

fails to show other power relations. People tend to reproduce such discourses through their ethnicities. However, ethnic discrimination is nothing new in this geography and therefore, it should not be reduced to micro and/or macro nationalist projects of the nation-state. I will present various field examples demonstrating how individuals associate their ethnic identity with their proficiency in making the "Adana" kebab. Subsequently, I will explore potential reasons behind these discourses.

Regarding the culinary traditions of the region, most informants assert that the food culture predates the establishment of Turkey as a nation-state. Their expressions are noteworthy. For instance, one kebab artisan emphasizes that he creates the most authentic kebab due to his ethnic heritage, historically linked to kebab-making practices. He asserts, "You know, I am Arap Alevi (Nusayri), and our ancestors have been doing the same job for centuries. We know how to make the best kebab. It belongs to our identity; therefore, it is ours." Such individuals often validate their identities by drawing comparisons. One of the interviewees' thoughts on this subject were as follows:

You know, we were born and raised here. Our ancestors also lived here. On the other hand, many citizens migrated from the eastern cities of Mardin, Urfa and Diyarbakır. They do not even know how to make 'real' kebab. They only learnt it from us afterwards.

For him, it was clear that the artisanship of a certain dish comes with its ethnic boundaries. If you were not born into that community, there is no way to become a master of kebab making. However, not everyone thinks that way. Even if you are not part of this specific ethnic group in Adana, there are still ways to become a good kebab artisan, to learn it from 'the real' artisans. The sharp boundaries drawn by another interviewee confirm this:

The owner of the X grill restaurant is from Mardin, but you still can trust his work. He migrated with his family a long time ago, and he learnt how to make good kebab from us, the real artisans of the dish.

I probed further, highlighting that this family from Mardin also has Arab roots. I questioned what set him apart from that family. For him, the boundaries are unequivocal. He continued: “No, Mardin Arabs are different from us. Just because they are Arabs does not mean that we belong to the same community. Our differences should be pointed out, so you can distinguish between the food we cook.” Freud (1930) explains such tendency of humans to emphasize dissociation among various social groups to make themselves ‘different’ from others as the ‘narcissism of small differences.’ He argues how people create imaginary discrepancies with one another as follows: “...peoples whose territories are adjacent, and are otherwise closely related, are always at feud with and ridiculing each other, as for instance, the Spaniards and the Portuguese, the North and South Germans, the English, and the Scotch, and so on. I gave it the name of narcissism in respect of minor differences, which does not do much to explain it” (p. 73). In my research, such divisions are rooted in various ethnicities, which may not be ‘minor differences,’ but they don’t prevent individuals from sharing similar food production and consumption practices.

The exclusionist discourses are multilayered and there is always a way to find a difference which Zubaida explains transparently: “Localities and communities have their own distinctive food styles, including some highly specific dishes, but mostly describable in a common vocabulary within which the differences are marked” (p. 34). I believe that the ‘Adana’ kebab perfectly fits with that definition. As I discussed previously, the artisans have their specific ways of making the dish by rooting it on their ethnicities.

In parallel with that, Zubaida reveals the connection between food cultures and how people create a sense of belonging to that. He divides Turkey into Istanbul, Izmir, and the broader Anatolian region, each featuring distinct tastes, ingredients, and spice usage. Considering southern Turkey, He underscores how the culinary themes of

Antep, Mardin, and Adana echo those of Syrian cities like Aleppo and Damascus. For him, the unique dishes and tastes in this region transcend the imagined boundaries of the nation-state. Noteworthy examples include specific spices, the kofta/kibbeh genre, and an array of mezzes. The shared food culture underscores his assertion that: “Some modern nation-states in the region are built on long pre-existing cultural and territorial entities, such as Egypt, Iran and Turkey” (p. 35).

Therefore, Zubaida’s observations regarding the role of food cultures in shaping social identities and belongingness prompt us to question how identities are defined and how social/ethnic groups delineated. While individuals may have certain affiliations with specific groups, it is important to consider the broader social, economic, and political factors that contribute to the formation of a sense of belonging. It is not sufficient to attribute all social tension to ethnic differences without exploring the underlying dynamics that shape social identities.

Important questions to consider include: who has the authority to define social identities, how do we establish the boundaries of particular social or ethnic groups, and what factors determine an individual’s status as, for example, an Arab-rooted citizen in Turkey? While people may associate themselves with specific groups based on certain cultural or social schemes, we must acknowledge that the sense of belonging driving social tensions is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses not only ethnic factors, but also socio-economic and political considerations. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on the fundamental aspects of belongingness to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse manifestations of social tensions.

3.7.4 Authenticity of food

In discussion centred on the theme of ‘sense of belonging’, it is necessary to emphasize the notion of authenticity. This critical concept is debated across diverse domains, encompassing realms such as gastronomy, nationalism, and the construction of personal and collective identities. In our daily lives, we encounter it with definitions such as “authentic food”, “authentic design of a place” and “authentic people.” So, the authenticity can be found in taste, styles and even personalities of humans. Each of these definitions will connote different things since the concept of authenticity can mean something else elsewhere. Lu and Fine (1995) define authenticity as a locally constructed folk idea which is said to represent authentic experience. This definition supports my argument as I also believe that it is a socially constructed concept used for the creation of traditions, socio political arguments, and even the commodification of cultural objects. However, authenticity is contingent by definition, and it is, together with culture, in continual flux (p. 538). Culinary cultures within social groups offer a clear example of how these concepts remain in continuous flux. They explain the creation of regional cuisines, without being under the illusions of authenticity, identity, and belongingness:

From generation to generation, some culinary preparations and foodways absorb features of “alien” foods—perhaps a function of biological succession of foodstuffs, migration, technological change, shortages, or alterations in food-related ideologies (e.g., increased negative attitudes toward red meats, sugar, fat, or animal products; increased positive attitudes toward fish, turkey, or leafy greens). The vitality of a culinary system depends on its adaptability and flexibility. The maintenance of a food pattern does not depend on whether it is identical with an original model but on whether the “fundamental” characteristics of the food are defined as being continuously present, connected to core cultural beliefs, and recognized as a differentiated food pattern. (Lu and Fine, 1995, pp. 538-539)

The authors highlight how historical sociopolitical events shape everyday experiences within social groups. Consequently, authenticity isn't a static perception of place and

culture; it upholds traditional and local landscapes. Conversely, local foods from various regions have been commodified for gastronomic tourism under the guise of “authentic cuisines.” In this context, every tourist destination (domestic or foreign) must cultivate and market goods and foods distinguishing that place from others, in efforts to attract persistent visitors. Sims (2009) suggests that instead of focusing on “authenticity,” we should emphasize “authentification.” From her perspective, authenticity is the process through which individuals assert authenticity claims and serve particular interests. (p. 324). For instance, social media influencers, food writers, and local food producers share narratives about foods and production methods. This transforms a meal or product into a more authentic and desirable entity for tourists. This phenomenon becomes a cycle: storytellers craft narratives, tourists become more intrigued, which in turn fuels storytellers to generate more stories and products. However, I argue that this isn't merely storytelling; it often involves romanticizing the product.

I hold the belief that the practice of storytelling should be contextualized within history. Sociological reasons underpin the development of every culture and/or production of goods associated with that culture. In this regard, a historical materialist approach can provide genuine accounts of objects, goods, cuisines, and other facets of mundane life. In this chapter, my intention was to delve into artisans' experiences and stories, unveiling what being a kebab artisan means to them, their initial motivations, and how this perception evolved over time. In most cases, their stories didn't commence with gastronomic intentions or as a continuity of regional cuisines. In relation to the discourse on storytelling, Seremetakis invites us to contemplate the notion of commensality. This concept extends beyond the consumption practices of foods and beverages, encompassing the broader societal context surrounding the dish.

In her words, commensality is “the exchange of sensory memories and emotions, and of substances and objects incarnating remembrance and feeling” (Seremetakis, 1993, p. 14). It is not only the taste and smell, but also social knowledge of food with its historical consciousness. Commensality encompasses the exchange of communal history, engendering feelings, senses, and knowledge. These experiences become enmeshed in material culture, manifesting across various times and spaces. In fact, during historical transformations and cross-cultural encounters, commensalities may clash, some potentially suppressed, erased, or relegated to private recollections and marginalized experiences. In this context, she critiques the modern approach to commensality, stating that "commensality is not absent but is rendered banal, functional, or literal and increasingly reserved for the diversions of private life" (Ibid). This underlines the necessity of focusing on commensality that emphasizes people's experiences in relation to history and social background.

The following chapter aims to provide a detailed analysis of the concept of ‘eating out.’ It adopts a broad perspective that emphasizes eating-out practices in various places – Adana, Istanbul, and global contexts. Previously, I emphasized the production practices and both the individual and collective experiences of artisans. Next, I will analyse the consumption practices of Adana kebabs. This analysis intends to explore the role of dining out culture and to facilitate comparisons with other cultural contexts. Plus, it explores the socio-economic and historical factors that underlie these differences. To do that, I explore the accessibility of meat in Turkey prior to the 1980s, when industrial meat production was not yet widespread, and the potential influence of the ‘luxury food’ concept on meat prices. I anticipate that this investigation will yield insights into the economic, social, and historical elements influencing food consumption patterns over time.

CHAPTER 4

“ADANA KEBABS” IN LOCAL AND NATIONAL CUISINES

In the previous chapter, I discussed artisanship, the Adana kebab, and its artisans, while presenting data collected during fieldwork. Initially, my aim was to introduce the dish's production practices and the laborers involved. In doing so, I provided insights into the crafting of Adana kebabs and the individuals contributing to it within the local context. This chapter continues the discourse by delving into consumption practices, both within the local setting (Adana) and larger cities. As people migrated from southeastern Turkish cities to urban centres like Istanbul and Ankara, they carried their culinary habits with them. Notable distinctions exist in how the dish is consumed in Adana compared to other locations. My objective is to elucidate these disparities, unveiling the diverse ways in which the dish is perceived and savoured.

To broaden the perspective on consumption patterns, I have divided this chapter into four sections. The first section adopts a broader approach to the concept of dining out. I explore the question, "How did the practice of dining out originate?" While I believe that the inception of dining out can be traced to a specific point, there are numerous stories around this topic that offer insights into its evolution. The debates on dining out revolve around whether it emerged as a gastronomic delight or as a 'need' for individuals on the go (Ferguson, 2004). Discovering a singular truth about the origin of dining out isn't necessary; however, placing it within a historical context is invaluable.

Secondly, I delve into the class-based dimensions of certain food items. I explore how 'unpopular' and/or 'inexpensive' foods from the past evolved into unique products. Through various examples, I illustrate the formation of niche markets. Each product boasts a distinct narrative rooted in its historical context linked to colonialism,

nationalism, and the globalization of food markets. In connection to this, I delve into the historical consumption practices of the Adana kebab within the region. How did people used to consume kebab in Adana? What are the current trends of eating kebabs? This is closely linked with the practice of eating out since it emerged as the “food of the lower class” but has transformed into something else today. The Adana kebab is not the only dish that underwent a change, but it has a unique transformation story which is worth discussing in detail.

Next, I will talk about the journey of the Adana kebab to larger cities with a specific focus on Istanbul. During my fieldwork, I realized that people have different understandings of the Adana kebab, both in Adana and elsewhere. Even the reputation of the dish as “Adana kebab” solidified when it travelled to other cities around the 1950s. The journey of the Adana kebab to Istanbul is particularly important as it reveals many sociological and spatial aspects of the dish. These aspects include migration patterns, socio-economic and cultural differences of social groups, and the practice of dining out. To this end, I present a historical overview of eating out practices in Istanbul, first offering a general perspective before narrowing it down to the culinary habits of the southeastern population, with a specific emphasis on kebabs. Istanbul provides distinct examples of grill restaurants (*ocakbaşı*) opening and the incorporation of the dish into the region's culinary landscape.

In the final section, I synthesize the topics discussed in this research, with a particular focus on the preceding chapter. In doing so, I aim to show the interrelations among the sociological concepts, data from the fieldwork, and its historical background.

4.1 A brief history of dining out

Today, we eat out for several reasons. We want to socialize, taste unfamiliar foods, reunite with friends and family, have business dinners, and experience the notion of ‘commensality’ in different ways. For some, it is a ‘necessity’ while it is a ‘luxury’ for others. In fact, these terms are often redefined, and they have different meanings elsewhere. Dining out practices and their prevalence in daily life change alongside class lines. For instance, it is a social necessity for the upper class to dine out occasionally, whereas the lower class may understand such necessities differently. In general, the dining out concept is considered from psychological, gustatory, and collective aspects as a whole experience. It also depends on what we understand from “eating out.” For some, it is the meal eaten during their lunch break whereas for others, dining out practice is linked to reserving a table at a restaurant and having a dress code. The examples of dining out practices are abundant, but it has undoubtedly evolved into an activity oriented around socializing in the community.

Also, dining out, as we know it today, feels familiar to us as if people have been doing it for ages. In fact, this is not the case. The history of eating out may not necessarily be linked to gastronomic desires, and some scholars have pointed out that the subject did not receive much attention in social science until the 1990s (Warren and Martens 2003; Bugge and Lavik 2010). Nowadays, it seems to be expanding “as a form of entertainment and a means to display taste, status and distinction” (Warren and Martens, 2003, p. 1). However, there were different eating practices outside of home long before the advent of dining at restaurants that we know of at present. As Spang (2020) explains, restaurants as socialization spaces in cities emerged in France after the French Revolution and industrialization era.

In earlier times, there were transient groups of people such as merchants, travellers, and sailors who needed to eat food on the go. There were diners, public

houses, and street vendors for these people to dine and move on their journey. Rawson and Shore (2019) explain from a historical perspective that there were caravanserais, khans and inns along the silk and spice trade routes. These places emerged to “serve the caravans of merchants moving goods and wealth between (to name a few) the Chinese, Indian, Arab, Sogdian and Roman regions” (p. 21). Therefore, how they practiced ‘eating out’ different from a modern notion of a restaurant. Not only the wanderers and merchants, but also many foodstuffs travelled the world.

Their journey was related to historical social events – colonialism, wars, discovery of new continents, migrations, and overseas trades. These occasions created a concept of ‘diaspora food’ with the examples of Italian cuisine in the US, Indian cuisine in the UK, and Turkish cuisine in Germany. Consequently, food has interacted with societies to reshape eating practices and be transformed by these societies. The French Revolution and industrialization stand as significant historical events that contributed to the evolution of dining out culture in Western Europe. Major historical events such as world wars and mass migrations have shaped the economic, socio-cultural, and political dimensions of food production, distribution, and consumption practices. Urbanization has particularly played a crucial role in the proliferation of new restaurants, cafes, and eateries within cities.

There are different opinions around the emergence of the modern gastronomic restaurant as we know it today. On one hand, Spang (2020) argues that the first modern restaurant was found in Paris. At the beginning, the term ‘restaurant’ was not a *place* where we dine, but a *thing* to eat. It was a “tiny cup of bouillon” which was made of “pure meat essences” to be consumed as a restorative meal (p. 1). On the other hand, Rawson and Shore (2019) argue that the emergence of the restaurant “as an institution” was not in the West, but in China, 700 years earlier than Paris (p. 24). They also explain the reasons why the first restaurant was based in China. At that time, the size of

the cities was enormous, and they were massive centres for trade. It paves the way for cultural exchange between traders and to loosen the social orders of China, shifting the governance from aristocracy to central bureaucracy of officials (Ibid). While determining the definitive 'first' restaurant may prove elusive, restaurants as establishments became increasingly widespread since the mid-19th century, adopting distinct meanings across various locales.

4.1.1 Globalization and the spread of ethnic restaurants

These different meanings include ethnic restaurants, regional and national cuisines. When food migrates with its makers, it can be cooked, served, consumed, and culturally perceived differently by various recipients of that taste. There is a wide range of examples of these ethnic restaurants in North America, England, the Netherlands, and other countries known for their colonial pasts. In his work on North America's ethnic cuisines, Zelinsky (1985) emphasizes that there are three dominant ethnic cuisines: Chinese, Italian, and Mexican which are widespread and familiar to people living there. On the other hand, Japanese and French cuisines are considered as elite cuisines of different ethnicities. He argues that commodities and social events such as ethnic cookbooks and food festivals highlight the trans-nationalization of cuisines. He describes the experience of going to an ethnic restaurant as: "The furniture, china, cutlery, and table-linen speak to us of alien delights, as do the wall decorations, paintings, maps, or photographs. The host or hostess, as well as the waiters, are natives of the foreign country, or reasonable facsimile thereof, and are suitably costumed" (p. 54).

The variety of ethnic restaurants are generally related to socioeconomic status and cultural sophistication of a neighbourhood, the culinary variety at touristic destinations, and the accumulation of specific ethnic groups in and of a particular

region. When it is related to gastronomic sophistication for customers, it may be different for the restaurateurs of ethnic restaurants. Migrants may be searching for familiar tastes, far from home (Ray, 2004, p. 129). The availability of food ingredients has been important for various ethnicities to cook what they call “home-cooked dishes.” For that, globalization, together with industrialization, paved the way for ingredients to be shipped to “Asian supermarkets.” Today, it is possible to find ethnic food for different socio-economic classes. There is both Chinese street food and Michelin-starred Japanese restaurants. These examples extend from North America to Indonesian restaurants in the Netherlands, Thai food in Germany, Moroccan food in France, and so forth.

In contrast, we do not have the concept of ‘ethnic food’ in Turkey. There are certainly restaurants from other ethnic groups (e.g.: Syrian, Yemeni, Chinese, and Georgian), but the socio-historical background of these restaurants is different from North America and Western Europe. Turkey has unique ethnic diversity, and the culinary culture of these groups are mostly called “regional cuisine” instead of “ethnic food.” There are examples of dishes such as *mantı*, *iskender kebab*, *keşkek*, *hışmerim*, and *tirit* that are known to be regionally famous. Also, ethnic differences are more nuanced within the country, so the notion of transnational cuisines does not apply for Turkey in the same way as it does for the examples above.

In relation to that, the history of eating out culture does not have a clearly defined chronology or one-way process as it has occurred differently in other countries. However, Scholliers et al. (2019) point out that the 1980s seem to have played a decisive role because of striking changes in world trade, demography, purchasing power, politics, consumption, and perhaps decisively, meaning of food (p. 51). In accordance, globalized food systems brought “a complex history of cultural and scientific exchange in which the perceptions, uses, and qualities of foodstuffs became

appropriated differently in new contexts” (Ibid). In these different contexts, I will focus on a term ‘the cooking of the poor (*la cucina povera*)’ to uncover class-based aspects of particular food items which are known to be ‘peasant food’ and therefore, unpopular and cheap. I will provide examples of these dishes – how they initially emerged and underwent a change as a result of globalization and formation of niche markets for middle- and upper-middle class of urban populations.

4.2 “La cucina povera”: consumption of niche products

“La cucina povera” is an Italian term which translates as “the cooking of the poor” or “peasant cooking” (Johns, 2011). The term is used to explain the culinary culture of the peasant population in rural areas in Italy. It is not a ‘cooking style’ from the gastronomy world, but a ‘philosophy’ which originated out of necessity (p. 4). Also, it is not only inherent to Italy. It applies to all ‘poor’ and/or ‘peasant’ populations of different places with their own history. In this section, I will discuss examples from such “food of the poor” to show how certain foodstuffs are transformed in time. These examples will be the popular dishes and ingredients from specific countries which are known globally. These examples consist of globally recognized popular dishes and ingredients from specific countries. While their narratives might be distinctive, a significant pattern exists between the cooking practices of the past and the prominent and/or niche cuisines of today. Following this, I delve into current trends in artisanal food consumption to reinforce my argument.

As the originator of the term ‘la cucina povera’, Italy has numerous staple foods, mostly easy to find carbs such as pasta, bread, and polenta. Among these carbs, I focus on pizza as one of the most popular dishes of Italy. There have been many opinions about pizza making both within and outside of the country. While some groups do not like the idea of adding pineapple to the pizza, others do not mind what is

on it. It can be baked in an ‘authentic’ way, with handmade pizza dough, fresh tomato passata and high-quality ingredients on the top. On the other hand, it can also be mechanized; standardized pizza dough, ingredients of middle- or low-quality, and ready to be baked fast. It can be consumed as street food, rustic food at a restaurant, convenient party food, and grab and go provisions for a journey. In contrast to the current popularity of pizza, Giusti (2023) uncovers the striking fact that pizza was used to be originally found only in a few southern Italian cities. Plus, it was prepared and consumed in the streets by the lower classes. She further asserts that the first restaurant serving pizza was not even in Italy, but in New York City in the 1910s.

We can extend the examples from other countries. For Japan, it was rice and seafood, as meat was too expensive for many people to consume. In his ethnographic work on Tsukiji, which is known as Japan’s “food market”, Bestor (2004) goes deep into the market to uncover Japan’s food market trade in relation to its traditions, values, and relationships. He emphasizes the impacts of globalization on the Japanese market starting from the 1960s. Bestor covers the seafood market, and he also points out the story of sushi. In today’s world, sushi is considered as food for the sophisticated cosmopolitan consumer. However, it was not always the case though. The types of sushi cannot be categorized into a single group. There are fish both considered as ‘premium’ and ‘cheap’, so that the availability and the prices of the dish have been varied. However, the basic idea of sushi appeared as preserving fresh fish either with vinegar or salt and preserved by the fermented rice around it. The preservation methods enabled the ingredients to stay longer without getting spoiled, as refrigeration was invented much later than the dish itself.

It is believed that sushi was consumed extensively by poor fishermen. However, the consumers of the dish expanded especially after World War II. In North America, sushi was considered as a “sign of class and educational standing” (Bestor, 2000, p.

56). The distinction between Chinese and Japanese varieties emerged in the global market, with the latter often perceived as more upscale. Sushi evolved from being a staple of the poor to a local commodity in the global market. Today, it boasts its own artisans, traditions, and stories, recounted by food writers, travellers, and chefs.

The example that follows – of coffee – veers away from the concept of "cooking of the poor." The narratives of pizza and sushi offer insights into the creation of niche markets through globalization and the popularization of once unfamiliar and affordable dishes. On the contrary, the transformation of coffee consumption throughout history reveals significant concepts such as industrialism, post-Fordism, and the conditions of postmodernism. Diverse coffee bean varieties are found across geographies, including Kenya, Colombia, Ethiopia, and Yemen. The geographical origins of coffee, coupled with coffee-making equipment (such as brewers and grinders), have been commodified within the global food market (Roseberry, 1996). This shift has led to an array of coffee choices, greater diversity, and a reduced reliance on instant coffee from supermarkets. Modern coffee shops prioritize fair trade and 'sustainable' coffee production, although these concepts have garnered criticism. Despite this, they aim to differentiate themselves from large coffee producers like Gloria Jeans and Starbucks.

To understand the switch in production and consumption practices of foods and drinks, we need to have a historical approach. The examples of pizza, sushi, and coffee show us that the globalization of markets and transnational consumerism both characterize the continuing expansion of industrial capitalism and engender a contradictory trend. This trend emphasizes the local, culturally composed identities, spaces, production practices, and commodities as a source of distinction and authenticity opposing the homogeneity of transnationalism (Terrio, 1996; Harvey, 1989). As in the case of coffee, cultural authenticity and the globalized markets are

harmonized to create “genuine” products. These are the products of craft work and commodities to be maintained, vitalized, and reinvented, so that they can be commoditized and kept in global markets (Terrio, 1996, p. 148). While Harvey's discussion on postmodernism may not fully explain current market conditions, it effectively contrasts Fordist modernity with flexible postmodernity.

In Fordist economies, the capitalist system was based upon economies of scale, homogeneity, undisputed authority, and detailed division of labour which reduces humans to working entities. On the other hand, flexible conditions of postmodernity emphasize the economies of scope and the social division of labour in which an individual labourer has the opportunity to explore the possibilities of specialization within an open economic system. The Fordist economic regime highlights the numbers of blue-collar workers, avant-gardism, state power and welfarism, centralization, and mass production. In contrast, flexible postmodernity stresses eclecticism, white collar workers, deconstruction, individualism, deindustrialization, and small batches (Harvey, 1989, p. 341). This is not a simple comparison with spatial and temporal rupture between them. Rather, it is a non-linear transformation of capitalist forms and societies. Harvey's debates on this transformation enable us to see how certain products have entered our lives, changed our consumption patterns, and became part of our daily life.

A good example of such mundane commodities is sugar. Mintz (1985) explains it broadly from a historical perspective while he explores the growing and changing presence of sugar in the English diet from the 17th through 19th centuries. This diet is explicitly linked to industrialization and the growth of a working class, changing modes of life, consumption, and sociality in growing cities in England, and to the establishment of colonial power, plantation economies, and slave labour in the Caribbean. In these changing contexts and socio-economic settings of the country, sugar became available for the working class and became a part of daily consumption.

It turned into an integral part of canned foods, coffee, bakery products, jams, and packaged products. Mintz (1985) explains this as: “The social history of the use of new foods in a western nation can contribute to an anthropology of modern life” (p. 28).

Although more examples can be cited, but the main idea is the transformation of the foodstuff regarding its production and consumption practices. Previously 'unpopular' foods like sushi and pizza, which were economical and accessible to the lower classes, have ascended to become globally recognized food commodities. Other foods can be classified as porridges, offal, soups and stews, carbohydrate-based dishes, and domestic fruits and vegetables. These dishes' narratives must be contextualized within a historical framework. Turkey boasts a variety of dishes that fit into the category of 'the cooking of the poor.' The country's diverse geographical conditions have led to varying culinary practices in rural areas. For instance, Eastern Anatolia's terrain is conducive to cattle farming, resulting in a higher availability of meat and dairy products. Similarly, the Black Sea region stands out with its production of black tea and corn, attributed to its substantial rainfall.

In the light of the discussions above, my next discussion will be on the concept of *la cucina povera* in Adana. The region has a long history of agricultural production and labourers who work in the field. The cooking practices of these labourers is an important aspect of that past. There are some dishes that are highly popular among today's middle- and upper-classes in the city – and kebab is no exception to that. However, they were not necessarily linked to the cooking and eating habits of the upper class in history. I will discuss the transformation of these dishes and focus on the Adana kebab specifically. By doing that, I will trace the historical background of how kebab was consumed in the region.

In their book about Levantine cuisine, Gaul and Pitts introduce us to the general framework of Eastern Mediterranean cuisine. It is not a uniform culinary culture and

there is much to discover in the formation of regional cuisines regarding migration patterns and the socio-economic environment of that time. Particularly for Adana, they argue that: “The presence of a mobile and predominantly male labour force spurred the creation of new kinds of food preparations, like the Adana kebab, designed to feed them while they were working” (Gaul and Pitts, 2021, p. 5). The Adana kebab, like other similar dishes, used to be consumed quickly, in wrapped form (*dürüm*)²¹, while working or during quick lunch breaks. Other dishes include wrapped liver, chicken and various parts of an animal rolled in a flatbread. In addition to these pieces of meat, there are other ingredients in *dürüms* such as tomato, cucumber, parsley, onion, and lettuce. They are easily found in the region and bring freshness to the dish. Another specific food practice in the city is to eat offal early in the morning. Today, it attracts much attention from the ‘gastronomy world’ as eating grilled meat for breakfast is not common (and therefore exotic) for the mainstream. However, the emergence of that eating habit dates to the convenient consumption practices of the agricultural laborers.

There is a popular wisdom about barbecue culture in Adana that the peasant food of the past periods became the food for the middle and middle-upper class. It is believed that what was consumed by the lower-class previously has moved to the plates of the upper class. Dishes such as the Adana kebab, liver, and offal were supposedly cheap, and became more expensive afterwards. Although there is some truth to it, it is not that simple. When I asked Dağdeviren²² about it, he expressed that there is a widespread misunderstanding on that topic. His perspective is worth taking note of:

²¹ *Dürüm* is a Turkish word for food which is rolled/wrapped in different types of bread. The word comes from the verb *dür-* which means to roll something. In Turkey, eating food in a *dürüm* form is a widespread practice and can be considered as convenient street food. Practically, it is easy to hold a *dürüm* and eat it quickly or as “food on the go.”

²² He is the chef-owner of Çiya Restaurant in Kadıköy, Istanbul. He was born in Gaziantep and moved to Istanbul when he was a teenager. To read more about him, please see: https://www.ciya.com.tr/index_en.php?history=2

It is true that liver was cheaper before. However, the food that was common among the lower class was mutton lungs (*akciğer*), not liver (*karaciğer*).²³ Also, there is no need for the romanticizing of eating offal in the morning. Why should people, who have adopted ‘modernized’ lifestyles in urban areas, have such an eating habit? It was the agricultural laborers who used to work in very difficult conditions and needed energy to work for long hours. That is why they used to eat offal early in the morning. Also, it was not possible to preserve the meat for long periods of time. You know, refrigeration did not become widespread in the country for a long time. Thus, people needed to consume those perishables quickly.

He covers multiple aspects of ways of consuming meat, which differ from today’s modern consumption of meat in big cities. Also, there is no ‘historical rift’ on the availability of red meat. In fact, it has always been an expensive foodstuff when compared to other foods like grains, fruits, and vegetables. Another example for the accessibility of the meat is sacrificing an animal for God (e.g.: sacrificial lamb as known as *kurban kesmek*). People who can afford to buy an animal – mostly veal or sheep – would get the animal slaughtered and distribute the meat to the poor, who otherwise could not access meat easily. Thus, it has never gained the reputation of “food of the poor.” As I explained in the previous chapter, there are kebab artisans who started working at grill restaurants at a very early age in the hope of feeding themselves meat. When it comes to Adana, the quick *dürüm* culture of the lower classes has evolved and diversified into different forms. Currently, it is also a favoured dish for the upper-class. That is to say, the availability of meat products has always been a class issue. In this regard, the making and presentation of the dish transformed in relation to the trends of the current gastronomy world.

The shift in these dishes’ consumption patterns wasn’t confined to class boundaries; it also underwent changes as the cuisine migrated to larger cities. Introduced to urban dwellers unfamiliar with these dishes, they underwent a process of

²³ In Turkish, confusingly, the dish ‘*ciğer*’ can stand in both for ‘*karaciğer*’ and ‘*akciğer*’ (liver and lung, respectively). The latter is usually considered poor folks’ food.

redefinition. The dishes are no longer limited to wrapped form (*dürüm*). Modern menus in grill restaurants and street food stalls offer a variety of options. Plate servings accompanied by side dishes such as onions, grilled tomatoes, peppers, and bulgur pilaf are now common. Often, patrons are asked whether they prefer the dish in wrapped form or on a plate, using the phrase, "*Dürüm mü istersiniz, porsiyon mu?*" This transformation is intricately connected to internal migration patterns from rural to urban areas, which gained momentum in the 1950s. The migration of people from one locale to another brought with it their culinary habits, substantially influencing the food consumption patterns of major cities. The dishes, in turn, adapted to these changes and continued evolving in other locales. I will elaborate more on these changes and emergence of 'dining out' concept both within Adana and in larger cities, unearthing the city's dining experience and its influence on urban centres through migration.

Subsequently, I will first focus on eating out culture in Adana. Previously, I discussed how food and artisanship is produced in the region. Now, I will demonstrate how it has been consumed from a historical point of view. Later, I will continue with the dining out concept in Turkey, particularly in metropolises, to uncover how eating out is practiced in different forms. Also, it will help us to understand the making of "Adana kebabs" elsewhere. This exploration will also help illuminate the broader influence of, or rather the transformative power of, migrations on food cultures.

4.3 Dining out in Adana

Within this section, I'll describe the contemporary dining scene in Adana. I will discuss the availability of dishes outside homes. This section encompasses different categories of foods found, their representations, popular dining destinations, and current culinary trends within the city. Additionally, I will highlight dishes that aren't commonly found

outside homes, emphasizing the distinction between public and private food production and consumption practices.

Throughout my research, I've explored several phases of dining out. Adana offers a unique case study, as it aligns with Gaul and Auman Pitts' (2021) definition of the Levant as "Unified but not uniform, the Levant possesses multilayered diversity in addition to a clear cultural and historical unity" (p. 3). The city's eating culture predominantly centers around grill restaurants, known locally as *ocakbaşı*. These establishments serve a variety of char-grilled meats, including kebabs, chicken, and various cuts of mutton. Accompanying these meats are a range of mezzes, which often complement alcoholic beverages.

In addition to grill restaurants, Adana boasts cafes, international cuisine restaurants, 'national' and 'international' fast-food chains, seafood restaurants, and street food vendors. According to Çanakçı (2021), Adana's culinary landscape can be summarized as follows: Adana's local dishes (prepared at home and sold in restaurants offering home-cooked meals), kebab culture (barbecue-prepared dishes served with salads and appetizers), Adana street delicacies (including ring dessert, *şalgam* – turnip juice, boiled chickpeas, *aşlama*, etc.), Adana seafood (encompassing blue crab, clam, sea snail, shrimp, black caviar-sturgeon, mullet caviar), and Adana agricultural products (comprising citrus products, olive oil, pepper paste, and pomegranate syrup) (p. 28).

Fast-food chains are also a noteworthy component of the city's dining scene. Similar to other major cities, Adana has both globalized and locally rooted establishments. I categorize them as either local or international due to differences in the way global corporations enter the local market compared to local brands. On one hand, the city hosts well-known global food and beverage chains such as McDonald's, Burger King, Starbucks, and Domino's. On the other hand, there are national fast-food

chains centered around doner kebabs, *çiğköfte*, *lahmacun*, and *börek*. These establishments can be deemed fast-food chains based on their operational scale and consumption patterns. These dishes, designed for quick consumption, provide convenient options for those looking for a swift meal. Take-away options are common, and the service is notably efficient compared to other restaurants. Additionally, many entrepreneurs have established new brands, where food is predominantly prepared in centralized facilities and then distributed to franchisees. These brands position themselves as more 'localized' than global food companies, capitalizing on their local roots while expanding their profits. In contrast to these globalized or nationalized eateries, the rise of third-wave coffee culture has ushered in an abundance of coffee shops offering coffee, desserts, and 'healthy breakfast' options. This trend has gained momentum over the past decade, and these coffee shops often remain open late, providing an alternative to pubs and bars.

When it comes to international cuisine, these restaurants are present only in specific areas of the city, where the middle-upper and upper-class live. Their menus encompass pastas, pizzas, hamburgers, fried appetizers, red meat, and chicken dishes prepared in ways that deviate from Adana's regional cuisine. Examples include dishes like Mexican-style chicken, beef steak with *café de Paris* sauce, and Italian pasta carbonara. Certain places may even offer a limited range of Asian foods, typically revolving around basic sushi and noodle dishes. There is no restaurant that represents the cuisine of any particular Asian country. In contrast, the city is home to a considerable Syrian population. Consequently, Syrian cuisine is prevalent in specific districts, mainly in areas inhabited by Syrian communities. The local culinary landscape features street food vendors and take-away spots that differ from modern, tablecloth-clad restaurants. These establishments serve falafels, hummus, chicken doner, and various Syrian sweets. However, these places are often criticized for their

perceived lack of hygiene, which might be indicative of an internalized exclusionary practice against migrants. This outlook leads to Syrian food not being regarded on par with other 'international cuisines' available in the city.

Moreover, there are seafood restaurants which are located around Seyhan Lake, and a town called Karataş which is on the Mediterranean coast of the region. The cooking and consumption practices are limited to grilling and frying seasonal fish and serving them with some fresh herbs and lemon. The side dishes include fries, a variety of salads, and seafood-related mezzes (e.g., *kaya koruğu turşusu*). The region offers an array of fish species, including shrimp, blue crab, squid, sand mussel, grouper, mullet, sea bass, sea bream, eel, sea snail, and bottarga. However, seafood is often considered a 'luxury food' unless individuals catch and cook the fish themselves. There are also home-cooked seafood dishes associated with local fishermen. For instance, a lesser-known dish called *siyadi* features seasonal fish cooked with bulgur and spices like cumin and black pepper. This affordable and convenient dish is favoured by fishermen and their families residing close to the Mediterranean Sea. In summary, seafood-based dishes aren't intrinsically ingrained in Adana's culinary culture; instead, they serve as dining options for the middle- and upper-classes or food for sailors and fishers.

Finally, the city boasts a vibrant street food culture characterized by its affordability and convenience. Street food is often more familiar to people and readily available. Some notable examples of Adana's street food scene include kebabs, offal-based dishes, locally renowned sweets²⁴, and doner kebabs. Offal is particularly integral to the region's culinary identity. Varieties such as stuffed sheep sausages

²⁴ They are many desserts for people with sweet tooth, and the most known ones are *taş kadayıf*, *karakuş tatlısı*, *bici bici*, and *halka tatlı*. Bici bici is made of a starch pudding, rose water, a great quantity of shaved ice, and caster sugar, and is consumed in the summer. The other three sweets are different forms of fried dough. *Halka tatlı* is a plain dough that is fried and nectarized; *taş kadayıf* has different fillings – either walnut or clotted cream; *karakuş tatlısı* has rolled dough, lots of syrup, and is served with pistachios or walnuts.

(*mumbar*), *şırdan* and tripe soup are prevalent, especially during late hours. The city's streets feature "*şırdancı*" establishments where patrons can enjoy these dishes even at 2 a.m., often requiring a wait for available seats. Adana kebab can be found both in grill restaurants and on the streets. As I noted before, the tradition of "*tablacı*" culture remains strong in Adana. Customers can enjoy wrapped Adana kebabs while standing or sitting on stools near *tablacı* stalls. However, the distribution of these street-side vendors isn't uniform across the city. This geographical disparity is crucial for understanding Adana's dining practices. As I've discussed in the chapter on space, the region's ethnic diversity is segregated, influencing its dining culture. For example, there are many *tablacı* stalls around Büyük Saat, the historic city centre. This area hosts various artisanal shops, business offices, and residents ranging from lower- to middle-class, contributing to its ethnically diverse population. Here, it's common to grab an Adana kebab for lunch or a quick bite while passing through the district.

In contrast, *tablacı* kebab artisans are not found much in the new settlement areas. Large boulevards are great examples of that. Streets are wider and more modernized around these places. We won't see the rusty tray of *tablacı* places and people rushing from one place to other while eating something in between. Instead, there are restaurants and cafes that are supposed to be neater. The chaos of the city and the barbecue smoke from the kebab restaurants belong more to the old town of the city. Therefore, there is no homogenous 'eating culture' of the region but it is clearly distinguished with the class-based, historical, and ethnic background of Adana.

I've talked about what we can eat outside so far, but the food we cannot find outside is equally important. There are many labour-intensive dishes that are extensively cooked at home – stuffed vine leaves, kibbeh, fellah kofte, stuffed vegetables and *yüksük* soup are only some of the examples to that. These dishes are not on the menus of the restaurants. Sometimes, one of them (mostly kibbeh) is served as

an appetizer at grill restaurants, but it is limited to that. Why can't we find outside what we cook at home? I do not have a certain answer for that, but I believe that it is related to two reasons: gender-related food production practices and how the eating out culture is introduced in society.

Home-cooked dishes are mostly prepared by women. When we consider the time and know-how that is needed to cook these dishes, we can easily say that invisible labour of women is highly involved in domestic food production. Therefore, the public-private distinction emerges once again in the research. When compared to males, the number of female cooks in professional kitchens are very limited. Additionally, male participation in labour-intensive food preparation remains questionable. During my fieldwork, I have never seen a male cook preparing these home-cooked dishes. For instance, there were only two kebab restaurants which serve kibbeh as a starter and when I asked about the maker of the dish, the answer was: "We buy it from a woman who prepares them at home. By doing that, she can earn money from what she cooks the best and we serve good quality kibbeh here." The second place answered it as: "It is my wife who makes those kibbehs. I do not say it because it is my wife, but she makes the best ones in the city." Both believe that they 'contribute' to the invisible workforce of women by giving them the opportunity to cook for their food operation. For them, it is an action to be proud of, even though it manifests as either the invisible and/or unwaged work of women.

Another 'invisible' cuisine involves Armenian dishes. These dishes are not drastically different from what we eat today. Since the land was shared by many groups, the food culture was also a part of this mutuality. However, Armenian history in the region is not acknowledged. It is fully erased from the mainstream food production and consumption practices. Although it is not strictly about food culture, Polatel's (2018) work on Armenian cultural heritage in Adana provides us the roots of

the Armenian community within the multicultural heritage of the region. It includes the built environment (schools, monasteries, fortresses, and churches) as well as oral history (excerpts and interviews) to reveal "... relations between the communities, and second, even if with no great impact on the course of the history, events that are important for the different communities living in Adana. By doing this, instead of presenting the race for sovereignty and clashes between the communities, we tried to present the histories of several communities that lived together or close to each other" (p. 13). Armenian food culture may be missing in the city, but it exists in nearby cities like Bourj Hammoud in Lebanon.²⁵ While I won't delve deeply into this subject, the Armenian community in Lebanon serves as a testament to the displacement of food due to sociopolitical events, political persecution, and nationalist agendas.

I've addressed various layers of historical dining out practices in this section. Beyond being a mere social activity, dining out reflects complex dynamics. In fact, the (in)visibility of certain foods enabled us to see how sociological discussions such as migration patterns and introduction of the free market in Turkey impacted the eating out culture of the city. Migrations from the eastern cities increased the number of grill restaurants or *tablaci* places that are closely linked to barbecues. On the other hand, the emergence of the free market around the 1980s accelerated the invasion of global food and beverage brands, mushrooming in the city. The dining out culture of the city is the harmony of red meat, offal, global and national fast-food chains, cafes, taverns, and eat-and-go places that are different from fast-food shops. In the following section, I extend the concept of eating out. I will discuss how people started going out for food in Istanbul. By doing that, I will uncover multifaceted aspects of the culinary culture of a large(r) city, showing how the migration patterns from southeastern cities to Istanbul

²⁵ To read more about the Armenian community in Turkey, which was displaced in different periods of the country's history, starting from the Ottoman Empire and up till the Republican era, please see: <https://armenianweekly.com/2021/08/04/bourj-hammoud-an-armenian-city-in-exile/>

led to the adoption of “kebab culture” in the city. This cultural shift extends beyond Adana kebabs, reflecting a broader trend of increased red meat consumption at grill restaurants.

4.4 Dining out in Istanbul and the journey of kebabs

In parallel with Turkey's ever-evolving sociopolitical and economic landscape, dining out culture has experienced transformations over time. To understand the evolution of dining practices, a comparison between Turkey and the Western world – specifically France – proves useful. In France, dining out was closely tied to the emergence of the working class and the bourgeoisie. In contrast, Turkey's experience differed due to its retention of an ‘agricultural society’ identity, distinct from the industrial societies of the West. Consequently, the formation of a working class took a unique trajectory in Turkey, contributing to the reshaping of its culinary culture. To explore these dynamics, a closer examination of various Ottoman periods concerning the empire's culinary practices is necessary.

Starting from the Ottoman era, culinary traditions underwent several changes dictated by factors such as ingredient availability, the expertise of palace cooks, and the food preferences of different sultans. For instance, coffee only made its way to the empire in the 16th century (Samancı, 2019). Prior to that, people enjoyed beverages like sherbets and fermented drinks like boza. Furthermore, distinctions between the Palace cuisine and everyday fare were evident. Desserts, for instance, were considered a privilege of Palace cuisine and were not accessible to the general populace. Amidst this hierarchical culinary landscape, Turkey's first-known restaurants emerged in Istanbul.

It's unsurprising that Istanbul had the first restaurants in the country. This is analogous to the situation in China, where the country was bustling and frequently

visited by merchants and travellers. Although there were places to eat out, the concept of modern restaurants didn't become common in Istanbul until the 1850s (Samancı, 2019). The emergence of these restaurants began within the city's elite class. Furthermore, the influx of Russians after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 greatly influenced the proliferation of restaurants (Ibid). Russian cuisine and beverages were prevalent around Beyoğlu until recently, with Rejans serving as a prominent example. This restaurant played host to a diverse array of people, including diplomats, politicians, bohemians, and civil servants. Additionally, the establishment of the Turkish Republic reshaped the restaurant landscape. Restaurants started to serve more 'traditional' cuisine, presented in a 'modernized' manner. Moreover, the term; *lokanta*; adapted from the Italian word '*locanda*' (Chase, 2000, p. 84), began to be used as a descriptor for dining places that didn't serve alcohol, and gained widespread popularity.

Samancı (2019) explains the traditional-modern dichotomy of the first years of Republican era as: "The dichotomy of traditional (*alaturka*) and modern (*alafranga*) cuisines, which emerged since the second half of the nineteenth century in Ottoman culture, became evident in the urban centres during the first decades of Republican era" (p. 71-72). For instance, the recipes of dishes such as *mantı* and Italian ravioli, meatballs and steak with Café de Paris sauce began to appear in the same book, in Ekrem Muhiddin Yeğen's work called "*Alaturka ve Alafranga Yemek Öğretimi*." The major aim was to preserve what is familiar to us and be open to new tastes at the same time. In fact, these flavours were not just random recipes, but the well-known dishes of the Western world. This was a part of the Westernization and secularization project of the new government.

After the first decades of the Republican era, eating habits in large cities, especially Istanbul, started to change. These changes took place mostly around the 1950s. There are three major reasons: migration from rural to urban areas, decrease in

non-Muslim population, and the development of transportation. Between the 1950s and 1960s, the government applied agrarian reforms which worked in favour of landowners (Batmaz and Erdem, 2016). Due to the mechanization and modernization in agriculture, there was a surplus of labour in rural areas.

There were many citizens, especially young unmarried men, who left rural areas and migrated to big cities to find jobs. During the inland migration, people brought their food and eating habits with them. Also, the decline of non-Muslim population led people to introduce more ‘traditional’ food from Anatolia. It was a time when ‘Anatolian’ dishes met with Istanbulites. These dishes were prominent until the 1980s, before the coming of the free market in Turkey. Yenel and Keyder (2013) summarize it clearly: “Although the entry of international capital into the food and agricultural market in Turkey had started around the 1950s, its fields of activity were still limited until the 1980s” (p. 110). Therefore, dishes like *lahmacun*, *çiğ köfte* (steak tartar a la turca), and *içli köfte* (kibbeh) were introduced to the city to a large extent.

Among those dishes, kebab is prominent, and has a long history in the city. According to Eksen (2003), the earliest known document mentioning kebab shops in Istanbul dates to the time of Fatih's son, Bayezid II, that is, from sources published in 1501 (p. 20). However, we should remember that there are many types of kebab dishes. The most well-known types of kebabs in the city were tandoori, shish kebab and doner kebab. Later, the city encountered the new era of kebab that came from the southeastern part of the country. Kebabs from the cities like Adana and Urfa became “Adana” kebab and “Urfa” kebab. Kebab, which is prepared and cooked in the Adana style, gained its identity as the “Adana kebab.”

Its journey to an ‘unknown’ urban area assigned specific features to the dish, so that it could be distinguished from others. In contrast to its “*Adanali*” identity elsewhere, Adana kebab has never been called “Adana kebab” in Adana. Rather, it is

called “*kıyma*.”²⁶ How the same dish reflects differently in the local v/s larger cities is an important point. In Adana, it is a familiar food that everyone knows, but Istanbul is another story. The city's inhabitants underwent changes, ushering in new faces, habits, and ways of utilizing spaces. In that change, I am particularly interested in how the ‘Adana’ kebab reshaped the eating habits of Istanbulites while undergoing changes itself. Fragner (2000) summarizes this change well: “Besides, one should not forget that it is typical of any great cuisine in the world to be based on local varieties and on mutual exchange and enrichment among them, but at the same time to be homogenized and harmonized by a metropolitan tradition of refined taste” (p. 52).

To talk about these changes, we first need to discuss the economic policies of the 1980s and onwards. In fact, the entry of the free market into the country was accelerated and expanded to many sectors including food. Scholars who are focused on food studies from various disciplines argue that the 1980s was the turning point of the new economic era based on consumerism (Samancı 2019; Scholliers et al. 2019; Akarçay & Suğur 2015; Yenil & Keyder 2013). This era introduced a ‘consumption culture’, the diversity of products that are available in the market increased, and the notion of ‘time’ was commodified. The accelerated pace of living transformed daily practices, including eating. These changes were spurred by an increase in multinational company investments, liberalized import regulations, media influence, super(hyper)marketing, and the influx of conflict-driven migration to major cities, coupled with a rise in the number of working women in Turkey during the 1980s (Yenil, 2003, p. 99).

In parallel with that, food has undergone a change. It travelled to other cities, recipes were readapted, and consumption practices gained speed. In Ahiska & Yenil’s

²⁶ An English translation of this word, *kıyma*, would be ‘minced meat’. Since it is the most prominent dish including minced meat, local people define and order it in that way.

(2006) terms, “fast food became faster” (p. 140). What was once considered authentic local food in Turkey was transformed into Turkish-style fast food, competing against global giants like McDonald's and Burger King. Items previously thought of as 'local' and 'traditional' became emblematic of fast-food culture. The pillars of this trend were *çiğköfte*, kofte shops, Ayvalık style toasts, *lahmacun* and *pide*. This trend led to standardization processes aimed at enhancing productivity through centrally monitored systems. The food was no longer meticulously prepared using artisanal methods; instead, it was mass-produced in manufacturing facilities. These facilities then distributed the products to franchisee shops in Istanbul and throughout Turkey, depending on the scale of the operation. Amidst this transition and migration, kebab found itself in a new place.

According to Eksen (2003), one of the first grill restaurants (*ocakbaşı*) was opened in 1957 by a person from Urfa. At the same time, *Adanalı* restaurant owners also showed up. If the kebab was made by a kebab artisan from that city, the dish was assigned an “*Urfalı*” identity. Several well-known grill restaurants in Istanbul have persisted and deserve mention as pioneers of this culture within the city. The first example is Develi Restaurant²⁷ which opened in 1912 in Gaziantep and carried the business forward to Istanbul in the late 1960s. It is a family-run business passed down from generation to generation. They started with one small shop in Samatya, and currently the family owns 12 branches of Develi Restaurant, ten of them in Istanbul, one in Ankara and one in Cyprus. Their menu consists of soups, cold and hot appetizers, salads, oven-baked products, a large selection of kebabs, regional dishes from Gaziantep, and desserts. Plus, the restaurant serves alcoholic beverages. The menu contains traditional dishes from the southeastern part of Turkey. The owners point out

²⁷ To read more about the restaurant, please see: <https://www.develi1912.com/index.html>

that their products are premium quality, and that the restaurant is not only about the food but a whole dining experience. Considering the prices of the meals, this dining experience is only accessible for middle-upper and upper-classes.

Another example is Çiya Restaurant²⁸ which was opened by Musa Dağdeviren in 1987 at the centre of Kadıköy in Istanbul. He was born in Nizip, Gaziantep and started working at an early age. He started his career at a bakery where he honed his skills in preparing *lahmacun* and *pide*. Afterwards, he learnt how to make kebabs from his masters and followed each step which an apprenticeship does to become a kebab master himself. When he decided to open his own restaurant, he wanted to go beyond ordinary kebab shops. Instead, he aimed to introduce the experimental cuisine of the forgotten tastes of the rich Anatolian food culture, which he was interested in and was gradually disappearing in the face of growing fast-food culture. Although the restaurant is defined as “Southeastern and Eastern Mediterranean Cuisine”, it reflects the rich cultural mosaic of a geography stretching from Anatolia to Mesopotamia with the meals belonging to Azeri, Georgian, Turkish, Arab, Armenian, Ottoman, Syriac, Seljuk, and Jewish cultures.

When kebab travelled from various cities, people needed to differentiate them to distinguish the dishes from one to another. For that, they created imagined differences as if Urfa kebab is hot²⁹ and that Adana kebab is not. However, this is an oversimplification; the diversity within the dish is more intricate than a single characteristic. It's not solely about heat or the presence of specific ingredients. This notion aligns with what was discussed regarding standardization: numerous methods exist for making kebabs, none of which are intrinsically 'right' or 'wrong.'

²⁸ To read more about Çiya Restaurant, please see: <https://www.ciya.com.tr/?tarihce>

²⁹ I believe that the term 'hot' in English does not fully capture the Turkish meaning of '*acı*'. The term 'spicy' is also sometimes used for the same reason, but it too fails to reflect the specific taste. It is not a combination of various spices, but rather, relates to the taste of, for example, cayenne pepper. The term 'piquant' may be the most suitable one.

While the big city undeniably influenced kebab's evolution, the phenomenon extended beyond urban centres. During my interview with Dağdeviren, he argued that: “The spread of a culture takes place from metropolitan to rural.” If it stays in the countryside, it cannot be known to others. On the contrary, larger cities make room for food to be on other people's plates. From working-class to upper-class, cities enable people to experience a variety of food in their own way. The working-class may be going to *dürüm* shops to enjoy wrapped kebab while the upper-class goes to high-class grill restaurants to have ‘authentic’ kebabs. However, the common recipe of Adana (or Urfa) kebab has also changed according to the palate of Istanbulites as the inhabitants have different eating habits than in the southeastern part of the country. For example, the amount of tail fat and spices were adjusted. It became a fat-reduced dish in Istanbul. For some people, it is also less piquant in the city, but in fact, the kebab is not necessarily a piquant dish. The pepper that is used in the recipe is not to make it hotter, but to give its distinctive taste. Gratien and Dolbee (2021) also overemphasize the usage of pepper in their work, but many people prepare the dish only by adding salt and excluding any type of pepper. Therefore, the discussion around ‘spicy pepper’ (*acı biber*) appears to me as a way for the southeastern population to define themselves and to have a distinct taste from others.

‘Eating spicy’ is a characteristic that is assigned to cities like Adana and Urfa as part of their food identity. It is believed that people of the region can eat more spicy food than the rest of the country. However, this isn't about certain spices being exclusive to certain groups; it's about evolving eating habits that become characteristic of specific regions over time. It reminds me of Massoth's work (2017) on Mexican cookbooks and representation of Mexican food in the United States. She points out that Mexican cuisine was adjusted according to “middle-to-upper-class Anglo standards of spice and cleanliness” (p. 45) since they considered authentic Mexican food as

‘indigestible.’ The taste palate of Anglos was the norm, and the rest were ‘unfit’ as they were either too spicy, too sweet, or too salty – too much for the refined taste buds of certain groups. Although this debate is not grounded in the same way in Turkey, similar discussions over the taste and ‘acceptability’ of dishes and foodstuffs can be found.

Eksen (2003) reviews this situation thusly: “Kebab shops became grill restaurants. The city has transformed the kebab culture from the southeastern region as much as the dish changed the city” (p. 58). This transformation isn't unidirectional; both the dish and the city mutually influence each other. The complex dynamics of these changes illuminate the reciprocal evolution of the city's eating habits and the various ways the dish is prepared and enjoyed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

When I initially embarked on the exploration of regional culinary cultures, my aim was to discover production of localities and its reflection on food cultures. In doing so, I emphasized the notion ‘sense of belonging’ is created through food. While food is produced and consumed daily, the associated socio-cultural aspects often remain unexamined. During my research, I realized that people tend to create links between places, ethnicities, and geographies on different scales. Pivoting from that realization, I centred my research on the Adana kebab, a well-known yet understudied dish from an academic perspective. I have not come across any research on how the Adana kebab is made, and how it has found a place in the contemporary culinary culture of the country. My familiarity both with the dish and those who make it, allowed me to pursue the dish at its point of origin, in Adana. However, my academic curiosity spurred me toward a broader, more circuitous, journey, encompassing the consumption patterns of the dish both in Adana and in Istanbul. This expanded perspective allowed me to compare how the dish was received, experienced, and interpreted, by the respective populations differently.

The research went beyond simply considering the Adana kebab as a gastronomic delight. Throughout the thesis, I focus on three distinct dynamics – spatial, historical, and societal. I include the elements of ethnicity, the economy, and migration patterns. My initial goal was to uncover the production processes of the dish from various angles, including the artisans, the ingredients, the apprentices, and the operation scale of the kebab restaurants in Adana. However, I realized that the culinary culture built around the dish is understood and practiced distinctly elsewhere. This prompted me to compare the consumption practices of the dish both in Adana and in

Istanbul. I did so, by focusing on how the dining out culture has been shaped in (and has shaped) the city. As such, I discovered that the consumption practices of the dish are closely linked to the migration patterns from the southeastern regions to Istanbul, a metropolitan city with great density of population, and a harmonious blend of different socio-economic groups. I realized that different places lead people to experience a dish, or a culinary culture, from a wider perspective, in various forms.

I started with a discussion on the conceptualization of ‘space.’ I argued that there are different ways of approaching the term ‘space’, that it is not a static place witnessing the historical events, but that it also actively shapes the experiences of both human and non-human actors. Drawing from Massey’s work on human geography, in which she suggests that “space is a product of interrelations” and to consider space as “the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity... as the sphere in which distinct narratives co-exist...as the sphere of the possibility of the existence of more than one voice” (p. 279), I built the theoretical framework for this thesis, beginning with introducing Adana from historical and geographical perspectives. This perspectival work allowed me to consider both the human and physical geography, so that I showed how both the region, and its inhabitants transformed each other over time.

Continuing this trajectory, I delved into a brief history of agricultural production in the region. While only tangentially related to my research, this historical aspect holds significance as agricultural products and producers have played a role in shaping Adana’s socio-economic and ethnic fabric. Migration patterns dating back to the 19th century have been an important dynamic, showing how migrants changed the culinary culture of the region, in conjunction with their eating habits and other cultural aspects of daily life. Finally, I discussed at length, the local cuisine of the region – ingredients available, cooking techniques, and how they relate to each other.

Approaching the region from this multi-perspectival historical background provides a solid foundation for the discussion of the subsequent chapters.

Building on that foundation, I placed the Adana kebab at the center of the research. I started with a discussion of the methodological aspects of the research and my local networks in the city. It was an important part of my academic journey to be clear about how I found the informants and used the snowball sampling method. I continued with the definition of what a kebab is, so that there could be a shared, clear understanding that it is a cooking technique, rather than a name of a specific dish. This chapter incorporated a range of data from the fieldwork, including a particular focus on the experiences of the kebab makers as the artisans of the dish. Further, I delved into their relationship with their apprentices, thus revealing a transformation in the traditional steps of apprenticeship. I discussed what it means to be an artisan in a modernized world, highlighting the parallels between the concepts of artisanship and artisanal food, and how that has led to dishes with historical roots, like kebabs, being reinvented as ‘trendy’.

Moving forward, I presented the Adana kebab from different angles - including raw materials, cooking techniques, and side dishes. During my interviews with the artisans, I discovered that there are numerous ways of making the dish, based on the usage of various ingredients on different scales. It made me further question the multiplicities of each dish and eating culture. I realized that the ingredients, recipes, and overall understanding of food cultures of a specific place have become mostly standardized. There are various elements that pave the way and/or support these standardization processes, of which I focus on two- geographical indicators (GIs) and cookbooks- which tend to define a single recipe and a culinary culture for a particular geography. In turn, however, the fieldwork revealed that there remain multiple ways of making and consuming the foodstuff, regardless of the attempts at standardization.

Further, I delved into the gendered aspects of the kebab making processes. Although I have not intended to investigate the gendered aspects of artisanship, it emerged as an integral part of the research, revealing the public-private distinction of food production practices. The making of kebabs and handling of the barbecue are considered as ‘heavy’ and ‘difficult’ operations, which are supposed to be more suitable for the men. Yet at home, women are actively involved in both processing the meat and grilling it on the barbecue. Therefore, it is not the matter of the difficulty of the job, but the invisible labour of women in public spheres. I concluded the chapter by discussing the foundations of a ‘sense of belonging’ and the notion of authenticity.

In the following chapter, I explored the consumption of the Adana kebab locally and nationally. I began by exploring the formation of the dining out culture in both cities, focusing on how their socio-historical backgrounds lead to different dynamics. These differences impact many aspects of everyday life, and food cultures are no exception to that. I had mentioned previously that migration patterns to Adana were a key determinant of the food culture of the region; and much the same can be said for Istanbul as well.

Discussing the production side of the story was an essential part of the thesis but understanding the differences in consumption practices is what allows us to see the full picture. I argued that the concepts of mechanization and globalization have accelerated the production and consumption processes. Starting from the 1950s, the spatial distribution of population has shifted, and most of the population began to live in large cities. In accordance with that, eating and drinking habits have undergone many changes and ready-to-eat products have become more prevalent. Ultimately, the dining out culture and the consumption of Adana kebabs operate almost as parallel processes, without one being more “essentially correct” than the other.

The actual and conceptual significance of a particular dish may have different meanings for different people. In fact, none of these meanings would be strictly right or wrong. We should not approach this issue from an essentialist point of view, in search of a perfect recipe and the pure taste of a dish. We should question, instead, the ‘sense of belonging’ that people tend to create between themselves and places, foods, objects, and many other symbols that they think reflect their culture and/or identity.

This research enabled me to emphasize the importance of going beyond the dualities of local and national cuisines, original or imitation recipes, modern and traditional ways of producing food. I highlighted the production of localities to argue that the socio-historical dynamics of a place, together with its inhabitants, go beyond the standardized understanding of dishes, things, places, and memories. Seremetakis (2020) reminds us of another duality, the Aristotelian mind-body distinction. The body is a representation of physical functions on its own such as eating and walking. This division facilitates a homogenization, a discipline, and a functionalization of food and eating cultures. However, food production and consumption practices go beyond the merely physical, to the realm of memories. Those memories are not just the private thoughts of an individual’s mind, but are “encapsulated and stored in artefacts, spaces, and temporalities of both ‘making and imagining’ of sharing and exchange” (p. 319). Building on this understanding, I conclude the thesis by inviting people to abandon essentialist perspectives when talking about cuisines, and to hold open space for multiplicities – in recipes, in preparation, and indeed, in the communal consumption and experience of food.

T.C.
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER YÜKSEK LİSANS VE DOKTORA TEZLERİ ETİK İNCELEME
KOMİSYONU
TOPLANTI KARAR TUTANAĞI

Toplantı Sayısı : 34
Toplantı Tarihi : 28.09.2022
Toplantı Saati : 16:00
Toplantı Yeri : Zoom Sanal Toplantı
Bulunanlar : Prof. Dr. Feyza Çorapçı, Doç. Dr. Arhan S. Ertan, Doç. Dr. Senem Yıldız, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi
Yasemin Sohtorik İlkmen, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ayşegül Metindoğan
Bulunmayanlar : Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Harun Muratoğulları

Elif Birbiri
Sosyoloji

Sayın Araştırmacı,

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Bu karar üyelerin toplantıya çevrimiçi olarak katılımı ve oy birliği ile alınmıştır. Onay mektubu üye ve raportör olarak Yasemin Sohtorik İlkmen tarafından toplantıya katılan bütün üyeler adına e-imzalanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla, bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

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