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Food and beverage rituals at the period of birth, marriage, and death in Shamanist Turks and its modern reflections

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ABSTRACT

It is known that the Turks have adopted many religions in history. Shamanism is also among the ancient beliefs of the Turks. Shamanism; Tengrism is also known by names such as the religion of the Sky God. This study examines the food and drink habits of Turks who believe in Shamanism during the mythological rituals they perform on the occasions of birth, marriage, and death. It also investigates how food and beverages were consumed during these occasions in Turkish mythology. The study emphasizes the reflections of the eating and drinking rituals in Turkish mythology to the present day. . In this context, a compilation article was made by using the literature review method, one of the qualitative research methods, by making use of secondary data sources. Various Turkic peoples and Turkic tribes were examined by scanning the relevant academic literature, and a conceptual framework was tried to be created. The research shows that Turks often use plant foods (barley, wheat, and oats) grown in their geographical area and horse meat in their rituals because it has an essential function in their lives. In addition, milk has an important place and is often consumed.

KEYWORDS

Shamanism, The Turks, Food and beverage, Rituals

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INTRODUCTION

It is known that the Turks have adopted many religions in history. Shamanism is also among the ancient beliefs of the Turks. Shamanism is also called Tengrism, known as the religion of the Sky God. In this study, a compilation article was made using the literature review method, one of the qualitative research methods, using secondary data sources. Various Turkic people and Turkic tribes were examined by scanning the relevant academic literature, and a conceptual framework was created.

Shamanism has been advocated as an ancient religion by writers such as Georgi, Shashkov, and Banzarov in the 18th and 19th Centuries. In the same period, some researchers who judged this issue with Christian conservatism approached with the view that Shamanism should not be considered a religion. Ibn Fadlan said that in the first half of the 10th century, some Turkic peoples, Gokturks, and some ancient Uighur peoples living in the Ural-Altai region were Shamanists. Radloff, in the second half of the 19th century, Anohin, Culloeh, and many other writers in the first half of the same century showed Shamanism as the religion of the Ural-Altai peoples only (Radloff, 2018, p. 139). Abdulkadir Inan (2020, p. 1) said, "Old Turks, without a doubt, were Shamanists." He stated that Shamanism in Turks is a mythological phenomenon. German-born Russian Turcologist Wilhelm Radloff, who considers Shamanism a major religion, has done many studies by observing and compiling the religious and historical information of the Central Asian Turkic Tribes during the years he lived among Shamanist communities due to his duty as an inspector. Radloff also has an essential place in deciphering the Orkhon Inscriptions. For this reason, Radloff's participation in some shamanic ceremonies and the knowledge and impressions he gained from the local people have an essential place in understanding shamanism (Radloff, 2018, p. 6). Bapaeva (2011, p. 9) states that the history of Shamanism in Tuva Turks dates back to B.C. It states that it is as old as the 3rd and 2nd centuries. According to Bapaeva, Shamanism in Tuva is based on the Huns, the ancestors of the Tuva people (Bapaeva, 2011, p. 9).

There are many cultures under the influence of Shamanism. Many high cultures, such as Indian, Iranian, Georgian, and Chinese cultures, have been influenced by Shamanism. Natives of North America, some peoples living in the Ural and Volga valleys in Russia, Turkmens, southwestern Kazakh tribes, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and Koreans were also influenced by Shamanism. It is known that all Turkic-Mongolian and Tungusic peoples once upon a time also adhered to Shamanism. Most Turks have long embraced Islam (Radloff, 2018, p. 148). Turks were influenced by religions such as Buddhism, Mazdaism, Manichaeism, and Nestorian Christianity before settling in their new homeland in Southeast Europe and Anatolia and converting to Islam (Boratav, 2012, p. 9). Some communities have kept Shamanism alive and preserved until today. Radloff states that today, Shamanism still lives among some Altaic communities (Turkish, Mongolian, Manchu, Tungusic). Altai-kijis, Teleuts, Ku-kijis (lebeds), Yish-kis (Forest Turks), Yenisei people, Tunguses, Chuvans, Koryaks, and Shors are some of these communities. Altai and Abakan Turks and Yakuts are officially Christians, but they are Shamanists (Radloff, 2018, p. 91). Today, 90% of Turks in the world are Muslims (Inan, 2020, p. 209). Islam has shown the most significant influence on the Turkish people and has successfully destroyed Shamanism compared to other religions (Radloff, 2018, p. 91). It is still possible to see the effects of Shamanism on some folk customs and beliefs in our country. Shamanism traditions in Muslim Turks have not been forgotten for centuries. The Oghuzes, who started to accept Islam at the beginning of the 10th century and became entirely Muslim in the 11th century, continued many Shamanism traditions even in the 15th century, as told in the Dede Korkut stories. Traces of ancient beliefs and rituals, such as cutting off the tail of the deceased person's horse during mourning ceremonies, walking the victim around the island, cutting a stallion, and celebrating the tree, can be found in today's Anatolian Turks, who are descendants of the Oghuzes (Inan, 2020, p. 209).

It is a subject that is emphasized in the study that the effects of Shamanism continue today. For this reason, in this study, it was desired to investigate the food and beverages used in the rituals of Shamanist Turks, their current place, and consumption patterns. The literature has been meticulously scanned in this context, and the reflections on the eating and drinking rituals in Turkish culture and Shamanism have been investigated. To continue Turkish culture, it is important to keep historical information alive and transfer it to future generations. This study

examined the eating-drinking rituals and culture in Shamanism, a belief in the past, but we observe that we carry traces of it today. It is hoped that the study will contribute to the relevant literature.

SHAMANISM AND TURKS

The first religion of the Turks is the “Turkish religion” known as “Şemeniyye” in the Eastern scientific world and “Shamanism” in the Western scientific world (Yörükan, 2020, p. 11). The historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, who was the first to deal with Shamanism as a whole, states that the term Shamanism is “an archaic and worldwide religious phenomenon.” It is also a religion seen especially in Central and North Asia and regions close to the North Pole (Eliade, 2003, p. 20). According to the belief of Shamanism, the universe consists of three parts. The upper realm has seventeen layers and represents the sky, the realm of light. The lower realm is the realm of darkness, which has seven or nine layers. Between these two layers is the earth, and people live in this intermediate realm. In the religion of Shamanism, the highest of the gods is Tengere Kayra Kan, which is seen as the beginning of all beings (Radloff, 2018, p. 21-23). Kayra Kan is probably one of the names given to the Sky God. The Sky God is the greatest god of Turks (Çoruhlu, 2019, pp. 57-61) and is the “Turkish God,” who created everything, the world, and people, and who gives people the state, happiness, and fortune, and is also mentioned in the Orkhon Inscriptions. Three great gods were formed from Kayra Kan. These are Bay Ülgen, Kızagan Tengere and Mergen Tengere. Apart from these gods, there are also spirits. The place where people live symbolizes a community of spirits who do good to people. These spirits are called Earth-Water spirits. Since people are most close to these spirits, they can connect without intermediaries and offer sacrifices. The god of the lower world is Erlik Kan, the terrible enemy of people (Radloff, 2018, p. 21-23).

There are different discourses on the etymological origin of the word shaman. According to Radloff, it came from a common root in Altaic languages and passed from Tungusic to the Western world of science through Russian. Instead of the Tungus word shaman, the Turks use the term “kam,” and the Mongols use the term “Böge (Bö)” for male kams and “Udagan” for female kams (Radloff, 2018, p. 11; Gömeç, 1998, p. 40). The ordinary meaning of all these concepts; words such as the one who performs the ritual, the magician, the fortune teller, related to the religion of Shamanism. Kasgarlı Mahmud says that the word Kam means “seer.” In Kutadgu Bilig, Yusuf Has refers to Hacıp as an “herbalist.” He says that they are people who heal people (Gömeç, 1998, p. 40). According to Sadeddin Buluç, a shaman is a religious man who acts as an intermediary between spirits and people in tribes affiliated with Shamanism (Radloff, 2018, p. 107). The shaman offers sacrifices, cleanses the house of the souls of the dead, and directs the prayers of prayer and thanksgiving (Radloff, 2018 34). Yaşar Çoruhlu (2019, p. 127) states the duties of the shaman in more detail as follows;

“...to cure all kinds of diseases, to restore the protective spirit of the patient who left during the illness, to help with infertility and difficult births, do things such as delivering the sacrifices to the gods, conducting various religious ceremonies, sending spirits to the realm of the dead, arranging rites to protect people from evil spirits, telling fortunes about the future.”

The shaman defends life, health, fertility, and the world of light against death, disease, misfortune, and darkness (Eliade, 2003, p. 27). After explaining shaman and Shamanism in general, it is helpful to mention the eating and drinking rituals in Shamanism and their current reflections, which form the basis of the study. We can observe these reflections in many different ways in our daily lives. Perhaps the most striking of these reflections today is the rituals of sacrifice. In the next section, sacrificial rituals are examined in detail.

SACRIFICE RITUALS IN SHAMANIST TURKS AND REFLECTIONS OF TODAY

Since, in this section, the Shamanism and post-Islamic rituals are compared in order, the flow will be this way. To understand the eating and drinking rituals in Shamanism, it is necessary to discuss the sacrificial ritual. Because the rites and ceremonies in Shamanism do not take place without victims, these victims consist of food and beverages. Shamanist Turks offered sacrifices

for many reasons, such as rain during droughts, healing of the sick in times of illness, peace for the souls of the dead, health of the mother and baby at birth, and sound marriage at weddings.

There are two types of sacrificial practices in the Turks: bloody and bloodless. The bloodless sacrifice is called "Saçılga". It is also known as "Saçu or Saçıl" in different Turkish societies. These bloodless sacrifices offer food and beverage (dessert, milk, vodka, etc.) by pouring into nature, throwing oil and wine into the fire, or in the form of gifts spilled from the bride's head. "Tayılga" is a form of sacrifice in Shamanism in the form of killing an animal by strangulation and without slaughter. "İdik" is a freed victim. It is also known as "İtik, İyik". In the İdik sacrifice, the animal is released into nature with a sign and is released. People who know that that animal is İdik can never touch that animal. Gagauzs used the term "Godness" instead of İdik. The practice called divinity is the wealthy farmer choosing the best among its animals and releasing them to the countryside. "Kurumsak" is also a kind of blood sacrifice. "Yağış" also refers to an animal to be slaughtered for divine or religious purposes (Karakurt, 2012, p. 170; İnan, 2020, p. 98; Kılıçve Albayrak, 2012, p.711).

Bloody victims were horses, deer, cattle, rams, sheep, mules, oxen, rodents, squirrels, bulls, dogs, mountain goats, and camels (Akgün, 2007, p. 141; Alsan, 2022, p. 189; Roux, 1994, p. 201, Kılıçve Albayrak, 2012, p. 710), etc. are animals. The animals that can be sacrificed in Islam are much more limited. In blood sacrifice ceremonies, the animal is chosen from the owner's herd, which must be the fattest. The victim is killed by torture, unlike in Islam. The sacrificial animal is usually a horse. The killing of a horse victim is done as follows: The horse is placed with its head to the east and tied tightly with a string. All body openings, such as ears, nose, and breech, are clogged with grass, so blood does not flow. Great care is taken that the animal's blood does not spill even a drop. The ancestor is tortured until it dies. Then, the skin is peeled so that the whole head and legs are left on the skin up to the knees. Their meat is distributed raw. Back, ribs, small bones, and breasts are cooked in water in a large cauldron without adding anything. Two chosen cooks mix the meat in the cauldron. After the meat is cooked, it is placed in a prepared place from beech sticks and cut into small pieces. The Shaman takes a wooden bowl, puts meat in it, pours soup on it, and goes to the sacrifice place, facing east, and presents it to the ancestors and guardian spirits of the house. The Shaman presents the remaining meat on the plate to the host. The host eats some and gives the rest to the Shaman (Radloff, 2018, pp. 39-48; Roux, 1999, pp. 121-122).

In Islam, the sacrifice is sacrificed on Eid al-Adha, and the blood of the victim is shed in Islamic methods. It is rewarding to distribute the meat of the sacrifice to people experiencing poverty. It can also be eaten by meat, slaughter, and family. In addition to offerings, sacrifices are also made to give thanks after seeing the help of God, apart from the feast. However, the votive sacrifice cannot be eaten by first-degree relatives and the devotee, per Islamic rules (Karakurt, 2012, p. 506). The sacrifices that were made after the deceased in the ancient Turks were made to protect from the harmful effects of the dead, to please the dead, and to leave the soul of the deceased from the house and find peace in the household, with Islam, sacrificial rituals began to be performed to do charity and feed the poor. Ceremonies with the names of eren vaccine, grave victim, and afterlife victim in Anatolia today are among the sacrificial traditions of the past that are reflected in the present. For today's version of the bloodless victim, we can give examples of mawlid made for death, marriage, or a newborn baby, food products such as wheat and sugar thrown on the bride and groom's head, and prenatal baby parties (Sağır, 2016, p. 11). Mawlid tradition in the Islamic world. The tradition began with writing literary texts in verse and prose about Muhammad's birth, his family, prophetic qualities, miracles, morality, state and behavior, and various periods of his life and death. This tradition extends over time to the Turks. On the Night of Power in 1932, upon Atatürk's request, a Mawlid celebration was held in the Hagia Sophia Mosque, and it was delivered to the public via live radio broadcast for the first time (Akarpınar, 2006, p. 45). It is seen that in Turkish societies that accepted Islam, Shamanism rituals were restructured and practiced by the people. Mawlid ceremonies are a form of restructuring that has reached practical and aesthetic maturity (Akarpınar, 2006, p. 46). In addition, in contrast to the "Saçılga" ritual in Shamanism, in Islam today, we see the wheat and sugar scattered on the head of the bride who got married and left her father's house, the tooth wheat made for babies, the mawlid and the lokma rituals that are taught for deaths, births or newly purchased worldly goods.

These practices, which are done in different ways but for similar purposes, can be counted among Shamanism's eating and drinking rituals. In fact, in practices such as bloody or bloodless sacrifice or "Saçılga", the aim is the desire for abundance and protection from evil.

EATING AND DRINKING RITUALS RELATED TO BIRTH IN SHAMANIST TURKS AND THEIR REFLECTIONS TODAY

Birth, marriage, and death are the three transitional periods of human life. In transitional periods, people were believed to be weak and vulnerable to harmful external influences. For this reason, rituals were performed to be protected and sanctified during these transitional periods (Türker and Gündoğdu, 2016, p. 142).

When the rituals related to birth are examined, we encounter various prenatal and postnatal practices in the past and today. Prenatal practices are generally performed by people who do not have children and who seek a cure for infertility. Having a child is an essential phenomenon in Turkish society today. It is seen that the desire to have a son for the continuation of the lineage is higher in some regions of our country. Beliefs of sacrificing man, visiting shrines and graves, and praying, which have existed for a long time to have children, continue to exist together with Islam.

It has been observed that women who want to get rid of infertility in shamanism drink water from the spring there, take soil from the tomb and drink this soil with water, and even swallow an insect taken from the tomb. It is also an old Turkish belief that a woman without a child drinks water from the palm of a woman with a child and that a woman in labor pains eats the apple she has bitten. It is known that today, childless women mix various spices with honey, eat wolf meat in some regions, and even feed the placenta/wife of a woman who has just given birth to the woman without her knowledge (Kılıç, 2012, p. 18-19). Dede Korkut tells in his stories that women pour wine into dry tea when they want a son (İnan, 2020, p. 171). The Kyrgyz sacrificed and gave a feast to have children. They also visit sacred places such as trees, graves, etc., and offer sacrifices. Again, when a child is born healthy, the Kyrgyz sacrifice an animal to thank Allah if the newborn baby and mother are healthy. Names such as "tülöö (wish), aksarbaşıl, sadaga" are given to this tradition. Again, in these ceremonies, other than sacrifice, food made from dough is served (Arık, 2005, pp. 160-161). Yakuts also donate animals to God when they want children. This is primarily done when wanting a boy. Yakuts place great emphasis on the firstborn. On the day the child was born, he ate a fatty meal, sacrificed an animal, and cooked without breaking his head (İnan, 2020, p. 171). In the Yakuts, the creator gods and spirits' general name was "Aylhut." Three days after the birth, a farewell ceremony was held for the bear, and the women were laughing and smearing oil on their faces; a soup was cooked from wheat boiled in water and eaten. This soup is known as "Salamat" (Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3309). "Urug Doyu" (Children's Party) was held on the day a child was born among the Tıva Turks. This custom continues today during the first month after the baby is born. The sacrifice is made at this toy, and the meat is distributed (Türker and Gündoğdu, 2016, p. 144).

A sacrifice ceremony is held on the ninth day of the new moon for mother Umay, who is believed to help women give birth, which is associated with childbirth in Turkish mythology. In addition, raki prepared from sour milk in the Altays is thought to be related to the Umay cult. The apple and the apple tree are also associated with birth. Kazakh Turks believed childless women could become pregnant after rolling under the apple tree (Kılıç and Albayrak, 2012, p. 712). In the old Turks, fire was highly sacred, and sacrifices were made because fire drove away evil spirits and cleansed everything (KTB, 2018, p. 85). Fire is both creator and destroyer. Cursing the fire, insulting, spitting, defecating, nailing, etc., were considered sins (Çoruhlu, 2019, pp. 104-106). During their birth, Yakuts worshiped by pouring oil on the fire (Akgün, 2007, pp. 144-147). On the other hand, Kyrgyz Turks hold an entertainment ceremony called "CentekToyu" at births. In these celebrations, held for the joy of the child born into the world, relatives and neighbors are invited, and family members cook and serve the best dishes. In Turkmens, forty days after the baby is born, washing with salt water is done. This process is also called "kırklama". In the Caspian Turks, women cannot eat meat until they are forty, and meat is prohibited in their houses (Yeşil, 2014, pp. 123-124). Today, the belief is that women who have just given birth should not leave the house

for 40 days, and the tradition of washing the baby with salt water when the baby is 40 days old continues.

The old Turks believed that an evil spirit haunted the puerperium. This spirit is known as “Albastı/Al karısı”. It has occurred in Turkish legends such as “Alkarısı, Albis, Almis” (İnan, 2020, p. 172). This belief has persisted until today. Red sherbets such as poppy and licorice sherbet are drunk to eliminate this evil spirit. Today, those who come to see a child are offered a treat under the name of “loğusa şerbeti” (Kılıç, 2012, p. 29).

EATING AND DRINKING RITUALS RELATED TO MARRIAGE IN SHAMANIST TURKS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY REFLECTIONS

Shamanists and Muslim Turks have a common element regarding marriage. This element is scattering the “saçı” on the bride's head. The purpose of this saç is for the bride to be accepted by the ancestors and spirits of her new lineage in the house she comes to. While these saç were the blood, fat, and meat of the hunt among the people engaged in hunting, kumiss, milk, and animal fat among the people involved in shepherding, they were wheat, millet, and various fruits among the people engaged in farming (İnan, 2020, p. 170). Today, at weddings, items such as wheat, snacks, and sugar are scattered from the bride's head, food is given (wedding meal in Shamanism), oil is smeared on the door, etc. Traditions are an extension of the culture inherited from Shamanism (KTB, 2019, pp. 245-321). It is known that when young girls reach marriage age, they accept marriage by giving apples to their suitors (Kılıç and Albayrak, 2012, p. 713). Among the Yakuts, the groom would take a cooked horse head as a gift when visiting his fiancée (Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3309). Nowadays, it is customary to bring cookies to the fiancée instead.

When getting married in Shamanist Turks, each person has to slaughter a light-coloured horse for Ülgen. Among Kyrgyz-Kazakhs and Bashkirs, the newly married bride would throw oil on the fire and pray. In the Altai, on the first night, the bride would bless the fire lit by the groom and offer him food. He would throw oil on the fire, throw a piece of meat, and pour kumiss. Dolls made of cloth, called nenes, are called “emegender” among the Teleuts, a tribe of the Altai people, and are a cultural heritage passed from mother to daughter. When the girl gets married, she goes to her husband's house with this doll, and twice a year, in spring and autumn, the ceremony of giving food to the “emegender” is held (Akgün, 2007, pp. 144-147; Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3309). A wedding dinner is also held today. This dish can be made during the wedding or after the bride arrives. A wide variety of home cooking can be seen in these dishes, which vary from region to region. For example, in Elazığ, while stuffed meatballs, Harput meatballs, stuffed meat, casserole, and rice are served, boiled meat, rice, and compote are served in Tunceli and its surroundings. Tirit, roasted meat, bulgur pilaf, and stuffed cabbage are served in Konya. In Hatay, the wedding dishes include eggplant stew, firik, rice and bulgur pilafs, green beans, and soups with yogurt. In Isparta, bulgur pilaf made before the wedding, called “pilavdökme”, is taken to the cemetery and distributed to the children there. When visiting the newlyweds in Bingöl, “kapama” is made, and they are wrapped in hot lavash and given as a treat. In the Aegean region (Manisa, Izmir, Denizli, etc.), keşkek and alcoholic drinks are often served. Keşkek has become the symbol of wedding meals (Kılıç, 2012, p. 45). The ceremonial food known as “köçö” (a soup made from meat and edible flowering plants) in the Altai people and “malahın” in the Yakuts is the wedding food we know today as keşkek (Yeşil, 2014, p. 134; Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3312).

EATING AND DRINKING RITUALS RELATED TO DEATH IN SHAMANIST TURKS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY REFLECTIONS

The feature that distinguishes Shamanism from other religions is the belief that there is a close connection between the living man and the people's long-dead ancestors. The belief in the strength of this bond necessitates respecting the ancestors and offering sacrifices to them (Radloff, 2018, p. 34). In Turks, ancestor spirits seem helpful and protective (Akgün, 2007, p. 146). Even today, we can say that the distribution of food on the anniversary of death, visits to the cemetery on holidays or other days to be good for the dead, and prayers for their souls are indicators of the continuation of this cult of ancestors.

The most significant art of the shaman is the work called cleaning the homeland. This is done on the fortieth day of the deceased in the family. According to this ritual, the Shaman talks to relatives who have died and are in the nether world. The dead do not want to accept the new spirit, and the shaman seeks to deceive them, pleading with the dead. The shaman takes the bottle of raki and offers the souls of the dead from the water of life. Offering sacrifices and cleaning the house are the primary religious duties of the Shaman (Radloff, 2018, p. 83). Shamans say prayers by sprinkling water around to clean the house after the dead. It is known that this old tradition continues in some regions (Alsan, 2022, p. 192). The ancient Turks used to offer their first bite, the first milk of their mares, when they sat down to eat for their deceased ancestors. Today, Kazakhs also have a tradition of offering sacrifices for the deceased (Akgün, 2007, p. 146).

In many ancient Turkish states, the dead were buried with their horses, servants, belongings, jewels, and sometimes with their wife or wives, while they were buried in the grave. It has even been revealed in archaeological excavations that the dead were buried with food and drinks (cheese, butter, wine, kumis, meat, raki, etc.) to eat in the next world. The ancient Turks believed that the dead could come to life again. For this reason, they were buried with objects they might need to survive and live comfortably when they came to life again (Alsan, 2022, p. 189).

Post-mortem funeral ceremonies hold an essential place in Shamanist Turks. In the Orkhon Inscriptions, which have an important place in Turkish history, it is stated that people gathered for funerals, and in the works written by Kaşgarlı Mahmud and Ahmet İbn-iFadlan, a large meal was given to the participants in the funeral ceremonies (Alsan, 2022, p. 188). The Gokturks held ceremonies, also called “dead vaccine, which they called “yog” after the deceased rulers. These were held in the form of sumptuous banquets. Some of the meals cooked by the rich people by slaughtering hundreds of animals were distributed, and some of them were poured onto the graves of the dead (Şişman, 1996, p. 567). In Chinese sources and Orkhon inscriptions, it is written that during the funeral ceremonies of the Göktürks, their relatives slaughtered horses and sheep and laid their meat in front of the tent (Alsan, 2022, p. 191). Even today, this ancient culture continues. On the day of the funeral, the first three days following it, and the fortieth day of the deceased, a mass meal is given in the dead house. Some also serve meals on the seventh and fifty-second days after the burial. This dish is called “dead food”. The purpose of these collective meals is to commemorate the deceased and share their relatives' pain in life. Although this meal is performed differently in Anatolia, it is a typical ceremony at every death. In some regions, the funeral owners prepare the meals personally, while in others, the subject is prepared by neighbors and relatives and brought to the funeral home (Akdağ and Sormaz, 2019, p. 554). This “dead food” is known by the following names in different regions of Anatolia; “Kırkekmeği or Ölüekmeği” (Erzurum region and its environs), “Kazmatakırtısı” (Divriği, Mersin villages, Southern Yoruks), “Kırk yemeği” (Tunceli), “Ölününkırkı” (Divriği), “Can aşısı” (Tunceli, Şebinkarahisar, Alacahöyük), “Can helvası” (Mersin), “Hayrat ekmeği” (Gaziantep), “Kazma kürek helvası” (Urfa). Some foods are considered dead food but not given as a feast. Some of them are as follows: “Şemşek” (Kilis), “Ölü gigiği” (Sivas), “yogurt bread” (Haymana), “Ölü çöreği, Köncülü”, (Kahramanmaraş) (Örnek, 1971, pp. 88-89).

It is a common view that child deaths in Teleuts are due to measles and smallpox. To heal the child, the oldest person in the family makes a tiny raft, and a drink called araki, food made from dough, fruit, and honey, is placed on this raft. These were left in the river to be delivered to the god Talay Kaan, associated with the water element. If the child did not recover and died, the same procedure was applied, and this time, the child's belongings were also placed on the raft. In the spring, this raft was released into the river (Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3307).

In Anatolia today, food is usually not cooked in the dead house for the first three days. Only after the deceased is halva roasted in the deceased's home and served to those who attend the funeral. It is believed that commemoration ceremonies are held on the three, seven, twenty, and fortieth days after the burial or death day and at the end of the year in the old Turks (Roux, 1994, p. 234). In Altays and Yakuts, the funeral meals given on the 3rd, 7th, 9th, and 40th days after the death are called “töğü” and “ahılık”. Food such as meat, butter, and lavash are served in these ceremonies. In the Shor Turks, food was scattered on the fire on the 40th day of the dead to feed

the souls of the dead by the Shaman. They believed that when the fire was extinguished, they said goodbye to the soul of the dead (Koç and Dönmez, 2020, p. 3309).

CONCLUSION

In this study, we tried to determine the food and drinks used during the birth, wedding, and death periods in various Turkish communities according to the Shamanist belief, and it was seen that there were many different traditions. From birth to death, human beings have emphasized the fact of eating and drinking, which is their most basic need, as if they organized a ceremony in their happiest and saddest times. Many of the eating and drinking traditions continued with Islam. Today, Turkish people meticulously prepare food and drink during birth, marriage, and death periods.

It is seen that some old Turkish beliefs still exist and are still alive today. We can say that this is solid proof that the Turks are a society that adheres to their traditions even after hundreds of years have passed. One of the most important ways to understand cultural values is to know the eating and drinking habits of the society. The continuation of eating and drinking habits in Turks since Shamanism reflects a deep-rooted cultural infrastructure. Although society's civilization brings some changes in lifestyles and habits, this change does not change the cultural phenomena symbolized in some beliefs and cultural values. Despite the changes and transformations that have occurred even in religious beliefs from the past to the present, there has been no change in the perspectives and meanings attributed to birth, marriage, and death, which are life's turning points. We see that the rituals of these vital cycles, which evoke feelings such as health, trust, and abundance, are repeated in different ways but are essentially similar. There are, of course, advantages and disadvantages to these unchanging facts. However, the fact that the phenomenon of eating and drinking can be continued and that the culinary culture is rooted in it makes every society culturally unique.

As stated in the study, Turk culture carries many traces of Shamanism from the past to the present. Continuing behavioral patterns today are not just about food and drink. It is known that in the evil eye belief, elements such as the blue bead and the behavior of hitting the wood by saying "God forbid" when a bad word is heard or said are connected with Shamanism. In the belief of Shamanism, while the Turks held big weddings during their birth, today this event has turned into similar entertainment under the name of 'baby shower party.' Again, if a woman is a guest in a house after giving birth, the custom of giving eggs to her continues even among the younger generation today. Other gifts, such as candy, bread, clothes, and toys, were added to the egg. It reflects the old belief that wheat, sugar, and cookies are scattered all over the bride's head during weddings, especially when leaving her father's house. Today, these hairs have meanings such as getting along with her husband sweetly in the house where the bride goes and being the blessing of her home. It is seen that the food and drinks in Shamanism are used as a treat and for beliefs. Today, we see that many shamanistic beliefs are practiced by Turks living in Anatolia, even unconsciously, apart from food and beverage elements.

The old Turkish belief, Shamanism, is a cultural heritage left to the Turkish people from their ancestors. Keeping this legacy alive should not mean spreading a religion or corrupting Islam. Bearing the traces of a past culture should be seen as the beauty of existing as a non-assimilated society.

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