

Doç. Dr.
Ali GÜVELOĞLUUniversity of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
Dept. Of History (Ancient History)
guveloglu@hotmail.comORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9114-7272>

Eser Geçmişi / Article Past: 5 Nis 2019 / 11 Nis 2019

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21551/jhf.549966>

Orjinal Makale / Orjinal Paper

An Approach on Tarhana and its Similarity to Hittite word GA^Ataraşganna

Tarhananın Hititçe GA^Ataraşganna Kelimesi İle Benzerliği Üzerine Bir Yaklaşım

Abstract

The soup termed terhâne, tarhana, trachanás or tarhonya, which is prepared by mixing flour, milk/yoghurt, and various spices and fermenting them together, is a well-known food in Middle East. Tarhana is a food that can be crushed into a powder form and carried in this way, and it can be cooked anywhere by mixing it with some hot water. The naming criteria of this food, which is considered to have Persian origins, remain unclear. The literature focuses on terhâne in Persian and *tracta* in Latin. In addition to naming, discussions regarding the period in which the food first appeared are ongoing. The twelfth century, which is the date suggested by the sources is quite late for this kind of food that can be prepared with simple ingredients. This study argues that the food was named based on dairy products, which are included in its ingredients, and that it still has the names derived from the same root. Among the words considered from this point of view, the word GA^Ataraşganna, found in Hittite cuneiform tablets, which is understood to be about milk and dairy products, may have served as a basis for the names given above.

Keywords: Tarhana, Tracta, Trachanás, GA^Ataraşganna, Kishk, Anatolian Food, Hittite, Milky soup, Grain soup, Colostrum.

Öz

Un, süt / yoğurt ve çeşitli baharatların bir arada fermente edilip kurutulmasıyla elde edilen terhâne, tarhana, trachanás ya da tarhonya isimli çorba çabuk hazırlanan yiyecekler arasında iyi bilinenlerdendir. Tarhana toz haline getirilip taşınabilen ve istenilen her yerde bir miktar sıcak suya katılarak pişirilebilen bir yiyecedir. Orijini Pers kültürüne dayandırılan bu yiyeceğin isimlendirilmesinde hangi kriterlerin rol oynadığı henüz netlik kazanmamıştır. Çalışmalar Pers dilindeki terhâ-

ATIF: GÜVELOĞLU Ali, "Tarhananın Hititçe GA^Ataraşganna Kelimesi İle Benzerliği Üzerine Bir Yaklaşım", *Tarih ve Gelecek Dergisi*, 5/1 (Nisan-2019), s. (110-121)

CITE: GÜVELOĞLU Ali, "An Approach on Tarhana and its Similarity to Hittite word GA^Ataraşganna", *Journal of History and Future*, 5/1 (April- 2019), pp. (110-121)

ne ile Latince *tracta* üzerine yoğunlaşmış durumdadır. İsimlendirme dışında yemeğin ortaya çıktığı dönem konusunda da tartışmalar devam etmektedir, basit girdilerle hazırlanabilen bir yemek için kaynakların ortaya koyduğu M. S. 12. yy. oldukça geç bir dönemdir. Bu çalışma yemeğin girdilerden birisi olan süt ürünlerine göre isimlendirildiğini ve hala aynı kökten türetilen isimler taşıdığını iddia etmektedir. Bu bakış açısıyla ele alınan kelimeler arasında Hitit çivi yazılı metinlerinde süt ve süt ürünleriyle ilişkili olduğu anlaşılan ^{GA}taraşgannanın yukarıdaki isimlere köken teşkil etmiş olabileceği üzerinde durulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tarhana, Keşkek, Hitit, Ekşi süt, Eski Anadolu Yemekleri, Ağız sütü.

Introduction

As nutrition is essential for humankind, organising it in a more practical manner and shifting towards easier to prepare and more filling food using the available resources must have been due to living conditions. Ancient Egyptians discovered a way to make bread by leaving crushed barley in water to soften it and baking it afterwards. When the same mixture was left under the sun for a longer duration instead of being baked, they discovered an early example of beer.¹ The only differences between these two products were the duration of fermentation and baking. Humankind was aware that they could make different types of food using the same ingredients. A similar process might have occurred with bread and tarhana in places where people used wheat instead of barley. Bread dough is fermented and baked in an oven, and when it is prepared this way, it becomes a product that needs to be consumed in a short time. However, if the fermentation is kept short and the mixture is sun-dried, it can be stored for an extended period of time and can be consumed any time after being cooked in hot water. Foods with such properties were either prepared as provisions for winter and stored or they were used for military expeditions and long journeys. The food that was called kishk or kashk by Persians was one of the best-known examples of such food. Studies indicate that these types of food were given names derived using the consonants ‘t-r-h-n’ in Anatolia and in the region to the west of it. Even then, the twelfth century, the date suggested for the origin of tarhana, whose main ingredients are crushed grain and sour milk, must be a very late estimate because before this date, much more complex food that could be stored for longer periods were prepared in Anatolia and Egypt (and practically all over the world).² Approaching the duality between the origins of tarhana and its nomenclature from a new perspective and perhaps establishing a connection between its taste and name might help clarify the issue. There are many possible civilizations and societies that might have played a role during this process. If its roots reach further back, I believe that the Hittites, who knew how to ferment grain with products such as cheese and milk,³ were very well-equipped to accidentally discover this food.

In modern Turkey, the grain-based ingredient for making the soup known as tarhana is prepared differently in almost all regions. It is prepared in autumn and stored to be consumed in winter.

1 John P. ALCOCK, **Food in the Ancient World**, London, 2006, p. 137; Reay TANNAHILL, **Food in History**, New York, 1988, p. 48.

2 Jean Louis FLANDRIN, “The Humanization of Eating Behaviors”, **A Culinary History of Food**, J. L. Editors: FLANDRIN, M. MONTANARI, Translated From French to English by C. Botsford et al., New York, 2013, p. 13.

3 Güngör KARAUĞUZ, **Hititlerde Ekmek**, İstanbul, 2006, p. 70.

When a small amount of tarhana is boiled in enough water, a thick and filling soup is prepared.⁴ Although tarhana preparation habits vary by region in Turkey, the main steps are usually the same. First, the grains are crushed or ground, then they are flavoured with onions, tomatoes (tomatoes were added to the recipe much later after arriving from the new world) and various spices, and yoghurt is added with a 35-40% ratio to the main ingredient wheat, and then the mixture is thoroughly kneaded. The resulting mixture is laid on a flat surface or divided into palm-sized pieces and left to dry under the sun. Those who want to make their tarhana tastier and more nutritious add in ingredients such as boiled and crushed chickpeas, verjuice, pomegranate sour sauce, coarsely ground wheat, and red pepper. The purpose is to ferment the grain with milk or yoghurt to achieve a sour taste. The vegetables included in the ingredients are selected to make the soup rich in vitamins. Today, in the north-western regions of Turkey, milk is also used for fermentation instead of yoghurt, which is a practice that supports the thesis that is proposed in this article. Similarly, today, Greek Cypriots use both ingredients at the same time to take advantage of milk's fermentation and yoghurt's sourness.⁵

This article does not intend to contribute to the discussion on the recipe and variations of tarhana since from Inner Asia to Central Europe, almost all villages argue that their method is the best. Another commonly accepted idea is that the tarhana tradition and name comes from Persia. My goal is to offer a new suggestion on nomenclature based on historical and linguistic evidence. The study is based on linguistic and historical data dating back to the 2nd millennium BCE in the Near East, where the oldest traces of agriculture and husbandry can be found. The region displays the earliest traces of urbanization in addition to agricultural activities while the said time period features multiple spoken and written languages as well as large migratory movements. Reaching a conclusion on the matter by analysing the linguistic traces in the Persian may be very easy yet also very deceiving at the same time. Therefore, before reaching a final conclusion, an analysis of the now extinct languages that used to be spoken in the region will be helpful. The probable names given to the very basic ingredients that must be included in the simplest tarhana recipes in these languages were used as the basis of reasoning.

Discussions on Naming a Food

The first and the strongest theory on the origins of tarhana posits that it is a food which originated from Persia and was spread westward with the influence of the Turks. However, the argument proposed by those who aim to confirm this theory, which is based on the equivalence of tarhana with *kaşk/kashk/kishk/kişik* and words derived from this root, has not always been accepted. Words derived from the consonants Ksk or kshk are seen in all Indo-European, Semitic, Altaic, and Caucasian language families, and today they have lost their initial meanings. Sallenave states that the word *kaşk* was first seen in an Armenian text from the fifth or sixth century as *k'aşken* and this word was derived from the word *kaşkîn* in Pahlavi.⁶ The word used to mean barley bread in those times. The word disappeared until the tenth century, and around this time it appeared a few times in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* as barley bread (*nan-ı kaşkın*). There is no enlightening information related to its content, and in the twelfth century, it appears as porridge with the name *kaşkbâ*,

4 Zümür NAHYA, "İl İl Çorbalarımız", **Türk Mutfak Kültürü** Üzerine Araştırmalar, Editor: K. Toygar, Ankara, 1999, p. 201.

5 William Woys WEAWER, "The Origins of Trachanás: Evidence from Cyprus and Ancient Texts", **Gastronomica**, vol. 2, No. 1, 2002, p. 42.

6 Françoise Aubaile SALLENAVE, "Al-Kishk: the past and the Present of a Complex Culinary", **A Taste of Thyme Culinary Cultures of the Middle East**, Editors: Sami ZUBAIDA, Richard TAPPER, New York, 2000, p. 106.

as a soup with the name âb-ı kaşk, and as a dish with the name âş-ı kaşk.⁷ In this process, the word lost its meaning of barley bread but still referred to a product that contains grains. In the twelfth century, the word lost its meaning of grain content and referred to curdled milk or sour milk. In the same century, in the Arab world, it was the name given to water leftover after curdling instead of the curdled water. The same word was used for products that were prepared by the fermentation of grains and dairy products. In short, the words derived from the consonants -ksk or -kshk were used to refer to 1) bread, 2) grain dishes, and 3) fermented food produced by mixing grains and milk; and the food we know today as tarhana was named as a food belonging to the third group.⁸ According to A. Davidson, the food is known as *kashk* or *kishk* in the Near East today broadly referred to the food prepared by mixing barley or wheat flour with sour milk or yoghurt and leaving it to ferment under the sun.⁹ However, there is no explanatory information on which ingredients served as the basis for the nomenclature of the food.

As can be seen in the texts, the word lost its grain connotation quickly and was mostly used to refer to grain-based food fermented with milk, milk, dairy products, and curdled milk. Today it is used in Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and the Arab world to mean dried yoghurt or sour milk. Keş derived from *Khisk* is used in Turkey to refer to yoghurt or curdled milk, and it is known as ayran, yoghurt or dry curdled milk in other languages in the region.¹⁰ The general information so far indicates that *kishk* does not always mean tarhana, but the food we call tarhana today was once named *kashk* or *kishk* in Persian. The origin of the word *Kashk* is also disputed. Derived by being combined with Sumerian ideogram ^{NINDA}, meaning bread, the word ^{NINDA}KASKAL, which meant ‘traveler’s bread’ was used with the same meaning in the Hittite language, which belongs to the Indo-European language family like Persian.¹¹ In this regard, it appears to be quite similar to *k’aşken*, which was the name of barley bread in the fifth-sixth centuries, both phonetically and semantically. However, there is not enough evidence to say that the two are the same. Nevertheless, if we also take *kiştu*, which is a type of bread in Hittite,¹² into account, it can be argued that the names given to food such as *kaşk/kashk/kishk/kişik* date much further back.

The name tarhana, which is believed to have originated first as a derivative of *khisk* and later have gone through a name change, first appears in the dictionary of twelfth century dictionary author Al-Zamakhshari. In the same century, it was also known among the Turks with the same name. When Malik Danishmend of the Danismend Beys married Byzantine Princess Gülnuş Banu, during the seven-day long wedding ceremony, the guests were served tarhana soup in addition to tens of other dishes.¹³ This new(?) food entered Ottoman royal cuisine starting from the fifteenth century and established a place for itself. Tarhana was cooked with cheese, eggs, and meat for the sultans, and sometimes cheese and eggs were used together.¹⁴ Although this tradition has mostly been abandoned in Turkey, people cook tarhana with halloumi cheese in Cyprus and Greece.¹⁵

It is believed that this new name tarhana was a deformation of *terhâne*, *terhîne* or *terhuvâne*;

7 Ibid., p. 108.

8 Ibid., p. 131.

9 Alan DAVIDSON, *The Oxford Companion to Food*, Oxford, 2014, p. 441.

10 Françoise Aubaile SALLENAVE, “*Al-Kishk: the past and the Present...*”, p. 112.

11 Ahmet ÜNAL, “^{NINDA}KASKAL”, *Hititçe-Türkçe/Türkçe-Hititçe Büyük Sözlük*, Ankara, 2016, p. 268.

12 Ibid., p. 284.

13 Pryscilla Mary IŞIN, *Avçılıktan Gurmeliğe Yemeğin Kültürel Tarihi*, İstanbul, 2018, p. 208.

14 Ömer Lütfi BARKAN, “İstanbul Saraylarına ait Muhasebe Defterleri”, *Belgeler*, vol. IX, No. 13, 1979, p. 190.

15 Andrew DALBY–Rachel DALBY, *Gifts of the Gods: A History of Food in Greece*, London, 2017, p. 159.

the Turks learned it and transformed it to tarhana and spread it to Anatolia (tarhana), Greece (trachanás), and Hungary (tarhonya).¹⁶ This claim poses no historical problems as the expansion of the Turks appears proportional to the dissemination of the word. The author of an informative article on tarhana, C. Perry,¹⁷ also states that the word is pronounced *tarkhâna* or *tarkhîna* in Persian and supports the claim that it was spread westward by the Turks. However, there is no study which explains the root of *Terhâne* and other words in the Persian. Investigating the traces of the word in the Byzantine period, A. Bryer agrees with others that the word tarhana is Persian, yet he considers its dissemination in the West problematic.¹⁸ In particular, he argues (p. 4) that the word trachanás in Greek was known before the Turkish hegemony started in Anatolia. He cites the use of the word in Imbros, Euboa, and Pontos dialects as evidence. In the same article, the author defines trachanás as a combination of tarhana with an old recipe called *trágos* (soaked balls of dough that were left to dry). Thus, Bryer dates the word tarhana further back because the close relations between Persians and the Byzantine Empire could have only started during the Byzantine-Sassanian wars, which took place as a series of conflicts between the years 421-651 CE.¹⁹ Another possibility is that the Byzantines might have learned about this word before the Turks arrived in Anatolia through their relations with Islamic communities.²⁰ A. Dalby agrees with Bryer that *trágos* was known in Greece before Ottoman rule.²¹ He also states that today balls of dough are soaked with milk instead of water, which brings them one step closer to tarhana.

The second important argument of individuals, who wish to clear up the issue of origins, is the similarity/equivalence of *tarcta*, which is encountered in the works of Roman authors, and tarhana. However, we lack the sufficient explanatory information to back this claim up. First of all, the meaning of the Latin word is yet unclear and Glare's dictionary provides no information on this issue. When the works of Antiquity authors like Cato and Apicius were translated into English, *tracta* was usually translated as pastry or noodle. Cato uses *tracta* as an intermediary ingredient in *placenta* recipes.²² In the same passage, the required ingredients and steps to prepare *tracta* are listed as follows: 2 pounds of wheat flour for the crust, besides them 4 pounds of flour and 2 pounds of prime groats are needed for the *tracta*. To make ready *tracta* first; soak the groat in water, take them when they are fully softened take them in a mixing bowl and drain well. When it is thoroughly kneaded, work in the 4 pounds of flour. Make a dough and shape *tracta* from this dough. Place them in a wicker basket where they can dry out. When they are dry, arrange them evenly. Cover them with an oily cloth, when they are moulded it means *tracta* is ready.²³ Cato's instructions are clear; these are nothing more than oiled and dried balls of dough, and they contain no dairy products or spices that can induce fermentation. Therefore, these cannot be expected to be the same as tarhana. The discussion should focus on whether *tracta* turned into a general term used to refer to dried pastries. To complete *Placenta*, a mixture of 14 pounds of cheese and 4.5 pounds of honey is prepared. After the oven and the mould is prepared, crushed *tracta* is laid on the bottom and the cheese-honey

16 Françoise Aubaile SALLENAVE, "Al-Kishk: the past and the Present...", p. 131.

17 Charles PERRY, "Tracta/Trahanas/Kishk", *Petits Propos Culinaires*, vol. 14, 1983a, p. 59.

18 Anthony BRYER, "Byzantine Porridge", *Studies Medieval History Presented to R.H.C. Davis*, Editors: Henry M. HARTING, R. I. MOORE, London, 1985, p. 3.

19 Gene R. GARTHWAITE, *The Persians*, UK, 2005, p. 103.

20 Shaun HILL–Anthony BRYER, "Byzantine Porridge Tracta, Trachanás and Tarhana", *Food in Antiquity*, Editors: J. WILKINS et al., Exeter, 2003, p. 52.

21 Andrew DALBY–Rachel DALBY, *Gifts of the Gods...*, p. 135.

22 CATO, *On Agriculture*, Translated from Latin by W. D. Hooper, H. B. Ash, Cambridge et al., 1935, 76.

23 Ibid., 76.

mixture is added on top of it; this is repeated until all ingredients are used, and a complete *tracta* is placed on top. Then, the preparation is baked in an oven. It is understood that *tracta* is not a stew-type dish but rather a dried material that is cooked in the oven. I was unable to determine what makes this dry material, which consists of just flour and water, so valuable. Secondly, the lack of a liquid ingredient that would allow *tracta* to cook was another significant issue.

The Ancona bread of the Picentes mentioned by Pliny's *Natural History* also contained *tracta*; however, unlike Cato's, this bread was not baked in an oven but was cooked in pans instead.²⁴ Our next reference related to this ingredient, which we cannot clearly identify, is Athenaeus's canonical work *Deipnosophistae*.²⁵ When describing the pan bread called *artogalanon*, which is also termed *kapuria* or *tracta*, the author mentions that some wine, pepper, milk, and either oil or lard are used. Of course, he does not feel the necessity to add flour, water, and salt to the list of ingredients and provides no information on whether the bread is fermented or not. However, we know that *kapuria* is a thin, pan-cooked bread.²⁶ From the limited amount of information provided by Athenaeus, we still cannot say anything about *tracta*. However, the fact that fermenting milk and spices are added to the recipe shows that there is a divergence from the *tracta* tradition introduced by Pliny.

Tracta appears differently in Apicius's work *De re Coquinaria*. Although they are in the form of dry balls of dough like Pliny's recipe, this time they are cooked in a liquid and mostly used to thicken sauces. In the English translations of the cookbook of Apicius, for one of the dishes called 'pottage', the steps to follow for a good *tracta* sauce are given as follows: put some milk and water in a new pan, heat them together and crumble 3 disc of dried *tracta* in them, stir while adding some more water, when it is cooked add some honey when it is still over the fire. You may use sweet-wine cakes instead of honey.²⁷ This recipe draws *tracta* close to classical grain-based soup ingredient. Particularly, if it is prepared with Athenaeus's recipe containing milk, oil, and pepper, it can be claimed to be a close relative of tarhana. In another recipe, a cut and cleaned whole chicken *liquamen* is cooked in a mixture of oil and wine. In a separate pot, a mixture of milk, water, and honey is heated for the sauce. Then some *tracta* is crumbled into the sauce and cooked carefully without overcooking. When the sauce thickens, the cooked chicken is placed in this mixture, fully coated, and the cooking continues.²⁸ In a third recipe, Apicius pours the *tracta* sauce, which is thickened after being cooked in a mixture of pepper, honey, and wine, over the fried pork before serving.²⁹

It is clear that *tracta* went through formal changes in the period from Cato to Apicius.³⁰ Therefore, researchers that studied *tracta* reached different conclusions. Some considered it to be an ancestor of pasta while others considered it to be a kind of noodle or a different pastry. On the other hand, J. Solomon claimed it was a dessert.³¹ The fact that different recipes use ingredients such as milk and honey for cooking made him arrive at this conclusion. At some point in history,

24 Pliny, **Natural History**, Translated from Latin by. H. Rackham, Cambridge et al., 1950, XVIII. 106.

25 Athenaeus, **The Learned Banqueters**, Translated from Latin by. S. D. Olson, Cambridge et al., 2006, III. 113 d.

26 Anthony BRYER, "Byzantine Porridge...", p. 5.

27 Marcus Gavius APICIUS, **A Critical Edition with an Introduction and English Translation**. Translation from Latin by. C. Grocock, S. Grainger, London, 2006, V. 1. 3.

28 Ibid., VI. 8. 13.

29 Ibid., VIII. 7. 5.

30 Andrew DALBY, **Food in the Ancient World Fom A to Z**, London, 2003, p. 251.

31 Jhon SOLOMON, "Tracta: A Versatile Roman Pastry", **Hermes**, vol. 106, No. 4, 1978, p. 540.

tracta may have been used as an ingredient for desserts. However, this does not make it a dessert on its own.

Those who have tried to establish a connection between Latin *tracta* and *trachanás* cooked in contemporary Greece have no other proof except the texts cited above and the partial similarity in the nomenclature. In his note written in response to C. Perry's article on *tracta*,³² C. Conran expressed that there might be a connection between *tracta* and *trachanás* in Modern Greek.³³ Perry wrote another piece and stated that no historical connection may be established between the two despite the similarity in names and argued that *trachanás* is a Persian food like *kishk*.³⁴ Even though the subject was brought up a few more times, none of the claims came to fruition to prove that the Greeks took Latin *tracta* and continued to cook it until the present day.

A third and less frequently cited theory argues that *tarhana* and similar foods were known in Anatolia since the Neolithic Age (11,000-5,500 BCE). A. Uhri reports that oxalate enzymes, which arise from the fermentation of grains, were found in 6 troughs with a 160-240-litre capacity that were used in Göbekli Tepe around 11,000 years ago.³⁵ Furthermore, scapulae belonging to wild asses were found by the troughs and in the nearby areas. It is believed that these were used for mixing, which leads to the theory that grains like barley and wheat were fermented and mixed. Uhri believes that these troughs were used to make the earliest examples of *tarhana*. However, we do not have any proof as to whether these mixtures were solid or liquid. Therefore, residents of Göbekli Tepe may have come up with the ancestor of beer rather than *tarhana*. Uhri also proposes a theory on nomenclature and points out that the words related to fermented foods, such as "salted fish, pickle or vinegar seller", were derived from the consonants 'trh' in Ancient Greek and suggests that *tarhana* and similar words might come from a process (which means to ferment).³⁶ However, since we do not know the language used by the residents of Göbekli Tepe, it is impossible to claim that an unknown language had an influence on the Indo-European language family. Indeed, Uhri's suggestion seems reasonable because it covers the region in which agriculture and husbandry emerged, yet it still lacks a foundation due to inadequate data. W. W. Weawer shares similar views with Uhri and claims that the food named *anse.se.a.a* in Assyrian could be a fermented grain food similar to *tarhana* but states that the data to prove this claim does not exist.³⁷ Weawer also points out that *tarhana* might be found anywhere with milk and grains, and in fact, *tarhana* must have originated when the first grains were harvested.

In light of the information above, it can be said that fermented grain-milk mixtures prepared by soaking in water, such as *kishk*, *tarhana*, and *trachanás*, have historical and linguistic ties with one another. Arguing that this highly nutritious, easy to prepare food, which combines the dairy products of nomadic cultures and grain products of sedentary societies, emerged suddenly and from a single point of origin would mean a denial of culture's ever-improving progression. On the other hand, we do not have much data to determine the origin of *tarhana*. The Hittites, who established an empire at the centre of modern Anatolia in the first quarter of the 2nd millennium BCE and who used one of the oldest Indo-European languages, consumed milk and dairy products like nomads

32 Charles PERRY, "What was Tracta?", *Petits Propos Culinaires*, vol. 12, 1983b, pp. 38-39.

33 Caroline CONRAN, "Tracta and Trachanas", *Petits Propos Culinaires*, vol. 13, 1983, pp. 76-77.

34 Charles PERRY, "Tracta/Trahanas/Kishk", pp. 58.

35 Ahmet UHRİ, *Anadolu Mutfak Kültürünün Kökenleri*, İstanbul, 2016, p. 45.

36 Ibid., p. 46-47.

37 William Woys WEAWER, "The Origins of Trachanás....", p. 44.

and grain-based food like sedentary societies.³⁸ In addition, they knew of ingredients like wheat (kant/kanza), milk (menuwa), and chickpeas (GÚ.GAL- zinail), which are still required for even the most complex tarhana recipes today. Furthermore, the Hittites knew how to ferment grains. For example, they used fermented millet to prepare a drink called zythum; they also fermented bread dough.³⁹ They had a dish called zannu, which was prepared with fermented barley (p. 191). Pickles and wine were other fermented foods prepared by the Hittites. Moreover, they knew of spices with the names GI.DÚG.GA, ÚUD.TIR. BABBAR, ÚUD.TIR.GE₆; so, the only questions remaining are whether they combined these ingredients, and if they did, what they named this mixture.

The ideogram ^{GA}tarašganna, which is found in a fortune text in KUB 5.5 i. 21 and iv. 13, can be translated as the first milk of the mother (*colostrum*) or as a dairy product. It is clear that the Sumerogram ^{GA} should be read as milk;⁴⁰ the subsequent ideogram tarašganna gives the meaning of mouth or beginning, so it can be translated as the first milk of the mother, i.e. colostrum, or with a different approach as an unidentified dairy product. Without the Sumerogram ^{GA}, which means milk, the word written as tar-aš-ga-ni-ia-u-wa-an-za means the mouth of a new-born baby.⁴¹ As a contemporary of the Hittite language, the Akkadian language was common in Anatolia as it was in Mesopotamia, and for grains it used words like aldu(m), asnan, se'u(m),⁴² and for milk it used words like hilpu/hilabdnū that were derived with the consonants 'hlp' while kisimmu meant sour milk and ser pet u was used for barley soup made with milk or oil.⁴³ For unidentified dairy products, the words sie iskurratu or iturru were used. Since no words that start with the root tara... are related to dairy products or grains,⁴⁴ it is very unlikely that this language named tarhana. Furthermore, none of the surviving words of the Hattian language, which is an older language from Anatolia,⁴⁵ and none of the tablets written in the island of Crete in the 2nd millennium BCE with the Linear B script contain words for grains or dairy products that resemble this sound.⁴⁶ Traces of tarašganna or words derived from this root are not found in the language of the Assyrians, who ended the Late Hittite Kingdoms and were brought down by the Persians.⁴⁷ The reason for this may be due to the fact that Assyrian, which belongs to the Semitic language family, completed its development a long time before they encountered the Hittites and Late Hittite Kingdoms.

One of the words that led me to think that ^{GA}tarašganna, which means colostrum, is related to grains is the verb tarš in the Hittite language, which means grinding/drying grains. According to Hoffner, it goes back to the Sanskrit verb *trsta* and *terreo* = drying the grain in Latin, *tersomai* = drying in Greek and with the same meaning, *dürr*, *dörr*, *darne* in German, and *thirst* in English

38 Ali GÜVELOĞLU, "Eski Doğu Toplumlarında Beslenme ve Damak Tadı", *Cahit Günbattı'ya Armağan*, Editors: İ. ALBAYRAK et al., Ankara, 2015, pp. 128-130.

39 Harry A. HOFFNER Jr., *Alimenta Hethaeorum: Food Production in Hittite Asia Minor*, USA, 1974, p. 55, 116.

40 Ahmet ÜNAL, "GA", *Hititçe-Türkçe/Türkçe-Hititçe...*, p. 124.

41 *KBo* 10. 37. i. 61; ii. 24.

42 Mark WEEDEN, "The Akkadian Words for "Grain" and God Haya", *Die Welt des Orients*, vol. 39, 2009, p. 82.

43 Leonid KOGAN, "Proto-Semitic Lexicon", *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, Editor: S. WENINGER, Berlin, Boston, 2011a, p. 240; Leonid KOGAN, "Proto-Semitic Phonetic and Phonology", *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, Editor: S. WENINGER, Berlin, Boston, 2011b, p. 111.

44 Karl HECKER-Walter SOMMERFELD, *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian*, Editors: J. Black, A. GEORGE, N. POSTGATE, Wiesbaden, 2000, p. 45.

45 Ahmet ÜNAL, *Hititçe-Türkçe/Türkçe-Hititçe...* p. 890.

46 Paul HALSTEAD, "Late Bronze Age Grain Crops and Linear B Ideograms", *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, vol. 90, 1995, pp. 229-232.

47 See Martha T. ROTH et al., *The Assyrian Dictionary*, vol. 19, Chicago, 2006, p. 49.

come from the same root; this means that the verb is directly related to grinding and drying.⁴⁸ The relationship between the verb tarš and tarašganna made me think that the relationship between ground grain and dairy products may not just be about the physical environment but rather the words might have been intermingled, as well.

As a dairy product, ^{GA}tarašganna might have been used for the fermentation of various grains, and it might have lent its name to the resulting product. Although there are no extensive studies on the practices of the Hittite periods, it is a known fact that they used to name foods based on their taste.⁴⁹ This is especially evident when it comes to bread and grain products.⁵⁰

Historical Process Behind Names

The Hattians, who resided in Central Anatolia prior to the Hittites, were erased from history with the very few words they left behind. Looking at these words, all of which can be found in Hittite texts, it is impossible to draw conclusions on their eating and culinary habits.⁵¹ Between the years 1640-1190 BCE, the Hittites conquered and expanded the area they lived in, and they organized raids into Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine regions while defending against incoming attacks. Therefore, the Hittites were the ones responsible for the establishment of political, commercial, cultural, and social ties between Anatolia and this region. They utilized the rich livestock and agricultural resources of Anatolia well and created an excellent nourishment style for themselves.⁵² In the 1190s BCE, once the Hittite Empire collapsed, the local people moved to the east and the south, taking their know-how with them, and they settled in South-eastern Anatolia, Iraq, Iran and Syria. These settlements are called Late Hittite Kingdoms. At the places they went, they used the old Hittite writing system, namely hieroglyphic writing. The Anatolian lands they left behind had no written documents for around two centuries. In the 890s BCE, the Urartian people started to produce written documents in Eastern Anatolia.⁵³ Later, in the first half of the 1st millennium BCE, Anatolia experienced a relative dark age and almost no written documents were produced in this period. In the Hellenistic (330-30 BCE) and Roman periods (133 BCE – 395 CE), Anatolian lands once again saw an influx of written documents, but these were mostly political writings and inscriptions which dealt with the public sphere. Even the Romans, who normally enjoyed writing about daily life, hardly produced any works that discussed daily life in Anatolia. The lack of a tarhana or tarašganna tradition or name in Anatolia might be the result of the internal dynamics of the period that followed the fall of the Hittites, as this period was too hectic to be writing about the dynamics of daily life or eating habits. The locations settled by Late Hittite Kingdoms, such as Kummukh, Carchemish, and Pattin, were first captured by the Assyrians and later by the Persians (sixth century BCE), and a new lifestyle emerged here.⁵⁴ It may be suggested that the interaction and word exchange between the Hittite and Persian languages were not related due to direct interaction but rather successive settlements.

48 Harry A. HOFFNER Jr., *Alimenta Hethaeorum...*, p. 142.

49 Ahmet ÜNAL, *Anadolu'nun En Eski Yemekleri*, İstanbul, 2007, p. 135.

50 Güngör KARAĞUZ, *Hititlerde Ekmek...*, pp. 96-100; Asuman ALBAYRAK, Ahmet UHRİ, Ülkü M. SOLAK, *Hittite Cookery: An Experimental Archeological Study*, İstanbul, 2008, p. 101.

51 Ekrem AKURGAL, *Anadolu Kültür Tarihi*, Ankara, 2000, pp. 15-16.

52 Ali GÜVELOĞLU, "Eski Doğu Toplumlarında Beslenme...", pp. 128-30.

53 Mirjo SALVINI, *Geschichte und Kultur der Urartaer*, Dramstadt, 1995, p. 22.

54 Marc Van De MIEROOP, *A History of the Ancient Near East*, UK, 2007, p. 230; Pierre BRIANT, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, Translated from German to English by Peter T. Dannels, Wionna, 2002, p. 27.

Results

Above, we have seen that the Persian food *kishk*, which was the name of thick grain dishes, later evolved to refer to dried dairy products like *keşk*, *keş*, *kiş*. ^{GA}taraşganna that is used to mean colostrum, milk, and dairy products in the Hittite language, which belongs to the Indo-European language family like Persian, might have the same connection we observe with *kishk/keş*. Therefore, after mixing and fermenting crushed grains with certain types of milk and fermenting them, the Hittites may have named the product after the dominant taste resulting from the fermentation instead of the type of grain, which is the main ingredient, and they may have called this product *taraşganna*. On the other hand, the Hittites knew of the determinative TU₇, which meant soup-stew, and they used this determinative when they were deriving names for soups. For example, TU₇ A meant liquid clear soup, TU₇ A.UZU.GUD meant beef stew, TU₇ BA.BA.ZA meant crushed barley soup, TU₇ GÚ.GAL meant pea soup, and TU₇ GA meant milk soup.⁵⁵ Thus, the Hittites must have named tarhana soup as TU₇ *taraşganna* (that is, if they cooked it as a soup, of course). They might have cooked pieces of tarhana in milk, as people still do in north-western regions of Turkey, and continued to use the name ^{GA}taraşganna due to the dominant taste of milk. However, the fact that ^{GA}taraşganna has only been found in KUB 5.5 so far makes it unclear as to whether the word was used with different connotations.

The phonetic similarity between tarhana and *taraşganna* is undeniable, and at the same time, the requirement for a milk with high fermentation potency is another factor to produce tarhana. Nevertheless, the mystery of the nomenclature remains unsolved. At this point, I believe that one of the main ingredients, grain or dairy products, might have had an effect. In the region where tarhana first originated (modern-day Iran and the Near East), the words used for grain and dairy products are provided above. Among them, ^{GA}taraşganna appears to be significant with its meaning of colostrum or dairy product because it might have given tarhana its name along with its sour taste. Although its steps were reversed, a similar naming is observed for the word *kishk* in Persian. Above, we have described that a word that initially meant barley bread was later used for dairy products and dishes prepared by mixing grains and dairy products. The dominant sour taste of milk and dairy products must have become prominent as the products were named and collected the words derived using the consonants *ksk/kshk*. As a dairy product, ^{GA}taraşganna might have lent its name to the food in the Hittite language, along with its taste.

Although the similarity between tarhana-*taraşganna* is an evident, establishing the connection between them is not as simple. More precisely, it is not clear whether the food itself or the name survived. I can propose two theories based on the available data. The first one is that tarhana might be a common food in Anatolia that dates back to the Hittite period, but it only appeared in written documents after the twelfth century. The second is that after it arrived at Anatolia, the Persian food *kishk* was renamed tarhana due to *taraşganna* and similar words, which had been in use in this region for a long time. In other words, the word that spread to Mesopotamia in the tenth century BCE through the Hittites might have transformed from *taraşganna/terkine/tarhana/trachanás* and finally to *tarhonya*. *Tracta*, which is prepared with similar ingredients and methods, can be considered a unique pastry that is historically unrelated to this group.

References

- Ahmet UHRİ, *Anadolu Mutfak Kültürünün Kökenleri*, (İstanbul, 2016).
- Ahmet ÜNAL, *Anadolu'nun En Eski Yemekleri*, (İstanbul, 2007).
- Ahmet ÜNAL, *Hititçe-Türkçe/Türkçe-Hititçe Büyük Sözlük*, (Ankara, 2016).
- Alan DAVIDSON, *The Oxford Companion to Food*, (Oxford, 2014).
- Ali GÜVELOĞLU, “Eski Doğu Toplumlarında Beslenme ve Damak Tadı”, *Cahit Günbattı'ya Armağan*, İ. ALBAYRAK et al. (eds.), (Ankara, 2015), pp. 119-134.
- Andrew DALBY–Rachel DALBY, *Gifts of the Gods: A History of Food in Greece*, (London, 2017).
- Andrew DALBY, *Food in the Ancient World Fom A to Z*, (London, 2003).
- Anthony BRYER, “Byzantine Porridge”, *Studies Medieval History Presented to R.H.C. Davis*, Hanry Mayr-HARTING, R. I. MOORE (eds.), (London, 1985), pp. 1-6.
- Asuman ALBAYRAK, Ahmet UHRİ, Ülkü M. SOLAK, *Hittite Cookery: An Experimental Archeological Study*, (İstanbul, 2008).
- Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters*, Translated from Latin by. S. D. Olson, (Cambridge et al., 2006).
- Caroline CONRAN, “Tracta and Trachanas”, *Petits Propos Culinaires*, vol. 13, (1983), pp. 76-77.
- CATO, *On Agriculture*, Translated from Latin by. W. D. Hooper, H. B. Ash, (Cambridge et al., 1935).
- Charles PERRY, “Tracta/Trahanas/Kishk”, *Petits Propos Culinaires*, vol. 14, (1983a), pp. 58-59.
- Charles PERRY, “What was Tracta?”, *Petits Propos Culinaires*, vol. 12, (1983b), pp. 38-39.
- Ekrem AKURGAL, *Anadolu Kültür Tarihi*, (Ankara, 2000).
- Françoise Aubaile SALLENAVE, “Al-Kishk: the past and the Present of a Complex Culinary”, *A Taste of Thyme Culinary Cultures of the Middle East*, Sami ZUBAIDA, Richard TAPPER (Eds), (New York, 2000), pp. 105-139.
- Gene R. GARTHWAITE, *The Persians*, (UK, 2005).
- Güngör KARAUĞUZ, *Hititlerde Ekmek*, (İstanbul, 2006).
- Harry A. HOFFNER Jr., *Alimenta Hethaeorum: Food Production in Hittite Asia Minor*, (USA, 1974).
- Jean Louis FLANDRIN, “The Humanization of Eating Behaviors”, in *A Culinary History of Food*, J. L. FLANDRIN, M. MONTANARI (eds.), Translated From French to English by C. Botsford et al., (New York, 2013), pp. 13-20.
- Jhon SOLOMON, “Tracta: A Versatile Roman Pastry”, *Hermes*, vol. 106, No. 4, (1978), pp. 539-556.
- John P. ALCOCK, *Food in the Ancient World*, (London, 2006).

Karl HECKER – Walter SOMMERFELD, *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian*, J. Black, A. GEORGE, N. POSTGATE (eds.), (Wiesbaden, 2000)

KBo: *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*.

KUB: *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi*.

Leonid KOGAN, “Proto-Semitic Lexicon”, *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, S. WENINGER (ed.), (Berlin / Boston, 2011a), pp. 179-258.

Leonid KOGAN, “Proto-Semitic Phonetic and Phonology”, *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, S. WENINGER (ed.), (Berlin / Boston, 2011b), pp. 54-150.

Marc Van De MIEROOP, *A History of the Ancient Near East*, (UK, 2007).

Marcus Gavius APICIUS, *A Critical Edition with an Introduction and English Translation*. Translation from Latin by. C. Grocock, S. Grainger, (London, 2006).

Mark WEEDEN, “The Akkadian Words for “Grain” and God Haya”, *Die Welt des Orients*, vol. 39, (2009), pp. 77-107.

Martha T. ROTH et al. (eds.), *The Assyrian Dictionary*, vol. 19, (Chicago, 2006).

Mirjo SALVINI, *Geschichte und Kultur der Urartaer*, (Dramstadt, 1995).

Ömer Lütfi BARKAN, “İstanbul Saraylarına ait Muhasebe Defterleri”, *Belgeler*, vol. IX, No. 13, (1979), pp. 1-380.

Paul HALSTEAD, “Late Bronze Age Grain Crops and Linear B Ideograms”, *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, vol. 90, (1995), pp. 229-234.

Pierre BRIANT, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, Translated from German to English by. Peter T. Dannels, (Wionna, 2002).

Pliny, *Natural History*, Translated from Latin by. H. Rackham (Cambridge et al., 1950).

Priscilla Mary IŞIN, *Avcılıktan Gurmeliğe Yemeğin Kültürel Tarihi*, (İstanbul, 2018).

Reay TANNAHILL, *Food in History*, (New York, 1988).

Shaun HILL–Anthony BRYER, “Byzantine Porridge Tracta, Trachanás and Tarhana”, in *Food in Antiquity*, J. WILKINS et al. (eds.), (Exeter, 2003), pp. 44-54.

William Woys WEAWER, “The Origins of Trachanás: Evidence from Cyprus and Ancient Texts”, *Gastronomica*, vol. 2, No. 1, (2002), pp. 41-48.

Zümrüt NAHYA, “İl İl Çorbalarımız”, *Türk Mutfak Kültürü Üzerine Araştırmalar*, K. TOYGAR (ed.), (Ankara, 1999), pp. 201-215.