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The Use of Probate Inventories (*tereke*) of Grocers as a Source for the Food Consumption of Urban Ottomans: The Case of Eighteenth-Century Ankara

Abstract

Although food consumption among urban people in Ottoman history remains an under researched area, there is a growing body of literature on the food consumption of those living in the palace and among the elite. This asymmetry is in parallel with the lack of historical documents. This means that while there is a wide range of historical sources corresponding with the studies concerning the elite's food consumption, there is a lack of archival documents that can shed light on urban people. Within this framework, this study suggests using the probate inventories of grocers, who were scattered around the neighbourhoods and kept a wide range of products in their shops.

Keywords: food consumption, grocers, probate inventories, grocery shops, Ottoman Empire

1. Introduction

In the year of 1754 a grocer (*Bakkal*) called Ali Beşe, who lived in the İğneci neighbourhood of Ankara, passed away.¹ Thereupon, his wife Amine and his daughters Saime, Hadice and Vahide, as well as his sister Aişe, applied to Ankara kadışip in order to portion Bakkal Ali Beşe's inheritance according to the Islamic laws, and to constitute his probate inventory (*tereke*). *Kassam*, the official of the local court attendant who implemented the Islamic laws in inheritance issues, registered Ali Beşe's private belongings. There were several types of garments, such as a loose robe, a sash, a fur, and plenty of household goods like pile rugs, bolsters, candlesticks, coffee pot, etc. Thereafter, the *kassam* enlisted the goods in the grocery shop (*bakkal*) of Ali Beşe by noting the sentence at the top "*müteveffâ-yı mezbûruñ dükkânında mevcûd bakkâl eşyasıdır ki ber vech-i âti zikr olunur*", which means "the goods found in the mentioned deceased person's grocery shop are as follows". Subsequently, a new list was compiled by the *kassam*, including the goods that existed in the grocery shop. According to this list, 28 different food-stuffs were found in the shop, including honey, almonds, rice, figs, walnuts, raisins, garlic, and different types of oil. Lastly, the *kassam* registered the expenditures and some taxes of Ali Beşe that had to be paid from his inheritance, and then divided the remaining residue among his five heirs. .

1 ACR No: 825, 60a-1.

How does this record, registered in the Ankara court records in the eighteenth century, contribute to consumption studies within the field of Ottoman history? It would appear to make at least two significant contributions. The first part of the inventory, in line with the features of other areas of consumption studies, yields much about the private consumption patterns of Ali Beşe, and this corresponds with the consumption trends of the time. In addition, the second part of his inventory, which is the inventory of his grocery shop, provides clues about the food consumption patterns of the entire İğneci neighbourhood. As noted in other studies, grocery shops in the Ottoman Empire met the daily needs of the people.² Therefore, the grocers themselves must have determined the goods stocked in their grocery shops in accordance with the preferences and necessities that prevailed in their neighbourhood.³ Using this as a starting point, this article asserts that probate inventories of grocers that have never been used in this context can be used as sources for tracing the food consumption of urban Ottomans, as they present a picture on a neighbourhood scale.

Within this framework, the following sections of this study will deepen the discussion of the use of grocers' probate inventories as a historical source for understanding the food consumption of urban people. The article will then present a series of findings on eighteenth-century Ankara as a case study, in order to illustrate the use of this source. This section will reveal the goods sold in the grocery shops of Ankara. The changing socio-economic conditions of eighteenth-century Ankara are particularly important for understanding food consumption patterns. However, as this article is largely introducing the archival source, it will not shed any further light on other aspects of the century. The final section will discuss possible ways of using this source in a more inclusive way and offer some concluding remarks.

2. Methodological Discussion: The Use of Grocers' Probate Inventories as a Historical Source

The literature on the non-elite Ottomans of the early modern period has increased through the valuable contributions of numerous Ottomanists, which encourage contemporary scholars to enhance new challenges and to raise new research agendas.⁴ However, the food consumption of the non-elite Ottomans has remained a relatively unstudied area for two main reasons, despite the fact that there is a voluminous body of literature in Ottoman historiography on the food consumption of the elite.⁵ The first

2 Faroqhi 2012, 313; Pullukcuoğlu Yapucu 2013, 525.

3 Hoşgör Büke 2016, 132.

4 There are a number of studies concerning the non-elite people's lives in early modern Ottoman Empire and it is impossible to mention all of them here. For a comprehensive and interpretive review see Faroqhi 2020, 13-50.

5 The studies concerning the palace and elite's food consumption: Barkan 1962-1963, 380-398.; *ibid.* 1979, 1-380.; Artan 2000, 107-200; *ibid.* 2011, 93-138; Emecen 2003, 89-126; Reindl-Kiel 2003, 59-88.; Samancı 2003, 161-184.; Bilgin 2004.; Berksan 2005; Samancı 2010, 324-347; Oğuz 2015, 239-262; Bilgin 2016, 440-448; Samancı 2017, 339-357. Other

reason is the overwhelming (though now dwindling) academic interest in the lives of the palace people and elite, as opposed to the ordinary residents of the cities. The second is the relative lack of archival material concerning the food consumption of these people,⁶ compared to the wealth of sources that can shed light on the food consumption of the elite. In addition to the sophisticated registers of the Imperial Palace Kitchen (*Matbah-ı Âmire*), there are other registers of the elite, such as purchases (*müibayat*), expenditure (*masarifât*), and accounts (*muhasebe*).⁷ On the other hand, the urban population did not need to budget for their food consumption; nor did they have dinner menus, which means they tended not to leave any documents about food that are available in modern archives. Additionally, the perishable nature of food makes it impossible for today's researchers to trace the food consumption of urban Ottomans in the archives.⁸ However, the content and relatively micro scale of the grocers' probate inventories provide a new perspective for scholars in understanding the food consumption of urban people.⁹ In short, the neighbourhood-scale organisation of grocery shops, as well as the wide variety of goods involved, will allow scholars to unearth the food consumption of urban people in the Ottoman world.

There were numerous guild organisations in Ottoman cities for those working in the food sector, such as cheese makers (*peynirci*), yoghurt makers (*yoğurtçu*), vinegar makers (*sirkeci*), onion sellers (*soğanca*), timbale bakers (*börekçi*), cookie bakers (*gurabiyeci*), and halva producers (*belvaci*).¹⁰ However, none of these provide an adequate answer to the question of who consumed what. Since these shops, together with the goods supplied by the many itinerant peddlers, served everyone in the city, it is not easy to determine who bought what, and from where. Therefore, while we have a general knowledge about the type of foodstuffs sold in the markets through the guild organisations, we still cannot answer the above question regarding urban Ottomans. Therefore, the basic requirement in this framework is to minimise the scale of the space in order to generate a new perspective and obtain knowledge on food consumption among urban people.

In this sense, three neighbourhood scale guilds, namely butchers, bakers and grocers, stand out, as they provide information on the food requirements of the local residents. In contrast with other Ottoman guild organisations, these three guilds were prevalent throughout the cities of the Ottoman Empire, rather than forming groups in bigger marketplaces. Their neighbourhood-scaled organisation gives a strong impression of their functions of meeting the daily needs of the inhabitants.¹¹ Despite this common

prominent studies concerning food in the Ottoman history: Sauner Nebioğlu 1995; Matthaiou 1997; Faroqhi and Neumann 2003; Singer 2009; Trépanier 2014; Blaszczyk and Rohdewald 2018; Jianu and Barbu 2018; Işın 2018.

6 Trépanier 2014, 75.

7 Artan 2000, 116.

8 Ibid., 111.

9 The other suggested source to trace the food consumption of urban Ottomans refers to the *mefkûd* registers of the grocery shops. See: Bozkurt 2016, 121-145. Bozkurt, Gündoğdu, Şahin 2019, 311-333.

10 Bilgin 2016, 181-191.

11 Faroqhi 2012, 313.

basic feature, two important points distinguish grocery shops from two other types of shops: butchers and bakers. The first point is the content of their probate inventories. As the registration of this legal document required time, the products of butchers and bakers must have perished, which means that their products were not included in the probate inventories. In contrast, as the various products in grocery shops were more durable than those of butchers and bakers, the majority of their probate inventories catalogue the goods in their shops.

The second point is the wide variety in the range of products found in grocery shops. It is clear that butchers and bakers sold a limited type of foodstuff, namely meat and bread, compared to grocery shops.¹² On the other hand, grocery shops contained a wider variety of products, which can help us to understand the food consumption patterns of the neighbourhood, as shown in the above case of Ali Beşe. Therefore, it can be surmised that while the products found in every grocery shop demonstrate general food consumption trends of the city, some of the rarer goods may identify specific demographic features of the neighbourhood. Within this framework, it will be possible to make well-set comparisons between the neighbourhoods that reveal differences regarding their demographic profiles. In short, this source not only provides an opportunity to trace food consumption patterns, but also enables scholars to evaluate the different characteristics within different localities.

Although the probate inventories of the grocers are more informative than they are for butchers and bakers, it should be noted that they also have some limitations. The primary shortcoming is a result of the state's lack of enforcement in registering all the probate inventories: if there was no dispute about the portion of the inheritance, or if the legatees were above the age of puberty, there was no obligation for the inheritors to go to court and register a will.¹³ This means that contemporary researchers have access to a limited number of records of the deceased in any given place or period, as well as to their probate inventories. Bearing this in mind within the framework of grocers' probate inventories, there must have been more grocery shops than we were able to identify from probate inventories in the determined period and locality.

The second limitation of the probate inventories is the contents of the lists. Heirs were neither obliged to register an inheritance nor enforced to list the entire estate of the deceased in a probate inventory.¹⁴ One option for the heirs was to share out some of these belongings before going to the *kassam*. Therefore, in the context of this study, the probate inventories may not reflect all the goods that existed in grocery shops; presumably, they sold more products than we are aware of.

On the other hand, supplementing the probate inventories with additional archival material will help. Although they may differ according to changes in the focused time period, this study used two types of supplementary sources: the probate inventories of non-grocers and *narh* registers. Probate inventories of non-grocers in Ankara were used

12 For details referring to bread and meat consumption in Anatolia see: Trépanier 2014, 83-86.

13 Establet and Pascual 1992, 375.

14 Bozkurt 2013, 209.

in order to identify and compare the goods that existed in grocery shops and in the cellars of houses. *Narh* registers, which mainly control the market prices, and which were included in the court records,¹⁵ were also employed in order to position grocers and their products within the context of the broader city markets and goods. The accounts of travellers could also be used for observations on food, and these could be compared with the items appearing in the grocers' probate inventories. Additionally, in some cases, the *abkam* and *mübbimme* registers could be used for tracing the malpractice of grocers, which might reveal the varied functions of grocers within the neighbourhood.¹⁶ Furthermore, in the studies that focus on the nineteenth century, cook-books could be used as alternative sources. In general, though, the supplementary sources differ according to the identified time period, location, and problem.

The remaining section of this study illustrates the use of the above-mentioned records as a historical source for eighteenth-century Ankara. The study examines and analyses 115 surviving court records from eighteenth-century Ankara, including 20 grocers' probate inventories.¹⁷ In light of these records, together with the aforementioned supplementary archival documents, the following section aims to provide an overview of the food consumption among urban people in eighteenth-century Ankara, and to highlight some significant points.

3. Case Study: Eighteenth-Century Ankara

In the eighteenth century, Ankara was an Ottoman city located in the centre of Anatolia with a population of approximately 20,000.¹⁸ Existing studies on Ankara demonstrate that the city consisted of nearly 90 neighbourhoods in the same century.¹⁹ These neighbourhoods were inhabited simultaneously by Muslims and non-Muslims.²⁰ Since existing studies demonstrate that there were 46 grocery shops in Ankara in 1827,²¹ it can be more or less surmised that in the eighteenth century, two neighbourhoods were also served by at least one grocery shop. An investigation into the court records of eighteenth-century Ankara allows us to access almost half (20) of these grocery shops. The heirs of the remaining grocers must have divided their inheritance without the support of the *kassam*. It should be noted that, in the same period, there were also five

15 Kütükoğlu 1983, 25-29.

16 Hoşgör Büke 2020, 52, 53.

17 Within the scope of this study, eighteenth century court records covering the numbers between ACR No:765- ACR No:880 of Ankara Kadiship were examined.

18 Akyüz 2003, 82.

19 Some studies claim that the number of neighbourhoods in Ankara had increased to 88, as it had amounted to 85 in the seventeenth century. On the other hand, some other studies mention that the number of neighbourhoods in eighteenth century Ankara was 87, while it had amounted to 91 in the previous century. For details see: Ergenç 1980, 106; Özdemir 1986, 92; Taş 2004, 111.

20 Ergenç 1984, 70,71.

21 Özdemir 1986, 172.

public markets and 19 inns throughout the city, from which the inhabitants could purchase a wider variety of foodstuffs.²² However, the probate inventories of the grocers enable the researchers to learn about the food consumption of urban residents on a smaller scale. This means that the foodstuffs and goods sold in grocery shops provide clues about the daily lives and consumption habits of those who inhabited the neighbourhood.

It is also possible to glean information from the probate inventories about grocers as individuals and as members of a guild. The first section of the probate inventories provides personal information about the grocers, such as their name, *millet*, location, and title. For example, the inventories examined within the scope of this study all belonged to the category of Muslim grocers.²³ While their titles can vary, some were identified by their occupations, such as *Bakkal* Mustafa or *Bakkal* Abdullah, while others were given different religious titles, such as *Esseyid*, *Molla* or *Çelebi*.

Furthermore, these sources also allow the researchers to identify the locations of their shops and their homes. In the cases examined for Ankara, while some of the registrations gave an accurate name of the locality of the shop, such as Öksüzce, Hacı İvaz, İğneci, Ahi Hacı Murad, others provided only an approximate description of the address, such as Hisar *suku* (market), Tahtakale *suku* or Suluhan *kurbü* (vicinity) (see Table 1). Considering Ergenç's description of the city, such as "Aşağı Yüz" and "Yukarı Yüz", it seems that majority of the grocery shops in this study were located in the Yukarı Yüz of the city.²⁴ This means that the shops located close to the Tahtakale were situated in the Aşağı Yüz region, while the environs of the Pazar-ı Ganem (Koyun Pazarı) and At Pazarı belonged to the Yukarı Yüz. On the other hand, places like the Ahi Hacı Murad neighbourhood were close to the Koyun Pazarı and Tahtakale.²⁵ It is therefore possible to analyse and compare food consumption patterns at the neighborhood scale. However, the literature on Ankara neighbourhoods is very limited, so, while it is possible to extend and deepen the analysis on the basis of neighbourhoods, it is beyond the scope and capacity of the present study to do so. Therefore, while this study cannot make solid comparisons between the different neighbourhoods, it introduces archival material that can provide historians with the opportunity and potential to trace similarities and differences in food consumption patterns at the neighbourhood scale.

22 Akyüz 2003, 75.

23 Rıfat Özdemir's study on the guilds of Ankara in the eighteenth century confirms that all the grocers of Ankara in this century were Muslims. Özdemir 1986, 175.

24 Ergenç 2012, 6-7.

25 Ergenç 1980, 107.

Table 1: Grocers with probate inventories in eighteenth-century Ankara

	Record No:	Location/ Neighbourhood of the shop	Name, Title
1.	ACR No: 806/84-85	Tahtakale <i>suku</i>	Osman
2.	ACR No: 807/141b-1	Belkıs Mah.	Elhac İbrahim
3.	ACR No: 815/76a-2	Tahtakale <i>suku</i>	Abdurrahman
4.	ACR No: 816/82b-1	Pazar-ı Ganem	Molla Salih
5.	ACR No: 816/100a-1	Pazar-ı Ganem	Molla Mustafa
6.	ACR No: 816/106a-2	Hacı İvaz Mah.	Esseyid Hasan Çelebi
7.	ACR No: 819/93a-3	Ahi Hacı Murad Mah.	İbrahim Çelebi
8.	ACR No: 822/61b1	Öksüzce Mah.	Bakkal Ali
9.	ACR No: 825/60a-1	İğneci Mah.	Bakkal Ali Beşe
10.	ACR No: 832/63b-1	Hacı Arap Mah.	İsmail Çelebi
11.	ACR No: 834/77b-1	Haseki Camii	Bakkal Hacıoğlu
12.	ACR No: 837/84b-1	Karaman Han	Topal Mehmed
13.	ACR No: 846/66a-3	Pazar-ı Ganem	Bakkal Sarı Hasan
14.	ACR No: 850/52a-1	Hatunî	Ali Dede
15.	ACR No: 853/19b-1	At Pazarı	Bakkal Esseyid Ahmed
16.	ACR No: 853/26a-1	At Pazarı	Bakkal Esseyid Mehmed
17.	ACR No: 863/94b-1	Suluhan <i>kurbü</i>	-
18.	ACR No: 868/68b-1	Koyun Pazarı	Suriyeliogüzade
19.	ACR No: 868/87b-1	At Pazarı	Bakkal Mustafa
20.	ACR No: 876/16b-1	Şemseddin Mah.	Bakkal Abdullah

4. Products in the Grocers' Probate Inventories

In a review of the details of 20 probate inventories, a total of 54 products were found. While some of the foodstuffs appeared in every register, others were barely seen in the probate inventories. The products were not consistently categorised in the documents, but appeared under eight main titles, namely, dried fruits and nuts, sweeteners, cooking oils, foods of animal origin, spices and add ons, legumes and grains, other food stuffs, and non-food goods (see Table 2). Although all elements of these goods deserve to be researched in detail, some were prioritised here as a first step. Moreover, the attention given to the selected goods is disproportionate. As is clear from the following sections, foodstuffs such as sugar and cheese provide a broader discussion ground than others, as arguments concerning these products already exist in the literature.

Table 2: Foodstuffs and goods registered to grocers' probate inventories

Dried Fruits and Nuts	Sweeteners	Cooking Oils	Food of Animal Origin	Spices and Add ons	Legumes and Grains	Other Foodstuffs	Non-Food Goods
Hazelnut	Raisins	Sesame oil	Pastrami	Sumac	Rice	Scratch	Matches
Almond	Honey	Clarified Butter	<i>Sucuk</i>	Coriander	Chickpeas	Garlic	Wax
Walnut	Grape treacle	Olive oil	Cheese	Cumin		Onion	Soap
Roasted Chickpeas		Tail Fat	Egg	Saffron		Fruit leather	Candle
Roasted chickpea with raisins				Salt		Tahini	Rope
Fig						<i>Ağda</i>	Tar
Apricot						Vinegar	Henna
Plum						Fenugrek (<i>çemen</i>)	Tobacco
Pear							Paper
Sour cherry							Cone
Oleaster							
Carob							
Plum (Amasya)							
Jujube							
Apple							

4.1. Sweeteners: Raisins, Honey, Grape Treacle

In the eighteenth-century, sugar was still a luxury item not only for the majority of the population,²⁶ but also for the elite and the palace.²⁷ Therefore, it is not surprising to find sweeteners such as raisins, honey and grape treacle (*pekmez*) in the grocery shops. None of the grocers dealt with in this study stocked sugar in their shops; nor was there

26 Samancı 2020, 15.

27 Even in the palace, honey was sometimes used as a substitution for sugar. Ekin 2008, 171.

a guild of sugar producers in Ankara during the period.²⁸ Raisins, with varieties such as *beylerce*, *razaki*, and *İzmir*, were the only product to be found in every grocery shop.²⁹ These were followed by honey, with varieties such as *asel-i İzmir*, *asel-i Ankara*, honeycomb (*petek asel*), and extracted honey (*revak asel*) found in 17 of the 20 probate inventories.³⁰ It is known that sugar became more widely desired among the urban population from the eighteenth century onwards.³¹ Therefore, the prevalence of these two products in grocery shops means that the urban residents of Ankara demanded raisins and honey as sweeteners. Grape treacle was the third product used as a sweetener,³² although probate inventories of the grocers show that it was not as prevalent as the other two sweeteners, being found only in two of the grocery shops.³³ However, considering the limitations of the archival documents, we cannot conclude that the residents of Ankara did not consume this product, especially as there were vineyards spread throughout the city,³⁴ which provided different ways for people to obtain it. For this reason, grocers may have considered that it was not commercially viable to stock it.

On the other hand, a review of the registrations of eighteenth-century Ankara gave rise to a thought-provoking case of “Sofçular Şeyhi”, which helped to illustrate the differences between food consumption among particular social groups.³⁵ According to the registration, an inhabitant of the Kİçülü neighbourhood, Sofçular Şeyhi Ali Efendi, died in Oc-

- 28 However, the guild of *attar* (guild of spices and drugs) had the right to sell sugar and there were *attars* in Ankara in the century in question. Akyüz 2003, 124-125.
- 29 ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR No: 816, 82b-1; ACR No: 816, 100a-1; ACR No: 816, 106a-2; ACR No: 819, 93a-3. ACR No: 822, 61b-1, 62; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 832, 63b-1, 64; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 846, 66a-3; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1; ACR No: 876, 16b-1.
- 30 ACR No: 806,84-85; ACR No: 807,141b-1; ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR NO: 816,82b-1; ACR No: 816,100a-1; ACR No: 819, 93a-3. ACR No: 822, 61b-1, 62; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 832, 63b-1, 64; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 846, 66a-3; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1.
- 31 Karademir 2015, 196.
- 32 Samancı 2020, 15.
- 33 ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85.
- 34 Tunçer 2019, 125-126. During the archival examination of this study, I encountered a great number of probate inventories that included vineyards as a landed estate. For a few examples: ACR No: 804, 87b-1; ACR No: 807, 106a-1; ACR No: 810, 77a-1; ACR No: 816, 76a-2; ACR No: 818, 94b-2; ACR No: 820, 116b-2; ACR No: 821, 94a-1; ACR No: 822, 84a-1; ACR No: 825, 92b-1; ACR No: 827, 55a-1.
- 35 Faroqhi mentions that the manufacturing of *sof* (mohair) provided a special position to the city within interregional trade. Within this context, Sofçular Şeyhi should be considered as a person belonging to the upper urban class of the city. See: Faroqhi 1987, 25; Akyüz 2003, 157.

tober 1781.³⁶ Following his death, his belongings were registered by the *kassam* in order to be divided among his heirs. As expected, Sofçular Şeyhi possessed a remarkable amount of property, as he held the title of head of the manufacturers of mohair (*sof*). As in the case of Ali Beşe, the belongings found at his home in the Kiçülü neighbourhood, and in his shop at Kara Maslak, were listed.³⁷ Thereafter, the registration continued with his commodities, which were mainly textiles and fabrics, found in commercially important spaces of Ankara, namely Çukur Han, located around the Tahtakale, and Safran (*Zağfıran*) Han, established in the vicinity of the At Pazarı.³⁸ Among the commodities in Safran Han was a substantial amount of sugar and soap, which was worthy of attention. He had approximately (*ber vech-i tabmin*) 70 *kıyye*³⁹ of sugar, which equates to 90 kg in today's measurements. The monetary value of this amount of sugar was also remarkable, as the *kassam* priced it as 150 *guruş*. A more detailed examination of the inventory of the Şeyh illustrates that the deceased possessed few belongings worth more than the sugar price. For instance, his house in the Kiçülü neighbourhood, worth 450 *guruş*, was the most expensive possession in the lists. His *Acem cariye*⁴⁰ was worth 200 *guruş*, 100 *zira sim çuka*⁴¹ were valued at 100 *guruş* and 45 *şayak* baggy trousers (*şalvar*) were worth 100 *guruş*. Considering the amount of sugar, together with the commercial networks of the Sofçular Şeyhi, his sugar was possibly for resale. On the other hand, as revealed by the monetary value of his wealth and his social position, it is also possible that it was for household consumption. In this case, the picture of Ankara in the eighteenth century fits well with the perspective that sugar consumption among urban upper groups of the Ottoman Empire was relatively prevalent.⁴² Based within the limits of the archival material used in this study, we can safely conclude that sugar was not extensively consumed in the city. However, this claim needs to be supported by a more detailed work based on additional archival documents.

4.2. Dried Fruits, Nuts and Roasted Chickpeas

According to the probate inventories of the grocers, it is clear that dried fruits were commonly consumed during the eighteenth century. One of the most popular dried fruits available in grocery shops was the fig, which was found in 10 of the 20 probate

36 ACR No: 857, 31-32. The study drawing my attention to the case of Sofçular Şeyhi is: Uzun 2004.

37 Even though the following studies were scanned, the location of Kara Maslak was not determined. Ergenç 1980; Özdemir 1986; Akyüz 2003; Taş 2004.

38 Ergenç 1980, 92; Taş 2004, 150-151.

39 1 *kıyye* = 1,282 kg.

40 *Cariye*: female slave

41 *Çuka/Çuba*: warp and weft of wool. Koçu 1969, 82.

42 Karademir 2015, 196.

inventories.⁴³ Fruit compote (*hoşaf*), made of dried fruits, was one of the main components of the classical Ottoman menu, together with rice pilaf and meat dishes.⁴⁴ Therefore, the presence of dried fruits in the probate inventories of grocers may indicate the consumption of fruit compote varieties in private homes. For example, dried plums were available in nine of the inventories, while dried apricots (*zerdali*) were available in eight.⁴⁵ Additionally, there were occasional dried fruits in some of the grocery shops that cannot be attributed to the trends of general food consumption. One of these was dried pears, which can be found in only two grocery shops in the At Pazarı region: one belonged to Bakkal Esseyid Ahmed and the other belonged to Bakkal Esseyid Mehmed.⁴⁶ All these dried fruits are listed as the main flavours of the fruit compote in the palace.⁴⁷ Sherbet (*şerbet*) was another popular beverage of the Ottomans and sour cherry and jujube were used for making the sherbet in the palace.⁴⁸ These two fruits were not prevalent among the Ankara grocery shops: jujube was found in three,⁴⁹ while the sour cherry was found only in Bakkal Esseyid Ahmed's shop.⁵⁰ Carob and oleaster were also found in a number of grocery shops. The former was stocked in seven shops,⁵¹ while the latter was stocked in five.⁵² According to these figures, we can say that both fruit compote and sherbet were consumed by the urban residents of Ankara.

Nuts is the final category of foodstuffs prevalent in grocery shops. Within the scope of this study, hazelnuts were found in a total of 12 shops.⁵³ There were also almonds

43 ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR NO: 816, 82b-1; ACR No: 816, 100a-1; ACR No: 816, 106a-2; ACR No: 822, 61b-1, 62; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 876, 16b-1.

44 Işın 2018, 43.

45 Plum: ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 816, 100a-1; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1. Apricot (*zerdali*): ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1.

46 ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1.

47 Bilgin 2008, 90.

48 Bilgin 2008, 110.

49 ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1.

50 ACR No: 853, 19b-1.

51 ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 832, 63b-1, 64; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1.

52 ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 816, 100a-1; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1.

53 Hazelnut: ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR No: 816, 100a-1; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 832, 63b-1, 64; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1.

in eight of the shops,⁵⁴ walnuts in five,⁵⁵ and roasted chickpeas in four.⁵⁶ It is interesting to note that Bakkal Ali Beşe, who lived in the İğneci neighbourhood, also sold a blend of raisins and roasted chickpeas that is still a popular snack in Turkey.⁵⁷ It is therefore clear from the probate inventories that dried fruits and nuts were commonly consumed by residents of Ankara.

4.3. Cooking Oil

Four kinds of cooking oil were stocked in the grocery shops of Ankara: olive oil, sesame oil, clarified butter, and tail fat. Sesame oil was found in 15 of the grocery shops,⁵⁸ suggesting that this was the most popular cooking oil in the city. In his article, Fikret Yılmaz claims that the people of northwest Anatolia started to use olive oil as a primary cooking oil, instead of sesame oil, from the sixteenth century onwards.⁵⁹ However, in Ankara, it seems that even in the eighteenth century sesame oil was used as a popular cooking oil. The second is clarified butter, which was identified in 13 of the shops.⁶⁰ Nine of these grocery shops sold olive oil as well as clarified butter and eight sold sesame oil, too. According to the findings, out of 20 probate inventories, eight stocked sesame oil, clarified butter and olive oil at the same time, suggesting that the consumption of cooking oil in Ankara may have concentrated on these three varieties. Although the majority of studies claim that olive oil was used as lamp oil and a raw material for soap,⁶¹ the listing method of the *kassams* indicates that it was also used as cooking oil. While there were no specific rules about the listing methods, they made rough categorisations, first listing foodstuffs, and then listing non-food products such as candles, soap, and tar. In the majority of the examined registrations, olive oil was listed along with cooking oils. Based on this information, it is likely that, while olive oil had many different purposes, the type sold by grocers was specifically a cooking oil.

54 Almond: ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 816, 82b-1; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 832, 63b-1, 64; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1.

55 ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1.

56 ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1.

57 ACR No: 825, 60a-1.

58 ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR No: 816, 82b-1; ACR No: 816, 106a-2; ACR No: 819, 93a-3; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 832, 63b-1, 64; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1.

59 Yılmaz 2010, 31.

60 ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR No: 816, 82b-1; ACR No: 822, 61b-1, 62; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 832, 63b-1, 64; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 846, 66a-3; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1.

61 Yerasimos 2002, 13; Doğan 2007, 127; Yılmaz 2010, 31; Faroqhi 2018, 113-114.

4.4. Food of Animal Origin: Pastrami and Cheese

Pastrami

Grocery shops stocked products of animal origin, such as pastrami (*pastırma*) and cheese. First, pastrami was found in nine of the 20 probate inventories.⁶² Interestingly, this was one of the most common products in the non-grocers' probate inventories. In different neighbourhoods of the city, such as Ahi Hacı Murad, Şemseddin, Kattanin, Mihriyar and Eşenhor, 13 probate inventories of non-grocers included different amounts of pastrami.⁶³

There are two suggestions for the existence of pastrami in the inventories of people. The first concerns the consumption of the household, while the second may be associated with pastrami production in the city. However, these documents far from indicate the real reason. For example, people kept different amounts of pastrami, which makes it complicated to ascertain whether they were the consumers or producers. To illustrate this, Mehmed Çelebi had 3 *kıyye*⁶⁴ of pastrami, while Halil Beşe had 30 *kıyye* and Kırkor had 40 *kıyye*. Considering the different amounts, we can assume that Halil Beşe or Kırkor produced pastrami, while Mehmed Çelebi may have kept it for the daily consumption of his household. Interestingly, according to the studies regarding Ankara, there was no pastrami producer in the city in the eighteenth century,⁶⁵ which suggests that the above individuals were consumers rather than producers.

However, some additional archival documents indicate that there may have been some high-quality pastrami production in the city. For instance, a *narh* register of Istanbul dated 1726 shows that pastrami from Ankara was listed among the varieties found in the markets of Istanbul, such as Kayseri, Kili, Karadeniz and Edirne. Looking at the market prices of pastrami, it is surprising to see that Ankara's product was the second most expensive type after the famous pastrami of Kayseri.⁶⁶ Another registration of Istanbul of the same date provides a further clue regarding pastrami production in Ankara. This document confirms the quality and taste of the Ankara pastrami in an indirect way. According to the registration, some shopkeepers affiliated to the pastrami and *sucuk* guilds of Istanbul promised each other that they would not sell inferior pastrami for the same high prices as the products of Kayseri, İstanbul (*yerli*) and Ankara.⁶⁷

62 ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR No: 816, 106a-2; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 846, 66a-3; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1.

63 ACR NO: 802, 55; ACR No: 803, 19; ACR No: 804, 90; ACR No: 804, 120; ACR No: 807, 144; ACR No: 807, 162; ACR No: 807, 176; ACR No: 808, 71; ACR No: 818, 95; ACR No: 822, 95; ACR No: 840, 91; ACR No: 842, 90.

64 1 *kıyye* = 1,282 kg.

65 Akyüz 2003, 123-124.

66 According to the *narh* register of 1737, a *kıyye* of pastrami from Kayseri was worth 40 *akçe*, pastrami from Ankara was 38 *akçe*, Edirne was 12 *akçe*, Karadeniz was 10 *akçe* and, finally Kili was 8 *akçe*. ICR No: 24, 59b-2.

67 ICR No: 24, 68a-2.

This example clearly shows that the origin of products from Ankara was an important feature in marketing. In short, the documents illustrate that pastrami from Ankara was one of the most popular and widely preferred goods in the Istanbul market, which largely confirms pastrami production in the city. It is clear that while these documents are not enough to prove pastrami production, they allow scholars to undertake more meticulous research on this matter.

Cheese

According to the sources examined within the scope of this study, there were only four varieties of cheese in Ankara, namely, “*basma*”, “*sünme*”, “*ovma*” and “*tulum*”. Within these varieties, we cannot identify “the most common kind”, which can be interpreted as the most preferred.⁶⁸ However, types of cheese such as *basma*, *sünme*, and *tulum* were mentioned in three grocers’ probate inventories.⁶⁹ *Ovma*, on the other hand, was mentioned only in the *narh* registrations.⁷⁰ Bearing in mind the limitations of the historical sources, discovering cheese in only five shops does not mean that cheese was not consumed in Ankara in the eighteenth century, as with the case of grape treacle. In this case, probate inventories can provide information about the varieties of cheese in Ankara, rather than revealing food consumption patterns based on quantity.

It is clear that Ankara had a very limited range of cheeses. By contrast, in eighteenth-century Istanbul, the most common types of cheese were *kaşkaval* and *tulum*.⁷¹ In addition to these, which were found in the grocery shops, there were many of other types of cheese in the Istanbul market: *lor*, *teleme*, *dil*, *Midilli*, *Mora*, etc.⁷² Still, grocers must have sold the most popular varieties. After the introduction of *kaşkaval* into the Istanbul markets in the seventeenth century, it became the most popular cheese on the market.⁷³ However, the documents used in this study show that in Ankara there were no registrations regarding *kaşkaval* cheese in the specific time period. On the other hand, *tulum* cheese could only be found in one of the grocery shops.⁷⁴ From a different

68 Only five of the inventories of grocers include cheese. ACR No: 806,84-85; ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 816, 82b-1; ACR No: 846, 66a-3; ACR No: 868, 68b-1.

69 ACR No: 816, 82b-1; ACR No: 846, 66a-3; ACR No: 868, 68b-1.

70 A few examples of ‘*ovma*’ recorded in the Ankara *narh* registrations: ACR No: 867, 27; ACR NO: 868, 40; ACR No: 871, 05; ACR No: 872, 39; ACR No: 873, 05; ACR No: 878, 28; ACR No: 878, 31; ACR No: 880, 20 and so on.

71 Within the analysed archival documents of this study, there were only two registrations that include *tulum* cheese in Ankara. One belonged to a grocery shop, located at the Koyun Pazarı, and the other to a non-grocer person named Esseyid Mehmed Çelebi, who lived in the Kul Derviş neighbourhood. *Kaşkaval* in Galata: GCR No: 172,14a-2; GCR No: 172, 69b-2; GCR No: 172, 82b-2; GCR No: 173, 7a-2; GCR No: 177, 34a-1; GCR No: 258, 29a-1; *Tulum* in Galata: GCR No: 172, 69b-2; GCR No: 172, 82b-2; GCR No: 173,7a-2; GCR No: 177, 34a-1; GCR No: 258, 23a-1; GCR No: 258, 29a-1.

72 Bilgin 2016, 190.

73 Ibid.

74 ACR No: 868, 68b-1.

perspective, the local cheese types of Ankara, such as *siınme*, *ovma* and *basma*,⁷⁵ did not exist in Istanbul markets, which indicates a difference in the consumption of cheese between the two cities. The main reason behind this must be the geographical differences, which were directly linked with food consumption, in terms of husbandry, vegetation and the traditional knowledge of producing cheese. The other reason was no doubt associated with Istanbul being the capital and therefore able to access various kinds of products from all over the Ottoman lands.

4.5. Legumes and Grains

According to existing food studies, the main diet of both the palace and the majority of the Ottomans consisted largely of soup, rice and meat dishes.⁷⁶ As meat was a product sold only by butchers, we cannot form any impression about this issue from the available sources. However, the second main component of the menu, rice, was sold by grocers, and is found in seven of the probate inventories.⁷⁷ This means that contrary to the claims that it was a luxury item, rice was accessible to ordinary people in eighteenth-century Ankara.⁷⁸ Furthermore, *bulgur*,⁷⁹ which for a long time was considered to be the main foodstuff consumed in Anatolia compared to rice, was not listed in the inventories.⁸⁰ This does not mean that *bulgur* was not consumed among the Ottomans; they may have developed another supply chain in order to obtain this product. Additionally, it is observed that the range of this category was limited in Ankara, compared to Galata. It is interesting to note that while the grocery shops of Galata stocked lentils, chickpeas, black-eyed peas and broad beans,⁸¹ these products were not stocked in the grocery shops of Ankara. The people of this city must have acquired these types of legumes in different ways.

75 Kamber 2005, 153; Ünsal 2013, 114-115.

76 Reindl-Kiel 2003, 61-62; Bilgin 2016, 180; Işın 2018, 43.

77 ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR No: 816, 106a-2; ACR No: 822, 61b-1, 62; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1.

78 Emecen 2003, 98; Faroqhi 2010, 348.

79 *Bulgur*: wheat that has been boiled, dried and coarsely ground. Işın 2018, 12.

80 Samancı 2020, 68.

81 Grocery shops of Galata with lentils: GCR No: 172, 14a-2; GCR No: 172, 69b-2; GCR No: 172, 82b-2; GCR No: 177, 34a-1; GCR No: 258, 23a-1. Grocery shops of Galata with chickpeas: GCR No: 172, 14a-2; GCR No: 172, 69b-2; GCR No: 172, 81b-2; GCR No: 172, 82b-2; GCR No: 258, 23a-1; GCR No: 258, 29a-1. Grocery shops of Galata with black eyed pea: GCR No: 172, 14a-2; GCR No: 172, 81b-2; GCR No: 172, 82b-2; GCR No: 258, 23a-1; GCR No: 258, 29a-1; Grocery shops of Galata with a broad bean: GCR No: 172; 14a-2; GCR No: 172, 69b-2; GCR No: 172, 81b-2; GCR No: 173, 7a-2; GCR No: 177, 34a-1.

4.6. Spices

Another group of products found in grocery shops was spices. In the eighteenth century, there was an active guild of guild of spices and drugs (*attar*) in the city.⁸² An analysis of the probate inventories shows that sumac, coriander, cumin and saffron were the four varieties of spice stocked in certain grocery shops. Out of 20 inventories, 11 sold sumac, while six sold coriander.⁸³ This clearly demonstrates that these two spices were the most common types. The remaining two spices, cumin and saffron, were less common. Two inventories included cumin, while only one included saffron.⁸⁴ The grocer who sold saffron was located near the Suluhan, one of the commercial centres of the city of Ankara. Due to the location of the shop, it is also possible to claim that saffron was sold to general customers from the city, rather than to particular customers of the neighbourhoods. Finally, spices were also used for medicinal purposes, as well for enhancing taste a culinary context.⁸⁵

4.7. Non-food Items

Although this study focuses on the relationship between food consumption and grocery shops, non-food products can also provide significant information for our understanding of inedible domestic needs. Those sold in the grocery shops of Ankara included soap, candles, wax, tobacco, paper, tar, matches, henna, pipes from Aleppo, cone (*külâb*) and rope.⁸⁶ In addition to illustrating the daily non-food necessities of homes, these goods allow us to see the multi-functionality of grocery shops in the neighbourhood. That is to say, the existence of these goods corroborates the initial assumptions of this study, that grocers determined the range of products in accordance with local needs.

82 Akyüz 2003, 124-125.

83 Sumac: ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 816, 100a-1; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 832, 63b-1, 64; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 846, 66a-3; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1. Coriander: ACR No: 850, 52a-1; ACR No: 853, 19b-1; ACR No: 853, 26a-1; ACR No: 863, 94b-1; ACR No: 868, 68b-1; ACR No: 868, 87b-1.

84 Cumin: ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85; ACR No: 850, 52a-1. Saffron: ACR No: 863, 94b-1.

85 Neumann 2003, 132.

86 Soap: ACR No: 816, 106a-2, ACR No: 837, 84b-1, 85. Candle: ACR No: 846, 66a-3, Wax: ACR No: 806, 84-85; ACR No: 815, 76a-2; ACR No: 816, 82b-1. Tobacco: ACR No: 816, 106a-2; Paper: ACR No: 816, 106a-2; Tar: ACR No: 868, 87b-1; Matches: ACR No: 807, 141b-1; ACR No: 825, 60a-1; ACR No: 834, 77b-1; ACR No: 846, 66a-3. Henna: ACR No: 816, 106a-2; Pipe: ACR No: 816, 106a-2; Cone: ACR No: 816, 106a-2; Rope: ACR No: 825, 60a-1.

5. Conclusion

We can conclude by highlighting two main points. The first is the methodological contribution, which proposes a new set of sources that enable scholars to trace the food consumption of the ordinary people of the Ottoman Empire. As mentioned at the start of this study, probate inventories of grocers have never been used for revealing food consumption patterns.

As discussed above, probate inventories of grocers help to reveal the details of the food consumption of the Ottomans on a neighbourhood scale, although they include some limitations that should be seriously considered. Nevertheless, these sources deserve to be considered by scholars, in order to reveal a holistic picture of food consumption in the Ottoman Empire. As previously mentioned, the literature on food consumption among the Ottomans concentrates mainly on the elite and the palace and hence fails to reflect the bigger picture in the houses of the urban people. While most of the attention has been paid to the effects of the transformation on the food of the elite, a smaller part has focused on the food consumption of the same social group in the early modern period. On the other hand, probate inventories of the grocers provide a space for starting a discussion on the food consumption of the Ottomans and connecting the separate literatures with each other, which finally enriches the literature on food consumption.

On the other hand, within the scope of this study, the case of Ankara endeavours to illustrate the instrumentality of these sources. As indicated earlier, using probate inventories with a combination of other archival materials enables us to reach certain conclusions about the consumption patterns in Ankara. At least, these sources encourage scholars to ask new questions and constitute new research agendas about the food consumption of Ottomans. For example, although Ankara has been studied several times and from different perspectives, it is interesting that none of the scholars have considered *pastırma* production in the city. While this does not, of course, suggest a deficiency in these studies, it demonstrates the significance of the grocers' probate inventories in generating different questions.

Further sampled studies covering two different locations may have the potential to reach more accurate conclusions. The divergence in the range of products of grocery shops in different cities may shed light on the characteristics of the ecological and socio-economic conditions of these cities. In the same way as we might compare different cities in a determined period, comparing the different centuries of the city would also make a significant contribution to the literature. In short, the probate inventories of grocers deserve the attention of scholars at a time in which food consumption has become a popular theme of Ottoman historiography.

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Non-Grocers' Probate Inventories

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