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GASTRONOMIC TOURISM IN UZBEKISTAN AND LINGUOCULTURAL BASIS OF FOOD CULTURE

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Abstract: In this article is given information about gastronomic tourism in Uzbekistan. The article presents the prospects of gastronomic tourism in Uzbekistan, the work to be done in this regard, and a draft of the factors and objectives of gastronomic tourism. The article extensively describes how food culture in English and Uzbek is not only about preparing or consuming delicious food, but also reflects the lifestyle, values, and mentality of the people. The author emphasizes that by combining linguistics and cultural studies in gastronomic tourism research, the culturally specific worldview of peoples can be illuminated by analyzing food paronyms and phraseologisms.

Keywords: tourism, gastronomic, gastronomic cities, food industry, hospitality, National cuisine, travel tourism, business tourism, gourmet tourism, cuisine tourism, culinary tourism, or food tourism.

Introduction. Tourism has in recent decades become one of the most important service industries in the global economy. Part of its importance lies in the wide range of services required to produce tourism products: transportation, accommodation, information, marketing, financial services, insurance, etc. The bundling of these services supports the production of tourist experiences. Food has a particularly important role in the development of tourism services, since it makes up a large part of tourism expenditure and it is a necessity, for all tourists, in all destinations.

There are an array of uses for local food in regional tourism, ranging from meeting the tourist's biological and functional need to eat, to the use of produce in regional tourism promotion to differentiate destinations and create a sense of 'place' through regional identity. Food may also add value to a core tourism product and become the focus for special events. Additionally food maybe used as a stand-alone niche attraction (Jones and Jenkins, 2002, p. 115), referred to by tourism writers as *gourmet tourism, cuisine tourism, culinary tourism, or food tourism* (Okumus, Okumus and McKercher 2007, p. 19).

Gastronomic cities have played a key role in achieving the 2020 tourism development goals in Europe. In this context, gastronomy and gastronomic tourism can be a key factor. With a mix of different services (hospitality and catering) and resource use, urban complexity, service policy and knowledge provide the key to high social solidarity and economic growth. It is no secret that the mobilization of various industries and resources will increase the experience and its attractiveness with the opportunity to contribute to the overall development of cities.

It is known that on August 6, 2019 in the conference hall of the Association of Chefs of Uzbekistan was held the opening ceremony of the Association of Gastronomic Tourism with the participation of representatives of relevant agencies and the media. The event included a presentation on the goals, activities and membership conditions of the association.

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According to the State Committee for Tourism Development, the purpose of the association is to organize various events in the field of gastronomic tourism, including exhibitions, festivals, forums, seminars, scientific conferences, roundtables, competitions and other events. implementation of various projects that serve for the development of gastronomic tourism in its history, present and future.

According to officials, in order to prolong the tourist season in Uzbekistan, the association regularly hosts the International Festival of National Cuisine "Delicious Uzbekistan" in November each year, regularly attracts international travel agencies to the festival and organizes regional gastronomic tours throughout Uzbekistan. It is also planned to hold awards ceremonies among the member restaurants of the association and their employees in the nominations "Best Restaurant of the Year", "Waiter of the Year", "Restaurant Manager of the Year", "Chef of the Year". was conducted in such a way.

Method. Previous research on Gastronomy (food) tourism concentrates on the role of food (cuisine) as an attraction, as a cultural phenomenon, and as an experience. Moreover, food from production and motivational viewpoints is reviewed briefly.

Results. We would like to recommend a project model for gastronomic tourism based on our research. The project is planned to be based on travel and business tourism and can be introduced in all cities of Uzbekistan with high tourist potential, such as Khiva, Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent, Namangan, Fergana, Andijan and Khanabad. Of course, it is gratifying that the first gastronomic town in Uzbekistan was established in Bukhara.

Project named after "Uzbekistan Gastronomic Tourism Development Model" and it is based on the following functions:

1. Innovative culinary art: reinvention of traditional cuisine, recipes and menus, cuisine nouvelle following the trends in technology and demand, use of new agricultural products and adoption of old products as raw material for cooking and food preparation. Innovative approaches were also introduced when serving food in restaurants or bars as well as selling agricultural products in shops or on markets.
2. Innovative approach in marketing: inviting customers to come to the origin of products either in rural areas in shops and markets or in restaurants and bars.
3. New approaches in internal communication with inhabitants of Uzbekistan. They were simply not anymore only observers, they participated in the project, they were creators of friendly, inviting atmosphere of the city, they became a part of experience of visitors, they were witnesses of success stories and finally they became ambassadors of the city.

The success of Uzbekistan Gastronomic Tourism Development is based on the following main factors:

1. Clear vision, strategy and realistic targets what the city has to become in the future and what is the role of gastronomic tourism: strategists and political leaders realized that gastronomy, tourism and culture can form the pillar of experience economy in Uzbekistan.
2. Commitment of all main stakeholders to develop innovative gastronomy and to offer experience based tourism products with leading role of Municipality and effective projects: the project required participation of numerous stakeholders to develop recognized Uzbek experience of gastronomic tourism, culture and the city itself.
3. Social network promotion: development of co-operative and participatory atmosphere in the city with all target groups and stakeholders, with media, with national associations and participants of events that joined the project and transferred it into gastronomic movement.
4. Highly qualified and enthusiastic cooks, sommeliers, food and wine producers: they were creators of new products, menus, brands and promoters of Burgos gastronomy.

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5. Internal city communication to inform and involve citizens in the project: citizens are a part of city experience and the project gave them the possibility to contribute to the project and to benefit from it; they realized that project will contribute to increase of quality of life in the city.
6. Efficient management of project development, coordination and implementation by Resolution of Strategic plan of Uzbekistan: they represented the core group in the project, mediator among stakeholders and their interests, active participants and communicators.

Baseline study of Gastronomic project gives the general overview of development of gastronomy in several countries and on international, global or European level. All the documents, case studies show the growing importance of gastronomy and gastronomic tourism (also called food tourism). Gastronomic tourism is a trend, is a fashion, is experience that combines reinventing traditional cuisine, search for new delights, new tastes, using adopted and new raw materials – mainly agricultural and food products and new technology.

Gastronomic cities project partners are coming from different countries with different tradition and recognition of gastronomy. Russia, Korea and India are leaders, not far behind is Uzbekistan and newcomer is America. The project is based on good practice of Burgos, where gastronomy was set as a pillar for tourism and economic development. The Burgos project shows that development of gastronomy is very complex and it demands multi-stakeholder cooperation, the work of many individuals and small businesses, volunteer work and good management. Baseline study compiled Uzbekistan gastronomy development, challenges, targets, activities and results in a model that can serve as benchmark for transfer to receiving cities. The project also demonstrates that gastronomy development does not need big investment and new or additional known economic or social policies. Gastronomy is all around us is present in everyday life, is easy to understand. Agriculture and food production is close to urban centers and can play important role in supplying restaurants with their products and play important role in promotion of development of rural areas. Development of gastronomy brings results on short term and without big financial investment.

Food is now used as a means of developing new niche markets, supporting regional identities, developing quality tourism and sustainable tourism. Food has therefore developed from being a basic necessity for tourist consumption to being regarded as an essential element of regional culture. (Jones and Jenkins, 2002, p. 115) Many countries and regions around the world are focussing on the opportunities that the linkage of food and tourism provides and have used it as a point of competitive advantage and as a means of destination differentiation. For example, every Australian state and territory now has a wine and food tourism strategy and a body in place to coordinate wine and food tourism (Mitchell and Hall, 2001). Canada has a national Culinary Tourism Development Strategy (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2003). Other countries that have incorporated the use of food in tourism as an important component of their tourism strategies include Scotland, Wales, United Kingdom, Germany and Singapore (Boyne, Hall and Williams, 2003; du Rand and Heath, 2006, p. 208). Several European destinations, in particular regions of France, Italy and Spain use their food/wine reputation to promote tourism (du Rand and Heath, 2006, p. 208). The various initiatives surrounding the development and implementation of food and tourism associations range from culinary tourism strategies to the integration of food into national tourism strategies. Integral to this is the establishment of food and tourism networks, tourism web sites and marketing initiatives dedicated to food, the development of culinary events including festivals, documentation of culinary heritage, and food related activities such as dedicated food tours and cooking holidays (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003; Long, 2003; Henderson, 2004).

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Discussion. The close interconnection between language and culture is especially evident in paremiological and phraseological units. Proverbs and oral expressions created by the people have been formed over centuries and have embodied the worldview, customs, and values of a nation. Proverbs represent a treasury of folk wisdom, as they convey extensive life experience in a concise and figurative form. For this reason, proverbs are often referred to as "a mirror of the people," since through them a nation's traditions, values, beliefs, and worldview are clearly reflected.

Similarly, phraseological units are used metaphorically and express collective emotions, humor, and cultural norms. For instance, the English expressions *"to butter someone up"* (to flatter someone) and *"bring home the bacon"* (to earn a living or provide for one's family), although formed from words related to food, reflect broader social values and cultural attitudes.

Therefore, within the framework of gastronomic tourism studies, by integrating linguistics and cultural studies, the analysis of food-related proverbs and phraseological units can reveal the culturally specific worldview of different nations.

Linguoculturology is an integrative discipline that studies the interaction between language and culture and investigates how a nation's culture and worldview are manifested in linguistic units. According to the Russian scholar V. Karasik, linguoculturology is "a complex field of research concerned with the interrelation and mutual influence of language and culture," a field that studies culture through language and language through culture. In this respect, linguoculturological research views language not merely as a grammatical system, but as a cultural phenomenon. A linguistic unit may reflect a people's history, traditions, and way of life within its meaning. From this perspective, linguoculturology is closely connected with such disciplines as ethnolinguistics, cultural studies, and semiotics. Indeed, the language of every nation constitutes an integral part of its spiritual world.

The issue of the relationship between language and culture has been studied in world linguistics for many years. As early as the nineteenth century, Wilhelm von Humboldt described language as "the expression of the spirit of a nation" [Humboldt, W., 1985], while in the early twentieth century the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis advanced the idea of the interdependence between language and worldview. According to this theory, the language of a people influences the way its speakers perceive and conceptualize the world [Sapir, E., 1956]. For example, since the system of concepts in one language differs from that of another, cultural context plays a crucial role in intercultural communication. Therefore, modern linguistics emphasizes that language cannot be understood without context. The British linguist M. A. K. Halliday, viewing language as a communicative system, pointed out its dependence on the "context of situation" and the *"context of culture,"* demonstrating that every speech act is grounded in a specific cultural framework. The above-mentioned statement by Lotman also confirms this idea, likening language and culture to the heart and body of a single organism. Hence, the language of any nation functions as an inseparable whole together with its culture.

To describe this unity of language and culture, many scholars use the concept of a *"cultural code."* That is, in linguistics, the vocabulary and system of expressions related to a particular domain form a specific system of meanings—a cultural code. For example, clothing codes, color codes, and food codes each convey particular signs and symbols within a given culture. Food-related elements (names of dishes, products, and ingredients) likewise constitute a semiotic system that signifies concepts that are valuable and meaningful to a people.

In the studies of Yuri Lotman and his school—the Tartu–Moscow Semiotic School—culture is viewed as a "text," and the system of codes embedded within it is analyzed. In particular, it is emphasized that the figurative structure of phraseological units reflects cultural

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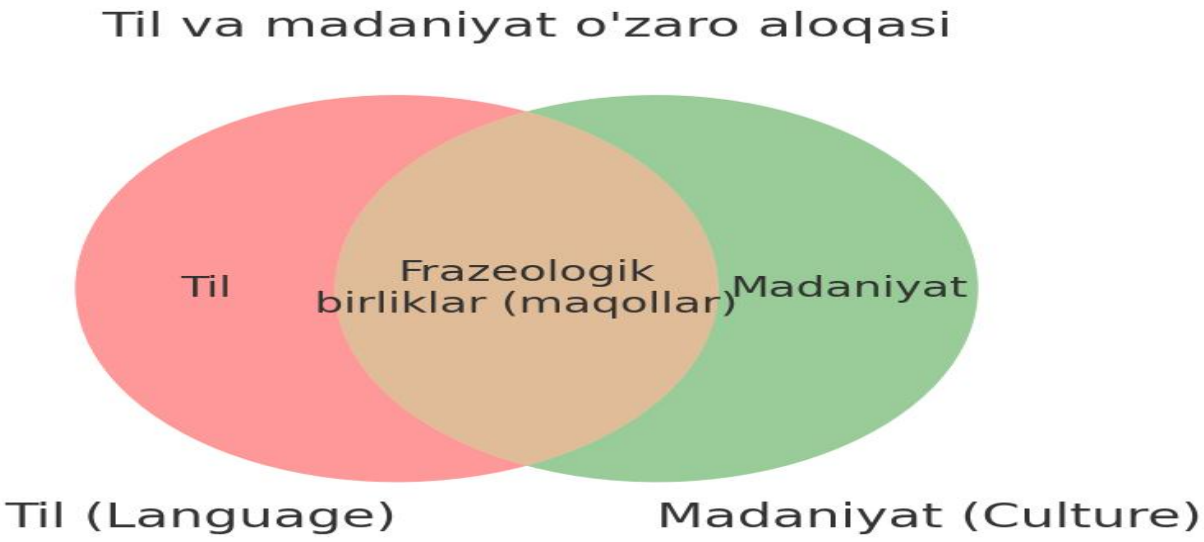
codes, since each nation encodes its worldview in language through images that are familiar and intelligible to it. Among such images, food and national dishes occupy a special place, as they represent an inseparable part of a given culture and constitute an important component of the linguistic picture of the world (linguistic worldview).

Based on the above, there arises a need to study language and culture as an integrated whole. New directions in linguistics—such as linguoculturology, ethnolinguistics, pragmalinguistics, and others—have emerged precisely from this necessity. These disciplines examine linguistic units in direct connection with a people's history, culture, and values. In particular, the notion of *"concept"* plays a central role in linguoculturology. A concept is understood as a notion expressed through language that embodies a specific cultural meaning. For example, the concept of *"bread"* in Uzbek culture symbolizes a sacred blessing, sustenance, and abundance, whereas in English culture it primarily denotes livelihood and a source of income (as in *"breadwinner,"* meaning the provider or head of a family). As can be seen, behind the single word *"bread/non"* lie different cultural connotations. Linguoculturology seeks precisely to identify and interpret such national and spiritual meanings through language.

Table #1 Interconnection of the language and culture



Language and culture are closely interconnected, and phraseological units (including proverbs) are formed at their intersection. Proverbs and folk expressions represent the most vivid manifestation of the harmony between language and culture. Paremiology—the field that studies proverbs—has long developed at the crossroads of folklore studies and linguistics. Since proverbs concisely express a people's life experience and wisdom, they are regarded as products of national thinking. For example, in Uzbek there is a proverb *"Mehmon kelsa, tandirga qarab qo'y"* ("When a guest arrives, look to the tandoor"), which reflects the tradition of hospitality and implies that bread should be baked when guests come. In contrast, the English expression *"My house is my castle"* emphasizes the homeowner's independence and the inviolability of personal space. Even these brief examples demonstrate that the proverbs of every nation reflect its mentality, values, and way of life.

The linguist V. N. Telia, who studied the cultural function of phraseological units, defined phraseology as "a mirror in which a person's national and cultural identity is reflected" [Telia, V. N., 1996]. Indeed, folk expressions convey a people's inner world, emotions, and

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perceptions. For instance, the Russian expression *"Душа нараспашку"* ("one's soul is wide open") denotes openness and sincerity, whereas in Uzbek the phrase *"oshi qozonida"* (literally, "boiling in someone's pilaf pot") is used to describe a person who envies another's happiness or success—another reflection of national character and worldview.

Similarly, expressions containing meat and fat components also differ across cultures. In Uzbek proverbs, meat is usually a symbol of abundance and wealth. For instance, the proverb *"Go'sht go'shtga qo'shilsa, suvi chiqadi"* ("When meat is added to meat, its juice increases") is used metaphorically to convey the idea that when the wealthy unite with the wealthy, their prosperity grows even more—the image of meat releasing its juices symbolizes richness and plenty.

In English, however, proverbs involving meat or dairy products tend to emphasize life lessons or pragmatic reflections rather than wealth. For example, *"There's no use crying over spilt milk"* teaches that one should not regret something that has already happened, while *"Too many cooks spoil the broth"* conveys the practical wisdom that excessive interference in a task leads to failure.

Thus, in English, food-related components in proverbs more often function as vehicles of instruction and advice, whereas in Uzbek they are more closely associated with symbols of prosperity or moral and spiritual values.

The following table presents a comparative overview of the main gastronomic concepts most frequently found in English and Uzbek folk proverbs, along with their cultural interpretations.

Table *#1.2.*

Ovqat konsepti **Food concept**	**O'zbek tilida ma'nosi (madaniy ahamiyati)** **Uzbek semantics and cultural role**	**Ingliz tilida ma'nosi (madaniy ahamiyati)** **English semantics and cultural role**
Non (bread)	Muqaddas ne'mat, hayot va rizq ramzi. "Non topgan yerda o'lim top".	Kundalik tirikchilik manbai. "Breadwinner" – oila bo'quvchisi.
Choy (tea)	Mehmondo'stlik timsoli. "Choy ichilmagan uy – g'amgin uy".	Shaxsiy didni bildiradi. "Not my cup of tea".
Go'sht (meat)	To'kinlik va boylik ramzi. "Go'sht go'shtga qo'shilsa, suvi chiqadi".	Pragmatik hikmat manbai. "Too many cooks spoil the broth".
Tuz (salt)	Halollik, sadoqat ramzi. "Tuz totgan joyga xiyonat qilma".	Shubha bilan qabul qilish. "Take it with a grain of salt".
Milliy taomlar	Urf-odat va marosimlar timsoli. "Palov pishmay, to'y	Ingliz tilida to'g'ridan-to'g'ri maqol yo'q. There is no any

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	bo‘lmas”.	variant in English

Conclusion. Thus, as can be seen from the table above, *bread* and *salt* occupy a special place in Uzbek folk tradition, where they are revered as symbols of sacredness and loyalty. Although these concepts also exist in English, they do not carry the same religious or spiritual connotations and are used more in a practical sense. *Tea*, for Uzbeks, is a symbol of hospitality, whereas in English discourse it appears mainly in expressions related to personal taste and everyday preferences.

Meat and other types of food likewise convey different meanings: in Uzbek culture they often symbolize abundance and prosperity, while in English proverbs they more frequently express bitter experience or the violation of moderation (for example, the idea that too many cooks lead to spoiled work). In addition, some national dishes function as culture-specific concepts unique to Uzbek tradition—for instance, *osh* (pilaf), which appears in expressions associated with weddings and festive ceremonies. In English, although foods such as *pudding* or *peanut butter and jelly* may occur in idiomatic expressions, they are not very common in folk proverbs.

In this study’s use of in-depth expert interviews has helped to identify existing food experiences and to identify a range of opportunities for the generation of new products and food related activities. The interviews also revealed a range of critical constraints which serve as impediments to closer ties between food and tourism. A growing demand for quality local food has provided regions with a potential tool to enhance local and regional development and contribute to destination differentiation: one that increases visitor yield without compromising regional integrity.

This thesis has demonstrated the value of food and its ability to enhance a destination’s appeal. The use of food in tourism can contribute to regional economic and social sustainability and its potential role should not be underestimated, and indeed, should be nurtured by tourism policy makers, planners and other industry stakeholders.

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