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An archaeological approach to nutrition as a fundamental and enduring basis for the concept of traditional hospitality in the western cities of Middle Maghreb-Algeria-.

مقاربة أثرية حول الغذاء كمرتكز أساسي مستديم لتشكّل فكرة الضيافة التقليدية بالحواضر الغربية للمغرب الأوسط-الجزائر-

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Abstract

Hospitality and nutrition are an integral part of Arab culture, and food and water have always held a special place in the daily lives of Arabs. This article reflects on the historical and cultural importance of food and water and how customs of hospitality and nutrition have shaped cultural identity. based on archaeological approaches that aim to develop a basic understanding of the role of all this in providing an environment that reflects anthropological, social, intellectual and cultural factors.

Based on archaeological and historical knowledge, this study aims to understand the role of food in shaping the Arab understanding of hospitality and nutrition throughout the ages, and to identify how they have influenced the cultural

and social development of western Algeria—the western part of the Middle Maghreb—in particular. It will also Analysis their impact on social customs, health and thought in order to identify a set of challenges based on promoting sustainable development within this scope.

Keywords: Food; Hospitality; Traditional families; Western Algeria; Arab culture

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الملخص

تعتبر الضيافة والتغذية جزءً لا يتجزأ من الثقافة العربية، ولطالما شغل الغذاء والماء مكانة خاصة في الحياة اليومية للعرب، يعكس هذا المقال الأهمية التاريخية والثقافية للغذاء والماء وكيف شكلت عادات الضيافة والتغذية الهوية الثقافية، وفقا واستنادا إلى مقاربات أثرية تصبو إلى وضع تصوّر أساسي حول دور كلّ هذا في توفير بيئة تعكس المعطيات الأنثروبولوجية والاجتماعية والفكرية والثقافية .

تهدف هذه الدراسة -انطلاقا من معارف أثرية وتاريخية- إلى فهم دور الطعام في تشكيل الفهم العربي للضيافة والتغذية عبر العصور، والتعرف على كيفية تأثيرهما على التطور الثقافي والاجتماعي لمنطقة الغرب الجزائري -الجهة الغربية للمغرب الأوسط- على وجه الخصوص، كما سيتم تحليل أثرهما على العادات الاجتماعية والصحة والفكر لإعطاء جملة من التّحديات المبنية على تشجيع التنمية المستدامة ضمن هذا النطاق.

كلمات مفتاحية: الغذاء؛ الضيافة؛ العائلات التقليدية؛ الغرب الجزائري؛ الثقافة العربية.

1. INTRODUCTION

Hospitality and nutrition are an integral part of Arab culture, and food and water have always held a special place in the daily lives of Arabs. This article reflects on the historical and cultural importance of food and water in Arab thought

throughout the ages and how customs of hospitality and nutrition have shaped the cultural identity of the region.

This study aims to understand the role of food in shaping the Arab understanding of hospitality and nutrition throughout the ages, and to identify how they have influenced the cultural and social development of the region. Their impact on social customs, health and thought in the Arab world will be analysed.

In light of the above, we can ask the following questions:

- How have the concepts of hospitality and nutrition been shaped in Arab thought throughout the ages?
- What role do food and water play in promoting social interaction and building relationships in the Arab world?
- How have eating habits and water use influenced Arab culture and public health?
- How can food and water be cultural elements that stimulate social and cultural development in the Arab world?

In short, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the importance of food and water in shaping the Arab understanding of hospitality and nutrition throughout the ages, and how this can contribute to promoting cultural understanding and building sustainable societies in the Arab world. This seems achievable if we can explore the profound influence of food and water on Arab culture and nutrition. We hope to highlight the shared cultural links and cultural foundations that can contribute to unifying and enhancing understanding among Arab societies.

In this study, we will rely on an in-depth analysis of previous literature and research related to food and water in Arab culture, before conducting surveys and interviews with individuals from different communities in western Algerian cities to understand customs and beliefs related to food and water. To this end, we will attempt to use qualitative methods in data collection and analysis to ensure accuracy and authenticity.

This research aims to make a tangible contribution to the Arab understanding of hospitality and nutrition and their role in the development of societies, focusing on the history of food and water, where this research can contribute to enhancing intercultural communication and a deeper understanding of the common origins and values that characterise Arabs.

2. Hospitality in traditional Arab culture

The term or concept of hospitality refers to the process of welcoming and hosting guests or visitors in a friendly and generous manner[1]. This term also encompasses many aspects, behaviours, mindsets, customs, traditions and rituals that aim to provide a welcoming and comfortable environment for visitors.

Common elements of hospitality include:

- A warm welcome: greeting guests with a smile and a pleasant appearance, and paying attention to them from the moment they arrive.
- Providing hospitality: offering food, drink and services generously and tactfully.

- Care and attention: Ensuring that guests are comfortable and have everything they need.
- Respect for privacy: Respecting guests' privacy and not intruding on their personal affairs in an unwelcome manner. [2]
- Offering assistance: Providing assistance when needed[3], whether in the form of directions, transportation, or other services.

The concept of hospitality varies from one culture to another, but in general, a warm welcome and caring for visitors are values shared by most cultures. Hospitality contributes to building social relationships and strengthening communication between individuals and communities.

Hospitality is an important cultural value in the Arab world. It is an expression of kindness, welcome and care for guests[4]. In this context, food is considered one of the most important meals served to guests, as hospitality is seen as a means of communication and building social relationships.

3. An overview of the evolution of the concept of hospitality throughout the ages

Hospitality has a long history among Arabs, and there is no doubt that this culture has undergone several changes throughout the ages. Here, we can provide an overview of how the concept of hospitality has evolved among Arabs in the past and present.

3.1. Hospitality in ancient times

- Pre-Islamic Arabia: In ancient times, hospitality was a highly valued virtue, with Arabs considering it a social and cultural duty to welcome guests and provide them with food.[5]
- Early Islamic times: With the establishment of Islam, the concept of hospitality was reinforced, as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) encouraged hospitality, saying, 'Whoever does not believe in Allah and the Last Day is not worthy of hospitality,' which gave hospitality religious dimensions.

3.2. Hospitality in modern times

- Modern times: In modern times, hospitality continues to be an important value in the Arab world, with people continuing to welcome guests warmly and generously and offering them food.
- Hospitality in urban communities: In urban communities, hospitality customs may vary depending on lifestyle and economic circumstances[6]. However, guests are still held in high regard.
- Hospitality in the modern world: With cultural and social changes, hospitality traditions may have changed somewhat, but the fundamental value of welcoming guests and offering care remains alive.

In short, hospitality has been and continues to be an important value in the Arab world. Despite changes over time and social developments, hosting

guests and caring for them remains an important part of Arab identity and culture.

4. Food and water as social and cultural practices

Historically, food has been a time for gathering and socialising in Arab culture, where eating with others was an opportunity to build social bonds and cultural understanding[7]. The Arab understanding of hospitality includes serving food generously and caring for the comfort of guests.

4.1. Water as a symbol of life and social organisation:

Water has special significance in Arabic and many arid societies, where it is considered a symbol of life and generosity. Securing water was of paramount importance, and water distribution systems also played an important role in organising social and economic life.

4.2. Impact on nutrition and health:

Nutrition and health have been greatly affected by eating habits and water use in Arabia. We note that food and water play an important role in shaping individuals' eating and health habits, bearing in mind that people's[8] knowledge of nutrition and health may be influenced by cultural and social factors.

4.3. Impact on thought and social development:

Food and water are not merely nutritional processes, but form part of the identity and cultural heritage of Arabs. They reflect the values, meanings

and social traditions of society, and are thus part of the cultural consciousness of Arabs.

5. The concept of hospitality among traditional families in western Algeria

Traditional families in western Algeria reflect distinctive traditions of eating lunch and using food[9]. This requires a careful understanding of the role of lunch in shaping their understanding of hospitality and nutrition.

This study aims to explore how lunch customs are linked to the concept of hospitality and nutrition in these families and how they influence culture and social communication.

This research aims to understand the cultural and social impact of lunch traditions among traditional families in western Algeria. It will investigate how these traditions shape the understanding of hospitality and nutrition, and how they affect social relations and public health.

The term 'traditional families' refers to families and social systems that preserve traditional cultural and social customs and traditions. These families often live according to values and traditions that span several generations and respect traditional social and cultural patterns.

Traditional families can include many elements, such as traditions in eating, celebrations and holidays, as well as specific social roles for family members based on gender, age and family relationships. These families try to

preserve the values and customs that distinguish them from other cultures and societies.

In the context of our study on the role of lunch in shaping the understanding of hospitality and nutrition among traditional families in western Algeria[10], we find that this term refers to families and communities that adhere to traditional customs and values with regard to eating habits and the concept of hospitality.

Hospitality in Algeria is an integral part of Algerian culture and traditions[11]. Here are some notable features of Algerian hospitality:

- **Warm welcome**: When someone visits an Algerian home, they receive a warm and heartfelt welcome. Guests feel comfortable and welcome from the moment they arrive.
- **Generous food offerings**: Algerians consider serving food to guests an important duty. A wide variety of traditional foods may be served, such as couscous, tagine, makrouna, and traditional desserts.
- **Tea**: Tea plays an important role in Algerian hospitality. Green tea with mint, sugar and nuts is served as a welcome offering to guests.
- **Hospitality at weddings and events**: On special occasions such as weddings, holidays and social gatherings, hospitality is intensified and luxurious foods are served to guests.

- **Respect and courtesy**: Respect and courtesy in dealing with guests are important values, and guests must show respect and courtesy towards their hosts.
- **Saharan hospitality**: In the desert regions of Algeria, hospitality is distinctive due to Bedouin traditions and trans-Saharan trade, which rely on providing food and shelter to travellers.
- **Family gatherings**: Hospitality in Algeria often takes the form of family gatherings where relatives and friends come together to enjoy time together.

Overall, hospitality is considered an essential part of Algerian identity and social interaction[12], reflecting the values of generosity, courage and welcome that characterise Algerian culture.

In western Algeria, particularly in cities such as Tlemcen, Mostaganem, Oran and Mascara, hospitality is an important part of the local culture and has its own unique characteristics. Here are some of the distinctive aspects of hospitality in these regions:

- **Eating traditions**: These regions rely on rich Algerian eating traditions, serving traditional dishes such as couscous, pastilla, shawarma, and seafood in Oran.

- **Markets and local cuisine**: Western cities are famous for their lively markets where you can find a wide range of local cuisine and fresh produce.[13]
- **Wedding traditions**: At weddings, hospitality is very important[14], with ceremonies held with pride and pomp, and delicious food served to guests.[15]
- **Hospitality in homes**: Families in these areas are known for their generosity and hospitality, and guests receive a warm welcome in family homes.
- **Tea traditions**: Drinking tea is part of the hospitality traditions in these regions. Tea is served according to specific rituals, and serving tea is considered a welcome gesture to guests.
- **Maritime heritage**: Oran and Mostaganem, for example, are famous for their maritime heritage and fishing, and hospitality often includes serving seafood to guests.

Hospitality in these regions reflects the rich cultural identity and geographical and cultural diversity of western Algeria. Food and hospitality are considered an important aspect of their cultural and social heritage.

6. Conclusion

This study is an important addition to research on the impact of dietary habits on cultural and social understanding in traditional societies. We hope

that it will contribute to promoting communication and understanding between different cultures and to improving health and public health.

One of the fundamentals of hospitality in traditional families in major cities in western Algeria is that appetisers are generally served at the beginning of meals to accompany the main course. These vary from region to region, but generally consist of a salad of raw or cooked vegetables, briouats stuffed with chicken or minced meat, and even shakshouka made with peppers, tomatoes and aubergines.

Hospitality in western Algeria is characterised by generosity and a warm welcome, which is reflected in the serving of delicious traditional dishes such as couscous and harira, as well as desserts such as makrout and baklava. Traditions of hospitality are an integral part of Algerian culture in general, including in western Algeria, where the population is known for its friendliness and cooperation.

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