



FOOD AROUND THE WORLD

A Cultural Perspective • Fourth Edition

Margaret
McWilliams

Food Around the World

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Fourth Edition

Food Around the World

A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

McWilliams, Margaret.

Food around the world : a cultural perspective / Margaret McWilliams.—Fourth edition.
pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-13-345798-8 (alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 0-13-345798-2 (alk. paper)

1. Food. 2. International cooking. 3. Food habits. I. Title.

TX353.M396 2015

641.3—dc23

2013039280

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

PEARSON

ISBN 10: 0-13-345798-2

ISBN 13: 978-0-13-345798-8

*To my family for their enthusiastic interest in my world wanderings and
willingness to view a multitude of pictures, accompanied by
a litany of my overseas adventures!*

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PREFACE

This has been a particularly interesting and challenging time to be writing this edition; the Arab Spring heralded a period of unrest and turmoil which is clearly still evolving. It has been sobering to remember that I was in Benghazi driving past the American Embassy in 2006, a year after Libya had first welcomed tourists, and now barely seven years later, dreams of international peace are ever harder to bring to reality. However, common threads of human needs still afford some avenues for understanding and appreciating the uniqueness of individuals and nations. Food offers a particularly significant pathway of study to promote cultural knowledge. I hope that this edition can be helpful to those seeking to expand their knowledge and understanding of food and its cultural variations.

Food is a significant messenger of culture and the human experience. We have all grown up with experiences of family meals and parties where we ate delicious foods that were favorites dating back at least a generation. Conversations may have recalled the great fried chicken, spaghetti and meatballs, or tamales that Grandma used to make. The special treats vary with our ancestral tree, but memories of food specialties still persist for us.

Each of us is a member of (or soon will become a part of) a minority in the United States. This remarkable increase in diversity within the U.S. population means that we all need to learn more about the world: its geographic parameters, food, and social and economic factors that have shaped the people who have emigrated from other nations to the United States. Better relationships between individuals, within schools, and throughout communities and the nation begin with learning about one another, what we value and seek. Food preferences and eating habits provide a fascinating and very approachable avenue for promoting understanding.

Now is a wonderful time to get acquainted with the world, its nations, their people, and culture. Your study will increase your knowledge and appreciation of the diverse traditions and food patterns of people in your community, school, and workplace. You will develop a spirit of adventure as you discover exciting new flavors and textures in foods from around the world. Whether you are preparing these dishes yourself or dining in a restaurant featuring foreign specialties, your enjoyment will be enhanced when you know about the region or country that developed the original cuisine. Regardless of your professional goals, this book will help you become a citizen of the world. However, this knowledge is particularly important for dietitians, nutritionists, and food technologists as they strive to help people from other cultures achieve healthy and satisfying food patterns in this country.

This edition has been changed in several ways. The chapter on Canada is new. I have also included discussion on some of the world's food problems and the reasons for severe food shortages in several countries. Maps of the regions and countries are provided throughout. More color and black-and-white pictures are included to help readers visualize the uniqueness of the different places visited in the book. Definitions in the margins and study questions are additional aids.

Now it is time to journey with me around the world through the pages of this book. Let's go!

Margaret McWilliams
Redondo Beach, California

NEW TO THIS EDITION

This edition has been updated to maintain its objective of examining food and cultural patterns while also incorporating the current situation relating to the food scene around the world, as impacted by geography, population pressures, economics, politics, and natural disasters.

- New chapter on Canada
- Extensive revision of Chapters 1 and 25 (formerly Chapter 24)
- Extensive changes in the black-and-white photos
- Numerous changes in the color photos
- Updated maps
- Thorough revision of supplements for professors

ONLINE SUPPLEMENTS ACCOMPANYING THE TEXT

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I continue to be indebted to two close, very talented friends who have been so encouraging, helpful, and patient during the preparation of this manuscript and especially during production. Dr. Antoinette Empringham, formerly Professor of English at El Camino College, has been my sounding board not only when I was starting to revise Chapter 1 in this book, but also for other chapters in my other books. That is the really tough moment for me, and her questions regarding my plans have always helped me move from intangible ideas in my head to an evolving manuscript. Fortunately for readers, her help extended through production where her sharp eyes helped considerably in spotting typos so that readers' eyes can focus on the printed word, rather than having to wonder what should be on the page. Pat Chavez, my other proofreading friend, also is owed much thanks for her skillful work proofreading this book and others that have gone through production in the past few years. It is wonderful to have friends who are cheerful and very competent aides in our production phase. And with this edition, I am pleased to have the opportunity to recognize Ned Forsyth for his remarkably careful proofreading to help eliminate typographical errors. I gratefully thank David Lombard, my neighbor and computer guru, who waved his magic wand to open some confounding files that came in e-mails from India during production. Without him, some chapters would have remained invisible to me at critical moments.

My hat is tipped to my editor Bill Lawrensen and his great co-workers at Pearson Education. Their prompt and thorough responses to my queries and requests make my writing tasks much easier. I also appreciate all that they do at their end to create a beautiful book from my manuscript, which by no stretch of the imagination could even be described as attractive. They are the ones who make it happen.

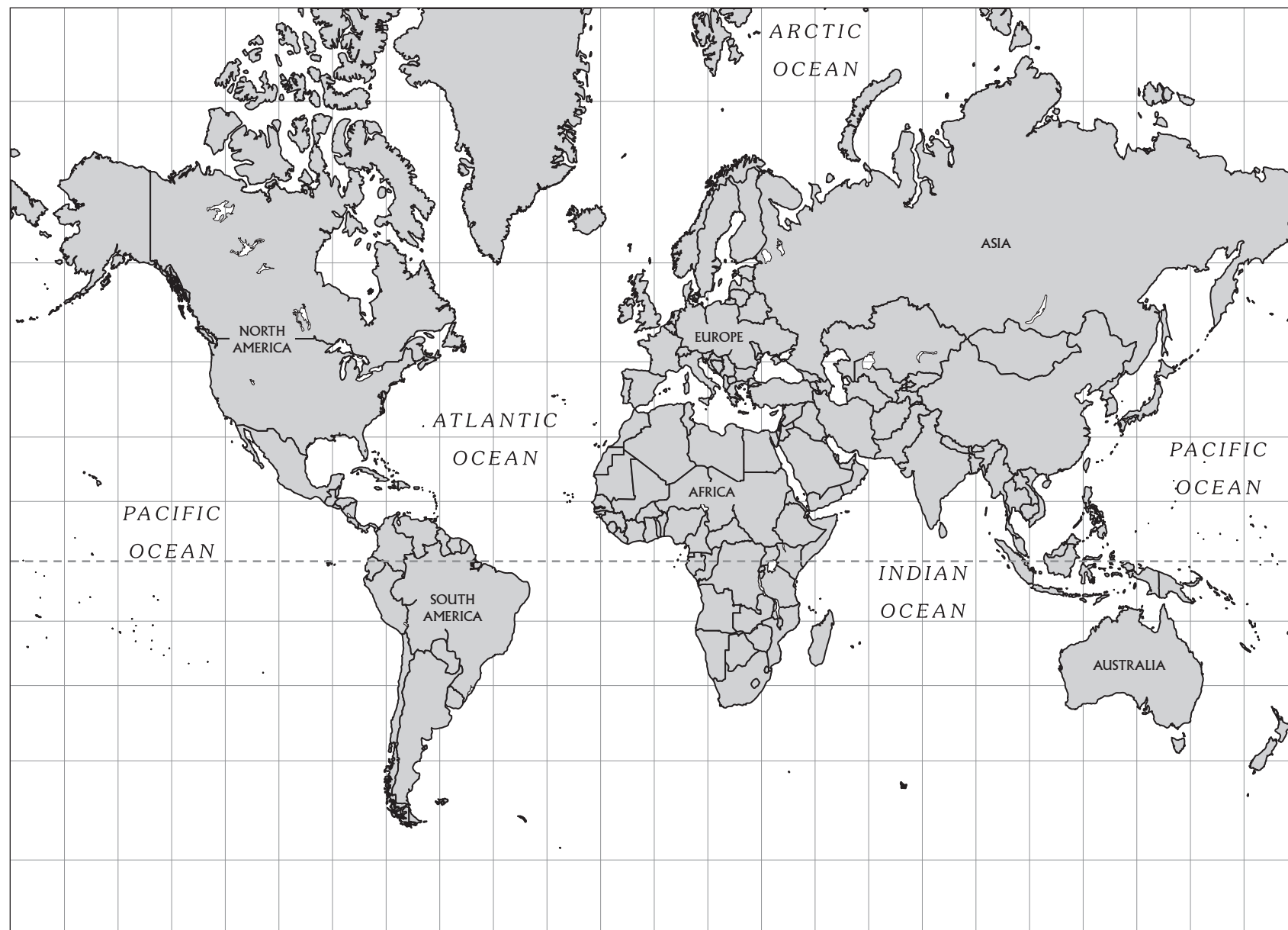
My special thanks go to Shiny Rajesh, my long-distance friend and colleague at Integra in Pondicherry, India. Her patience and skill in helping me through the challenges of working electronically through the entire production process have been invaluable. She also was my wonderful hostess when I was fortunate enough to get to meet her in person at Integra.

It is with deep appreciation that I thank my reviewers, Tawni Holmes, University of Central Oklahoma; Monica Lowe, Eastern Michigan University; Julie Davis, Benedictine University; Stephanie Herrington, Austin Community College; and Wilfred Beriau, Southern Maine Community College, for their helpful comments and thoughts. Their input was very useful in conceptualizing this edition.

Margaret McWilliams
Redondo Beach, California

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Food Around the World

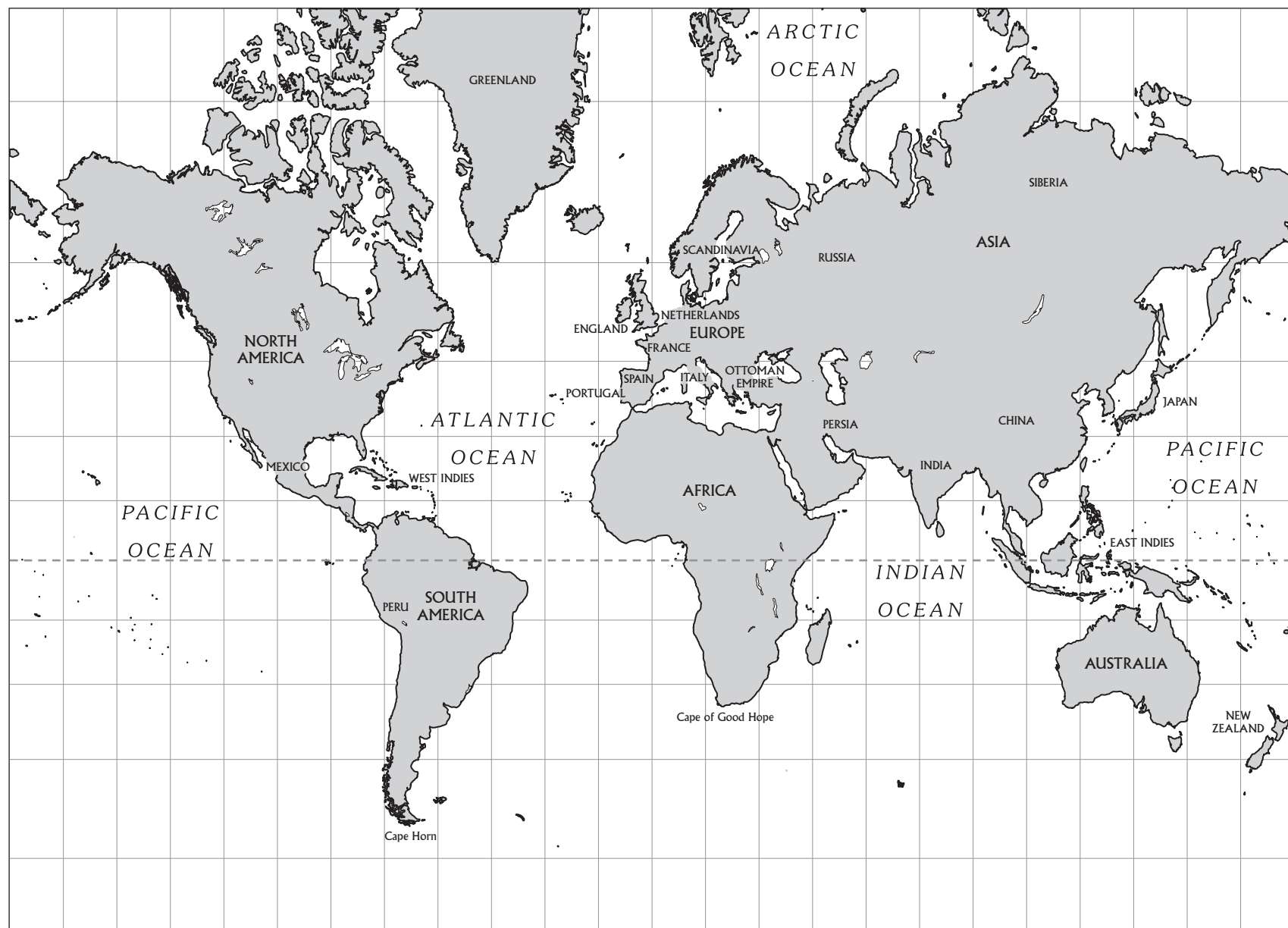


Influences on Food Around the World

CHAPTER 1 Introduction

CHAPTER 2 Cultural Parameters

CHAPTER 3 Religions



Introduction

Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- Trace the origins of the food supply of mankind.
- Examine key factors influencing diets.
- Explore the interactions of cultures, conquests, and food habits.
- Identify the factors impacting food adequacy in today's world.

Have you ever wondered why you eat the foods you do or why certain foods are your favorites? If you compare your food choices and preferences with those of others, you may find some major differences. Most people enjoy eating, but what they choose varies widely, whether they are living in this country or some other part of the world. The reasons for these differences can be traced to many factors, including place of birth, cultural heritage, religion, individual preferences, and income.

This book examines cuisines in countries and regions around the world and focuses on the geographic, climatic, cultural, and historic influences that shaped these food patterns. The geographic origins of foods determined the diets of early people because they had to survive on whatever they could find to eat in their immediate environment. Development of farming practices (crops and domesticated animals) over many centuries resulted in a more reliable food supply. As foods became cultivated and plentiful, various cultures evolved in distant places, and special food patterns and preferences began to play an important role in celebrations and religions, as well as in daily living.

Travel, conquests, and migrations gradually expanded human knowledge and experiences. Exciting tales of such early travelers as Marco Polo and Ibn Batutta introduced ideas and evidence of different cultures from distant places. Discoveries included new foods, some of which could be traded and transported to other people and places. Even today, the global economy is continuing to expand knowledge of food from other cultures as new foods from afar appear in our markets and on menus.

FOOD ORIGINS

Early Food Habits

Early people's food habits derived strictly from what was available in the near environment. Hunter-gatherers were restricted to the particular plants and prey indigenous to where they lived. Survival was the driving force that determined what was eaten. Archaeologists have been able to identify some of the foods eaten by the people who lived at the sites being studied, although many food samples have been destroyed by time (Figure 1.1).

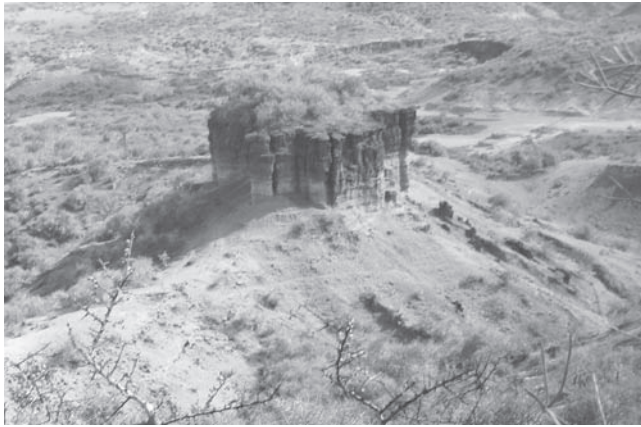


FIGURE 1.1 The immediate environment in Kenya's Olduvai Gorge was the only source of food for some of the earth's earliest humans.

Geographic features of their immediate environment determined significantly what foods were available to early people. If they were living in an area next to an ocean, the possibility of food from the sea was a nourishing, if challenging, prospect. Similarly, some people were fortunate enough to live near a lake or stream where they could catch fish to eat. Civilizations with access to either fresh or saltwater fishing developed dietary patterns in which fish played a very prominent role. Evidence of shellfish being used as human food as far back as 127,000 years ago has been found in southern Africa. Some early cave paintings indicate that hunting was another way of acquiring food.

Agricultural Developments

Civilizations that flourished in temperate river valleys were able to grow wheat or other cereal and vegetable crops (Table 1.1). They also were able to domesticate animals, which were allowed to graze or were fed portions of the crops reserved for that purpose. Central

Europeans developed this type of agriculture, and their dietary patterns were quite different from the Japanese and others around the world living near the sea (Table 1.2).

Table 1.1 Timeline of Mankind's Evolving Larder

Date	Food Developments	Location
12,000 BCE	Flour from wild grasses	Egypt
10,000 BCE	Emmer	Palestine
9000 BCE	Einkorn	Syria
8000 BCE	Wheat, barley, legumes Sheep domesticated	Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt Middle East
7000 BCE	Goats and pigs domesticated Taro Barley Fermented beverage	Turkey to Pakistan New Guinea India China
6500 BCE	Goats and sheep domesticated, cereals	Balkans
6200 BCE	Farming	Western Europe, Mediterranean region
6000 BCE	Farming Maize Irrigation	Mesopotamia, China Mexico Mesopotamia, China
4500 BCE	Plowing using cattle	Lower Danube
3500 BCE	Cattle (milk, plowing)	Europe
3000 BCE	Millet	Korea
500 BCE	Wet rice farming	Japan
300 BCE	Rice trading	China to Middle East
200 BCE	Water buffalos used as draft animals	Southeast Asia
600 CE	Coffee grown and transported	Ethiopia to Yemen
1493 CE	Maize transported	Mexico to Spain
1500 CE	Tomatoes and sweet potatoes traded	Central America to Europe
1520 CE	Chocolate transported	New World to Europe
1522 CE	Spices	Southeast Asia to Europe (Magellan's voyage)
1600 CE	Potatoes traded	South America to Europe, Africa, and India
1850 CE	Palm oil traded	Africa to Americas and Southeast Asia

Table 1.2 Foods by Hemisphere of Origin

Eastern Hemisphere	Western Hemisphere
Cereals	
Barley	Amaranth
Buckwheat	Corn
Rice	Quinoa
Rye	Wild rice
Wheat	
Vegetables	
Beet	Peppers
Broccoli	Pumpkin
Cabbage	Squashes
Carrot	Tomato
Cauliflower	Beans
Onion	Dry legumes
Pea	Peanuts
Soybean	Potato
Fruits	
Banana	Avocado
Breadfruit	Blue-, straw-, raspberries
Cherry	Cherimoya
Kiwi	Grapefruit
Citrus	Papaya
Mango	Passion fruit
Pear	Pineapple
	Plum
Other	
Almonds	Arrowroot
Cashews	Chocolate
Dairy	Tea
Eggs	Macadamia nuts
Mushrooms	Pecans
Spices	
Sugarcane	

Around 12,000 BCE, people in Upper Egypt and Nubia were using grindstones to make flour from wild grasses. In Palestine, wild **emmer** (wheat) was being harvested by 10,000 BCE, and **einkorn** (a type of wheat) was eaten in Syria by 9000 BCE. Wheat, pulses (legumes), and barley (Figure 1.2) were cultivated around Jericho and in the favorable locales from Syria to Mesopotamia and Egypt by 8000 BCE. Sheep were domesticated to add to the diet in this region. Before 7000 BCE, goats and pigs were domesticated as sources of meat from Anatolia (now southern Turkey) as far east as Pakistan.

Barley became a food crop in India, and farming was developing in the region between the Indus River and the Baluchistan Hills around 7000 BCE. **Taro** (Figure 1.3) was a cultivated crop in New Guinea by 7000 BCE, approximately the same time **manioc** was being grown in the upper region of the Amazon in South America.

Domestication of goats and sheep and the raising of cereal crops had spread into the Balkans from Anatolia by approximately 6500 BCE. By 6000 BCE, farming was established in central Mesopotamia and China, and Peruvians in South America were raising potatoes. Around 6200 BCE, farming was expanding into Western Europe and along the Mediterranean Sea, but use

EMMER

An early type of wheat farmed in Palestine by 10,000 BCE.

EINKORN

A type of wheat grown in Syria around 9000 BCE.

BARLEY

Cereal grain eaten by humans and animals.

TARO

Starchy root vegetable that thrives in tropical climates.

MANIOC

Inclusive name for a group of related tropical plants native to the western hemisphere that has fleshy roots rich in starch.



FIGURE 1.2 Barley was a grain cultivated by early people countless centuries ago.



FIGURE 1.3 Taro and sweet potatoes are tubers that thrive in tropical climates from the South Pacific and around the world to the Caribbean and Africa.

of cattle for plowing did not begin until around 4500 BCE near the lower Danube. Use of animals for milk and wool did not occur in Europe until about 3500 BCE, at which time the plow was introduced in western and northern areas of Europe.

Around 5000 BCE, wet rice farming was being carried on in eastern China, maize was being cultivated in Mexico, and irrigation was being developed as an aid to farming in Mesopotamia. Millet began to be cultivated in Korea about 3000 BCE. Wet rice farming was not begun in Japan until 500 BCE. Water buffalos were used as draft animals in Southeast Asia in approximately 200 BCE.

Coffee was first grown in Ethiopia apparently sometime in the 7th century and is still grown and prepared there today with considerable ceremony. From Ethiopia, coffee was traded to Yemen and gradually made its way to most parts of the world. Maize, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and potatoes were brought from the Americas to Europe by Spaniards as they conquered parts of the New World.

INFLUENCES DETERMINING DIETS

Geography

Topography was a geographic dimension that influenced agricultural land use. Mountainous regions were inhospitable settings for early people (Figure 1.4). The rugged terrain made agriculture virtually impossible, and the extreme cold due to the high elevations added to the hazards of attempting to live in the upper elevations of the Alps, the Hindu Kush, and the Himalayas.

Lower valleys in the mountains could be used for grazing animals in the summer, but the mountains were not the regions where early civilizations developed. Extremely steep slopes were appropriate only for raising goats or perhaps sheep. On the other hand, gently rolling or flat lands were well suited to growing a variety of crops. Some regions required labor-intensive terracing for crops or animal husbandry efforts to produce food.

The land available for habitation by people on the earth was limited. About 80 percent of the world was covered by oceans. Mountain ranges restricted use of large parts of Asia and South America as well as many regions in Europe and North America.

In the early times, civilizations based on farming were established where the land was fertile enough for good crops to be raised. The region in Mesopotamia where early civilization and agriculture flourished in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers was dubbed the Fertile



FIGURE 1.4 Early people avoided rocky, rugged terrain and settled in regions where crops could be raised.

Crescent by historians, a name clearly reflecting the importance of rich farmland with water and weather suited to raising food crops.

Environmental Factors

WATER Several environmental factors determined the feasibility of early farmers growing a crop in a particular location. Adequate moisture, but not too much, was vital to a crop. In contrast to Mesopotamia's favorable weather, the climate of approximately the northern half of Asia was not only dry and arid, but also severely cold in winter due to its northern latitude and some high elevations. Northern China was dry, but southern China had a wet, tropical climate. Northern Africa had a very hot, dry climate, with the Sahara Desert occupying a huge area where crops could not be grown (Figure 1.5). Western Asia was rather desert-like, especially the Arabian Peninsula and portions of the western interior. Europe and the eastern half of North America had



FIGURE 1.5 The Sahara Desert that covers a large area of North Africa is unsuited for growing crops because of the intense heat and lack of water.



FIGURE 1.6 Although Egypt is situated in the Sahara Desert, irrigation from the Nile River has made it possible for farmers to raise crops in the Nile Valley for thousands of years.

moderate climates more amenable to a wider variety of agricultural products than could be produced in desert lands.

Natural rainfall has been adequate for growing many crops around the world, and this reliance on nature influenced the early crops that were raised in various regions. For instance, rice was the staple grain for centuries in the monsoonal areas of the world, from India to Japan, while wheat was the favored grain crop in farm areas that received moderate amounts of rain.

Early people living in rice-growing areas did not eat wheat because it did not grow well in such wet conditions. It did thrive in Europe, Asia, and the northern part of China, where it was the staple cereal in the diet. These contrasts illustrate how rainfall influenced the diets of people long ago in different regions, particularly before trade developed between regions.

In some parts of the world, rainfall was adequate in most seasons for early people to raise a crop, while in more arid places, irrigation was required for crops to flourish. This necessitated building a functional irrigation system with an adequate supply of water if farmers were to be successful (Figure 1.6). In other regions of the world, early farmers faced failure of crops when they were inundated with rainfall to the point where fields were flooded and crops were washed away.

The need to control water for crops has been addressed for centuries in various parts of the world. Long ago, farmers terraced the steep hillsides of Bali to create rice paddies that have been maintained and utilized for centuries (Figure 1.7). In much of Southeast Asia, water is directed



FIGURE 1.7 People have built and maintained elaborate terraces for centuries so they can control the water needed to raise rice successfully on the steep hills of Bali.



FIGURE 1.8 Date palms thrive where water is available in the Arab Emirates and other desert lands of the Middle East, providing a food that can easily be dried and stored safely in the hot climate.

into and out of rice paddies as is necessary to plant and eventually harvest rice in the paddies throughout the year.

Irrigation systems were developed in Mesopotamia around 5000 BCE so crops could be watered using water from the Tigris and Euphrates as necessary, regardless of droughts. Much later in Europe, the Romans engineered and constructed aqueducts to transport water long distances to meet the needs of people and agriculture in parts of the Roman Empire where the local water supply was inadequate.

GROWING CONDITIONS Temperature was a key determinant of crop successes. An early illustration of this geographic factor is that oranges and dates (Figure 1.8) were successful crops in the warm climates at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, but they were unknown to the Norsemen, whose climate was far too severe for citrus and dates to survive. Similarly, the tropical fruits of Southeast Asia could not withstand the cold winters in Beijing, China.

The length of the growing season (the number of days at temperatures warm enough for active growth) also determined whether or not a crop could be grown in a particular location. For example, corn requires a growing season of at least 140 days to mature. Countries at very high or very low latitudes did not have enough warm days for corn to mature. Vegetables requiring a comparatively short growing season to reach maturity could be grown in such northern latitudes as Alaska with surprising results because of almost continuous daylight in the height of summer.

Success in raising livestock and crops supported Earth's early population growth in places where climate and terrain were favorable (Figure 1.9). Lives of these early people were gradually evolving beyond the basic pursuit of food for mere survival. In fact, evidence suggests that a fermented beverage was produced in northern China around 7000 BCE, which is far earlier than a similar drink from 5400 BCE that was found in Iran.

Broadening Horizons

At several points around the world, pockets of rather sophisticated cultures emerged. These civilizations began to create riches that sometimes resulted in the exchange of goods. Trade routes,



FIGURE 1.9 Nomads on the plains in Iran still herd goats, a heritage that began many centuries ago.



FIGURE 1.10 Luxor Temple is one of the noble remnants of the Pharaohs who ruled ancient Egypt.

such as the Silk Road across Asia, were developed over land; sea captains ventured around Africa to destinations in the Indian Ocean. As a result, unique food and other goods were carried to and from new markets, thus adding some variety to foods and flavors enjoyed by people over vast distances.

Sometimes envious and aggressive leaders mounted military attacks to plunder such territories and to build empires at the expense of the conquered. Selected illustrations of these developments that ultimately led to today's expanded food experiences are presented in the next section.

A CAPSULE OF CULTURES AND CONQUESTS

Early Cultural Sites

Egypt is likely to be the first early culture that comes to mind (Figure 1.10), for the dramatic temples and pyramids built by early

Egyptians more than 4,000 years ago remain as testimonials to these people (Table 1.3). They controlled land along the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea and the northeastern corner of Africa as far south as the Sudan before they began to be conquered by various invaders.

The lands to the north of the Persian Gulf also fostered the development of cultures. Sumerians came south from Persia around 2000 BCE. Their contemporaries, the Hittites, who were flourishing in the Anatolian region that is now Asian Turkey, conquered Sumeria's Babylon and ruled Syria as well for four centuries, until 1200 BCE. Assyrians, the next group to conquer the region, ruled until the Persians took Nineveh in 612 BCE.

Meanwhile, Chinese culture was developing and flourishing on the eastern edge of Asia as early as 1800 BCE during the Shang dynasty. In contrast to the history of many other parts of the world, China has continued over many centuries as its own political unit, except for the Mongol incursion from 1280 CE to about 1350 CE. The ruling sequence after the Shang period included the Chou, Ch'in, Han, Sung, Ming, and Ch'ing dynasties.

Table 1.3 Timeline—Cultures

Date	Culture
3000 BCE	Egypt
2000 BCE	Sumerians (Persia)
2000 BCE–1200 BCE	Hittites (Turkey, Babylon, Syria)
1800 BCE–1280 CE	Chinese dynasties (China)
? –1625 BCE	Minoans (Crete in Mediterranean Sea)
1500 BCE–1100 BCE	Myceneans (Greek Peloponnesus, Crete, Sicily, Troy)
1200 BCE–612 BCE	Assyrians (Turkey, Babylon, Syria)
700 BCE–300 BCE	Greeks (Greece, Mediterranean lands to Spain, Asia to India)
612 BCE–331 BCE	Achaemenid Empire (Persians)—Middle East
350 BCE–1200 CE	Mayan Empire (Yucatan to Guatemala)
? BCE–284 CE	Roman Empire (Rome, Tunisia, Levant, Europe, England)
284 CE–493 CE	Western Roman Empire (Rome and Europe)
284 CE–1453 CE	Eastern Roman Empire (Constantinople to the Adriatic)
1206 CE–1405 CE	Mongols (Middle East, Central Asia, China, Eastern Europe)
1300 CE–1533 CE	Incas (Peru and bordering regions)
1345 CE–1519 CE	Aztecs (Mexico to Guatemala)
1526 CE–1806 CE	Mughals (Indian subcontinent)



FIGURE 1.11 Ruins at Persepolis in modern-day Iran hint at the glory that once was the Achaemenid Empire in ancient Persia.

In the western hemisphere, enduring evidence of the early culture of the Olmecs, who lived along the Gulf of Mexico in what is now Mexico and in Central America, dates from 1200 BCE for almost 1,000 years. They peacefully coexisted near Oaxaca with the Zapotecs, who also left enduring ruins as evidence of their culture around 500 BCE.

Conquests and Empires

Cultural centers developed at various points around the world during the two millennia prior to the birth of Christ, but these tended to be isolated from each other. However, geographical barriers eventually began to be breached, and knowledge of other groups led to the desire for conquest and possible riches. When conquerors established themselves by settling among the conquered for extended periods, considerable sharing of such aspects as foods and arts of both cultures resulted in lasting changes, many of which are still evident today.

THE ACHAEMENID EMPIRE The Persians conquered a vast empire by the 6th century BCE. The **Achaemenid Empire**, also called the Persian Empire, included present-day Turkey, the Levant (eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea), Armenia, eastward in Asia beyond the Caspian Sea and Samarkand, southward over the Hindu Kush Mountains of Afghanistan to the Indus River in India, then westward to the Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia. Particularly prominent among the various rulers of the Achaemenid Empire were Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes. The ruins of the great palace at Persepolis in Iran still reveal some of the artistic glory of the Persian Empire, which finally was ended by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE (Figure 1.11).

EARLY MEDITERRANEAN CULTURES The **Minoan** civilization on the island of Crete flourished in its Mediterranean location because of the favorable environment for farming and safety from attacks of other peoples. Art was developed and appreciated, as can be seen in the frescoes from the ruins of King Knossos' palace (Figure 1.12). The bounty of the food supply is evident from the huge amphorae for storing olive oil and wine that were found at the palace. This culturally advanced early civilization was destroyed dramatically by the enormous tidal wave in the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea that was generated following the gigantic volcanic eruption on Thera (today's Greek island of Santorini) in 1625 BCE.

As a result of the abrupt end to the Minoan civilization, the **Myceneans** on the Greek Peloponnesus peninsula were able to establish control over Crete, and they extended their control to Sicily, Sardinia, and Troy at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. They even ranged as far north as the Baltic Sea and westward to Britain. Mycenaean control of the region lasted four centuries (from about 1500 to 1100 BCE). Agamemnon was the most prominent ruler of this vast trading empire. A period of strife dominated the region that is now Greece for almost 800 years after the fall of the Myceneans.

ACHAEMENID EMPIRE

Empire that extended from the eastern end of the Mediterranean eastward to central Asia, then southward to northern India and the Persian Gulf (also called the Persian Empire); conquered by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE.

MINOANS

Mediterranean people who developed a prosperous, artistic civilization on Crete that was ended by a tidal wave in 1625 BCE.

MYCENEANS

Civilization centered on the Greek Peloponnesus that controlled Crete and other Mediterranean islands.



FIGURE 1.12 King Knossos' palace (partially reconstructed) and a colorful mosaic illustrate the highly developed Minoan culture that once developed on the island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea.



FIGURE 1.13 The Parthenon on the Acropolis in Athens has long been under reconstruction to reveal the beauty of Greece's architecture when it was the center of culture.



FIGURE 1.14 The Forum was the center of the Roman Empire for centuries.

CLASSICAL GREECE

Era in Greek history during the 5th and 4th centuries BCE when its artists and thinkers were creating works for the ages.

HELLENISTIC GREECE

Ancient Greek civilization that reached its peak of political dominance and cultural influence from about 323 to 27 BCE.

CLASSICAL AND HELLENISTIC GREECE Classical Greece (5th and 4th centuries BCE) was the era when Greek culture evolved and left such lasting legacies as the Parthenon, a temple built in honor of the goddess Athena. Following the death of Alexander the Great, **Hellenistic Greece** began to emerge by 323 BCE as a civilization characterized by remarkable achievements in philosophy, mathematics, and the arts. The artistic creations of the Greeks of this era (e.g., beautiful marble sculptures and vases) are among the leading cultural gifts to the world that are still prized today. Architectural contributions include the Acropolis in Athens (with its dramatic Parthenon (Figure 1.13), as well as structures in Erechtheum, and the Theatre of Dionysus), Ephesus and Priene in Turkey, and Cyrene in Libya.

Dining was an important aspect of life for wealthier Greeks of this era. Servants prepared and served meals to masters and their male guests who reclined on couches in the male dining room. Women ate separately from the men. Meals featured breads and cake (made with wheat and barley), local fruits such as figs and grapes, vegetables, perhaps seafood, and cheese prepared from goat's milk, as well as wine from local grapes. Olives were traditional in Greek meals, either served as an accompaniment or used as an ingredient in various recipes. They were also pressed for their oil, which was used extensively in preparing foods.

Greeks extended their influence westward over the entire northern shores of the Mediterranean Sea to the eastern part of Spain and eastward along the Turkish shores of the Black Sea. The Macedonian military leader Alexander the Great was able to extend the conquests to central Asia by such feats as defeating the Persians at Persepolis and then marching to Afghanistan and on southward to northern India before his death in 323 BCE at the age of 33.

ROMAN EMPIRE

Vast empire based in Rome that gradually was formed to cover much of the areas along the Mediterranean coast into Turkey, France, and England.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE The Roman Empire began in Italy but gained immense dimensions as its leaders sent legions to various points, starting with lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea (Figure 1.14). Romans fought three Punic Wars against Carthage in Tunisia from 264 to 146 BCE to gain control not only of Carthage itself, but also of its territories (Sicily, Corsica, Sardinia, the Balearics, and Spain). Later conquests included the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic Sea, the western part of Anatolia (part of Turkey in Asia Minor), land along the Black Sea, the Levant (from Syria almost to the Red Sea), and finally France and England.

Among the significant contributions of the Romans to their provinces were law and government, roads, aqueducts, and baths. Romans also brought their food patterns with them as their empire extended across Europe and into Africa and Asia. Greek foods and dining practices had been assimilated and further elaborated by the Roman aristocracy. When the Roman

legions conquered and occupied new lands, they also introduced their cuisine featuring heavy spices, thick sauces, and wine. Such fare could be enjoyed in the provinces because the roads built by the Romans and their subjects made it possible to transport spices and some foods from great distances.

The enormity of the Roman Empire made it difficult to defend from the fierce tribes threatening the borders. Emperor Diocletian split the territories in 284 CE to establish the Eastern Roman Empire with its headquarters in Byzantium (subsequently renamed Constantinople by its emperor Constantine). This part of the Roman Empire lasted until 1453 CE when the Ottoman Turks conquered it. The Western Roman Empire was overrun by northern barbarians, thus ending that part of the Roman Empire in 493 CE. Over the course of the centuries that Rome dominated its vast empire, it was ruled by many different emperors; Julius Caesar is perhaps the best known.

THE MONGOL EMPIRE The **Mongol Empire** presents a sharp contrast to the ways of the Roman Empire. It lasted for only 200 years (1206–1405 CE), beginning under Genghis Khan. He united very fierce warriors from the various tribes of Mongolia and central Asia, who breached the Great Wall (Figure 1.15) and invaded China in 1211 CE. He also sent troops westward toward northern Tibet and on to encircle the Caspian Sea and penetrate Kashmir and northern India. One of the consequences of the westward push beyond the Caspian Sea was the acquisition of many Turkish-speaking people, which ultimately led to the demise of the Seljuk sultanate in Turkey and the establishment of the Ottoman Empire there.

The food habits of the Mongols were drastically different from those of the Greeks and Romans. The harsh climate and living conditions of the Mongols' native lands fostered a diet based heavily on meats from both wild and domesticated animals. Meat might be dried for later use, but much of it was consumed fresh after being fried or boiled. Grain was also available and frequently was made into noodles. Vegetables and fruits were rare. Meals were far less elaborate in the Mongol than in the Roman Empire and were a means of survival rather than an entertainment.

One of the consequences of the Mongol Empire was a weakening of Christianity, which had been fairly strong in Constantinople, and the tremendous gain in support of Islam, as well as some strengthening of Buddhism (in the Far East only). Even after Genghis Khan died in 1227 CE, Mongol hordes attacked Russia in 1237 CE and then went on to conquer Poland and Hungary in 1241 CE. Fortunately for Europe, the Great Khan Ogedei, the Mongol leader, died, and so did the Mongol threat to Europe. However, Mongols held control in Russia until the last ruler, Tamerlane, died in 1405 CE.

MUGHAL EMPIRE Babur, a descendant of Tamerlane, provided an interesting footnote to the Mongol Empire. He invaded India in 1526 CE to begin the **Mughal Empire**, which extended

MONGOL EMPIRE

Barbaric, short-lived empire ranging southward from central Asia and westward to threaten even Vienna in Europe.

MUGHAL EMPIRE

Empire in Afghanistan and northern India established by Babur in the 16th century, which blended Persian and Indian cultures.

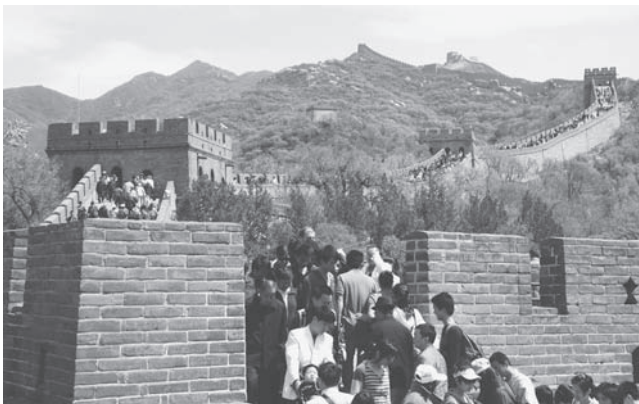


FIGURE 1.15 China's Great Wall was breached by the Mongols in 1211 CE and is now the objective of countless tourists from around the world.



FIGURE 1.16 Mughal ruler Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal near Agra, India, but later his son imprisoned him in the Red Fort in a chamber where he could see the Taj in the distance above the river.

eastward from the Arabian Sea well into Afghanistan and included all of Kashmir, southward along the Indian side of the Himalayas, and a long coastline of the Bay of Bengal before turning westward to the Arabian Sea just north of Bombay. Akbar, the grandson of Babur, fostered the unique artistic style that blended Persian and Indian influences. The Taj Mahal (Figure 1.16), built by Shah Jahan, is the architectural masterpiece of the Mughal Empire, which ended in 1707 CE.

WESTERN EMPIRES Three empires (Mayan, Incan, and Aztec) were dominant in different areas of the Americas, the earliest of these being the Mayan Empire (350 BCE to about 1200 CE). Remains of this culture still stand on the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico and in the jungle lowlands of Guatemala. The Incan Empire was the leading civilization in the mountains of Peru (Figure 1.17) and beyond in South America from about 1300 CE until Pizarro arrived from Spain, conquering the Incas and seizing Cuzco in 1533. The Aztecs gained control of land near today's Mexico City when they arrived in 1345 CE and built their capital, Tenochtitlan. By the time Spain's Cortez arrived in 1519, they ruled the land from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific and from central Mexico to Guatemala, land that immediately was claimed by Spain. Potatoes, tomatoes, corn, and chocolate were traditional foods.



FIGURE 1.17 Machu Picchu, the remote city of the Incas hidden in the Andes in Peru, was at its zenith before Pizarro's men conquered the Incas in the early 16th century. Today's visitors see a partial reconstruction.

Table 1.4 Food Origins and Trade

Food	Origin	Trade Destinations
Cabbage	Europe	North America
Cacao	Latin America	Europe
Coffee	East Africa	Europe, Africa, Southeast Asia
Maize	Latin America	Europe, Africa, India
Onion	Europe	North America
Palm oil	West Africa	Americas, Southeast Asia
Potato	South America	Europe, Africa, India
Rice	China	India, Southeast Asia, Mediterranean
Spices	Southeast Asia	Europe
Sweet potato	Central America	Europe
Sunflower	Central America	Europe
Tea	Northern China	Westward to Europe
Tomato	Central America	Europe, North America
Wheat	Mesopotamia	Europe, North America

EMERGING TRADE ROUTES

The growth of trade was a natural result of the conquests mentioned earlier, as well as many others around the world (Table 1.4). Wheat was one of the early items traded from the Fertile Crescent of Mesopotamia, for this was a crop that could be transported long distances to such places as Europe, Scandinavia, and the British Isles without spoilage. By the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries, wheat had even been carried to the Caribbean and Argentina. Spanish conquerors and friars aided in the introduction of wheat to North America.

Maize was developed in Central and South America, and then it was introduced to Europe when the Spanish conquistadors returned to Spain in 1493, carrying some maize from Mexico (Figure 1.18). A century later, maize from South America was introduced to West Africa. European voyagers in the 16th century not only transported maize to Europe, but also carried Mexican maize to eastern South America and on to part of India and northeastern China. Rice originated in China, spread to India, and then was carried by traders to the Fertile Crescent and throughout the Mediterranean and North Africa by about 300 BCE.

Central America was the origin of the tomato and sweet potato. From there, they were introduced to Europe in the very late 15th and early 16th centuries. South America and Central America added chiles to the world's larder.



FIGURE 1.18 Maize and chiles originated in the New World and were introduced to Europe by the Spanish conquerors.



FIGURE 1.19 Coffee originated in Ethiopia and gradually became a popular beverage in many regions of the world.

Europe provided not only onions and cabbage, but also tomatoes to North America in the 19th century (long after tomatoes had ventured to Europe from Central America). Potatoes went from western South America throughout Europe and to eastern Africa and India by the 17th century.

Coffee appears to have originated in Ethiopia (Figure 1.19). Its acceptance spread subsequently to Amsterdam and all along the routes of the Dutch traders around Africa and to Southeast Asia. Tea originated in northern China and then spread rapidly all along the trade routes back to Europe. Cocoa is the only popular beverage that originated in the New World. The wonderful discovery of chocolate was carried in about 1520 CE to a very appreciative audience in Europe.

Another gift of the New World to Europe was the sunflower with its excellent oil. Palm oil had its origins in the western part of Africa around the Niger River. From there, its use spread to both Americas and Southeast Asia in the 19th century. Much of the production of palm oil for the world is centered now in Malaysia, where it is an agricultural commodity of considerable importance; recently, oil palms have been planted in the Amazon basin as competition to Malaysia.

For the early traders, spices offered two particularly outstanding characteristics that spurred the spice trade: long shelf life and high market value per volume and weight. Various spices were known and highly prized from China all the way to Rome and beyond. Long before the time of Christ, people in many parts of the known world placed a high value on various spices. The exciting flavors were appreciated not only for their uniquely pleasing variety, but also for their ability to help disguise off-flavors in the era when refrigeration was not available to extend the useful life of foods. A further subtle message conveyed by the use of spices was that the household was wealthy and could afford such luxuries.

It is said that the spices carried back in the hold of Magellan's only ship that returned from his 3-year voyage of 1519–1522 returned sufficient money to pay for the entire expedition. Subsequently, traders from various European nations plied the seas between Indonesia and Europe, often under extremely difficult conditions (Figure 1.20). Despite these long ocean voyages, the spices from Southeast Asia brought such high prices when they finally reached their markets that many traders became very wealthy.



FIGURE 1.20 Two of the spices from Southeast Asia are nutmeg (center seed of the fruit) and mace, the flavorful webbing surrounding it.

Changes in food habits and diets occurred gradually as a consequence of conquests and trade, but improvements in transportation since the time of the early empires have accelerated this trend. Over the centuries since these early days of exploration, trading has expanded greatly. Food from all over the world is shipped to distant ports to add variety to people's meals. Thanks to refrigerated and frozen containers, perishable foods can be transported by air, sea, and land so that they arrive at markets in excellent condition. Although some of the food may be grown locally, today people choose diets that are only partially determined by climate, geography, and growing conditions. A broad array of foods is available if people can afford and wish to buy products from other parts of the country and the world.

TODAY'S WORLD FOOD SCENE

What and how much food people are eating today in countries around the world still is influenced by their traditional food patterns. However, other critical problems are limiting actual consumption in many developing nations. The food equation includes several critical factors: population, acceptability, production, and distribution.

Populations at Risk

Although all nations have some undernourished people, lack of food is a far more pervasive problem in some developing countries than in the rest of the world. At the international level, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations monitors the food situation around the world on an ongoing basis (Figure 1.21). Sometimes the problem is lack of food availability; other problems occur because of limited access to food, which may be due to localized problems such as crop failures or distribution problems that occur following an earthquake or governmental conflicts. Clearly, poverty can seriously affect the ability of people to buy food essential for health and even survival. Food crises are nearly always due to a combination of factors.

In May 2008, 47 nations were identified as needing assistance from outside their borders, a daunting figure even without translating this into numbers of people suffering from malnutrition leading to starvation and death. Adverse weather conditions reduced crop yields, particularly in Syria, Jordan, and Tajikistan. Natural disasters, such as the devastating cyclone and flooding in Myanmar and Bangladesh, earthquakes, landslides, and floods in Indonesia caused severe food shortages in some parts of these nations.

The consequences of rapidly rising prices of basic foods in tandem with deep poverty, crop failures due to severe drought, floods, or insects, and/or civil strife or governmental policies created such anticipated food shortages that large numbers of people were at great risk of starvation in 2008. Projections were that as many as 35 percent of the population in North Korea, 20 percent in Pakistan, 6 percent in Indonesia, 45 percent in Ethiopia, and 36 percent in Yemen were at risk of severe malnutrition and starvation.

The "Arab Spring" that erupted in North Africa and the Middle East in 2011 added to the food problems in the region. Many people from Mali who had been working in Libya and sending money to support their families back home fled to safety in their native country, not only adding to the numbers Mali needed to feed, but reducing the money available to buy food. Yet another dimension was added to the difficulties by **Tuaregs** who raided Libyan arms depots during the rebellion there and then ransacked villages in Mali in an attempt to take over the nation. The underlying reasons for food insecurity vary from country to country and include civil strife, war, conflict, low productivity, severe drought, and economic instability.

In March 2012, 27 African nations were identified with serious problems of food insecurity. Burkina Faso, Chad, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Zimbabwe were facing exceptionally critical problems triggered by continuing drought and rising prices. The severe food crisis in Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Eritrea on the Horn of Africa and Somalia and Sudan has been continuing for several years (Figure 1.22).

At the same time, six nations in Asia (Iraq, Yemen, North Korea, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Syrian Arab Republic) and Haiti were also confronted with widespread lack of access to adequate food. Conflict and insecurity were identified as the causes for food shortages in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) had insufficient food supplies because of governmental constraints, as well as floods.

TUAREGS

Nomadic traditional traders controlling caravans transporting goods across the Sahara.

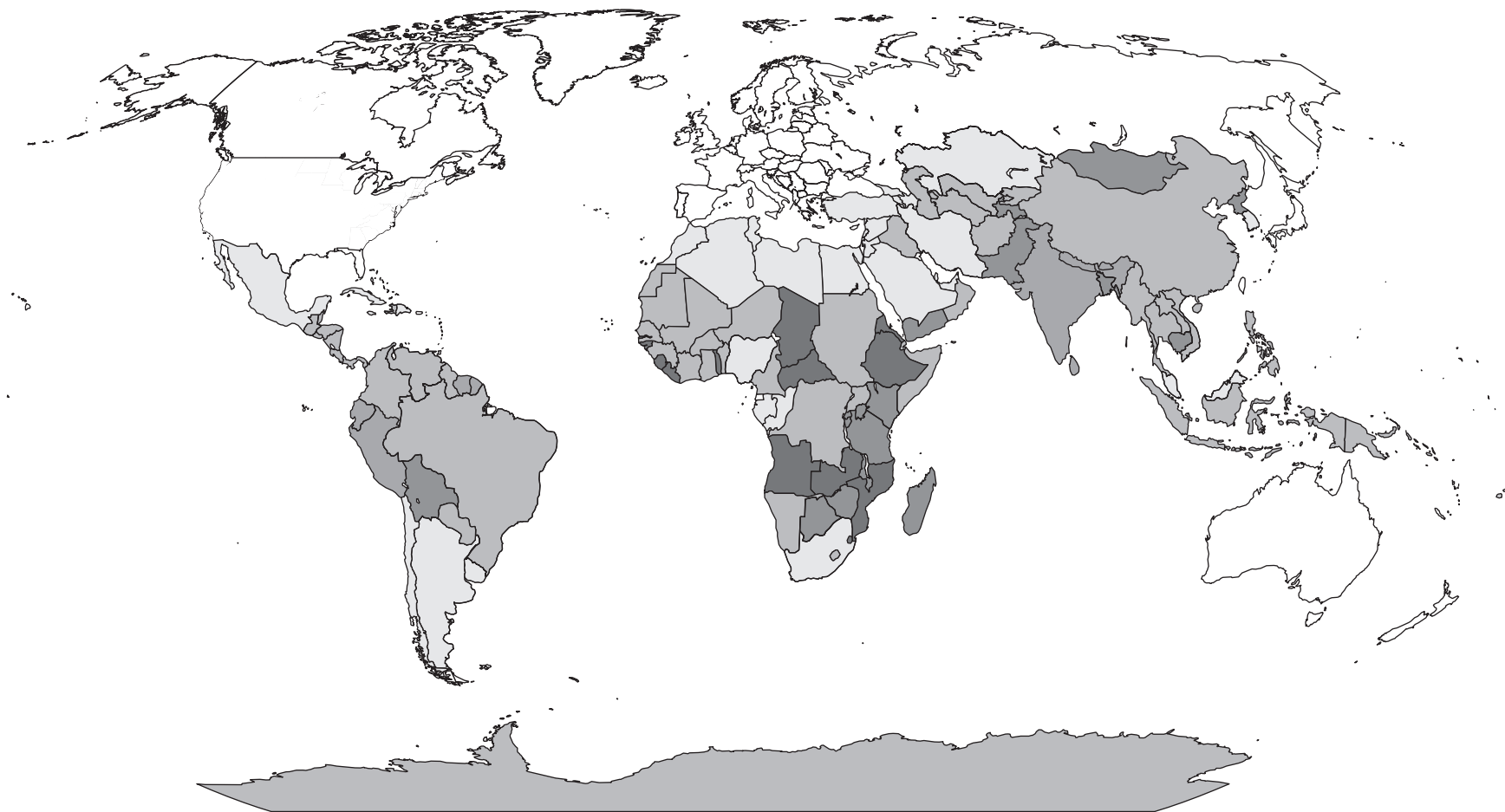


FIGURE 1.21 Map of the world reflecting undernourished populations from 2006 to 2008 (the darkest areas have the highest rate of food insecurity).

Production

Weather plays a key role in determining how large a crop will be produced in a growing season. Excessive rain can delay planting, which may mean that there is inadequate time for growth and maturation so the crop can be harvested before winter weather sets in. Spring flooding or heavy rains while crops are growing can severely damage or destroy them at any point prior to harvesting. Drought, the opposite weather problem, also can have a tremendous impact on crop yields. Without adequate water, plants grow slowly and produce less food per acre, and the quality also is diminished.

The erratic weather that has been occurring at various spots around the world recently is confounding food production in many regions. The devastating cyclone that ravaged Myanmar in 2008 flooded low-lying coastal and delta areas, resulting not only in a high human toll at the time, but also destruction of crops and existing food supplies. The reverse problem is evident in many countries in North Africa and south of the Sahara (e.g., Niger, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) where persistent severe drought conditions have severely reduced crop yields.

Crop failures mean reduced income so that farmers may be unable to buy the supplies needed for the next planting. Continued droughts result in ever-diminishing yields in the subsequent growing seasons. Limited food further compounds the difficulties because farmers may be too weak to work their land effectively.

Distribution

Millions have died and many more will die in famines caused not only by weather-related crop failures, but also by natural disasters (earthquakes and floods) which create serious food shortages unless food aid reaches survivors. Political corruption and problems with food distribution in times of famine are other factors that compound the deaths.

The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, International Red Cross, and various religious groups and private foundations usually are actively involved in helping to distribute food and other aid where serious food shortages occur. Unfortunately, sometimes food cannot be distributed to those who need it the most. A glaring example of obstacles to distribution was seen in Myanmar after the spring cyclone caused major flooding; foreign food aid was prohibited completely for an extended period, a decision that added significantly to the overall death toll. Refugees in eastern Sudan in Darfur are also victims of famine aggravated by governmental inaction. Ships carrying food for Somalians have had to be protected from pirates with the aid of European forces in order to help alleviate famine conditions for 3.2 million (43 percent) people living there. North Korea has also blocked foreign relief efforts. Relief workers on the ground in such places as Afghanistan and Darfur face physical dangers despite the fact that they are trying to help local people by distributing food.

Economics

Poverty is a major obstacle to obtaining enough food to eat, particularly in such developing countries as Ethiopia. People who are barely able to feed themselves in the best of times are likely to be susceptible to diseases, which may make it impossible for them to work and buy food. Price fluctuations, such as those that occurred for rice in 2008, can quickly put basic commodities out of reach of the most needy. Access to safe water is another problem confronting many people in areas where food insecurity is found. International relief agencies have provided help by installing wells in some regions where contaminated water has been causing cholera and other diseases (Figure 1.23).



FIGURE 1.22 Severe droughts continue to reduce crop production in Ethiopia and other countries in Africa, causing severe malnutrition and even starvation.



FIGURE 1.23 International relief agencies have installed wells, such as the one in a Masai village in Kenya, to help prevent waterborne illnesses.

One approach to help improve the incomes of people who are most needy in developing countries has been microloans (particularly to women) for small businesses. Donations from several people may be pooled to make a microloan on a specific loan request they have selected; the donors will be paid back as the business proceeds. The interpersonal nature of these loans and the industriousness of the loan recipients have made such loans an increasingly valuable resource in helping people help themselves in developing countries.

Summary

The diets of people very long ago were determined by food they could obtain by fishing, hunting, or gathering plant foods. Early foods native to different parts of the world included emmer, einkorn, barley, pulses, taro, and manioc. Agriculture developed gradually in temperate areas near rivers; animals also were domesticated. Factors influencing the foods that were being produced in various regions include geography and such environmental factors as water and growing conditions.

As food production became adequate to meet the needs of groups of people living fairly close together, some groups developed cultures that were so advanced that they created some buildings and art that can still be seen today. Among the early cultures were those found in Egypt, Persia (Hittites, Sumerians, and Assyrians), China, and Central America (Olmecs and Zapotecs). Conquests by warring on other people resulted in the establishment of the Achaemenid (Persian) Empire. Early Mediterranean cultures included the Minoans on Crete (ended when the volcano on Thera [Santorini] erupted), the Mycenaeans, and the Greeks, whose best-known conqueror was Alexander the Great. The Roman Empire extended over much of Europe, the north of Africa, and into the Middle East. Mongols followed briefly toward Europe but remained a comparatively short time, and little of their presence remains today. By contrast, the Taj Mahal and many other lovely buildings remain in India today, the heritage left by the Mughal Empire. In the western hemisphere, the three key empires were the Mayan, Incan, and Aztec.

Actions of traders in centuries past are still influencing trade practices. Entrepreneurs who bought cloves in Indonesia

in the early days devised a plan to shorten the length of the voyage. Their solution was to carry clove seedlings to Madagascar and grow clove trees there off the eastern coast of Africa, a point much closer to Europe and with a climate that suited the trees. Cloves from Madagascar have held a strong position in the spice trade for many years, although governmental regulations and trade barriers impact the current rivalry between Indonesia and Madagascar.

Food patterns were influenced significantly by trade routes that developed as conquests and exploration increased knowledge of other parts of the world. Foods that originated in the western hemisphere sometimes were carried to very distant places, including the eastern hemisphere. Similarly, foods originally found in the eastern hemisphere were transported to the west.

Today shipping has evolved so that food can be marketed anywhere in the world, depending on demand and people's ability to purchase food from other regions. Diets no longer are dependent on only the local food supply.

Despite the ability to produce food and transport it around the world, many people are not able to obtain adequate food for optimal health, and large numbers are facing famine, particularly in parts of Africa and in other developing nations. Efforts to alleviate the suffering are provided from such agencies as the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, International Red Cross, and various religious groups and private foundations. Microloans from numerous small donors to small businesses (often owned by women) are becoming an increasingly effective way of helping people in developing countries help themselves.

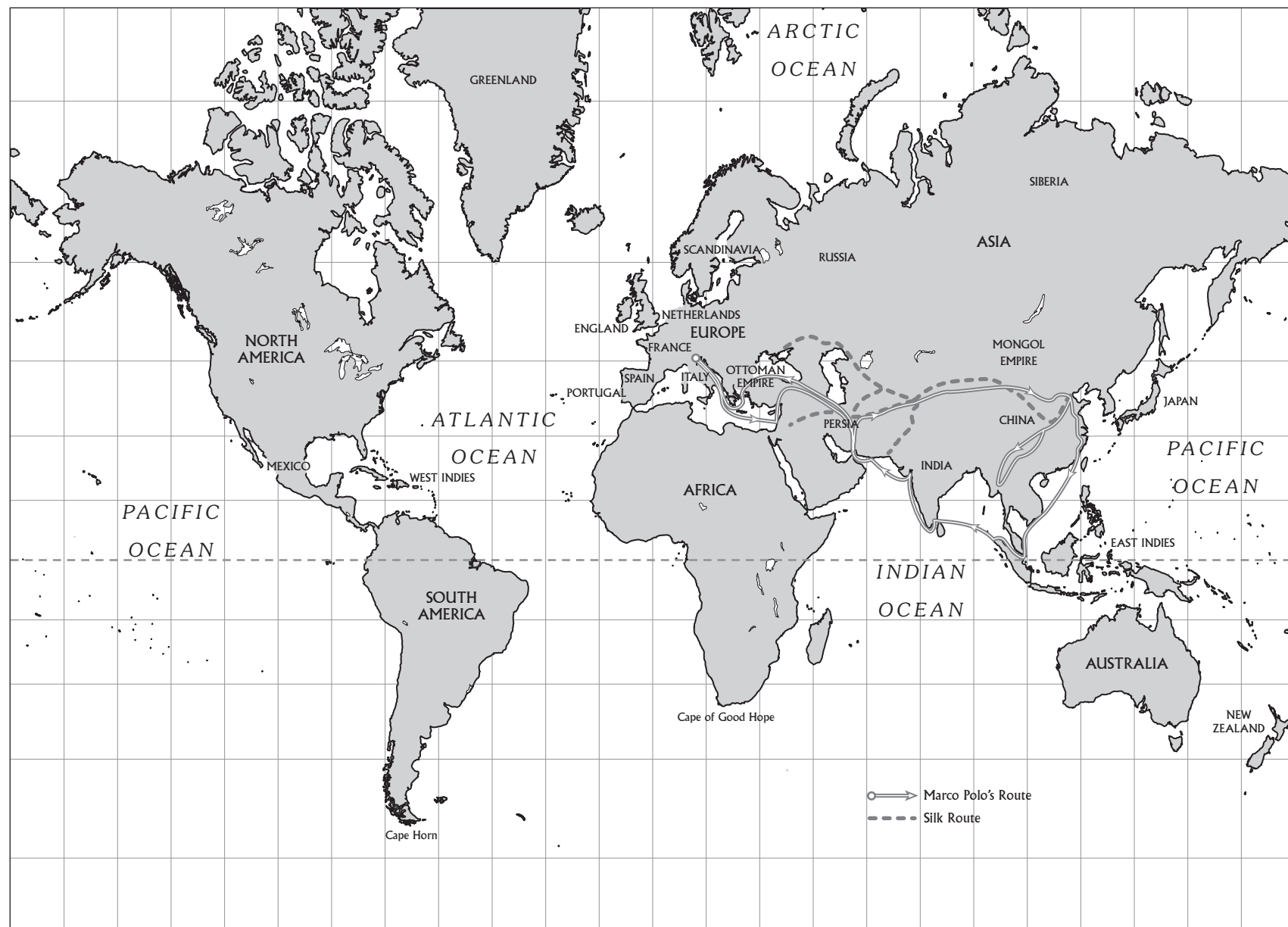
Study Questions

1. What geographic characteristics were found in the Fertile Crescent that favored the development of an agrarian society?
2. Why is development of a culture dependent on the food supply?
3. Civilizations that were on the shore of the ocean tended to have food provided by:
 - a. fishermen
 - b. hunters
 - c. farmers
 - d. traders
 - e. grocers
4. The civilization that was wiped out by the consequences of a volcanic eruption was
 - a. Persian
 - b. Roman
 - c. Greek
 - d. Aztec
 - e. Minoan
5. True or false. The Greek civilization developed before the Roman Empire.
6. True or false. The Aztec civilization developed before the Mayan.
7. The Roman Empire was
 - a. in decline by the time of Christ.
 - b. confined to Europe.
 - c. split in the 3rd century BCE.
 - d. split in the 3rd century CE.
 - e. none of these
8. Identify 10 of your favorite foods and the part of the world where each probably originated.

9. Where did the food that you ate yesterday come from? As much as possible, indicate where each ingredient probably was produced.
10. Why was rice the staple cereal in Japan? Why was wheat the traditional grain in Central Europe?
11. Briefly describe each of the following empires: Western Roman, Mughal, Persian, Mycenaean.
12. Why were food patterns influenced by empire builders?
13. Compare the food patterns of citizens of the Roman Empire with those of the Mongol Empire, and discuss the reasons for the differences.
14. Why and where in Africa are serious food shortages occurring?
15. What are some roles the United Nations is playing to help decrease human suffering due to lack of food security?

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Cultural Parameters

Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- Explore the components that shape culture.
- Consider how culture influences food patterns.
- Identify cultural variations in manners and social interactions.
- Examine some cultural messages of special foods.

Five words—“You eat what you are” and “You are what you eat”—placed in two different sequences provide an intriguing introduction to this chapter. The first statement shows an appreciation of some of the cultural factors that shape food choices and preferences. The second is a pragmatic way of relating physical outcome to a lifetime of eating (nutrition). If food is thought of only as the means of getting the nutrients needed for life, the important subtleties that influence what people actually eat will be missed.

Take a moment to think about the way you eat: how many meals per day, foods you usually like to eat at each meal during a day, dishes served at family gatherings on special holidays, and your favorite foods. Then consider why you have these food preferences and dietary patterns. In other words, describe the influences that shape what you eat. These thoughts set the stage for reading this chapter.

COMPONENTS OF CULTURE

CULTURE

Way of life of a group of people (what they create, do, and think).

ETHNICITY

Affiliation with a race, people, or cultural group.

Culture is a somewhat nebulous concept because a wide variety of characteristics may all contribute to a complex picture that describes the way of life of a people. Customs, habits, language, knowledge, housing, tools, and the arts all contribute to the uniqueness of a culture. Beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group are some of the characteristics contributing to this description (Figure 2.1). **Ethnicity** is the affiliation with a race, people, or cultural group. Culture and ethnicity are essential foundations of the study of food and people. Knowledge of the major cultures around the world and appreciation of the cultural richness that is a part of their food patterns not only add pleasure to our lives, but also strengthen the ability of food professionals to work effectively with people from cultures other than their own.

Country of Birth

To an extent, the country where a person is born and resides shapes the food patterns of the individual and families. The geographic realities of climate and terrain suitable for productive agriculture define



FIGURE 2.1 Stave churches were part of the cultural religious landscape in Norway as early as the 12th century CE.

the local foods that may be available (Figure 2.2). Other resources of the country will influence whether or not manufacturing and business and other commercial endeavors generate a vigorous economy. In countries where all is favorable, an abundant and varied food supply can be obtained by virtually all people in that country. In less-favored locales, food may be in very short supply and unavailable in adequate amounts. In other words, the economy and the agricultural conditions combine within a country to define one of the parameters of the nation's food culture.

Housing

Housing is another dimension of a person's culture. People in some cultural groups live in elegant, single-family dwellings; some live in cottages; others live in apartments or condominiums. The roof may be anything from a leaky thatch to an orderly fireproof tile. Some people have a bedroom for each person, while others live in a one-room house in which the entire family must eat and sleep (Figure 2.3). Kitchens range from spotless and completely equipped with every appliance to those in which refrigeration is unavailable or extremely limited in space, a situation that imposes serious problems of food safety and necessitates daily shopping. Families often live in housing that is similar to others in their cultural group.

Language

Language is a key component of culture because it provides a means of sharing thoughts, ideas, and information. Accurate, meaningful communication is important in families, communities, nations, and the world. The fact that many international airports around the world require pilots to use English to communicate with the tower illustrates the importance of language as a common denominator in business. Even with the same language, word definitions may differ by country (e.g., *biscuit* in England means a cookie, but it is a type of bread in the United States).



FIGURE 2.2 People living in remote mountain valleys in Oman rely primarily on foods that can be grown in the challenging terrain, whereas the diet of South Pacific islanders is dominated by foods from the surrounding sea.



FIGURE 2.3 Thatched structures are the style of houses commonly seen along waterways and throughout rural Thailand.

Similarly, people in the same cultural group need to be able to understand what is being said in personal conversations.

A national language helps to define what a nation is culturally. Even within a country speaking the same language, confusion may exist due to differences in dialects and accents. An illustration of such communication difficulties can be found in China with its numerous dialects. Mandarin is the dialect that often serves as the communication interface for people who use different dialects in their daily lives (Figure 2.4).

The Arts

One of the important threads that tends to identify a culture and to continue to hold its members together as a group is that of art. Styles of art vary over the ages and around the world, yet most cultural groups have an artistic heritage that they feel to be their own (Figure 2.5). In fact, paintings, sculptures, mosaics, bas-reliefs, and other forms of art provide a somewhat historic documentation of the earlier people who helped to define the group's artistic culture. These visual works sometimes depict foods and/or dining scenes that convey a cultural message. For instance, Pieter Brueghel's *Peasant Wedding* depicts a wonderful Dutch wedding feast in the mid-16th century; Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party* reveals a completely different cultural scene in France in the late 19th century.

Music and dance are other art forms that communicate directly to individuals and draw them toward the local culture (Figure 2.6). Performances of *Swan Lake* (a ballet by Tchaikovsky, a famous Russian composer) and the Barong dance (traditional presentation in Bali) are representative of the cultural heritage from Russia and Bali.



FIGURE 2.4 A sign in the Imperial Gardens at the Forbidden City in Beijing is written not only in Chinese, but also in an English translation for visitors from other cultures.



FIGURE 2.5 The ceiling of the nave in an old Norwegian stave church is a fine example of the folk art of the country.



FIGURE 2.6 A graceful traditional dance is performed to the rhythm of a drummer in the Amber Fort overlooking Jaipur, India.

Musical examples also abound. Sibelius's *Finlandia* is an orchestral work that creates pride in their heritage among Finnish people while also providing an appreciation of Finland to all people who hear this rich and very strong composition. Austria is noted for its music, which ranges from the numerous works of Salzburg's Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart to the lilting Viennese waltzes of Johann Strauss. The United States boasts such composers as Aaron Copland (works include *Appalachian Spring* and *Rodeo*), John Williams (*Star Wars*), and Stephen Foster (composer of "Swanee River" and other songs of the South). Some American songs such as "Rum and Coca Cola," "Short'nin' Bread," and "Shoo Fly Pie and Apple Pan Dowdy" are musical reminders of some cultural foods in the South.

Literature

An enduring part of a nation's culture is the literature written by its people. William Shakespeare remains revered among British authors long after his death. Charles Dickens brought the food tradition of an English Christmas to life for all to share in his classic *A Christmas Carol*. Victor Hugo, who wrote his masterpiece *Les Misérables* in the 19th century, occupies an important place among French writers. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is the beloved American poet who wrote "Paul Revere's Ride." Carl Sandburg brought the drama of aspects of food production in early 20th-century America to life in his poetry. These are but a few examples of the contributions writers have made to the culture of their land.

Storytelling is another aspect of culture; although similar to literature, stories are embedded in the culture by being passed from person to person rather than being preserved in printed form. This is an art form in many places in Africa, particularly in the western and central regions. Legends have been told from generation to generation in many countries, and some of these have evolved into print. German fairy tales are an example of this type of literature.

Architecture

Public architecture affords additional insights into a culture. Recent excavations in Egypt have revealed two bakeries that were used to feed the workers building the pyramids more than 4,000 years ago. In homes of the elite that have been unearthed in Pompeii, the *triclinium* (formal dining room) had benches for reclining around three sides of the room. In Russia, the survival of St. Basil's, the Summer Palace, and the Hermitage, as well as other grand buildings from the Tsarist era, provides mute testimony to the appreciation that the citizens of Leningrad (now St. Petersburg once again) held for their cultural heritage even through the Revolution and eventual breakup of the Soviet Union (Figure 2.7).

In the United Kingdom, the stern and imposing palaces and castles are proudly viewed as the cultural heritage of the country. The strength and independent nature of earlier citizenry were clearly expressed in the castles that were built and defended to keep invaders from their stark and windswept coastland. Cooking for all the people in the castle was done over open fires in huge fireplaces, and the privileged residents of the castle dined in the great hall.

All around the world, architectural sites continue to reveal the beauty and strength of earlier cultures. The Parthenon on the Acropolis in Athens, with its inviting style, is an enduring reflection of the early Greeks. Karnak Temple near Luxor, Egypt, affords a glimpse of yet a different ancient culture that is an important part of a nation's culture almost five millennia later.

The famed Taj Mahal in Agra, India, is a dazzlingly lovely and graceful tribute to Shah Jahan's dead wife, its intricate inlaid designs of semiprecious stones attesting to the highly developed skills of the craftsmen and artists in India. Deeply carved bas-reliefs adorning the long walls of the huge Angkor Wat complex in Cambodia (Figure 2.8) add a different artistic dimension to the cultural context of architecture. The Forbidden City, with its temples and mazes of buildings and rooms within its

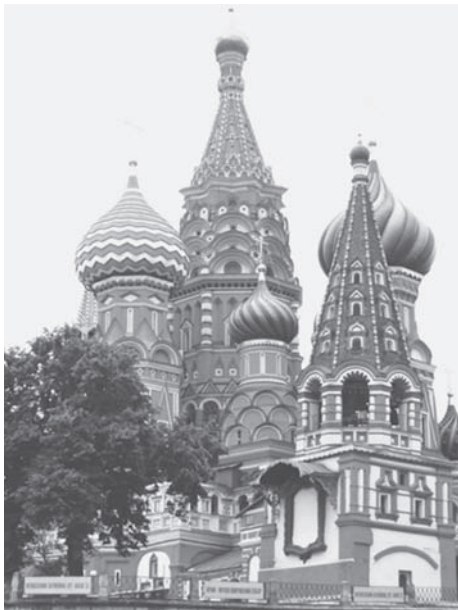


FIGURE 2.7 Fortunately, although Communists once planned to demolish it, St. Basil's still stands on the edge of Red Square and the Kremlin, where it remains a cultural symbol of Moscow and its people.



FIGURE 2.8 Bas-reliefs at Angkor Wat reveal the remarkable artistry of the Khmer artists in northern Cambodia in the 12th century.

encompassing walls, affords a remarkable look at the cultural heritage of both Beijing residents and all people of China.

These glimpses of the importance of the arts in creating emotions and feelings are presented to help you begin to think about similar artistic works that help to define your cultural inheritance.

ADDITIONAL DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE

Other defining aspects of cultural groups are their food traditions, national histories, and religions (see Chapter 3). When people live within a region that constitutes a nation, or possibly just a portion of a nation, common experiences related to government of the land and beliefs and values can either unite people or create civil unrest and even wars. From such influences, cultural identity and groupings often result, and these groups continue for many centuries when governments are stable.

Immigration

The hope for a better life is the reason many people choose to immigrate to the United States. Examples over the years include the Pilgrims (seeking religious freedom), the Irish in the mid-19th century (escaping the Potato Famine), students pursuing higher education, and workers looking for higher-paying jobs to support their families.

Nations with a history that included empire building often have a mixture of cultures that is evident today. In the United Kingdom, for example, many immigrants from Pakistan, India, and other distant parts of the realm have settled in England, thus permanently altering the homogeneity of earlier years. Similarly, France now has many residents from its earlier territory in North Africa. Even in these countries with strong national identities, the addition of significant numbers of immigrants from other cultures has altered elements of the national image permanently.

Terrible wars in past years caused many people to flee their countries to avoid persecution and probable death, and current conflicts continue to trigger flights from homelands in parts of Africa and the Middle East. These political refugees often have sought asylum and new beginnings in countries quite distant from their country of origin. An illustration is provided by the very large influx of Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians (Hmong) into the United States as the Vietnam War was ending. Their arrival in their new country brought awareness of cultures into focus, both for the new arrivals and for Americans. At first, refugees were settled all around the country in an attempt to provide community support for some individuals and families in numerous towns. Gradually, these new immigrants began to gravitate in the new country to regions where others from their own culture were already beginning to gather. The result is a few very large pockets (e.g., “Little Saigon” in Orange County, California) of residents formerly from Southeast Asia.

Immigrants from other cultures often tend to settle together because of strong cultural ties. Evidence of the importance of their former culture is retained in their daily lives. For example, they often speak to each other in their native language and shop where they can get food ingredients for making their native dishes. Such tangible reminders of their cultural heritage provide support and a feeling of belonging.

Thus, the cultural fabric of nations with significant immigrant populations is becoming a patchwork quilt with a piece of this culture and a piece of that one scattered in various places. However, the overall culture of a nation still ties the country into a multicultural whole. The United States, a nation with a significant amount of heterogeneity since its colonial beginnings, is a living example of cultural identities being retained while being united into a single nation.

Religion is a particularly strong factor in cultural identity. Sharing common beliefs and practices that are central to a particular religion creates common threads that bind people together into a culture. By the same token, the fact that people practicing a different religion do not have the same beliefs and customs serves to separate the followers of each major religion into isolated groups or into groups who respect each other, but who are not as close between as within religious groups. Even though groups are defined, knowledge and appreciation of various religions can do much to reduce possible tensions and enrich the fabric of American culture.

Lifestyle

CUSTOMS

Traditions that are common to a cultural group, such as shaking hands or bowing.

Lifestyle adds to a cultural identification. Certain **customs** of living help to define a culture. An example of this is the very late dinner hour (10 P.M. or later) in Spain and in countries that were former Spanish colonies. This tradition developed because the intense heat of midday was made more tolerable by taking a siesta and then continuing business in the late afternoon, thus pushing dinner to a late hour. By contrast, Americans tend to try to push as much work into the day as possible.

Cultural attitudes toward time are highly variable and tend to linger long after immigrants have settled in the United States. The typical U.S. system that requires one eye on the clock at all times simply refuses to mesh with the more leisurely attitudes of people from countries where personal interactions take priority over punctuality.

Personal space expectations also may vary, depending on the culture. For example, Americans typically expect to have some space between themselves and the people they are talking with. However, people from India usually stand very close or touch the other person. This is a subtle aspect of culture, but it is helpful to be aware of space and adjust to meet that need.

BODY LANGUAGE

Movements made that reveal attitude or feelings to another person.

Body language is an aspect of communication that can have a strong, yet unintended impact. The various movements you make as a normal part of your style of interacting with another person happen automatically unless you make a conscious effort to adjust your behavior to that person's culture. In addition to maintaining an appropriate space, it is helpful to know such matters as whether to shake hands or make other physical contact, whether eye contact is acceptable or expected, and if hand motions (particularly pointing) are acceptable. Surprisingly, even the way your feet are positioned can convey messages contrary to your intent.

Another example of the role of culture in shaping traditional patterns is seen in the Orient, where the usual practice is to remove one's shoes before entering a home. Also, patterns of greeting are different there. Pressing the palms together and bowing are the custom, but a handshake serves the same purpose in the West.

At the dining table, chopsticks are used in the Orient (Figure 2.9), silverware is used by Westerners, and Ethiopians eat by holding injera (a pancake-like bread) in the right hand and using it as a scoop to get tasty bites from platters of flavorful foods.



FIGURE 2.9 Chopsticks are used in the Orient for cooking and dining.

SOME CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Far East

SPACE AND GREETING Customs and behaviors in the Far East vary a bit from country to country, but are generally somewhat restrained. The Japanese have a particular appreciation for private space. A bow serves as the greeting, with the depth of the bow reflecting the importance and/or age of the person being greeted. If there is a handshake, Japanese usually prefer a weak grip. Men from South Korea may bow slightly and shake hands, sometimes with both hands, but women do not ordinarily shake hands. Touching is uncommon among Chinese.

Business cards are very important when meeting people of Far Eastern background; they read them carefully to appreciate the title of the person on the card, and you should receive their cards with similar respect and attention. Exchange of business cards is usually done in a formal manner that shows respect for the donor of each card.

BODY LANGUAGE It is important in the Far East to avoid any prolonged eye contact. Also, the sole of your shoe should not be exposed, the palm of your hand should be kept downward when pointing or beckoning, and the mouth should never be seen open (Japanese and Koreans often cover their mouths when smiling or laughing).

NAMES AND FAMILY Names may be confusing because the family name is often the first name in the sequence, followed by the given name. Among key values are the importance of the family (superseding one's personal needs), respect for the elderly, and paternalistic and rigid hierarchy in family organization.

OTHER VALUES People of the Far East appreciate formality and rules as well as indirect and circuitous dialogues; they dislike confrontation and disagreements. Beliefs and superstitions (e.g., those beliefs regarding hot and cold foods) are important. Personal questions may not be welcome. Beauty and style are particularly important to people from a Japanese background. This is evident in their carefully manicured gardens, stylized flower arrangements, food presentations, and elegant, yet simple home interiors.

India and Southeast Asia

GREETING In India and Southeast Asia, greetings vary a bit from those of the Far East, although there are certainly many similarities because of the numerous interactions over the centuries. Indonesians and Filipinos shake hands. Malaysians may extend their palms outward and touch fingers in greeting, while Thai, Balinese, Indian women, and some other Hindus greet people with their hands together in a prayer-like manner and sometimes with a slight bow. Indian men shake hands.

Middle East

FAMILY VALUES The customs of the Middle East often reflect its religious heritage. For Muslims, women are important within their families and may be quite protected from the rest of the world, which is evidenced in their wearing of the burka or similar enveloping outer garment (Figure 2.10). The family and its honor are at the center of values; males are clearly recognized as the leaders of their families, and male children are especially cherished.

INTERACTIONS Men may embrace each other in greeting, may touch, and may stand quite close to others while talking. Punctuality is not a value in this part of the world, but warm hospitality is important. Expressing interest in the family's well-being precedes any business. Generosity often is so great that Middle Easterners may give you an item that you admired. Friday is the Islamic religious day, and no business is to be conducted.



FIGURE 2.10 Completely covered by her burka, a Muslim woman in Zanzibar peers through her veil as she shops in the market.

EATING TRADITIONS Women and children may eat separately, after the men, but the foods served to both sexes usually follow Muslim laws: no alcohol or pork, goat, dog, crab, lobster, or products containing them. Daytime fasting is required during Ramadan.

Jewish Practices

Judaism is prominent in Israel, which means that the religious day is Saturday. The food laws prohibit pork and shellfish; Orthodox Jews require that their food be kosher (see Chapter 3) and that dairy and meat products be kept separate.

Hispanic Values

In the western hemisphere, Hispanics are characterized as a family-oriented, paternalistic society, which places the family (and extended family) as its dominant value. Typically, women are expected to take care of the children and home while men make the important decisions.

When talking with others, sharing news of family takes priority over proceeding with the business at hand. Sociability is valued more than punctuality. Conversation and greetings often involve touching and standing close. However, South Americans often greet each other with a handshake rather than an embrace.

SPECIAL MESSAGES OF FOOD

Food sometimes carries special meanings beyond simply providing nutrients. The subtle messages conveyed by a particular food may be a nonverbal exchange between people at a meal or a social occasion. Certain foods may be absolutely essential on a particular occasion. For example, matzo (unleavened bread) must be served for Jewish Passover (Figure 2.11). Bread and wine are served to Christians at Communion as symbols of Christ's body.

Green tea prepared in the traditional Japanese tea ceremony conveys total welcome and hospitality to guests. Wassail is a traditional Christmas beverage in the United Kingdom that is served to welcome guests during the holidays. The specific foods and traditions vary greatly around the world. Some of these will be discussed in later chapters in this book. However, the importance of salt is sufficiently universal to all people that it warrants some attention here.

Salt

Salt, a simple yet essential part of the diet for people and animals, has been valued throughout the world for many centuries (Figure 2.12). The Romans were well aware of the importance of salt for their troops in their military conquests as they carved out their vast empire. Caesar's armies had persons responsible for making salt (by boiling down brine) for the troops. In remote Tibet during the time of Marco Polo (around 1300 CE), salt cakes served as the currency. The remains of Mayan salt-production facilities that have been excavated recently just off the coast of Belize provide evidence that salt was an important trade commodity in the Mayan Empire of Central America.

Chinese Emperor Yu, in 2200 BCE, attempted to control and tax salt in his domain. Throughout the centuries, taxes on salt have punctuated numerous political upheavals, including the French Revolution. Even in the 20th century, England's tax on salt in India and its ban on personal harvesting of salt from the sea triggered Mahatma Gandhi's famous 200-mile protest march to the sea in 1930.

Many American consumers today take salt for granted and always have it available when cooking and dining. However, some entrepreneurial salt manufacturers are marketing such unique salt products as sel gris (gray salt) from France and Hawaiian black and red (sulfur and iron overtone, respectively) salts. Although the colors of these specialty salts are due to impurities present during crystallization of the salt (sodium chloride crystals are pure white), some gourmets attach such significance to the impurities that they are willing to pay a premium for them.



FIGURE 2.11 Matzo (unleavened thin and cracker-like bread) is an essential food in the Jewish celebration of Passover.