

DIGITAL DINING TABLES: VISUAL CONSUMPTION OF CINEMATIC GASTRONOMY ON INSTAGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between cinema and gastronomy is established not only on a visual and aesthetic level but also through cultural and sensory experiences. While cinema represents social values, identities, and emotions through food scenes, gastronomy functions as a carrier of narrative and a complementary element of atmosphere in cinema. This study examines the content production strategies and transmedia narrative practices of an Instagram account called “@sinegastro”, which brings together the themes of cinema and gastronomy in digital and physical media. The aim of the study is to reveal, through the example of sinegastro, how the interaction between cinema and gastronomy is represented in social media environments, what kinds of narrative forms these content production strategies generate, and how these practices shape the dimensions of audience engagement. In this study, a mixed-methods approach was employed, primarily utilizing qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis, to examine both online and offline participatory experiences through content that thematically combines cinema and gastronomy. The limitation of the study is that it is based on the analysis conducted on the Instagram contents of the sinegastro account, which is the sample of the study, and especially the Reels videos that have exceeded 1 million views. The study finds that food has been transformed from being merely a physical object of consumption into a visual and cultural representation through social media. The fact that the sinegastro account produces content on specific special days (such as the birth or death anniversaries

of artists) based on nostalgia and emotional connection demonstrates that the platform pursues a strategic publishing policy. In addition, cinema-gastronomy-themed physical events developed under the title “Movie Tasting” extend digital content beyond its boundaries and transfer it into the realm of physical experience. In this context, the sinegastro account functions not only as a social media content provider but also as a transmedia platform that integrates cinematic narrative with multisensory gastronomic experiences. The findings are significant for understanding the modes of reproduction of popular culture objects in new media environments and the multilayered forms of interaction established with audiences.

Keywords: *Cinema and gastronomy, Transmedia, Sinegastro, Cinema and food, Instagram.*

DİJİTAL SOFRALAR: SİNEMATİK GASTRONOMİNİN INSTAGRAM'DA GÖRSEL TÜKETİMİ

ÖZ

Sinema ve gastronomi arasındaki ilişki, yalnızca görsel bir estetik düzlemde değil, aynı zamanda kültürel ve duyuşsal deneyimler üzerinden kurulmaktadır. Sinema, yemek sahneleri aracılığıyla toplumsal değerleri, kimlikleri ve duyguları temsil ederken; gastronomi de sinemada anlatının taşıyıcısı ve atmosferin tamamlayıcısı bir unsur olarak işlev görmektedir. Bu çalışma, sinema ve gastronomi temalarını dijital ve fiziksel mecralarda bir araya getiren bir Instagram hesabı olan “@sinegastro”nun içerik üretim stratejilerini ve transmedya anlatı pratiklerini incelemektedir. Çalışmanın amacı, sinegastro örneği üzerinden sinema ve gastronomi etkileşiminin sosyal medya ortamlarında nasıl temsil edildiğini, içerik üretim stratejilerinin hangi anlatı biçimlerini ortaya çıkardığını ve bu pratiklerin izleyiciyle kurulan etkileşim boyutlarını ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmada, sinema ve gastronomiyi tematik olarak birleştiren içerikler üzerinden hem çevrimiçi hem de çevrimdışı katılım deneyimlerini incelemeyi mümkün kılan karma yöntem yaklaşımı çerçevesinde, ağırlıklı olarak nitel içerik analizi ve tematik analiz yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın kısıtlılığı, çalışmanın örnekleme olan sinegastro hesabının Instagram içerikleri ve özellikle 1 milyon izlenmeyi aşan Reels videoları üzerinden yürütülen incelemeye dayanmasıdır. Çalışmada, yemek olgusunun yalnızca fiziksel bir tüketim nesnesi olmaktan çıkarak sosyal medya aracılığıyla görsel ve kültürel bir

temsile dönüştüğü saptanmıştır. “sinegastro” hesabının belirli özel günlerde (sanatçıların doğum ya da ölüm yıldönümleri gibi) nostalji ve duygusal bağ üzerinden içerik üretmesi, platformun stratejik bir yayın politikası izlediğini göstermektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, “Movie Tasting” adı altında geliştirilen sinema-gastronomi temalı fiziksel etkinlikler dijital içeriklerin sınırlarını aşarak fiziksel deneyim alanına taşınmasını sağlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda “sinegastro” hesabı yalnızca sosyal medyada içerik sunan bir hesap olmanın ötesine geçerek, sinema anlatısını çok duyulu gastronomik deneyimlerle bütünleştiren bir transmedya platformu işlevi görmektedir. Elde edilen bulgular, yeni medya ortamlarında popüler kültür nesnelerinin yeniden üretim biçimlerini ve izleyiciyle kurulan çok katmanlı etkileşim biçimlerini anlamak açısından önem taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Sinema ve gastronomi, Transmedya, Sinegastro, Sinema ve yemek, Instagram.*

INTRODUCTION

Mass media has undergone a profound transformation through the integration of the internet, one of the most significant technologies of the modern era. In today’s rapidly evolving digital environment, traditional media either adapt to this new landscape or are reshaped by it. This process has intensified the interaction among different media platforms, leading to the consumption-oriented reproduction of content through transmedia narratives.

Digitalization has increasingly blurred the boundaries between media types, and platform convergence has generated not only technical integration but also a transformation in the way audiences interact with media. As Jenkins (2016, pp. 29–36) emphasizes, convergence is a dynamic and continuously evolving process. In this context, transmedia emerges as one of the most effective storytelling strategies, with content now adaptable across cinema screens, digital displays, mobile devices, and print media. According to Koç-Kaplan and Yıldırım (2023, p. 484), such multi-platform compatibility strengthens and enhances content production and narrative delivery.

Transmedia refers to the process by which components of a narrative are presented across different media and constructed to form a coherent and meaningful whole (Karcı, 2019, p. 87). Nuno (2011, p. 3) describes it as a content production and distribution strategy that employs various storytelling and communication techniques to reach audiences within the natural flow of daily life. Jenkins (2016, pp. 144–145) defines transmedia as the creation of narratives across media platforms that offer new and valuable contributions to the story as

a whole. Scolari (2009, p. 587) further emphasizes that transmedia storytelling is not merely the transfer or adaptation of content from one medium to another, but a process of enriching the narrative across multiple media. This participatory dimension facilitates a culture in which audiences are not passive recipients but active contributors to content creation. While Jenkins (2006) provides the foundational framework of convergence culture, subsequent scholarship has broadened the understanding of transmedia storytelling in significant ways. Carlos A. Scolari (2009) argues that transmedia narratives create implicit consumers who actively navigate across platforms, engaging with narrative worlds that expand through diverse media and branding strategies. Marie-Laure Ryan (2004), in *Narrative Across Media*, emphasizes that transmedia should be seen as a form of intermediality, where each medium contributes its own semiotic resources to the overall narrative experience. Christy Dena (2009) further develops this perspective by theorizing transmedia practice as the systematic expression of fictional worlds across distinct media environments, highlighting the role of design and strategy in orchestrating audience participation. Taken together, these perspectives demonstrate that transmedia storytelling is not a unidimensional process but a multilayered cultural and communicative phenomenon, which provides a valuable framework for analyzing the cinema-gastronomy interactions presented in the *sinegastro* account.

The rise of Web 2.0 technologies has enabled users to actively engage in content production, information sharing, and collaborative processes (Yılmaz & Erdem, 2016, pp. 76–80). Henry Jenkins (2006), in his seminal work *Convergence Culture*, argues that the boundaries between old and new media are increasingly blurred, leading to a participatory culture in which audiences are no longer passive consumers but active contributors to media production and circulation. In parallel, José van Dijck (2013) highlights in *The Culture of Connectivity* how social media platforms have reshaped communication logics by embedding cultural practices within the infrastructures of connectivity, visibility, and algorithmic control. Complementing these perspectives, Manuel Castells (2009) in *Communication Power* emphasizes the transformative role of digital networks in redefining power relations through information flows, collective participation, and networked communication. Taken together, these approaches provide a critical framework for understanding how digital environments such as Instagram not only mediate cultural representations but also enable new forms of participatory engagement around cinema and gastronomy. As Kucur (2018, p. 94) notes, within such narrative structures, audiences interact with each other to access all layers of a story world, forming a collective knowledge network that adds indirect value to the media industry.

The study titled “Digital Dining Tables: Visual Consumption Of Cinematic Gastronomy On Instagram” exemplifies the transmedia concept, illustrating a structure in which audiences become active participants rather than passive consumers of narrative worlds. According to Dönmez and Güler (2016, p. 161), stories traditionally transmitted face-to-face transform into holistic narratives composed of multiple components and disseminated across various platforms through transmedia. Cinema, as a traditional mass communication medium, now interacts with emerging communication technologies to reach audiences via diverse media and formats. The rapid development of the internet and the growing popularity of digital platforms have accelerated the evolution of cinema into a transmedia storytelling form, wherein cinematic content is reproduced across different digital environments and shared by users in multiple ways.

This study aims to examine how the interaction between cinema and gastronomy is represented in the digital media context through the case of *sinegastro*. It also analyzes the narrative forms emerging from content production processes and discusses the interactive dimensions these practices establish with audiences within an analytical framework.

In addition to the existing discussions on media convergence and participatory culture, it is essential to emphasize that previous studies provide critical but partial perspectives. For instance, Jenkins (2006), Scolari (2009), and van Dijck (2013) offer foundational insights into convergence culture, transmedia storytelling, and social media dynamics; however, the intersection of these frameworks with gastronomy remains relatively underexplored. To situate the analysis of *sinegastro* within broader academic debates, this study also draws upon cultural studies (Hall, 1997; Storey, 2018), digital media research (Castells, 2009; van Dijck, 2013), and gastronomy-centered cultural scholarship (Parasecoli, 2008; Bower, 2004). By integrating these perspectives, the article not only expands beyond descriptive analysis but also strengthens its conceptual contribution to the literature.

The central problem of the study lies in the insufficient exploration of how creative content that brings together cinema and gastronomy in digital environments is produced and consumed in relation to user engagement, cultural representations, and transmedia narratives. In particular, the question of why certain contents produced in short audiovisual formats such as Instagram Reels receive high engagement while others achieve lower visibility emerges as an issue that requires investigation in terms of cultural context, the effect of nostalgia, visual-textual narrative strategies, posts coinciding with special occasions, and social media “click factors” (visibility, personal preference,

algorithmic orientation, etc.). Within this scope, the research encompasses both qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the content produced on the sinegastro Instagram account: alongside visual, auditory, and textual elements of Reels videos, the use of hashtags and captions, food-scene pairings, themes of nostalgia and cultural memory, and representations of local identity are analyzed as qualitative aspects, while quantitative data such as views, likes, comments, and shares are also evaluated. Moreover, the analysis extends beyond online content to include offline events such as “Movie Tasting” and “Climax,” thereby broadening the scope within a transmedia narrative framework.

Within the broader field of cultural studies, the concepts of representation, identity, and cultural memory provide an essential framework for understanding the intersection of cinema and gastronomy in digital environments. Stuart Hall (1997) emphasizes that representation is not merely a reflection of reality but a constitutive process through which meanings are produced and circulated in culture. In this sense, food scenes in cinema and their digital reproductions on platforms such as Instagram can be regarded as cultural signifiers that shape and negotiate identities. Similarly, Raymond Williams (1974) highlights how television and by extension visual media functions as a cultural technology that organizes everyday life and social practices, a perspective that resonates with today’s digital platforms. John Storey (2018) further develops this line of thought by linking popular culture to processes of consumption, meaning-making, and collective memory. Together, these cultural studies perspectives strengthen the theoretical grounding of this research by situating the case of sinegastro within broader debates on representation, popular culture, and mediated cultural practices.

The originality of this research lies in its examination of how digital content combining cinema and gastronomy is produced, represented, and consumed on audiovisual-based social media platforms such as Instagram. Moving beyond studies that focus solely on thematic analysis, this study adopts a mixed-methods approach that integrates qualitative content and thematic analysis with quantitative engagement metrics, including views, likes, comments, and shares. The analysis investigates visual, auditory, textual, and cultural elements of Reels videos, incorporating features such as hashtag usage, descriptive language, and scene selection to derive interpretive insights. Themes such as nostalgia, cultural memory, and local identity are systematically categorized to provide an in-depth understanding of the content’s cultural context (Krippendorff, 2018; Braun & Clarke, 2006), while quantitative metrics are analyzed to assess audience reach and viral potential (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Furthermore, by evaluating online content alongside offline experiences, such as “Movie Tasting” and

“Climax,” the study introduces a transmedia narrative perspective, emphasizing multi-platform storytelling and the experiential dimension of audience participation (Jenkins, 2006). Overall, this interdisciplinary approach contributes to the literature on digital culture studies, gastronomy communication, social media engagement strategies, and transmedia storytelling, providing both theoretical insights and methodological guidance for future research on the intersection of content production and audience engagement.

THE EVOLUTION OF CINEMA, A TRADITIONAL MASS COMMUNICATION TOOL, INTO A NEW MASS COMMUNICATION MEDIUM

Cinema has been directly affected by social changes and transformations from past to present, and has transformed these into artistic expression. It is one of the important tools that reflect the social, political, economic, and cultural structure of society (Aktürk, 2019, p. 97). The journey of cinema, which began with the Lumière Brothers’ mass film screenings using their cinematograph device, continues with the tradition of the silver screen, but today it is undergoing a transformation through integration with various technological developments.

The adventure of cinema, which began with the projection of images onto the silver screen through a projector, entered a process of transformation with the invention of television and the introduction of broadcasting into homes. The integration of television into daily life in the 1950s created a serious competitor for cinema. This development caused movie theaters to lose their audiences. The cinema industry, in turn, began to develop new technologies and produce alternative solutions in order to win back its audience. Cinema, which had played an important role in social communication until the 1950s, gradually ceded its functions of socialization, entertainment, and mass interaction to television (Önbayrak, 2011, p. 359). The increase in demand for television has been associated with individuals gaining the opportunity to watch content in their comfort zones. As a result, television programs, series, and films began to be broadcast, and even special films started being produced specifically for television. In this context, *Talk Faster, Mister*, produced in 1944, was recorded as the first television movie. Over time, the development of internet technologies has triggered the transformation of traditional mass media. The cinema industry in particular has been significantly affected by internet-based technologies, both in terms of content production and audience habits. Digital platforms have emerged as one of the key driving forces behind this technological transformation. Digital broadcasting, which encompasses these platforms,

involves moving away from analog broadcasting methods in favor of digital approaches. It is defined as the transmission of sound, images, and other communication elements to digital media via computers and the internet. Initially coming into contact with television in the 1980s, digital broadcasting gradually increased its influence, eventually giving rise to digital platforms (Sarı & Sancaklı, 2020, p. 248). Today, television and cinema content reaches wide audiences not only through traditional media but also via digital broadcasting services. In addition to global platforms such as Netflix, Disney Plus, Amazon Prime, and Hulu, local digital broadcasting services such as Tabii, Exxen, Gain, MUBI, and BluTV in the case of Turkey have become significant actors in content production. This development illustrates that traditional media tools are undergoing digitalization, adapting to new communication technologies, and experiencing structural transformation within the media field. Personalized content consumption, multi-screen experiences, and time-independent viewing habits offered by digital platforms are generating radical changes in how media is produced, distributed, and consumed. Consequently, the media ecosystem is evolving into a more fragmented, interactive, and user-oriented structure. This digital transformation is not limited to digital broadcasting platforms alone. Cinema-focused content produced by individual or collective actors on social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok creates an alternative space for production and sharing, where the transmedia narrative expands even further.

Transmedia narrative is basically defined as the dissemination of a story or theme across multiple platforms in such a way that each medium offers a unique narrative contribution (Jenkins, 2006). In this context, cinema-gastronomy pairings presented in short video formats (e.g., Reels) on Instagram or scene analyses, film reviews, and background stories on YouTube point to a multiple narrative universe where the viewer is not limited to the experience of watching a film but encounters different layers of information, emotions, and interpretations on the same theme. Platforms such as YouTube, in particular, nurture the critical media literacy of the audience with a wide range of content ranging from film analysis to theoretical discussions, from behind-the-scenes narratives to character analysis. In visually focused media such as Instagram, cinema representations are often visualized through cultural and emotional bonding strategies. A personal and nostalgic connection is established with the audience through aestheticized scenes, dishes, or lines attributed to the characters. These forms of production, unlike the traditional media system, are shaped by decentralized, participatory, and user-oriented structures. Therefore, today, the cinema narrative lives not only in the film itself but also in the

reproductions, interactive content, and experience-based activities related to that film on social media. This situation shows that cinema is being fragmented and reconstructed in the age of digitalization, both narratively and culturally, and these fragments are being circulated in new contexts on different platforms. Thus, platforms such as Instagram and YouTube are considered not only content distribution tools but also transmedia areas where the cinema narrative is reproduced, interpreted, and expanded.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CINEMA AND GASTRONOMY

The concept of gastronomy, derived from the ancient Greek words *gastro* and *nomos*, means "the science of the stomach" or "food belonging to the stomach" in Turkish. Having developed throughout the historical process, the concept of gastronomy today encompasses the relationship between food and culture, meal preparation processes, and the science of food (Kivela & Crotts, 2006, p. 355). The experience of food has always carried social meanings throughout history. Elements such as food scenes depicted on cave walls, symbolic meanings attributed to food in religious beliefs, and the economic value of food are considered social indicators of food. However, the discipline of sociology began addressing the social dimension of the food phenomenon only in the mid-20th century. Today, the experience of food is examined in relation to social variables such as culture, identity, gender, media, politics, and class. In this regard, the sociology of food can be regarded as a gradually developing field of research (Çetin, 2022, pp. 521–522). Food, which is expressed as culture itself in many sources, emphasizes sharing across different geographies and cultures (Montanari, 2006, p. xii). It is noted that food, in addition to being a cultural product, serves as a kind of code indicating certain judgments related to social relations, much like language (Lévi-Strauss, 1983, p. 10). Studies related to food culture are addressed across various disciplines such as philosophy, anthropology, history, cinema, sociology, and media studies (Gunkel, 2016, p. 246). While individuals develop their eating and drinking habits as part of the cultural structure they live in, they also become interested in different cuisines over time. The social and cultural meanings carried by food lead to its consideration as a status indicator and symbolic value. This symbolism is based not only on the content of food but also on its presentation. In this context, gastronomy becomes a multidimensional field that must be addressed in conjunction with disciplines such as sociology, art, and culture (Topçu, Kurtçu, & Erdönmez, 2021, p. 36). Food is referred to as a rich communication tool because what is consumed at the dinner table, how it is prepared, to whom it is

served, and who consumes it first all carry meaning and convey messages (Çaycı & Aktaş, 2018, pp. 712–717). The act of cooking has been increasingly emphasized as an artistic practice, particularly in the context of the gastronomic spectacle. As the creator of this art, the chef is often defined as an artist. This framing has paved the way for food and beverages to be aestheticized and, at the same time, transformed into objects of consumption. Aestheticized gastronomic displays are increasing in many areas from movies to advertising content, from television programs to food magazines and books, and from tables to restaurants and these representations are increasingly permeating everyday life. The role of eating and drinking rituals in delineating class differences contributes to the aestheticization of life through mass media and thus reaches broad audiences. Today, a chef is seen not only as someone distinguished by their cooking skills but also as someone who produces a work of art through the food they create (Yücel, 2004, pp. 70–73). Cinema, one of the most popular and powerful narrative tools of our time, influences audiences through its unique cinematographic language. This mass communication medium, which constructs narrative through sound and image, comes very close to representing reality (Çiçek, 2019, p. 25).

Gastronomy has long found a place in various branches of art. One of the art forms in which gastronomy is thematized or represented is cinema. Within the evolving and transforming technological conditions on a global scale, the phenomenon of food is represented and imbued with meaning in various ways through different media technologies. While written and printed media serve the function of transmitting and documenting information, food becomes tangible and transforms into a visual document through electronic visual technologies (e.g., photography). Verbal information flow is provided through auditory technologies (e.g., radio), and in cinema an audiovisual medium food becomes a narrative element, contributing to the storyline and capturing the audience's attention. In other audiovisual technologies such as television, food is presented to the masses as a performative element with functions including entertainment, advertising, marketing, and ratings (Alpyıldız, 2021, p. 200). The use of pornographic aesthetic elements and various visual effects in food photography shared on social media results in food being represented in an idealized and flawless manner. Such representations remove the dining experience from its real-life context and place it on an aestheticized and fictional plane, often accompanied by fantastical recipes and presentations that are difficult to replicate. This situation transforms the act of sharing food into a visual expression of certain lifestyles, consumption practices, and social statuses (Çaycı & Aktaş, 2018, p. 720). Thanks to the technological capabilities of cinema, gastronomy is

frequently represented as an aesthetic value. Through cinema, the director can convey messages to the audience via imagery, using cinematographic tools and symbols without necessarily resorting to verbal expression. One of these cinematic symbols is food, which is used as a cultural code and even as a form of language (Çinay & Sezerel, 2020, p. 112). Gastronomy-themed films, which can be defined as films focusing on the acts of cooking and eating, possess certain defining characteristics. Kanık lists these features as follows (Kanık, Gastro Cinema, 2018, pp. 72–78):

-The narrative structure is often shaped around a story related to a kitchen or food.

-The main characters position themselves directly in relation to food within this narrative.

-The act of eating transcends the basic need of nourishment and offers a space for social analysis in terms of both content and form.

-The visual narrative in the film centers on all stages of food preparation and consumption; in this process, food becomes the focal point of the narrative and the star of the film.

The food scenes or food-related themes in films vary depending on the narrative language. Through the food representations chosen by the director, interaction with the audience can be enhanced (Kanık, 2018, pp. 18–30). Cinema, which has the capacity to present visual spectacles drawn from daily life, also carries meanings related to food culture (Çakır, Şengül, & Parmaksızoğlu, 2020, p. 3174). In cinema, food may sometimes appear as a secondary element, while at other times it becomes the central theme that forms the narrative axis. Although food often appears as a visual element fulfilling the basic needs of individuals, it can also signal multiple layers of meaning beyond this primary function when considered in relation to the main theme. As an important part of culture, food encompasses many shared clusters of meaning from a sociological perspective. In this regard, viewers do not merely observe a food scene on screen; they also interpret the cultural and social references that are implicitly embedded in the scene (Kanık, 2016, p. 85). The first food-related story in the history of cinema is the Lumière Brothers' film *Baby's Lunch* (1895), which includes footage of a baby eating lunch (Bower & Piontek, 2013, p. 177). This documentary-style film has gone down in history as the first instance of gastronomy intersecting with cinema. Another early example of gastronomic representation in cinema is the short silent documentary *Cheese Mites* (1903) by Charles Urban. During the silent film era, when film production gained significant momentum, food

representations were primarily used as elements of physical humor and visual comedy. In the films of iconic actors such as Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy, and Buster Keaton, food scenes were frequently employed to generate humor through body language, gestures, and facial expressions (Drzał-Sierocka, 2015, p. 55).

When the relationship between food and cinema is evaluated historically, food-themed films can be classified into three categories: those that are obsessed with food, those that are centered on food, and those in which food is the main theme. Examples of food-themed films from the pre-1980 period include *The Battleship Potemkin* (Sergey Eisenstein, 1925) and *Rome, Open City* (Roberto Rossellini, 1945). Beginning in the 1970s, there has been a noticeable increase in films where food constitutes the central theme of the narrative. In productions from this period, food is presented not only as a physical element but also as a carrier of political, social, and cultural meanings. One notable example is *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (Luis Buñuel, 1972), in which food functions as a political symbol, making the film one of the seminal works in the context of cinema and food (Uca, 2021, p. 81). In recent years, not only fictional food films but also documentary food films have shown remarkable development. These documentary productions are significant in that they cover all stages of the food system from production to consumption. Unlike fictional food films, documentaries, due to their nature and objectives, more clearly emphasize the meanings attributed to food and often focus on issues such as hunger. In this regard, cinema and television have increasingly begun to serve functional roles in promoting a food-based sustainable future (Alpyıldız, 2024, p. 96). Especially in the post-2010 period, rapid developments in digital media technologies and the proliferation of global digital platforms (particularly OTT services such as Netflix) have enabled the encouragement of local content production from diverse geographies. This has led to a significant expansion not only in production forms but also in thematic diversity. Gastronomy-themed content stands out as one of the most prominent examples of this diversification. Netflix's "Food Show" category includes productions such as *Somebody Feed Phil*, *Garnachas: Glorious Street Food!*, and *Midnight Diner: Tokyo Stories*, which introduce viewers not only to food cultures but also to the sociocultural dynamics, traditional lifestyles, and local identities of the communities represented. Thanks to the global reach of digital platforms, such content also contributes to the international recognition of local gastronomic cultures and supports their use as tools of cultural diplomacy. Thus, digital platforms serve not only as entertainment providers but also as mediums that enhance the visibility of cultural diversity and reproduce cultural representation practices through

gastronomy in the digital cultural environment. In this context, the polyphonic narrative structure made possible by digital media positions gastronomy not only as an object of consumption but also as a multi-layered representational field related to identity, belonging, and cultural memory. Cooking and eating scenes in films that foreground food imagery support the narrative as cinematographic tools. In some cases, food becomes a character in its own right or even the narrative itself.

Turkish cinema has included various representations of food since the early periods of its development. However, the first example in which gastronomy and food culture were treated as the central theme of a film is *Zengin Mutfağı* (1988), directed by Başar Sabuncu (Çinay & Sezerel, 2020, p. 112). In more recent Turkish cinema, *Sofra Sırları* (2017), directed by Ümit Ünal, stands out as another significant local production notable for its prominent use of food scenes.

One of the key concepts that define the relationship between mass media and gastronomy is gastro media. Gastro media refers to media activities that convey food and beverage-themed content to a wide audience. Television, as highlighted by Qian Gong, is an important component of food media. It produces numerous visual images related to food and integrates gastronomy into popular culture. In this context, various cooking programs are broadcast on television, and the number of such programs continues to increase. Through these programs, the cultural structures of societies regarding food and drink are shaped on a global scale (Gong, 2013, pp. 130–131). In cinematic narratives centered on human life, food, as an inseparable part of daily existence, occupies a prominent place. Incorporating individuals' eating routines into the cinematic narrative enhances the level of realism in films and enables a stronger connection with the audience. In this regard, food is regarded not only as thematic content but also as a form of cinematic expression. An examination of food scenes in films reveals that food is often used as a powerful and multi-layered narrative device. These scenes can include symbolic representations of different societies and cultures. Additionally, food is associated with various concepts such as power, romance, social status, and cultural identity. In this respect, it adds narrative depth and complexity to cinematic storytelling (Uçkan Çakır, Şengül, & Parmaksızoğlu, 2020, p. 3175).

In the context of the relationship between gastronomy and cinema, new concepts are being introduced into the literature. One of the most prominent among these is cinegastronomy. In parallel with contemporary new media technologies, food culture has become increasingly diverse on social media, and cinema one of the key visual media forms has played an important role in this diversification. As a cultural and ideological medium, cinema influences not only individuals and

societies but also gastronomy and eating habits. The concept of cinegastronomy represents a new formation that articulates the convergence between cinema and gastronomy. It offers an innovative experience that enables individuals to both enjoy the art of cinema and explore the field of gastronomy. Gastronomy and cinema interact on multiple levels, including experience, visuality, creativity, and cultural meaning (Doğan, 2024, pp. 2–3). According to Doğan, the concept of cinegastronomy suggests that individuals engage with and are shaped by popular culture products in their cultural and social lives.

Beyond the technological and narrative dimensions of transmedia, gastronomy itself should be understood as a cultural and symbolic practice deeply embedded in media representations. Fabio Parasecoli (2008) highlights how food operates as a central element of popular culture, functioning not only as nourishment but also as a site where pleasure, desire, and identity are negotiated. Deborah Lupton (1996) similarly emphasizes the intimate connection between food, the body, and the self, framing culinary practices as arenas where social values, health norms, and cultural meanings intersect. Anne Bower (2004), in *Reel Food*, specifically situates food within cinematic narratives, arguing that food scenes in film both reflect and reshape cultural memories and social identities. Taken together, these perspectives demonstrate that gastronomy in media cannot be reduced to aesthetic spectacle; rather, it constitutes a layered field of cultural production and representation. This framework is particularly relevant to the case of sinegastro, where cinematic food scenes are not only reproduced digitally but also reinterpreted as cultural texts that engage audiences across platforms.

ANALYSIS: FROM THE WHITE SCREEN TO DIGITAL SCREENS-REPRODUCING CINEMA FOOD SCENES ON INSTAGRAM

In the pre-digital era, social life was constructed and reproduced through physical spaces such as schools, markets, mosques, churches, hospitals, coffeehouses, and streets. However, in the digital age, this construction process takes place and is reproduced in digital media, especially on social media platforms. In this context, the spectacle corresponds to the forms of sociality that are shaped and reconstructed through social media and other digital environments. The most common way to be included in the society of the spectacle is through the act of consumption (Debord, 2012, p. 65).

The concept of gastro-space offers a multi-layered representational area that conveys political, social, and economic messages to society through food, while also carrying visual and cultural codes. Food itself has always played a central

role in the production of popular culture and has emerged as a cultural object, as it contains attractive elements such as pleasure, desire, entertainment, and consumption. Various communication channels such as television, radio, cinema, print publications, and especially new media serve as important tools in making food cultures visible. In this context, addressing the intersection of food culture and popular culture within a theoretical framework makes it possible to understand cultural mechanisms more deeply and to question and reconstruct the phenomenon of cultural change at a conceptual level. On the other hand, the positioning of social media as a space for socializing and entertainment has paved the way for sharing photos of food and drinks. This situation not only increases interaction between individuals but also allows for the promotion of dishes from different cultures and the discovery of new gastronomic venues. The visual appeal of food photos shared on social media platforms and the inherent pleasure that food evokes ensure that such content attracts others and facilitates social engagement. Additionally, sharing positive experiences about gastro-venues on social media encourages users to develop a desire to visit and experience these places themselves. All these dynamics clearly reveal that food is not merely a biological necessity but also a multidimensional means of communication and cultural interaction (Çaycı & Aktaş, 2018, pp. 712–713).

In parallel with the development of media technologies and the growing demand for media content, cooking programs are becoming localized and culturally hybridized in the process of globalization. In this way, the food economy is also globalizing (Kanık, 2016, pp. 237–256). Social media is one of the most effective platforms for gastronomy, especially in line with changing consumption habits (Çelen & Tuna, 2018, p. 412). Popular culture is defined as a form of spectacle built on dreams and desires. In modern Western popular culture, food contains certain codes that carry symbolic meanings and influence individuals' perception processes. The widespread and ubiquitous nature of these cultural elements renders their ideological and political dimensions invisible. Thus, these signifiers dissolve into the natural fabric of daily life. To understand the globalized consumer society of the 20th century, it is necessary to analyze the cultural conflicts that arise from differing perspectives between the individual, family, society, and economy. In this context, it is important to clarify in what sense the concept of “popular culture” is addressed in this study. Popular culture encompasses all cultural phenomena, material objects, practices, social relations, and forms of thought that are designed, produced, distributed, and consumed in a market-oriented environment. Various media platforms cinema, television series, books, magazines, comics, music videos, blogs, and social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook where visual and audio

content with food themes is presented, shaped by consumer perceptions and socio-political attitudes, function as important communication tools that enhance the visibility of food in the public sphere.

The content on these platforms contributes not only to nutritional practices but also to cultural representation, identity construction, and consumer culture. Therefore, examining the intersections between food culture and popular culture from a theoretical perspective allows for a more comprehensive understanding of cultural mechanisms. In addition, such analyses make it possible to conceptually examine, redefine, and update the phenomenon of cultural change in a contemporary context (Parasecoli, 2008, pp. 4–8).

Today, on Instagram, one of the most popular social media platforms, food content is becoming a trend by being displayed as objects. As consumers of popular culture, individuals now upload visual images of food to social media before tasting it in order to catch the trend (Çaycı, 2019, p. 134). While food was once consumed solely as a physical necessity, today it is often consumed visually and symbolically as an object of popular culture. Food content, especially that displayed on social media platforms, circulates not only as a means of nutrition but also as aestheticized and meaningful cultural representations. These forms of representation become part of a wider cultural production network by being inspired by food scenes and gastronomic images in cinema narratives. Thanks to increasing transmedia narratives, the interaction between cinema and gastronomy has strengthened; these two areas have been reinterpreted in popular culture and transformed into new content forms that reach consumers through digital media. Thus, food has evolved into a cultural object on both a visual and narrative level.

In this section of the study titled “*Digital Dining Tables: Visual Consumption of Cinematic Gastronomy on Instagram*”, the Instagram account named “sinegastro” is examined as a sample. The founder and writer of the account is Selçuk Uzman. The channel shares creative content that combines cinema and gastronomy. It has an average of 312,000 followers and follows 520 accounts. While the account owner defines himself as the blog writer, the description section includes the Turkish phrase “Sinemadaki Gastronomi,” the English translation “Gastronomy in Movie,” along with 🎬 and 🍷 emojis. Additionally, at the bottom of the description section, there are links to other accounts belonging to the Instagram user, such as “@filmdekindenlutfen” and “@drukcffee.co shop.” The account presents content that features cooking and eating scenes from both domestic and international films and TV series. As of June 25, 2025, the account has a total of 803 posts, with the first one published on April 15, 2021. The post reads: “*Dish name: Mac and Cheese. Movie: Once*

Upon a Time in Hollywood (2019).” The description of the Reels video states: “Let’s face it, it was the best cooking scene of 2019. And Tarantino makes Brad Pitt do it in the dirtiest, simplest, and sexiest way. A package of pasta and cheddar salt is enough for this. No oil, no tomato paste, no vegetables, not even a plate; none of that fancy stuff. But who wouldn’t want to try this simplicity at the first opportunity after watching this iconic scene? And to enjoy it even better by diving into the teflon with a fork! #bradpitt #margotrobbie #leonardodicaprio #quentintarantino #macandcheese #cheesesauce #pasta #onceuponatimeinhollywood #hungrymovies #hungryscenes”. The post consists of a video showing the cooking and eating of mac and cheese from the film, followed by a photo of a package of cheddar cheese when swiped. The account’s first post received 29 likes and 1 share but no comments. This inaugural post of the “sinegastro” Instagram account reproduces the thematic relationship between cinema and gastronomy using the aesthetic codes of digital culture. Based on the cooking scene in Quentin Tarantino’s *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* (2019), it serves as an example of how cinematic narratives are reflected in everyday consumption practices. The post exemplifies how visual culture aestheticizes the ordinary, eroticizes the act of cooking in cinema, and references cultural memory by labeling the scene as “iconic.” The language used in the post is informal and shaped by a popular, sincere tone rather than an academic one. However, this stylistic choice is deliberate, aiming to create a sense of closeness and shareability for the follower. The food scene free from “visual excesses” like oil, tomato paste, or plates is also associated with the concept of “minimalist pleasure” in modern consumer culture. Thus, the post offers not only a scene analysis but also a lifestyle and aesthetic preference.

The study examined 803 Reels videos, and analyzed 74 videos in detail, each with over 1 million views. This selection was specifically designed to be aggregated to understand the high levels of engagement and viewership. The analysis of the selected examples focused not only on the stored data but also on the visual, textual, and cultural elements of the content. For example, the content’s descriptions, hashtags, scene selections, audiovisual narratives, and cultural contexts were analyzed in detail. This allowed for a detailed assessment of the content’s performance in terms of both digital freedoms and the viewer experience and cultural representation.

This table was created by combining the use of thematic content and user interaction. Its primary purpose is to reveal which content is more effective in terms of cultural, visual, and social media.

Table 1: *Thematic category of the sinegastro Instagram account*

Reels name	Views	Like	Comment	Share
Food: Kuzu Sarma (Lamb Wrap) Movie: <i>Bir Zamanlar Anadolu’da</i> (2010)	1.3 M	26.3K	197	412
Food: Çizburger (Cheeseburger) Movie: <i>The Menu</i> (2022)	1 M	23K	129	175
Food: Kuru Fasulye (White Beans) Movie: <i>Hayat Bilgisi</i> (2003)	1.6. M	15.5K	163	53
Food: Yaprak Sarma (Stuffed Grape Leaves) Movie: <i>Issız Adam</i> (2008)	3 M	131K	889	1900
Food: Zeytinyağı (Olive oil) Series: <i>Mo</i> (2022)	1.3 M	34.8K	54	54
Food: Karakovan Balı (Black Hive Honey) Movie: <i>Bir Zamanlar Anadolu’da</i> (2011)	1.2 M	24.8K	234	305
Food: Bardaki Beyefendinin İkramı (Treat from the Gentleman at the Bar) Sketch: <i>The Tonight Show</i> (2019)	1.3 M	64.7K	266	4525
Food: Whopper Movie: <i>The Terminal</i> (2004)	1.3 M	38.4K	241	501
Food: Portakallı Kek (Orange Cake) Series: <i>Bir Başkadır</i> (2020)	1.1 M	48.2K	260	1082
Food: Biber Dolması & Rakı (Stuffed Peppers & Raki)	2 M	64K	619	6314

Movie: <i>Duvara Karşı</i> (2004)				
Food: Dil Balığı (Sole Meuniere)	1.3 M	34.9K	167	5662
Movie: <i>Julie & Julie</i> (2009)				
Drink: Süt (Milk)	2.7 M	40.2K	342	6317
Movie: <i>Inglourious Basterds</i>				
Food: Pain au chocolat	1 M	21.4K	79	2213
Series: <i>Emily in Paris</i> (2020)				
Drink: Kırmızı Şarap (Red wine)	3.3 M	93.8K	440	44.3K
Movie: <i>Siyah Beyaz</i> (2010)				
Food: Su Böreği & Votka- Kola (Water Borek & Vodka-Cola)	1.5 M	17.2K	139	8040
Movie: <i>Ne Olacak Şimdi</i> (1979)				
Food: Kokoreç (Kokorec)	1.6 M	75.7K	422	14.6K
Movie: <i>Issız Adam</i> (2008)				
Food: Tereyağı (Butter)	1 M	29.1K	61	3315
Movie: <i>Hababam Sınıfı Uyanıyor</i>				
Drink :Bira & Antep Fıstığı (Beer and Pistachios)	3.3 M	58.7K	546	47K
Series: <i>Bizimkiler</i> (1989-2002)				
Drink: Türk Kahvesi (Turkish Coffee)	4 M	81.8K	259	18,4K
Series: <i>Muhteşem Yüzyıl</i>				
Food: Karnabahar (Cauliflower)	4.4 M	52.4K	294	41,1K
Series: <i>Yabancı Damat</i> (2004)				
Hayo Miyazaki	1.7 M	96K	510	21.1K
Food: Dolma (Filling)	22.6 M	325K	1351	35.9K
Movie: <i>Hanım</i> (1989)				

Food: Köpoğlu Mancası	1.3 M	28K	252	5952
Series: <i>İkinci Bahar</i> (1998)				
Food: Balkabağı Çorbası (Pumpkin Soup)	1 M	10.8K	215	3371
Series: <i>İnci Taneleri</i> (2024)				
Food: Bulgur Pilavı, Otlı Peynir (Bulgur Pilaf, Herbed Cheese)	1.1 M	11.7K	109	2868
Movie: <i>Hakkâri'de Bir Mevsim</i> (1983)				
Drink: Şarap & Rokfor Peyniri (Wine and Roquefort Cheese)	3 M	95.7K	788	30.5K
Movie: <i>Siyah Beyaz</i> (2010)				
Food: Lahmacun	2.7 M	53.8K	299	24.7K
Series: <i>Kuvvetli Bir Alkış</i> (2024)				
Food: Ramazan Pidesi (Ramadan Pita)	3.7 M	73.8K	197	23.9K
Series: <i>Avrupa Yakası</i>				
Food: Kıymalı Börek (Minced Meat Pie)	3.3 M	86.6K	423	11.8K
Series: <i>Bir Başkadır</i> (2020)				
Food: Türk Lokumu (Turkish Delight)	1.1 M	33K	307	11.1K
Movie: <i>The Chronicles of Narnia</i>				
Food: Kuzu Kol& Pilav (Lamb Leg & Rice)	2.2 M	32.2K	152	4704
Movie: <i>Neşeli Hayat</i> (2009)				
Food: Kuzu Pirzola (Lamb Chops)	2.8 M	28.1K	163	3845
Movie: <i>Nasipse Adayız</i> (2020)				
Food: Tulumba (Tulumba dessert)	7.6 M	122K	1126	90.6K

Film: <i>Milyarder</i> (1986)						
Food:	Fesleğenli Omlet	(Basil Omelet)	5.5 M	230K	268	27.5K
Movie: <i>Ratatulle</i> (2007)						
Food:	Kuru Fasulye	(White Beans)	3.6 M	71.4K	215	12.2K
Movie: <i>Piano Piano Bacaksız</i> (1991)						
Drink:Rakı (Raki)			3.1 M	54.8K	362	26.4K
Movie: <i>Masumiyet</i> (1997)						
Food: Tas Kebabı (Tas Kebab)			2.1 M	30.9K	707	8541
Movie: <i>Zavallılar</i> (1974)						
Food: Bakkal Kahvaltısı (Grocery Store Breakfast)			2.7 M	82.3K	224	9048
Movie: <i>Garip</i> (1986)						
Food:	Çilekli Dondurma	(Strawberry Ice Cream)	1.8 M	60.1K	187	14.4K
Movie: <i>Aftersun</i> (2002)						
Food: Çiğköfte& Mandalina (Raw Meatballs & Tangerine)			1.5 M	29.4K	196	4957
Movie: <i>Muhsin Bey</i> (1987)						
Drink: Martini			1.2 M	29.1K	80	7809
Movie: <i>A Simple Favor</i> (2018)						
Drink: Rakı & Kavun (Raki and Melon)			2.1 M	60.8K	192	18.5K
Series: <i>Behzat Ç.</i> (2022)						
Drink: Rakı (Raki)			1.7 M	48.9K	367	27.4K
Movie: <i>İstanbul Hatırası</i> (2005)						
Food: Cheeseburger			5.6 M	87.2K	681	20.2K

Movie: <i>The Menu</i> (2002)							
Food: Kum Midyeli Spagetti (Spaghetti with Clams)	1 M	9714	59	2403			
Movie: <i>Triangle of Sadness</i> (2002)							
Food: Turşu& Rakı (Pickles & Raki)	2.7 M	60.9K	99	4595			
Movie: <i>Neşeli Günler</i> (1978)							
Food: Krem Brüle (Creme Brulee)	1.8 M	41K	1141	12K			
Movie: <i>Amelie</i> (2001)							
<i>Kabakçının Hayatı</i>	1.7 M	96.3K	435	27.9K			
Drink: Bira+Cips 7 TL (Beer + Chips 7 TL)	3.2 M	65.4K	445	72.9K			
Series: <i>Behzat Ç.</i> (2010)							
Food: Cızlak (Cızlak)	1.4 M	15K	135	6237			
Series: <i>Gibi</i> (2021)							
Drink: Şırlı Şırlı Bira (Sparkling Beer)	4.8 M	55.4K	188	132K			
Series: <i>Bizimkiler</i>							
Food: Orkinos Sashimi (Tuna Sashimi)	1.2 M	13.7K	68	30.7K			
Series: <i>Ayak İşleri</i> (4.sezon)							
Drink: Rakı (Raki)	5.1 M	214K	773	71.2K			
Series: <i>Ezel</i>							
Food: Kuru Fasulye& Şarap (Beans & Wine)	3. 2 M	45.7K	251	8312			
Movie: <i>En Büyük Şaban</i> (19839)							
Food: Piliç Çevirme& Rakı (Roast Chicken & Raki)	1.6 M	25.9K	415	10.5K			
Movie: <i>Gemide</i> (1998)							

Drink: Beyaz Şarap (White Wine)	1.4 M	78.8K	111	12.2K
Movie: <i>Fakat Müzeyyen Bu Derin Bir Tutku</i> (2014)				
Food: Simit	2. 2 M	60.3K	656	7088
Movie: <i>Uçurtmayı Vurmasınlar</i> (1989)				
Food: Şarlot Pastası (Charlotte Cake)	3.4 M	37.8K	156	7292
Movie: <i>Bir Zamanlar Amerika</i>				
Food: Water Borek & Vodka-Cola	3.1 M	32.3K	232	11.4K
Movie: <i>Ne Olacak Şimdi</i> (1979)				
Food: Üzümlü Yulaf& Süt (Raisin Oatmeal)	1.1 M	10.3K	80	4214
Movie: <i>Umut Işığım</i> (2012)				
Food: Kaburga Dolma (Stuffed Ribs)	2.7 M	80.9K	366	25.5K
Movie: <i>Kurtlar Vadisi</i> (2003)				
Food: Kavurmalı Yumurta (Fried Eggs)	4.4 M	40.7K	638	9999
Movie: <i>Derman</i> (1983)				
Food: Bildircin Dolması (Stuffed Quail)	1 M	18.4K	114	5353
Series: <i>Muhteşem Yüzyıl</i> (2011)				
Food: Ramazan Pidesi (Ramadan Pita)	1.4 M	32.8K	105	15.9K
Series: <i>Avrupa Yakası</i> (2004)				
Food: Ruhsuz Bir Tabak (A Soulless Plate)	2.4 M	44.6K	99	11.8K
Movie: <i>Soul Kitchen</i> (2009)				

Food: Sarının Çorbası (Yellow's Soup)	1 M	16.9K	157	3325
Movie: <i>Masumiyet</i> (1997)				
Food: Mercimek Çorbası (Lentil Soup)	1.9 M	26.3K	217	2211
Movie: <i>Düştürü Dünya</i> (1988)				
Food: Yeni Börek (New Borek)	2.3 M	72.5K	217	51K
Series: <i>Gibi</i> (6. Sezon)				
Food: Rakıli Makılı Kahvaltı (Breakfast with Rakı)	1.4 M	28.9K	182	12.9K
Movie: <i>Gemide</i> (1998)				
Food: Et Köftesi& Rakı (Meatballs & Rakı)	2.8 M	48.8K	366	22.9K
Movie: <i>Çöpçüler Kralı</i> (1978)				
Food: Patates Sulusu (Potato Juice)	4.2 M	27K	624	41.1K
Movie: <i>Bereketli Topraklar Üstüne</i>				
Food: Kavurma (Roasting)	1.9 M	35.4K	102	21.4K
Movie: <i>Bizim Aile</i> (1975)				
Food: Karides Salatası (Shrimp Salad)	9.7 M	66.4K	273	27.6K
Movie: <i>Allied</i> (2016)				
<i>Şeflerin Aşkı</i>	1 M	31.8K	280	13.3K

There are 74 Reels videos with over 1 million views on the “sinegastro” account. Reels videos that include food scenes from movies and TV series have titles such as “Food/Food/Drink” and “Movie/TV Series” as their covers. With these titles placed on the visual, brief information about the content is provided to the follower/viewer before the Reels video begins. The first of the posts with the

highest engagement was Dolma – *Hanım* (1989), which received 22.6 million views, 325K likes, 1.3K comments, and 35.9K shares. Respectively, Shrimp Salad – Allied (2016) received 9.7M views, 66K likes, 273 comments, and 27K shares; Tulumba – *Milyoner* (1986) received 7.6M views, 122K likes, 1.1K comments, and 90.6K shares; and Basil Omelette – *Ratatouille* (2007) received 5.5M views, 230K likes, and 27.5K shares. These posts are related to local films, nostalgia, or iconic animated movies that create an emotional connection. Additionally, the effect of cultural memory and nostalgia is evident in both the content and the engagement metrics. Local productions from the 70s, 80s, and 90s (*Masumiyet* (1997), *Bizimkiler*, *Ne Olacak Şimdi* (1979), *Milyoner* (1986)) also received high shares and comments.

This suggests that nostalgia is a driving force in digital media interactions. The statistical evaluation of the content success of the “sinegastro” Instagram channel, which has 312 thousand followers and 74 of its 803 posts exceeding 1 million views, is as follows: Considering the Instagram algorithm and the competition for content on the platform, approximately 9 out of every 100 posts going viral (1M+) is a high success rate. This rate shows that the channel is able to both capture audience habits and produce content that can stand out algorithmically. When this rate is evaluated in terms of the number of followers, 1 million or more views means a reach of more than three times the number of followers. This figure shows that the content not only reaches followers but also reaches a wider audience through discovery, hashtags, and sharing. This suggests that the channel's interaction power is high. The fact that 74 out of 803 posts went viral shows that, in addition to its experimental production, some of the channel's content (food-film pairing / drink-food pairing) features are successful. It is understood that the channel produces some content strategically, as some artists' Reels videos are shared on special days such as their death anniversaries or birthdays, and a text to this effect is included in the description. As a result of the statistical evaluation, the channel shows 9% success in going viral according to the number of followers and content, but the number of non-follower accesses is high, and it reaches the right target audience with the content produced.

Another striking point in Reels videos that have reached over 1 million viewers is the number of likes, comments, and shares. The Reels videos mentioned have achieved the highest interaction in terms of likes. Of the 74 posts, 4 exceeded 100 thousand likes, and 31 exceeded 50 thousand likes. The most liked content among the Reels videos is Dolma – *Hanım* (1989), which also has the most views, with 325 thousand likes. Of the 74 posts, 5 exceeded 50 thousand shares, and 39 exceeded 10 thousand shares. The most shared content among the videos is Şırlı Şırlı Beer – *Bizimkiler*, with 132 thousand shares. Another striking point about

this content is that the number of comments (188) is far behind other engagement metrics. The comment option has the lowest percentage of interaction. Out of 74 posts, only 3 have exceeded 1,000 comments, and 11 have exceeded 500 comments. The most commented content among the Reels videos is *Dolma – Hanım* (1989), with 1,351 comments. This data reveals that the content performs remarkably not only in terms of the number of views but also in terms of multiple forms of engagement. High rates of likes and shares indicate that the content establishes an emotional or nostalgic connection with the audience. However, the relatively low number of comments indicates that viewers are more passively participating. While this situation points to an important trend in terms of viewer behavior on Instagram, it also reveals that interaction dynamics on the platform should be evaluated multidimensionally. Another statistically noteworthy aspect is that some content with high engagement rates is shared again in the Reels format. For example, items like *Cheeseburger – The Menu* and *Stuffed Peppers – Duvara Karşı* were published twice. In addition, multiple Reels content based on different food and drink scenes were produced for some movies that attracted great attention from the audience. For example, various scenes from the movie *Bir Zamanlar Anadolu’da* were used in different posts. This shows that the content creator is closely following audience trends and optimizing their content strategy by recirculating themes with high engagement potential. Selecting different scenes from the same film and re-editing them highlights the cinematic diversity of the gastronomic narrative, while resharing aims to keep the digital audience's attention alive and increase algorithm-based visibility. This strategy can be considered an important practice in terms of creating sustainable interaction on visual-oriented platforms such as Instagram.

When the Reels videos shared on the Instagram account named “sinegastro” and viewed over 1 million times were examined, it was observed that there were certain structural similarities in the description sections of the content. In these posts, the descriptions are usually in the form of long paragraphs, and the visual content of the video is first described textually, followed by information about the name of the relevant film, its director, and its historical context. At the end of the description texts, a number of hashtags (#), ranging from 4 to 10, are used with the aim of making the content more visible to the Instagram algorithm. This shows that gastronomy-themed content is structured not only for aesthetic or cultural purposes but also strategically in line with digital media dynamics. Thus, the “sinegastro” account constructs its content production at the intersection of cinema and gastronomy not only at the visual but also at the textual level, and actively uses the discovery logic of the digital platform to increase audience interaction.

Each post is paired with a food moment from a movie scene. While the viewer visually watches the food associated with the scene, both cultural memory and taste are appealed to through text and sound. This method can be seen as an example of a transmedia narrative; food, cinema, and social media converge. Many of the posts that receive high views and shares are commented on for the fact that the use of long explanations and literary expressions parallel to the visual, hashtags, and text influence the audience. This shows that the posts are not only "informative" but also "narrative" in nature. Although hashtag use is limited, the narrative and scene context encourage sharing the content. In order to increase interaction and expand visibility, both Turkish and English hashtags are included in the posts. However, the fact that the explanatory texts are prepared only in Turkish limits the accessibility of the content at an international level. Adding English translations of the descriptions can expand digital reach so that international users can better understand and interact with the content of the post. While the use of multilingual hashtags facilitates the inclusion of content in algorithmic circulation, the reliance of text content solely on the local language (Turkish) can create a gap in meaning for global users. Considering that not only the visual but also the textual aspects of digital content have the capacity to generate interaction, choosing bilingual expression in the description section can turn into a holistic approach that supports the platform's internationalization strategy as well as expanding the audience base.

When looking at the gastronomic representations in Reels videos, traditional dishes (stuffed vegetables, beans, kavurma) receive higher interaction, while scenes featuring international cuisine also attract attention. Apart from food performances, drink pairings (rakı, wine) also receive high interaction. This is related to the social identity construction of food and drink culture. The food and drink scenes included in the posts go beyond being just a visual narrative element and become aestheticized consumption images through the explanatory texts. The camera angles, sequence choices, and descriptive language used in these scenes transform food and drink into a kind of spectacle object, thus contributing to the visual representation of consumer culture. This form of expression sometimes goes beyond arousing aesthetic pleasure in the viewer and also serves to satisfy desire on a visual level. The content producer's transformation of the act of preparing food into a performative spectacle places the viewer in the position of a passive consumer, offering a satisfying experience detached from the production process. Thus, the viewer, as a subject of the consumer society, tends towards a pleasure-oriented viewing practice in the face of such content.

According to Jenkins, transmedia narrative is the process of expanding a theme or story across different media platforms and utilizing the platform's unique

narrative capacities. In this context, the Reels content on the "sinegastro" account is developed not only in line with Instagram applications but also as a transmedia narrative focused on cinema and gastronomy. The combination of visual and audio elements, descriptive texts, and scene selections references cultural memory and nostalgia, thus engaging the viewer both aesthetically and emotionally. This method does not leave the viewer merely as a passive tourist but allows for an integrated experience across different types of content.

Nostalgic local films and iconic animations, in particular, stood out with their high sharing and engagement rates. Jenkins's transmedia theory document argues that the success of this content stems not only from its algorithmic emergence but also from the characteristics of the range of different content layers, effectively incorporating elements such as cultural memory, local identity, and nostalgia. Thus, "sinegastro" creates a holistic transmedia production practice that expands the spectrum of both the digital and cultural spectrum.

The differential engagement of content, with some posts achieving high interaction while others remain less successful, can be attributed to factors such as cultural context, the influence of nostalgia, visual-textual storytelling strategies, the timing of posts on significant occasions, platform visibility, users' personal preferences, and click-driven engagement dynamics. Furthermore, the repetition of content and the re-publication of Reels with different scenes reflect a deliberate content strategy aimed at enhancing algorithmic visibility. These findings indicate that content success is not merely coincidental but is closely linked to production strategies, audience behavior, and platform-specific interaction mechanisms, highlighting the multidimensional interplay between creative decision-making and user engagement within digital media environments.

The "sinegastro" Instagram account took pleasure-oriented viewing to a further level and entered a different experiential process in November 2024. A new account called "filmdekinden lütfen" was launched, and events where participants could eat the food from the movie began with the followers of the "sinegastro" account. The announcement of these activities is shown in Image 1, along with the first examples of other event posters.

Image 1.

First Announcement Posts Regarding The Activities Of The Filmdekinden Lütfen Account



The “From the Film Please / Filmdekinden Lütfen” event was introduced in the first post with the explanation: “*Since I started Sinegastro, the idea of a sincere, unpretentious cinema-gastronomy meeting, just like the one I had in mind, was always in the back of my mind. When I found the dim and sincere atmosphere I*

was looking for in our home @diyojensahaf in Beşiktaş, I decided to start. A reasonable fee was set for our first event...” The prepared visual is specially designed for users who follow the Sinegastro account. The expression "With SineGastro Presentation" at the top of this visual clearly indicates this. Immediately following the introductory section, the phrase “From the Movie Please” is prominently displayed in the largest font size in the visual. Directly below this, there are explanations about the film and food pairing related to the theme of the event. Within the scope of this concept, the page carried out a total of six events. In addition to events designed around a common food theme in different movies, a new concept called “Movie Tasting” has been developed. This new format is based on an experiential event concept where cinema and gastronomy are brought together, and the food featured in the film is tasted while watching it. The first event announcement post was shared as follows: “*The first cinema and gastronomy meeting of 2025 will be on the evening of January 8th at @ferros.emirgan. While we watch Ratatouille, which is considered the best gastronomy movie of all time, I will be commenting, and Chef @demir_demirhisar will be presenting the menu of the movie to your table one by one. We are keeping our quotas limited for this special experience where you will feel the strong relationship between cinema and food through taste and senses...*”. This series of events, which started with the movie *Ratatouille* (2007), continued with two more events. The visual prepared for the Movie Tasting concept emphasizes that the event focuses on only one movie. For this purpose, a visual poster from the film covers a large part of the post. In addition, in order to reinforce the emphasis that the event is an "experience", the information that the event will be held with a chef is clearly included in the visual. Among these events, which are extensions of “sinegastro,” an event called “Climax” was last organized. The first announcement regarding this event was made as follows: “*You are invited to a very special night on the evening of February 27th. We will warm up a cold night of February with mulled wine. There is a lot to talk about with scenes from the films of Gaspar Noe and Yorgos Lanthimos presented by @sinegastro. For limited reservations...*”. Only one event has been held so far within the scope of this concept. Supporting the online productions of the “sinegastro” Instagram account with events held in physical spaces is a reflection of transmedia narrative strategies that are increasingly gaining importance in today’s digital cultural environment. Transmedia narrative, as defined by Jenkins (2006), is the process of expanding a story or theme across multiple media, using the unique narrative capacities of each medium.

The “sinegastro” Instagram account serves as a compelling illustration of contemporary transmedia storytelling, effectively bridging cinema and

gastronomy within both digital and physical contexts. Through the strategic integration of visual, textual, and auditory elements, the account constructs a multi-layered narrative that engages audiences aesthetically, emotionally, and culturally. Content featuring local films from the 1970s to the 1990s, iconic animations, and culturally significant food scenes demonstrates that nostalgia and cultural memory are key drivers of audience engagement, while high rates of likes, shares, and selective commenting reveal the complex dynamics of digital participation. Beyond the digital platform, offline events such as “Movie Tasting” and “Climax” transform passive viewers into active participants, offering multi-sensory, immersive experiences where cinematic narratives are materially and experientially enacted. This convergence of online and offline storytelling not only enhances algorithmic visibility but also contributes to the formation of a holistic cultural archive, positioning cinematic food representations as tools for memory, identity, and affective engagement. The account’s iterative content strategies—such as scene selection, thematic repetition, and timed releases aligned with nostalgic or cultural references—further demonstrate a deliberate approach to optimizing both visibility and emotional resonance. Collectively, “sinegastro” exemplifies how transmedia practices can expand narrative scope, foster audience co-participation, and facilitate the circulation and reproduction of popular culture in digital media ecosystems, offering a concrete model for the integration of cultural, aesthetic, and experiential storytelling in contemporary social media environments.

CONCLUSION

The “sinegastro” Instagram account represents a distinctive digital practice that merges cinema and gastronomy while creating a multi-layered space for interaction between these fields. The account’s content constructs cultural representation through the selection of food images in movie scenes and the accompanying texts, transforming simple posts into narratives that extend across platforms via strategic timing, interactive captions, thematic posts on special days, and physical events. Unlike conventional content sharing, sinegastro’s approach aligns with transmedia narrative strategies frequently emphasized in contemporary media studies.

This study aimed to explore how the interaction between cinema and gastronomy is represented on social media, using sinegastro as a case. The analysis examined content production strategies, pricing, and audience data interactions, employing a combination of content analysis and thematic analysis methodologies. Posts, particularly Reels videos exceeding 1 million views, were examined, revealing

that 9% of the videos reached this milestone. This indicates the platform's success in building a digital identity through content quality and audience outreach. Cinema and food scenes on sinegastro are paired not only visually but also through detailed interpretive texts that reference film directors and production years. These texts position users educationally, shaping digital aesthetics both in terms of taste and cultural capital. Nostalgic and emotional connections are further established through themed content and posts marking special occasions, transforming sinegastro into a mediator that reproduces and extends cultural memory online.

Sinegastro's narrative is also embodied in physical events, such as "Movie Tasting" and "Climax," where presenting film-inspired dishes during screenings transforms cinematic narratives into multi-sensory experiences. These activities position audiences as active participants rather than passive consumers, reflecting Henry Jenkins' (2006) definition of transmedia storytelling, where narratives expand across multiple media using each medium's unique affordances. By combining Instagram posts with live events, sinegastro constructs a layered narrative universe that integrates visual, textual, and sensory dimensions. Optimizing content for social media algorithms through striking visuals, concise captions, and strategic hashtags enhances reach while fostering a participatory digital community. Through such strategies, sinegastro demonstrates how cinema and gastronomy converge in the digital age, producing not only aesthetic online experiences but also sensory narratives in physical space.

A significant example of this transmedia approach is the June 15, 2025 post announcing the Paramount Pictures x Sinegastro collaboration cookbook. This project extends the narrative into tangible, commercialized forms, allowing users to engage with the story of *The Godfather* (1972) through recreated food scenes and iconic narratives. The collaboration emphasizes that each platform contributes uniquely to the overarching narrative, transforming the audience from mere consumers into carriers and reproducers of the cultural story. Licensed production, official partnerships, and special offers for followers illustrate how Sinegastro functions simultaneously as an artistic and commercial media actor, highlighting the intertwined nature of cultural production and economic value in today's media economy. Overall, sinegastro exemplifies how social media content can be enriched through transmedia strategies, merging digital and physical experiences, cultural representation, and participatory engagement. By bridging cinema and gastronomy, it constructs a narrative universe that is simultaneously aesthetic, educational, emotional, and commercial, reflecting the dynamics of cultural production in the digital age.

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