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Air fryer: Reflections on working class objects of desire and changing food culture

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Abstract

Products and objects are phenomena that shape and reproduce everyday life for the classes involved in the production process. Global commodity chains and marketing networks ensure that similar products are marketed and incorporated into everyday life in all countries and cities. These products can be products that bring about changes in the kitchen and food culture as well as in many different areas of life. In this study, the meanings of Air Fryers, which, although they are included in cooking technologies, bring about changes in food culture, recipes and cooking time with their features, will be examined for the working class and poor classes. Although Air Fryers have a history of a hundred years, their entry into our daily lives is limited to a little over ten years. The product has been analyzed in its commodity form and its cultural dimensions have been analyzed from a class perspective. The changes that Air Fryers have brought about in the daily food practices and food cultures of the working class and poor classes, and the meanings they attribute to the commodity within the class culture have been examined. In this exploratory study, auto ethnography and digital ethnography research methods were used. Within the scope of the digital ethnography research method, relevant content, and comments on TikTok were analyzed and turned into data. As a result of the study, it was concluded that Air Fryers are perceived as objects of desire for the working class and the poor, and that owning them is an indicator of economic and



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cultural capital for exit from habit uses. Although Air Fryers are marketed as a device that saves cooking time and provides convenience to individuals in working life with ready-made recipes, the main thing is to adapt the working class to the new conditions of the capitalist working order. These devices, which are part of the reproduction of labor power, are far from bringing about a global change in food culture, as they differ according to economic purchasing power, working hours and food culture according to country groups.

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INTRODUCTION

Based on capitalist relations of production, labor and capital represent two groups in conflict with each other in the historical context. The production process determines social relations. The continuity of the production and capital accumulation process is based on production and consumption relations. While the working class, the subject of the production process, continues to produce, it is also involved in consumption relations. The products obtained by the working class in the production process are offered to market relations with other actors with exchange value. The working class in market relations alienates itself from the products it produces and becomes unlimited consumers of these products, which turns into auxiliary objects in the reproduction of labor power. One of the most dominant phenomena in the reproduction of labor power and the continuation of the capitalist production cycle is food. While the consumption of food enables the production of the human body, it also creates the labor power to be consumed for capitalist relations of production (1). Kitchen equipment is auxiliary equipment in this process in which the working class, together with their households, transforms the products they buy from the market with their wage income into food with their class culture, historical knowledge of cuisine and various recipes.

The equipment used in cooking and eating activities has diversified in different periods of history within the framework of historical encounters, differences and accumulation between the aristocracy, the bourgeois class, and other classes. Another important development has been the development of raw materials and production capacity in the sectors where this equipment is produced. Developments in the metal, ceramic, porcelain, and glass sectors, as well as differentiations in the energy sources of heating and cooking equipment, have constituted the most important processes of changes in culinary culture. In light of these developments, in which the industrial revolution and its production were the main factors, the equipment used in the production and consumption of food was shaped. While the use of forks and knives, which are important tools in the consumption of food in Europe, was first seen in the 14th century, this process progressed differently for Türkiye than other countries in the world. In the late industrialized Ottoman Empire, the use of forks and knives began with Mahmud II (1808-1839) and was enriched with tableware, seating arrangements and kitchen equipment after the Tanzimat Edict (2). However, this enrichment was limited to the court gentry and invited guests.

With the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye, steps were taken to include all citizens in the production and consumption of food, especially the state administration and cadres. As a direct investor and promoter of this process, the state ensured the establishment of factories producing equipment for modern culinary culture. Paşabahçe Glass Factory, the first glass factory, was established in 1934, Karabük Iron and Steel Factory, which produced the raw material for stainless steel cutlery, was established in 1937, and sugar factories, which made sugar widespread in kitchens, were established in the first years of the Republic. In addition, factories opened with domestic capital prepared the ground for changes in cuisine and food culture. The Piyale Pasta Factory opened in 1922, the Jumbo Cutlery Factory opened in 1947, and the Ülker Factory opened in 1944 are examples of this group.

The factories opened did not only have an impact on the labor force and industry, but also brought about changes in all fields such as urbanization, demography, education, and health, as is often expressed in the literature. While the cafeterias and lodgings opened within the factories created the new daily life of modern Türkiye on the factory campuses in the cities where they were established, this new culture of life was eventually transferred outside the campus. While products such as cutlery, steel cookware, granite were introduced into our lives with the initiatives of capital in the relevant field, with the spread of electricity, natural gas and other energy sources in cities, different cooking devices, recipes with different products have been developments that enrich the culinary culture.

Developments have not always proceeded in the same direction, and with the free market economy after 1980, products such as *fast food and junk food* began to take center stage in daily life. As the state withdrew from production through privatization processes, products in healthy product groups were gradually replaced by the profitability drive of capital, and products containing carcinogenic substances began to take place in all areas of food (including equipment). In this new period in which the state is the controller, violations of health regulations are left to the mercy of capital, while social classes have included the products that are the blessings of the free market in their kitchens within the consumption cycle. Unchanging and even diminishing meals in growing kitchens have been the summary of the process. In this study, the place of Air Fryer cooking equipment, which capital has included in daily cooking practices in recent years, in the food culture of the working class and consumption as an object of desire and its meanings for the working class will be examined.

The reason for the special selection of the working class in the research is its differentiation from other social classes in terms of labor, time, and leisure. While Air Fryers, an object of household food production, have meanings such as pleasure, practicality, and possession of new technologies for social classes, for the

working class they have dimensions such as increasing leisure time, transferring time from leisure to labor time, invisible labor within the household, and their effects on women. For the working class, production and consumption go hand in hand and derive from each other (1). A critical approach will be adopted to reveal the differences and unique aspects of Air Fryers for the working class within capitalist relations of production and consumption. Perlman's statements summarize the approach adopted:

"The task of capitalist ideology is to maintain the smokescreen that always prevents people from seeing that their own activities reproduce the forms of everyday life; the task of critical theory is to lift the veil of the activities of everyday life, to make those activities transparent, to make the reproduction of the capitalist form of social activity visible in people's everyday activities." (3)

The critical approach's aim of lifting the smoke screen in the activities of everyday life includes processes that encompass the field of culture. However, at this point, it is necessary to establish the relationship between the term culture and Air Fryer. In Eagleton's (4) definition of culture as including the working class and its structures instead of art and intellectual life, the life practices produced by the class are included in the definition of culture with the daily work cycle, hours of leisure, kitchen practices and objects, while the main determinant of culture is the class. When we consider culture and the object (Air Fryer) together as a commodity, the concept of culture industry comes to the fore. *"The structure of the culture industry that combines the old with the familiar in a new quality"* (5) It is an example of Air Fryer's subjective adventure. This is also supported by the structure of the culture industries, which reorganize objects according to the consumption of the masses by removing them from high and low cultural groups (6). While Air Fryer is available in the market for the capital group and upper classes with its more technically equipped forms, its simpler forms have a market targeting the middle class, working class and even the poor with its poor-quality materials and affordable prices. Within the differentiated markets, the meanings attributed to Air Fryer

and the meanings attributed to objects within classes differ.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Exploratory research was conducted due to the lack of any study on the subject in the social sciences literature, the fact that Air Fryers are relatively new equipment in kitchens, and the limitations of examining the subject from a working-class perspective. The lack of a sufficient number of studies and the exploratory design of the studies conducted to reveal different dimensions of the problem are important at this point (7). Auto ethnography and digital ethnography methods are the search methods used in this study. The main purpose of using the auto ethnography method is related to the researcher's curiosity to research the Air Fryer product as a research subject in the context of class and food studies over the years. This method was used to observe the product's place in daily food practices in various periods and individual experiences in cooking practices through the spectacles of social politics and class. The digital ethnography method was adopted to use the information obtained from individual experiences to observe the meanings of Air Fryer in the daily life patterns of the working class and the poor, the way it is handled, and its position as an object in class culture. In the adoption of the digital ethnography method, there is an aim to examine the data not only in the context of their content, but also with participant observation within class patterns. In this context, the content produced on TikTok constitutes the universe of the research. Within the universe, content was scanned with words such as "*Air Fryer, airfryer, airfy, airfrey*". As a result of the content scan, 20 videos fully related to the subject of Air Fryer were analyzed. The comments made were transformed into data in the context of the topics. The main reason why TikTok constitutes the research population is that working class, poor and disadvantaged groups produce more content on this platform than other social media platforms. As a matter of fact, the content produced on TikTok is also a space for policy making from below in the context of these groups (8).

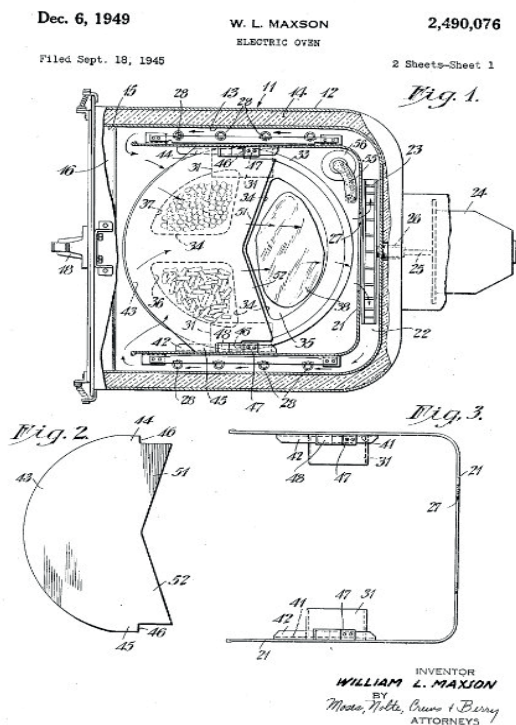
Air Fryer from an Autoethnographic Perspective

Zukin (9) and Sennet (10) state that "*the consumer lacks the knowledge of production that previous generations had mastered*". Although it is an article written in the field of social sciences, it will be useful to discuss the history and processes of Air Fryer, which constitutes the subject of the search, both in making sense of the product and in examining its effects on social processes. It is within the responsibility of the researcher to have information about whether the technology product in question is a new product that has just entered everyday life, as the companies producing Air Fryer claim in their websites and advertisements.

Considered as the ancestor of Air Fryers, the first discovery of the electric, pressure and fan cooker was featured in Technical World Magazine (1914) with the news that the cooked products preserved their taste and lost less material during cooking compared to other methods. Although the machine, which is automatic and time-controlled, takes much longer to cook than today (2 hours of electric cooking and 10 hours of pressurized cooking in a closed appliance), it is considered to be the first version of today's Air Fryer technology (11). Although cooking technologies have continued in many different forms in the intervening years, the idea of the Air Fryer came back to the agenda 30 years later.

The first Air Fryer in its present form according to an article published on the New air website. It was invented by William L. Maxson in 1944 for use in the navy. It was also stated that Maxson's plans included serving frozen meals instead of the cold sandwiches served in the air transportation of the period. It was also stated that the airline companies of the period made plans for all flights as of 1949. After Maxson's death, it was stated that the company was closed, and the plans were cancelled. As a matter of fact, the issue was closed until 2010, when Philips announced the first Air Fryer at the Berlin Electronics Fair (12). Figure 1 shows the first Air Fryer design patented by Maxson. It is seen that the design has almost the same working principle, shape and mechanism as the products produced by various companies today.

Figure 1. First Air Fryer patent applied for by William L. Maxson in 1945 and approved in 1949 (US Patent No. US2490076A, 1949)



Although microwave ovens, which entered our lives in the early 70s, played a leading role in the story of frozen food from the end of the 19th century to the present day, it has always been an important issue for entrepreneurs and inventors such as William L. Maxson to get the food in a form that can be eaten again and to do this effectively. In this context, it is also important to note that canned, frozen and packaged food, which increased during the period, started to be used for military purposes, but its ultimate reach was the working class. To feed the growing urban population and the working class in the newly established industrial environments, the diet of households was made dependent on the industry to preserve the products for a long time and make them ready to eat again (13). Science and technology products have also come into play in the process of making these products produced by the food industry suitable for consumption in households. The change in the products used in kitchens is the product of a process that continued from the industrial revolution to the present day.

In the short time humanity has changed and improved its equipment to the extent that it has been able to dominate metals and nature (41). With the opportunities provided by growing up in a house with a garden in a small city, primitive forms such as ground stoves and tandoor stoves, which we can call pre-technological, were the first of these cooking technologies. Tandoors, where wood is used as fuel, strengthen women's roles in the household, especially in bread making, and strengthen the household production of bread and other dishes. As a matter of fact, in the later period, tandoors powered by fuel oil, gas and electricity had similar characteristics. The architecture of the kitchens was also shaped according to the type of fuel used by the tandoor (43). It is still possible to see different examples of tandoor stoves and ground stoves in different cities of Anatolia today (42). If it doesn't focus on the other primitive forms and focus on the electric ones; the drum oven, stovetop oven, built-in oven, deep fryer, microwave constitute the composition of these products. Except for the unique functions of the microwave and the deep fryer, almost all appliances had taken their place in the same kitchen at different dates. The introduction of microwave ovens into people's lives after World War II, for example, is one of the important turning points in the changes in the kitchen (40). The introduction of electro-magnetic energy cooking technology into kitchens after the transition from traditional tandoor and floor stoves heated with wood and coal to gas and electric stoves has been an important feature of this innovation (44). Even though these products do the same job in many homes, except for reasons such as deterioration and loss of function, the change of these products over time was among the main issues that attracted my curiosity as a researcher working in the field of social policy and food until before Air Fryers. Within the framework of this curiosity, my first personal experience was six years ago with an Air Fryer, which was released for the first time by a local company but was not very popular in the market. The results of this experience were the smell of plastic that permeated the products it cooked, the gelatinous taste of the meat groups when cooked lean/low-fat, and the moistness of vegetables such as potatoes. As a matter of fact,

it was scientifically determined in the following years that protein-containing products cooked with Air Fryer caused bad odor (14).

“Air fryers have had a recent surge in popularity, and they work by circulating hot air around the food to produce a crunchy, crispy exterior. A chemical reaction occurs between an amino acid and a reducing sugar in the presence of heat, which leads to a change in the colour and flavour of foods. When compared to a deep fryer, an air fryer reduces the amount of fat, calories and more.”¹

These basic features about Air Fryers give us information about its basic working principles and reveal the differences between other types. The formation of acrylamide in foods such as potatoes fried in an air fryer is also an important feature of the devices. Although the device claims to be healthy with low-structure cooking, this situation reveals individual and social harms in the future (46). As a matter of fact, in a similar study conducted on potatoes, potatoes cooked in the oven had the lowest acrylamide level, followed by deep-frying and the highest formation occurred in the air fryer (47).

Air Fryer’s entry into the market after a long time with various models, features, and shapes has caused me to enter an academic thought process instead of personal experiences this time. Although the people around me have the cooking products I mentioned above, the fact that they run after this product like a miraculous product that they need most in their lives is also increases my curiosity. The reason for this interest in the Air Fryer, which clearly does not contain major differences from other cooking appliances in market reports, has been the differences from similar equipment and the advantageous questions that need to be answered. The answers to these questions are given only under the headings of less electricity consumption and the suitability of the oil-free cooking function for diet and fitness (15, 16). The popularity of the product in the European market is explained by its use in businesses such as hotels and restaurants, its touch screen, temperature control and fast preparation options, and the effect of online sales channels on fast sales (16). In the 2020 report, it was stated that the market volume in 2022 will

be 863.1 million dollars.² However, according to another report, the actual market volume in 2022 is 953.59 million dollars (15).³ The reports indicate that the Air Fry market is dominated by large shares of certain companies. The large shares of these companies in the international division of labor and production processes are also the main employers of the global working class. While brands such as Philips, Xiaomi, Electrolux are the world’s major producers, they also represent a wide network of producer subcontractors in neighboring countries within global commodity relations. In other words, people who make a living by selling their labor, such as the working class, middle classes, and the poor, contribute to the accumulation process of global Air Fryer capital by continuing to buy this object they admire.

AIR FRYER AS AN OBJECT OF CLASS DESIRE

Air Fryers are on their way to quickly becoming the most important appliances in our social lives and kitchens around the world. As always, the benefits of the product have slogans that aim to keep up with the speed of capitalism, the hurried rhythm of everyday life, and to keep more of the free time left to individuals outside their working lives. Although the companies that market products ignore the position of consumers as producers, for the working class this new product that will require money to be spent is the fact that they are willing to work more hours as wage labor and offer this time to capital. As a matter of fact, this situation has created an Air Fryer fury not in specific countries but globally in similar time periods all over the world. In this process, global capital has once again demonstrated its fluid and unlimited organization all over the world (17).

In the process of turning class relations with a commodity like Air Fryer into a research question, many concepts, theories, and ideas have been filtered and the phenomenon has been tried to make sense of. Some of the concepts identified as stops in this process are the concepts of modernism and postmodernism. The structure of postmodernism, which excludes class and replaces it with identities, was seen as

irrelevant in the context of the class agenda being at the heart of the research.

However, Bocock's relationship with objects of consumption and postmodernism raises a different question at this point. Bocock (18) stated that the similarities of certain groups in the context of eating, drinking, household organization, leisure time entertainment and tastes during the modernism period have become intertwined with post-modernism and have become a complex structure. We can give different examples such as a conservative young man who belongs to the working class and lives in an urban depressed area going to a rock concert in the evening, decorating the room of the house where he lives with his family with the works of an artist he likes and listening to classical music.

Air Fryer has become an important product of the culinary cultures of different social classes and groups such as the working class, the poor, YouTube phenomena, politicians.⁴ In this context, Air Fryer has also become an important object of desire for escaping from class in the postmodern era. What reinforces it as an object of desire is expressed by Baudrillard:

"...by giving desire an abstract and personalized appearance in terms of needs and making it identical with the means (products, images, sign-objects, etc.) that serve to satisfy them, the volume of the consumerism process is doubled." (19)

After the thought process of modernism and post-modernism, other concepts that were included in the process were the concepts of development and underdevelopment, including economic and sociological justifications. In Türkiye, where economic indicators do not bode well for the working class, middle classes and the poor, Air Fryer as an object of desire has been the top selling product in the category of small household appliances on internet shopping sites.⁵ In addition to this, the weekly product catalogs of supermarket chains, which operate mostly in poor neighborhoods, include an Air Fryer product of a brand every week. As a matter of fact, the limited number of products sent to cities has been criticized on social media.⁶

"It is well known that the most irrational spending is done by the poorest people. It is a well-known fact that the less developed a society is, the more widespread is the culture of gambling. In fact, there is a direct cause and effect relationship between underdevelopment, overcrowding, the takeover of the poor classes by religion, the army, domestic servants, and unnecessary spending." (19)

Baudrillard (19) stated that "the lack of a social status is as important as hunger". Instagram Reels videos, real person accounts in their stories, and phenomena shooting mise-en-scene videos have produced a lot of content about the situation of buying Air Fryers between spouses. In the content, there are images that are shown as a reason for fights between couples, women want Air Fryer as a gift on special occasions, and even fights between men and women who buy or indicate the existence of different materials such as pots, ovens instead of Air Fryer. It was observed that women who bought Air Fryers uploaded box opening, evaluation and food videos of the brands they bought to their accounts, regardless of the followership figures of their accounts (non-phenomenon accounts with few followers).

"Ever-increasing consumption, or more accurately, accelerating the circulation of new objects of consumption, is perhaps the only, probably the most essential and effective way to satisfy the human pursuit of happiness." (21)

These videos and contents encountered during the research process have been decisive in determining the digital ethnography method in addition to the auto ethnography method. YouTube, Instagram, Tik Tok videos and content were analyzed. It was decided to examine the content uploaded to TikTok, where the working class shares more content from their daily lives, workplaces, and daily lives.

The first issue that stands out in the content is that the creators are almost entirely women. Women shared the products they made with Air Fryer with the words "#kocam, #kocamsağolsun, #canım kocam" and various spellings of Air Fryer. The common sound played in the background of these posts, which have become a trend, is as follows:

"My husband, I sacrifice you, I sacrifice your fingernail, I sacrifice husbands who are not worth a penny. I sacrifice the soil you tread on. Your mother gave birth to you. May Allah be pleased with that mother, that mother, that mother."

This vocalization made with the eastern accent takes place in various videos.⁷ In another trend, the woman in the video in the voiceover quoted from the Turkish movie shared the statements "I have seen an air fryer in every house I go to and to ld my husband to buy it..."⁸ While those who bought the products expressed their opinions on whether they were satisfied or not in the comments, those who did not yet own the products expressed their demands for Air Fryer in various ways. The first group of these demands was their demands for their spouses. To give examples of this situation:

"he's not buying it for me either..."

"What did my husband say about air fryer, I'm not alone" "You're not alone, sister."

"My wife first took it to the kitchen at work and said that if it did well, I would take it home, the result was that it dried the potato too much and it was not delicious."

"I didn't go to every house and see an air fryer, so I bought it myself."

"If I can afford to buy it, I will buy it right away, it's super, I get excited when you buy it and do something with it, use it in good days..."

In response to these comments of women, information on the need for the product, information on the reasons for its use and content were not found. This situation is like Baudrillard's (19) anecdote in which Malaysian natives who saw an airplane emulated it by making a replica of it and illuminating its surroundings. This consumer item, which is nothing more than are production of everyday life, has become "objects of spectacle and passive admiration" for people (3). In Holloway's terms, it would be unwarranted at this point to deny the serious impact of life under capitalism on how we think and act(22).

"Since what we call 'facts' are those things that oppose human desires, the main thing is to eliminate facts. It

is to live in a world consisting only of human desires and wishes, only of yours, mine and ours (customers, consumers, users and beneficiaries of technology)." (21)

The comments made by men are more parallel to the quote from Bauman. However, the comments mostly contain gendered expressions. Women also tagged their spouses in their video comments. Male users' comments on the same videos⁹:

"Well, I bought it, ma'am," he says, still frying the potatoes in the pan... "we have one but it has a lace cover on it and it never opens..."

"I bought it today for 14.000 TL.2 months later it will be on the shelf, I wish I had employed minimum wage for 2 months, he would have cooked..."

"I realized that these women's desire never ends, even if you die, they will say that you left us without a penny..."It is bought to end the nagging of those at home, it is useless...It is nothing but a waste of money. Buy yourself a sturdy oven instead ;I didn't buy it and won't buy it" "the idle deeds of a time of rabid naiveté."

These comments made by men contain expressions that disregard women's invisible labor in the household and their role in the reproduction of social labor power (23). The problem for women is the lack of information on their class position. As a matter of fact, within the scope of the search, the accounts of women who shared videos and made comments were analyzed one by one. It is possible to make inferences with a Bourdieu (39) approach about the class position of women through their posts, likes and clothing styles. However, it is impossible to reach this with their comments. At this point, the only option available was the ones above and below, with whom they compared themselves in terms of Air Fryer ownership. This perspective only symbolically represents class difference (24). The fact that women do not base their ownership of the product on their invisible labor roles within the household is the main factor in their gender roles turning to Air Fryer as an object of symbolic consumption and desire.

The recipes provided in addition to the comments

reveal a completely different dimension. There is a widespread view on TikTok that Air Fryers can do everything. In the analyzed content, it was seen that products such as chestnuts, soufflé, potatoes, chickpeas, eggs, chicken, rice, cakes, and pies were made. French fries were one of the most common dishes made and commented on with the Air Fryer. In the context of the comments, the male commentators' fryer analogies regarding the product are parallel.

The majority of the sample recipes given for Air Fryer in the world consist of dishes made with meat and vegetable products. The use of the product is correct and successful in developed countries where frying and meat consumption is high. It is not suitable for cooking watery dishes that are characteristic of Turkish cuisine. One user painfully experienced this situation: *"I bought it, it's very good, but it doesn't work for stews."*¹⁰

The belief that the Air Fryer can do everything and the effort to adapt it to the Turkish culinary culture received similar comments from different users¹¹:

"I'll make tarhana soup too..."

"We are waiting for baklava making in the air fryer... "

"You know those who act as if this product is the only cure for death..." "Soon they will put the dishes in the machine to wash them..."

"Sister, text air fryer or something and the cake will be in the oven."

The most viewed and commented video in a video among Air Fryer recipes was pasta making. The cooking time of the pasta, which can be made in 8-10 minutes in a pot of boiling water, is given as 25 minutes¹². This video, which distances itself from all realities in order to buy the product that it has turned into an object of desire, has a total of 3.7 million views, even though the majority of the comments are intended to make fun of it. The cooking time of the pasta as an object or the duration of the meal, but the assigned feature of the Air Fryer to make pasta as a subject shows another result.

At this point, to make a critical evaluation, this object that people who earn wage income by selling their labor have bought to make their free time more valuable has actually prolonged their waiting time. The person or people can neither get back the value of their labor time nor the lost free time (3). All that remains is the belief in *"real objects, consumption, supported by satisfaction and motivated by needs"* (25).

The fact that pasta and other traditional products take much longer to cook than even the most primitive cooking techniques diminishes the claims that the Air Fryer is a product that can cook everything, make life easier and make all kitchen products unnecessary. This is a consequence of the fact that consumers attribute very different psychological meanings to products that are turned into fetishes and objects of desire, in addition to their physical properties (26).

In countries where meat products and frozen products are cheaper, Air Fryer can fulfill its time and speed claims with the right recipes and nutrition culture for the working class. However, in the case of Türkiye, for the working class and the poor to fully benefit from the Air Fryer, they need to change their eating habits and food culture. As a matter of fact, apart from certain products, there are no products that belong to the Turkish culinary culture and the nutritional cycles of these classes. In 2018, with the increasing inflation and food inflation, it has become more and more difficult to access meat products, and the traditions of cooking by multiplying meat with by-products make this situation even more difficult. Air Fryer's expanding market and the fact that its target audience includes countries with cheap labor, including Türkiye, brings with it questions about the future.

Another consequence of instilling the urge that product recipes can be made with the same device by adding recipes from different countries is that cultural forms or food products belonging to the local are given within the global, and in this context, the local is also commodified within the global space. Without leaving the food agenda, it would be more useful to discuss this situation within the changing nature of commodity and food culture.

THE CULTURE OF THE FUTURE: SOMEONE ELSE'S KITCHEN

The most basic example of cultural differences between generations is the examples given by different generations for making phone calls. While Generation X makes the dialing gesture with the habit of dial-up phones, Generation Y makes the phone gesture with the thumb and pinky finger reminiscent of the existence of hands-free phones, Generation Z gives physical responses that symbolize the rough grip of the smart phone.

A similar situation is inevitable in food culture. The fact that culture is not a natural phenomenon, but a phenomenon given by the societies in which it is lived and internalized by those living in the society and that it affects everything is supportive at this point (4). While boiled eggs, which are expected to get the desired consistency in hot water with gas settings that vary from stove to stove, cannot find the desired consistency in programmed boiling machines, these devices promise to be ready in the targeted time with automatically selected programs. Or the chicken in the oven, which never cooks at the same time and minute for the cooks even though it comes out of the same factory and even has consecutive production numbers, is replaced by ready-made sauces and quickly sauced with ready-made sauces and automatically selected programs or programs directed by phone application. The apprenticeship adventure, which everyone who is curious about the food production process has learned from an early age and said that they exhibited with mastery in the following years, is now coming to an end (27).

This new cooking culture has a structure that *"combines values, customs, beliefs and practices"* as in Eagleton's (4) definition of culture. In this context, it will be an important issue for children to continue the food culture of the societies, families, or groups in which they live throughout their lives, which they learn at an early age. As a matter of fact, children who lack the knowledge of food production and preparation will not have anything other than the cooking knowledge of Air Fryer and similar technologies in situations and conditions where they are involved in war,

earthquake, or similar processes.

The fact that recipes on sites such as YouTube can be translated with simultaneous translation programs and software without the need to speak the language allows different recipes made with Air Fryer around the world to be easily made at home. Another important factor here is the existence of global commodity chains where different products are available in almost every market, even thousands of kilometers away from each other. It will be the frozen products that will be bought from the markets and said to be made delicious by the Air Fryer. It is possible to define this process as a method of marketing the products of global frozen food capital and giving them more space in food culture. As a matter of fact, in addition to the Air Fryer sector, which is expected to reach 1 billion dollars in the coming years, the total volume of the frozen food sector is 300 billion dollars in 2022 (28).

Baudrillard (29) emphasized that consumption has a structure determined by production. As a matter of fact, this has also been the case for Air Fryer. In a short time, after it started to take place in the social culinary culture, food culture with recipes, ease, and videos with rich content, domestic producers acted quickly in addition to foreign producers. It was considered to increase the tax exemption bracket in the foreign customs tariff from 30 dollars to 100 dollars.¹³ However, this regulation was withdrawn due to the upcoming election process and public pressure. The main purpose here is to pave the way for local production companies or companies that outsource services. What is important at this point is that this regulation on Air Fryers may be included in the same regulation with cell phones, which are indispensable communication tools of social life. This situation once again reveals the social response and consumer demand for the product. This approach of the government, which involves direct intervention in commodity production and consumption, is also a result of surveillance societies. With its share in the organization of consumption and the creation of a culture of consumption, it causes individuals in social life to see reality through the eyes of power instead of real needs (30).

Another dimension of commodity production is the working class. Workers who produce the objects of desire of capital as products of labor with the motive of consumption do not see these productions as commodity forms of their own labor, and this creates fetishism over commodities. Workers who work within the framework of the laws of the social division of labor in the production of the products they consume are confronted with the phenomenon of "commodification" as if their own labor were something independent of them (31). Commodity fetishism dominates society with "*both sensible things and supersensible things*" (45) fact, this is also clearly stated in the market research on Air Fryers. Increasing incomes of wage earners in developing countries such as India and China have a positive effect on the growth of the market (16).

Knowledge that food and/or food are things of nature, culture, and religious beliefs (32). In addition, food to day is the fuel for commodities to function and for different commodities to survive and new ones to emerge. Even when food, which is an agricultural product, is not a commodity product but is produced for use value, if it is prepared with materials that are part of global commodity chains in the process of getting to the table, or if these objects are needed individually or as a consumer in this preparation process, it also has transforming and changing meanings. In this process of change from farm to table, food can also have a structure that changes and transforms everything from social life, art, culture, beliefs, labor-capital relations to the shaping of the labor force (32).

While weekly working hours are decreasing, leisure time is increasing, and interest and expectations in gastronomy are on the rise with titles such as food porn and gastro shows, this emphasis on making use of the little free time left is also related to labor regimes. In the report (15) Although there is no official data on Türkiye, the researcher's status as an observer and the increase in sales, which constitutes the main argument of this study, is similar to the situation in similar country groups. As a matter of fact, in the European example, the reason for the

increase in sales in places where the Airbnb style sharing economy is high, such as restaurants and hotel accommodation, is shown (16). In these countries, the habits of cooking at home, which have been erased from social memory, and the fact that the need to eat at home can be met through market relations and institutions are the main factors in the increase in institutions and places other than these.

Another issue that will be experienced and expanded in the working class and culinary culture of Air Fryers is the use of oil. Reducing the use of oil has been an issue that has been on the agenda from time to time with the history of capitalism. In this situation, which has developed against the working class and poor classes, the upper classes and the bourgeoisie have kept plenty of fatty dishes on their menus. Montanari (33) quotes a 17th century French peasant as saying, "*If I were king, I would only drink oil*". The oil mentioned here is olive oil. As a matter of fact, in periods when the use of oil decreased (decreased production, increased prices), various health problems due to vitamin D deficiency began to be seen widely among the working class, poor and peasants (33).

Living with less fat or living in a country with plenty of fat and being an activist or is it more important to buy the power represented by machines that promise to do everything (10)? The fact that villages, which have lost their legal identities in important geography with the metropolitan law, where dispossession processes have been largely completed, are rapidly moving away from agricultural production processes with migration is also important in the fact that the working class buys the objects of desire, the products that they buy the power, with their consumer citizen identities, instead of making their demands for nature and their democratic demands as citizens to benefit from the riches offered by the geography instead of less oil. Time will show that the Marshall Aid, which is identified with the folk song "I can't eat olive oil", and a process in which olive oil consumption was reduced (olive trees were cut down) and the use of margarine was encouraged instead, are not similar. However, what is important at this

point is that the changes in the diet, cuisine and food culture of the working class and partly the middle classes will also increase in terms of taste, flavor and product use.

The capitalist class and the upper middle class have turned towards natural, fresh and good food in their daily food preferences. In addition to their direct food supply with producers in the villages, they are also representatives and followers of internationally organized food and food movements. Good, clean, fair food like Slow Food (34) in this context, the movements with a slogan support the kitchens and eating out patterns of these classes, while they do not have a supportive position for the working class and poor classes (35).

CONCLUSION

The change and transformation of food culture has given birth to many different materials in the historical process and followed their destruction. Each new material entering the kitchens and the production process has been instrumentalized to make the same dishes as well as the birth of new dishes and recipes. Kitchen materials, which were among the durable consumer goods, have lost these properties with the new era, also called post-capitalism or neoliberalism, and have taken their place among non-durable consumer goods. The fascination with consumption and the fact that these materials are objects of desire within the consumer society are also prominent features of this process. The working class, which is at the center of social production and consumption relations, has been among the main actors of change. Economic and sociological changes, regulations in working life, changes in the culture of home-work-school-institution and eating out have been the main indicators of changes in food and nutrition culture. While the share of the country's economy has decreased the phenomenon of meals outside the home, food consumption at home has increased. This situation has diversified the materials needed in the light of reasons such as time, practicality, and economy. Home-based life cycles such as the Covid-19 process, or the new working style of telecommuting have also been decisive in the time spent at home and the number of meals.

Independently of the forms of work, consumption has lost its real character and has reached a point where it is understood as specific by everyone (19). These materials that are human labor, i.e. commodities, have taken on an identity of their own, and the phenomenon called commodification (19) has been transformed with this new look (37).

Regardless of local culinary cultures, similar meals, regardless of time and place, have made it possible to eat products produced in the same factory in different homes through numbered products produced in the same factories of the global commodity chain. Although the expression "has enabled" can be interpreted as an affirmation, what is being conveyed here is the negativity of the situation. Capital reinforces the endless cycle of consumption with these products that are constantly and consciously worn out, out of fashion and outdated.

These and similar products and food culture, which weave the daily lives of the working class and the poor within the social classes, have also had their share of transformation. The expression of poverty here may vary according to countries. As a matter of fact, people can buy products that are well below 100 dollars in foreign prices with their daily minimum wages, even poor people living on social assistance. However, in Türkiye, it corresponds to more than half of the monthly minimum wage. It would be appropriate to consider the reference to poor classes throughout this study in this context.

The working class and the poor's fascination with speed and the new has certain foundations. The reason for this is that these social groups spend a lot of time in work and work-related areas in their daily life practices. In countries like Türkiye, where overworking is common (much more than the legal 45 hours per week), where it is common to work two or more jobs at the same time, where there are forms of work that are not subject to labor laws due to artisanal work, such product groups will always be tools that are thought to have a function. Similarly, in societies with these structures, it will be possible for individuals to escape from class and feel a different class belonging.

Although it is not possible to escape from class with objects and tools, the fact that the majority of individuals in the social structure show similar behavior through certain commodities will make this situation an element of class culture after a while (38). These objects that become class culture will take their place in the habitus (39). The fact that habitus becomes an object will enable research companies to take firm steps towards their results and Air Fryer companies to have a much larger market and profit share than expected. As a matter of fact, in order to ensure this situation, habitus will manifest itself not only in everyday life but also in digital media.

Video content producers, who clearly show their class position with their habitus, lifestyles, speech styles, clothing, houses, kitchens, will invite more and more people with similar structures to this new object and cause the existing habitus to expand. This situation will continue until the next consumption object and commodity and will affect the food knowledge and food production practices of future generations. It will even bring about significant changes in their memories. This change in memories will lead to the consolidation of new armies, generations, and destructive consumer forces for the continuity of capital accumulation.

It is no coincidence that the country groups mentioned in the ports are countries with a high share in the global manufacturing economy (China, India) (15, 16). As a matter of fact, different headings are presented in the comments on European countries. However, these countries, which are in the production economy, are places where overwork and precariatization are intensely experienced. And the only way to survive in these countries is through the working class that continues to exist as wage labor. The working class, which must constantly reproduce labor power, does not live in the same social reality as the populations in Europe, whose working hours and days have been reduced and who pursue hedonic pursuits. In addition to this, the housing crisis is more prevalent in countries with a dense production economy, which leads to the necessity of maintaining daily life with smaller appliances. At this point, Air Fryers are

in a more advantageous position than traditional ovens and cookers. This is reinforced by the claim that the appliance can do everything.

As a result, the Air Fryer was an invention that entered our lives with a more effective cooking method for households and manufacturers in the first invention phase in 1914. During the second development process of the product and the period when it was patented, a utilitarian attitude was adopted to be used in airline companies and airplanes, especially in the navy. After many years of silence, it re-entered our lives with a structure that would target certain social classes to adapt to post-capitalist life and working styles, which is the last point of capitalist life culture. The only benefit here is the benefit considered in the production of the labor power of the working class. There are almost no scientific studies on Air Fryers. In the limited data obtained in this study, the fact that Turkish culinary culture is not suitable for making Turkish cuisine and dishes, and that these groups do not have the budget to purchase meat products that increase with food inflation means that Air Fryers will not be able to claim to be a product that facilitates the lives of the working class globally for a while, at least for Türkiye. Examining the issue in the context of white-collar workers and middle classes and making parallel or cross-class comparisons across countries will reveal important data.

End Note

¹<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzDT4WRnxu0>

² Estimates for 2023-2024-2025 and 2026 are 925.7, 994.1, 1,069, 1,150 million dollars respectively. (16)

³ According to the same report, it is expected to reach 1,431.08 million dollars in 2028.

⁴ 2023 Presidential Election candidate Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu's kitchen videos, featuring an Air Fryer, went viral on social media.

⁵ It is stated that Air Fryer continues to be the leader in the small home appliances category with 50,000 products in the sales made by Hepsiburada.com shopping site on November 1-28, 2022 (<https://www.dunya.com/sirketler/hepsiburada-efsane-kasimda-rekor-kir-di-haberi-675421> E.T.

12.06.2023) In the first six months of 2022, sales of the

product increased by 236% on the same shopping site (20)

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8<https://www.tiktok.com/@mrcnskr/video/7235006845562146053>

⁷ <https://www.tiktok.com/@tayfunsoylu/video/7132421269357694209?lang=tr-TR>

<https://www.tiktok.com/@nadiferkan/video/7176349050155879686><https://www.tiktok.com/@kuzey.brk.fdm/video/7152565843623234817><https://www.tiktok.com/@aysegultncy/video/7146141240508026114><https://www.tiktok.com/@artunmerve/video/7144681871543160069><https://www.tiktok.com/@user8875149176822/video/7143287433994456321>

⁸ <https://www.tiktok.com/@aytachalideacar/video/7180386142028696837?lang=en-TR>

⁹ Male user comments in the videos given in footnotes 6 and 7.

¹⁰<https://www.tiktok.com/@qmzisklr/video/7176253521598123270>

¹¹ Comments can be found in the video in footnote 9.

¹² <https://www.tiktok.com/@serpiltevfik16/video/7196950367026875653?lang=tr-TR&q=airfryer%20makarna&t=1711723737598>

¹³ All products, regardless of price, were to be valued at \$100. (<https://www.webtekno.com/ticaret-bakanligi-airfryer-robot-supurge-karari-h133192.html> E.T. 02.04.2023)

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