



*Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article*

**Daily Life Experiences of Conservative Upper-Middle-Class Women in Turkey: Trends and the New Cultural Codes**

***Türkiye’de Muhafazakar Üst Orta Sınıf Kadınların Gündelik Yaşam Deneyimleri: Eğilimler ve Yeni Kültürel Kodlar***

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**Öz:** Muhafazakarlık, günümüz Türkiye’inde, politik alanı belirleyen önemli bir siyasal ideolojidir. Muhafazakar ideoloji, Türkiye’de önceleri merkez sağ partiler içerisinde temsil edilmiştir. Ancak 1970’lerde politik bir aktör olarak görünür olmaya başlayan İslamcı muhafazakar ideoloji 1990’larda önce yerel düzeyde daha sonra da ulusal ölçekte iktidara taşınmıştır. Günümüzde bu nedenle İslamcı muhafazakarlığın merkez siyaseti yönlendirdiği söylenebilir. Bu politik değişim aynı zamanda kültürde ve gündelik yaşama da yansımıştır. Günümüzde İslamcı muhafazakarlık, modern popüler kültür ve tüketim kültürüne referans verebileceğimiz dönüşümlerle gündelik yaşamda görünür olmaktadır. Özellikle muhafazakar kadınlar, gündelik yaşamdaki bu sentezin inşa edilmesinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Buradaki çalışma, bu özgül deneyimlerin içeriklerinin nasıl gerçekleştiğini, özellikle üst orta sınıf kadınlarla yapılan görüşmeler aracılığıyla öğrenmeye çalışmaktadır. Çalışmada 2017 yılı içinde İstanbul’da üst orta sınıfların yaşadığı bir muhitte belirli bir örnekleme yapılan derinlemesine görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiş ve bu görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler temalara ayrılarak incelenmiştir. Araştırmada Türkiye’deki muhafazakar üst orta sınıf kadınların özellikle yeni yaşam biçimleri ile kurdukları bağlantılar ve bunların içerikleri öğrenilmeye çalışılmaktadır. İnceleme sonucunda yeni yaşam tarzları ve üst orta sınıfa dair karakter oluşumlarının, muhafazakar ve İslami gösterenlerle birlikte yeniden üretildiği görülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Muhafazakarlık, Muhafazakar Kadınlar, Gündelik Yaşam, Gündelik Yaşam Estetiği, Tüketim, Kadın, Orta Sınıf.

**Abstract:** Conservatism is currently a significant political ideology that shapes the political sphere in Turkey. As known, conservative ideology has been represented in the center-right parties in the country. However, the conservative Islamic ideology, which became visible as a political actor in the 1970s, was brought to power first at the local level and then at the national scale in the 1990s. Today, it can be argued that this is why Islamist conservatism directs the central politics. This political alteration has also been reflected in the culture and daily life of the society. After all, Islamist conservatism becomes visible in daily life with transformations that we can refer to as modern popular and consumer culture. Principally conservative women play a notable role in building

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this synthesis in everyday life. With these concerns, this article tries to find out how the contents of these specific experiences take place, particularly through interviews with upper-middle-class women in 2017, with particular deep interviews that were conducted in a neighbourhood of Istanbul where the upper-middle-classes lived. Then the data obtained from these interviews were divided into themes. This study tries to find out the connections established by upper-middle-class women with new forms of life in Turkey, and their contents. As a result of the examination, it is seen that new lifestyles and character formations of the upper middle class are reproduced with conservative and Islamic signifiers.

**Keywords:** Conservatism, Conservative Women, Daily Life, Daily Life Experiences, Consumption, Woman, Middle-Class.

## Introduction

In Turkey, Islamist conservatives made peace with the neo-liberal economic policies since 2002 and have been the center of power together with the other components of the right wing. Islamist conservatives<sup>1</sup> have been economically involved in capitalist modes of production and have created their own middle and upper-middle classes (Akçaoğlu, 2019). On the other hand, lifestyles that represent conservatism at the imaginary level have also become visible in daily life. In these everyday experiences, it is seen that lifestyles shaped by commodity aesthetics come to the fore. Nowadays in Turkey, the lifestyles, dressing styles, eating and drinking habits, entertainment, and spare time activities of the new capitalist culture are interpreted and reproduced by conservatives.

Women's experiences play a notable role in the aestheticizing of daily life in this way. Femininity appears here as a means of care, service, decoration, and organization. This study aims to learn the contents of the daily life experiences established with the new meta aesthetics of upper-middle-class conservative women. Thus, the meeting points with the meta aesthetics of today's conservative transformation are investigated.

The study is carried out to reveal how upper middle class conservative women participate in modern consumption culture patterns. The study investigates to what extent conservative assumptions about daily life can be maintained in practice and how conservative acceptances and modern consumption culture practices are tried to be harmonized. In this context, it can be said that the study is important in terms of revealing how the daily life experiences of conservatism, which shapes the political field in today's Turkey, takes place. The research also aims to examine how the political reactionism of the conservative ideology at the beginning has been transformed, especially in today's daily life. For example, in the 1990s, especially conservative women's struggles for the freedom of wearing hijab in universities made them a political actor in this period. However, it can be said that the appearance of conservative women in the public sphere is changing significantly today. This transformation takes place by adding to modern consumption life experiences. This transformation takes place by adding to modern consumption life experiences. This study examines these transformations through the experiences of upper middle class women. The fact that they have an economic background that can transform conservative lifestyles plays an important role in the selection of this sample. In the study, it was observed that the women in question could easily combine their conservative lifestyles with their modern consumption experiences and even fashion conservatism.

The study is based on in-depth interviews with upper-middle-class conservative women after specifying the theoretical framework. In the interviews, the traces of the conservative forms of the new upper-middle-class daily life aesthetics are traced, and their content is tried to be questioned qualitatively.

The interviews were conducted with upper middle class conservative women living in Uskudar, Istanbul. Within the scope of this study, semi-structured questions were directed to the interviewees about their domestic life, out-of-home experiences, and vacation, shopping and leisure time activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the study, they will be briefly referred to as conservatives.

### Conservatism and Middle-Classes

It is a challenging effort to render middle-class implicitly distinctive through labor. All forms of work that contribute to the creation of surplus-value by capital are included in labor. In this case, principally all professionals including small landowner peasants, small crafter in the cities, small shop owners, lawyers, physicians, engineers, consultants, freelance journalists, etc. fall into this middle-class category (Yurtsever, 2016, p. 75-76). While the upper-middle-classes refer to those who have come closer to the capitalist class or have established partnerships with the capitalist class in the process of increasing capital. However, it is not claimed here that the class category has class consciousness before a class. In this study, a type corresponding to a certain space from the upper middle classes is discussed. Therefore, it should be noted that we describe the class situation under study in a way similar to Bourdieu's (2015b, p. 27) view as *a place of differences*.

On the other hand, we can say that the new middle classes have an intermediate position.

"While the new middle class approaches the capitalist class ruling at the top of the bureaucratic hierarchy, it also approaches the white-collar working class at the bottom. In this sense, it is not an independent class, but a class that is drawn in one direction or another depending on the pressures on it" (Şimşek, 2014, p. 112).

Thus, the consequences of conservatives' convergence with the upper-middle-class can also be evaluated within this context.

It is possible to argue that conservatism first emerged as a reaction to Enlightenment, revolutions, and capitalism (Aydın, 2002, p. 64; Güler, 2008, p. 119; Burke, 2003, p. 9). However, conservatism would later become a modern ideology that strives to control the Enlightenment (Bora, 2008, p. 100). Conservatism is a political ideology today, which has a future fiction, based on a basic social unit (family) and extending to a social project and fiction formed from it. Congregation-like organic relations have a fundamental place in this social construct (Nispet, 1986, p. 25). In conservative ideology, the idea of an individual separate from the community is not considered. Community refers to a community that determines the individual (Willems, 1992, p. 68; Özipek, 2004, p. 74, Kylvlicka, 2006, p. 296). The first stop of this congregation is the family (Vural, 2007, p. 55). While the family appears to be the basic social unit in conservatism, society is imagined as an organic whole defined by congregational relations. It is based on a hierarchy initiated by ancestral authority (Nispet, 1986, p. 36). The aim is to ensure that this society is protected in the future. Religion (Öğün, 2003, p. 573-574), as the source of tradition and morality, forms the basis of this protective attitude.

According to Mannheim, conservatism has become an ideology as a self-conscious search for tradition and a preservation project (Mannheim, 1959, p. 99). Likewise, there is a certain relationship between the preservation of convention and the transition to conservatism and classes. Mannheim (1999, p. 101) argues that traditionalism has become conservative only in a class society, principally in a community with contradictions originating from the middle class. While some of the middle classes are being skewed by the transformations caused by modernization; they may long for the lost, old sociality, order, or hierarchy. They can try to reproduce tradition as a project. However, the convention is largely reconsidered here, especially according to the circumstances and political expectations (Öğün, 2003, p. 557). This contradictory relationship established with tradition also manifests itself in the conservative ideology's view of the modern state. In conservative ideology, the state is conventionally constructed as an extension of paternal authority. However, it takes on an exorbitant appearance as long as the modern state conflicts with congregational relations (Öğün, 2003, p. 559). Thus, the modern state is seen as both a feared and respected social mechanism in conservative ideology. Their view of the liberal economy also contains some contradictions. Work and labor appear essential to the continuity of the family and congregational community. However, today, these qualities also form the basis of liberal economic acceptances based on free markets.

Today, conservatism seems to be economically compromised with liberalism. Although the new right and neo-liberalism seem to be incompatible with the basic assumptions of conservatism, it has become the most significant component of the new right, especially after 1980 (Tuzcu, 2010, p. 477). Conservative ideology produces its specificity mainly in cultural and social contexts. While this neoconservative right recommends the free market and freedom in economic relations, it advises restoring authority in social life (Helvacı, 1999, p. 26).

The use of conservatism in the political arena is a relatively new concept in Turkey. The approaches that were previously discussed under different titles can be evaluated under the concept of conservatism. In this respect, religious, Muslim, Islamist, and traditionalist definitions should be seen among conservative ideologies.<sup>2</sup> Political formations that come into contact with these emphases have gained visibility with different actors in the political arena in the historical process, provided that they remain in an area legitimized by the Republic.

Conservatism is based on Anatolian tradition and culture in Turkey. With Turkey's transition to a multi-party system, Democrat Party which was founded as an alternative to the founding Republican People's Party, and came to power in a short while (1950), cannot be called a strictly conservative party at a cultural level. However, it features conservative elements just like many center-right parties in Turkey. According to Toprak (1998, p. 247), the DP loosened the secularization program of the one-party era and ensured the revival of interest in Islam. Later, another pathway (National Vision) whose Islamic references would be expressed more definitely by party actors and would clash with the central authority, especially in the 1990s, pointed to different kinds of connections in terms of tradition, urban life, religion, economy<sup>3</sup> etc. However, when the second generation of this tradition was brought to power in the 2000s, the center-right perspective, especially on the economy, was accepted. Uzgel (2010, p. 24) describes this as the meeting between neo-liberalism and Islam.

On the other hand, the political representation of socially excluded identities is also a significant in terms of defining this movement. In this sense, it is possible to name this new formation as conservative populism, which mobilizes marketization from above and Islamic solidarity from below (Yıldırım, 2010, p.75). This exclusion is not only material; but cultural, political, and social.

Exclusion and poverty hold a notable place in conservative ideology's Turkey course. In the 2000s, this exclusion began to erode during the ruling period, which came from the national view and settled in the center with economic policies. The display of identity, culture, religion, and traditional images was seen as an element of democracy and prestige. The conservative ideology became discursively middle-classed. Moreover, the active founding of the upper-middle-class with new experiences would be more effective in shaping daily life. Göle (2002, p.128) introduces it as a hybrid synthesizing both the educated, entrepreneurial, modern, and Muslim forms. This synthesis also related

<sup>2</sup> In Turkey, the argument that there is a distinctness between Islamism and conservatism is dominant. However, this distinction, according to Akçaoğlu, is synthetic: "One of the forms of conservatism that Islamism in Turkey is assumed until relatively recent times remained outside the legitimate borders of conservatism. With the establishment of the JDP, the Islamist opposition has not only been integrated into the system; it also expanded the definition of legitimate conservatism to include Islamism" (2019, p. 19). On the other hand, the recent conservatism in Turkey, as Yankayas states, it is possible to argue that the social and ethical status symbols of Islam, a group corresponds to the elements put forward as a condition. It is absolutely distinctive from Islamism's imagination of Islamizing the social (Yankaya, 2018, p. 26). In this context, it is possible to include Islamic actors in modern conservative ideology.

<sup>3</sup> The political reflection of the National Vision movement is the National Order Party (NOP), which was founded by Necmettin Erbakan at the end of the 1960s, and the formation that continued as the National Salvation Party (NSP) when it was closed after the memorandum in 1971. It can be stated that the "NSP" is composed of three social layers: 1. New elites, who came from religious families of provincial origins, were brought up from the secular educational institutions of the Republic and generally engaged in self-employment; 2. Religious entrepreneurs dealing with commerce and industry in the countryside; 3. Low-income Sunni religious people living in both provinces and big cities" (Çakır, 2005, p. 545). The movement, which turned into the Welfare Party (WF) in the 1990s, achieved significant success in local elections. After the closure of the Welfare Party's successor, the Virtue Party, for the same reasons, the names including Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who left the formation by not joining the Felicity Party, which is seen as the continuation of this party, and who also served as the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Mayor, have founded the Justice and Development Party (AKP), which is more at peace with liberal economic policies.

to the emergence of consumption forms with an Islamic character (Avcı, 2012, p. 217). For Çiğdem (1997, p. 29), this process was the product of the adoption and use of the achievements of bourgeois civilization. Thus, although not fully corresponding to bourgeois lifestyles, the rise of conservative capitalism led to new types of lifestyles and spatial transformations. To exemplify, the Başakşehir site, which has the nature of a satellite city, corresponded to a class habitus simultaneously with the prestige, comfort, and luxury lifestyle trends (Özet, 2019, p. 262). Conservatism's appearance in Turkey in recent years; synthesis of modernity and tradition built by conservative capitalism with symbolic representations is encountered. On the other hand, conservatism has also been able to frame these with an accumulation of resentment known for Ottomanism (Tokdoğan, 2018), a new kind of Muslim Turkism (White, 2014), and philanthropy towards victimization (Yılmaz, 2018). Today in Turkey, conservatism, which is represented by Justice and Development Party (AKP), corresponds to neo-liberalism economically and create new-powerful conservative capitalists<sup>4</sup>, national identity in politics, a populism produced with victimization based on hardship and religion, and, as Mollaer (2016) quotes, a techno-conservatism shaped by instrumental rationality in administration in general. On the other hand, it should be said that together with these populist and pragmatist contents, it is in an effort to create a hegemony in the cultural field and this effort is shaped by efforts to be included in the new consumer culture aesthetics. The middle classification created for its political environment conduces to new types of conservative daily life experiences. These conversions have also had some consequences for conservatism in Turkey, perspectives on women.

In conservative ideology, the woman is primarily seen within dominant social acceptances. It is more like the definition of women in home. However, the house should also be read as a metaphor for a more complete sociality. As a matter of fact, "There is no question of woman's existence other than being a part of the whole (family and nation)" (Kancı, 2015, p. 88). For women, the social role that sustains this whole, namely motherhood, has a sacred value in conservative ideology. This reproductive role is interpreted as the most natural difference between men and women.

The woman, who is sanctified as a mother in the family, does not have an equal status with the man according to the conservative ideology. The denial of gender equality for the woman positioned as a mother in the family and the use of concepts such as 'equivalence' or 'justice' instead corresponds to an unequal and essentialist use. (Öztaş, 2015, p. 103). This inequality is interpreted as the natural differences of genders in conservative ideology (Akşit, Şentürk, et al., 2012, p. 355). On the other hand, despite the natural inequality, the conservative Islamist women in Turkey can also be active in the public sphere as modern political and daily actors.

Conservatism debates on the social position of women in Turkey have been materialized through hijab. In this context, the movement of conservative women to the social sphere, at the first stage, corresponds to a political struggle and the demand for visibility in the public sphere. Islamic dressing, namely hijab, can be read as part of the struggle for inclusion in this public and social sphere. (Göle, 2010: 133; Özdalga, 2007, p. 149-150; İlyasoğlu, 2015, p. 84). Fashion and commodity aesthetics will enter the agenda of conservative women from now on. Varlı Gürer (2016, p. 186-187) also emphasizes a connection between visibility, dress, and clothing style. Therefore, alterations in the conservative position of women have a significant role in shaping the conservative daily aesthetics. Therefore, conservative aestheticization processes are often realized as a woman's experience. Primarily the emergence of conservative lifestyle and fashion magazines is a significant indicator of the inclusion of conservative women in the aesthetic culture. This is also an indication of the now intertwining of Islam and market logic (Meşe, 2015, p. 149). A comparative study of fashion magazines also found some commonalities between conservative lifestyle and fashion magazines and their non-conservative counterparts.

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<sup>4</sup> Independent Businessmen Association (IBA), which has strong ties with the Islamic movement in the 1990s, includes more than 2,700 business owners from different economic sectors, producing 15% of the national income in 2011, having more than 1 million 200 thousand employees. These enterprises are fully integrated with the international economy thanks to their mutual trade relations with Europe, Central Asia, Middle East, and North Africa countries (Yankaya, 2018, p.18).

"The subject of both magazines examined is generally product, place promotion, and fashion. Magazines often emphasize lifestyle, fashion, life's meaning, being yourself, capturing style, elegance, and beauty. Even versatile and sensitive issues such as nutrition and health often include consumption messages in the form of the promotion of a product or a private hospital" (Kaymak and Babacan, 2019, p. 33).

However, this partnership did not eliminate the political polarization at the Turkish level; it was rather instrumental in bringing it to a more symbolic level: "In Turkey, even the consolidation of symbolic product's market around capitalist values converted the conservative middle-class's applause, it does not put down symbolic polarization" (Akçaoğlu, 2019, p. 159).

On the other hand, lifestyle experiences are not limited to fashion magazines that can only be categorized as taste experts:

"The 'elegant and religiously acceptable' appreciation is not only limited to fashion magazines. Rather, it is the basic and common principle underlying the seemingly unrelated choices made by the conservative middle classes in various fields. In other words, this principle is the eye, heart, and mind of conservative middle classes, who see the world in a certain way, love the world as they see it, and want to act in the way they love. Hence, it arose from the confrontation of old and new trends rather than the skillful hands of taste experts. Nevertheless, conservative connoisseurs of taste are quite effective at twisting the elegant and religiously acceptable" (Akçaoğlu, 2019, p. 113).

It is possible to evaluate the negotiations with such taste styles, the display of selves, and the specific syntheses between being modern and tradition, as a class category at the same time. The inclusion of conservatism in the field of cultural aesthetics and commodity aesthetics has also been realized through an economic transformation that increased middle classification:

"Conservative factions of the middle class are not a new part of social life in Turkey. Contrary, the conservative middle classes became the main ground and early representatives of Islamist politics. By transforming the capital, they gained in their struggle in the field of politics into other types of capital, especially symbolic capital, they gained recognition (or legitimacy) within the secular order" (Akçaoğlu, 2019, p. 84).

This legitimacy would also have some aesthetic consequences that would affect everyday lifestyles.

### **Design of Everyday Life Aesthetics**

Everyday life is a process that appears to be an area of experience beyond the classes. Everyday life corresponds to our interactions with what we do during the day without realizing it. It can be understood as a set of routines, but it is also mobile. Therefore, everyday life includes both routine and dynamism (Binay and Tatlıcan, 2018, p. 184).

To Lefebvre, everyday life corresponds to direct neutrality. Still, the existence of institutions rising above it passes through this, and daily life choices will either be based on the legitimization of these institutions or will reject them by relativizing them (1998, p. 22). Everyday life has an aesthetic value on both sides of this process. "Everyday life has no history. Seemingly indifferent, it keeps one busy and causes a world of work, yet it does not need to be said; hidden in the use of time is ethics, the aesthetics of the decor of this time" (Lefebvre, 1998, p. 31). The aesthetics of this decor is its commodity aesthetics.

The introduction of everyday experiences into commodity aesthetics is related to the acculturation of the consumed. The fact that the consumed corresponds to a cultural value other than use value or exchange value, but that includes both in places and goes beyond them, is related to the exposure of everyday life to the commodity aesthetics of everyday life. "Consequently, the aestheticization of

commodities means separating their product from itself, transforming them into entertaining experiences or appearances of these experiences" (Haug, 1997, p. 81). In today's commodity culture, commodities do not need to indicate a meaning or value. Instead, they correspond to float symbolizations of everyday experiences and designs aestheticized as an experience and design.

Life experience, taking part in life, turning it into a show and being involved in fiction to feel all kinds of emotions constitute the universe in which commodities float. . Commodities enable these experiences. Funk (2007, p. 33) states that today's advertising logic works in this way, and what happens in advertisements is to create a life fiction and place the commodity here. The symbolic values and images they produce are also expressive as long as they correspond to an experience.

Funk (2007) describes experiencing life according to character design as postmodern self-orientation. In this approach, self-orientation appears as the basic orientation of the individualization practices of our age. However, to Funk (2007), there are two types of self-focus: Passive and Active. "Active self-oriented individual, extroverted and recklessly open; she or he does not refrain from expressing her/his feelings everywhere, feels great pleasure in living her/his contradictions to the fullest, release her/his feelings to produce an internality that will make her/his own life an event for others with her/his sensuality and sentimentality" (Funk, 2007, p. 67). The passive self-oriented individual, in other respects, knits a life experience by using the symbols of the designed ones. On the other hand, the user typically uses brands, logos, and lifestyle symbols that symbolize the living worlds and styles, unlike the active type, to access the living worlds and styles and get their share (Funk, 2007, p. 84). Although these are considered mainly separate categories, they may also be visible in the same actors in particular contexts.

It can be emphasized that upper-middle-class conservative women also create their lives as a design. On the other hand, it should be stated that this design, which will also correspond to the aesthetics of daily life, corresponds not only to following and resembling, but also to self-realization.

According to Featherstone (1996, p. 41), lifestyle, a person's body, clothes, speech, spare time management, food and beverage preferences, home, automobile, holiday choices, etc. are the individual signs of the consumer's taste. These experiences, which involve interacting with the consumption culture, include redefining the place, eliminating the opposition to private and public spheres, transforming dressing from a mere presentation into a practice of self-construction, and the reproduction of vacation spare time. It should be stated that all these are related to place, body, pleasure, and fluidity. These experiences, according to Chaney (1999, p. 103), take place without breaking the relationship with the existing social and cultural patterns. It may be thought that similar patterns are displayed in the experiences of conservative upper-middle-class women.

### **Methodology**

The study is based on qualitative analysis. "In a qualitative analysis, description of the case studied in a complete and comprehensive manner is important. Description is a process of revealing the main reasons leading to the observed behavior and the intention behind it (the behavior)." (Özdemir, 2010: 330). Qualitative research method is a useful method to make a social process or interaction understandable. Qualitative research tries to reveal the contextual and changing nature of reality, starting from the fact that reality is socially constructed (Güçlü, 2021, p.52). The data obtained from the sample are interpreted by dividing them into themes in accordance with the qualitative data analysis. In this framework, first of all, the common meanings obtained from the coding were divided into certain clusters and each cluster was transformed into a specific category (Güçlü, 2021, p.191). In this way, it was determined some frames which data were placed.

The interviewees were selected from the Uskudar district of Istanbul, where the conservative upper-middle-class is located. Hence, the study's spatial coverage is limited to this scale. In the study, interviews have been performed with 14 participants from the upper-middle class, and the data acquired from the interviews are examined under definite themes. In identifying the interviewees, personal

testimonies and the recommendations of these testimonies have been determined. To reach the interviewees, women from a definite social class and extension were visited, and in-depth interviews were conducted in line with the appointments. Therefore, the determination of the interviewees was carried out with the Snowball Sampling. The researchers attended home meeting organized by the participant they had met through a friend. The research universe was reached by following home meetings that took place afterwards as a guest. The women participating in the interviews are predominantly middle-aged and housewives from high-income families. Although some are well educated, they do not practice their profession (See Appendix 1). The interviews conducted in 2017 with semi-structured questions focused on the participants' experiences of domestic life, out-of-home experiences, and vacation, shopping and leisure activities. In the review, the participants were given a code name. The descriptions in question were tried to be revealed by dividing them into certain themes in the research. The data obtained from the interviews were interpreted by dividing into themes: *Consuming the Place, Hijab in terms of Fashion, We Knit the Nest, We Work for a Vacation*. Two authors of the article worked independently in establishing the themes and determining which data would be included in which themes. Theme titles and contents are arranged according to this harmony. Data from the interviews showed how upper-middle class conservative women adapted their leisure activities to new lifestyles.

### Findings and Assessment

The data obtained show that women are involved in new lifestyles in their leisure activities and adapt them to their own perspectives. When the data obtained are divided into clusters, it is seen that specific themes emerge. These themes include important parts of women's daily life experiences. they also form the framework of how leisure activities are aestheticized. In the interviews conducted with the participants, it is seen that conservative middle class women define the house as a home which is designed as a reflection of their life style, and out-of-house experiences are designed as an extension of their home. Women also pay attention to follow fashion. On their holidays, they prefer places that offer comfort and tranquility.

### Consuming the Place

While the places follow the compressed theme of modern capitalism, they appear as places of experience. An out-of-home experience is instrumental in expressing a mood that gives happiness and makes it possible to feel living. The experience of place corresponds to a designed place experience that captivates the disenchanting world (Ritzer, 2016). The new place experience has to symbolize facility, comfort, welfare, but temporality. An interviewer summarizes this place experience as follows:

*Spending time outside is significant to me. After the children were born, it started to be a little more limited, but I feel happy when I spend time outside. We usually hang out in Çengelköy. There is a restaurant called Beste; we are satisfied with its service. It is a place where ladies<sup>5</sup> can have comfortable time. Sometimes we go to the Swiss Hotel in Beşiktaş with friends. We hang out on our way. We prefer places suitable for hijab ladies. Comfort is very significant for my friends and me. **Hayriye (40, Housewife)***

Therefore, it seems possible that taking life outside home corresponds to an acceptance and experience of life that forces conventional home-centered patterns. However, this exterior must be tamed by the conservative ideology. Such acceptances comply with today's life, and the conservative style of public spheres in Turkey has increased rapidly. Therefore, these outdoor places were also frequently used for interviewees.

*We eat out, yes. We go out with my husband and children. We chiefly prefer places that do not sell alcohol. There is Hidiv Pavilion in Beykoz; we*

<sup>5</sup> The word 'lady' is a form of address conservative men and women prefer to use for women. It has become widespread with the claim that it is a polite way of describing women in everyday life. However, its use as a form of address is incorrect in Turkish. Mrs. and Mr. are descriptions used before nouns; they are not used as a form of address.



*go there. Sometimes sit on the street<sup>6</sup>. We do whatever we want. **Muhterem (34, Housewife)***

Pleasure design requires swinging here, being there, and here. It corresponds to the designed life experience of the postmodern individual focused on an active life. However, this experience has been framed by conservative assumptions. For some, this limit is a bit more pronounced:

*My family and I enjoy being together. Every Sunday, everyone quits, and we go out. Our day starts with breakfast in the morning. We do not go back to our house without having dinner outside. Apart from that, I don't go out with my friends much, we gather at home. **Nazlı (42, Housewife)***

Consequently, being out is seen as an extension of family life for conservative upper-middle-class women. The exterior design bears indications that the house is moving outside. The comfort sought outside is the projection of what is at home. It, however, reflects the longing for closed-town life. The seclusion of the town is also reflected in the outside of the city. Outside is, now, conservative.

### **Hijab in terms of Fashion**

For conservative women, fashion emerges as an accustomed indicator of everyday life aesthetics. Today, we can argue that fashion has a quality that transcends class categories. To Crane (2003, p. 222), who made a distinction between class fashion and consumer fashion, consumer fashion is geared towards various lifestyles in social classes and 'tribes.' However, this does not disrupt the relationship between luxury fashion and the upper-middle-class. Luxury fashion represents not a style adopted and spreading downward by the upper class, but essentially a group style adopted by definite segments of the upper and middle classes (Crane, 2003, p. 214-215). Therefore, the upper-middle-class category has class codes as much as tribal codes with its luxury consumption. Here, the class and the congregation (tribe) begin to intertwine and overlap more and more.

According to Göle (2019, p.164), modest fashion indicates being both modern and Muslim. However, this intermediate area now seems to have settled at a decisive level. In any case and status, fashion emerges as a medium where both individualities are revealed, and group bonds are formed (Bennett, 2013, p. 159). For the section we are dealing with here, group bonding has been defined with a religious framework. This link is established with symbols. The general logic of adornment works here as well.

Baudrillard (2014, p. 112), who establishes a relationship between the denial of the body and the process of challenging and participating in life, states that adornment and playing with the body are ancient acts. It is also a seduction ritual, and its supreme and primary support is the body (112). However; For Baudrillard, the existence of everything depends on this kind of challenge (113). Therefore, it can be mentioned that there is a relationship between clothing and fashion and challenge. This challenge has to pass through objects first as the rediscovery of the body today (Baudrillard, 1997, p. 163). The conditions of the challenge that passes through the things are also economically pre-created. Participants interviewed also established a link between the fashion of the hijab and liberation. Moreover, it should be noted that this connection is realized with the knowledge that their period is being experienced.

*I was born into a conservative family. I covered my head right after primary school was over. There was no such thing as modest fashion in the past. Whatever we found, we would pull on us. I will never forget; while studying at Galatasaray University, there was a trip to France. I also registered to go. Those with the highest grades would be chosen. I was also chosen. However, since my father did not let me uncover my head outside of*

<sup>6</sup> The place, that the interviewer abbreviates as "street" is Bagdad Street, where places such as cafes, restaurants, and shops that appeal particularly to the secular upper-middle-class are located. As can be understood from the statements of the interviewer, this street has now become a place where upper-middle-class conservatives hang out.

*school, I could not attend the trip I wanted so much. But now, the time is ours. Everybody does whatever they want, right? If those without a hijab do what they want, let the women with the hijab do it, too. Esma (52, Housewife)*

The obligation to remove the hijab in the school was a practice that could be applied by conservative segments, but this should not be carried to the public sphere. That is why the participant could not attend a trip abroad, but now the time has altered. The *time* is theirs now, as the interviewer has stated. The statement "If those without a hijab do what they want; the women with hijab should do it, too" emerges as a distinct confrontation. However, it must be quoted that an implied acceptance is at play here that those who are open are already free to present their lifestyle. On the other hand, *a struggle is thought to have been won*:

*Wearing the hijab is never an obstacle to the following fashion. It used to be a constraint, but now everything seems to be for us. And I am in favor of hijab women to follow fashion in a way that suits them; it should not be left behind in any object. Birgül (31, Architect)*

What is meant by *not staying behind the times* is to transcend tradition. Here, conservatism is now a prevailing modern ideology. Conservatism has not only gone beyond convention but has made it embedded in modern life by transferring it to definite symbols. Now; this is a comfort:

*I used to have principally tailor-made clothes. Because there were not many options for hijab ladies, but it is not like that; everything is at our disposal. We feel comfortable. Funda (34, Math Teacher)*

A relationship between hijab, mystery, and elegance may also appear as a self-fulfilling challenge:

*On the contrary, I think women wearing hijab are more elegant. There is a distinctive mystery in the clothes of hijab women, not like women without hijab. I attach great significance to being stylish. Funda (34, Math Teacher)*

The success of this mystery and challenge has resulted in the knowledge that hijab has now taken the place of fashion. The idea that fashion is determined by modest clothing is common among the interviewees:

*Hijab is not an obstacle to follow the fashion. The fashion continues over hijab. I can also see that many tunics for hijab women are used by women who are not hijab. Hijab is no longer the only type. Kayra (36, Housewife)*

Modest fashion does not correspond to a process that works by itself. There are fashion shows and fashion magazines that determine and modest direct fashion:

*There is no such thing as wearing one type of clothing just because we are wearing hijab. There are many beautiful clothes and designs for ladies wearing hijab. Modest fashion is now very famous and very stylish. There are magazines, and fashion days. These are very valuable, very notable developments. Nur (39, Housewife)*

Fashion is also spreading with following others' clothing.

*The most stylish clothes are now for hijab. I see very chic ladies out there. You can understand the modest fashion from the clothes worn by the hijab ladies that you see outside. Ladies who do not wear hijab have their fashion, but why hijab ones not; ladies deserve the best things. It is Sunnah to look beautiful. Hayriye (40, Housewife)*

Therefore, following fashion is regarded here with an approach that looking beautiful is a necessity of faith. A relationship is established between faith and fashion. hijab, which is accepted in line with the demands of the family, can be made easier thanks to fashion:

*I covered my head the year I started high school; I have a conservative family. They wanted me to hijab, and I accepted, but now, I'm glad I did. Being hijab frightened me at first; everything was uniform at that time; I also love to dress beautifully, I follow fashion. Then the fashion shifted towards hijab, and it got easier for me. And I believe every woman should follow fashion. **Sare (28, Physician)***

Other participants also openly admit that fashion is now largely determined by the hijab:

*The most beautiful fashion is modest fashion. Before, we would have had a hard time finding clothes, it would usually be one type, but now there are many alternatives for hijab ladies. Hijab ladies dress very elegantly now. **Medine (36, Housewife)***

*Now, fashion is modest. **Muhterem (34, Housewife)***

*Hijab is in fashion right now. Our ladies are very chic. I also wear hijab, and I make sure to be stylish. There are only modest clothes in many stores. **Feyza (36, Quran Teacher)***

Following fashion is not only a challenge that gives freedom to hijab but can also settle in opposition to the man who is the bearer of conservatism:

*I dress in a world of colors, and even my husband told me one day, "Fear God, these clothes are so much colorful". However, I love it. Such ladies deserve consumption. I have an obsession with makeup and always buy quality brands. **Gülden (56, Housewife)***

The fact that the appearance is possible with hijab also causes it to achieve an aesthetic value. Dressing well, looking chic, experiencing the difference are all a matter of active individual design. The fashionable hijab corresponds to a ground on which this activity is played. Shopping for clothes can also be a source of pleasure. Brands, fashion websites, and fashion magazines serve as a guide for women. This entire process allows being involved in an experience created or designed through brands and logos. It associates carrying logos on clothes or exhibiting brands, labels, or slogans to being included in a lifestyle (Chaney, 1999, p. 120). Therefore, it is possible to see the traces of passive self-focus here. Here, watching, witnessing, seeing, and enjoying it comes to the fore. The consumption link between travel, shopping, and enjoyment also applies to upper-middle-class conservative women interviewed.

*I enjoy trying the product I will buy, love to spend my time for myself, shopping, and sightseeing. **Kayra (36, Housewife)***

*Yes, I follow fashion, so I ordinarily follow it on the internet and in magazines. I often visit shops and boutiques because I love shopping very much. **Medine (36, Housewife)***

Shopping for clothes corresponds to performing a design job. Participants interviewed also follow a design and combination process to a large extent and receive support from other media in this regard. Here, a combination of selective design and filtering between brands is also created. An interviewer, who said that she went shopping with his mother, stated that her family had confidence in her taste and said:

*"When we travel principally to Saudi Arabia, we can buy the quality clothes we want at Mall of Arabia or Makkah Mall... I follow fashion magazines, although I do not wear every fashion, I see most of them in magazines and create my combination. **Birgül (31, Architect)***

*I buy from boutiques or shopping centers in Uskudar. There is a boutique called Merve Dağlı for Ladies. I shop from there in Uskudar, a store*

*selling modest clothes. Since I cannot find the things I want conveniently, the shops where I shop are almost the same. I prefer Dior, Longchamp, and Hermes for scarves; they are of higher quality. My shoes and bags are also Gucci and Armani. Feyza (36, Quran Teacher)*

Here, it is concluded that an identity design created with brands comes to the fore. The luxury and expensive brands used, at the same time, undertake the complementarity of the identity formations established with hijab. On the other hand, there is also a class meaning in this symbolic construction of identity. Nominal indicators of identity now point to belonging to a different class.

Another characteristic of the design is the emphasis on old craftsmanship and boutique consumption. These craft channels, where specific creations are realized rather than the ones presented, result from the demand for difference and active participation. According to this, the active self-oriented character consumes the things that are 'beautiful' because they fit design and lifestyle (Funk, 2007, p. 68). Here, the activity related to fashion emerges as identity construction. Fashion is an expression of the individual's looks with her lifestyle (Gençtürk-Hızal, 2003, p. 67). Therefore, the following fashion corresponds to an identification practice created by the participants' efforts:

*My modest fashion is myself. I do not like to wear the clothes that everyone is wearing. I am particular, and I think I should reflect this in my clothes. I have a fashion designer abroad. I provide my drawings in Dubai; my fashion designer just makes the outfit wearable. Funda (34, Math Teacher)*

*We choose my husband's clothes with his designer. However, I buy from modest boutiques for myself. Because there are more distinctive types. Since my daughter is also a textile manufacturer, she sometimes makes me sew confidential clothes. To exemplify, at the wedding of our President's daughter, my daughter had me tailored my outfit. Esma (52, Housewife)*

It should be underlined that standing up to high authorities can also be achieved by developing a difference. Here, there is a link between the specificity of the President and the distinction of her design. Some participants think that there is a conflict between hijab and fashion. This contradiction appears as an inability to renew a weakness for a participant. In another, this contradiction has been overcome with a moral stance.

*I like to dress in color, but it shouldn't be like that. I'm aware of that too. I shouldn't get too much attention, but I love it. Hijab was a revolution for me. I'm not too hard on myself. Gülden (56, Housewife)*

*I have a standard for fashion. I am a little conservative in this matter. I mean, I cannot wear everything due to my weight and hijab. Because it is fashionable, I don't feel obliged to wear it, even if it suits me. I do not follow fashion. I covered myself sixteen years ago, and it wasn't that much back then. It was not that pretty; we had scarves or uniform overcoats. Now there are very stylish abaya and clothes. It is no longer possible to prevent fashion. Contrary, there are very chic clothes in the hijab. Since I am a bit more conservative in terms of mentality, I sometimes think that fashion is unsuitable for hijab. Too many vibrant colors are used. Indeed, I think it is not appropriate to use those colors in the hijab that much. Too many fluorescent greens, reds (...) People may want to act like ladies with no headscarves, but why were you covered? If you're going to pretend to be non-hijab, then you have to remove it. Hijab is a bit of avoidance; in this sense, it is a little bit not suitable for me. Hatice (46, Housewife)*

It seems possible to argue that the participants saw the relationship with fashion as a challenge, ultimately as an expression of a realized victory, a demonstration of beauty and holiness, and therefore

they follow fashion. Distant attitudes towards fashion are quite limited. Thereby, conservatism expresses itself more with processes such as fashion in modern life. Indeed, fashion is hijab; namely, being included in the symbols of modern life is also being conservative.

### **We Knit the Nest**

Home is another complementary element of the habitus of upper-middle-class conservative women. Habitus both identifies agents' behavior and distinguishes it from other lifestyles and is the product of the internalization of the division into social classes (Bourdieu, 2015a, p. 255). Habitus is established through taste. Appreciation as a structured and constructed experience specific to social classes expresses preferences belonging to certain lifestyles (Bourdieu, 2015a, p. 259). Home-related acceptances also settle into the distinctive habitus produced by this level of taste. For conservative upper-middle-class women, the first level of home-related liking is related to associations with conventional acceptance of home.

For the participants, home corresponds to peace, comfort, and being like yourself, while the outside is about a matter of presentation or pleasure. In the interviews with the participants, it is noticed that concepts such as roof, nest, and heaven are used in metaphorical constructions about the house. It is also possible to argue that this corresponds to a home set up as a family place (Zeybek, 2011, p. 240). Besides, family, love, peace, trust, warmth, and sincerity appear as other depictions that define home. To these, it is necessary to add the quality of the house to be a place of worship.

*Home means peace to me. Funda (34, Math Teacher)*

*First, I can state that it is my paradise where my whole family is gathered under one roof. Esma (52, Housewife)*

*Home is a place of peace for me; I feel like I am in heaven while praying, sleeping, and sitting. Sare (28, Physician)*

Here, it should be underlined that the house is described with the metaphor of paradise. The house gains the broadest description of peace with this metaphor. In conservative ideology, home is also the family's place, which is supposed to be the main carrier of society.

*The house is the only place for me that can gather my loved ones within four walls. Home means family for me, my husband, peace, in short, my place where I can express my feelings comfortably. Kayra (36, Housewife)*

*My home is the only place where my family is together, so I love my home because it keeps my nest and my family together. Ebru (68, Housewife)*

As the family's place, home is a nest. For the participants, home is a warm, friendly, and shelter nest established with the family:

*Home means my husband and children, means nest. Nur (39, Housewife)*

*For me, family is the nest. It means a warm and friendly atmosphere; it signifies peace of mind. Medine (36, Housewife)*

It is possible to see the house as a warm and natural private place in front of the public sphere. In Sennett's transference (2016, p. 124), the family as "the lap of nature" appears as a natural phenomenon that escapes from the public sphere and takes refuge. Besides, in this family place, that is, in the nest, the main social place of women is motherhood.

*Family symbolizes motherhood for me. A home where I am happy with my husband and children. Hayriye (40, Housewife)*

It expresses that, despite all modern consumption habits, widespread conservative acceptances and patriarchy continue. The house in which the woman is positioned as a mother is also sacred. Thus, there is a relationship between the house as a nest and the house as a place of worship. Trust, worship, and order refer to each other. Therefore, it is also significant that the house is clean.

*Being at home gives me confidence; it is the place where life finds meaning, the place where one feels deeply as a servant while worshipping.*  
**Nazlı (42, Housewife)**

*I love my house very much. My priority is home. Home, order and cleanliness are significant to me.*  
**Hatice (46, Housewife)**

Time spent at home is conceived as the opposite of time spent outside, but the boundaries between home and outside are also beginning to disappear. To exemplify, for a participant, home is essentially a place where she can improve herself; it does not indicate exclusion from life.

*I have been married for 11 years; I graduated from Bogazici University, Mathematics Teaching. I do not practice my profession; my husband does not want me to work. I do not need this as our financial situation is also good. However, I am constantly trying to improve myself; I attend courses, seminars. I think working life regresses people. Working ladies cannot spare time for their children and husbands. I think this is an awful thing.*  
**Funda (34, Math Teacher)**

Therefore, the house is envisioned as a place outside of active design. The house opposite the outside is confidential as a family-related and warm nest that does not contain artificiality. However, the bond between inside and outside seems to be weakened here as well. The contradiction between convention and modern can also be read as a symbol of this private and public sphere intertwining. Attribute meanings to the house are produced mainly with modern lines. Even the old and the traditional can be confronted as a frightening image:

*I do the home decoration. I prefer modern products. I do not like the traditional designs.*  
**Feyza (36, Quran Teacher)**

*Aesthetics are as significant as comfort. Our home has mostly modern features. It is not classic, or let me say it is not very classic. There are always modern lines that; and ornaments that do not tire the eye. It is streamlined and plain.*  
**Funda (34, Math Teacher)**

Although collecting antiques corresponds to an upper-class interest, for some interviewees, they seem to be items to be avoided because they remind them of the past. Some interviewees decorate their homes in a more modern style. In fact, for a participant, old and antique items may be unattractive enough to confront her husband. The participant wanted to return an old table that her husband bought but failed:

*My husband bought an antique table a few years ago. I wanted a table with a new design. When he brought the table home in the evening, I broke out in hell. I said, "This table will not stay in this house." Conventional motifs and antiques do not attract my attention. The feeling of being used scares me. Indeed, it still writes on the table that it is the table "Semra Özal uses." As soon as I woke up in the morning, I took it to the Antique Dealers Bazaar in Üsküdar with my driver and sold it for a very small amount, and my husband was resentful the next day he went and repurchased it for twice what I sold. I never forget the table is still in our house. As I said, things that my husband wants are bought to our house. I do not have much authority in decoration.*  
**Gülden (56, Housewife)**

However, other participants say that they have a more active role in the decoration of the house.

*I ordinarily do the decoration of the house. My husband never interferes. Making money belongs to my husband, household order, and spending money to me. I like modern household items more. I am not attracted to authentic antique household items. **Esma (52, Housewife)***

*I decorate my house myself; my husband does not interfere at all; he does not understand. Sometimes he doesn't even realize, as my husband works very hard. I change my living room every year. I give the old ones to those in need. I prefer aesthetics in the guest lounge. But comfort is more significant for our room that we use daily. Yes, I like traditional motifs very much, but I do not use them in home decoration; we prefer modern furniture for now. **Kayra (36, Housewife)***

Moreover, clarity to constant change and fluidity stand out in the design of the house:

*I decorate the house. I love paintings; there are paintings all over the house. I prefer modern armchairs; I usually pay close attention; home is very significant to me. Although my husband is uncomfortable with this situation, I often change things. **Hayriye (40, Housewife)***

*I decorated my house; maybe that's why I felt like I was in my own home for a long time on the first day of our marriage. My husband does not interfere; I take care of the decoration of the house. I attach great significance to comfort; the place that is comfortable for me is also aesthetics. Traditional motifs exist only in one of our rooms; my mother-in-law had prepared it, everything in the room already belonged to her, it is not used much, but it is still there, I could not say no to not hurt her. **Sare (28, Physician)***

On the other hand, for some participants, it is concluded that there are no sharp contrasts between modern and traditional. Some participants fall somewhere between the two. They are waiting for their time, that is, future times when they get older, to move to the conventional. It is possible to read a decision that has not been entirely made yet in these transfers. The tradition has not been completely abandoned, or it has been seen as the value that both modern and tradition should have at the same time.

*I do the home decoration. There are generally modern motifs. Everything is to my taste; usually, my husband does not interfere much. Of course, I like traditional motifs. However, I do not use it now at home; I do not know what I will do in the future. **Medine (36, Housewife)***

A participant who makes the decoration with her husband is also on an unstable line between tradition and modern:

*My husband likes to take care of everything that is in the house as much as I do. We are doing the decoration together; I can even say that my husband is more concerned than me. He does not put anything that does not have color harmony into our house. Aesthetics is very significant for my husband, I keep pace with him, and it is satisfying. I like traditional motifs when I see them elsewhere, but I cannot adapt them to my own home very much; I guess I don't like conventional motifs at my own house. **Nazlı (42, Housewife)***

*My daughter-in-laws and I decorate my home; there are points where we care about aesthetics but also points where we care about comfort. We also used traditional motifs, but we could not give up modern items; we have everything in our home, you will understand. **Ebru (68, Housewife)***

Fewer participants accept traditional motifs as indispensable. On the other hand, it should be stated that these accepted traditional images correspond to the outstanding examples that have been subjected to a selection:

*I usually prefer Ottoman motifs to traditional motifs. I love to see Modern Art Canvas paintings of the Ottoman Empire at home. Nur (39, Housewife)*

It is noticed that following the traditional is expressed by the metaphors used to follow the new and modern. Joy, getting lost in it, and sensitivities about styles appear in the narratives, as well:

*Traditional, old things used to mean little to me, but now it interests me a lot. Looking at a pattern, I can get lost in front of it, so I enjoy it very much. There are currently no traditional motifs in the decoration of my house. However, gradually I started to like and buy those kinds of plates. It is not available in large objects yet, but it has been striking for me for three years. Funda (34, Math Teacher)*

*I like conventional motifs. For example, I like the use of lace; I like this detail from the bottom of the vase. Also, some ladies don't like carpets, and I don't like a house without a carpet. Even if it is small, I like the carpet according to its environment; I would like it. It seems too naked to me. Hatice (46, Housewife)*

One participant organizes her home with a décor referring to traditional craftsmanship:

*Rugs attract my attention mostly in home decoration. I like hand-woven rugs. There are very few rugs at home, but they are hand-woven rugs. I don't like too much furniture at home. Muhterem (34, Housewife)*

The construction of the house shows that it is equipped with symbols and transported to the field of commodities corresponding to the life experience. While the definition of home is defined as nest, inclusiveness, authenticity, peace, and comfort, this definition turns into a reality through commodities. Even traditional and conservative images do not have any significance in constructing the house for some participants. Where considered notable, the relationship established with the conventional is a gradual and selective one. In this selection work, linguistic patterns of consumption culture that aestheticize daily life, such as pleasure, style reflection, and detail, come to the fore.

### **We Work for a Vacation**

Vacation is a ritual for all of the participants. Going somewhere, traveling, visiting different places are significant for participants. Vacation is a process in which identities are re-established or discovered. Tourism refers to the carnivalesque behavior in which individuals re-discover themselves, albeit temporarily, and play with their identities (Bennett, 2013, p. 233). During the interviews, it is possible to encounter demands regarding this carnivalesque demand. The vacation is experienced with claims about self-realization such as traveling, relaxing, enjoying, and therapy:

*I mostly travel all over the world; this is my understanding of vacation. Of course, I do not know if it changes with age. To exemplify, Dubai or somewhere would be a restful vacation. In a hotel in the country, skiing is resting for me. But as I said, what I enjoy is traveling brutally. Getting out of the morning and traveling all the streets of that city. Funda (34, Math Teacher)*

Traveling brutally also brings along the wandering around and fluidity between the places.



*Places where I can travel attract me. For example, I read something; suddenly, a part catches my attention. The city catches my attention, then I hear a place from there, and when we say this is there, etc., we turn the route there. **Funda (34, Math Teacher)***

Shopping is also considered a part of the vacation.

*Traveling is therapy for me. I love Dubai very much; I went 20 times. Shopping is very satisfying there, you live the summer in the middle of winter. Dubai is where a woman can live freely the most. Nobody disturbs anybody there. **Gülden (56, Housewife)***

Traveling helps to increase experiences between distant countries and establish a sense of freedom. It should also be underlined that this freedom comes with luxury and comfort:

*I take a vacation whenever it comes to my mind. Every day is a vacation for me, as I don't have much responsibility. I visited many countries of the world; Germany, the USA, Lebanon, Arabia, Belgium, Norway, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Azerbaijan, Greece, Canada, Africa, Bulgaria, Macedonia... I will continue to travel the world as much as I can. I guess I don't need to count my trips within the country. I make sure that the hotels I stay in are 5-star in the countries I visit, because every service offered is personal and comfortable. I can say that I spend most of my time traveling and exploring new places. **Birgül (31, Architect)***

On the other hand, thematic vacations have a notable place in tourism today. Bennett also points out that there is a direct link between lifestyles and thematic vacations (235). Indicators regarding the presentation of lifestyles appear in vacation preferences. "The tourist seeks appropriate places, images, and narratives to exemplify a sensibility. As with other features of lifestyle, what is sought is materials related to lifestyles" (Chaney, 1999, p. 146). In the example we have examined, these lifestyles are woven by those who are conservative.

*My husband and I prefer conservative hotels where men and ladies are separate. Having fun means spending time with my family for me. When I am with my husband and children, my world becomes mine. **Kayra (36, Housewife)***

It has been observed that there is a link between freedom and conservative avoidance:

*It is important for me to have a calm vacation. I don't wear hasema; I have a tunic. In this sense, Dubai is very comfortable; I can even wear a swimsuit. I would be ecstatic, particularly if I could coincide with women's day in Dubai. Since it is women's day, men cannot even go near the beach. At the places I go to the summer house, I swim with my tunic. **Gülden (56, Housewife)***

*There are places preferred by the conservative community in Turkey and abroad. You know, there are the best services in those places, like solarium. We choose places where we can be comfortable and receive quality service. **Nur (39, Housewife)***

It is noticed that comfort, trust, and conservatism are concepts that complement each other in the understanding of vacation. The search for alcohol-free places appears as another detail that establishes them.

*We go on vacation regularly. We generally prefer the seaside. We have a summer house in Çatalca, and we go there. Of course, comfort is important*

*because ladies wearing hijab cannot comfortably swim in the sea or pool everywhere. There are exceptional vacation places for ladies wearing hijabs and even families. Fun places that are both modern and have many alternatives. Of course, they are places without alcohol. Medine (36, Housewife)*

In the interpretation of these designed vacations where quality and conservatism are experienced together, it is noticed that the emphasis on comfort comes to the fore. This emphasis on comfort corresponds to the creation of possibilities of being entertained *conservatively* by hotels. It is noticed that similar results were obtained in a study conducted with the subject. In that study, while the reasons for the participants to choose halal concept hotels were emphasized, respectively, as having separate areas for men and women, the absence of alcohol, and the suitability of the family environment; among the positive experiences are the availability of particular entertainment and services for women and the absence of alcohol in the hotel (Dal and Topay, 2018, p. 277). This comfort is also related to the conservative peace search. The emphasis on home, the choice of alcohol-free places, and the meaning attributed to the prayer reveal the significance of peace for the interviewees. This search for peace is related to the search for balance in conservative life experience and reveals the relationship established between peace and patriarchy.

Peace is also determinant in shaping vacation preferences. It is seen in the interviews that there are several versions of the vacation concept synthesized with peace. Sacred places, or tranquility, are accepted as vacation practices where this peace is established. Hajj and Umrah visits are mostly included in vacations abroad. Besides, forms suitable for conservative values can be seen about vacations (jerseys). In these transfers, it is possible to see a synthesis between wandering and peace, stability and mobility. As a matter of fact, according to Funk (2007, p. 75), the discovery of slowness, which evokes a dominance of time, is a distinctive feature as well as being mobilized and mobility in the active self-oriented character structure.

*We determine the places we will go to in advance; if there are other places to visit nearby, we stop by them. I love to stop by Bursa in Turkey; we usually prefer it in winter after skiing in Uludağ; visiting the shrines in the city gives me incredible peace of mind. Nazlı (42, Housewife)*

The concept of vacation, where peace and fluidity are synthesized, is also noticed in the choices made on different dates:

*We prefer to travel abroad in winter and seashore in the summer. We regularly go to South Africa and Saudi Arabia several times a year. Thank God we fulfilled our pilgrimage. With my husband, we went to Hajj twice and to Umrah three times. We love the seaside in Turkey. We generally choose hotels and boutiques where men and women who respect conservative values have separate beaches. Esma (52, Housewife)*

It is possible to argue that the understanding of vacation released among these places includes security, peace, and fluidity. In this context, pilgrimage visits are now a part of the vacation. Hajj also corresponds to the acceptance of the existence of wealth.

*We are going on vacation. We are also going abroad. We went to Dubai a few times; we went to the USA, New York. We went to Hajj with my husband and children. We prefer Antalya and Didim in Turkey. Feyza (36, Quran Teacher)*

Hajj is the most significant vacation destination. Therefore, it should be considered among the vacation preferences:

*I was going on vacation regularly throughout the year. But as the kids grow up, their jobs and stuff (...) I can't go on vacation right now. When I went to Dubai with my sister several times, and I also visited Cyprus with my*

*sister. Otherwise, my husband cannot find time every minute because he is dealing with trade. But I went to Dubai, Cyprus, Skopje, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, the USA a few times. I went to Hajj twice. Hajj is the most significant one; how can I forge! Hatice (46, Housewife)*

For another participant, the Hajj gains value with and among other vacations. Finally, for a participant, pilgrimage and wedding constitute a *concept* due to their specific situation:

*We often go on vacation. We generally prefer the seaside. We already have a summer house; we usually spend our holidays in the summer house. Once or twice we went to Angels Marmaris Hotel. When traveling abroad, I prefer Europe. I don't like long plane trips. I went to the USA once. The eleven-hour flight was pretty tiring. It doesn't feel like a vacation; after that, I've avoided any longer flights. We went to Hajj with my husband right after we got married. My husband is Iranian; there is no wedding in their customs; they go to Umrah or Hajj. We also held a wedding and, right after, we went to Hajj together. It was an excellent feeling for me; I fulfilled my pilgrimage and held my wedding simultaneously; it was an incredible feeling. After the children were born, we visited Umrah twice; so that the children could know and see our sacred place. Hayriye (40, Housewife)*

Umrah and Hajj is a spiritual vacation that is repeated now:

*We went abroad; we went to Dubai three times. We went to Barcelona, also England and France in Europe. We love to travel as a family. Thank God we visited the Hajj; the Hajj visit is the most significant one for me. When I went to Hajj for the first time, I did not want to return. I prayed, "God, let me stay here with you" It is a vastly unique feeling, a perfect one that every Muslim should taste. May God allow everyone to go! We went to Umrah many times with my husband. We try to go every year whenever we have time. Medine (36, Housewife)*

It should be noted that the pursuit of quality has a feature that makes Umrah visits meaningful.

*We traveled mostly to Europe. We went on pilgrimage with my husband, Alhamdulillah, we fulfilled our duty. I went to Umrah three times. We did not enjoy our first Umrah visit. The hotel we stayed in was problematic. We made our second visit with VIP Umrah. With better quality service, it was a more peaceful Umrah visit for us. I recommend it to everyone. I see people criticize; I read from the media. I do not understand why people can go to Paris by taking a private plane, but there are so many agitations when the Umrah visit is made more comfortable. Nur (39, Housewife)*

Returning to family and childhood are the qualities that make the vacation meaningful for some participants.

*I did not have much time for a vacation, and my husband also doesn't have much time. But from now on, I will travel a lot with my daughter. We went to Dubai on honeymoon with my husband, and then we couldn't find the time. I have no free time. Our house belongs to us. Outside of work, I prefer to be at home or go to my mother, which makes me ecstatic. Family is very significant; they come first. Sare (28, Physician)*

*I am always in Istanbul with my family in winter, but I stay in Marmaris after May; it is my vacation. I am going to my hometown; it takes me to my childhood; I am blissful there, my father's house is still standing, I do not let*

*anyone touch it. Apart from that, we made two Hajj visits with my husband; I do not remember the number of times I went to Umrah with my sons. Ebru (68, Housewife)*

It seems possible to claim that conservative women's vacations fiction is realized with meanings such as traveling and getting away; besides, conservative thematic patterns are prioritized in holiday preferences, and the search for peace and comfort affects these holiday preferences. It should be added that Hajj and Umrah stand out as the place of spiritual vacation. In the imagination of vacations, fluidity, peace, safety, comfort, ease, and unique experiences come together.

### Conclusion

In today's Turkey, it can be argued that conservatism has transformed into a political and economic hegemony based on the alliance established with other modern ideologies or borrowed conceptual contents. Inevitably, this will also find its counterpart in cultural-daily life. A new aesthetic of everyday life has also emerged, especially among the economically conservative middle and upper-middle-classes. New lifestyles and character formations of the upper-middle-class are reproduced with conservative and Islamic signifiers. This research indicates that a habitus or congregation intersects with class status and that this intersection does not respectably contradict each other.

To sum up, it is possible to observe that conservative upper-middle-class women have settled into a daily lifestyle shaped by meta aesthetics. The contents of this style, on the other hand, are defined as speed, fluidity, design, participation, tranquility, and escape within the field of different experiences. On the other hand, it is observed that these are tried to be realized with those who are conservative and with contents that evoke tradition. However, in some cases, it is noticed that there is a distant attitude to traditional images, and contradictions cannot be placed in the symbolic order. However, these are contradictions for women that are comfortably passed over.

For conservative upper-middle-class women, while conservatism and tradition appear as a basis for socialization, experiences and tastes are formed according to their compatibility with this ground. However, conservatism is also perceived as an experience in all these processes, going on vacations to live it, following fashion: Even following fashion is associated with hijab. In this process, traditional patterns turn into experience through commodity aesthetics. In this aesthetic setup, implications of postmodern self-orientation are encountered, and life is experienced as a design. All these processes are not that conservatism surrendered to modern capitalism, which already suggests that instead of being settled in the specific context of Turkey as a modern ideology. On the contrary, conservatism is a notable style in the aestheticization of everyday life. While conveying the preferences of women towards their life experiences, some of the issues that they particularly emphasize — such as preferring alcohol-free places, turning to consumer places that care for the privacy of men and women, and shopping from places that they know to be conservative — point to this.

As a result, conservative upper middle class women in our sample are able to harmonize their life experiences and aesthetic forms of modern consumption culture with their own life perspectives. This shows that today, conservative lifestyles can easily be combined with modern aesthetic styles. Therefore, the conservative ideology shaped by a reaction against modernism can become compatible with modern lifestyles in today's Turkey.

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