

The Reconstruction of Masculinity in Conservative Political Discourses*

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ABSTRACT

The phenomena of conservatism and masculinity can be considered as two closely related concepts because they have many common points. Because they have historically had mutual functions that feed and produce each other. It is possible to say that conservative politics has an aim to sustain masculinity. Trying to protect the patriarchal values that have been formed from the past to the present is the main reason for this purpose. Therefore, it is necessary to say that expressions of masculinity are very common in conservative political discourses. In this context, the aim of our research is to critically analyse the expressions of masculinity reflected in the discourses of members of conservative political party in power in Turkey. The texts within the scope of the research were analysed using the Critical Discourse Analysis method. According to the findings obtained as a result of Critical Discourse Analysis (semantic analysis, formal structure analysis and mental model analysis), it has been revealed that social, political, cultural and ideological structures related to the reconstruction of masculinity take place in conservative political discourses. The similarity between the language used by conservative politics and the expressions addressing the nature of masculinity proves this situation.

Keywords: Conservative Politics, Conservative Political Discourse, Masculinity, Construction of Masculinity, Critical Discourse Analysis.

Received / Accepted: 02 June 2024 / 10 August 2024

Muhafazakâr Siyasi Söylemlerde Erkeklığın Yeniden İnşası

ÖZ

Muhafazakârlık ve erkeklik olguları, birçok ortak noktaya sahip olmaları nedeniyle birbiriyle yakından ilişkili iki kavram olarak değerlendirilebilir. Çünkü tarihsel olarak birbirlerini besleyen ve üreten karşılıklı işlevlere sahip olmuşlardır. Muhafazakâr siyasetin erkek egemenliğini sürdürmeye yönelik bir amacı olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Nitekim geçmişten günümüze oluşmuş ataerkil değerlerin korunmaya çalışılması bu amacın temel nedenidir. Dolayısıyla muhafazakâr siyasi söylemlerde erkeklik ifadelerinin çok yaygın olduğunu söylemek gerekir. Bu bağlamda araştırmamızın amacı, Türkiye'de iktidarda olan muhafazakâr siyasi parti mensuplarının söylemlerine yansıyan erkeklik ifadelerini eleştirel bir gözle analiz etmektir. Araştırma kapsamındaki metinler Eleştirel Söylem Analizi yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Eleştirel Söylem Analizi (semantik analiz, biçimsel yapı analizi ve zihinsel model analizi) sonucunda elde edilen bulgulara göre, erkeklığın yeniden inşasına ilişkin sosyal, siyasal, kültürel ve ideolojik yapıların muhafazakâr siyasi söylemlerde yer aldığı ortaya konmuştur. Muhafazakâr siyasetin kullandığı dil ile erkeklığın doğasına hitap eden ifadeler arasındaki benzerlik bu durumu kanıtlar niteliktedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Muhafazakâr Siyaset, Muhafazakâr Siyasi Söylem, Erkeklik, Erkeklığın İnşası, Eleştirel Söylem Analizi.

*Bu araştırma makalesinin verileri anket veya mülakat teknikleri kullanılarak elde edilmediğinden etik kurul izni gerekmemiştir. / In this research article, ethics committee permission was not required as the data were not obtained using survey or interview techniques.

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Başvuru / Kabul: 02 Haziran 2024 / 10 Ağustos 2024

Atıf: Sağlık, C. (2024). The Reconstruction of Masculinity in Conservative Political Discourses, *İmgelem*, 15, 61-86.

INTRODUCTION

Conservative politics was born as a reaction against the political and intellectual formations that emerged especially after the French Revolution. The fact that new formations eroded old values and created different social structures caused conservative politics to protect its ideological ideas and doctrines. Whether religious or cultural, the form of protectionist politics that conservative politics has adopted as its mission has continued to exist under different power structures until today. In fact, we can also say that it has had to act together with different power structures. Because, it has not been possible to prevent major social, political and cultural changes, especially in the last 250 years. Although the ideological foundations of conservative politics were laid by longing for the seclusion-oriented ascetic life of the Middle Ages and the social structure ruled by sharia law under the yoke of religion, this form of politics was defeated in the face of irreversible transformations. Therefore, conservative politics, which tried to make its own way in the midst of the flames of revolution, has tried to exist in the political arena by finding paternalistic, oligarchic, totalitarian, centralist and nationalist political approaches close to itself, although they have changed over time.

Conservative politics has always adopted a rigid attitude towards the changing order and formations. The ideological thought of this politics has been able to exist within the existing order and has tried to protect religion, tradition, customs and other elements of culture. Although it has tried to exist in new political organisations - by facing change - it has tried to preserve some of its core concepts (e.g. religion, family, morality, tradition, custom, culture, history, etc.). In fact, all of these core concepts are also intended to protect the patriarchal order. Because, concepts such as religion, family, tradition, custom, morality, glorious history are actually the mental constructs and structures in which masculinity has found a place for itself the most. Masculinity has reproduced itself under these concepts and ensured its continuity. Therefore, conservative politics and masculinity appear as two closely related phenomena. For this reason, the discourses of conservative politics also have an aim to sustain masculinity.

In this respect, the aim of this study is to analyse the social and cognitive structures for the reconstruction of masculinity in the political discourses of the current government with conservative ideology in Turkey. The reason for choosing the conservative political party currently in power in Turkey for the discourse analysis is the institutionalisation of political

Islam in this period. Another reason is that this party has the authority to use all the ideological apparatuses of the state and therefore holds the power of sanction.

The texts used in the study were analysed using Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method. The texts containing discourses on the reconstruction of masculinity were analysed within the framework of CDA's semantic (analysis of global and local meanings) and formal analysis (syntactic, rhetorical, repetition, emphasis, relationship between sentences) and mental model analysis (analysis of context and event/situation models) dimensions. In addition, the findings were strengthened by evaluating each text from a sociological perspective within the framework of the theories related to the concept of masculinity.

The Concept of Masculinity

According to Freud, the process of acquiring masculinity as a gender has developed as an escape from women and rejection of femininity. As Freud says, it is the process in which the child gives up identifying with and deep emotional attachment to his mother in the oedipal process and then chooses his father as the object of identification (Kimmel 2005a). The child first feels deep sexual desire for his mother and sees his father as a rival, but the fear of being castrated by his father, who is stronger than him (Freud 1993), suppresses his sexual desire. Since the feeling of fear prevails over the feeling of sexual desire, the child rejects his mother and starts to become a man like his father and gain a personality/identity opposite to femininity. The process of cognitive formation of masculinity was handled in this way by Freud and he made detailed analyses on how the formation process of masculinity is shaped before the sociocultural phase. However, it is not possible to explain masculinity only with the oedipal complex. Although Freud's ideas are important, the masculinity mentioned in this study refers to masculine characteristics that have been produced and developed socioculturally in the longer term and have penetrated into all social systems. Therefore, as Kimmel states, the masculinity referred to is not a biological law of nature, but the cultural structure of a set of roles and meanings determined by social relations in the historical section of society and dictated to men through this determination, changing according to space and time (Özarslan 2016). Based on these explanations, it can be said that masculinity refers to a concept consisting of behaviours, languages and practices (Abumere-Itulua 2013; Messerschmidt 2018) that exist in certain cultural and organisational positions, are generally associated with men and thus culturally defined as the opposite of femininity. Considering the behaviours, languages and practices that characterise masculinity, Connell (2019) has mentioned four types of masculinity. *Hegemonic masculinity*, which Connell first mentions, is a cultural dynamic and gender practice that claims

the dominant position in society and maintains the dominant position of masculinity by ensuring the legitimacy of patriarchy. *Subalternised masculinity* refers to gay men who are stigmatised, impotent, degraded and placed at the bottom of the gender hierarchy by hegemonic masculinity. Another type of masculinity, *complicit masculinity*, is the passive slothful type of masculinity that secretly carries hegemonic masculinity and masculine domination within itself and benefits from the gains of the patriarchal system. The last type of masculinity mentioned by Connell, *marginalised masculinity*, refers to the type of masculinity that is inferior in terms of race, ethnic culture or social class relations (e.g. blacks are physically strong) and this type of masculinity is also determined and managed by the hegemonic masculinity type (e.g. whites).

As can be understood from the explanations made above, masculinity refers to a broad concept that is too complex to be explained with a purely biological or psychological approach, which is constantly repeated historically and whose domination is felt in all social structures. Therefore, when explaining masculinity, we cannot simply see it as the opposite of femininity and make a simple dichotomic explanation. Instead, when explaining masculinity, we need to look at the side of masculine domination that takes different forms according to place and time, that is seen in all social institutions such as family, religion, education, media and politics, and that is constantly repeated and produced covertly in different parts of the social system.

Conservative Politics and Masculinity

Conservatism, a product of Western culture, took place in politics after the French Revolution (Akkaş 2003; Duman 2017). Because in this period, a political ideology was formed that aimed to return to the old order in order to eliminate the chaos and confusion brought by the revolution. This political ideology opposed values such as individualism, rationalism brought by the Enlightenment and equality, freedom and nationalism brought by the French revolution. In fact, conservatism has been against all kinds of intellectual and revolutionary formations that disrupt order. They wanted to return to the divine order of medieval times and the ascetic religious environment in which God's commands prevailed. But once the flame of change was lit, it was impossible to prevent it. As Nietzsche (2011) says, God is dead. God can no longer take back his former power, nor can the soul prevail over the body. Although Spinoza (2011) once tried to prove the existence of God, this endeavour was reduced to ashes in the flame of revolution.

Conservatism is the ideological idea of the search for God in these ashes and the effort to resurrect him. However, it is largely unclear whether the aim is to resurrect God or whether religious political ideologues want to regain their own divine position. What is known for

certain, however, is that the defence of conservatism and the defence of male power intersect on the same plane. Because the presence of masculine arguments in the content of the holy books clarifies what it is that is actually wanted to be protected. It is obvious that both Christian, Muslim and Jewish clergymen are the most ardent defenders of the patriarchal system. Because all of these celestial religions have developed many doctrines against women's emancipation*. In this case, of course, the decline in the dominance of religion means the decline in the dominance of masculinity. Whether the form of conservative politics is religious or liberal, it is obvious that it embodies a masculine mentality. Because, conservative politics often emphasises tradition and opposes human emancipation.

Throughout history, the right has always represented the high, male and conservative side, while the left has always represented the low, female and anarchist side. In other words, conservatism and masculine mentality have been on the same side. It is not accidental that masculinity and conservative politics are on the same side (right). Because, the power aspirations of conservatism and masculinity converge at the same points. The values defended by conservatism (religion, family, tradition, glorious history etc.) are in fact the values that consolidate the position of masculinity. The concepts such as religion, family, history and tradition are all based on the male-dominated system. Trying to protect these values actually means protecting the power of masculinity.

Conservatism has always found a place for itself in the protectionist politics of power and has tried to exist in this medium. For this reason, conservative politics has been associated with different structures of thought in the position of power. For example, conservatives have at one time defended royal power, constitutional monarchy, aristocratic privileges, representative democracy and presidential dictatorship; free trade; nationalism and centralism; capitalist market society and different versions of the welfare state (Muller 1997). It is noteworthy that conservatism has moved on even with the forms of liberalism and nationalism it once opposed. However, the first political ideology it fought against was liberalism (Fawcett 2020) and, as in the French Revolution, nationalism. Unable to stand in the face of change, conservative politics has tried to take a place in the position of power - by reserving or transforming its own core resources. However, it should be noted that conservative ideology

*The idea that woman was created from the rib of man in the creation story of Islam (Ulutaş & Özpınar 2013), the mention of woman as an object owned by man in the Ten Commandments in the Torah, and the commandment of woman to be a faithful servant of man in Christianity (Turğut 2017) prove this argument. Therefore, the institution of religion did not evaluate women and men in an equal position (Duman 2012).

intersects with other political ideologies (authoritarian, totalitarian, paternalist, etc.) at some points. The intersection points are also the political ideas that conservatism constantly defends.

Phenomena such as "order, authority, tradition, property, hierarchy, morality, moderation, etc." (Duman 2017), which are the core values of conservatism, are also phenomena that feed masculinity. Conservative politics wants to preserve order, power, tradition and glorious history, just as the patriarchal system wants to exist in these concepts and maintain its own position. As a matter of fact, this is the reason why the vast majority of the segments defending the masculine mentality in political arenas have right-wing and conservative/nationalist attitudes. If we go back even further; the effect of fascism rising before and during the Second World War on the re-establishment of hegemonic masculinity (with slogans such as "victory of will", "think with your blood") (Connell 2019) is also based on the same point.

Method

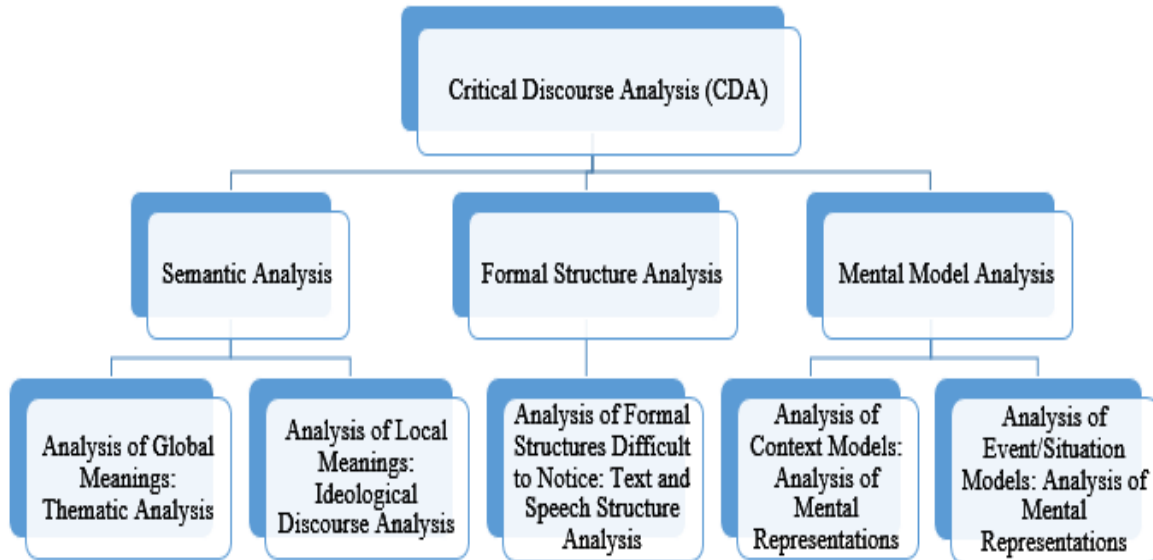
Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. CDA started in the mid-1980s as a new direction in the work of Fairclough, van Dijk, Wodak, and others. As a movement it began in 1992, at a meeting in Amsterdam with presentations by van Dijk, Fairclough, Wodak, Kress, and van Leeuwen, which were later published as a special issue of "Discourse and Society (4, 2,1993)" van Leeuwen (2006: 292). Although the ideas of other names on CDA are also important (especially Wodak and Fairclough), Teun A. van Dijk's ideas were taken into consideration while analysing discourse in this study.

According to van Dijk (2008; 2002), CDA is a method of analysis developed to reveal the social conditions of discourse and especially the problems of power and abuse of power, as well as to understand how power is related to text and speech, and more generally how discourse plays a role in the production and reproduction of domination. In other words, it is a method based on the assumption that language is an irreducible part of social life and dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life (Fairclough 2004). Therefore, the reason why the CDA method was used in this research is that it allows the social, political and ideological aspects and the real intention behind a discourse to be revealed.

Van Dijk (2002; 2006; 1996; van Dijk and Kintsch 1983) explained CDA based on the sociocognitive approach in general in 5 dimensions. These 5 dimensions were categorised by

the researcher and grouped under the following headings. CDA of the texts analysed within the scope of the study was carried out by taking these dimensions into consideration.

Figure 1: Analysis Dimensions of CDA



1- *Thematic analysis of semantic macro-structures*: Headlines and basic propositions such as news headlines and sub-headlines, summaries, thematic sentences, introductions and announcements are analysed in order to reveal the underlying realities of the discourse (Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983). Semantic macrostructures (the main theme of the discourse) express the global meaning and the best-remembered "essence" in discourse production (e.g. headlines and sub-headlines in a newspaper article or thematic sentences such as spotlights). This dimension of analysis therefore focuses on the global meanings underlying thematic discourse (e.g. capitalism).

2- *Analysis of local meanings*: The aim of this analysis is to reveal the implications, propositions, inter-propositional relations and coherence -expressed directly or indirectly- of the words in the discourse. In the analysis, it is important to reveal indirect or hidden meanings and ideologically biased discourses (polarising statements representing us and them).

3- *Analysis of formal structures difficult to notice*: In addition to, or instead of, semantic structures, critical discourse analysts should be concerned with many features of spontaneous speech such as repetitions, word corrections, pauses, hesitation, etc., as well as textual or speech structures that are much less consciously controlled by speakers, such as intonation, syntactic structures, propositional structures, rhetorical figures (ibid.). As a matter of fact, Van Dijk

distinguished between global and local forms of discourse just as he distinguished between global and local meanings, and stated that global and local forms of discourse should also be analysed. In this respect, it is important to analyse the formal structures of the dominant discourse (local and global) that are not noticeable in the sentences, especially due to its excessive use of certain expressions that are in accordance with its own social structure and ideology and conceal the facts, and deliberately eliminating or passively using the expressions against itself.

4- *Analysis of context models:* As mentioned earlier, context models are mental representations that direct and constrain people's thoughts and actions in a communicative event. The ways in which language users interpret or describe in mental context models appropriate to the characteristics of the communicative event control and constrain text and speech (ibid.). Through context models, people make discourse appropriate to the communicative event and social environment in which they are situated. While context models generally reflect subjective mental representations, they enable people to produce subjective evaluations, information and thoughts appropriate to the current situation. Van Dijk distinguished between local and global contexts as well as between local and global structures. Global contexts are defined in terms of the social, political, cultural and historical structures in which a communicative event takes place, while local contexts are usually defined in terms of the characteristics of the immediate, interactive situation in which a communicative event takes place (including the intentions, goals, knowledge, norms and other beliefs of participants in various communicative and social roles, as well as the general actions taking place in a general social space) (ibid.). In general, context models are analyzed as mental representations that interface between cognitive and social structures and discourse. As a result, the analysis of context models aims to analyze the subjective mental representations present in discourse in relation to cognitive and social structures or to reveal local and global contexts. In this way, the social and ideological realities that exist in discourse are revealed through the analysis of context models (interface) that express mental representations.

5- *Analysis of event/situation models:* Like the context models mentioned above, event/situation models are mental representations in episodic memory, i.e. long-term memory, where people store their knowledge and opinions about episodes they have experienced or read/heard (ibid.). Therefore, it would be appropriate to use the term "mental model", which applies to both. People's evaluations of events and situations are made according to the interpretations and definitions required by subjective mental models. According to Van Dijk

(ibid.), the subjective mental models that people reflect in their discourse specific to events and situations are analyzed as an interface to reveal social representations such as knowledge, attitudes and ideologies related to the structure of groups and organizations (social structures). In order to establish the indirect link between discourse and society, i.e. between the personal and the social (since no direct link to social structure can be established), it is important to analyze mental models that express models of context and events/situations.

As mentioned above, CDA was used in the discourse analysis of the texts within the scope of the research. Although it is not possible to benefit from all stages of this analysis (because the analysis does not subject the entire news text to discourse analysis), it was deemed appropriate to use the useful points of the analysis method. Because, in this study, only the parts of the text that contain discourses on the reconstruction of masculinity were analyzed and evaluated in a sociological sense. As a matter of fact, Van Dijk himself did not propose a standardized way on CDA. He underlined that "in line with the critical nature of CDA, the analysis should have a perspective and a working method that aims to reveal - for the benefit of the oppressed - the abuse of power and power and the legitimizing effects of dominant discourses" (Şah 2020: 219-220).

Findings and Interpretation

Discourse 1:

06.03.2021-Twitter message by the Presidential Communications Head: *"We will not allow concepts such as freedom and tolerance to be corrupted for the propaganda of homosexuality and the targeting of our families and children (...). It is the primary duty of the state to protect our citizens from all forms of extremism. Presenting such ugliness as something 'normal', especially to young people, is an attack on our social order and the noble character of our nation" (URL-1). (Translation belongs to me)*

Description of the Text: Above is a message posted on social media by a political official from a ruling conservative political party. Although there are many such discourses within the same political channel, other discourses are not included as it is thought that only this discourse would be sufficient. When the content of this message is examined; it is mentioned that LGBTI groups are perverted, disrupt order, attack moral values, behave in an extremist manner and that citizens should be protected from such people as a duty of the state.

Analysis of Local Meanings (ideological discourse analysis): The fact that homosexuality is seen as a degeneration, perversion and an inferior act proves that hegemonic

masculinity imposes its own masculine understanding on the other type of masculinity. As a matter of fact, as Connell (2019) states, hegemonic masculinity places gay men at the bottom of the gender hierarchy and exposes them to political and cultural exclusion, legal violence and sanctions such as street violence. As it is understood from the sentence "it is the primary duty of the state to protect from all kinds of extremism", it is understood that LGBTI individuals are made vulnerable to violence by the state mechanism and the masculine domination of conservative politics is applied to the members of this group. An important point to be mentioned here is that those who hold the state mechanism convey their ideological thoughts to people through different devices and try to reproduce their power through these devices. As Althusser (2003) mentions in his book "Ideology and Ideological Devices of the State", some of these devices are family, religion, media, trade unions and politics. It is understood that the conservative masculine ideology of power is applied to individuals through other institutional apparatuses, especially politics (either through pressure disguised as consent or through violence where pressure is not effective). Moreover, according to Michel Foucault (1981), who deals with the relationality between discourse and power in a poststructuralist manner, in every society, discourse production is controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures with roles such as fending off the forces and dangers against it and gaining dominance over events. One of the procedures of power is the method of exclusion, and the most obvious/familiar one of this procedure is prohibition. As a matter of fact, using prohibitive language against LGBTI groups and making ideological discourses to keep them under control refer to this point. Therefore, according to the Foucauldian approach, there is a close relationship between discourse and power. Foucault's approach points out that power reveals its shaping and dictating domination over the body and behaviours (Foucault 1978; Smart 2003) through discourses.

Analysis of Formal Structures Difficult to Notice (repetitions) and Analysis of Local Meanings (word-level analysis): Words such as "corruption", "extremism", "ugliness", "abnormality" and "deviant" are the most commonly used words by conservatives, but they also refer to keywords that produce defence mechanisms for the protection of the patriarchal order. According to Howard S. Becker (2017), deviance, which defines those who are stigmatised as outsiders due to the violation of social rules, and according to Goffman (2014), individuals who are discredited by making a mental distinction as a result of revealing their actual identity, is a socially constructed phenomenon rather than an individual phenomenon. Thus, with the same logic, conservative masculine ideology marginalises homosexuals who do not conform to its

moral and ethical values by pushing them out of society, discrediting them and labelling them as deviant. In this way, masculine domination tries to maintain its hegemony. In addition, these words contain a lot of homophobic implications. It is usual for such homophobic exclusion to be constantly repeated in order to maintain hegemony. Because, homophobia contains both the construction strategies of heterosexuality, which is the constitutive element of hegemonic masculinity, and the functions of forcing men to hegemonic masculinity (Sancar 2009).

Analysis of Formal Structures Difficult to Notice (syntactic analysis, inter-sentence relationship analysis): Statements such as "...we firmly oppose the targeting of our families and children", "...it is an attack on our social order and the noble character of our nation" are evidence that the conservative ideology seeks to protect itself and retain its ideology of power. Since the conservative ideology endeavours to eliminate all kinds of formations that would be a threat to itself, this ideology emphasises concepts such as 'family, religion, social order, noble national character' (sublime: at the same time, this term refers to the position of men in the historical sense[†]) in which it exists and in which the ideology of masculinity is most present. It is noteworthy that homosexuality threatens both conservative ideology and masculinity. As a matter of fact, as Sancar (2009) points out, homosexuality is seen as a social 'moral' problem that directly threatens masculinity. For this reason, the opposition in the aforementioned statements is actually a defence to keep both (conservatism and masculinity) alive.

Discourse 2:

11.12.2018- President's Speech at the Women and Justice Summit Programme: *"You cannot put women and men in an equal position, it is against the creation. Their natures are different. In business life, you cannot subject a pregnant woman to the same conditions as a man. You cannot put a mother who has to breastfeed her child in an equal position with a man. You cannot make women do every job that men do. As in communist regimes. Give her a pickaxe and shovel and let her work, this is not possible. It goes against her delicate nature (...). Our religion has given women a position, the position of motherhood."* (URL-2). (Translation belongs to me)

Description of the Text: When the content of this text is analysed, it is implied that women and men are not in an equal position in any way, that they are naturally on an unequal plane due to the different characteristics of these two genders by creation, that women and men

[†] See H. KIVILCIMLI's (1980) "The Effects of Religion on Turkish Society" for historical evidence of the male/right/supreme and female/left/low dichotomies.

cannot do the same jobs because their nature and creation are different, that women have a more delicate structure, and that the most sacred duty of women should be motherhood because religion gives women the position of motherhood.

Analysis of Local Meanings (lexical analysis): It is understood that the most striking expressions in this discourse are the words "creation" and "nature". These two words actually imply that inequality between men and women is natural and unchangeable. Because, to say that inequality is a matter of nature and creation means accepting that the superior position of men should already be in this way. Attributing superiority and a certain position to men, as well as binding the place and roles of men and women to unchangeable rules, implies the ideological perpetuation of inequality. This view, still widely held among the general public, is that men and women are fundamentally different and that different fixed traits characterise archetypal masculinity and femininity, and reproduces notions of masculinity and femininity by repeating popular phrases such as 'like a man' or 'like a woman' (Abumere-Itulua 2013). The reason for reproduction is to normalise the hegemony/domination of masculinity. As a matter of fact, according to Bourdieu (2019), "it legitimises a relationship of domination (masculine domination) by placing it in a biological nature, which is itself a naturalised social construction". In other words, the approach to the distinction between men and women by referring to the naturalness of biological separation functions to implicitly legitimise masculine domination over women. Again, according to Butler (2002), masculine law is not a simple cultural imposition on a natural heterogeneity (female-male); rather, masculine law requires conformity to its notion of "nature" (domination) and gains its legitimacy through the binary and asymmetrical (unequal) naturalisation of bodies.

Analysis of Formal Structures Difficult to Notice (syntactic and rhetorical analysis, inter-sentence relationship analysis): Expressions such as "You cannot subject a pregnant woman to the same conditions as a man in business life" and "You cannot make women do all the jobs that men do" refer to the fact that the division of labour automatically places women and men in different positions and that women should do certain jobs even though women can do many jobs that men do. This implication, in a way, emphasises that the gender-based division of labour brings men to the forefront and that the male-dominated system should be the one who has the real say. As can be understood in the expressions "It goes against her delicate nature" and "Our religion has given a position to women, the position of motherhood", it is implied that women should withdraw from the domain of men with a harsh nature due to their delicate nature and return to their original domain, the domestic space, to perform their

motherhood duty. Özdemir (2019), in his research on perceptions of masculinity and femininity, revealed that expressions such as delicate, emotional fragility reinforce the strong position of men, and the assignment of the role of motherhood to women as the main qualitative feature refers to the fact that domestic work belongs to women. As Bourdieu (2019) mentions, the symbolic arrangement of the gender-based division of labour, which is an arbitrary construction of the work and functions of masculine and feminine bodies (especially sexual reproduction), provides a natural-looking basis for the male-centred perspective. For this reason, subjecting men and women to distinction within the framework of certain roles and division of labour actually aims to normalise masculine domination.

Discourse 3:

19.10.2016 - Speech by the Minister of Family and Social Policies:

"Turkish women know, how to die like a man (...). Remember what I was telling you, won't we die one day? We will die. There is dying like a man, I was going to say something but I won't say it, and there is dying like a madam. Let's die, but let's die like men." (URL-3). (Translation belongs to me)

Description of the Text: The text above contains the words of a female minister in the conservative political scene. In this text, it is stated that women should die like men, and only in this way will they be worthy of a glorious death, otherwise they will deserve cowardice, a low title and a death like madam, which represents woman.

Analysis of Local Meanings (lexical level analysis): As it is clearly read, the act of women dying is explained by referring to the attribute of manhood. This way of explanation implies that a woman can reach the level of a man only when she dies with a title like his. The phrase "dying like a man" is used in the sense of fighting heroically and dying in an honorable and upright manner. In other words, it is implied that a woman must die brave, strong and heroic like a man, and only then will her corpse make sense. The male-female dichotomy is used in an equivalent sense to the high-low dichotomy. In the text, manhood is used to represent greatness, i.e. masculinity, and madamhood is used to represent lowliness, i.e. femininity. In this discourse where femininity is accepted as a low identity, it is implied that women must behave like men and die like men in order to exist and even for their corpses to have meaning. As a matter of fact, the lowest identity in the arena of masculinity is the female identity. Therefore, in the hegemonic male mentality, the most severe method of humiliating a man (such as the

subalternization of homosexuals) is to make him look like a woman and transform him (Bourdieu 2019).

Mental Model Analysis (Analysis of Context and Event/Situation Models): The instincts of masculinity based on power and competition have also been transferred to the political arena. Therefore, the gender of politics has always been male throughout history. Women, on the other hand, have only existed in this arena as the helper of the man or as the man himself. The experience of women's presence in politics has only found its meaning by asserting the greatness of masculinity and deriving discourses that reproduce masculinity. As can be understood from the discourses above, the language of politics is mostly filled with the words and rules of masculinity. The precondition for a woman to engage in politics or to exist in politics is that she adopts the ideological masculine mentality and engages in discourses and actions accordingly. As in politics, women's acceptance in the fields of masculinity also depends on women's resemblance to men rather than revealing their differences (Kimmel 2005b; Önder Memiş 2017).

Discourse 4:

25.02.2018-The Minister of Interior's Speech: "3,300 *brave young men*. None of them went there as a duty, they voluntarily got involved there. They were all *lion pieces*. We shook hands with each of them one by one, we said goodbye, we hugged. I told them one thing: We entrusted you with *our honour*. *The honour of this geography is entrusted to you*." (URL-4). (Translation belongs to me)

Description of the Text: In the text above, there are words spoken to soldiers and policemen who go to participate in an operation. After a mission is attributed to the soldiers taking part in a war operation, sentences are said to flatter the pride of manhood of these people.

Analysis of Formal Structures Difficult to Notice (repetitions, stress and intonation, rhetorical analysis): Military service is a place where masculinity is constructed and proved. By its very nature, military service requires a tough temperament. For this reason, in order to construct and prove masculinity, masculinity must be exhibited in this arena. For this reason, the psychological and ideological motivation given by military service is aimed at convincing soldiers to fight and die by referring to the hard nature of masculinity. In other words, depictions that caress and flatter masculinity actually aim to prepare soldiers for war and inject them with the courage to die in war. Characterisations such as "brave young man" and "piece of lion" in the discourse in the text are militarist descriptions that refer to the masculinity of the soldiers

and prepare them for war and death. Such personality traits used in reference to masculinity prove that militarist ideology has close ties with masculinity. For example, traits such as an invincible will, the ability to protect one's honour and integrity, being brave, enduring pain and hardship by training oneself with strict discipline, physical endurance, having a competitive personality, fearless and risk-taking adventurousness, the ability to make decisions on one's own, having the sexual power of masculinity and giving importance to conservative patriarchal values (Higate & Hopton 2005) are the character traits of hegemonic masculinity that militarist policies deem necessary for warrior soldier men (Sancar 2009).

Mental Model Analysis (analysis of context and event/situation models): As it is known, honour is mostly used in the world of masculinity in reference to women. The man perceives the woman he has as his honour at the same time. This honour turns into a sacred phenomenon that needs to be protected from other men. Honour, which is attributed sacredness, is a phenomenon where masculinity is proved, produced and must be protected at the cost of life. The logic of considering the homeland as honour is also based on this. Just as a woman must be protected from other men as an honour, the homeland must be protected against the enemy as an honour. In that case, the homeland is the woman, that is, honour, and the man is the protector of honour. The reason why men's guardianship of honour is mostly based on nationalist discourses is based on this. As a matter of fact, as Sancar (2009) states, patriotic masculinity, which is the gendered discourse of militarist nationalism, and the image of motherhood, which is glorified as the icon of nationalism, actually signify the man who is the protector of the "nation", which is likened to a family, and the woman who is the guardian of the home that the man protects. As can be understood from these depictions, there is a close connection between the discourses of nationalism and masculinity, and most of the time, the concepts that glorify masculinity and the concepts that glorify nationalism are used in very close terms. For this reason, it is difficult to distinguish terms such as honour, dignity, patriotism, cowardice, courage and duty as nationalist or masculine, because they are concepts that are completely connected to both nation and masculinity (Nagel 2005).

Discourse 5:

09.04.2015-Conservative Party MP : *"In the heart of every feminist there is a feeling of being in love with a husband, being his slave, being his individual, belonging to him. This is inherent in every woman. To act as if this does not exist is to act against creation. Those who behave like this are definitely not happy. Woman's nature is to be attached, to belong. Man's is not like that. A man does not belong to a woman, he owns her."* (URL-5). (Translation belongs to me)

Description of the Text: In the text above, the discourse of the deputy of the conservative political party in the ruling position on women is given. It is stated that the man is the owner of the woman and that the master-slave relationship is an unchangeable feature of human nature.

Analysis of Local Meanings (ideological discourse analysis) and Mental Model Analysis (analysis of context models): As it can be understood in every word of the text, the unquestionable dominance of man over woman is repeated with different expressions every time, and this understanding is reinforced with a very humiliating discourse by seeing woman as man's servant and attributing this understanding to human nature. The likening of the woman to a slave means that she is seen as an insignificant and subordinate being who acts under the command of the man. Therefore, in this text, the dominance and superiority of man over woman is reflected with a primitive thought. Because, this mentality is on the same level with the male mentality of about 2500 years ago. We can even trace this mentality back to the formation of the monogamous family in antiquity, when maternal law lost its dominance and paternal law prevailed.

It is known that the system called paternity law emerged when the economic surplus value in ancient times passed into the hands of men, and with this system, a structure similar to the current monogamous family structure was adopted. With the collapse of the maternity law, the man took over the sovereignty in the home, the woman was degraded, enslaved, and seen only as a tool for childbearing as a slave to the man's lust (Engels 2015). In patriarchal law, the man was the head of the house, and women and children, whose rights to live and die were completely in the hands of the father, were slaves to the father. Therefore, in the first formation phase of the monogamous family, the father was the slave owner, and the woman, who was one of the other members of the house, was a slave to the man (Engels 2015)[‡]. Expressions such as "being devoted to a husband, being his slave, being his individual, belonging to him" in the text actually reflect the mentality structure in antiquity. Because in the early stages of paternity law, the woman was completely subordinated to the man as a slave and the man had all kinds of rights of disposal (including death) over the woman's life. In addition, the fact that women had the same value as slaves in the Ancient Greek and Roman periods are different versions of this mentality. As a matter of fact, Aristotle (1987) stated that a woman is of inferior value and a slave is a creature of lesser value. In this context, as it is understood from the discourse in the

[‡] The word "famulus", which means family, etymologically means "household slave" and "familia" refers to the totality of slaves belonging to an individual (male) (Engels 2015).

text, the view of women as slaves who are bought and sold only in a subordinate position and as a servant of the man is the way of thinking in the most primitive periods of patriarchal mentality.

Discourse 6:

09.02.2021-Twitter message of a theology professor from a conservative political party:

"Are you from Boğaziçi[§]? What are you? I don't know about that. Don't even think about it. We do ablution and do not go out. We already have ablution. Just so you know. Let me put it this way. You've been protesting for over a month. We don't organise protests. We finish you off at night and go to work the next day." (URL-6). (Translation belongs to me)

Description of the Text: The above text is a twitter message of a theology professor who is a supporter of conservative political party. In this message, there are discriminatory and threatening expressions against a group of university student protesters who are not satisfied with the sanctions imposed by the current political system.

Mental Model Analysis (analysis of context and event/situation models): As it is clearly understood in the text, activist groups are wanted to be eliminated by using a threatening and discriminatory language against political opponents. What is really meant to be explained in this discourse is the endeavour of conservative politics to defeat people who are against its own thought and order with threats of masculinity. There are dictating expressions throughout the text. Dictating expressions imply both oppression and the existence of violence underlying oppression. The expressions "don't even think about it", "I wanted you to know that we finish the work at night and go to work the next day" can be accepted as a preliminary form of threat. It is intended to say that if they do otherwise, they will be met with a greater sanction. The fact that the political language challenges the public in a show of masculinity also reveals the style of the method used by conservative politics. This style first takes the form of threatening expressions, then pressure, and where pressure is not effective, violence. The concepts of threat, pressure and violence are phenomena that constitute masculinity. The fact that conservative politics uses the concepts of the language of masculinity (such as "I finish you off") reveals that the way of doing politics is clearly masculine.

Analysis of Local Meanings (ideological discourse analysis): Another point to be implied is that the conservative political language tries to show its power over those who oppose it by marginalising them. As can be understood from the expressions "We already have

[§] Students of Boğaziçi University are meant.

ablution", "You know, you have been protesting for over a month", "We do not protest", a discriminative language was used. The distinction between you and us aims to marginalise the opposing groups. By implying that conservatives, as those with ablution, adopt a Muslim attitude, while the others are anti-conservative/anarchist activists without ablution, in fact, it is intended to intimidate the others with the unifying pressure of religion and political power. There are important common points between conservative politics and masculinity in this regard. This is because patriarchal masculinity's intense focus on accumulating power for domination (Martín 2020) is similar to conservative politics' attempt to intimidate the others through political and religious power. Moreover, the act of marginalisation is one of the strategies to maintain the hegemony of masculinity. As Connell states in his work "Masculinities", masculinity's acts of marginalising are aimed at class, ethnic or racial discrimination of the other group (for example, discriminating black men by attributing certain characteristics to them, or defining working class masculinity on the basis of certain characteristics), stigmatising them with othering qualifications, and legitimising domination and violence over the group as a result of stigmatisation (Connell 2019). In fact, marginalisation, as it is done to homosexuals and women, also aims to subalternise in a sense. Because first, the opposing group is subjected to discrimination, then it is reduced to an inferior position, then it is defined on the basis of certain characteristics, and based on these definitions, it is marginalised and made open to oppression and violence. Likewise, in the discourse in the text, speaking threateningly with masculine expressions based on religious and political power through the distinction between you and us carries similar aims to legitimise domination and violence by first discriminating the opposing group and then marginalising it. The dichotomies of you-us and ablutionary-unablutionary contains implications such as moral-immoral/conservative-anarchist.

Evaluation and Conclusion

Conservatism's rigid attitude towards different opinions, thoughts and lifestyles and the fact that politics is open to a constant struggle for power point to two important points that enable conservative politics to appeal to the nature of masculinity. Because, one of the two most important characteristics of masculinity is that it is rigid and harshly interactive, and the other is that it has a structure based on constant competition.

There are important studies in the literature explaining the relationship between politics and masculinity (Cuordileone 2000; Messner 2007; Daddow&Hertner 2021; DiMuccio and Knowles 2023; Greig 2019; Childs and Webb 2012). However, the similarity between

The Reconstruction of Masculinity in Conservative Political Discourses

conservative politics and masculinity is not included in most studies. Connell (1987), in his analysis of the political practice of masculinity, makes important points on the subject. According to Connell, masculinity becomes valid wherever the ideological tools of politics reach. It is understood that especially right wing politicians design politics according to the rules of masculinity in order to prevent the breakdown of traditional structures such as the family. For this reason, the United Nations has put countries such as Iran and Pakistan under pressure on women's rights within the scope of the "Equal Rights Amendment". Because these countries are countries where conservative politics prevail. In these countries, women suffer more loss of rights, and in this respect, it becomes clear that masculinity has the most place in conservative systems. Additionally Greig (2019) examined the relationship between far-right politics and masculinity. The far right is used in the sense of religious conservatism, ethnic racism and religious ethnic racism. Greig revealed why masculinity is more present in the far right through various studies. Research shows that anti-feminist movements are an entry point to the far right. According to Greig, explanations based solely on economic conditions are insufficient to explain voters' support for far-right parties, and gender conservatism and adherence to authoritarian values need to be taken into account in order to analyze the issue. Because, masculinity is mobilized in the gendered form of far-right politics, the masculine politics of the right always creates a group of others to preserve the social order. On the subject, Childs and Webb (2012) state that the conservative party in the United Kingdom is dominated by men, that the number of women is very low compared to the Labour Party, that the conservative party started to renew itself in 2005 with David Cameron and started to include women politicians, and how the Western-based conservative party has changed in favor of women. Although the rules of masculinity are more valid within the conservative parties on the extreme right wing, it is a fact that Western-based conservative parties give more space to women politicians compared to Asian and African conservative parties because they are more compatible with the liberal system. Thus, gender equality is a sign of the "cultural" difference between "Islam" and "the West" and thus an important battleground in the "clash of civilizations" (Greig 2019: 54).

The ideological thought of conservative politics emphasises concepts such as religion, family, tradition, custom, culture, history, morality and social order in order to ensure that certain values are perpetuated and reiterated. It should be said that such a mission is also aimed at protecting the social and cognitive structure of masculinity. Because, all the values, ideas and cultural elements that conservative politics tries to protect have a structure that includes male

superiority, the harsh and animal nature of men, the principles of masculinity and the legitimacy of the patriarchal order. As a matter of fact, the social, cultural, ideological and moral concepts that conservative politics constantly emphasises and repeats in its discourses are phenomena historically formed by the rules of masculinity. Because, history is the history of masculinity (Atay 2012). Since women have no value in this history, it is normal for every system created to be executed by the rules of men. Therefore, every value and cultural element that is tried to be protected by conservatism or conservative politics serves to nurture and grow masculinity. It is possible to prove this throughout history, from the hunter-gatherer social structure to the emergence of the concept of family and the transfer of the surplus value of property to the hands of men.

Based on the above explanations and reasons, it can be said that conservative politics is closely related to masculinity and is one of the most important intellectual and political systems that sustain and reproduce masculinity. As can be understood from the discourses of people who practice conservative politics, it is seen that most of the concepts used by masculinity are also used by conservative politicians. Features such as dominating, humiliating, establishing superiority, having harsh interaction, defending strict rules, subjecting women and feminized men to hierarchical distinction with the phenomena of oppression, violence, power, which appeal to the nature of hegemonic masculinity, are very common in conservative political discourses. The conservative form of politics, which defends the legitimacy of masculinity and centralises and hosts the ideological mechanisms that ensure its reproduction, ensures the continuation of the hegemony of masculinity.

In the respect, the reveal what these functions are and what role they play in the reconstruction of masculinity is the aim of this study. Using Teun A. Van Dijk's CDA method, the social and cognitive structures that provide the reconstruction of masculinity in conservative political discourses were analysed. In addition, the relationship between conservative political discourses and masculinity has been subjected to sociological evaluations with the support of the theoretical framework. Discourse analysis, which is mostly used by linguists, is important to be used in sociology due to the predominance of the social aspect of language. The semantic, formal (syntax, rhetoric, repetition, emphasis, relationship between sentences) and mental model providing structure of the concepts can be an element of analysis in revealing the social and cognitive aspects underlying the discourses of individuals. In this way, the existence of social, political, cultural and ideological structures can be revealed. As a matter of fact, in this

The Reconstruction of Masculinity in Conservative Political Discourses

study, when some texts containing conservative political discourses are subjected to CDA, the roles and functions of these discourses in the construction of masculinity are revealed.

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The Reconstruction of Masculinity in Conservative Political Discourses

Makale Bilgileri/Article Information

<i>Etik Beyan:</i>	Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan edilir.	<i>Ethical Statement:</i>	It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.
<i>Çıkar Çatışması:</i>	Çalışmada kişiler veya kurumlar arası çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.	<i>Conflict of Interest:</i>	The authors declare that declare no conflict of interest.
<i>Yazar Katkı Beyanı:</i>	Çalışmanın tamamı yazar tarafından oluşturulmuştur.	<i>Author Contribution Declaration:</i>	The entire study was created by the author.
<i>Mali Destek:</i>	Çalışma için herhangi bir kurum veya projeden mali destek alınmamıştır.	<i>Financial Support:</i>	The study received no financial support from any institution or project.

