Television Series and the Construcion of Society and Gender Roles: The Case of the 'Kızılcık Şerbeti' Series in the Context of the Relationship Between Secular Women and Conservative Men

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ABSTRACT

Television series, which are effective in shaping gender roles and family structure, have a key role in supporting and rebuilding social change. The existing social structure can be supported with television series, as well as the differences in the society can be shown with extreme examples by creating conflicts with the concern of being watched, and the opinion that change is necessary can be created with series that are not always compatible with the social structure. Such series can strengthen the gender inequality that exists in society, as well as cause characters that are not included in the ideal family structure to be pushed out of society. In this study, which aims to reveal the effects of television series on the reconstruction of society, gender roles are discussed within the framework of conservative and secular identity. Within the scope of the study, the three episodes of the first season of the *Kızılcık Şerbeti* series, which are in the mainstream media, were analyzed using the content analysis method. In the sections examined, it can be said that secular women represented in society than conservative ones due to their family structures, and conservative men are shown as stronger and wealthier than secular men. As a result of the study, *Kızılcık Şerbeti* can be considered not only as a means of entertainment but also as an important cultural text that questions gender dynamics. Such series, which also contain elements that can reinforce stereotypes and increase social tensions, can play an important role in shaping the values and norms of society and provide viewers with new perspectives.

Keywords: Television Series, Conservatism, Secularism, Family Dynamics, Building Society.

Toplumun İnşası ve Cinsiyet Rolleri Üzerinden Televizyon Dizileri: Seküler Kadın Muhafazakâr Erkek İlişkisi Bağlamında 'Kızılcık Şerbeti' Dizisi Örneği

ÖZ

Cinsiyet rolleri ve aile yapısının şekillendirilmesinde etkili olan televizyon dizileri, toplumsal değişimin desteklenmesi ve yeniden inşasında kilit role sahiptir. Dizilerle var olan toplumsal yapı desteklenebildiği gibi izlenebilme kaygısıyla çatışma yaratılarak toplum içindeki farklılıklar çok uç örnekler ile gösterilebilmekte, toplumsal yapıyla her zaman bağdaşmayan diziler ile değişimin gerekli olduğu kanaati oluşturulabilmektedir. Bu tür diziler, toplumda var olan cinsiyet eşitsizliğini güçlendirebileceği gibi sergilediği ideal aile yapısına dahil etmediği karakterlerin de toplum dışına itilmesine neden olabilmektedir. Televizyon dizilerinin toplumun yeniden inşası üzerindeki etkilerini ortaya koymayı amaçlayan bu çalışmada, cinsiyet rolleri, muhafazakâr ve seküler kimlik çerçevesinde ele alınmıştır. Çalışma kapsamında ana akım medyada yer alan *Kızılcık Şerbeti* dizisinin ilk sezon yayınlanan üç bölümü, içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. İncelenen bölümlerde seküler kadınların sahip oldukları aile yapıları sebebiyle, muhafazakâr olanlara oranla toplumda daha fazla yer edindiği, muhafazakâr erkeklerin ise seküler erkeklere oranla daha güçlü ve varlıklı olarak gösterildiği söylenebilmektedir. Çalışma sonucunda *Kızılcık Şerbeti* dizisi yalnızca bir eğlence aracı değil, aynı zamanda toplumsal cinsiyet dinamiklerini sorgulayan önemli bir kültürel metin olarak değerlendirilebilir. Stereotiplerin pekişmesine ve toplumsal gerilimlerin artmasına neden olabilecek unsurları da barındıran bu tür diziler, toplumun değerlerini ve normlarını şekillendirmede önemli bir rol oynayarak, izleyicilere yeni bakış açıları kazandırabildiği söylenebilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Televizyon Dizileri, Muhafazakârlık, Sekülerlik, Aile Dinamikleri, Toplumun İnşası.

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SELÇUK ÜNİVERSİTESİ YAYINLARI

1. Introduction

Traditions formed by elements that are considered common heritage are seen as the source of social continuity and legitimacy (Yılmaz, 2005, p. 40). Past shapes the future and societies with a common memory are accepted as part of a common culture. According to Halbwachs, social memory, which is limited in time and whose limitation may be different in each society and which is not possible to reach people outside the time limit, reaches large masses through communication tools. (2007, p. 55).

Gender, which forms the basis of the construction of society and is frequently used in television series, emphasizes the roles of women and men in society, culture, tradition, education and religious teachings. According to Butler, innate gender characteristics are shaped by interpretation of the culture of the society, and the behaviors expected from men and women are formed in this direction (2008, p. 46). While gender is defined as roles and responsibilities, behaviors, positions, expectations, power and privileges, rights, and opportunities; social construction is expressed as the imposition of these on women and men by society (Türkiye Barolar Birliği, 2002, p. 6). Social memory, which makes the existence of societies possible, contains the consistency, reason, emotions and even actions that provide the connection with the past (Huyssen, 1999, p. 13).

In Turkish television series broadcasting, many series have been broadcast that support two different lifestyles in society. In the series called Asmalı Konak which is broadcast on ATV channel in the early 2000s, the love story of Bahar, a modern woman who studied art in America, with Seymen, the son of a well-established family living in Cappadocia, is told. In this series, the differences in cultural and lifestyle between the two parties are shown as the basis of the difficulties experienced in the relationship of the two. Based on the novel by Halid Ziya Uşaglıgil and filmed three times with different actors at different times and revolving around a forbidden love story, the series Aşk-ı Memnu deals with the conflict between traditional and modern values and the position of individuals in this conflict. In the series Paramparça, which broadcast 97 episodes on Star TV, the conflict between conservative and secular values was revealed by examining the relationship between two women from different social classes and their families. As in the past, the conservative-secular debate, which started again with the series Bir Başkadır broadcast on Netflix and defined ideologically different family structures, continued with the series *Kızılcık Şerbeti* on Show TV and Ömer on Star TV. The discriminatory sentences used in the conflict scenes in these productions may cause the discrimination known to exist in the society to be strengthened. Cemil Meriç argues that modernization efforts imitating the West have distanced Turkish society from its own values. He also argues that Western civilization represents a superficial and shallow form of relationship and that instead of emulating the West, we should embrace our own cultural heritage (Meriç 2006, p. 25). Berkes (1978, p. 55), who describes the process of modernization as a process characterized by the dissolution of the traditional social structure and the emergence of new institutions, emphasizes that the concept of secularism is based on the "religion-state dichotomy" that emerged in the history of Christianity. Furthermore, he states that there was no such dichotomy in the Islamic and Ottoman tradition, and that religion and the state were intertwined. Therefore, he argues that the Western understanding of secularism cannot be applied to Ottoman-Turkish society. According to him, secularism is not a static state but a dynamic process. This process, which is full of conflicts and tensions, emerges with the modernization of society, the decrease in the influence of religion in the social and political sphere and the increase in individual freedom of conscience (Berkes, 1978). According to Berkes (1984), secularism does not mean irreligion but also includes freedom of religion. In a secular state, the state is not officially affiliated to any religion, but individuals are free to practice their religions. Arguing that secularism means more than the separation of religion and state, Berkes defines this concept as a historical, social and cultural process. In this process, religion. Turkish sociologist and political scientist Şerif Mardin (1991) argues that the Westernization movements that gave rise to this discriminatory approach took place along a line extending from the late Ottoman Empire to the transition to the Republic. Secularism constituted one of the cornerstones of this process; however, secularism was shaped in Turkey in a different context than the Western understanding of secularization. In the process of Turkish modernization, secularism and conservatism have been in a constant struggle and compromise on a sociological plane. It is necessary to understand this struggle in its historical context and social dynamics.

In particular, the center-periphery model provides an important tool in explaining how Turkish society was shaped in this process. The tensions between secularism and conservatism reveal the unique dynamics of Turkish modernization and it is possible to say that these tensions still continue today.

According to Özdemir (2009, p. 21) television, which is an important driving force of social change, reinterprets basic concepts such as male and female roles and moral values and presents them to society. Television programs and series play an important role in many subjects, from the way modern people dress to the way they behave, and through these texts, the audience is taught what is right and wrong, how to dress and behave.

2. The Concept of Social Memory in the Positioning of Gender

The individuals who make up the society live the roles assigned to them by accepting the rules that the society they are in deems appropriate for them. Individuals who take on stereotyped roles differentiate according to the society they live in over time, and fulfill the roles and responsibilities called gender (Demirgöz Bal, 2014, p. 15). According to Bhasin, it is necessary to impose socio-cultural perceptions and behaviors on girls and boys from the moment they are born, and to teach and adopt the gender stereotypes accepted in the society (2003, p. 8).

At the end of the learning process that starts with the social and cultural structure, it is possible to observe the differences due to gender (Yaşın Dökmen, 2015, pp. 24-25). Gender, which indicates the expectation appropriate to the role of women and men in society, refers to various physical differences according to gender and emphasizes the differences between femininity and masculinity by expressing cultural variability in contrast to biological sex. In this structure, which can vary from culture to culture, men and women are clearly separated, and men have priority over women (Ökten, 2009, p. 302). Although it is said that the images of violence against women, which are frequently included in television series, are broadcast to raise awareness in the society, emphasizing the helplessness and wretchedness of the woman in the attack scenes that she cannot resist brings with it the danger that the society will develop a sense of pity for women. This attitude in the television series scenarios represents the position of the woman who is humiliated, devalued and exposed to violence in the society, or it may cause this represented role to become taken for granted (Çam, 2019, p. 89).

3. Television Series and the Reconstruction of Society in the Context of Gerbner's Cultivation Theory

Culture is "a network of symbolic building blocks of society that enables people to make sense of the world and share their experiences." Culture is constructed through the stories, symbols and narratives that people use to construct and share social reality. According to Gerbner, the mass media, especially television, plays a central role in communicating these cultural stories and mediates society's construction of a shared world of meaning (Gerbner, 1998, p. 109).

Individuals enter a symbolic world where television dominates the cultural landscape. Even before they learn to read or speak, children are exposed to television. This exposure not only influences their worldviews and ways of living but also becomes an enduring aspect of their identity. Television links individuals to a broader, constructed reality—a realm shaped by its own narratives and imagery (Gerbner, 1998, p. 180).

Gerbner argues that mass media fulfills the function of forming public opinion. Mass media, especially television, are tools that enable people to share ideas and messages that have become a widespread opinion. Public opinion emerges as a result of the formation of masses through the symbols spread by television. According to Gerbner and his colleagues, television places relatively static and common images in people's minds (Gerbner, 2002: 55).

Television, whose effects on the individual and society are well known (Topaktaş, 2022), either carries the past into the present and constructs social memory through visible realities and the rituals and myths of societies, or it updates the existing and directs its target audience in the direction it wants to transform (Gerbner et al., 1980; Veysal, 2009, p. 363). Television's central role in society has made it the primary channel of our culture.

Gerbner's Acculturation Theory tries to explain the fact that groups of viewers are surrounded by similar mindsets. Gerbner argues that mass media, despite different content and tools, develop a common view. He calls it the main view (Güneş, 2001, pp. 98-99). This tool, which is also characterized as a perception management tool, serves to produce awareness that will facilitate the broadcasting tools to achieve their desired goals, instead of contributing to the development of individuals as well as setting the agenda. Television channels, which contribute to the use and dissemination of culture by establishing social reality, do this directly through cultural programs or by modeling cultural shaping in the content of the programs. Therefore, these programs play a role in both ensuring cultural continuity and directing the society towards cultural change and even have the power to adopt the characteristics of another culture by carrying them (Özdemir, 1998, p. 35).

Gerbner argues that the media directs individual behavior by using the value judgments that exist in the culture, that these phenomena that bind people together continue to spread (Yaylagül, 2006, p. 76), that television broadcasts offer a very low level of objective reality, and that television prioritizes dominant ideologies and the value system they bring. The media reflects not the reality that exists or should exist, but the falsehood, that is, unreality, which is fabricated and conforms to the expectations of authority (Mills, 1974, p. 400).

Historical events learned through television series, which are one of the determining actors in the formation of social memory, have brought the construction of social memory back to the agenda over time (Şahin Kaya, 2011, p. 103). It can be said that the reconstruction and presentation of historical events through a series of movies broadcast on television channels has an impact on the establishment of remembrance and social memory in society, as well as learning, reinforcing and wondering about the history of the country. According to Hudson and Ritcie, such series that arouse the curiosity of the audience can create a desire to learn more about the subjects in the scenario and the period conveyed (2006, p. 389).

4. A Conservative Religious? Is It Secular? Or Is It the New Family Model?

There are different opinions about the origin and definition of the concept of conservatism, which is defined as conservative and frequently used in daily life (TDK, 2023). Conservatism has a structure that cares about the integrity of society, adheres to its traditions, is open to innovation in line with needs, but opposes innovations that disrupt continuity and radically change society (Ergil, 1986, p. 273). Conservatism, which should be in harmony with the historical, political and social position of countries, is a concept that can be evaluated as an independent ideology where different political views are adopted from time to time (Öğün, 1997, p. 109).

Edmund Burke offers an important perspective for understanding the dynamic relationship between modernization and conservatism. Burke emphasized the importance of traditions for the continuity of social order and argued that change should be organic and gradual rather than revolutionary. His criticism of the French Revolution shows a conservative stance against the effects of modernization such as individualization and secularization. For him, society is a contract formed not only by living individuals but also by past and future generations. Burke's approach suggests that traditions are an accumulation of knowledge and sudden changes can disrupt the social balance, while reforms can be pragmatically evaluated according to social benefit (Burke, 1790, pp. 123-127).

Within the framework of the secularization theory, which is a result of modernization, claims that religion would disappear socially were discussed in the 20th century; however, with the new theories that emerged at the end of the 20th century, it was seen that religion did not disappear, on the contrary, it continued to evolve through new religious movements. These movements offer an understanding of religion that is more in line with the needs and values of modern societies and give individuals a sense of spiritual community and identity (Şengül, 2020, p. 315).

The contradictions between conservatives and secularists can be found in every culture. Emphasizing that the existence of culture and language is fundamentally based on this opposition, Yaylagül says that it is possible to reveal collective consciousness by analyzing this structure (2006, p. 122).

Conservatism was born in reaction to the process of modernization, but rather than being an ideology in complete opposition to it, it developed an approach to understanding and managing change. In this context, Burke's ideas reveal the importance of preserving traditions and social continuity in a rapidly transforming modern world. This understanding shows that modernization and conservatism are intertwined, and that conservatism is actually shaped as a result of modernization (Burke, 1790, pp. 145-148).

The change in the social structure and the change in the family structure, which is the smallest unit of society, go parallel to each other. According to Sayın (2020, p. 531), these changes from traditional to modern society and from traditional to nuclear family structure are largely similar. In societies with a holistic approach and hierarchical structure, the rules that emerge with traditions create order in social relations as in traditional families.

The family, one of the basic building blocks of social life, is a social group, union, organization or community (Gökçe, 1976, p. 47). Despite its conservative roots, the family structure in Turkey is undergoing a transformation under the influence of legal regulations and natural processes. While in the past, roles were clear and hierarchical in large and patriarchal families, today the nuclear family and egalitarian roles come to the fore. Women's participation in the labor force, higher levels of education and technological developments are considered to be important drivers of this transformation. The increase in divorce rates and new lifestyles such as staying single also confirm the change in family structure (Yıldıran Önk, 2011, p. 66).

Today, although the nuclear family structure is said to be increasing, the effort to live a life based on traditions indicates that the extended family continues to exist. According to Çapçıoğlu, the prominence of individualization in society has been effective in increasing the number of family members with different mindsets and understandings of life. Families with this new structure, which can be expressed as hybridization, are frequently shown in today's television programs, and especially in television series, family structures consist of both secular and conservative individuals. In the series *Kızılcık Şerbeti*, which is the subject of this study, it is emphasized that individuals with different thoughts and life structures can live together by finding a common sharing space (2018, p. 25).

5. Method and Findings

The fact that social changes are experienced faster in the light of technological developments has also increased the use of influencing tools. Television, which has become an effective tool in Turkey, especially in the 1990s, and series, which are the most watched program types, have a positive or negative effect on the process of change in society. Television, which presents the reflections of culture on the audience, can shape individual memories of national events by determining the dominance over social memory. From this point of view, the aim of this study is to examine the characters in the series *Kızılcık Şerbeti*, which is scripted within the scope of conservative and secular identity, to try to reveal the effects of television series on the reconstruction of society and to offer constructive suggestions in this context.

In this study, document analysis and content analysis, which are qualitative research methods, were used. The document of the study is the domestically produced television series called *Kızılcık Şerbeti*, which was broadcast on Show TV in 2023. Within the scope of the research, three episodes of the *Kızılcık Şerbeti* series, episode 1, 17 and 29, when selecting the episode to be examined, care was taken to ensure that it was from the beginning, middle and end of the first season to understand the approach to the course of the scenario. These episodes were examined to determine the secular and conservative transmissions between their characters.

Document review includes the analysis of all written materials containing information on the topics to be investigated. This research approach is widely accepted by historians, anthropologists and linguists in the past, but also by sociologists and psychologists, contributing to the development of important theories (Şimşek, 2009, p. 42). Content analysis, which is the process of identifying the similarities and differences in the texts, dividing these data into certain categories or themes, bringing them together, and organizing them in a way that the reader can understand, is content analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008). It is a preferred research method in order to systematically examine certain characters in the text and to obtain

objective and verifiable results about these characters (Stone, et. al., 1966, p. 213). With content analysis, it is tried to obtain information about the sender, himself and the recipient of the messages to determine the frequencies and distribution of the words, concepts, themes and relationships in the text. This method is widely used in qualitative and quantitative research methods (Weber, 1989, p. 5).

This section contains data on the characteristics of the characters in the first, seventeenth and twenty-ninth episodes of the *Kızılcık Şerbeti* series. This series, which is the product of a scenario that can be found frequently in Turkish films, begins with Fatih, who comes from a conservative, religious family, and Doğa, who grew up in a modern, family, fall in love with and continues as a result of Doğa's unexpected pregnancy, when the young couple suddenly find themselves as husband and wife. The events and relationships between the two families, which are at opposite poles in terms of lifestyle and mentality, constitute the subject of this series.

As of the first episode of the series, the differences between the conservative and secular segments, the preferences arising from the differences, and the lack of respect for the lifestyles of both sides are presented to the audience, indicating the existence of the conflict between these two groups. Fatih, who is a groom-to-be, refuses the alcohol offered to him in the first episode of the series, takes off his shoes when entering the house and kisses the grandmother's hand, which is considered religious by the secular segment, as stated in the series 'kıro' it is shown as the reasons why. Words and hate speech that will increase the social separation in the script of the series can cause secular-religious conflict by fueling the language of discrimination. According to Dursun (2023), among the viewers who criticized the series fiercely, "What kind of series is this? It is an insult to the religion of Islam", and there are those who say, "We Turkish women are secular women of the Republic. Our calves are not bare, this is a very ugly criticism. Please take this ridiculous series off the air."

In the script, the behavior of people with different lifestyles is criticized by the representatives of the other side, but the fact that these people can come together after a while by showing understanding to each other indicates the existence of social acceptance. In the series, the traditions of Turkish culture were mixed with conservatism, and kissing hands and not wearing shoes at home were shown as actions taken only by conservatives.

5.1. Characteristics of Characters in the Series

When the demographic characteristics of the characters, which form the main backbone of the series and are evaluated within the scope of their relationships, are examined, it is seen that a total of 9 characters are present, consisting of 5 females and 4 males. It can be said that 3 of the women are in public sphere due to their working and student lives, and 2 of them are private sphere because they spend most of the day at home.

The main characters were included in all three episodes examined, but it was seen that different characters were included in addition to the existing side characters due to the subject of the episode. Therefore, the number of characters in the episodes vary.

5.1.1. Age of Characters

There are a total of nineteen characters in the series, including the main and side characters. Female characters make up the majority with 57.9% of these, while male characters make up 42.1%. When we look at the distribution of the age groups of the characters, it is seen that it is more common in the adult age group with a rate of 45.5% in women and in the young adult group with 50% in men compared to other age groups. Elderly group with 9.1% for women and the young and middle age group with 12.5% for men are the age groups with the least character. Giving more space to characters in the adult age group in women; However, it is important in terms of showing that they can prove their existence in society at this age.

Table 1. Distribution of Age Ranges of Characters by Gender

Apparent age	Woman		Male		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Junior (16-25)	2	18,20%	1	12,50%	3	16%
Young adult (26-39)	3	27,30%	4	50,00%	7	37%
Adult (40-64)	5	45,50%	2	25,00%	7	37%
Elderly (65+)	1	9,10%	1	12,50%	2	11%
Total/s	11	57,90%	8	42,10%	19	100%

5.1.2. Gender of Characters

When we look at the genders of the characters playing in the series, it is observed that there are differences between the episodes in terms of the number of male and female actors and a proportional distribution is made. This situation can be explained by the high number of couples in the series, and at the same time, it can be said that the importance of women in the construction of society is emphasized by causing the number of female characters to be high.

Television series have the power to raise awareness about gender equality in society, as well as to strengthen common judgments about male and female roles.

In the series, women are often represented in relation to housework and childcare, while men are portrayed as active and strong characters in business life. Ideas that represent such widely adopted patterns of behavior can make it easier for young people to understand and accept gender roles.

Especially in recent years, many of the television series have tried to raise awareness about gender roles and focus on the representation of women in strong roles. Such series can contribute to the equal representation of women with men in business, politics, and other fields, as well as increase the self-confidence of young girls.

Table 2. Distribution of the Number of Characters by Gender

Series Section	Woman		Male		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Episode 1	10	62,50%	6	37,50%	16	100%
Episode 17	12	54,50%	10	45,50%	22	100%
Episode 29	10	58,80%	7	41,20%	17	100%

5.1.3. Duration of Appearance of Characters on Screen

The first episode of the series lasted 1 hour and 59 minutes; However, the duration gradually increased, and the duration of the episode reached 2 hours and 35 minutes. The increase in the duration is directly proportional to the viewing rates of the series. Table 3, shows the duration of the appearance of the characters on the screen in the three sections of the sequence examined. Although the number of male and female characters in the series is close to each other, the duration of visibility on the screen reserved for female characters is higher than that of male characters in all three episodes examined.

In the series, it is thought that the durations are determined in a way that will serve a purpose for women to have a say in society and to increase their visibility. Although there is a superiority of men in male-dominated societies, it is thought that the presence of women in society is emphasized in both modern and conservative family structures.

Table 3. Distribution of Characters According to the Duration of Their Appearance on the Screen

Series Section	Woman		Male	
	Duration	Percent	Duration	Percent
Episode 1	84m 44 sec.	76,90%	25m 27sec.	23,10%
Episode 17	89 min. 15 sec.	62,70%	53m 4 sec.	37,30%
Episode 29	97 min. 21 sec.	64,20%	54m	35,80%

5.1.4. Marital Status Distributions of Female and Male Characters

When the distribution of the marital status of the characters was examined, it was determined that married couples were more than single and widowed ones.

In this series, it has been tried to show that marriage, which exists as a necessity of social life in traditional family structures and as a necessity of living or reproducing with the opposite sex, is preferred by children of both conservative and secular families. Although in the first part of the series, the character of Doğa is shown as a necessity because she is pregnant, it is thought that it is tried to point out the existence of the idea of establishing a home and having children with the person she loves. In the seventeenth episode of the series, the children of two conservative families were married without their consent; However, the disappointment of this marriage has caused families to question whether traditions or children are more important.

The fact that Kıvılcım, who opposed his daughter's marriage at the very beginning because their lifestyles were different, was right in the 29th episode of the series that this marriage was wrong, proves that people who grew up in a modern family structure cannot continue a life under pressure and obligation for a long time, even if they love each other very much.

Table 4. Marital Status Distributions of Female and Male Characters

Marital Status	Number of Episodes	Woman	Male
Single	Episode 1	4	4
	Episode 18	4	4
	Episode 29	3	3
	Total	11	11
Married	Episode 1	4	4
	Episode 18	4	3
	Episode 29	6	6
	Total	14	13
Widowed	Episode 1	2	1
	Episode 18	2	2
	Episode 29	1	-
	Total	5	3
Unencoded	Episode 1	1	-
	Episode 18	1	-
	Episode 29	1	-
	Total	3	-

5.1.5. Ideological Distinctions of Characters

Although secular and conservative characters are equally distributed throughout the series, this distribution differs according to gender. This situation indicates that secular female characters with a modern lifestyle are given more space in the series, while men are chosen conservatively due to the patriarchal/traditional structure, since they have an effective role in the reconstruction of society.

Table 5. Distribution of Characters According to Ideological Distinctions

Ideology	Woman		Male		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Conservative	4	36,40%	4	50,00%	8	42,10%
Secular	6	54,50%	2	25,00%	8	42,10%
Unencoded	1	9,10%	2	25,00%	3	15,80%
Total	11	100,00%	8	100,00%	19	100,00%

Looking at Table 5, it is seen that 42.1% of the characters are conservative, 42.1% are secular, and 15.8% are uncoded. This shows that the number of characters in the series is determined equally according to their ideologies. The majority of women are secular with 54.5%, while the majority of men are conservative with 50%.

5.1.6. Relationships Between Characters

The individual, who is active in making decisions in the family, is also considered as the authority figure of the family. Although this individual is usually the head of the family or the oldest member, he/she can also be seen as the most knowledgeable and experienced person. Family members respect this individual's decisions by taking their opinion on important issues. While the authority pattern and decision-making authority belong to men in traditional societies, there is an equal distribution between men and women in modern societies (Özen, 1991, p. 145).

From the first scene, the effort to show the presence of women in society is observed throughout the series. The self-struggle of Kıvılcım, who is a pointed character, in the first episodes, creates a conflict within herself when she falls in love with the conservative man in the following episodes, and when the character cannot resist herself, she begins to move away from her pointed identity.

In the series, it has been observed that the representatives of the conservative and secular sides have sharpened views against each other. In the very first part, the character of Kıvılcım described the conservative segment as reactionary and himself and those who think like him as contemporary and civilized through two characters wearing headscarves. Again, in the first episode, the character Fatih's kissing the hand of someone older than him and not entering the house with shoes was seen as outdated by the secular Kıvılcım, and especially his asking for tea instead of the beverage offered caused Kıvılcım to characterize Fatih as "kıro". Although the series is not within the scope of the study, a scene from the third episode is also included as an example of this situation. In this scene of Fatih and Doğa's wedding ceremony, two women with headscarves say, "The bride's family is very bad. Her sister-in-law is obvious, she has opened her whole body", and in the conversations of two secular characters about this marriage, expressions such as 'They gave their daughters to this family for money' and 'Do you know the man's wealth? They will all be closed soon' are used to create the impression that people with different worldviews, lifestyles and beliefs are not seen as normal by different segments of society.

When we look at the series in general, the subtext is given that not only modern families but also conservative ones care about their children, listen to them and understand them; However, it has been shown that conservative families, like secularists, can sometimes disagree with their children and even conflict. These conflicts cause parents to think that they can directly intervene in their children's lives with the effect of the pressure created by social rules and to develop behavior in that direction. An example of this situation is that Kıvılcım, who is a secular character, opposes her daughter Doğa's desire to marry Fatih, and even wants to take her daughter to the doctor by forcing her to terminate her pregnancy. Likewise, Abdullah Ünal, a conservative character, forcing his own daughter to marry someone he does not want is another example of this situation.

The family relationships presented in the series reveal the effects of social norms on individuals and offer viewers the opportunity to reflect on parenting. Conflicts within the family play an important role not only in individual relationships but also in the overall structure of society. This shows that the problems faced by individuals with different family structures are universal.

The difficulties and conflicts faced by families through the characters of the series reflect the transformation process of social values and norms and offer viewers the opportunity to empathize and understand different perspectives. In this context, the depth of the conflicts in the series allows viewers to think about their own family structures and question the dynamics of these structures. In particular, the similarities and differences between conservative and secular families help to understand how gender roles are shaped and the pressure of these roles on individuals.

By raising awareness on gender roles and family dynamics, such productions can help viewers develop a more critical perspective on these issues. Viewers' empathy with the conflicts experienced by the characters may lead to a re-evaluation of social norms in society. Furthermore, such series may encourage viewers to be more conscious and sensitive about parenting, child rearing and communication within the family. Thus, the content offered by the series may go beyond being just a means of entertainment and become a part of social change.

Table 6. Inter-Character Relationship

Female Characters	Lifestyle	Sequencing	Relationship type	Male characters	Lifestyle
Kıvılcım	Secular	Before	Wife	Kayhan	Secular
		After	Belove	Ömer	Conservative
		Afterward	Wife	Ömer	
Leman	Conservative	Before	Wife	Ömer	Conservative
		After	Wife	Kayhan	Secular
Nursema	Conservative	Before	Belove	Umut	Secular
		After	Wife	İbrahim	Conservative
		Afterward	Wife	Umut	Secular
Pembe	Conservative	Concurrent	Wife	Abdullah	Conservative
Alev	Secular		Belove		
Doğa	Secular	Before	Belove	Fatih	Conservative

5.1.7. Characters Contempt-Glorification Behaviors

Kıvılcım's disdain for the woman wearing the hijab she saw in the store by looking at her outfit, Pembe's belittling of her sister-in-law Alev because of her short dress at the wedding of her young son Fatih, Kıvılcım's disdain for drinking tea instead of drinking alcohol can be given as examples of the contempt-glorification behaviors of the characters according to their ideology. Looking at Table 7, it is observed that women show more contemptuous behavior than men in both conservative and secular characters. When we look at the glorification behaviors according to gender, it is seen that conservative female characters do not glorify at all, while male characters do it twice. In secular characters, it is seen that men do not do any glorifying behavior, while women do it four times.

Table 7. Distribution of Contempt-Glorification Behaviors According to the Ideologies of the Characters

Ideology	Gender	Underestimate		Sublimation	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Conservative	Woman	3	75,00%	0	0,00%
	Male	1	25,00%	2	100,00%
Total		**4**	**100,00%**	**2**	**100,00%**
Secular	Woman	5	100,00%	4	100,00%
	Male	0	0,00%	0	0,00%
Total		**5**	**100,00%**	**4**	**100,00%**

5.1.8. Roles Attributed to Women and Men

When we look at the distribution of roles attributed to men and women in the series, it is seen that women and men who are in the position of spouses/partners/lovers are more numerous than others. This shows that both secular and conservative segments in the series attach importance to the concept of being a family.

Table 8. Distribution of Roles Attributed to Women and Men

Roles	How many men and women are in this role?	
	Woman	Male
Parents	4	3
Spouse/Partner/Lover	5	5
Boss/Employer/Manager	2	2
Attendant/Caregiver/Employee	2	3
Wealthy and Non-Working	3	-
Idle	-	-

5.2. Dialogues in the Episodes That May Lead to the Conservative-Secular Debate

In the first episode of the series, Kıvılcım who plays the secular character is looking for clothes in a store when another woman accidentally bumps into him and says sorry. Kıvılcım is disturbed not by the fact that it has been struck, but by the fact that the person who hit it is wearing a hijab, and there is a

dialogue between the characters that will fuel the conflict that exists between these two segments of society:

> Kıvılcım: "These are everywhere."
> Çimen: "Mom, they're going to shut up"
> Woman in hijab 1: "What did you say?"
> Kıvılcım: "Excuse me. Did you say that to me?"
> Woman in hijab 1: "Yes, I told you. Are you talking to us?"
> Then Kıvılcım said, "Why are you being taken on? Are you in a place where you don't belong?"
> Çimen: "Mom, what are you saying, don't talk nonsense"
> Kıvılcım: "Çimen a second"
> Woman in hijab 1: "What are you saying?" Woman in hijab 2: "Don't let me be your victim, sister."
> Kıvılcım: "Bravo bravo. It's a behavior that suits you perfectly. It's exactly what I expected."
> Woman in hijab 1: "Nasty. Enemy of freedom."
> Kıvılcım: "It is better than being an enemy of civilization. There can be no freedom like this."
> Çimen: "Mom, don't be ridiculous"
> Kıvılcım: "Çimen"
> Woman in hijab 1: "I'll take you to court. I'll sue for defamation."
> Store clerk: "Ladies! What's going on?"
> Kıvılcım: "This lady keeps yelling at us. That's what it is. Why are you taking these people here, brother? Does it suit you at all?"
> Çimen: "Mom, let's go, what's the matter?"
> Kıvılcım: "Çimenciğim"
> Woman in hijab 1: "Fascist."
> Kıvılcım: "Fascist?"
> Store clerk: "Madam, please calm down!
> Çimen said, "Mom, look, everyone is looking at us. Please, let's go."
> Kıvılcım: "Çimen, why are we going out? Let him come out. He's the one shouting. And they're not used to socializing."
> Çimen: "Mom, come on, look, everyone is looking at us. Please, let's get out. What the heck!"
> Woman in hijab 1: "May Allah bless you as he knows you."

Although it is thought that the dialogues between people are not expressed so clearly in the conservative-secular conflict that exists in this scene and exists in the society, it is possible to say that there is a possibility that the conflict will reveal it.

In the seventeenth episode of the series, despite all the differences in terms of lifestyle, Nursema and Umut's parents do not approve the relationship of Nursema and Umut, who love each other, and marry their daughter to the son of a family that is ideologically close to them. Although she does not want this marriage, Nursema submits to this marriage because she cannot go against her father's word. In the scene where her mother tries to console Nursema, an effort is made to normalize the forced marriage. As the daughter of a conservative family, Nursema's parents consider the man they marry and his family sufficient for their daughter's happiness in terms of social status and family structure. The following dialogues take place in this scene, where this marriage, which was made without the consent of the girl, is shown as normal by the mother and father.

> Pembe: "It's like a funeral came out of the house. What's going on, girls? My daughter, what a beautiful family you are going to be a bride. Let me see, there is a miracle in marriage. Come on."
> Doğa: "Pembe mommy, I don't think that's true for every marriage."
> Abdullah said, "Nursema, you are now married in the sight of Allah, my daughter. I hope that from now on, he will adjust his actions accordingly."Pembe: Girl, your father said something. Answer me. Did you swallow your tongue?

Nursema: "Can I go to my room?
Pembe: "Hasbin Allah!"
Abdullah: "Go, girl."

What Pembe said to her daughter Nursema can be considered as a sexist discourse under the influence of the masculine mentality.

In the twenty-nine episodes of the series, Pembe is disturbed when she sees her husband Abdullah wearing a necklace around the neck of Alev, the sister of her sons-in-law, and the following dialogues take place between the three characters.

Pembe: "What's going on here?"
Abdullah: "For God's sake, what are you talking about, Pembe?"
Alev: "Pembe! You misunderstood. My necklace had fallen off, and Abdullah was helping me put it back."
Pembe: "Didn't you find a lady to help? What does that mean? There is such a thing as shame."
Abdullah: "Pembe!"
Alev: "Pembe, there is nothing to be angry about. It can't be. I don't know what you're thinking about!"
Pembe: "You're not so naïve that you don't know that Alev!" Is it up to you to wear Alev's necklace? You should have told us!"
Abdullah: "Pembe, don't stretch it. Let's go to the guests, no shame. 'La havle!' "
Pembe: "You weren't ashamed to make the married man wear a necklace in the nooks and crannies, were you?"
Alev: "Pembe, I have done nothing to be ashamed of. If you had been with me at that time, I would have asked you for help. There's nothing to grow."
Pembe: "The main problem is that my husband is with you."
Alev: "Something was missing! Ugh."

Morality, which is defined as the behavior and rules that individuals living in a society have to follow, is reflected in the series in a way that befits this definition. In this scene, where there are dialogues that have the effect of increasing social polarization, the reckless sentences of Alev, who is a secular character, and the fact that she finds the freedom to express her feelings with the ease she wants, are not welcomed in the eyes of the society in general, causing her to draw an image with low moral values. To be moral in the roles assigned to women in Turkish society; It is evaluated by the clothes worn, the speech made, and the emotion that has not been acted (TDK, 2023).

Women who do not exhibit the behaviors defined as ideal are definitely punished, marginalized, excluded or left alone. It is thought that the masculine mentality, which wants to hold the power, not only protects its homeland, but also wants to protect its women from all kinds of evil and trouble by taking it under its wings. As Saktanber points out, while the ideal woman is shown in the media, she is depicted with stereotypes such as "devoted mother" or "faithful, good wife", and women who do not want to be out of demand also contribute to the creation and dissemination of these discourses (Saktanber, 2015, p. 213). It is not strange that the person who is accepted in business life is mostly men, even if he is in business life or even more successful than men, the woman lags behind the man and the society accepts this without questioning (Baş, 2019, p. 568).

At the end of this episode, there are confrontations between Pembe, Alev and Abdullah. In the first confrontation, the character of Pembe plays a dominant wife who tries to take care of her husband; In the second confrontation, a female character is portrayed who is silenced by her husband's discourses when she is faced with the fear of losing her husband to the secular Alev with the influence of her conservative nature. This scene is important in that it shows that the conservative woman is not only behind the man, but also subjected to the pressure of the secular woman.

Again, in this section, although it is emphasized that the marriage of Nursema and Umut, who love each other despite all the differences they have in terms of lifestyles, is not socially appropriate, this marriage also points to a family structure that is described as lovers reunited and does not make a sound.

In the first part, Doğa, who wants to marry and give birth to her child quickly because she is pregnant with the man she loves, receives a negative reaction from her mother, contrary to social expectations. However, the reaction of Kıvılcım, who draws the image of a modern, educated mother, shows that she cannot go far beyond the society she lives in. According to Sayın (1990, p. 10-11) in the nuclear family structure, which is a result of modern life, unlike the traditional extended family, the control of the family elders over the family and individuals is very low, and sometimes it can be said that it is completely absent due to lack of communication. The choice of spouse takes place depending on the couples' own decisions, and most marriages are made through negotiations or agreements. Fertility is consciously limited by couples. Gender discrimination is not discriminated against when making a divorce decision; Each spouse can make this decision individually. The authority model is based on an egalitarian basis, and all family members can participate in the decisions to be taken in the functioning of the family decision-making mechanisms.

The fact that the character of Kıvılcım, who is portrayed as a member of the modern family structure, opposes her daughter's marriage and pregnancy, and intervenes in the life she wants to establish with an approach that she states to be protective, contrasts with the existing accepted modern nuclear family structure. However, in family structures that choose urbanized and modern life, social expectation points to the existence of parents who care about the freedom of family members and respect their preferences.

5.3. Analysis of Series Characters in the Context of Relationships

In the series examined, the stance of both male and female characters is reflected as accepted in society. Although the fact that women have a greater place in social life, especially with the realization of urbanization, creates a perception that they have equal opportunities with men, it is known that this equality is often not real, and women are a few steps behind men.

In the series, the secular woman, who has high self-confidence and can easily take part in working life, is brave and can react to events in any way she wants when she is single, but this situation changes when she marries a conservative man, and the normalization of behaviors such as the acceptance that the first right to speak belongs to her husband, as predicted by society, is shown as if the woman was touched with a magic wand and her ideas were changed at the same speed. The change in the behavior of secular women after marrying a conservative man can be considered as an indicator of social acceptance and shows the existence of the effect of social memory on individuals. According to Halbwachs, it is built in the family and social environment that comes with birth (1992, p. 22). Memory is formed in a mental process. The mind, on the other hand, contributes to the subjective structure of social memory, also expressed as collective memory, by passing the information it remembers through its own filter. With this feature, social memory becomes open to external manipulations, distortions and reconstruction (Mersin, 2010, p. 12).

Gender inequality, which is frequently seen in society, is reflected in a similar way in this series and it is emphasized that men are superior to women in the conservative segment. While Abdullah, Ömer and Fatih, who are among the conservative male characters in the series, draw the profile of strong and wealthy men, secular characters such as Kayhan, who is trying to live on the backs of his yesterday, and Umut, who does not have the financial capacity to support his family and does not make an effort to change it, are emphasized as weak characters with financial inadequacy. In the series, it is shown that secular women prefer conservative men, taking care of their families and earning money. This reveals that there is an effort to show the conservative characters in the series as stronger than the secular ones (Mengü, 2024).

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The information carried from the past, referred to as social memory, tends to be replaced by new ones because it is different from the existing ones. In this process of change, which we can call a result of

global culture, it is important to manage the impact in order to ensure social continuity. Shaping the production of television programs by preserving the basic values of culture will both protect social integrity and contribute to the development of society without completely breaking away from its traditions.

Gender equality in society is important for social justice and needs to be tackled using tools such as awareness-raising, education, and legal regulations. Society tends to view men as leaders, strong, and determined, while associating women with auxiliary roles such as childcare and housework. When characters representing the roles determined by the society are included in the series, the information in the memory will be reinforced and will increase the possibility of being accepted without being strange. The inclusion of an approach other than the gender roles assigned by the society in the series can not only update the information in the memory of the audience but also have an effect on the acceptance of newly created roles without realizing it. Television series can update or recreate the information in the memory of the viewer not only in gender roles, but also in many subjects.

In this study, the effects of television series on the reconstruction of society, gender roles and family dynamics are analyzed through the series called *Kızılcık Şerbeti*. According to the findings, it can be said that in the analyzed episodes of the series, secular women are represented in society more than conservative women due to their family structures, while conservative men are shown as more powerful and wealthy than secular men. Society tends to see men as leaders, strong and decisive, while associating women with supporting roles such as childcare and housework. The inclusion of approaches other than the gender roles assigned by society in the series can update the information in the viewer's memory, as well as have an effect on the unwitting acceptance of the mindsets in the newly created roles. While this may reinforce gender inequality, it also allows viewers to reflect on these issues.

It can be said that the scenarios of the series are determined by the social, political, economic and cultural variables in the society and that the high number of followers is effective in increasing the power of these variables. The dialogues in this series show that change is possible in both conservative and secular segments and that it is possible for women to unite against oppressive impositions even if they have different worldviews.

Productions such as *Kızılcık Şerbeti* offer viewers new perspectives on social acceptance, diversity and gender roles; however, the stereotypes and discriminatory discourses they contain also carry the risk of increasing social tensions. In this context, the content of television series needs to be handled with caution. In order to positively improve the impact of television series on gender dynamics, it may be suggested that series producers should address these issues in a healthier and more inclusive manner and produce educational content. In this context, media literacy trainings should be organized especially for young viewers to increase audience awareness; productions that represent different lifestyles and social identities in a more inclusive way by increasing the diversity of characters in television series should be encouraged. Furthermore, conducting more academic research on the social effects of television series and integrating the findings of these studies into series production processes will contribute to the development of society without breaking away from its core values. Finally, it is thought that developing social responsibility projects on issues such as gender equality and women's rights in television channels and bringing them to the audience will contribute to supporting social change in this direction.

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