Initiative for Critical Studies of Masculinity (ICSM)

Initiative for Critical Studies of Masculinity (ICSM) is an independent group of researchers and activists working in different areas such as Sociology, Psychology, Literature, Political Sciences, Philosophy and Media Studies.

Established at the beginning of 2013, Initiative for Critical Studies of Masculinity aim to progress in parallel to critical and anti-patriarchal ways created by activisms, and feminism, LGBTI+ and gender studies and to gather everyone who criticizes masculinity.

To increase recognition of critical masculinity studies as an academic study area and an action plane, to find local counterparts in theoretical and practical terms and to extend discussion of masculinity in a critical view on cultural, sociological and artistic planes are among the primary objectives of the Initiative for Critical Studies of Masculinity.

Initiative for Critical Studies of Masculinity carries out studies basically towards increasing the interest in the subject of critical masculinity and awareness in the public, and specifically towards marginalization of gender equality, sexed identities, and supporting profeminist male activism and feminism and LGBTQ activisms.

While Initiative for Critical Studies of Masculinity publishes a peer-reviewed journal on males and masculinity called *Masculinities Journal: A Journal of Identity and Culture*, this initiative also carries out a series of studies including workshops and arrangement of congresses and meetings.

“Masculinity as a Political Category” workshop was held in Trabzon on November 2, 2013. In this workshop, Mehmet Bozok carried out a brief presentation of his work that was conducted on masculinity in Trabzon, and Bozok also brought the main concepts of the relationship between politics and masculinity up for discussion in his pioneering study in which he was a moderator. After a brief presentation in the session where Bilhan Gözcü was a moderator, profeminist masculinity activism and NGOs in Turkey were discussed. In this workshop, the emergence of manhood, masculinity and masculine power as a political fiction, and basics of conceptualization and reproduction of masculinity in cultural and political planes and becoming dominant were discussed.

“Visual Culture and Masculinity” workshop was held in Istanbul on February 2, 2014. In this workshop, in which Selin Akyüz was a moderator, Murat İri and Zeyno Pekünlü participated as speakers. In his presentation, Murat İri discussed how manhood is represented in today’s television series with reference to “Suleiman the Magnificent” series. Zeyno Pekünlü made a presentation that inverted the patriarchal codes and references that were ascribed to masculinities in Turkish movies, anthems and visual culture products with reference to her own works.

Another workshop was held in Ankara hosted by Kasaum on April 26, 2014. In this workshop, Selin Akyüz and Beril Türkoğlu participated as speakers. Selin Akyüz carried out a presentation called “Turkish Political Masculinity” with reference to political culture in Turkey. Beril Türkoğlu, in her presentation called “Men on the Fault Line”, critically discussed the issues of unemployment, masculinity and masculinity crises.
Published by the Initiative for Critical Studies of Masculinity, Masculinities Journal: A Journal of Identity and Culture is the first refereed journal on the subject of men and masculinities in Turkey.

Since the first day of the journal, the journal has provided us with a chance to communicate with many researchers from different countries and different disciplines, and it is again proven that the interest and necessity of criticism of masculinity is much more than anticipated. This journal, published bilingually in English-Turkish, is published every six months, in January and July. The first edition of the journal, which was fully in English, was released online in February, 2014. Masculinities Journal will be published bilingually in Turkish and English as of the second issue in August, 2014. Journal’s web site address: http://www.masculinitiesjournal.org/

Initiative for Critical Studies of Masculinity arranged the first international peer-reviewed scientific convention on masculinity in Turkey called 1st International Symposium on Men and Masculinities. The symposium took place at Tepekule Convention Center in Izmir on September, 11-14.

The symposium invites researchers in social sciences and humanities who are criticizing men and masculinities, as well as activists and NGOs conducting studies in this area, in particular for the subject of masculinity studies. The leading figures in the field of critical masculinity such as Prof. Jeff Hearn, Prof. Elijah C. Nealy and Prof. Serpil Sancar participated as invited speakers. A participant group consisting of 155 people, including academicians, researchers, postgraduate students and activists working in the field of masculinity studies in both Turkey and other geographies participated in 1st International Symposium on Men and Masculinities with their presentations, panels and/or workshops.

“Workshop on the Discourse of Masculinity, Trauma and Violence” was held in Istanbul (Ramada Hotel) on October 8-9, 2016.

ICSM organized “The Literature and Masculinity Workshop” in cooperation with Yaşar University on August 28-31, 2018. 16 graduate and PhD students from Turkish Language & Literature, American Culture & Literature and English Language & Literature departments participated in this workshop carried out under the moderation of Trevor Hope, Yusuf Eradam, Ayşe Lahur Kirtunç and researchers from ICSM such as Murat Göç and Çimen Günay. In this workshop, functions and representations of men and masculinities as creators, interpreters and readers of written texts were discussed critically.
(From left to right: Selin Akyüz, Özlem Duva, Naz Hıdır, Berk İnan, Şahinde Yavuz, Gülden Sayılan, Şenol Topçu, Beril Türkoğlu, Çimen Gümay-Erkol, Murat Göç, Hasan Akcan)