COVID-19 AS AN OTHERING PRACTICE:
DONALD TRUMP'S ANTI-CHINESE DISCOURSE

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Abstract

Since the beginning of 2020, cases of the COVID-19 have risen rapidly, more than 150 million people have been affected and more than 2,5 million people have lost their lives. In addition to its impact on global health systems, social life, and the economy, the virus has had impact on the global political discourse. In the United States, change in the discourse has resonated with United States' former President Donald Trump's use of the phrase "Chinese virus" in a posted tweet on March 17, 2020. Trump's association of the virus with a certain nationality had broad repercussion on social media. Following Trump, some conservative politicians and pro-Trump media outlets have used words such as China virus, Chinese virus or Wuhan virus. This study aims to reveal that COVID-19 pandemic has become a practice of "othering" through anti-Chinese discourses that are heavily prominent in the media. Hypothesis is that President Trump has been trying to build a new "othering" discourse against China and he instrumentalized COVID-19 pandemic for the re-construction of the othering discourse. Social constructivist theoretical perspective is used in the study to provide a more extensive perspective to debates that includes social and political discourses emerging from practices.

Keywords: *Othering, COVID-19, Social Constructivism, Donald Trump, Discourse*

BİR ÖTEKİLEŞTİRME PRATİĞİ OLARAK COVID-19:
DONALD TRUMP'IN ÇİN KARŞITI SÖYLEMİ

Öz

2020 yılının başından itibaren tüm dünyada COVID-19 vakaları hızla artış göstermiş, dünya genelinde100 milyondan fazla insan bu salgından etkilenmiş ve 2 milyona yakın insan hayatını kaybetmiştir. Koronavirüsün, küresel sağlık sistemleri, sosyal yaşam ve ekonomi üzerindeki etkili olmasının yanı sıra küresel siyasal söylem üzerinde de etkili olmuştur. Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde siyasi söylemdeki değişiklik eski Başkan Donald Trump'ın 17 Mart 2020'de yayınladığı bir tweet'te "Çin virüsü" ifadesini kullanması ile yankılanmıştır. Trump'ın virüsü belirli bir milliyetle ilişkilendirmesi sosyal medyada geniş yankı bulmuştur. Trump'ın ardından bazı muhafazakar politikacılar ve Trump yanlısı medya kuruluşları da

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"Çin virüsü" veya "Wuhan virüsü" gibi ifadeleri kullanmışlardır. Bu çalışma COVID-19 salgınının medyada yoğun bir şekilde öne çıkan Çin karşıtı söylemler üzerinden bir "ötekileştirme pratiği" haline geldiğini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın hipotezi, Başkan Trump'ın Çin'e karşı yeni bir "ötekileştirme" söylem inşa etmeye çalıştığı ve COVID-19 salgınının ötekileştirme söyleminin yeniden inşası için araçsallaştırıldığıdır. Pratiklerden ortaya çıkan sosyal ve politik söylemleri içeren tartışmalara daha kapsamlı bir bakış açısı kazandırmayı amaçlayan bu çalışmada kuramsal bakış açısı olarak sosyal inşacılık kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Ötekileştirme, COVID-19, Sosyal İnşacılık, Donald Trump, Söylem*

Introduction

2020 was a year that the world was shaken by an epidemic that had not been expected. Since March, 2020 174,413,956 million people have been affected by COVID-19 virus, more than 25,000,000 million people are currently infected and death tolls has become more than 3, 500,000 (Worldometer, 2021). Its rapid and uncontrollable spread across countries led to huge amount of life losses with negative social, political and economic effects. As the virus continues to spread quickly, governments around the world have been encouraging people to stay at home to keep themselves safe and to protect health services and save lives (BBC,2020). For the last few months, people all around the world have been experiencing a continuous fear and anxiety as COVID-19 is threatening the globe. Although the story of the emergence of this unexpected virus is clear, there is still a matter of discussion going on. After the first reported COVID-19 case in Wuhan, China, there has been an argument putting blame on Chinese people for production and the spread of the virus in the social media. Many countries, predominantly United States held China responsible for the spread of the virus and accused it for not being transparent and responsible. President Donald Trump considered measures against Beijing for its responsibility of the coronavirus in the position that China could have done more to handle, warn and slow down the spread of the virus. He continued to use the term "Chin virus" until the final days of his presidency. What is more striking was the U.S President Donald Trump's tweet using the phrase "Chinese virus" posted on March 17, 2020. After giving an address on March 16 Monday, he later tweeted his trust and support for various sectors affected by the pandemic:

> "The United States will be powerfully supporting those industries, like Airlines and others, that are particularly affected by the Chinese Virus. We will be stronger than ever before! (Twitter, 2020).

Beginning on the December 27th, coronavirus first emerged in Wuhan district of China. It was apparently associated with a market selling wild animals. Wuhan authorities started investigating and at the end Chinese

scientists identified a novel coronavirus that led to Coronavirus disease (COVID-19). However, Chinese authorities are blamed to mismanage the process of the informing public about deadly risks of disease. The worse thing is that China is blamed for the fact that it did not immediately informed World Health Organization (WHO) and at the beginning of the spread of the pandemic Chinese health authorities prohibited any statement of disclosure by doctors and researchers and reported no new cases for two weeks. According to Pew Research Center's Survey (2020), negative opinion of China increased in recent months with the spread of the virus, and Americans were critical about China's role on spreading COVID-19 (Devlin and Huang, 2020). Report (2020:6) also showed that around three quarters (73%) of Americans had an unfavorable view of China and indicated that "Republicans are much more critical of China's handling of COVID-19 and had more negative views of the country. In the late winter of 2020, the rates of hate crimes directed at Asian American people surged immediately. In the week following President Trump's press conference, not yet published report in the website of the Stop AAPI Hate (referring to Asian American Pacific Islander) was released. According to the report, between March 19th and 25th, "673 incidents of coronavirus discrimination" were recorded (AAPIC, 2020).

It is believed that, overall, China's immediate and earlier measures and transparency might have slowed the spread of the virus down and save lives. According to a study, if China had taken precautions three weeks before Wuhan's lockdown, infections could have been reduced by 66%, 86% and 95%, if measures could be taken one week, two weeks or three weeks earlier before three millions of people departed Wuhan for Chinese New Year (Lai et.al.,2020). In relation to putting blame on China for the spread of the virus, United States decided to punish Beijing over the outbreak. Small businesses and states filed different suits against China based on its culpability of the causing pandemic (Sean and Anderson, 2020). The accusations against China increased day by day at the public opinion level and increased a wave of biased opinions about Asian people. By the United States, East and South Asian communities were exposed to racial blame, attacks and abuses both discursively and physically. According to Al Jazeera, more than 10,000 tweets were posted on Twitter included term "kung-flu" on March alone (Al-Jazerra, 2020). Many officials from China, U.S and people all around the world criticized and condemned the phrase as wrong, identifying a global pandemic by ethnicity or a geography likely damaging in provoking racist associations between the coronavirus and China. While the threat to the efficiency of public health sectors and economy of COVID-19 pandemic was very challenging, phrases as "Kung-flu, Wuhan virus and China virus" added fuel to the fire by discriminating Chinese people and Asian communities. The clarity in discrimination and hate discourses during COVID-19 pandemic has shed a light on the concept that is not new in politics at all; it is the issue of "othering".

This study aims to reveal that COVID-19 pandemic has become a practice of "othering" through anti-Chinese discourses that are heavily prominent in the media. In the light of the aim of the study, the hypothesis of the study is that President Trump has been trying to build a new "othering" discourse against Chinese people and he instrumentalized COVID-19 pandemic for the re-construction of the othering discourse. Critical discourse analysis method is used to analyze Trump's anti-Chinese rhetoric. As the "critical discourse analysis deals with the relationship between discourse and power "by focusing on the use of language (Van Dijk, 20201:363), they play an important role for the construction of knowledge and how we rationalize it. The theoretical background of the study is the constructivist approach that considers the world we live in as a socially constructed and as a social context. It is aimed to provide a more extensive perspective to the debates that includes social and political practice and discourses emerging from those practices. Hence, the discourse and its influence, which rationalists only consider in relation to the strategic interaction or ignore constitutes the main theme of this study. Constructivist approach argues that the ideas and norms formed as a result of the interaction between actors (states, non-state actors, individuals) and the international environment affect the interests, identities, attitudes and behaviors of states their foreign policies and even the structure of the international system. Against the "primordialist" debates in the nationalist literature, constructivism argues that modern national identities are built within current-historical cultural developments or invented as Hobsbawm says. According to Alexander Wendt one of the main theorists of the constructivist approach, identity is the key concept to examine international relations from a constructivist perspective. According to Wendt, studies to be carried out within the scope of international relations should start reading of culture and identity and then turn to power and interests (Kaya, 2008: 107). Debates such as "Clash of Civilizations" and the post-Cold War change in the world have increased the interest in constructivism. It is seen that the norms and that were assumed to be fixed and given in the international system during the Cold War period are re-constructed today. The COVID-19 pandemic and the "new discourse" that emerged during pandemic period is one of the best examples of this construction process.

Primary data of this study was collected from media sources such as Twitter, Instagram and Rebuplican-Conservative online magazines/websites. Donald Trump's tweets including China virus or Chinese virus hashtags and coronavirus that were posted during pandemic period and pro-Trump bureaucrats' tweets about coronavirus using China virus or Chinese virus expressions were analyzed. The study has two limitations. First limitation is time period limitation. Although anti-Chinese rhetoric of Trump can be analyzed in military and trade dimensions, this study limits the unit of analysis as the anti-Chinese discourse during COVID-19 pandemic. Second limitation is related to the sources. As the study discusses a current affair, the

richest data comes from visual and printed media as being easily accessible and available to analyze practical discourse. Potential significance of the study comes from the analysis of the "othering" discourse of United States' president. Since 19th and 20th century, negative effects of the practice of othering in discourse in world politics were observed e.g. Milosevic against Bosnians, Hitler against Jew people etc. United States' role is undeniable as leading global politics, infusing the promotion of liberal international order, freedom, democratic values and so on. Therefore, every word that the U.S president uses has a significant impact on world politics. As the world is going through harsh times the words of the United Stated president are undeniably matter and directory for the world politics and public opinion.

Although a number of studies have been carried out on COVID-19 in a short period of time, studies on discourse (Reny and Barreto, 2020) produced in pandemic period is limited. Taking this, the present study on Donald Trump's anti-Chinese discourse during pandemic period is expected to contribute to COVID-19 and discourse studies literature. The study contains two parts. In the first part, the concept of othering is addressed by referring to "construction of the other in discourse"; in the second part, President Trump's anti-Chinese discourse during COVID-19 is analyzed with reference to the construction of COVID-19 pandemic as an othering practice.

1. THE CONCEPT OF OTHERING

The concept of other can be called as "being the one who does not belong to us". The basis of the concept of "other" can be explained in general terms as the members of a certain group is seen as "different" and/or negated by another group due to their belonging (Bezirgan and Bilgin ,2009). Besides, in any society, groups with few numbers of members with regards to religious and ethnic identity are also perceived as others by the members of the rest of the society (Gölcü and Dağlı, 2017:15). The subject defines himself/herself through the "other"; more precisely, the other is indispensable for the subject. The existence of the other becomes an indispensable necessity for the subject to define his/her existence. Moreover, a social structure or formation also needs the other in order to define itself. In this way, the social structure or formation determines its own position regarding the existence of the other formation. As a result, the other is not only a subject, but can also be a belief, an idea or any group (a certain ethnic group in a society or a nation as a whole) that carry different attributes from the self.

Othering is a concept that is useful for understanding the prejudice; when certain groups of people may be marginalized, hated, discriminated and oppressed by the others. Throughout the history humans have witnessed different accounts of the marginalization of certain groups of people; as the enslavement of the African people, engenderment of women, and oppression of ethnic or religious minorities that mostly included disgust, hate and fear.

In psychology, othering refers to the ordinary process as everyone experiences; othering is only possible through the nexus of self and the other in discourse; however, in sociology othering refers to discourses that lead to political and moral judgments about superiority or inferiority of one group over another that leads to us versus them distinction (Dervin, 2015). That is mostly described through a framework that he/she not good as "we" which leads to differentiated and marginalized type of representations of the other individual or the out-group. For example, Edward Said in his seminal work Orientalism (1978) demonstrated how the representations of the Orient (as mysterious and inferior) helped the Occidentals to define themselves with positive attributes and characteristics.

The concept of othering becomes critical to understand those behaviors and feelings towards the people that are perceived and called as different and totally the "other". In the process of building the other, the other is disgraced by the "self or the subject", therefore, being the "other" is the state of being different from the "self" as the self carries all the good attributes. The act of "othering" brings the process of building the existence of the "self" as higher than the other in its train. In this case, "the other" is not constructed equally with the "self" and is seen below the self. Self's own rules and ideals constitute the different other, therefore, the self/subject creates the other. Powell and Menendian (2016: 17) define the process of othering as following:

> "We define "othering" as a set of dynamics, and processes, and structures that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences based on group identities".

So Powell and Menendian (2016:17) define "othering" as a group based marginalization process through the individuals' group belonging identity and they also describe it as a set of practices that spread inequality and marginality. According to Dervin (2015:2), the practice of othering comes along with the idea of disparaging the other as bad and evil:

> "Othering is often accompanied by the idea that some groups are dehumanized or demonized as they are deemed to be inferior".

The process of othering involves negative attributions to the characteristics of the other individuals or groups of people that are represented as opposite to "the self or to us" (Rohleder, 2014). More specifically, in the process of othering of a certain group and/or individual, the other or the out-group is identified by having some characteristics that the self lacks and some characteristics that the self or in-group is having but the other or out-group lacks. Consequently, the construction of the othering is a process to develop a social representation of an out-group by attributing negative characteristics. It is the process of creating a representation of an image, belief, discourse and prejudices against the out-group and all these

practices are formed and reinforced through mass communication channels, in media as well as in daily speech.

According to Van Dijk, in order to maintain the mental control in the society it is necessary to control the discourse or to produce it (İnceoğlu and Çoban, 2014). The words used in "othering" process, speeches, sentences and expressions are the factors that consolidate the construction of a certain discourse. Riggins (1997) states that a person maintains two types of practices in the society to identify oneself; discourse of difference and discourse of similarity. In this context, the role of the media in developing "othering" discourse is very important. When media organs develop a number of linguistic and semiotic codes in line with the dominant socio-cultural and economic-political structure, it determines patterns of definition called 'normal' and 'other' behavior and discourses existing in the social structure (Gölcü and Dağlı, 2017:16). Therefore, the process of othering and representation of others in the form of "us versus them" is consolidated by discourses of othering, differentiating and marginalizing. As the media plays a decisive role in exhibiting and presenting existing relations and structures in the society, the texts, sentences and expressions used by media that include us versus them, enemies and friends, in group versus out groups etc. patterns bring along othering and marginalization in presentation process. Construction of othering in discourse is to utter negative attributes and certain prejudices against a group and to exclude themselves (the self or the in-group) from equating themselves with the "other".

With rapid globalization, the role of mass media in shaping and influencing the perceptions and attitudes of people towards each other is quite significant. Especially the way of constructing the discourse about an out-group and the representation of the out-group in the media via this discourse reinforces the weakening of the relations between in and out groups, in other words, between the self and the other. In today's world, in addition to television and radio as the most effective transmitters of information, printed media; newspapers and of course social media also play predominant role. In that sense, media fulfills its importance as a space where the dominant ideology is reproduced and consolidated every day, therefore, media is considered as one of the greatest tool that is used by the sovereign or "us" against the "other" (İnceoğlu and Çoban, 2014).

In the case of COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese people are expressed as the "other" that does not belong to "us" by causing the virus. In the process of constructing Chinese as "other" in discourse, they are represented as racially dehumanized and demonized by the "self"; namely the U.S. Thus, "self" is constructed as "superior" to the other with the use of elite rhetoric by media and political leaders. In our case, it is claimed that othering discourse is used by President Donald Trump by racializing COVID-19 pandemic in its early stages; represented the virus as entirely Chinese. In the next section, there will be examples gathered from websites and newspapers

that show the rise of anti-Chinese attitude that kindled the flames of the rise of othering discourses during pandemic period.

2. PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ANTI-CHINESE RHETORIC DURING COVID-19 PROCESS

After first reported case of COVID-19 was in Wuhan city of China, Trump and other officials' anti- Chinese attitudes started to be flamed by referring to the virus as Chinese virus, China virus and Wuhan virus. According to the numbers of a database website Factbase, President Trump used the expression of "Chinese virus" at least 34 times in the social media between March 18 and October 27 (Factbase, 2020). After his first tweet including the word "Chinese Virus" that is mentioned in the previous section, Trump used the term so many times in his tweets. On March 18, 2020, against the criticisms towards him he posted another tweet saying that he treated the China virus very seriously from the very beginning of the process:

> "I always treated the Chinese Virus very seriously, and have done a very good job from the beginning, including my very early decision to close the "borders" from China against the wishes of almost all. Many lives were saved" (Twitter, 2020).

In another tweet on July 21 Tuesday with a black-and-white photograph of himself with a mask on his face, U.S President Donald Trump used the word China Virus:

> "We are United in our effort to defeat the Invisible China Virus, and many people say it is Patriotic to wear a face mask when you can't socially distance. There is nobody more patriotic than me, your favorite President!" (Twitter,2020).

In a tweet he posted in March 17, the US President repeated "Chinese Virus" word as a response to the criticism from Governor of New York, Andrew Cuomo:

> "Cuomo wants "all states to be treated the same." But all states aren't the same. Some are hit hard by the Chinese Virus, some are being hit practically not at all. New York is a very big "hotspot", West Virginia has, thus far, zero cases. Andrew, keep politics out of it…" (Twitter, 2020).

The word "Chinese Virus" in this tweet is used by referring to a certain geographical location and identity of a nationality that provokes a racist association between the virus and China. Pro-Trump political discourse in the United States during COVID-19 pandemic is based on stigmatization by the xenophobic terms. The same attitude is reflected to Twitter account of President Trump. U.S President's expression of the coronavirus pandemic in his social media account by equating it to a certain national identity (Chinese) and using a discriminatory language also led to

the use of those othering expressions with hashtags in social media (#Chinavirus, #Wuhanvirus ,#Kungflu) by public users. Therefore, anti-Chinese discourse of othering is reproduced and constructed by President Trump by directing a certain nationality as the "other" for the coronavirus pandemic

In a press conference at March 18, 2020, Trump also defended his words and criticisms after a journalist directly asked him why he called the virus as the "Chinese flu" and about reports of discriminated and prejudiced acts in the United States against Asian communities:

"Because it comes from China. It's not racist at all, not at all. It comes from China. That's why. It comes from China. I want to be accurate" (VOX,2020).

Another example of Trump's othering approach is when he held his press briefing (Youtube, 2020) in White House garden. When White House correspondent of CBS reporter Weijia Jiang who has a Chinese origin asked him about why he sees dealing with COVID-19 as a matter for the global competition when everyday Americans still losing their lives and more cases are seen. Although Trump did not directly respond the question by using any of the words as Chinese virus, China virus or Wuhan virus, he replied that the journalist should ask this question China:

"Well, they are losing their lives everywhere in the world and maybe that's a question you should ask China. Don't ask me, ask China that question…".

When the president then called on another reporter to ask a question, CBS reporter interrupted and said;

"Sir, why are you saying that to me, specifically?",

The president replied as:

"I am not saying that it specifically to anybody, I am saying to anybody who specifically ask a nasty question like that".

Jiang continued:

"That's not a nasty question, why does it matter".

Considering the dialogue between the Asian American reporter and President Trump, he accused for being racist with such attitudes that leads to dangerous scapegoating that feeds a racist prejudice and a widespread ignorance of Asian communities (The Guardian, 2020). In addition to Trump's use of word Chinese virus, it's seen some of his defenders refer to the history of naming pandemics that relied on disease's place or origin. Another example of the use of discriminatory and othering word is of Senator Chuck Grassley form Republican Party. In March 18, 2020, he tweeted as:

> "I don't understand why China gets upset but we refer to the virus that originated there the "Chinese virus", Spain never got upset when we referred to the Spanish flu in 1918&1919" (Twitter, 2020).

Another example of using the phrase "China virus" was seen in a more interesting incident; in final 2020 United States debate as President Donald Trump and Joe Biden faced off and discussed over the coronavirus pandemic, immigration and foreign policy. The matter was Trump's claim on Biden's handling of swine flu. Attacking on Joe Biden over his handling of H1N1 epidemic "poorly for the Obama administration" as he called as a "total disaster" (Cnn,2020). After the debate he again posted a new tweets including the phrase "China virus". On September 3, he criticized Joe Biden for sitting back in his basement and doing nothing:

> "Sleepy Joe Hiden' was acknowledged by his own people to have done a terrible job on a much easier situation, H1N1 Swine Flu. The OBiden Administration failed badly on this, &now he sits back in his basement and criticizes every move me make on the China virus. DOING GREAT JOB!". (Twitter, 2020).

On September 18,2020, he tweeted that he did a "very incredible job" with the "China virus" than Biden did with the Swine Flu pandemic in 2009:

> "Biden FAILED BADLY with the Swine Flu. It was the Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight". He did not have a clue. We have a done an incredible job with the much tougher China Virus!" (New York Times, 2021).

As the term China virus reflects a "geopolitical hostility" of president Trump, anti-Asian sentiment is used for the presidential election campaign to applaud the Trump's administration response to the coronavirus pandemic; a damaging rhetoric leading to unfair perceptions towards Asian Americans.

One of the latest example of the power of media about the consolidation of Trump's anti- Chinese discourse was right after presidential debate that took place in September 30, 2020, when President Donald Trump and the former Vice President Joe Biden Jr., the democratic nominee faced off their electoral campaign. After two days of electoral campaign debate of two rivals, President Trump revealed that he and first lady Melania Trump had tested positive for the coronavirus (New York Times, 2020). More strikingly, according to a report by a civil right association, Anti-Defamation League Center on Extremism, there was eighty-five percent increase in anti-Chinese rhetoric and conspiracy theories on Twitter were observed right after Trump announced his and first lady Melania Trump's COVID-19 diagnosis on twitter (The Washington Post, 2020). Following this, since COVID-19 is portrayed as a disease that belongs to the "other", just right after disease's diagnosis on President Trump, Asian-American people were exposed to the discourse of "paying the price of the virus". Asian American

people were hold responsible and became the other one who is damaging the rest, the "self".

As the role of media influence is critical as an empirical assessment of the prejudice and othering practice, increasing use of discriminatory terminology particularly in conservative media representators were surging. A famous example of a pronounced use of the othering language directing Chinese people exists in The Federalist, an American, conservative online magazine. The online magazine which publishes various opinion writings on culture, politics and religion used statements in line with President Trump's anti-Chinese discourse of COVID-19 pandemic. Although almost eight months passed since the beginning of the spread of the virus, continuing use of the words China virus, Wuhan virus or Chinese virus in this magazine's articles reflects the power of mass media in re-constructing "othering" rhetoric. In all the title examples, the discourse is constructed on blaming a certain nationality (Chinese) via discriminating the "other" one who is distant and damaging. Here, Wuhan and China are distant places and they have potential to harm the "self"; vis-a-via the United States. Othering rhetoric via China virus and Wuhan virus statements are constructed through directing against people of Asian geography. The term "novel Wuhan virus" was used in many of the articles written on coronavirus from March 2020 to October 2020 in The Federalist magazine. As is seen in Figure 1, the article titles taken from The Federalist's website the subject of coronavirus was described as Wuhan virus and Chinese virus words.

Figure 1: The Federalist's titles of using the words Wuhan Virus and Chinese Virus

Anti-Chinese discourse does not only take form in using the words Kung Flu, Chinese virus or Wuhan virus. The narrative is also represented in the form of conspiracy theories about the claim that virus is "laboratory-made" in China. Following figure is taken from American Action News, a pro-Trump, conservative news website.

Figure 5: China's "Secret" Biolab in Wuhan

Source: American Action News, 2020

Throughout the article of the picture above, high level security and biological weapon production potential of BioSafety Level-4 (BSL-4) laboratories in Wuhan is mentioned (American Action News, 2020). In the end of the article, anti-Chinese discourse takes a narration form with supporting the opinion of President Trump about the Chinese origin of the virus:

President Trump is right to emphasize the Chinese origins of this novel coronavirus. The world needs to demand openness and transparency from the Chinese regime, and much more oversight and investigation into the Wuhan biolab, and its planned network of sister labs (American Action News, 2020).

Another example is from *"Big League Politics"*, a news site that is also using a likely Trump rhetoric when it comes to coronavirus. Instead of using a neutral language, news about coronavirus in the website is posted with the words China virus and Wuhan virus. Three of the articles published in Big League Politics used the terms "China virus outbreak, contracting China virus and Wuhan virus malfeasance" (Big League Politics, 2020). Not only, Trump, but also pro-Trump conservative media have instrumentalized the virus by appealing to racializing language conspiracy theories.

A latest result of Trump's othering and divisive rhetoric is the insurrection at U.S Capitol that took place at January 6th 2021. It was the storming of the United States Capitol that was a riot and attack against the United States Congress at the U.S Capitol. The riot was carried out pro-Trump supporters as a part of 2020-2021 US Presidential elections. The incidents were mainly caused by the opposition to the results of the 2020 United States Presidential Elections. The chaos occurred just right after Trump repeated his claims that the election had been rigged (The Guardian, 2021). A large crowd gathered at the Capitol in Washington DC on the day that lawmakers were about to sign Joe Biden's electoral victory. More interestingly, riots at U.S Capitol had sinister symbols as "a man walking the halls of Congress carrying a Confederate flag (AP News, 2021). The riots of U.S Capitol on January 6 was framed around the concepts of white Supremacy and far right-extremism that open up a way towards an ethno-nationalist ideological stance regarding not directly Donald Trump, but that he appealed to. In that case, Trump becomes the expression of the attitudes of loyalty and preference to a particular ethnic group and holding views from nativism to xenophobic attitudes.

Conclusion

The fact that the world has been continuing to be deadly affected by novel coronavirus that first came out of Wuhan city of China and the fact that the virus was attributed to the Chinese people by putting a blame on a certain nationality through a discriminatory discourse brought the re-construction of self/other distinction back to the agenda. This process of re-construction manifested itself as "the people who suffered and died during the pandemic period (the self or in group) and the damaging and hostile China and Chinese people who caused the virus (the other or out-group). At this point, the role of the media was an important variable. On social media, tags such as #ChineseVirus, #Chinavirus, #Wuhanvirus and #Kungflu became trend topics. Using these tags and sending discriminatory tweets by targeting Chinese people reinforced the re-construction of the othering

discourse. The expression of "China virus" was first used by the United States President Donald Trump. This statement spread to the masses through the media, and by using Chinese virus phrase Trump constructed a negative discourse of COVID-19 pandemic. It is not only president Trump but also his supporters from conservative media used the othering rhetoric by racializing COVID-19 as Chinese virus. The main purpose of this paper is to reveal that COVID-19 pandemic was instrumentalized by the president Trump for the re-construction of othering discourse. China virus rhetoric of Trump portrayed COVID-19 as a virus that comes from a damaging other (China), emphasizing to develop a social representation of an out-group as us vs. them, self vs. other. Negative attributions and stereotypes in different societies are provoked in the time a pandemic crisis and Trump obviously has jumped on the chance to build a new discourse against China by racializing a world pandemic.

In addition to the reinforcement of othering discourse in social media, marginalizing rhetoric also updated its influence on the international agenda. Such that, according to Fernand de Varennes, the UN Special Reporter on minority issues, in addition to the health crisis that COVID-19 pandemic, racism and marginalization especially towards Asian communities have intensified exclusion and hatred. Although the epidemic empirically increased racist and discriminatory discourse, it was also observed that xenophobia, discrimination and marginalization experienced by individuals and communities with different language, religion and culture in different countries of the world, especially during the pandemic increased. However, othering rhetoric by world leaders and attacks on social media is not limited to Asian communities or Asian descent people. The use of Islamophobic hashtags in Twitter as #Coronajihad which first posted by Indian users became a targeted harassment against Muslims and used and allowed by India's governing party and spread to other social media platforms. Combining the spread of a universal fear of coronavirus with a tension that is a subject of race, nationality and religion continues to unleash a wave of hate, scapegoating and at the end a practice of othering. As Donald Trump and his administration regularly used a rhetoric that put a blame on Chinese communities, this othering practice had consequences for US politics. In general, the fact that COVID-19 pandemic became a practice of marginalizing and discrimination through discourse indicates that not only Asian descent societies, but also the identities that are exposed to discrimination in different geographies of the world are going to be continuing to be stigmatized through a riveted marginalizing rhetoric.

The most obvious and expected result of the use of othering language by Donald Trump targeting Asian communities has already been reinforced with his loss of U.S presidential election. The current US President Joe Biden has already flashed a light on banning the use of abusive and discriminatory language against Asian-American communities with reference to COVID-19 pandemic. Biden's approach and directives to

combat discriminatory practices and racism against Asian communities regarding COVID-19 is resulted with an assigned executive action directing federal agencies to struggle with xenophobia against Asian-American communities. It is also obvious that Trump's use of racist and othering language related to COVID-19, has encouraged vigilantes and police violence, and led to insurrection at the end of his term in White House. Unlike his predecessor, President Joe Biden, has already put an emphasis on combatting racism, xenophobia, and intolerance against Asian Americans including references to COVID-19 pandemic. Biden's move to deal with Trump's legacy of othering discourse and practices against Asian-American communities during COVID-19 pandemic signs an important step to decrease already existing polarization and more focus on civil right protections.

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