

**TR  
YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
MASTERS OF SCIENCE PROGRAMME**

**MASTER'S THESIS**

**NEGOTIATING STYLE: HEADSCARF AND  
CULTURAL VISIBILITY IN URBAN TURKEY**

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**THESIS ADVISOR  
ASST. PROF. KEREM KARAOSMANOĞLU**

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## ABSTRACT

### NEGOTIATING STYLE: HEADSCARF AND CULTURAL VISIBILITY IN URBAN TURKEY

Prepared by **Emine Merve Korkmaz**

**March, 2017**

Ever since Muslim women started to be visible with their headscarves in urban life, they became an essential topic for several controversies. The discussions usually centered around various causes and motives on using the headscarf ranging from religion, urbanization, modernization, migration, conservatism etc. Today, the main discussion topic is on visibility and choices of clothing. There are diverse interpretations on headscarved women and as long as differences are present, discussions are not going to end. Yet, headscarved women have different stories and each dispute causes new and transformed voices to emerge. The purpose of this study is to illustrate difference within the narratives of headscarved women in urban Turkey and understand them “from inside” as much as possible. This study is based on a qualitative methodological approach and relies on twelve semi-structured interviews in order to meet this ethnographic agenda. After an examination of the interviews, three separate, but interrelated narratives emerged. I differentiated the three narratives using the following themes: ‘appearance and fashion’, ‘representation and change’, ‘criticism’, and ‘self and other’. The themes analysed in this study highlight the complexity of the discussion of headscarved women. Most of the analyses on headscarved women evaluate the current situation as if it is frozen in time and by focusing on the increasing visibility of the headscarf in public sphere as part of a political agenda in one way or another. Whereas in this study I emphasize the need to engage with individual experiences and stories in order to reflect and analyse the complexity of the issue by highlighting the element of change. My argument is that headscarved women are different individuals changing through urban life. In this context, I aim to demonstrate the diversity within fractions of identities from elapsing experiences.

**Keywords:** Headscarf, headscarved women, change, diversity, appearance, fashion, identity

## ÖZ

### TARZI MÜZAKERE ETMEK: KENTSEL TÜRKİYE’DE BAŞÖRTÜSÜ VE KÜLTÜREL GÖRÜNÜRLÜK

Hazırlayan **Emine Merve Korkmaz**

**Mart, 2017**

Müslüman kadınlar başörtüleriyle kent hayatında görünür olmaya başladığından beri çeşitli tartışmaların merkezinde yer almışlardır. Genellikle bu tartışmalarda başörtüsü kullanmanın sebep ve motivasyonları din, kentleşme, modernleşme, göç, muhafazakarlık gibi konular ile birlikte ele alınmıştır. Bugün ise genel tartışma konusu görünürlük ve giyim tercihleri üzerinedir. Başörtülü kadınlar üzerine muhtelif yorumlar vardır ve farklılıklar var olduğu sürece bu tartışmalar sona ermeyecektir. Fakat başörtülü kadınların farklı hikayeleri vardır ve her bir tartışma yeni ve dönüşmüş seslerin ortaya çıkmasına sebep olmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, kentsel Türkiye’deki başörtülü kadınların anlatıları aracılığıyla farklılıkları göstermek ve onları olabildiğince “içeriden” bir bakışla anlamaya çalışmaktır. Bu çalışma nitel araştırma yöntemine göre hazırlanmış ve etnografik gündemi elde etmek amacıyla on iki yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat yapılmıştır. Mülakatların incelenmesinin ardından ayrı, ama birbirleriyle ilişkili üç anlatı ortaya çıkmıştır. ‘Görünüm ve moda’, ‘temsil ve değişim’, ‘eleştiri’ ve ‘ben ve öteki’ temalarıyla üç anlatı birbirinden ayrıştırılmıştır. Bu çalışmada analiz edilen temalar başörtülü kadın tartışmasının karmaşıklığına dikkat çekmektedir. Başörtülü kadınlar hakkındaki analizlerin çoğu o durumu sanki zaman içerisinde sabitmiş gibi ve başörtüsünün kamusal alanda artan görünürlüğüne tek ya da farklı yönde siyasi gündemin bir parçasıymış gibi ele almaktadır. Halbuki ben bu çalışmada değişim etkenine odaklanarak meselenin karmaşıklığını yansıtmak ve analiz etmek için bireysel deneyim ve hikayelerle hareket etmenin gerekliliğine vurgu yapıyorum. Böylelikle, başörtülü kadınların kent hayatında değişmekte olan birbirinden farklı bireyler olduklarını savunuyorum. Bu bağlamda amacım, akışkan deneyimlerdeki çeşitliliği kimlik kesitleri ile göstermektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Başörtüsü, başörtülü kadınlar, değişim, çeşitlilik, görünüm, moda, kimlik

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# **1. INTRODUCTION: RESEARCHING HEADSCARF**

## **1.1. The Headscarf Between Religion and Culture**

Headscarf has been a controversial issue in Turkey. While discussions around this topic have been political, religious, or cultural; the only topic that has not changed is headscarved women themselves. Undoubtedly, the reason for the discussion in society and politics is related to the ‘visibility’ of headscarf. Every generation of headscarved women are confronted with criticisms. Sometimes it comes as a ‘requirement’, sometimes as a ‘warning’. Society says what they should do or what they should not; even the state had warned those women to have ‘proper’ attire. In other words, headscarved women are confronted with different respondents and remarks. However, there is not a homogeneous group of headscarved women; even if these women are included in the arguments/disputes they all have different and individual stories and each new dispute causes women to transform.

In modern cities, people are free to choose and practise their own belief. The heterogeneity of cities is one of the main features of the city that helps people to protect and continue their way of living. Sometimes belief becomes visible in social life as long as religious requirements reshape the appearances of people. Similarly, in Turkey, the headscarf is known as the most visible religious requirement of Islam for Muslim women. Headscarf for Muslim women is a dynamic part of *tesettür* which will be explained in detail below. Practising and style of *tesettür* and headscarf have been changing along with the changing urban life.

In this thesis, my aim is to understand the subjects’ point of view, their intentions, their opinions and thoughts towards headscarf. I argue that looking at this topic from one lens will lead to confusion and misconceptions. This is because headscarved women became individuals today, who construct their identity with personal experiences. In this sense, dealing with differences will give us comprehension. Therefore, my purpose is to grasp the complexity and demonstrate

the difficulty of understanding headscarved women as a homogeneous group of people.

### 1.1.1. Key Concepts

In order to understand this topic the definitions and the use of concepts related to headscarf, some key terms will be explained. There are many different concepts that describe several ways of *tesettür*. Some of these concepts refer to Islamic interpretation while some are created culturally by local interpretation and culture. One needs to be careful for the use of key terms. The definition of the key terms and the use of these words in certain contexts need to be distinguished in order to avoid confusion and misinterpretation. Therefore, first we will have a look at the relevant concepts that will be used in this study.

In Islam, *tesettür* is accepted as an obligation for Muslim women. This is also written in the *Kuran*<sup>1</sup>. According to Islam, women's presence in social life should be within her *tesettür*. The concept of *tesettür* refers to covering of the body with loose clothing. The face and hands do not need to be covered. Also, a scarf to cover the hair and neck should be used. In addition to this, *tesettür* is originally from the Arabic word which means covering/hiding; but in Arabic and Arabic speaking societies people use different words, such as *hijab*, *niqab*, etc. which refers to different practises. Therefore, in this context we will explain and use this concept with its interpretation in Turkey.<sup>2</sup>

These connotations of the concept also include the individual modesty, humbleness, and good morals. So therefore *tesettür* concept, and headscarved women who belong to the *tesettür* concept are thus different. This definition is the consequence of an interpretation by the society. So it is the view of the society that *tesettür* requires Islamically appropriate attire as well as the 'proper' behaviour and attitude which is compatible with Islamic morality. Its "aim is to construct the

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<sup>1</sup> "O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves [part] of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is God Forgiving and Merciful." **The Qur'an**, 33:59.

"And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests..." **The Qur'an**, 24:31.

<sup>2</sup> There are indeed diverse interpretations of *Kuran* and *tesettür* verses. I tried to explain common knowledge of *tesettür* in Turkish society. Therefore, I did not prefer to explain *tesettür* within theological/academic interpretations in order to engage it with its usage in daily life.

consciousness of privacy”<sup>3</sup>. In other words, *tesettür* is associated with having full implementation of Islamic attire; being a Muslim who has Islamic morality, and obeying to the other Islamic requirements as much as possible.

However, ‘headscarf’ refers to a piece of cloth that is used to cover the hair and neck. Its size, shape and colour depend on women’s choice. Headscarf is a part of *tesettür* and it has been a symbol of woman in *tesettür*. And also, there is a saying of ‘headscarved woman’ to refer to Muslim women. If we think the cause of the saying ‘headscarved woman’, we see the use of this term as being urban; and being subject of some political discussions. These connotations of headscarf and headscarved women will be explained in detail in the third subtitle of this chapter.

On the other hand, these definitions depend on personal point of views to some extent. For instance, İlyasoğlu<sup>4</sup> defines *tesettür* within popular appearance of headscarved women in the 1990’s:

It requires the complete concealing of the hair, the bosom, the arms, the legs, and the curvatures of the body. The outdoor attire that follows these principles typically includes wearing a loose and long raincoat that is accompanied by a large scarf that tightly frames the face and wraps the hair, shoulders, and the chest.

As well as İlyasoğlu, White describes *tesettür* in a similar way. But she also emphasizes that “it is a political symbol that unified members of the Islamist movement and Welfare Party [Refah Partisi]”<sup>5</sup>. White makes this description based on her interviews with women who have belonged to that particular party. But it seems that these definitions remained in the past. Now, there is a vast range of *tesettür* clothing. It cannot be explained with long coat and wide scarves at all. Instead, there is a general assumption that *tesettür* is about covering and morality or in other words understanding of Islamic principles.

In Turkey, women usually use the concept of ‘covering’ (*örtünmek, kapanmak*) to tell the act of having headscarf on her hair. So therefore, ‘being covered’<sup>6</sup> and

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<sup>3</sup> Altan Murat Ünal, “Mahremiyet Algısı Değişiyor mu?”, *Nisa Dergisi*, s.159 (2013): 13.

<sup>4</sup> Aynur İlyasoğlu, “Islamist Women in Turkey: Their Identity and Self-Image”, **Deconstructing Images of “The Turkish Woman”**, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 244.

<sup>5</sup> Jenny White, “The Islamic Paradox”, **Fragments of Culture: The Everyday of Modern Turkey**, (London: I. B. Tauris & Co Publishers, 2002), 213.

<sup>6</sup> As the word ‘covered’ is using for headscarved women, the word ‘open’ is generally using for the ‘uncovered’ women in Turkish. In this study I prefer to use ‘uncovered’ for the women who do not practice the Islamic headscarf. The reason for I prefer this is because I believe that it is a way of saying and the ‘covered’ woman is the main subject of this study.

‘being in *tesettür*’ refers to different statements even though the difference is unimportant. Moreover, being covered or headscarved is a form; while *tesettür* refers to more than the form. Whether it is Islamic or not, for instance, some Muslims expect a woman in *tesettür* should not speak and laugh loudly; should not be harmful to people; should be sensitive of her worship as well as her modest appearance.

Due to the fact that, some people consider a headscarved woman differently in some cases she makes ‘mistakes’ or does not apply *tesettür* the right way. This is because ‘society’ has some expectations from women in *tesettür*. For instance Ravza, one of the interviewees of this study, says that “I think, to consider one who does not pray as headscarved is not true”. She expects headscarved women to do other Islamic obligations. Being headscarved is more worthy if one practises all requirements. Similar sayings are common in society. On the other hand, this lets some women hesitate while describing themselves Islamically.

For instance, Esra Seziş Kiğılı<sup>7</sup> asserts in her interview: “I don’t say that I’m in *tesettür*, I say I’m covered. *Tesettür* has a wider meaning... I think I don’t fit its rules, therefore I am covered”<sup>8</sup>. Sometimes her appearance and job can be a subject of discussion. Some would argue her suggestions related to her job whether these are appropriate to Islam. Or her style could be judge as not Islamic enough. Therefore, it seems, she emphasizes that she is ‘covered’, to protect herself from criticism for her ‘weak’ application of Islamic rules.

### 1.1.2. The Issue of Diversity

In societies people are organized in groups and classified in categories. This is because they have common interests and they are regarded as having something in common. “A group may be identified by the outsider analysing a society, or it may be labelled by the members of the society and so form a category in system of their ideas.”<sup>9</sup> The common aim of having headscarf is an acceptance of obeying Allah’s commandment. The visibility of this Islamic practice exposes a particular ‘Islamic’

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<sup>7</sup> Esra Seziş Kiğılı is fashion, style and colour consultant. There are some other headscarved stylists, designers or consultants for *tesettür*. However, she is the first headscarved fashion editor and style consultant. Kiğılı’s job was argued whether it is acceptable for Islam among Muslims. Because of this discussions and her success in this area, she is a well-known consultant especially for headscarved women.

<sup>8</sup> 32. Gün: Tesettür Modası. [07.11.2016]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvITqzmuEu0>

<sup>9</sup> Lucy Mair, **An Introduction to Social Anthropology**, (New York: Oxford University Press: 1972), 54.

lifestyle in the society. The naming of ‘headscarved woman’ is, therefore, used to refer Muslim woman who practises this.

However, some claim that it is an unfair categorization that can dismiss different abilities and characters of women. For instance, according to Nazife Şişman this concept put limits on these women. Moreover, the researches on headscarved women make these women an anthropological and sociological object and this makes Şişman uncomfortable.<sup>10</sup> Şişman makes emphasis on difference, however, commonalities and similarities of the same experience in urban life make ‘headscarved women’ as a group that has been discussed a few decades now. That is to say, description of ‘headscarved woman’ has become a reference for Muslim woman who is wearing differently from the rural, and has urban ‘consciousness’ of Islam. And today, even some hesitate to use it to generalize women unfairly most of the people prefer to use this subconsciously. In addition to this, as it is similar in Mair’s words above, we will see this categorization by the members in some interviews of this study.

Beside the descriptions and definitions of *tesettür* and headscarf, even if the name of this practise is common, the application seems different. It has both religious and cultural dimensions. Firstly, one could suggest that, the reason for the variable understanding of *tesettür* and different appearances of headscarved women is the absence of the certain borders and rules for *tesettür* and its availability of making different interpretations in Islam. In other words, there are some verses for *tesettür* or headscarf that Muslims have a consensus on it. But the way people interpret this commandment is diverse.

Secondly, in addition to religious/Islamic interpretation, Muslim women practise this commandment similar to the way they interpret Islam in their culture. In other words, millions of Muslim women prefer to cover their hair and body according to verses in the *Kuran*; however, its details such as form, colour, and shape have been differentiated by cultures and even personal interpretations. On the other hand, culture has been a dynamic concept which is difficult to refer to a constant entity in this thesis. For instance, we cannot speak about the ‘Turkish style’ of

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<sup>10</sup> Nazife Şişman, **Başörtüsü: Sınırsız Dünyanın Yeni Sınırı**, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2009), 9-10.

covering or headscarf due to its changeability. This study is based on the idea of reproduction of cultural practises.

It is generally accepted that this Islamic obligation refers to covering the body except the face, hands, and feet; however, there are also women who cover her body entirely, including the face and hands. Or there are women who interpret *tesettür* as black clothing only. These practises vary in accordance with the way they interpret the commandment. But interpretations of particular society/community sometimes become their 'culture' in the end. On the other hand, there are women whose hair are visible under the headscarf; have colourful attire; have transparent dress; have their legs visible and so forth. One of these choices mentioned above can be a 'wrong' interpretation or practise for another women. Consequently, one could suggest that the different variety of interpretations and applications stems from cultural differences. The source is 'one' and same (i.e. there is only one *Kuran*), but the applications of it are different.

Because of the different interpretations for Islamic clothing, women in *tesettür* can be observed differently among geographies and cultures. Headscarved women have their unique type of *tesettür*, prevalent colours, patterns, and borders in every country/culture. On the other hand, today, we cannot talk about the one and prevalent traditional *tesettür/tesettür* style of particular country/culture. Beside changes and differences inside of a particular culture (i.e. rural-urban, young-old) mass communication, especially its increasing effect by the internet, and transportation has made it easy to exchange appearances, styles and habits. Therefore, one could suggest that the particular Muslim societies in the world have different tendencies besides their own traditions.

All these varieties of styles and choices stem from the need of people, geographical conditions, cultural heritages, tastes, and seeking for difference. Seeking for difference is popular among the youth because of the youth's openness to change. In addition the internet has made this process quicker. Today we observe that headscarved young women do learn and practise attire and types of covering from other cultures via internet and indeed from social media. It seems that this movement has made headscarved women look similar to each other in a sense; but in fact, it also carries the potential to bring about constant change and emphasize cultural differences.

So how have headscarved women been exposed to (negative) commentaries despite all these differences? How can we speak about headscarved women together with difference and change? “Essentialism assumes that words have stable referents and that social categories reflect an essential underlying identity. By this token there would be stable truths to be found and an essence of, for example, femininity or black identity.” However, language does not have stable referents, and therefore it cannot be represented by fixed identities. For this reason, anti-essentialism points to truth or identity “as being not universals of nature but productions of culture in specific times and places. The speaking subject is dependent on the prior existence of discursive positions... Truth and identity are not fixed objects but are regulated ways that we speak about the world or ourselves.”<sup>11</sup> Despite mentioned differences of being headscarved women, in an essentialist way, identities’ discursive feature sometimes neglected. Therefore, headscarved women’s changing of experiences and reproduction of self are more relevant to anthropology. This study aims to approach headscarved women in a similar way.

## **1.2. Coping with Diversity and Contextualizing Difference**

It is easy for headscarved women to be the subject of discussions in several matters. But indeed, most of them centers around their appearance and visibility. Their choices of style, choice of clothing, makeup choice are some of the topics. Modern urban life reshapes individual’s attire and appearance; however, this situation is becoming more special and sensitive for headscarved women, especially in terms of appearance that attract direct attention. The appearances of women are judged on various levels. These judgements range from whether it is ‘Islamically appropriate’ to whether it is ‘fashionable enough’.

There are differentiated social groups in urban life and “no single group has the undivided allegiance of the individual.” According to Wirth, an individual has social interaction among variable personality types. This makes rigid differentiation vague. “By virtue of his different interests arising out of different aspects of social life, the individual acquires membership in widely divergent groups, each of which functions

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<sup>11</sup> Chris Barker, Emma A. Jane, **Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice**, (Glasgow: Sage Publications, 2016), 23-24.

only with reference to a certain segment of his personality.”<sup>12</sup> Because of this, one could suggest that ‘headscarved women’ refers to a social group; however, urban life does not let social groups marginal or isolated. Their other interactions in the urban life compose unlimited choices and experiences. The complexity of urban life demonstrates the pluralist side and heterogeneity of it. Thus, to what extent is it possible to evaluate/determine the way of living for headscarved women?

In one section of her book Cihan Aktaş inquires the haphazard naming and attributes. According to her, people would restrict the perceptions by ‘naming’. He or she makes ‘categorizations’; these are making through cognitive and periodic limitations. “In the above case the common acceptance of a perception which had been dominant in some way, people who accept sharp categorizations would stagger”. There has been experiencing the similar confusion about headscarved women as well.<sup>13</sup> That is to say, headscarved women might be considered in some categorizations which were made through relevant limitations. For instance they might be considered as people who belong to the ‘traditional style’. But if one sees an activist headscarved woman advocating a ‘secular’ cause, this would be surprising for many. Therefore in cases where headscarved women are considered as ‘different’ or ‘peculiar’, this may create confusion.

Who is a headscarved woman? What does she do? What does she wear? In spite of the heterogeneity of urban life and the increase of individualism, sometimes one does not hesitate to categorize headscarved women. The religious requirement stems from one and divine but the different and vast implementations are due to different experiences. And this is due to the changing and diverse feature of people. But still, almost all headscarved women have been criticized in terms of the perception of ‘headscarved’. It seems that everyone has a certain view of how headscarved women should be. This could be about appearance, attire, morality, and even particular gestures used. Furthermore, people who do not account Islam as a way of life would criticize headscarved women in respect of fashion or appearance. Still, if we compound all criticisms, we cannot see one, ideal, common stereotype of

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<sup>12</sup> Louis Wirth, “Urbanism as a Way of Life”, **Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities** (ed. Richard Sennett), (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), 156.

<sup>13</sup> Cihan Aktaş, **Bacıdan Bayana: İslamcı Kadınların Kamusal Alan Tecrübesi**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2014), 189.

‘accepted/ideal’ headscarved woman. What one group consider as ‘corrupted’; another group would consider as ‘radical’.

When one evaluates the discussions and experiences, the following simple conclusion could be made: differences have created choice and choice has created shortcuts. These shortcuts and exchanges have in turn created change. Sometimes change cannot be acceptable by society. And therefore, changes can be controversial for society; people may start to criticise changes. However, we should not dismiss the fact that people are changing in time whether they want it or not.

We have mentioned that *tesettür* does not have definite and straightforward definition/boundary in religion. In addition to this we have also noted that shortcuts to choice were rooted in cultural interpretations. Thus one could suggest that *tesettür*'s undefined boundary has led to vast and different comments and this in turn has led to Muslim women being exposed to criticisms. For instance some decide how Muslim women should be and should do.

There are several examples of criticisms and categorizations. For instance if a headscarved woman preferred to wear loose clothing, she would be considered as ‘traditionalist’; if she preferred to wear black, she would be ‘political Islamist’; if she preferred to follow fashion, has make up and wears modern/trendy clothing, she would be considered ‘corrupt’... It seems a headscarved woman hears or faces such comments frequently. There is no doubt that she cannot easily escape from these criticisms.

On the other hand, religious people, both women and men, might also criticize each other. Within the Islamic community, headscarved women’s appearance and attire has always been an issue of discussion. The discussion about its appropriation to Islam is continuous. They compare attire with the past. Aktaş’s comparisons and remarks on this matter is a good example that illustrates the reactions made:<sup>14</sup>

We compare the seeking of being different or deficiency and weakness reflects coming out of the hesitation of the being at the bottom of the ladder with the expressions that reflect modesty and the *takva*<sup>15</sup> of young girls who walk around the city to *tebliğ*<sup>16</sup> with their long coats and wide scarves that we remember in the beginning of 80’s. However those veiled women would

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<sup>14</sup> Cihan Aktaş, **İslamcılık: Eksik Olan Artık Başka bir şey**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2014), 202.

<sup>15</sup> *Takva* is an Arabic word refers to avoiding from sins and prohibitions of Allah; and willing to have good/better deeds. It suggests the ultimate willing of becoming better for the sake of God.

<sup>16</sup> *Tebliğ* is conveying people to Islam. Indeed, this term refers to call people to be better Muslims in a cultural/Turkish context.

also confront with the condemnation whether they have colourful and patterned headscarf, high-heeled shoes, and long coat with slit.

*Comparison* is definitely an important measurement for all time. The newly formed phenomenon can be compared to the old. It is the way of gaining information in a sense. Another kind of comparison is among the new generation and old generation. The common expression made by people is: 'It was not the same in our times'. If we look at headscarf criticisms within this perspective, we see that the in-group criticism of religious Muslims is between the new or young and the old.

Being headscarved in the public sphere is itself a way of self-assertion; women participate in crowded places with their headscarves feel the need to express their own personality and identity. We observe that individuals and masses sometimes reflect similarity because of the apparent commonalities. Or they reflect diversity of personalities, culture, fashion, and socio- economic status. We can also observe variety of practises from *distinction*. "Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed."<sup>17</sup> In this sense, one could suggest that the new appearances and change occurred from these are related with the distinctions headscarved women made. The possible reasons and ways of being distinctive will be explained in next sections. After all, there are some women who want to resemble each other by being fashionable; but also some prefer to be distinct or marginal in terms of stylishness. There are headscarved women who have distinct styles such as rocker, ethnic/bohemian, hipster... In fact, these choices reflect the characteristics of urban life.

In order to grasp the diversity, we will refer to some theories and concepts. Firstly, Pierre Bourdieu's concepts are going to be examined to be able to accommodate the issue widely. Bourdieu theorizes "human sociality as the outcome of the strategic action of individuals". Within the concept that he coined, 'the *habitus*', he asserts that we reproduce the social conditions which is simultaneously structured and structuring. It is "an acquired system of generative schemes

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<sup>17</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, **Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste**, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1996), 6.

objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted”<sup>18</sup>. “It involves practices, systems and rules picked up by ‘habit.’” These are gathered and built from family and home, education, work and other social environments. It affects our understanding of the world and relates our social position. However, “the habitus is not a prison; it determines options to an extent, but allows for the possibility of individual mobility.”<sup>19</sup>

In relation to this concept, Bourdieu extends the concept capital, which seen as purely economic in Marxism, to include the cultural. According to him, economic capital is still central to social power and class divisions; but *cultural capital* has also an important role. “An ‘agent’, or player in the game, may possess both, or one, or neither, and the complex interplay of these two forces... determines the agent’s ‘life chances.’” “In Bourdieu’s research, habitus provides a system of classification which enables him to identify specific aesthetic ‘lifestyle’ choices, or ‘tastes’, with class positions; through the habitus, the distribution of capital is transformed into recognizable qualities and practices.”<sup>20</sup> That is to say, in his best-known work, *Distinction*, “he contends that the culture of living (lifestyle, etc.) is a significant area of struggle between social groups and classes.”<sup>21</sup> Bourdieu argues how we use consumption for purposes of social distinction. Within this argument, he highlights the relation between the consumption and distinction.

The concept of consumption is ambivalent since it gains new meaning through each new analyses and interpretations. First using of the concept, it had negative connotations such as to destroy, to waste, to completely use up... ‘The consumer’ had also unfavorable connotation as well as the consuming until contrasting with ‘the producer’; they became neutral. Then, conceptualization by economists “explicitly as the satisfaction of human needs through economic means” changes its neutral connotation to the positive. Nevertheless, there are more discussions made about the several ways of consumption in modern societies.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Andrew Milner and Jeff Browitt cited from Pierre Bourdieu, **Contemporary Cultural Theory**, (London: Routledge, 2002), 87.

<sup>19</sup> Will Brooker, **Cultural Studies**, (London: Hodder&Stoughton, 1998), 90-91.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 90-91.

<sup>21</sup> John Storey, **Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture: Theories and Methods**, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 115.

<sup>22</sup> Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg, Meagan Morris (edt.), **New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society**, (Oxford: Blachwell Publishing, 2005), 58.

According to Bourdieu, the consumption of culture is “predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfil a social function of legitimating social differences.” He emphasises that the dominant class uses the culture to ensure its reproduction. In other words, “the making of cultural distinctions secures and legitimates forms of power and domination.”<sup>23</sup> Bourdieu argues this with identifying tastes. For instance, he characterised legitimate taste as ‘aesthetic disposition’ which asserts the ‘absolute primacy of form over the function’. This implies a claim to “legitimate superiority over those who... remain dominated by ordinary interests and urgencies”.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to Bourdieu’s new approach to consumption as an active process which differentiates tastes and classes, there are more discussions about the creative part of consumption in cultural studies. Consumption becomes fully visible in cultural studies “in work on how subcultures appropriate commodities to produce alternative and oppositional meanings.”<sup>25</sup> It was argued that audiences are “active producers of meaning from within their own cultural contexts.”<sup>26</sup> Therefore, it is accepted that audiences are not passive consumers or masses; and consumption is not a passive process. Rather, it is a “creative and productive process, concerned with pleasure, identity and the production of meaning.”<sup>27</sup> Productivity of consuming process analysed with solutions of youth subcultures: Phil Cohen “contends that youth subcultures are an attempt to solve problems experienced by the parent culture.” They “communicate through acts of consumption.”<sup>28</sup> This communication is done through style as Hebdige argues. But, before the explaining these concepts we will go through the relation with the headscarved women.

In Turkey, the headscarf has both religious and traditional meanings. Basically, headscarf is not a new thing, but styles are new and this makes them more visible. Its process of becoming more visible until recently is going to be told in next section. Nonetheless, headscarved women’s styles’ relation with ‘the parent culture’ has to be evaluated with some cultural theories. For instance, Bourdieu’s habitus and cultural capital can be useful to understand the conflict between the secular and Islamic

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<sup>23</sup> John Storey cited from Bourdieu, *Ibid*, 115-116.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Milner and Jeff Browitt cited from Pierre Bourdieu, **Contemporary Cultural Theory**, (London: Routledge, 2002), 88.

<sup>25</sup> Storey, *Ibid*, 113.

<sup>26</sup> Chris Barker, **Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice**, (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 430.

<sup>27</sup> Storey, *Ibid*, 98.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 117-119.

section. In the construction of the new nation-state, secularism would transmit through practices as well as institutions. And the presentation of woman with her attire became an ideological indicator of modern and secular citizen. This can be evaluated as an adaptation of secular habitus.<sup>29</sup> In this way, headscarved women would face with the secular habitus; whether it is for overcome or adaptation. This facing has been experienced in various levels through the past; however, all reflect the ‘resistance’ and new ‘styles’ to be emerged. On the other hand, it should be noted that this approach has limitations. Bourdieu is useful to the extent that it helps to understand the class dynamics within a Muslim culture, but it is not enough. There are also generational differences as well as different Islamic groups. That is to say, there are more dimensions which go beyond these concepts. In this sense, we will continue to the argument within *youth* and *style*.

In struggle with the secular habitus in public institutions, headscarved women would try to find solutions. As we mentioned previously, the headscarf is an old item in this culture, but its new forms and styles which started to be seen frequently in urban life were new. Finding solutions to dominant culture, such as the headscarf ban in universities and public institutions, made them subordinated. The common discourse of headscarved women says in response to the ban, ‘half of the women are headscarved in Turkey!’ that is, being headscarved would not mean being a minority. But its struggle with the power/secular state was making them ‘marginal’. On the other hand, new styles and solutions have been discussed in cultural studies within the youth subculture. Using of the concept ‘subculture’ for headscarved women may be doubtful, but the relation between their experiences and the other concepts of subculture is crucial. It seems to me that, headscarved women’s style has something to do with ‘the solution’. Therefore, I will discuss this issue with subcultural consumption.

The concept of subculture is used as “distinctiveness and different from the dominant or mainstream society.”<sup>30</sup> Subcultures are also considered as youth’s solutions to the structural problems of class which observed in British subculture examples. Analysing subcultural practices, there are some concepts that applied to describe their preferred cultural item and surrounding. For instance, the concept of

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<sup>29</sup> Didem Arvas Balta, **Modernite İçinde Bir İnanç Deneyimi: Örtünme**, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2014), 42.

<sup>30</sup> Chris Barker, **Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice**, (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 410.

*homology* refers to the cultural symbols and styles, and the social values of social group. “The creativity and cultural responses of groups are not random but expressive of social contradictions.” There are ‘meanings’ coherent with the practise. According to Willis, “subcultures live out important criticisms and insights into contemporary capitalism and its culture.” Therefore, their creative, expressive and symbolic work can be seen as forms of resistance.<sup>31</sup>

Dick Hebdige interrogates style as a signifying system. Style has meanings; and this displays a *resistance* to the dominant order. “Youth subcultures communicate their distinct identity and their difference from and in opposition to peer, parent and dominant cultures through a politics of style.”<sup>32</sup> Style constitutes a group identity. This is making through the signification of difference. Moreover, “through a process of *bricolage*, subcultures appropriate for their own purposes and meanings the commodities commercially provided.”<sup>33</sup> It is the transformation of a familiar item in subversive meanings. In this way, a symbol acquires a new meaning and gives difference to the group members. On the other hand, “these subgroups were not operating outside ‘mainstream’ culture... Hebdige reveals a more subtle relation between dominant and subculture... a process not just of reaction but of *negotiation*.”<sup>34</sup> Consequently, style cannot be seen as merely opposite reaction to the dominant culture; there is also a negotiation coming through an interaction.

New appearances of headscarved women in urban life can be easily connecting with increasing welfare, and thus, consumption. If we only consider the negative side of the consumption (if we assume that non-productivity makes masses similar) we would see similar masses periodically change. However, there is variety and rapid change that is difficult to classify as a sort of consumption trend or habit. New appearances have more dimensions to interpret. If we go through the past we have the opportunity to see turning points for new styles. For instance, in the 1990’s, headscarved women’s style would have seen like this: a long, loose coat (*pardesü*) with pastel coloured wide scarf that covers head and shoulders. But, as time passes the look became partially or totally different from the past. What could be a reason for this? Can we explain the change with only one aspect?

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 412-413.

<sup>32</sup> John Storey, **Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture: Theories and Methods**, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 120.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 119-120.

<sup>34</sup> Will Brooker, **Cultural Studies**, (London: Hodder&Stoughton, 1998), 66.

When one thinks about the causes of new trends, interesting details emerge. For instance, young women were seeking many solutions and tactics to enter the university while the headscarf ban was in force. For instance some of these women were wearing a hat or wig. In some schools/departments students were covering their head with a hat and their necks with scarves. This was done to resemble a headscarf (although this solution was not allowed by some schools or professors). Students resorted to such solutions or tactics so that they followed the ban by not actually wearing a headscarf and at the same time their head/hair was not visible. That is to say, the purpose of using a hat was not for protecting themselves from cold; this was done for finding a solution. It was a resistance. People would understand that this look symbolizes ‘the headscarf’. In this sense, this solution can be considered as a *bricolage*; but without the subversion of the original meaning. In other words, the item was used with another purpose. But there is no need to seek deep meanings or underlying messages. It was done only for the solution.

While the students were searching for personal solutions for headscarf ban, both their covering and clothing styles have changed. Solutions and trying to be invisible in school had led them to have new appearances. According to Barbarosoğlu, during the ban, students in order to hide the fact that they were covered, created a loose and comfortable trend. Thus, they reproduced new styles and strategies.<sup>35</sup> In addition to this, she says, “as the opponents of headscarf concentrated more on styles, the number of covering styles increased and new styles emerged.”<sup>36</sup> That is to say, when headscarved women were confronted with criticisms or negative comments on their covering and clothing styles, they found new styles to deal with. Nevertheless, this change cannot be read by only as a resistance to ‘the secular habitus’, there are two different resistances for different ways. The second resistance is inside of the community: young women wanted to be different from the old generations by appearance. Some of them did not want to resemble with their mothers or grandmothers in terms of taste and style. Within the modern face of the city, and indeed, within new solutions in schools, young headscarved women had new appearances and styles.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 80- 81.

<sup>36</sup> Fatma Barbarosoğlu, *Şov ve Mahrem*, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2006), 65.

On the other hand, because the young headscarved women did not want to have old-style attire, they have started to purchase clothes from famous fast-fashion companies and brands. Some of them prefer to wear these trendy clothes rather than clothes designed especially for *tesettür*. Neither Muslim woman nor *tesettür* clothing was the primary target for those global brands. But headscarved women in Turkey, as some of the rest of the world Muslims, started to combine them in accordance to their necessities and tastes. This can be considered as a *negotiation* by Muslim women for having a trendy and Muslim appearance all together.

The concept of ‘*türban* ban’ was being used instead of ‘headscarf ban’ in politics and the media. According to this approach, headscarf was a traditional, cultural form of covering; *türban* was a political symbol. To explain clearly, headscarf was tolerated to some extent if the covering of headscarf/*yazma/yaşmak/tülbent*<sup>37</sup> was worn in a traditional way (for instance some hair is visible). But young students, especially in the cities who wrapped the headscarf widely and wore long coats were associated with political Islam. This particular style was considered as a new ‘trend’ that emphasised a particular political point of view. Therefore, the word *türban* was associated with the religious community. The concept of *türban* symbolizes the assumption that women/students have political motivations but not Islamic. But those that were ‘wearing a *türban*’ were not happy with this association. The majority of these women believed that *tesettür* (clothing) came from the past and therefore seeing the (concept of) *türban* as something that is developed/created, as a response to a movement is wrong.

A headscarf with particular choice of materials and covering styles in the city was called *türban*. This had a political connotation. On the other hand, Muslim women and men did not separate the Islamic covering as traditional or modern; but claimed *türban* was another thing altogether. *Türban* was a style that covered the hair only while the neck was visible. Also it was not Islamic because it was not proper form of covering. However, interestingly there are some headscarved women that do cover their hair in *türban* style today. This is also preferred in wedding and engagement ceremonies. It is more common in social media users from other countries as well. One could suggest that *türban* emerged again as a new trend. But

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<sup>37</sup> These are different names for the similar square cotton scarves in different parts of Turkey.

this time it was a 'real' trend. The generational change is the reason for this new trend, the second coming of *türban*.

These examples are very impressive to apprehend the consistence and changing of styles. It does not allow the people approach these issues from one perspective. It might have multiple meanings. We have mentioned to the new meaning of hat at the time the headscarf was assumed that it had a dominant political symbol. To some this was an undesirable solution for the ban. However, today we see some headscarved women who use a hat (without a headscarf) to be fashionable, some use this during winter or even use this for skiing. Hats are still used by headscarved women, but the meaning or the purpose has inverted again. Moreover, *türban* was not 'an actual' item; it was a political discourse. But today it is a style, there is no political concern attached. Style, it is now argued in post-modern world, "involves bricolage without reference to the meanings of originals. Style has no underlying message or ironic transformation. It is the look and the only look."<sup>38</sup> One could suggest that headscarved women created style and difference while they were seeking solutions to the secular habitus as well as looking for a new out of the traditional. Different practises would be seen as a resistance, but today, it is difficult to distinguish the different. There are various styles. In the end, headscarved women experience new styles which do not follow a predictable way. Now, their style is difficult to consider with a meaning. Now that change is intertwined with the style, it becomes more complex to separate them.

Beside the examination of the variety, distinctiveness, and the reason of criticisms of headscarved women in society, it will be beneficial to grasp the transformation and experiences of (headscarved) individuals and masses up to now. One could suggest that this historical process shapes the society. When it is about the presence of headscarved women in public sphere, we inevitably should mention the situation of these women in the Republic of Turkey. The headscarf has been very controversial especially in the 1990's agenda. This is because the modern republic was intolerant to Islamic symbols (indeed headscarf) through the nation-building process while simultaneously replacing the old regime.

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<sup>38</sup> Chris Barker, **Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice**, (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 428.

### 1.3. Being Headscarved in Turkey

The new republic had been created by changing both the legislations/ideology and lifestyles of the society. There was a range of changes for becoming the new modern state. However, the most effective changes were aimed for people's mentality and lifestyles. There was an encouragement for citizens to be educated, enlightened, modern citizens with a modern appearance. But in this process, woman became the visible face of modern lifestyle. There was an ideal of western/modern female citizen. This was to be successful, hard-working, enlightened and ambitious with modern/western appearance. On the other hand, there was a limitation for the creation of modern Turkish women. Modern appearance interpreted in a certain way: "virtues suppressed women's individuality."<sup>39</sup> In other words, there were some requirements for the change, but they would be in a determined way.

In order to adopt the new modern ideology or lifestyle to people, religious life had been aimed to be restricted in private lives in the beginning of the new republic. The practising and understanding of religion was accepted as something traditional and backward. Therefore, the issue was the identity for Muslims in those times. Those who wanted to live as Muslims had to embrace their own identities. This was done against the modern, secular lifestyle which dictated them.

On the other hand, to analyse the headscarf's relation with the secular lifestyle and its controversy, we should consider the visibility of headscarf. The Islamic tradition of headscarf has been practising differently among women who live in different regions of Turkey for a long time. As we mentioned above, the implementation of the same practice seem different. And therefore, we see several practices and different headscarf styles in rural parts.

It seems that the reaction to the Islamic symbols as a headscarf is about its presence in the city (and public places); however intervention of the state to the Islamic dress can be seen before the urbanization of masses before the 1970's or 1980's. For instance, in the beginning of the new republic, there was an attempt to remove the black veil. There was even a campaign advocating that religious women

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<sup>39</sup> Ayşe Kadioğlu, "The Headscarf Controversy: The Headscarf and Citizenship in Turkey", <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2008/04/23/the-headscarf-and-citizenship-in-turkey/> [10.10.2016]

should wear a coat instead of black veil<sup>40</sup>. Today, the preference of wearing black veil is rare, whereas in the past black veil was the preferred attire in some sections of the country, especially in city centres.

The urban is a place that allows people to think about deeply on both forms and motivations; and allows experiencing new, different styles and choices. And within the increase of migration to the cities, modern veiling styles had occurred around the 1960's. Appearances of Muslim women in cities were changing. This is because their needs in clothing were changing. Now along with the clothes being appropriate Islamically, women were also looking for comfortable, chic clothes as well.

As time passes, young women started to wear *pardesü*<sup>41</sup>; and Islamic dress became more common with headscarf and *pardesü*. Nevertheless, some *seculars*<sup>42</sup> were not contented with that; they would not like coats anymore. Because, Aktaş says, "their real opposition was not to dressing style but the understanding of Islamic *tesettür* represented by that clothing".<sup>43</sup> And headscarf had been an obstacle to ideology of the state when it became 'more' visible with young women studying in universities.

Before the headscarf discussions increased by the headscarf ban in universities, we should focus on the motives of Muslims in those years. As long as the state removed the Islamic/religious teachings from education system, Muslims were trying to continue Islamic education though small/large groups, communities and conversation cycles. Within the researches and Islamic readings people were becoming more 'conscious' in terms of interpretation and practising Islam. On the other hand, these people were also confronted with secular/modern institutions and surroundings of urban life.

In 1980's an important mission was to understand and practise Islam.<sup>44</sup> Muslims would like to live within Islamic principles in spite of modernization of life

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<sup>40</sup> Cihan Aktaş, **Tanzimat'tan 12 Mart'a Kılık- Kıyafet ve İktidar**, 2. Baskı (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2006), 283.

<sup>41</sup> *Pardesü* is a long coat that has been common for Muslim women in *tesettür* about a few decades. It is a western type of clothing, however masses accept this because it is enough appropriate for *tesettür*. *Pardesüs* were more popular in 1980's and 1990's than today.

<sup>42</sup> Indeed the concept of secularization is apart from religion; in this study it is going to be used to call people who does not privilege Islam in their life style and also not familiar with the Muslim community in society. It will be used as a category of cultural lifestyle.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 316.

<sup>44</sup> Cihan Aktaş, **İslamcılık: Eksik olan artık başka bir şey**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2014), 10.

styles. In other words, especially in 1980's we see 'conscious' Muslim men and women which were also active in social life. Headscarved woman also had a challenge to express herself in front of traditional Islam as well as the secular lifestyle. They were very passionate to live in the way that they had learned as 'conscious' Muslims. "The era of starting to be effective and visible of Islamic movements in public sphere is the 1980's". Çayır says that the 1980's are the years that Islamic intellectuals were writing critical pieces. This included both the traditional Islam on the one hand; and westernisation and secularisation of the Kemalist modernisation movement/process on the other.<sup>45</sup> In those years, Islamic novels were becoming popular and effective on people's life.

The new secular and Islamically educated Muslim women became visible and active in social life, in contrast to traditional Muslim woman in their 'homes'<sup>46</sup>. Their visibility in public sphere and universities was increased. "The seculars felt that they obliged to fight with all symbols that represent Islamic values in the name of democracy, because the basis of the modern nation-state seems questioned. In this fight, especially headscarf had been a satisfying and strategic target". Moreover, Özdalga<sup>47</sup> asserts that the covering of young women whom had a good university education and career effected modernity 'negatively'. And this was also one of the main reasons for headscarf discussion in Turkish politics. This conflict reached its peak during the headscarf ban.

Nilüfer Göle also describes the 'feeling' of people who are not comfortable with the presence of headscarved women in city centres:<sup>48</sup>

Traditionally, nobody is disturbed by the image of 'religious grandmother' or suburban veiled women. Headscarf in universities and a black veil in cities (especially women's) accelerate the reactions up to the disgust level. The sharing of same places with different casts' bodies is going to be the end of purity.

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<sup>45</sup> Kenan Çayır, **Türkiye'de İslamcılık ve İslami Edebiyat**, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2008), 6.

<sup>46</sup> Being/sitting at home has two connotations in both religious and cultural discourse. First one depends on a religious source that advice sitting at home for Muslim woman. This is criticized by new 'conscious Muslims' as it is a traditional interpretation that is not valid today. Second one is religious people asserts that secular people/secular state wants to see Muslim woman (who is not compatible with the modern appearance of modern secular state) sitting at her home instead of being successfully active in the public sphere. 'Conscious', new headscarved women want to reproduce both perceptions by being active in every aspects of the social life.

<sup>47</sup> Elisabeth Özdalga, "Kadınlık, Onur ve İman/ İslamcı Bir Kadının Hayat Hikayesi Üzerine Düşünceler", **İslamcılığın Türkiye Seyri/ Sosyolojik Bir Perspektif**, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006), 202.

<sup>48</sup> Nilüfer Göle, **Melez Desenler**, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2008), 91.

The clothing of woman which is a vital symbol in Turkey is constituted on the differentiation, addressing to modernity on the basis of identities, or showing reaction. Thus, it can be observed that the clothing of woman released itself within identity and identity politics.<sup>49</sup> In this sense, the headscarf issue can be seen in this light as well. In addition to this, the conflict between both secular and Islamic circles about woman's appearance is well described and evaluated by Göle:

The milestone of orientation to Western civilization was the visibility of women and leaving her private sphere. On the one hand, woman was a measure of civilization; on the other hand woman was guard of the community. Women being covered were considered by the westerns as an obstacle to 'modernisation'. In the eyes of Islamists/fundamentalists it was a significant barrier to 'corruption'.<sup>50</sup>

The headscarf ban is all about the presence of Islamic headscarf in the public places (i.e. university, public institutions). And this could be one of the reasons why headscarf is more controversial and a symbol for Muslim women. Or, during those days the agenda was to interpret the headscarf as a symbol for political Islam, the headscarf might have been a symbol to initiate the discussions/ban. The new urban appearance and its political consequences are effective on the image of the headscarved woman. Therefore, one could suggest that with the ban discussions, headscarf or being headscarved started to become a label for Muslim woman.

The headscarf ban in university was applied in the 1980 for the first time, but headscarved women were effected by this ban until a few years ago. It was banned in primary schools, elementary schools, high schools, and universities. To have a position in public sector with a headscarf was banned; being a student in public schools was also prohibited. It has been a difficult struggle to end headscarf ban for both students and workers. And the ban had gradually started to end towards the 2010's. In the end of the long and tiring process, the ban was over in 2013. Between those years, sometimes young women were in comfort; sometimes they experienced strict rules and bans. In some places the ban was lifted and in other places it was not. There were mixed appliances of the regulation. Therefore, headscarved women experienced different struggles both socially and personally.

Understanding the effectiveness of headscarf ban is going to be beneficial to comprehend this process and young headscarf women. Beside the changes from

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<sup>49</sup> Aynur İlyasoğlu, **Örtülü Kimlik**, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1994), 120.

<sup>50</sup> Nilüfer Göle, **Modern Mahrem**, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2010), 76.

1980's, Muslim women writers agree on the effectiveness of headscarf ban on the headscarved students. For instance Nazife Şişman<sup>51</sup> asserts that headscarved young girls constructed their identities by being 'rejected'. It seems that, 'being rejected' led headscarved women to initiate some changes on her. According to Aktaş, because of the exhaustion caused by headscarf ban, there is a tendency to feel and present oneself more distinctive and unique than the 'other headscarved women'<sup>52</sup>

Headscarved Muslim women were struggling with the bans especially in the 1990's. Simultaneously, within the urbanization process women were changing in terms of understanding and appearance. For instance, according to Aktaş, Muslims were trying to remove the signifiers of being 'rural'. They became open to exchange these signifiers to be 'more urban' in the 1990's<sup>53</sup>. "Many acceptions, trends, entertainment styles and hobbies was rejected and underrated by connecting the bourgeois lifestyle in the 1970's. But in the 1990's it was read as a sign of personal chrominance, preference and richness."<sup>54</sup> Moreover, according to Barbarosoğlu, one of the most controversial issues of 1970's was 'the visibility of Muslim woman'. But in the 1990's, 'appearance with the most chic way' has taken the place of the visibility issue<sup>55</sup>. (Figure 1 illustrates an advertisement of a *Tesettür* brand that shows a chic headscarved woman)

From the 1970's and 1980's to the 1990's, the only thing that changed is not only about appearance; discourses are transformed as well. In other words, becoming 'aware and conscious' Muslims was reshaping the discourses of women. For instance, the veiling was defended by verses and *hadises*<sup>56</sup> in those years. And also, in the 1980's, headscarved women were prioritising their study in order to learn, practise and teach their religion better. Motivations could be explained by Islamic discourses.

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<sup>51</sup> Nazife Şişman, **Emanetten Mülke Kadın Bedeninin Yeniden İnşası**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2013), 187-188.

<sup>52</sup> Aktaş, *Ibid*, 165.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, 67.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 71.

<sup>55</sup> Fatma Barbarosoğlu, **İmaj ve Takva**, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2009), 96.

<sup>56</sup> *Hadises* are the expressions of Prophet Muhammed as accepted the significant resource of Islam.



**Figure 1: A *Tesettür* Clothing Billboard is in the Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen Airport**

However, it was possible to refer to the ‘women rights’ and the ‘discrimination of women’ by the second half of the 1990’s. The Islamic discourse transformed to more secular/modern discourse. Women were demanding their ‘rights’ within modern terminology. One could suggest that it became a ‘self-fulfilment’. This was a personal reaction to the secular regime’s definition of them as they had deserved to be ‘alienated’.<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, discourse of rights had been initiating the dialogue between the secular and Muslims in order to ‘understand’ each other. Muslim women have been discussing that they were also effected from the solidarity of the ‘other’ during the ban years. One could suggest that, the changing of terminology occurred from both solidarity and feeling to defend herself in a ‘modern/acceptable’ way.

In the 1990’s, “the ‘participation’ concept had taken the place of ‘representation’ concept of 80’s.”<sup>58</sup> Muslims had started to deal with modern and urban features of lifestyle. This new searching for the new lifestyle naturally effected the individual. Participation to social life in many levels occurred simultaneously with being more individual in contrast to the past. The ‘representation’ of Islamic community had become secondary because the ‘participation’ of Muslim individuals

<sup>57</sup> Fatma Barbarosoğlu, *Şov ve Mahrem*, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2006), 44.

<sup>58</sup> Kenan Çayır, “Gökkuşuğu İstanbul Kadın Platformu”, *İslam’ın Yeni Kamusal Yüzleri* (edt. Nilüfer Göle), (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2000), 66.

was privileged today. Aktaş explains the change on priorities in the 1990's within their willingness to be dissociated from the offensive Islamic images that were created by the media.<sup>59</sup>

The reason for the change of discourses and approaches to some issues is because religious/headscarved women were confronted with some reactions that have effected their lives. "The power struggle which was conducted over the visibility of women's body and the pressure of veiling that was used to construct secularism had forced women to think about themselves and led to question the social codes deeply."<sup>60</sup> In the name of modernity headscarved women faced obstacles. On the other hand, headscarf in the public sphere was "a new fact that Islamic sects were forced to re-think the role of women."<sup>61</sup>

We had mentioned the changing discourse of headscarved women. New issues due to new experiences had let women to change their thoughts and create new approaches. Accordingly, headscarved women have made critiques about themselves and their community. Therefore, first discussions around Islamic feminism had occurred in the 1990's. There are different approaches in this discussion. For instance, Muslim women declare their 'independence' from the 'representation of Islam' by Muslim men. In the February 28 process, women had a realization the 'invisibility of Muslim men' while they confronted discrimination everywhere. They would not enter any public places to learn or service in contrast to Muslim men who did not have 'Islamic appearance'. Therefore that idea led some women to manifest themselves to represent the 'individual'.

When we reached the 2010's the headscarf ban issue was going to the end. Visibility of headscarf, at least as 'political', had no longer been an issue for some who were worried before; and headscarved women have started to be even more active. Today we come across these women in various areas and with various ideas. However, new discussions around headscarved woman still continue. It seems that, as long as new criticisms are 'still' done for headscarved women, reflective self-critiques are going to continue by educated women.

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<sup>59</sup> Cihan Aktaş, **İslamcılık: Eksik Olan Artık Başka bir şey**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2014), 61.

<sup>60</sup> Yıldız Ramazanoğlu, "Cumhuriyet'in Dindar Kadınları", **İslamcılık**, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 811.

<sup>61</sup> Cihan Aktaş, "Cemaatten Kamusal Alana İslamcı Kadınlar", **İslamcılık**, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 829-830.

In recent years it is apparent that all tendencies and approaches are converted to individualistic views of headscarved women. In 2014, a Muslim women blog, *Reçel Blog* has emerged as a continuity of this approach. In this blog, bloggers and guest bloggers are writing on different fields mostly around being woman. And they discuss issues of women such as motherhood, womanhood, masculinity, sisterhood, feminism, headscarf, representation, housewife, working women, marriage, house, relationships, society, solidarity, education, Muslim men, abuse, family relations, woman in academy, social life, visibility and so on. Sometimes bloggers write about common matters for all; sometimes share their unique and shocking experiences. But most of them become topics for further discussions; each attempt to find solutions for issues leads to ask new questions. Through this productive environment, especially Muslim women find a place going beyond the controversies and contributing 'change'. On the other hand, some blamed them for being feminist and *Reçel Blog* responded that there are some bloggers who define themselves as feminist, and some that do not. They also criticise the negative use of the concept of feminism. It seems, even if it does not represent all Muslim women in the urban setting, this blog can help understand Muslim women issues.

Excerpts from the blog can also illustrate the recent discussions among Muslims. One of the bloggers seeks in her article the representation of men; and criticizes them in terms of judgements on women. And she concludes her article with this expression: "I and many other headscarved Muslim women would like to represent only ourselves from now on; you can take the responsibility of representing Islam gentlemen."<sup>62</sup> In another article, a blogger questions whether representation exists. This no doubt leads to further questions/disputes. She complains that every behaviour, attitude, event, or even profile pictures and their comments written in social media have been criticized by 'some people'. They compare the 'corrupted' new headscarved women with the women of the struggle days of headscarf ban. They (people) ask 'did the headscarf fight led to this?' She thinks that people compare the struggles and should stop this race. Everyone has their own struggle in their life.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Nebiye. "Bayrak mıdır Başörtüsü?", <http://recel-blog.com/bayrak-midir-basortusu/> [29.12.2015].

<sup>63</sup> Huri. "Mücadelede Değer Hiyerarşisi Olur mu?", <http://recel-blog.com/mucadelede-deger-hiyerarşisi-olur-mu/> [29.12.2015].

We are familiar with the concept of the *tesettür* fashion from the 1990's, but today the new styles and changes of headscarved young women are still criticized. It seems that the criticisms over headscarved young generations are about how 'Islamic' they are. In other words, they discuss the appropriation of styles. They make statements and rules for them, 'what should be' and 'what should not be' as covered and uncovered women; Muslim men or secular men... They argue the appropriation of scarves of women and even their level of being Muslim. But something is missing: social and cultural change. And, "Muslims are seen as fractions that should not be changed although the society changing."<sup>64</sup> If we consider in the narrowest sense, Muslim women are seen as they should not change while society changes.

About the in-group reactions for the 'new' headscarved young women is probably about the feeling of common representation of 'good' in terms of rightness of religion. In other words, as we could say it to the all changes through the past: "Any disparity request might be regarded as a threat against the collective spirit that must exist in the community."<sup>65</sup> There is a sense of alienation to the new, especially from the 'old' generations, and it lets them to condemnation and dissatisfaction.

#### 1.4. Visibility, Presence and Fashion

Several designer brands notably create their *tesettür* designs for Muslim women. This is probably because of the growing Islamic fashion industry. "The latest Global Islamic Economy report suggests that worldwide spending on Muslim clothing is projected to grow to \$327 billion by 2020, up from \$230 billion in 2014."<sup>66</sup> For instance, *Dolce & Gabbana* has become the latest designer brand to release 'modest range'. In addition, *H&M* also hired its first headscarved model for advertisement campaign<sup>67</sup>. It seems that designing fashionable pieces for Muslim women have grown in popularity. One could even suggest that Muslim women have

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<sup>64</sup> Cihan Aktaş, **İslamcılık: Eksik olan artık başka bir şey**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2014), 183.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>66</sup> Riada Ašimović Akyol, "Muslim conservatives unveil anger at Turkey's Modest Fashion Week", <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/05/turkey-istanbul-islamic-fashion-week-splits-conservatives.html#ixzz49wN0mrqF> [27.05.2016].

<sup>67</sup> Annabel Fenwick Elliott, "H&M's hijab-wearing model: Fashion industry is changing", <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3250863/H-M-features-Muslim-model-hijab-claims-women-cover-heads-usually-ignored-fashion-world.html> [27.05.2016]

become target consumers in the global fashion industry. This group is a new and profitable target for the global high-street brands.

On the other hand, Muslim populated countries have already established industries for *tesettür* clothing. Kuwait, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar are the most influential countries for this industry as well as Turkey. In Turkey, *tesettür* fashion had been a headline in 1990's for the first time. It is still expanding. *Tesettür* fashion influencers aim to have Istanbul as the capital of *tesettür* fashion.

For instance, 'Istanbul Modest Fashion Week' (Figure 2 illustrates the poster of the event) was organised by an online retailer for Muslim fashion in Turkey. *Tesettür* fashion shows were organised in Turkey before. But it was the first international event in Turkey that met famous designers, bloggers, and influencers. 20 years ago the concept of *tesettür* fashion and the industry of *tesettür* fashion were disputable; but today, it has become a huge market and thus became more 'debatable' in contrast to those days.



Figure 2: A Poster of the *Istanbul Modest Fashion Week*

Simultaneously there was a protest outside of the event. Some columnists had written critical pieces about the event and on-going discussions about appearances of Muslim women. (Figure 3 illustrates one of the examples of criticisms towards the fashion week in the media). There were some negative reactions in the social media as well. These reactions are now very familiar to the headscarved or criticized women. The protest over the event had only happened last year. Last year there was another *tesettür* parade that was criticized a lot. In 2012, Turkey's first *tesettür* fashion magazine, *Âlâ Dergisi*, was criticized on the grounds that it had 'nothing to do with' Islam. In addition to this it was criticised for encouraging consumers to consume more: "When we look inside the [*tesettür*] fashion magazines, we see an encouragement of 'unnecessary' consumption tendency that apart from need and becoming a signifier of status."<sup>68</sup>



Figure 3: A Headline of a Daily Newspaper that Harshly Criticizes the Fashion Week.

<sup>68</sup> Yunus Polat's interview with Alev Erkilet in "Alev Erkilet ile Mahremiyet, Moda ve Aile Üzerine", *Nida Magazine*, S. 159 (Mayıs- Haziran 2013): 23.

The criticism of appearances of Muslim women, who are more visible in social life makes some people furious. For instance, Hacer Aydın tells that she is disturbed by the criticisms and insulting approaches of men or women in her article that she wrote after a fashion parade which has also attracted huge criticisms. According to her, Muslim woman is recreating herself as an identity. She also defends headscarved women's criticized appearances because it is important to be perceived positively in the public sphere:

Headscarved Muslim woman participates in public sphere and gives an ontological struggle, so she would not exist in public sphere within her grandma's dresses and would only be a victim. An urbanized, educated veiled woman has renewed with her clothing. She has created her fashion. She has opened her boutiques. She has published her fashion magazines.<sup>69</sup>

The phrase of 'Grandma's dresses' that Aydın uses in her response is a common saying among headscarved women. It has been generally used to explain the change on clothing and covering styles of headscarved women. 'Young women do not want to be a headscarved like her grandma' or 'I do not want to be covered/dressed as my grandma'. This attempt to distinguish themselves from old generation might be associated with Dick Hebdige's interpretation of style: "Youth subcultures communicate their distinct identity and their difference from and in opposition to peer, parent and dominant cultures through a politics of style."<sup>70</sup>

It is generally accepted that the consumption started to be priority in Muslim's lives since the liberal economy politics influenced the market. Barbarosoğlu asserts that, "day to day things have now been created as 'Islamic' this has no doubt opened the doors for both producers and Muslim consumers."<sup>71</sup> In addition to this, according to White, within this change Muslims preferred to buy and use these for being distinct from seculars: "Islamists have come to identify themselves as such by buying and using things distinct from those used by secularists."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Hacer Aydın, "Süslümanım Elhamdulillah", <http://www.sivildusunce.com/yazilar/352-suslumanim-elhamdulillah.html#.VU70wRMBVcu.facebook> [29.12.2015]

<sup>70</sup> Dick Hebdige cited from John Storey, **Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture**, (Athens: Georgia University Press, 1996) 120.

<sup>71</sup> Fatma Barbarosoğlu, **İmaj ve Takva**, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2009), 96.

<sup>72</sup> Yael-Navaro Yashin, "The Market for Identities: Buying and Selling Secularity and Islam", **Faces of the State/ Secularism and Public Life in Turkey**, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), 112.

These statements suggest that Muslims produce and prefer to use Islamic (labelled) things. However, we see that Muslims started to prefer global brands in their clothing or other choices. This is in contrast to the past. Sometimes preferring Muslim labelled things and brands are perceived as ‘old-fashioned’. There are some headscarved women who perceive the use of modern products, clothes, or accessorizes according to their Islamic understanding as more pleasing. One can be happy, confident and feel trendy to have clothes that cover her body in accordance to *tesettür*, especially if it is purchased from a well-known global brand.

On the other hand, the increasing choices of wearing famous, high-street brands, have also given rise to *tesettür* clothing boutiques. There are limited pieces for Islamic dresses with high price. These are very popular in big cities of Turkey. Muslim women also started to prefer *haute couture* (tailor made/exclusive clothing) for their ceremonies. (Figure 4 illustrates the variety of clothes for special occasions). But in the end, the choices for both *tesettür* and global brands are increasing. This is done so that women have better and chic appearances. To comprehend the motivations of headscarved women for their choices one should have a careful approach. Bourdieu’s distinction theory might be relevant for understand the issue since we mentioned the role of distinction in headscarved women’s choices and change. According to Bourdieu<sup>73</sup> consumption is used for purposes of social distinction. Also fashion satisfies the need of being differentiate, differentiation, change, and the tendency of individual distinctiveness<sup>74</sup>. Bourdieu also discusses that tastes and consumption trends are indicators of class. It should be taken into consideration for headscarved women as well. In this sense, one could suggest that new appearances and styles of headscarved women have making for distinction.

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<sup>73</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, **Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste**, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press: 1996).

<sup>74</sup> Georg Simmel, **Modern Kültürde Çatışma**, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), 106.



**Figure 4: A *Tesettür* Shop Window Shows Some Dresses For Special Days.**

On the other hand, these new trends can be associated with the interaction with European and American young Muslim women who create their own style with famous global brands. While people argue about the inappropriateness of *tesettür* fashion magazines in Turkey, social media was growing in terms of showing individuals' fashion choices simultaneously. In other words, as we will see from interviewees responses as well, these magazines are not the only influencer for the stylish headscarved women. There is a strong effect of social media trends. Thus, other headscarved young women from other countries are also modelled by headscarved women in Turkey. Young Turkish women are active in social media; they use it to see worldwide *tesettür* trends, and apply it with their interpretation of style. Fashion influencers communicate through internet and make collaborated events such as the *Istanbul Modest Fashion Week* which was mentioned above. Headscarved women get inspired by each other internationally today. Therefore, one could suggest that the reading of the 'consumption' of Muslim women for clothing can not only be explained solely through the political or historical context which only experiences the past experiences and incidents. The issue has become more complex today.

There are heated debates on the new appearance and choices of headscarved women, as well as the increase of money spent on Islamic dresses. So who is the 'respondent' for those discussions? There are criticisms on the changing perception of *tesettür* and Islamic dress, but who is 'responsible' for this? It seems that these criticisms are for the typical 'stereotype' of headscarved woman. But does this stereotype refer to a minority group of women or are there remarkable masses? What do women think about fashion?

"Dress style reflects people's aesthetic enjoyments, appreciations, economic situations and the economic class that they belong to. And what class they would like to be. In short, dressing is an iconic form of people's mentality."<sup>75</sup> According to this explanation, one could suggest that the *tesettür* clothing symbolizes the Islamic mentality of women in *tesettür*. One of the signifiers of the mentality is the way of clothing. But is it enough to understand the 'mentality'? Is it possible to create a link between appearance and mental processes of individuals? Can we understand the cause of the choice of a headscarved women or even her attitude?

When one looks over time, a lot of the clothing at some point was cause of discussions. Therefore one needs to be careful how we interpret and evaluate these discussions. For instance one year a particular clothing would have been in discussion but the following year it would be something else and next year it will be something different altogether.<sup>76</sup>

Therefore, time is an important measure to interpret the cultural changes. For instance, a long coat and widely covered headscarf reminds someone of the years of 1990's and its political climate; the young generation might think that this was modest and old-fashioned clothing style. And not even know its political connotation so much or even what it represented at the time. Moreover, today, this may not be a preferable style of clothing according to new covered young teen girls. (Figure 5 illustrates examples of common covering/headscarf styles).

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<sup>75</sup> Fatma Barbarosoğlu, **Moda ve Zihniyet**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2012), 23.

<sup>76</sup> Fred Davis, **Moda, Kültür ve Kimlik**, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1997), 18.



**Figure 5: A Building of one of the *Tesettür* Stores in Fatih District.**

### **1.5. Methodology**

Since the headscarf and headscarved women have been controversial whether it is within religious or political dimensions, this issue has always been evaluated and interpreted by researchers. As we mentioned above, the religious people started to reflect and question themselves. This was perhaps the start of the change of the religious mind-set. Those questions were asked usually from woman intellectuals who also help to create this study's framework. Some of these women are Cihan Aktaş, Yıldız Ramazanoğlu, Fatma Barbarosoğlu, Nazife Şişman and so forth. There are more influencers and thinkers, however, the names mentioned above are written especially on the headscarved/Muslim women. They have contributed immensely to this field.

On the other hand, the heated debates between religious and secular camps, also got the attention of secular women who were interested to understand and interpret on-going situation and the subjects. Those studies can be considered as ‘brave’ moves because some took negative reactions. However some of those were done to empower women studies. This was also promising and optimistic for the future. The prominent women researches on headscarved/Muslim women or headscarf are: Nilüfer Göle, Ayşe Saktanber, Aynur İlyasoğlu.

Even today, the issue is becoming more complex and it is difficult to distinguish factors of change and evaluate the ‘new’ phenomenon, those studies and researches led by women shed light on the new field data. Therefore, I have made use of these studies, in order to comprehend the roots of the issue. They were beneficial for me especially to learn and understand the past. In addition to this, I should mention the effect of the different point of views. Differences of point of views enrich the multi-dimensional comprehension and in fact enhance the ethnographic feel of the research.

Being ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’ for a study enriches the different ways of looking. They both have advantages and disadvantages which I will mention when I explain the method of this study. For instance, we can see this difference in Ayşe Saktanber’s research. In short, she had been making a research on Muslims’ practises in urban Turkey. The change on every day practises of Muslims has been evaluated differently by the researchers and the subjects. Saktanber says that “the social practise that have been evaluated as a ‘revival of Islam’ by ‘outsiders’ is understood by them [Muslims] as a ‘practising of Islam’”<sup>77</sup>. Or is it vice versa? ‘Practising of Islam’ has been understood as it is ‘revival of Islam’. Both statements have something to say important. Thus, we can say that, one should focus on the productive and bright side of different point of views. In order to adopt an anthropological outlook a sense of relativism is required.

We have mentioned contributions and studies of some researchers and intellectuals; but how the headscarf and its subjects have been evaluated in academia and literature? Studying on the headscarf/headscarf issue in academia has not been so

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<sup>77</sup> Ayşe Saktanber, “Bir Orta Sınıf Ethos’unun ve Onun Günlük Pratiğinin Oluşumu: Kentsel Türkiye’de İslam’ın Yeniden Canlandırılması”, **Mekan, Kültür, İktidar: Küreselleşen Kentlerde Yeni Kimlikler**, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), 212.

long. It is kind a new topic to have been evaluated. When we have a look at master and doctoral thesis, we see a few titles on headscarf. These are mostly about the political science and sociology and very few about feminism. While the word headscarf exchange with *tesettür*, there are a few studies on fashion and consumerist culture. Today, the headscarf analyses within fashion and social media become familiar/ frequent.

In a similar way, there are political analyses about headscarf in international context. There are some analyses by Turkish authors which held the issue in a Turkish context (headscarf ban, politics, and political parties). These studies discuss the headscarf within the tension between ‘Islamists’ and ‘Kemalists/seculars’. Other analyses are from U.S. and Europe which held issues around political, human rights&law, and a few about cultural diversity/identity. These issues occurred from an understanding or finding solutions for Muslim minorities in relevant countries. On the other hand, the remarkable increase of modest fashion industry has led some studies to be published in the UK. Professor of Cultural Studies, Reina Lewis has a book named *Modest Fashion*; Anthropologist Emma Tarlo has *Islamic Fashion and Anti-Fashion*. It seems that Muslim headscarved women have become new subjects within their *new* visibility.

Today, the issue of headscarved women have many dimensions to interpret. As we mentioned, the issue had been considered as complicated because of the headscarf ban. But now, even if the discussion around the ban is over, headscarved women are still part of the discussion. They were either voluntarily involved in the discussions or in some situations they distanced themselves. In 2010’s there were headscarved women who freely had their education, had their professions in business life, and were more active in social/urban life. The agenda is a little bit different today. Especially the young headscarved women who do not ‘know’ the past, they have different agendas. And they create their own issues regarding the necessities and situations of today. For example, one could even suggest that the internet changed the mentality of Muslims/Muslim women. The notion of the ‘privacy’ is changing; it is easy to see that the appearances and attitudes on (Islamic) clothing are going to be reshaped. This is only one aspect that demonstrates the complexity of this rapid change.

According to Aktaş, “the descriptions of headscarf, the reasons for choosing this have always been neglected in the process. Thus this will always be an incomplete process.”<sup>78</sup> As we explained in detail, the source of these practises seem the same, one and only, but the way individuals interpret the source is diverse. Choices of an individual depend on how she interprets her practise and how she interprets facts for the change. In other words, everyone has their own experiences which are determined by themselves in some aspects, and will be a basis for their future experiences. Therefore it is significant to have approaches and experiences of subjects of discussions rather than making generalizations. In order to engage with experiences which may help to comprehend current situation, interviews are going to be the main sources for this study.

This thesis is based on a qualitative- empirical approach and relies on twelve semi-structured interviews. “Interviews have several benefits to research. They allow the researcher to discover the meanings of experience that subjects create in relation to the research topics. Interviews provide rich understandings of human behaviour by providing real-life examples.”<sup>79</sup> Therefore, this thesis focuses on subjects’ explanations of their own experiences and stories on their attitudes and ideas, rather than making a general discussion about the change of headscarved women. Some “social research often ends up using the lived lives of other people to justify and prove some of the grand narratives of our times...” However, “new ethnography has sought ways of studying people’s lived lives in a way that would do better justice to the way in which the people see themselves and their worlds.”<sup>80</sup> In the similar way, the aim of this thesis is the understanding of subjects; but not to analyse the representation of headscarved women. That is to say, interviewees should not be seen as representative persons. Interviewees can be seen as some individuals who have stories that helps us to comprehend the elapsing experiences and issues. For that matter, the aim of the thesis is, exposing the subjects’ side of the controversial issues. This will shed light on the differences or similarities of opinion. The purpose is to portray the thoughts and approaches of headscarved women.

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<sup>78</sup>Aktaş, **İslamcılık/ Eksik Olan Artık Başka Birşey**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2014), 175.

<sup>79</sup> Gabriela Guazzo, “Methods: qualitative,” in William A. Darity (ed.), **International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences** (London and New York: Macmillan, 2007), 110-111.

<sup>80</sup> Paula Saukko, “New Ethnography and Understanding the Other”, **Doing Research in Cultural Studies: An Introduction to Classical and New Methodological Approaches**, (London: Sage, 2003), 57.

After examination of the interviews we see some themes that differentiate these three main approaches from each other. We will analyse the issues which create the particular approach. In the end, there were three narratives that emerged from the interviews. These are only some aspects that illustrate some tendencies and approaches of some headscarved women. This will be helpful to understand today. In addition, in order to have a glimpse of today's common headscarved women outlook, a few figures are used. They are not representative images or clothes of headscarved women. But in this fast changing era of fashion, these figures will give some idea about 2010's style.

Interviewees live in İstanbul except for one and interviews conducted in the 2015 summer. The youngest interviewee is 19 years old and the oldest interviewee is 56 years old. There are four 30 year olds. And the remaining six interviewees are aged between 20 and 30. Five of the interviewee work. Four of them do not work and can be considered as house wives and three of the interviewees are students. Four of the interviews were conducted in interviewees' offices, two of them were in my home, and rest of them were in their homes. All interviews had been done in a both comfortable and serious environment. I tried to balance between interviewees' feeling comfortable to be able to express themselves, and also getting reliable data from them. I initiated interviews with question about being headscarved woman and continued within other thematic questions. To point out the ethical concerns I would say that, I informed each interviewee about some issues before we met. For instance, interviewees have been informed that what they say may fully or partially used in the study. I used a recorder to keep the interviews for this matter. Also their real names were not used. These informations provided a confidential and relax environment for each interviewee.

All interviewees were excited and happy to be a part of such study. The interview went smooth and casual had probably something to do with the fact I was considered as an 'insider' for them. I think the fact that I was also a headscarved woman made the interview process comfortable for them. Indeed there are advantages and disadvantages of being insider. First of all, I felt that wearing a headscarf helped me because I would not have to persuade them to do the interview. As it is usual, one wonders the purpose of the research. However, these interviewees were very relaxed to share their opinions and experiences as much as possible

because I was ‘like’ them. Some of them probably thought that I might be sharing common experiences with them. I think if I was considered as an ‘outsider’, the interview would have been more ‘formal’, in terms of their responses and reactions. As I have observed, they sometimes forgot that we were in an interview and it felt like an informal chat. This is an advantage for a researcher because it allows easy access to their thoughts, experiences and attitudes.

However, there is something that would be considered as a disadvantage. When talking about similar experiences, people may use a language that is common for those issues. Especially in religious/Islamic area of discussions, there are some concepts or thoughts that one considers that they are known more or less among all counterparts. Therefore, interviews might have direct responses because they might assume that researcher does ‘understand’ in a way. In other words, interviewees would be more explanatory if researcher would be an ‘outsider’; “she or he should understand clearly”. As I have responses of interviews that help to reach my aim for this study, this cannot be considered as an important disadvantage. But, to compare both sides of being ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’, this should be noted.

**Table 1: Interviewees**

<b>Narrative</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Department</b>
<b>1</b>	Ravza	30	Executive	Marmara	Teacher Training in Ready Made Clothing
	Meryem	30	Computer Engineer	Bahçeşehir	Computer Engineering
	Sümeyye	30	Student	Karabük	Applied English and Translation
	Ebru	56	Housewife	-	-
<b>2</b>	Emine	22	Student	Üsküdar	Psychology
	Nurefşan	24	Sociologist	Selçuk	Sociology
	Eda	19	Student	İstanbul Kültür	Guidance and Psychological Counseling
	Gülsüm	20	Intern	Fatih	Business Administration
<b>3</b>	Zeliha	30	Computer Engineer	Boğaziçi	Computer Engineering
	Selin	26	Teacher	Sakarya	History
	Hülya	28	Teacher	Selçuk	Child Development and Education
	Büşra	25	Housewife	İstanbul Bilgi	Psychology

Interviewing offers a direct data for the researcher; it is the effective way to have data from the field. However, interviewees might show the performance part of identity. Goffman asserts that we all present performance in our daily life. He describes the performance as activities to impress others. In this sense, one can consider this approach especially for interviews. An interviewee might perform ‘idealized impressions’<sup>81</sup>. Questions asked in interviews were not seeking the good or best answers; however, an interviewee might responded to questions in order to give a better impression. As far as I observed participants; they mostly responded clearly. When I observed confusion or contradiction, I asked further questions which would illustrate their thoughts or attitudes better. Thus, I think being ‘insider’ had more advantages in terms of performance of identity. If researcher would be an ‘outsider’ interviewees could lean into idealized performances in order to create a positive impression.

Narratives are going to be examined in three separate chapters; and are going to be portrayed and detailed by five subtitles. Each subtitle has a constitutive feature of the relevant themes. All issues or themes form the integrity of narrative; they complement each other. However, the purpose of this thesis is to portray the stories. Therefore, no sweeping generalizations will be made; no rigid categories will be used. In addition, the differences of narratives illustrate the issues that people cannot have a consensus. In other words, the diversity in the similar topic has created different narratives. Therefore, the five sections of each narrative are sorts of themes that illustrate women’s diversity.

I conducted my interviews on controversial issues about being headscarved or on headscarved women. The themes that occurred were: representation, criticism, appearance, fashion, and duality of ‘self and other’. However, first of all, to focus on the story of individuals’ self and how they tell their life story is going to give us an idea about the narratives and approaches. Their language for discussion is also a key to the analysis. Therefore, the first part of the chapters will explore interviewees’ thoughts, opinions on *tesettür*; and their personal experiences will be included. Similarities and differences among the interviewees will also be presented. I want to share interviewees’ personal experiences to illustrate different experiences that might effect their general point of views. Interviewees are not representative characters or

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<sup>81</sup> Erving Goffman, **Günlük Yaşamda Benliğin Sunumu**, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2014), 44.

persons for the narratives. Thus, the sharing of different experiences is for the emphasis of person's individuality, that is generally richer and wider than a single narrative.

**Table 2: Narratives and Themes**

Themes	Narrative 1	Narrative 2	Narrative 3
Language/ Attitude	Interviewees focus on the <i>self-improvement</i> , personal development. They have analytical, constructive, positive, and <i>mature approach</i> . They do things for <i>God's appreciation</i> .	Interviewees have more <i>individualistic</i> responses. Their common purpose is being successful in <i>career</i> . Very comfortable to speak about themselves.	Interviewees focus on the <i>other headscarved women</i> more than themselves. They have a <i>complaining</i> and <i>didactic</i> language.
Criticism	Instead of criticising and blaming, interviewees prefer to <i>understand and help</i> people who do not practise as they do. <i>Tolerated</i> language for the new or other way of lifestyle.	Interviewees against criticism. They defend this by concepts like <i>right, respect</i> , and change. They are pleased with the <i>increasing number and visibility</i> of headscarved women.	They <i>criticise</i> the new appearance and Islamically ' <i>inappropriateness</i> ' of headscarved women. Interviewees have <i>unfavourable</i> thoughts on change.
Representation	Interviewees care of the right representation of <i>Muslim identity</i> . They emphasize <i>Islamic morality and principles</i> for behaviours in social life.	One should be <i>free</i> to practise her religion. They emphasize <i>personal choice</i> . Interviewees focus more on the <i>successful presence</i> and visibility of women in social life.	According to interviewees both <i>appearance</i> and <i>activeness</i> in social life are important for the representation of <i>Muslims</i> .
Fashion and Appearance	Interviewees are <i>neutral</i> towards fashion. Its <i>consumption</i> aspect is criticized. Appropriateness to <i>tesettür</i> is important and privileged.	Interviewees have <i>favourable</i> approach to the <i>fashion</i> in terms of good representation. <i>Tesettür</i> fashion has been very helpful and beneficial to have <i>better attire and appearance</i> .	They care to have a <i>good/stylish impression</i> . But at the same time see the fashion as an ' <i>evil project</i> '. Interviewees emphasize appropriateness to <i>tesettür</i> .
Self and Other	They focus on ' <i>us</i> ' instead of ' <i>them</i> '. Interviewees talk about themselves without alienating ' <i>them</i> '. Caring to be <i>better Muslims</i> .	There is an explicit <i>differentiation</i> of ' <i>we</i> ' and ' <i>they</i> '. Interviewees emphasize the presence of ' <i>we</i> ' <i>as oppose to</i> ' <i>them</i> '.	Interviewees <i>differentiate</i> ' <i>we</i> ' and ' <i>them</i> ' as well as they focus on their own <i>Islamic responsibilities</i> . They have <i>two</i> ' <i>others</i> ' for both Muslims and seculars.

There is an obvious *criticism* around the new appearances of headscarved women, but ‘who’ criticises them? What do ‘headscarved woman’ think about this? Are they the ‘criticised’ subjects or the ones who are criticised? What is the purpose and motivations for making criticisms? Is there any relation with generation gap? All things about criticism will be discussed by interviews in second sections of chapters. The change and participation of social life are issues that are included in this discussion. These are also important factors that should be included in the criticisms section.

The visibility of headscarved woman inevitably makes her the centre of *representation* of Islam in the society. She shows the attributes of Islam within her appearance. Because of this Islamic visibility, it is ‘accepted’ that headscarved women have responsibilities in public. The Islamic obligation itself contains probably some responsibilities from its features of necessity. However, there are more thoughts and conflicts about the representation. Headscarved women and other people, who do not experience the same religious duty, have something to say about it. Therefore, there are discussions around the representation of headscarved women, which is difficult to have a consensus on it. This issue will be expanded through the third sections of chapters.

Since the appearance and the visibility of headscarved women have started to grab attention, discussions on *fashion* also increased simultaneously. The *tesettür* fashion industry has been growing within the increasing visibility of headscarved woman in urban life. It has been just a few years that modest fashion industry provides *enough* and suitable pieces for women. Modest fashion designs different ranges of pieces; however, consumers also have different range of understandings and thoughts on fashion. We will see these differences in fourth section of chapters.

While interviewees’ are expressing people’s thoughts, approaches, and stories; they use a *language* that exposes the intentions. We have seen narratives through different ideas and attitudes towards several issues; however, some words and the use of language are also remarkable to comprehend the narratives. For instance some interviewees make a differentiation of ‘*self and other*’. The expressions were made in the fifth section can be considered as identity formation. Narratives have different attitude towards this issue. Some of them are really interesting. Thus, responses of the interviewees’ will be used to make comparisons.

Consequently, the aim of this thesis is to illustrate a fragment from the experiences of headscarved women. I think it is important to focus on fragments while there is rapid change in modern life. Embracing with some facts and stories of interviewees may provide to grasp the complexity of the issue. A significant circumstance of the past may not say something for today. A big controversy of today may not be significant in the future; and unimportant detail may be an initiation to the new discussions. Above all, as the subject of discussions, what do the headscarved women really think? Who are they or rather who is she? Can one categorize them as someone keen on fashion or against fashion; defends the working of woman or against it; embrace with modern places of city or insult them? Do women fit into these categories? I hope that these questions will be answered in this study.

## **2. ISLAMIC INSIGHT AND MODESTY**

### **2.1. Individual Responsibility and Maturity**

As mentioned in the introduction, the topic of headscarf is controversial. There are stereotypes and prejudice towards this group. But there are in fact headscarved women who do not fit into this stereotype and therefore one cannot generalize these women. Stereotypes cannot be used to generalize headscarved women into one category, nor polarised/distinct two stereotypes of headscarved women exist. If a headscarved woman shares her thoughts deeply, imagined constructed ‘stereotypes’ may have gone; one can see the beyond. We will also see such women in this chapter as well. It should be noted that some of the interviewees’ responses suggest that these women naturally have their own opinion and they are different. They have their unique story and thoughts on this matter. Therefore this should be taken in to consideration when looking at the excerpts.

In this chapter we will examine the first narrative which consists of four headscarved women. The elements which make these women’s approaches to one, distinct narrative will be analysed in detail later on. But first, it should be noted that these interviewees can be differentiated with their mature approach. Talking about some on-going issues usually gives a judgemental position to subjects. While some interviewees deal with issues in this position, some approach it too personal. Yet this narrative discusses equally. Therefore we will see a constructive, mature approach as well as focusing on the self-improvement and responsibility. These key words help us to comprehend the first narrative: Muslim identity, tolerance, maturity, understanding, and responsibility.

Ravza is a good example to begin with. She is thirty-year old young woman and is working in a foundation for young students. She graduated from Marmara University. It seems, from her observations, that she has a good opportunity in her workplace to compare present and past, particularly on the difference of generations.

Ravza shared her thoughts, views and anecdotes during the interview. Nevertheless, she refers to society to explain some on-going issues.

Ravza's story begins with February 28 process when she was about to go to high school and had difficulties to choose a school as a headscarved student. Ravza decided to go vocational high school for girls. Attending a vocational high school meant that you can only study the subject that you are majored in. This meant that you could not choose another degree in university. Because of this, despite her high score, she had not been accepted to another degree. She was first of the school. Then, she says, "I have been a student in a department that I would never desire. I had nothing to do with. They say that you can only go *Teacher Training in Ready Made Clothing*. I can say that it has effected all my life". Nevertheless, her struggles were not over yet:

After I graduated from university I was unemployed for about eight months. I was rejected from eleven job applications because I wore a headscarf. So you could work if only you were not covered. Nevertheless, you do not give up. This doesn't restrict you. Some people become stronger. Some people give up. I was not like that. So I think I have become more successful as a result of my struggle in the February 28 process.

Although the choice to have *tesettür* is more or less the same thing to headscarved women, with time women's interpretation of this choice had changed. Experiences, knowledge of religion, perceptions, environment, status, and even socio-economic situation have all effected a women's choice in *tesettür*. When I ask the first reason for making this decision, the common response is family and environmental factors. But as mentioned above, we will see from the responses of each interviewee that this goes beyond the family and environmental factors and each interviewee has her own reasons and unique motives for the choice. In addition to this, positive or negative experiences have also affected their motive. Ravza and Meryem is a good example of this:

I have covered in *imam-hatip* elementary school. At that time I was... How do I say, I can say it was a model example. Everyone in my family was covered. It wasn't a conscious decision. But when I experienced the February 28 in the last year of my elementary school, headscarf had become a conscious decision for me following the February 28 process. Actually I can say that it is a protection. It is women's protection of her purity. It is a signifier of that. It is just a factor. There are more factors. (Ravza)

Meryem had covered her hair when she was twelve years old because, she says, her environment was very religious:

Yes, covering has begun with the headscarf for me, but then, it has become the meaning of covering my attire, my body, and my ideas. Indeed, this came with time. I have very conservative family. I grew up in this environment. So, you see something... from my sister, my cousins. There is a culture from my parents. So I am covered from my own decision but environmental factors did effect my decision. This happened naturally.

Meryem is working as a computer engineer for eight years for a company. She graduated from Bahçeşehir University; she has also a master degree on administration of engineering from Istanbul Technical University. When she was telling her story, she emphasized how she became a comfortable person due to her father's influence. She was instantly expressing her independence and her experience of being a person who makes her own decisions. Moreover, she had remarkably used the word 'individual' several times during interview:

What are you doing as an individual? Firstly, I should exist as myself. I am responsible for myself. My behaviours can be exemplified by one, two, three, and many people. Am I responsible for the behaviours of others [headscarved women]? I am not. What can I do as an individual?

My aim becomes explicit. They are the gain of the sake of Allah, and to be a good example to people. These have become privileged in my life.  
(Meryem)

Sümeyye is a thirty-year old young woman, one of the enthusiastic interviewees. She was so passionate to tell her intent, purpose and the process of being headscarved. In contrast to other interviewees, she was telling her thoughts and experiences as if I was not familiar with the issues and discourses as a headscarved woman. She was explaining in detail the issues that were common to all headscarved women.

With regards to 'covering', she referred to her family, and mentioned her mother as her role model. Sümeyye also highlights that being a social person, being respected and constantly developing herself are important to a headscarved woman. Because she was confronted with many criticisms and questions from her relatives and others in society, she believed developing oneself was important for her to become a conscious person.

As well as Ravza, Sümeyye's story corresponds with the February 28. She was a teenager at *imam-hatip* school during the February 28. She was one of the protesting students who wanted to be active for the rights of headscarved women. She was against the headscarf ban and the restriction of *imam hatip* schools being allowed to universities. She participated on TV shows with her friends to express their struggles. It seems that her explanatory approach to the issues comes from those days. Throughout the interview she always referred back to being headscarved person. The responses she gave were all linked to being a headscarved woman. Her responses were more explanatory than interpretive.

As she stated in interview, Sümeyye had come across many different reactions, mostly negative, from people; and we see that she is very patient and still keeps her enthusiasm to explain her reasons to people. Nevertheless, it is hard to respond to people, and it seems she is sometimes upset but knows who she is and this is helpful to understand her approach to relevant issues:

Sometimes there are people insulting you even though they actually like you, just because you are covered. They didn't want to meet me and they insulted me because I am *wrapped* as a *dolma*<sup>82</sup>. However I am happy in this way; I don't need to please other people. Allah appreciates me in this way, so I am happy in this way. Our freedom starts here. I am glad with my headscarf in spite of everybody and everything. I know what and why I am doing it for. Therefore, *tesettür* gives me a freedom and a sense of courage.

Ebru is the only middle-aged interviewee. She is 56 years old. In the past few decades she had witnessed all the difficulties and changes of headscarved women in Istanbul. According to Ebru, *tesettür* is Allah's command. *Tesettür* also shows the obedience and the practise of Allah's command. She adds that the reason for her wearing a headscarf was not to do with the traditional expectations/cultural pressure. Rather it was her free-will. In addition to this, she highlights that she went through a phase in which she tried to practice her religion in a strict manner. She was more sensitive/careful. However when she reflects on this phase, she sees this as extreme behaviour.

Ebru is disappointed that her family has chosen a different path from what she had hoped for. She is unhappy because her children's lifestyle is not what she wished for. During the interview she does not mention about the 'other'. This suggests that

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<sup>82</sup> *Dolma* is an olive- oiled dish. It is grape leaves stuffed with rice.

she does not separate herself from the ‘other’. She does not make comparisons, criticisms like the other narratives. Perhaps this is because of her family’s different lifestyle, her environment and her experience. She has a more understanding approach to issues. Her level of maturity also supports the reason for her not criticising like the other narratives. She mentions what is wrong or not right but she does not criticize this.

The four women interviews help us to interpret, analyse and evaluate the narrative. The next section will look at this in further detail. The anecdotes so far in this narrative suggest that these women focus on the self. The language used also supports this argument. They do not bring the ‘other’ into their responses. Thus, no comparisons are made between the self and the other. Moreover, it is remarkable that even though they are confronted with difficulties (February 28 etc.) they ‘still’ do not criticise or alienate the ‘other’. This makes their attitude more distinct.

As we will see in the following sections, this narrative focuses on the self-improvement, personal development. Their priority is to do things for God’s appreciation. They have constructive, positive, mature approach to the relevant issues. Even though they have different stories it seems that there are common themes that shape this particular narrative.

## **2.2. Embracing Change without Judgement**

As we noted, criticism is always present in a headscarved women’s life. All of them have faced, experienced criticisms. The degree of criticism varies among the headscarved women. Although one usually experiences this with appearance, it is in fact included in all areas including lifestyle. It could be attire, behaviour, speech, social relations and so on. There are different approaches on criticising and being criticised. Evaluating these approaches within individual details we may find complicated connections.

From these women’s responses it seems that they do not prefer to speak about the ‘other’. Instead, they would emphasize on the personality of choices and differences of lives:

First of all, everyone should look at themselves. If I criticize one who is dressed with less care then, a black veiled woman would criticize me as well. I am not ‘*tesettür* dressed’ according to her, and the other is

‘uncovered’ according to me. It might be a person’s interpretation of life. It might be related to the result of the February 28, or different factors.

We care so much on the form. No one is interested in *why* you wear a headscarf. But, one is much more interested in *how* you cover. We don’t question why the young generation do not pray, but we are more interested in how they pray. We read *Kuran*. If one reads *Kuran* properly, excellently, we like it. But we don’t ask whether he or she reads the interpretation of it. It is a little bit about the process, as I’ve noted. It is because we as a society privilege the form. It is not only about the headscarf. Unfortunately, it is the general state of things. We became a society that cares completely on form and visibility. (Ravza)

In terms of criticism, her reactions and responses suggest that there is no emotional discomfort when discussing criticism. She gives examples, she explains, and she discusses the reason for it. Her response is more like an analysis; it is not very personal and there is no comparison or further criticism. Therefore, this makes the narrative different from the others. We will not see this type of response from the other interviewees.

Ravza also thinks that young people have less awareness than her generation because they are in comfort, there is not a ban, and they have not been discriminated. However, she does not blame them, despite this, she suggests helping them to have more information and awareness. As we will see from the expression of Ebru, she does not appreciate the new generation, but she underlines that she had not experienced the same situation as the young generation. And therefore does not want to comment on the young generation. Both these women have a mature perspective on this matter. They both highlight that there is a difference between generations but they do not criticise the young generation for being privileged.

Ebru had been criticized a lot by her family members because she was the only headscarved in family. And on the issue of criticism, she says that she does not criticise someone, however, she talks about the circumstance of visibility and behaviours of headscarved women. The change in the meaning of the visibility of headscarved women made her very sad:

I observe that the meaning of headscarf has been entirely changed compared to ten years ago. The years between the 1980’s and 1990’s were times that headscarved women cared just for the sake of Allah; worldly matters were not prioritized. People were worrying about to how raise children, how they could tell their children about Allah, how they could spread their religion in those years.

Then, she continued to narrate the whole process of change until today. According to Ebru, the turning point was the ban on headscarf in universities. When they started to take off their headscarves in classes, they would change their appearance the same way. They have started to dress up and the change continued. She is not happy with those changes, but she also adds that she had not experienced any harsh struggle as those girls had. Therefore, she says, “I wouldn’t want to condemn them”.

About the criticism of men, Ebru was the most complaining person among all interviewees. She does not appreciate the appearance and representation of Muslims. Moreover, she blames Muslim men for secularization and change of Muslim society:

Religious men should look at themselves first. Who am I, what I want? The women that you’d desired are hanging around the streets today. Yes, they have reached somewhere. For example headscarved women quarrel with men nowadays. They become rude. They became manlike. They gained this power by being manlike. So do you know what has been changed? Career or some stuff like that... Women have only headscarves on their head. In the past, in the 1980’s and 1990’s, when we see a headscarved woman on the street, we would become friends. We would exchange our phone numbers. We would become a pen-mate. We would send letters to people we would not know. I have a story like this. We have never even seen our photos. Today, a headscarved woman does not look at the face of other headscarved woman. She does not even help you. She could fight with you.

Meryem was very nervous about the issue of change. When the word had come to the notion of change, she had started to tell her attitude on criticism of headscarved women these days. She was passionately speaking about the different lives of people:

In recent years, headscarved women have become more visible and forefront in social life. Their attire is different now. They have more freedom in choice of clothing. Actually, there is something that I’ve been upset and criticize. I don’t want to criticize because it is easy to criticize headscarved women. I think that is not true. If a Muslim woman develop herself, have been grown up in culture, knows particular information, and knows particular things; I think she will improve something by time and she will practise and live something more carefully. We all have some mistakes, corrects, faults. All individuals... Even she is covered or not. I don’t like to stereotype. I don’t like the perception of ‘New headscarved girls are like that, new girls’ attire like that!’

All individuals' have *nefs*<sup>83</sup>. There is social effect and fashion. So, fashion influences both covered and uncovered indeed. We have been influenced, we all have been influenced. Therefore, I don't think that it should be an issue of criticism... Everyone lives something in a stage. Everyone goes through the phases. Some add meaning to their life and some don't. (Meryem)

Sümeyye tells that she hears some criticisms about headscarved women, wearing tight clothing and has makeup, from uncovered friends of hers. And it seems that she is not comfortable to make criticism over some headscarved women in terms of appropriation:

But I have never criticized my very fancy dressed headscarved friends as a headscarved person. I know the reason. The reason is, this friend covers her hair eagerly, but she hasn't matured herself in terms of faith and belief. She hasn't read the life of Prophet and *Sahabis*<sup>84</sup>. Or she hasn't read the verses. She hasn't read the *Kuran* within interpretation yet. She just eagerly put her scarf on. And she is indecisive. Sometimes she wears a long coat, sometimes not. One day she wears a large scarf, one day she does not. And she constantly reflects change. So, I am not angry with her because I know she hasn't matured yet.

Criticisms of headscarved women centre upon the apparent change by time. However, according to Sümeyye nothing has changed. She asserts that there have been some people who were less careful in the past and in the present. When she was thinking about the change, she concluded that now there are new opportunities. They can wear better quality pieces in contrast to days which they couldn't find anything to wear for *tesettür*. And, she says, "It makes me happy".

However, Sümeyye had concerns about the effects of the social media:

We want to imitate in the social media as well. Our culture has been changed through social media indeed. Before taking photos as a covered person were not common. But today, we post our selected beautiful pictures on social media. We want it to be liked. Both covered and uncovered. We all have changed as human beings. We share what we eat and places we go. We want to be known by everybody. There is a feeling of being known, being a celebrity in human soul, and we want to satisfy it through social media. It is fine, but it ruins the concept of being modest. Imagine everyone can see your best appearance; it is available to public access.

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<sup>83</sup> *Nefs* means "self" in the *Kuran* '*nefs* always attracts the evil'. It is very common concept in daily lives of Muslims just like Meryem's use of in that context. A Muslim person refers to *nefs* when talking about the difficulties and obstacles they face. They use *nefs* as a reason for their decision or choice. For instance 'I did this because of my *nefs*'.

<sup>84</sup> *Sahabis* are companion/followers of Prophet Muhammed. Some Muslims also read *Sahabis* stories, they believe there is a lot to learn from their lives and choose them as role model as well.

In this category, women do not enjoy making criticism; instead they are trying to understand what is going on today. Ravza had an encouraging outlook. She wanted to inform new generations. Meryem highlighted that in the process of learning people could easily mistakes. And therefore we should not judge them. Sümeyye emphasizes that the new way of life reshapes us without distinction of covered and uncovered. Also it should be noted that they preferred to use the word ‘we’, instead of ‘they’ to give example of new generation and as a subject of the criticisms. Therefore, this narrative has distinct feature as it has toleration to people who practise the *tesettür* in their own way.

### 2.3. Islamic Visibility and Representation

It is generally accepted that the representation of Islam in terms of visibility brings ‘responsibility’ to headscarved women. The issue of representation is perceived and explained in several ways by the interviewees. This group has a different perspective on representation and its related issues. In this section, participation in social life, attitude, and responsibility of headscarved women will be discussed. This will give us a glimpse on the issue of representation.

Firstly, according to Ebru, woman can be participating in social life only if her Muslim identity prioritised:

I care about the attitude of headscarved woman in social life. She should have an important attitude; a dignified, honoured attitude. For instance relationship with the opposite sex, relationship in the family, relationship in public, shopping should be practised according to teachings of Islam. It has to be *sünnet*<sup>85</sup>. They should be within the boundaries of *sünnet* of Prophet Muhammed.

Ebru’s response suggests that she prioritizes her behaviour and attitude to social life according to teachings of Islam. She tells her views clearly. Her expressions are not indirect; she says straight what she thinks:

A visibility of headscarved women must be felt to the others as this: ‘I am headscarved, I follow Allah’s command. All my relations are for the sake of Allah’. She should show this and I think she should protect this value wherever she is.

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<sup>85</sup> *Sünnet* means habits, sayings, deeds, practises of Prophet Muhammed which is accepted as other source of Islam after the *Kuran*.

Ebru's views on the working of woman also illustrate a similar stance:

I think woman should be in all work environments which are suitable for her *fitrat*<sup>86</sup>. The priority of the purpose of working should not be making money anyway. But if she has employment opportunity in education, health, or anywhere, she could be employed. But she should work just in the case that the environment is suitable for her *fitrat*. She should not do everything. I am against the discourse claiming she can do everything. It should be suitable for her *fitrat*, her grace; and in the way which she can protect herself, inside of the limits of her purity... I am against with that kind of working such as to make money, to make a career, have a status, and compete with men. (Ebru)

When she describes the limits of working for women, she is not very harsh. She also reported that a woman might come across with different crisis during her life. Therefore, a woman can work regardless of any difficulty.

Meryem is concerned about the misrepresentation of Muslim identity. In terms of morality for instance, honesty is the most important thing for the Muslim individual she says. It seems like she is not satisfied with the current situation of the representation of Muslimhood. Therefore, she wants Muslims to be represented accurately:

A Muslim woman, in fact is not only a woman, but also a Muslim individual who should participate to social life. There is a traditional perception of being Muslim, especially in Turkey. I think Muslim identities should be known. A woman should be known. We have to demonstrate ourselves by our identity, attitude, and our presence of being Muslim in social life as our Prophet had spread Islam. (Meryem)

One of the areas that Meryem is representing her identity is her workplace. She has been working in a plaza for a company that is located in Gayrettepe, for eight years. This location is a crowded business district of Istanbul that one also could not see many headscarved white-collar women as she noted. Meryem thinks that she has changed the perception of her colleagues in positive way:

Actually they have learned what type of a person a headscarved woman is. They know what kind of personality we have. They have understood the intent of headscarf, that there is nothing underlying the purpose. They have understood that it is not political... Now they are used to. They evaluate us an individual today, not as a headscarved.

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<sup>86</sup> According to Islam, human beings are born with a *fitrat* to Islam. *Fitrat* means following one's religion and not breaking away from the 'purpose of creation'. *Fitrat* also refers to (Islamic) human nature as well. In this context she uses *fitrat* to refer to a Muslim woman. She emphasizes on how woman should behave, her role and expectation.

Sümeyye on the other hand cares about the worshipping and morality of Islam. She reported that within modesty, if one focuses on worship her soul might be affected. She thinks, she worships Allah, she is Muslim so she is trustworthy. And she should not deceive. Therefore, according to Sümeyye, a person who does her duties within her modesty would let herself be more progressive and productive in terms of both character and religion:

If you naturally reflect your morality and modesty correspondingly, your prestige will be positively affected. And there is this: if you devote yourself to the practising of your belief and Islam, you are not interested in politics. Your priority becomes making a progress and become better person. Actually it is more effective than biggest political movements and rules. As you educate, develop yourself your choice, your lifestyle as an individual changes. You become a better character. While your ideas changes, and your realization of change, you become another person and do not follow up shallow stuffs; you become an idealistic person. It means constant progress. I mean you become a person who effects, you don't become effected. And people approach you as someone who can be consulted on desperate times. There is someone who is trustworthy and consulted on. In fact, *tesettür* changes you after covering; creates a difference in our souls. And it makes a woman more prestigious. (Sümeyye)

Ravza does not care about representation, especially on the representation of headscarved women. Because, she thinks, she and other headscarved woman who dress differently have different understanding of the religion. Ravza thinks that visibility has both advantages and disadvantages:

If a man sees me, and if he is not doing it for purpose, he might choose not to shake my hands. He is seeing something, if this is called visibility. I think it is an advantage for us as women. He behaves in the way which shows us that he knows you and your thoughts. Indeed, there are disadvantages as well. Some people are different from you, see that and use it in a negative way. Such as decrease your score and do not let you to pass your class in universities. You would come across. It is a little bit about the healing of society. Or it is about the change of the perception of society, not individualistic.

Indeed interviewees' of this narrative might not have exactly the same thought towards the issues discussed. Ravza is the only interviewee that highlights the advantages and disadvantages of visibility. Meryem passionately cares about the good representation of Muslim identity. Interestingly she also likes when people in her workplace treat her as an individual and not as a headscarved woman. But it is clear that all the interviewees in this narrative care about the Islamic attitude, especially of the appropriateness the social life.

In this part, we see these women's sayings are compounding on being a good Muslim. According to the interviewees' point of views, they all give importance to the right representation of Muslim identity. As headscarved women, they say that they should behave with a consciousness of Islamic morality and principles. Responses were given around the Muslimhood, and it signifies the acceptance of headscarved women's representation of Islam of this narrative.

#### **2.4. Modesty and Consumption**

There are many different ways of wearing a headscarf. However, even when we see some group of headscarved women in similar attire, they would have different thoughts about the issue of fashion/modest fashion and what Muslim women 'should' wear. Therefore in this section, we will see one of the different approaches towards fashion and appearance.

It is hard to imagine a woman who does not care about her appearance. Lifestyle's, thoughts, tastes, and priorities are diverse. Nevertheless, we have opportunity to understand distinctive features of headscarved woman, within their intentions and purposes of appearances.

I care my appearance because it is *sünnet*, and cleanliness is the most important thing. I don't want to be seen as scruffy and ugly. I want to be perceived with cleanliness and purity. I want to make sure my clothes suit each other. (Ebru)

Sümeyye says that she cares about her appearance as a woman. And she chooses her style according to where she goes. "Headscarved women can wear whatever she pleases on the condition that she cares about her modesty".

And Meryem prefers loose cloths and is careful to wear her headscarf properly. She likes comfortable clothes and she cares about her appearance. Also it seems she cares about her appearance in business. And her attire in business shapes her style:

If you wear casual cloths, you can't be a Principal; you can't be a project manager. I wouldn't want to be like this. I like to wear very comfortable clothes. I wear my casual skirt. But, I think it shouldn't be more than one or two days. You could be replaced... especially in business. Things change immediately.

Ravza does not like fashion, even though she is a ready-made clothing graduate. But she does not deny the necessity of modest dresses as well. Therefore, she criticizes the modest fashion within her ‘rational’ reasons:

There is a modest fashion unfortunately. It is not something that I affirm. It is indeed prompt people to waste, to consume. As I noted, our religion demands us to produce, not waste it. It is not appropriate for us.

Everything that attracts people is irrelevant for me. Why *tesettür* fashion magazines are published, it should be inquired. There are so many stuffs, magazines for uncovered. But it is not valid for us as headscarved women. Brands were very few. We would have difficulties to find long-sleeves shirts and long skirts for ourselves until very recently. It seems like, it comes through necessity. But it is dangerous to convert this to over consumption and to the way young people perceive this. Now the young is empty inside, but has a good taste on her appearance. We should focus on the spirit and unworldliness. That is because, I am a ready-made clothing graduated, and I am against fashion. I have never read any fashion magazines. Have I missed something? I don’t think so.

Ravza’s comment on the people who care about their appearance affirms Barbarosoğlu’s views on the new headscarved women who try to have an identity while being stylish. Barbarosoğlu’s description of women who do not follow this trend reminds us of the women in this chapter:

As we see the women who wear stylish *tesettür* in the public sphere they will start to lose their sense of appropriateness as they wait to get accepted. And this will result in them wearing for the other and caring about what the other thinks about their clothing. On the other hand there are those that do not construct their identity on being stylish. Their presence, what they produce, their values all contributes to this identity. These women continue to protect the style that which is appropriate.<sup>87</sup>

In terms of *tesettür* fashion Ebru thinks that it emerged from necessity, but has now become fashion. She also tells her difficulties to find some dresses and scarves when she was young. She would make it herself. However today, she thinks, “It is out of control”:

It is normal to dress for a woman, the presence of fashion is normal, and providing what is needed is normal. Producers make things properly, but consumers do wrong. I am not against the production of this. If there is a need it should be produced. Consumers make the mistakes.

Both interviewees, Ravza and Ebru, emphasized on the *contradictory* of *tesettür* fashion. The necessity of *tesettür* fashion is accepted. The inevitable feature of *encouraging* people to consume more and more is inappropriate to the spirit of *tesettür* itself. In the past, women could not find anything to wear suitable for

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<sup>87</sup> Barbarosoğlu, **Şov ve Mahrem**, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2006), 215-216.

modesty. But today the fashion industry provides more than what is necessary. Women feel the need to buy more and more colourful scarves, outfits, and accessorize to combine with.

Today it is easy to come across criticisms or evaluations of headscarved women and their choice in fashion. The choices have been ‘analysing’ to ‘interpret’ the new appearances and change of headscarved women. For instance, Yılmaz explains the reconstruction of *tesettür* in her book; she discusses that the new fashionable appearances of headscarved women use modernity as a form of revenge. The need for this revenge is because they were excluded<sup>88</sup>. This statement is quietly common in the society, but it is not valid for the women in this narrative. Interviewees’ of this group approach to fashion differs from the typical view point of the change of headscarved women. However, in the second narrative we will see that this statement resemble the interviewees’ opinions. Therefore, it should be noted that the example given in the statement should not be generalized. The need for revenge is a strong assumption and therefore assuming that all modern headscarved women do this for revenge is not valid.

Ebru’s priority for *tesettür* is to hide her body shape, because this is *sünnet*. According to her, the concept of *tesettür* and the interpretation of it, is different to each person. She believes that one should not show the shape of body and attract people. She says that she does not follow fashion, but does buy things if she likes it.

It is very common to have fashionable dresses even if interviewees do not like to follow the fashion. They say that it is difficult to have clothes that are out of fashion because shops are full of those items:

I don’t follow fashion, even if you don’t follow the fashion you come across these products when you’re shopping. So you buy this unavoidably. You wear the clothes that are popular at the time. These are the products that you can find and buy. But I prefer to wear casual clothes. Being comfortable is important, especially in the weekends. (Meryem)

When about the modest fashion, you go to buy a dress for yourself and you see that all the items are similar design. Therefore you would start to choose these items a while later... You realize that you have started to wear the same clothes and your part of this society. People can be influenced. For example, what was the difference of us? We young girls

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<sup>88</sup> Zehra Yılmaz, **Dişil Dindarlık: İslamcı Kadın Hareketinin Dönüşümü**, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2015), 194.

were covering differently; our mothers were headscarved and wore long coats. We were headscarved but we didn't wear long coats. But your *tesettür* has change through readings and inquiries... because your soul changes when your thoughts change. And it shapes your lifestyle. (Sümeyye)

As she said previously, she knows *tesettür* fashion appeared out of necessity, but Ravza is not very confident about the rise of *tesettür* boutiques as they attract people to consume more. She thinks that they would affect young girls with their non-Islamic designed pieces. In contrast to Ravza, Meryem seems to have better impression of boutiques in terms of variety, yet she does not prefer:

Yes, there are so many boutiques that have opened. But I also want the presence of these boutiques. I don't shop there, they are expensive. There are people who care about their attire and like to dress well. Boutiques might be a good opportunity for them... On the one hand, you try to be appropriate with your dress and *tesettür*, on the other; we want to have clothes that look beautiful and proper. So I think boutiques could help us with this. (Meryem)

Interviewees had emphasized fashion and appearance according to their understanding of religious codes. As we have seen in the last excerpt they have not the same thoughts about the issues. However, these women's thoughts are around the same matter: one should be careful of her appearance and wear appropriate clothes according to *tesettür*. These interviewees' point of view about fashion is determined by this value. They do not prioritise taste and best appearance; they inquire and consider the necessity and the situation of modest fashion. From the responses of these interviewees, it seems that there is also a hesitation of appreciating the modest fashion. There is not acceptance or denial of *tesettür* fashion. These women are neutral towards this topic. In the next chapter we will see different responses towards *tesettür* fashion. So therefore this narrative will be different to the rest.

## **2.5. A Language of Self-Responsibility: "Me and My Religion"**

The language of this narrative is different from the other narratives'. The women of this group were emphasizing the responsibility of 'themselves' in terms of an Islamic community. On the other hand they suggest several things to be a better individual.

Firstly, there is Ravza's thought on what is happening today and what one should do. She was comparing her generation to the new generation. It seems that

she is not happy with the current situation, but she makes suggestions to help the new generation:

In the past we could organize as a group to have a *mescit* in university. Suddenly you could associate your purposes with people you don't know yet. You can work together shoulder to shoulder for a purpose. Is it applicable today? It is not. Today young people are in wealth. It is important to pass this wealth test for young people. I don't think that they are aware of this. I think the memories, the stories about the past should be shared. (Ravza)

In response to responsibility of Muslim women, Ravza gives significance to worship. She notices that women should be aware of the reason for their creation. "Women are created for motherhood, it's their *fitrat* but, some women priorities career unfortunately" Ravza says.

Ravza reported that she had some aims to change the system since February 28 process and she continues with these aims. For instance, she says that she was an employee in a political party. She had intent to express her own ideas. She was so tired because she was also working. But she is very grateful that students can go to the university with headscarf, and thinks that she has contributed to this:

First of all, we should ask what I am doing as a Muslim. Everybody has responsibilities in their lives. So I have to act like a Muslim. I have to act like I am a woman. I have to behave like a Muslim woman would behave, I shouldn't behave like a feminist. I am a volunteer in a foundation. I am responsible of a coordinatorship. I inquire to be a good example for young people who are responsible for other cities (of foundation). I inquire what I can give them...

And she finishes her interview with an emphasis on the duty of everyone. She believes that everyone should do something to better themselves. She does not like to speak about others; she focuses on what she has done, and what she is going to do.

When Ebru was comparing the past and the present, she shared her concerns about secularization of Muslim's way of life. Ebru was unhappy with the current situation of religious people. But also she told that she is hopeful too:

We all participate in this secularization, we all do. But I believe that we will reach to a middle path. We will find. People will find within the willing of Allah. At least I have been dreaming. Muslim woman will see this. She will recognise her own fault. She will awaken. After those will be seen, those will be spoken. Indeed, some will be hurt.

As we seen from her expressions, Ebru is hopeful. And she does not build any hope or ideas on the ‘others’. Her only intention is on ‘themselves’. Her advices and solutions are about themselves. She does not discuss the situation by criticizing others. And Meryem is also expressing the responsibilities of being Muslim:

‘We have headscarves. I practise my religion, I pray, I am covered, I am Muslim’... [It is not enough] It should go beyond this. There is ‘Emr-i bil maruf’<sup>89</sup>, indeed. Your behaviour, your attitude, everything are examples for others. I think we experienced some problems that occurred from misconceptions. We therefore experience those difficulties. (Meryem)

When comparing the three narratives there is a sharp difference between the languages and approaches used. One could see that the variety in the society illustrates the vast differences of responses and languages. This is also evident in the interviewees’ responses. For instance, some interviewees when talking about themselves include the ‘other’ into their responses. They do distinguish themselves from the other group. However there are also some interviewees that do not mention the other at all when talking about themselves.

The narratives of these interviewees’ do not include any expression about ‘other’. When referring to the ‘other’ *secular* or *uncovered* people are included. They are just telling *their* stories. It seems that they do not need to mention the other. They had said favourable and unfavourable features of the current Muslim way of life. Sometimes they had shared some solutions and suggestions for obstacles. They prefer to focus on the ‘self’. In this way, they want to contribute to the Muslim community. In addition to this, we can say that this narrative carries a positive and constructive approach in projecting a better future.

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<sup>89</sup> A *Kuran* expression means “enjoining what is right” and continues with “forbidden what is wrong”. We can say that it also symbolizes to being active to invite people to the religion. This saying also invites to people to take responsibility.

### **3. A JOYFUL LIFESTYLE**

#### **3.1. Surviving the Competition**

This chapter's interviewees are young headscarved women. It seems the interviewees' age has effected the response and interesting themes have been revealed. The women in this chapter have different habits and preferences and generally fit the 'typical stereotype' of headscarved women. In fact the classification of stereotyped headscarved women is problematical since people who criticise 'stereotypes' are not completely different from them. However, headscarved women who wear colourful and trendy clothes and flashy scarves have been considered as 'corrupted' new modern youth. Basically, these headscarved women are 'representing' the negative images of daily discussions. Being the typical headscarved women no doubt has attracted a lot of criticism. I aim to present the interviewees responses in a neutral way without distorting the excerpts. And not portraying the excerpts in a way that will indicate that these women are typical stereotypes.

In this chapter, we will see different approaches and choices of headscarved women. They are the youngest interviewees. Because of their young age and being at beginning of their life, they mostly shared their dreams and aims for the future. Their ambitious and desire for having a prestigious job differentiates this narrative's interviewees from the rest. So therefore, we will see unique approaches for the representation, fashion and change issues in this category. These key words also help us to comprehend this narrative: success, chic, rights, respect, widening of places.

The first interviewee of this group, Emine, is a third year undergraduate psychology student at a private university. She is also very fashionable and has unique style. She was one of the relaxed interviewees and used the word 'happy/happiness' throughout the interview. And Emine is perhaps one of the bravest and open interviewee. She was very open and explanatory for her behaviours and thoughts, however, she did not tell her lifestory or something from her past. This is in contrast to the other interviewees.

Emine thinks that covering is a religious obligation and therefore, she says, it makes her feel peaceful inside. Her future plans are purely based on her career and this makes her happy. She believes that she will make a difference on people's lives when she becomes a psychologist. The idea of helping people makes her happy; she cares for the happiness of people as she cares for herself. Emine also adds that the idea of becoming an editor in well-known magazine, for instance *Vogue*, is something that she also places somewhere in her life.

Nurefşan has graduated with a sociology degree. She has teaching experience, she noted that this experience has been very effective on her in terms of having self-confidence and having a responsibility. And today she has been working for Ministry of Family and Social Policies as a sociologist. Covering for Nurefşan is a form of protection. She had made the decision of covering her hair when she was at the beginning of elementary school. She tells that her teachers' warnings affected her. She highlights that her teachers warnings even outside of school made her feel anxious. Phrases like "You have to open your hair" made her feel cautious when entering public buildings. In the back of her head she always had this fear of not being allowed in. Nurefşan also asserts that the ban on headscarf made them two-faced. She was different inside and outside of places. So, she says: "I wouldn't find myself. Now I don't have to open my hair. So I've found my identity. I am more comfortable. I can do whatever they give me [as a job]". The first part of the interview involved Nurefşan telling her negative experiences of covering and difficulties she faced. It seems these negative experiences have made a mark on her. And will continue to hunt her.

Eda is nineteen years old and is second year *Guidance and Psychological Counseling* student in Istanbul Kultur University. Her goal is to be helpful and beneficial to people and humanity. Eda tells similar reasons for starting to wear headscarf as others did; she was about ten years old and made this decision to obey Allah's commandment. She highlights that as she grew older she realized the true meaning of covering. In the early days of wearing a headscarf, she had a shocking experience that influenced her whole life.

One day she wanted to take her sister to school with her mother. Her mother warned her that she would face some questions. People were asking questions about why she decided to wear headscarf. Questions like 'was she covered by repression?',

‘why did she cover?’ were asked. Despite her mom’s warnings Eda insisted in going to school with her. When they were close to the school Eda’s teacher approached her and shouted “I don’t want to see you in this! I will never see you in this!” Eda describes her teacher as an authoritarian and despotic person.

She says that it was really shocking; moreover, the witnessing of a few friends had made it more tragic for her. She was ashamed. It was a humiliating for her. The fact that the teacher shouted at her in front of everyone, this made her feel devastated. Because of that, she says, “I’ve started to hide myself as I am not appreciated in that environment. Why? Instead of understanding the reason why the teacher had treated me like that; I had preferred to hide myself at that time”. This led to her not covering properly. She did this to avoid people seeing her wearing a headscarf: “What if a friend of mine sees me and tells the teacher? What if my teacher humiliates me in class? I was under the pressure of this.”

Eda told this experience in the beginning of the interview; however, she referred to it frequently when she was responding the other questions. This negative experience played a huge part in her life. Not surprisingly, she ended the interview referring to the same negative experience. She gives the impression that this experience was horrible and humiliating.

Gülsüm is the only newest covered headscarved women among interviewees; she has been wearing headscarf for two years. She grew up in a religious family, but also she was not thinking of wearing a headscarf at high school when people were not allowed to study with headscarves. As she reported, she was hesitating to be headscarved because she would like to study and work freely. Since the ban had been removed, she decided to be headscarved and attend the university:

My mother wore a headscarf but I couldn’t be brave for it. What society would think? Would I be discriminated? Can I find a job? What if it would be a problem in school? But thankfully my university was fine and even I have become warmer to headscarf. In business no one discriminates me. They are just staring different, that’s it. (Gülsüm)

She graduated from a business college. At the time of the interview, she was an intern with the potential of being offered a position. She tells some difficulties when she started to work there; she says they were looking very strange to her because she was the only headscarved in that business floor. She thinks that people were looking at her as if she was from a different planet. Gülsüm’s dream is to become a good

manager and tells the reason for it: at the place that she was working previously, there was an annoying manager and she wanted to be better than her.

To have a glimpse of this narrative, firstly, we realize the emphasis on career and success. Interviewees like what they study and what they hope to become in the future. When compared to the previous chapter, the interviewees priorities being successful. They are career driven which is interesting. Their description of themselves is very individualistic. Contrary to the interviewees of the first group, we do not see any reference to the teachings of Islam. In chapter two, the interviewees would refer to the teachings of Islam. They would talk about being a good Muslim and living a life compatible to Islam. But in this chapter we do not see this theme. In chapter three, Islamic sayings are replaced with the success in career.

In this chapter, the interviewees' negative experiences reveal a separation between 'self' (those wearing a headscarf) and 'other' (those that are not). Their stories suggest that the 'other' group are not pleased to see headscarved women. This will be discussed in the next section.

### **3.2. Standing Up to Criticism**

Opinions and experiences on criticism reveal the tendency of self, especially in this case. As we noted before, headscarved individuals have usually been criticizing or criticized on many levels. Therefore, criticism is one of the definitive features of particular approaches of three narratives. Criticism is a delicate issue for these interviewees who are usually confronted with criticisms because they are seen as stereotypes of the new generation. Seeing only a simple example of criticized image on these young headscarved women is 'enough' to stigmatize them into such stereotypes. Because of this, second narrative seems familiar with controversies around this issue. In this section the notion of change will also be included as it is the main reason for the criticisms.

When comparing all the interviewees, the four women in this group are not happy when the topic comes to criticism. They do not like criticising or being criticized. But when the topic comes to the issue of change, they have a more favourable approach. Firstly, we will look at Emine's expressions to give us an insight into second narrative's approach. Emine was very reactive when word comes to criticism. She does not stand to be criticized and says she hates criticizing:

I don't criticize other people. Because I think that they have their own thoughts and decisions. I think everybody has a reason for doing something. It might sound ridiculous but everything is based on a cause and effect relation. Therefore, I do not have a right to criticize him or her. I also do not expect any criticism for what I do. I think if I'm respectful to others, they should be respectful to me as well.

Emine is very proud and happy to see the activeness of headscarved women in social life. She appreciates the progression in fashion, but she is not happy with criticisms it receives:

Their activeness and visibility can be disturbing for some circles [seculars]. Some [uncomfortable religious people] claim that headscarved women misrepresent that particular circle [religious]. But whose right and wrong is this? Even if there is a religious responsibility; it is person's own conscience. I don't think one has right to judge or criticize her.

I always use this sentence: People are subject to the pressures of evolution. Evolution is an inevitable thing and social evaluation is one of them. Well, if we look at headscarved women... In the past there were people with traditional veiling in Anatolia. This was done according to religious teachings at that time. These women were covered properly. With time covering has been modernized. I personally like this. When I compare my first times of being covered and today, there is a huge gap. Being covered does not mean not being stylish. Being covered does not mean not being able to dress properly. This shouldn't be thought in this way. Headscarf style and attire have been changed from past to present. For example, I have twenty-five silk *şals*<sup>90</sup> in my wardrobe, this was not the case a few years ago. What's happening? If there is something new, people continue to purchase. These purchases end up in our house. So we inevitably change. (Emine)

The concepts like 'respect', 'right', 'evolution', and 'change' are at the centre of Emine's comments. These concepts indicate the difference of this narrative. She discusses the criticism within the rights of a person. She is very comfortable in her opinion. She does not show any hesitation on this criticism issue; she is very decisive, clear, and straightforward when compared to the other interviewees.

Her responses can be example for receiving criticisms of headscarved women from both 'seculars' and 'religious' people. According to Emine, on the one hand, 'seculars' are uncomfortable with their activeness and visibility. On the other hand, some religious people think that headscarved women misrepresent themselves. Consequently, she refuses to be criticised by both groups: no one has the right to

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<sup>90</sup> Silk *şal* is a fashionable piece of modest clothing in Turkey. This has been for the past few years. It is a long scarf that women cover their hair and wrap it around the neck. The silk *şal* comes in variety in colors and quality. Some have been arguing whether the silk *şal* is appropriate to modest clothing.

judge. Emine also discusses the change issue of headscarved women. Emine summarizes the process of change and interprets it within the social evolution. She underlines the huge gap of past and present; and emphasizes on adaptation. We understand from her expression, Emine defends that the change is normal and inevitable.

Nurefşan says that she had been criticized a lot. Nurefşan has a weight problem which is not easy to hide, especially as a headscarved person (this is because a headscarved woman needs to wear loose clothing that cover her body and because of her weight problem she cannot find clothes that cover her body accordingly). Nurefşan received criticism with regards to her choice in clothing. She was not happy with the criticism she received. She blamed her choice in clothing due to her weight. But deep down, she knew that there was some truth in the criticisms. She says in time, she fixed her mistakes. Because of that, she thinks that there are benefits of receiving criticism; “you end up fixing your mistakes”. She says that, if they did not warn her, she would not change her mistakes.

We cannot say that Nurefşan is open to criticism; it seems that she tolerates criticism if only one encourages the other one to be better. But she is not very patient towards people who criticize them and do not practice the same duty. She thinks that, uncovered people and men should not criticize headscarved women:

I don't criticize because one cannot see herself. I hear some expressions like, 'it would be better if you didn't cover!', 'what changed when you covered yourself?' You can't even do this! Those that criticize are people that can't cover. I don't criticize. Headscarved women in my environment don't criticize. But when an uncovered person says, 'it would be better not to cover!'... Well, you can't even do that! Got it? Maybe she wears skinny jeans and her body shape is visible; but at least, she covers her hair. Do you think that it is an easy decision? Is it easy?

Uncovered people and men criticize us. It can't be without experience. In order to make criticism they should at least wear headscarf. You can't know without experience. Especially a man! I think a man has no right to say a word about headscarf. They can't understand. Especially they do this with politics like 'she can go, she cannot' [university or public institutions]... They can't criticize because these sorts of things are sensitive issues. (Nurefşan)

Eda thinks that the increase in the number of headscarved women is related to the fashionable modest clothing. She is happy with this increase. According to her, people, including her uncovered friends, are interested in the vast choice, colour and

stylish designs. She believes this is appealing to people and gives an incentive to cover. She thinks that the reason for the increase in the number of headscarved women is due more to the popularity of the fashion industry. This suggests that the reason for the increase is not based on religious choice.

Eda thinks that headscarved women make mistakes as well. She thinks that one should not criticize headscarved women in a harsh way. She also thinks that there are some borders in modesty, however, one should warn people with a positive approach. For instance, this can be done with a polite comment or a softer tone.

Gülsüm does not talk much on criticism. It seems she did not receive much criticism and does not seem like a person that criticizes. But her thoughts on the visibility of headscarved women are positive:

There is an increase of women wearing headscarf. Girls couldn't attend universities. I am an example of this. I have so many friends like me; have covered since they could go to university with headscarf. Headscarved women can be seen in advertisements, televisions. Or headscarved woman can be a reporter, can be everything and anything. Our fields are widening. The numbers of headscarved women are increasing and I hope it will increase even more. This will only happen if barriers are broken. Still there are conservative companies but...

In this narrative, it is apparent that interviewees are pleased with the increasing number and visibility of headscarved women. They see it as a success and the widening of places for them. However, in the first narrative, interviewees were concerned about the change in fashion, especially the rise in consumerism. They do not appreciate the new generation's welcoming approach to this. In this chapter the interviewees are positive and excited about the opportunities that they have now.

One could suggest that criticisms in this chapter did make the interviewees uncomfortable. Two of them said that, if criticism should happen it should be constructive. They believe people should be respectful to each other. But generally, they do not encourage criticism and were very angry while discussing this topic.

In chapter two, the interviewees interpret criticism differently. Interviewees' of the first narrative highlight the differences of people who are at different stages of their own process of becoming a (good) Muslim. So, therefore they prefer not to criticise. They think that it takes time and maturity, and that people should not criticize the young. On the other hand, this chapter is totally against criticism and has

individualistic approach. The idiom, “there is no accounting for taste” may reflect their attitude for criticising.

### 3.3. *Nefs* and a New Presence in the City

The issue of representation is controversial; it is hard to find any consensus on it. The perception of (Islamic or non-Islamic) representation changes through phases. Every attempt to rethink on the representation within new experiences in urban life ends up with new interpretations of the representation issue. Because of its controversy, even in the same narrative, we find interviewees responses slightly different. But towards the end of the interview, the women show unity in their responses.

Emine says that it seems like she has to have an attitude because people insult things. “It’s like you have a set of rules that you need to obey. This restricts you. You can’t live your life beyond these rules because you wear a headscarf”, and she continues:

Especially it is about the attire. For example I wear short trousers. I don’t know. For example I wouldn’t wear a *bone*<sup>91</sup> underneath my headscarf. I don’t do this now. I only did this because I liked the way it looked. I didn’t do it to get attention. But it was irritating people. I constantly got asked what kind of a headscarved person are you? You are headscarved person, how can you do this? These questions were absolutely ridiculous.

There is pointless social pressure on the issue of attire. Even the laughing of covered person is condemning. I know it’s not a normal thing [mistakes]; you have to obey to social norms. I just don’t understand that no one realizes people have their own *nefs*. They [who criticise] feel that they [who criticised] have to do everything [religious duty] because they are covered.

Emine is not happy with the discussion of misrepresentation of headscarved women. She explains that she was also criticized by people. The example she gives illustrates that even though she was criticized she continued not to wear *bone*. It seems she would do things that she likes even if it is not acceptable. Therefore, even if all rational explanations and constructive criticisms are given to her regarding a certain topic (for instance *bone* and trousers), Emine believes that one is free and has its own *nefs*. So therefore she is entitled to do whatever she wants.

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<sup>91</sup> Modest women mostly use *bone* to hide their hair line. With silk şals, some women have stopped using bone and thus let their hair line visible. This trend is very controversial. Some argue that this is not appropriate to Islam.

One could suggest that in terms of (practising) religion Emine believes that everyone is entitled to do whatever they want to do. However she supports and wants to see women being at the centre of attention in social life. Emine is very excited to see headscarved women being represented as beautiful, successful and visible in social life:

The numbers of modest women are increasing day by day. We see more of them everywhere in society. And it makes me happy. Headscarved women wearing nice clothes and looking nice, I personally like this. To be at the centre of attention is nice. There might be a time when we are not at the centre of attention. But our presence is a good investment to the future. We don't talk about headscarved women from the past. It seems they didn't make an impression like we did today. But today there are lots of women who will be mentioned and recognized in the future. So, I think, it's a good thing. I am happy. I like their presence everywhere. They have gone beyond *Nişantaşı*<sup>92</sup>. They are everywhere, it is good. (Emine)

Here the emphasis on 'being everywhere' is very noticeable. It seems Emine is happy for the presence of headscarved women which reminds us of the presence discussion. During the headscarf ban, to be able to be in some places was considered impossible. In other words, headscarved women were not allowed or were not seen in public spaces (for instance at universities, or certain social areas) as it is explained in the introduction. But today, beside the presence in public spaces Emine is very excited to see headscarved women in 'upper-class' places. The satisfaction of seeing such a change is evident in Emine's response. It seems that some women who are contented with visibility in that kind of places would be considered as "they would like 'modernity', as a marker of class, to encapsulate the signs of Islamic life too for a woman wearing a veil to be perceived as 'upper class' as well."<sup>93</sup>

Excitement of being in 'upper-class' places is also evident with Bourdieu's concept cultural capital. He argues that culture of living is a significant field of struggle between social groups. Therefore, lifestyle, and indeed consumption, has been using for purposes of social distinction. In this sense presence of headscarved women in particular places implies struggle between groups.

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<sup>92</sup> It is a popular and famous high street known for its designer brands, boutiques, luxury restaurants and cafes. It is a place known for the upper-class/elite.

<sup>93</sup> Yael-Navaro Yashin, "The Market for Identities: Buying and Selling Secularity and Islam", **Faces of the State: Secularism and Public Life in Turkey**, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), 113.

Barbarosoğlu provides a possible reason for ‘headscarved women being everywhere’. Barbarosoğlu<sup>94</sup> asserts that “Young headscarved women’s desire for being everywhere is a reaction against the notion that headscarved women belong to the lower class. In order to prove that they do not belong to the lower class they mark their presence everywhere”. According to Barbarosoğlu, in the past there were people who ignored the presence of headscarved women. Because of this, she says, young women’s desire to be accepted in the city is seen in many levels. And one of the levels is ‘being everywhere’. Therefore ‘being everywhere’ is a proof for the young women being accepted in the city. One could suggest that Emine’s opinion also reflects the desire and satisfaction of young women wanting to be accepted.

In addition to this, it is remarkable that Emine claims visibility of headscarved women only with their success in fashion, business or any other ‘visible’ presence. It is because, for instance, there are women known by their books, studies, and intellectual identity. But Emine asserts that “we don’t talk about headscarved women from the past. It seems they didn’t make an impression like we did today”. So therefore, it seems that she accepts being the influencer in ‘visible’ fields.

These young women care about their presence in social life. But also, it is clear that they care about how they present themselves. Interviewees’ enthusiasm to tell what they are doing in social life is a proof that they also priorities how they present themselves. Aktaş provides one of the reasons for the headscarved women’s activeness in social life:

Young headscarved girls try to show that when they cover themselves they do not cover/close themselves from the world. Their choice of hobby and social activities are an indication that these girls try and prove that they are different. They do this because of the negative assumptions and negative thoughts. And similarly being active outside of the house is preferred. Wearing one ‘type’ of clothing’s is avoided. They try and be unique in order to prove that they are stylish and trendy.<sup>95</sup>

Nurefşan says that she is very happy to be in social and business life. She thinks that they (headscarved women) should definitely have a social life. She thinks in the similar way as Emine shared, but she has more to add:

Maybe I do this out of ambition and revenge. Headscarved women were perceived as weak, cannot speak, sitting at home... But today, we can be a teacher, a lawyer, a doctor; we can work everywhere. And this makes

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<sup>94</sup> Fatma Barbarosoğlu, **İmaj ve Takva**, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2009), 97.

<sup>95</sup> Cihan Aktaş, **İslamcılık: Eksik Olan Artık Başka bir şey**, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2014), 76-77.

those who are against us annoyed. To be honest, I like it. Actually this should not happen because we are Muslims and we shouldn't cover to oppose them; it should be a religious obligation. Well, there is a little bit of ambition because we are human; I feel that. I can't exclude myself from social life. I do my religious duties. I go outside but I don't have to commit a sin. I can enjoy myself.

Nurefşan supports women who are successful in every aspects of social life. But she also admits that ambition and revenge play a part in her motive to be active in social life. We also come across the separation of 'self' and 'other'. In addition to this, Nurefşan highlights the importance of being an example to other women:

I think that we have to be an example for others. The most common thing I've heard when people see me: 'We've seen a lot different headscarved women!' What headscarved women have you seen? She was covering her head but open other parts; or she is covered but holds hands with her boyfriend ... As far as I hear such things, I think I have a serious responsibility as headscarved. I have to behave properly. I can't blame this on my *nefs*. Young girls can because they are still growing up. (Nurefşan)

Comparing Emine's and Nurefşan's responses, it seems that there is a difference about the opinions on *nefs*. Emine emphasized that one has her *nefs*, so we should not blame her. It is her struggle and decision. Nurefşan on the other hand expressed that "I can't blame this on my *nefs*." Nurefşan makes this statement for herself. She believes it is self-responsibility. On the surface it might seem that Emine and Nurefşan have different opinion towards *nefs*. But in terms of individual freedom they both agree that it is up a person's *nefs* to make decisions and choices. Whether it is right or wrong, an individual is free to act within her own understanding. Therefore, in terms of freedom they share a common view.

Eda gives importance to headscarved women in social life. She believes that education and having a career are vital. She emphasizes the need for headscarved women to serve and educate other people. She studies *guidance and psychological counseling* to give back to the community.

Headscarved woman should definitely be active in life. She has to be social. If an uncovered woman has rights to everything, covered women should also have this right. We are women as well. Nothing should stop us from socializing. I give importance [to participating in social life]. (Gülsüm)

Gülsüm gives importance to her appearance. She tries to behave appropriately. She does not chew gum, she does not grin; she does not laugh so much that her teeth

become visible. She says that being headscarved person affects her behaviour: “I was a more relaxed person when I was uncovered. I was active. Since I have being covered, maturity has occurred from Allah. When I wasn’t covered I looked young.” She also told that she helped a woman learn how to pray. She believes that religion should be part of her life. And she should help people learn about Islam.



**Figure 6: A *Tesettür* Store in the Famous Shopping District of Fatih.**

In this group it seems that young interviewees are not comfortable being forced to follow set rules. They believe that headscarved women’s behaviour and attitude should not depend on society’s expectations. They argue that one should be free even if she practises her religion; because she has *nefs* and it is a personal choice. Nevertheless, when it is about the representation of headscarved women in social life such as education and business, they are very excited and optimistic. Emine is very happy to see stylish covered women. (Figure 6 illustrates a new modern look).

Interviewees feel proud of headscarved women that are active in social life, especially if they are successful in their job. It is probably seen as some sort of victory against those who do not have the same vision.

On the contrary, interviewees of the first group were identifying representation of headscarved women to Islam. They would use phrases like *Allah, Kuran, Prophet, Muslim, sahabe, sünnet, fitrat, nefis* and refer to Islamic norms and traditions when talking about representation. In this group they do not use such phrases to describe their attitudes and thoughts. Consequently, in this narrative interviewees focus more on the successful presence and visibility of women in social life, rather than the religious obligations required and expected of a headscarved women. Their language and approach suggest that these interviewees priorities this life and ‘worldly matters’ first and Muslim identity follows after this. In the previous narrative Muslim identity, religious obligations and expectations were prioritized over social life.

#### **3.4. Modest Fashion: “Why there shouldn’t be nice dressed covered people?”**

People have different thoughts on fashion; however, people who follow the fashion have more favourable thoughts on fashion. Interviewees of this group have fashionable, stylish appearance. Therefore, we will see more positive outlook in this section on the issue of fashion and appearance.

Emine cares about her appearance and she is well-known within her environment. She is always with her tailor. She does not like ready-made cloths because she does not like having similar look to the other headscarved women. Being distinct is significant for her; she says and adds, “I feel happy when I see myself in mirror in this way”. She also plans her attires for her school at least a month before; prepares a weekly plan for attire. By doing this she saves time. In addition to this, she puts happiness at the centre of her life:

I continue to do these because it makes me happy. Whether I go to a tailor for dress, or need to buy fabric... The process of purchasing a fabric makes me happy. Being with fabrics... Making of the dress and seeing the end result. These are things that make me happy. So, I care about these.

Emine is against the idea that every fashion style/preference is associated with modest fashion. She highlights that to put every choice a headscarved women makes

under this heading is wrong. She underlines the fact that people are choosing their attire by themselves, it is not happening by compulsion. She is against the notion that: “they are making modest fashion” and does not see this as a project. She supports the fashion industry:

It is fantastically a huge market. We are all have effected by it somehow. We have nothing to do. We have got some ideas; we are having inspiration from them anyway. Everyone has inspiration from someone. There is nothing to do. I don't see modest fashion negatively. At least, it is a business. It is not that bad. Why shouldn't there be nice dressed covered people? We shouldn't grab attention; I don't say something to this. Ideally it would be nice to dress modestly but it is not happening. That is that.

Consumption is centre of our lives. Am I sorry? I am not. I am fine with my way. They sometimes ask why. Why for a thousand lira bag? Why there is five, ten thousand lira bag? It is simple actually. There is a demand for it and producers respond to this demand. It is simple. There shouldn't be a narrow perspective for everything. Happiness of an individual and personal satisfaction can be important as well. (Emine)

As mentioned before Emine is fond of fashion and nice appearance. She sometimes got criticized for it. Therefore, it seems that she has so many things to say about this issue. Her expressions are completely different from the first group. She gets satisfied by having a new nice dress and being unique. She emphasizes on concepts like market, business, and consumption. She knows about the negative connotation of consumption, but she says she does not care. Moreover, Emine defends the individuality and happiness.

Being unique was the main priority for Nurefşan while she was choosing her style and appearance many years ago. She did this in order not to look ‘similar to sisters’ or ‘similar to society’. Today she has changed her mind, but has not changed her style entirely:

Who do you rise against? I don't wear long coat. Why aren't you wearing a long coat? Because I didn't want to resemble with them. They wore long coats. And if I wore long coats I would have been described in the same way. So what? So Allah will be satisfied with you, right?

She also tells reactions of people towards her different style in those years. She says that she would not wear silk scarf, instead, preferred to have simple cotton scarves with colourful patterns. Nurefşan was very nervous to have not been taken seriously because her scarf was with peace symbol for instance. She even heard

comments like “half covered”. She still thinks that she was happy not being one of them.

Nurefşan’s reason for having a different style is noticeable. We have mentioned that young headscarved women want to have different appearances from their mothers or grandmothers. Some of them reject the ‘old styles’ in order to fit into modern urban setting. As Hebdige argues, “youth subcultures communicate their distinct identity and their difference from and in opposition to peer, parent and dominant cultures through a politics of style.”<sup>96</sup> However, in this example, it is interesting to see a young woman who rejects ‘the modern style’ as well. In other words, there are new trends which created by young headscarved women. But according to Nurefşan, and some other young women, these styles are too mainstream and popular; she does not like being similar with society. She seeks to have more unique and alternative style. In order to see occurring of new styles and limitless cycle, this example is important.

With time she became more careful of her appearance, especially after losing weight. Nurefşan thinks that appearance effects the perception of headscarved women. In terms of fashion, on the other hand, she tries to have different attire from the other headscarved women. She follows fashion from a distance; nevertheless she likes *tesettür* fashion because it gives opportunities to wear glorious dresses:

People were headscarved but wearing skinny jeans with short shirts. But today, people have started to wear perfect dresses and skirts by designers. Because of fashionable *feraces*<sup>97</sup> became popular. People have started to wear feraces. The perception of ‘getting warm in summer’ has been gone. So, modest fashion works. It has saved the people in the middle.  
(Nurefşan)

Eda prefers to wear clothes that hide her body shape and prefers clothes that suit her. She also cares about clothes being modest. She emphasizes on the importance of appearance, she has positive approach to modest fashion for its advantages. She hesitates to have attire that might not be associated with the image of headscarved woman. Eda thinks that “one’s attitude and appearance can expose her morality, and give an idea about her families preferences”. They are all symbols:

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<sup>96</sup> John Storey, **Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture: Theories and Methods**, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 120.

<sup>97</sup> *Ferace* is a black outfit that covers the body from tip to toe. It is originally an Arab dress; and Turkish women have also started to wear these when they go to pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. Now it is popular and there are hundreds of different styles of *ferace* for Turkish consumers. And now women wear these everywhere.

People's appearance is a mirror of their personality. Taking care of yourself, having nice attire, having clean cloths, having a harmony in colours... They all indicate my personality. So I care for sure. It shows my self-respect and respect to others.

Gülsüm follows fashion if it is suitable to her principles. She thinks that modest fashion should encourage people. But she highlights that styles which are not appropriate to *tesettür* should not be available. She believes in 'good' and 'right' fashion. Her ideas towards the modest fashion magazines are similar:

I've bought and read a lot. I think there are nice stuffs. They are going forward to the fashion. It is nice. I think modesty should be in everything. There were none of these kinds of things in the past. I like the progress of these things. I think the presence of a special magazine is perfect for modest people and it's suitable for me. I find it very positive.

Eda does not follow any modest fashion magazines and she has never read them, but thinks that it can be helpful to give inspiration to people as it has been doing in social media already. She has also started to wear loose cloths because they are in fashion. She discovered it suits her body. She noted that she would not usually like loose cloths, but today she wears them because people around them are wearing it and she likes it now.

Nurefşan is not sure about Islamic fashion magazines. On the one hand, people make money from religious things. She does not appreciate this. On the other hand, she says, it gives inspiration to people on how to dress with modesty during their wedding ceremonies and special days. This is in contrast to the past when women opened their hair during special occasions: "They might not open their hair because they see gorgeous modest bride models in those modest fashion magazines".

When the word comes to modest fashion and lifestyle magazines, interviewees were expressing their positive approach to them. Just like their thoughts on fashion, they think that it is an opportunity to inspire headscarved women to have 'proper' and 'harmonized' attire. They did not evaluate this issue within any Islamic teachings, they appreciate its inspiration even if they are not following it; Gülsüm sees it as a positive development.

Emine is the only woman who criticizes these magazines. Interestingly she is the most fashionable person among the people interviewed. She does not criticize for ethical or Islamic reasons but criticizes its lack of quality:

Normally I read magazines a lot, but I prefer American magazines. They are Vogue, Marie Claire etc. ... They are all fashion and clothing magazines. I buy six of them at the same time. I read and like them. On the other hand, I don't like modest magazines publishing in Turkey. They don't attract me. Why? To be honest, they are definitely like an imitation. I am not a fan of American or foreigners, but what they're [Turkish Islamic fashion magazines] doing is not professional for me. Also I don't think that modesty needs to have a magazine. Social media is amazingly active for this. (Emine)

When we evaluate the interviewees' responses, there are common features. First of all, it is clear that they all like to have nice, beautiful attire; and really care about their appearances. Being unique from other headscarved women is important to them as well. According to these women, fashion, especially modest fashion, has been very helpful and beneficial for them to have better attire and appearance. They see it as a good opportunity to represent the best image of a headscarved woman. They also emphasize that some people have started to wear more appropriate dresses just because it is in fashion. In this narrative phrases like 'happiness', 'inspiration' and 'benefit' illustrate the individualistic opinions. This is in contrast to first narrative.

In the first group, the interviewees were not favourable towards fashion. There was an attempt to comprehend its reason and motive, but they were not pleased to see the vast variety of clothes in the market. They would emphasize the need for modest fashion and the need for modest attire to be within its limits; but it should not promote consumption. Thus in the first narrative they were more concerned with the diversifying habits of consumption. However in this chapter we see expressions like "consumption is in the centre of our lives". Moreover, in this narrative, women do not mention the Muslim identity or other 'Islamic concerns' in relation to fashion.

### **3.5. "We are everywhere": Towards a New Urban Visibility**

The language used by the interviewees reveal the separation between 'self' and 'other'. Throughout the interview, the women subconsciously portrayed themselves as 'those who wore headscarf' and the rest of the people as 'uncovered women and men'. In this section, there will be more responses that illustrate definite separation of 'self' and 'other'.

Emine's interview was entirely based on 'we' and 'they'. It is also interesting that she starts her responses with 'they' to express *them* and ends it with 'we':

They have begun to prepare modesty festivals. It's frightening to *some* people. Our professor of social psychology always says: 'I never forget; *they* have come to *Niřantaşı*'. *They* haven't only come to *Niřantaşı*; *they* are in *Çırağan*<sup>98</sup> today and fantastically active. *We* are everywhere.

People who had pressured the modest circle are now frightened of us. Actually I like it. It is bad maybe but I like it. I like their presence everywhere. I don't know if it's right or wrong. If we look at it from a religious perspective it's wrong to think like this. There should be religious sensitivity. Normally we shouldn't wear attire to grab attention. But I like what is happening. Why not? (Emine) (Emphasis mine)

It seems that Emine is very satisfied to be 'everywhere'. She uses the word 'they' to indicate "those who put a pressure on the modest circle". Emine uses 'we' to include women with headscarf. She gives the impression that headscarved women belong to a group and refers to them as 'us' and considers the opposing group as 'they'. When discussing the appropriateness of the attire Islamically Emine mentions more of the benefit it brings to 'us' (i.e. the group) and talks less about in terms of religion.

Aktaş highlights that a headscarved woman, who is shown as the 'other', is defined from the outside. Nevertheless, introducing yourself becomes harder; not easier. She says that headscarf gains new meanings as it goes through the masses; despite this for headscarved women it was a meaningful being different from the mass. They wanted to be different from the typical followers of fashion. The sense of belonging also changes as it goes through the masses. Because of this Aktaş emphasizes that: "You must make them believe that you are not dangerous, you can laugh, you can have fun, you can see the beauties, and you can enjoy life..."<sup>99</sup>

Still there is a saying, 'happiness games of headscarved women'. I see so many article titles these days. 'Why headscarved women are this happy? Why there are so many headscarved women enjoy life?' We have these sorts of comments, articles, and reactions. I like it when I see these. People don't understand why we are happy and it is interesting. People think as we cover our hair, we cover our lives. Probably we prove this by enjoying our life more. It affects them. I think I have a strong opinion about this matter. (Nurefřan)

I hope the number of headscarved women is going to increase. I wish the number of working headscarved women is going to increase. We all see the respect an uncovered woman has. Indeed, we should all have this regardless. It is so disappointing being discriminated because of our

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<sup>98</sup> *Çırağan Palace* has its own restaurant and venue spaces. *Çırağan* is known to be very expensive venue and not everyone can afford such venue.

<sup>99</sup> Cihan Aktaş, *İslamcılık: Eksik Olan Artık Başka bir şey*, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2014), 74-75.

headscarf, not being allowed to work in certain places because we wear headscarves. We are respectful to uncovered women's rights, they should also be respectful to our rights. A modest woman should be definitely in business life. She should work.

If an uncovered woman can be a manager, I want to be a manager as well.  
(Gülsüm)

In a similar vein, Şişman affirms that “because of the ban, the years that follow this meant to be part of the society, to be active in public sphere, to be recognized, to be active in politics. These became the criteria. But eventually it became more than this, it became a necessity. It became goals and principles of the individuals.”<sup>100</sup>

In this narrative, we see a reference to ‘us/self’. This does not have the similar connotation of the first narrative. In the first narrative there isn't a separation of ‘self’ and ‘other’. The interviewees only focus on the ‘us’ to refer to Islam and its teachings. It seems that the interviewees use ‘we’ to unite all Muslims. For instance phrases like: “first of all, we should ask what I am doing as a Muslim...”, “We could organize to have a *mescit* in university” are used in the first group. They do not mention the ‘other’ as an alienated group.

However in this chapter the interviewees portray ‘they/other’ as the sort of ‘enemy’, as an opposing group. In addition to this it seems that the interviewees are happy to see the ‘they’ group being frightened (Emine) and amused to see the confusion the ‘they’ group has about them (Nurefşan). In this chapter the reference to Islamic sayings are not present. Instead ‘happiness’, ‘success’ in business, and successful visibility of headscarved women are emphasized.

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<sup>100</sup> Nazife Şişman, **‘Emanet’ten ‘Mülk’e/ Kadın Bedeninin Yeniden İnşası**, 3.baskı (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2013), 133.

## **4. RECLAIMING THE HEADSCARF**

### **4.1. Reaction and Complaint: A Semantic Backlash**

Narratives are shaped through the thoughts and behaviours of headscarved women. The thoughts and behaviours of interviewees sometimes have similarities between narratives. This would be compared and evaluated in this section. However, in this chapter we also see that their approaches to the particular issue reflect vast differences as well. So far, we have seen two narratives which illustrate the different responses given by the interviewees. When we compared the first group to the second they were remarkably different. Few similarities were seen between the groups. However in the third narrative we will see that comparisons can be made because there are similarities and differences. It should be noted that even if comparisons can be made, one could not make generalizations between the three narratives. The third narrative has its unique approach and attitude and therefore needs to be evaluated separately.

In this chapter we will see different point of views from the other narratives. For instance, interviewees like to talk about other headscarved women instead of themselves. These are mostly about the particular stereotype of headscarved women. Interviewees openly describe the stereotype and criticise them a lot. Therefore we will see negativity in this narrative because they complain and criticise frequently. They continue this approach throughout the four themes. The key words may help to comprehend this narrative: corruption, change, loss, new headscarved women, they.

Zeliha is thirty-year old woman who identifies herself as a Turk from Western Thrace. She was born and raised in Greece. She always dreamed of living in Turkey. She moved to Istanbul to study, and she stayed there because she got married. She graduated from Boğaziçi University with a Computer Engineering degree. Today, she is working three days a week because she has a baby. She has been working with this company for about eight years. Zeliha told that she had experienced some difficulties in Greece because people would think of Muslims in a certain way

because of how Muslims are portrayed in the media. Zeliha highlights that her wearing a headscarf started with her family upbringing:

For me wearing a headscarf is more to do with consciousness. I get embarrassed. If I don't cover myself I would feel ashamed. For example if I wear tight clothing I feel ashamed. Because of my position [in business] I cannot wear long coat and because of this I feel bad. But I am happy with the way I am. I have found myself.

Selin is twenty-seven year old history teacher. She graduated from Sakarya University. She told the story of her wearing a headscarf. When she was in high school, in the summer she went to her local shop. She says that her neckline was visible. The shopkeeper told her that the summer had been good for her. She felt ashamed and bad. She considered covering her hair in the future. However, this particular incident had let her to cover her hair. She remembers that she covered her hair because she got affected by the shopkeeper's remarks. This was during *Ramazan*<sup>101</sup>. According to her, covering means to obey Allah's commandment. In addition to this, Selin highlights that she has started to be aware of the meaning of life while she was studying university.

Hülya has been a kindergarten teacher for about five years. She is an interviewee that likes speaking more about other people and less about herself. When answering the questions she was referring to the society or headscarved women. She did not mention herself. She liked to speak in a general context. When asked specifically about her views she did express her thoughts. In addition to this Hülya only cares whether her actions and behaviours are according to Islam. She priorities what God thinks of her behaviour and actions. She does not care about what people think of her:

It's God's commandment. It's Islam's souvenir/ornament. It's *farz* but also an ornament. It protects women from the evil. I decided to wear headscarf. My family did tell me to wear a headscarf but it wasn't forced upon. They told me to wear a headscarf because it was culturally expected of me. (Hülya)

The last interviewee, Büşra, is twenty six years old. She graduated from Istanbul Bilgi University with a psychology degree. She has six months consulting experience at a private school. Today, she is married and has an baby. She was the

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<sup>101</sup> *Ramazan* is a holy month that Muslims are fasting and gives charity according to teachings of Islam.

most excited interviewee. All the interviewees responded to being a headscarved because it is Allah's commandment. However, Büşra also adds that if it was not God's commandment people would not wear headscarf in the summer. She was the only interviewee that commented in this way.

When comparing to other narratives' interviewees, these four women did not talk so much on their personal stories or thoughts about themselves. They were only responding to the questions directly without mentioning about themselves. In addition they did talk about the issues in more detail than the others. Moreover, while discussing the issues, they would give more examples from people that they observed than themselves. This narrative can be seen as interviewees' reactions to the second narrative because they make statements for the stereotype of headscarved women. Therefore, one suggest that this group is focusing on the 'others' even if the 'other' is headscarved or not.

In the first narrative, for instance, interviewees were explaining headscarf in detail and analysing it. They would discuss its meaning and purpose. In the second narrative, we do not see any explanation about the commandment of *tesettür* or any other Islamic sayings or emphasis. Rather, interviewees were telling their career plans which centred around education and worklife. However, in the third narrative we do not see the interviewees mentioning in detail the purpose and the meaning of being headscarved. They are not as career driven as the second category.

#### **4.2. Consuming the Headscarf: "They shouldn't be left on their own, because *tesettür* is no longer *tesettür* anymore"**

The issue of criticism is the most revealing part for the approaches of narratives. Interviewees' language, thoughts and attitudes towards criticism illustrate the typical differences of headscarved women. In this chapter, we will see a totally different approach from the other two narratives. In other themes, the third group has similarities and differences between the other two groups. Therefore, criticism is the only theme for the third group which differentiates itself specifically.

Zeliha tells that she was not a conscious Muslim when she came to Turkey. Before, she liked to be stylish. But when she met her husband this has changed. Her husband warned her, and she changed her appearance. She mentions that she changed everything about her life. And today she warns her sister as well:

I can't lie. Yes I do criticise. I sometimes criticise my sister. For instance I would criticise her choice of clothing. I would say to her that she doesn't dress appropriately or that she talked too much around people.

Zeliha's response to the issue of change is neutral. She mentions the advantages and disadvantages. But she observes that this era is more relaxed. She says that you can go outside and live freely. At the same time people try to be more modern. She suggests that in the past people wore simple clothes and this was better.

Hülya says that she had been criticized only one time by her teacher in high school. She was the first in her school. However, her teacher would not understand the reason why she was covered. Her teacher could not associate her success and the headscarf; and told this to Hülya.

Out of all the interviewees Hülya complained the most about the new stylish fashionable headscarved women. She is not happy with the change. Therefore she criticises without hesitating:

Of course I criticize. If someone is wearing a headscarf then she should wear it appropriately. That's what I think. Whatever we do whatever we think has to be appropriate. One should always remember the reason why we are wearing headscarf and should behave like this. As we go through phases a headscarved women becomes only concerned with worldly matters. There only concern is to prove themselves. They want to make themselves look attractive. Our only concern is meaning it. But deep down we don't obey the teachings of Islam. I think this is to do with the political situation we are in at the moment... It's because of a particular political party that headscarved women become rich. As they became wealthier they became more concerned with worldly matters. The world became a better place. So they compromise.  
(Hülya)

According to Hülya's responses it seems she thinks that she has a right to criticise wrongly covered/dressed headscarved women because they should be dressing appropriate to Islam. She asserts that people forgot the reason for wearing it, so they could be mistaken. As people forget its reason and meaning they only care about worldly matters which are the main reason for changing negatively. She also emphasizes the political party and its effect to those changes which has caused people to become wealthier.

Hülya evaluate the changes in society differently. She blames the political influence, consumerism and worldly matters for the different styles and choices. According to her, headscarved women's religious appearance is unimportant as long as they are not 'filling' with Islamic consciousness. On the other hand, some

intellectuals point out that the Islamic appearances of Muslim women may effect the Islamification of social life. In other words, some believe that headscarf is the natural process of Islamification: “Women who cover in Turkey is the process of Islamification, it has become the most visible symbol”.<sup>102</sup> This is in contrast to what Hülya suggests about it. It should also be noted that Hülya’s explanation is not a marginal one; it has been argued among some Muslims. Indeed this discussion can be evaluated with many dimensions, but the way especially some headscarved women comment this is noteworthy. But in this group, she is the only interviewee who strongly emphasises this. One could suggest that there are differences of opinion and interviewees’ responses confirm this difference.

Hülya wanted to say more about the headscarved women who followed fashion. She openly criticise those people and it seems that she is angry with them:

We need to ask this to those sisters that follow this fashion. Do they pray, read the *Kuran*? Are they as sensitive as they are to fashion as they are to Islam? Do they follow the teachings of Islam? We need to ask this as well. Those that design these clothes, what do they have in their minds. Are they truly appropriate? We need to warn these people. They shouldn’t be left on their own, because *tesettür* is no longer *tesettür* anymore. It has lost its meaning. You see women’s earrings, even their fringes. It’s going to a point where *tesettür* is seen as a decoration/ accessory. That’s why we should always warn them. *Tesettür* purpose is to cover. But now all we think about is looking beautiful. That’s the mentality they have now; to look attractive.

Hülya’s first response illustrates the obstacles and describes what is going wrong according to her. She was complaining that headscarved women’s only concern was worldly matters, and to prove themselves and to be attractive. In this response she goes further and asks questions on whether these women practise Islam. Hülya is very concerned with the changing meaning of *tesettür* which is visible in society. She thinks that her views are rational and therefore correct. Because of this, it seems that she justifies her criticism. We see the same approach in Selin’s responses as well:

When you look at headscarved women they wear colourful clothing. In the past it wasn’t like this. They do their headscarf tight and really high. This makes the *şals* more attractive. A sunglass is another issue. By wearing them on top of the headscarf grabs a lot of attention. I think they wear sunglasses on purpose to grab attention.

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<sup>102</sup> Nilüfer Göle, **Melez Desenler**, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2008), 105.

There was a woman in our class she had dyed her [appear] hair blonde and wore a headscarf. She wasn't fasting as well. I asked myself what exactly she believes in. Why isn't she fasting? Why isn't she praying? I was really curious about this. Because people see her and say she wears a headscarf and does nothing.

They wear trousers and short top over it and go outside without wearing a *ferace*. When I look at these women...When they pray they find a long skirt and wear this. Then I think to myself, if you wear a long skirt to pray then it's conflicting because God is everywhere and you should wear long skirt all the time. It's conflicting even denying Islam to some extent. By only doing this when praying illustrates that God is only present when praying in their life. (Selin)

After Selin's criticism of headscarved women she started to talk about herself. She told that she had started to wear long coats after trying to understand and search the *Kuran* more deeply. She found out that one should have a different outerwear to what one is wearing. She says that one realizes it by searching. She noted that the environment also affects one.

When I compare myself to the time when I first covered, I wore short top over my trousers. When I look at the pictures I get shocked. It surprises me. So when I look at the teenagers now and those that have covered recently they were just like me. You only realize this in time.

It seems that Selin wore similar things to the generation that she criticizes now. One suggests that she has difficulty to understand why they are wearing in this way. She believes that it is not appropriate to Islam. She criticises the new generation:

When I look at women who have recently covered, I think they just cover for the sake of it. If we think about it has something to do with their social surroundings. It's to do with their families. For instance my students would cover but they just wear the headscarf for wearing it. When I look at the rest of their clothing, they wear normal trousers with a short top. If we look at it in this way then only their head is covered. And that's why they cover for the sake of it. Their neck is visible, you can see their ears. You have headscarved women like this. They wear colourful headscarves maybe they like this. They tried and created their own fashion by wearing colourful headscarves. (Selin)

Selin makes a lot of criticisms, however, when the word comes to criticism itself she showed a different attitude which was not compatible with the criticisms she made towards 'inappropriate' headscarved women. This can be an example for the 'construction of self' during interviews. She makes criticisms in details about 'inappropriate' appearances of headscarved women; however, about 'criticism' she shows a smooth approach:

Yes we are criticising/evaluating these people but to approach them and ask why they are doing it like this is wrong. Only God can judge. We try to evaluate these people because they are not wearing appropriate to Islam, but actually Allah knows [what she is wearing]. In fact, one's own religion is what one knows by its heart and mind. It is true for her as much as she understand. We shouldn't criticise but if we do it to show the right way it should be done nicely... No one has to right to criticise. But we should teach the true ways in a nice way. We have so much to learn ourselves. (Selin)

Selin believes that one should not criticise because woman practices her religion in the way she understands it. But Selin believes in showing and teaching the right thing to people in a nice way. Similar to Selin, Büşra has the same approach about criticism despite both of them criticize people:

When someone criticizes someone they really need to look at themselves and think if they're actually living up to their words. For instance if a headscarved girl that wears a *şal* approaches another headscarf girl and criticises that girls make up, then they have no right to criticise. They should look at themselves first.

When I was engaged, you could see my neck. My fiancé would warn me. I'm glad he warned because I learnt from this and became more aware of it. This was a good thing because sometimes you are not aware of your mistakes and someone telling you about it is good. You become aware of it. (Büşra)

Büşra thinks that change has two ways in terms of appearance. She highlights the positive change with the spreading of *feraces*. She says that she would not find any loose *feraces* that came to her from Mecca a few years before. But today one can find it everywhere. She considers it as a positive change. On the other hand there are different *tesettür* clothes that are designed by people who are against religion. This is a negative change.

Büşra criticises fashionable headscarved women, especially those that are not careful on their wedding dress and makeup: "I think a headscarved person exaggerates wedding makeups. They go overboard with it. Especially when compared to uncovered person". She was very angry while telling the headscarved woman who did not cover her neck in her wedding. Moreover she criticises the change of headscarved women:

They want to be attractive. Whatever uncovered girls wear they want to wear as well. They don't want to lag behind. They want to be as stylish and as attractive as them. But a covered girl doesn't come to this opinion randomly. It's subconsciously embedded into their thoughts. This is done

by commercials, pictures, boutiques. By seeing and taking it as role model it's somehow embedded into their thoughts.

In this narrative, interviewees criticize the headscarved women who do not dress appropriately to Islam. They criticise the new appearance of headscarved women. It seems that interviewees go further and criticise the extent to which they are Muslim. According to the interviewees, inappropriate dressed headscarved women do mistakes. Because of this, they criticise them. This is the interviewees' justification for criticising.

In the first and second narrative, however, we do not come across with criticisms. Rather, they are against criticisms. Therefore we can say that the third group differentiates itself by being critical. Comparing with the second group, there are no common attitudes and approaches. The criticism is unacceptable for the interviewees of the second group while in third group criticising comes naturally. These narratives have also different explanations for the issue of change. Second group's approach is totally favourable while third group is not favourable because the meaning of *tesettür* has changed.

To compare the first and the third group it seems that they have a commonality, but they are not evaluating in the same way. Both groups have unfavourable thoughts on the new appearance of headscarved women, especially the young generation. However, first group does not prefer to criticise because one is going through a phase which no one should say a word on it. Instead, interviewees encourage to help them to better themselves [those who have 'inappropriate' appearance]. And also interviewees' of the first group prefer to say 'us' to refer both them and other headscarved women who have 'mistakes'. This is in contrast to the third group as interviewees use the word 'them' to refer to 'inappropriate' headscarved women.

Lastly, we see Islamic explanations in both narratives, unlikely to the second narrative. But the first group makes Islamic interpretation to understand the 'mistakes' of headscarved women. They do not use an Islamic terminology in order to insult them. Contrary to this, in the third group we see that interviewees criticize the 'inappropriateness' of headscarved women in the name of Islam.

#### 4.3. Losing the Islamic Reference: “They should be aware of why they are wearing a headscarf”

The issue of representation is very important and sensitive for headscarved women, although headscarved women have different reactions and perceptions of it. Representation continues to be a controversial topic. In this narrative, like almost all headscarved women they care about representing Islam and giving a good impression of themselves as headscarved women. In addition to this they believe in women being active in society and promote this. However, the degree of this opinion changes amongst these women.

Firstly, Büşra believes that there is a strong responsibility for women to be headscarved because it is a commandment in the *Kuran*. Therefore women need to set example and promote the religion:

By covering your head you don't become a headscarved woman. You have to dress accordingly. Wearing a headscarf means *tesettür*. Whatever word comes out from your mouth you need to be careful. You need to think about what you say. You need to think before you speak. Words are important, the way you look is important, your actions, a lot of things are important.

As well as Büşra, Hülya emphasizes the importance of thinking about being headscarved women. They both suggest that a headscarved women needs to be aware of why she is wearing this. But Hülya's language is more informative and detailed. Her use of language and tone suggests that she was resentful towards those that were not behaving according to Islam:

If you're wearing a headscarf you need to think the reasons why you covered. Why did you cover? You need to know this, be aware of this. Are you aware that the word *tesettür* is one of God's names? If they know the true meaning then they need to behave in this way. They shouldn't compromise in a way that makes others happy. They shouldn't please others. They should behave according to the teachings of Islam.  
(Hülya)

Selin thinks that a Muslim woman, especially a headscarved woman should be very careful of her behaviour outside. She should be an example. This is because society would generalize this to the all headscarved women. She says that there are many people who criticise them. Or people would exaggerate the negative action that a headscarved woman does. Selin also underlines that Muslim men can 'hide' their

religious identity and this makes the headscarved women the only apparent faces of religious identity:

Our problem is that people get judged by what they wear, not by their personality. Men can hide the fact that they're religious or even Muslim. You can't judge men from their outer appearance. But we women get judged by our outer appearance, our clothing. One could see if we are religious from our choice in clothing. I wish we could hide this. People should live their religion without judgments like this. Because people still think if you are headscarved person you are backward thinking/old fashion/conservative.

Selin believes that people still think headscarved women are backward/old fashioned. This response highlights the importance of representation. From the above excerpt we can see that for Selin what others think are important to her and therefore it seems she wants to change this perception. She wants the others to think about headscarved women differently. One could suggest that the interviewees of this group have similar views like Selin.

In terms of the representation, Zeliha priorities to be active in social life:

You have to be social. If you restrict yourself then society will look at you/treat you differently. Then you start seeing yourself like that and you're always at home. And this leads to unhappiness. Socializing make one happy. Headscarved women especially need to be happy (It is important in terms of being an example).

As we mentioned before Zeliha is a working woman and she likes her job. In the interview she told that she was more career driven during her university years. Today she works part-time because she has a baby. But still she gives importance to headscarved women working or being active in any level of social life. She thinks this is beneficial to society and good for representation/ representing the image of headscarved women.

Büşra has a similar understanding of being active in social life. She also emphasizes:

You have to be one step ahead of people; you have to educate yourself more. You can't fall behind. You have to know about technology and English... You have to have an occupation. I think a headscarved woman should work as well. Not working like mad. But has to have an active social life, has to be active in the workforce as well. But if she has a family then she mustn't forget her kids. She has to balance family and work. (Büşra)

On the other hand Hülya asserts that headscarved women should be in social life on the condition that one preserves her Muslim identity:

You shouldn't be stuck up. A headscarved woman should have confidence. They should defend themselves as well. They should be aware of why they are wearing a headscarf. They should always defend themselves. Never give up. Never compromise.

A Muslim woman, as long as she doesn't lose her Muslim identity she can be social. But in order to fit in, that person loses her Muslim identity then I think she shouldn't be in those kinds of places. If that person is going to compromise in a way that affects the person Muslim identity then she shouldn't be in that social environment. In order to fit in, if that person behaves in an unislamic way, or if that person is using the headscarf for different purpose then she shouldn't be active socially. (Hülya)

In this narrative we see the interviewees care about the good representation of headscarved women, especially in social life. They all have concerns over the understanding and practise of *tesettür*. They think that headscarved woman should be active in social life within a good manner. According to this narrative a headscarved woman have responsibilities. One also suggests that this is related with interviewees' thoughts on what the 'other' thinks about them.

We mentioned that the third narrative has similarities from the first and the second narrative as well as differences. This is evident in this section. In the second group interviewees were against the issue of 'good' representation especially in terms of Islamic appropriateness. They believed that this put pressure on them. In the third group they prioritize the Islamic appropriateness. Thus, the third narrative differs from the second. However prioritising Islamic appropriateness is also evident in the first narrative. The language and approach of the first group is similar to the third group. They both defend that the 'good' representation is vital for Islamic identity; they also consider this as a responsibility.

However, there is another approach of the third narrative which is also mentioned in the second narrative. This is interviewees' desire for the good representation in social life. One could suggest that all the narratives have the approach of the good representation. But the second and third group priorities to be active in social life as a sort of 'victory' towards the 'other'. In other words, the second group does not prioritize the representation in terms of Islamic responsibility in contrast to the third group. However, the second group gives importance to the

‘good’ representation of headscarved women in order to having good impression especially in social life. Being successful in worklife, having nice and elegant look can be considered as examples for second group’s remarks. This is similar with the third group as another motive for prioritizing representation.

#### **4.4. Headscarf under the Threat of Consumerist Lifestyle: “They are trying to create a fashion”**

*Tesettür* fashion industry has started to develop in the last twenty years and reached its peak in the last few years. Because of this rise, fashion has been a topic of discussion. It does not even matter if one follows fashion or not. It still remains a topic of discussion. Nonetheless, people who do not even follow fashion had more to talk about this topic as well. It seems that every interviewee had an opinion on this topic. In the third group as well the interviewees had a lot to discuss.

In this narrative we will see that the interviewees’ negatively evaluate fashion. Interviewees seem to care about their appearance and coordination of their outfits. In addition to this, they were excited to speak about the *tesettür* fashion industry and headscarved women. Firstly, we will look at Büşra’s responses:

I have to be in style but at the same time dress accordingly. Balancing this is seriously difficult. Sometimes I can achieve this sometimes I can’t. For instance I wear skinny jeans/trousers but to compensate this I would wear a *ferace*. It’s really difficult wearing a *tesettür* in our time.

A headscarved woman has to wear clothes that cover her body, should hide her body shape. She shouldn’t draw attention, but of course has to be stylish. In order not to grab attention one shouldn’t be scruffy, wear weird things, look unstylish. A woman should be stylish. A headscarved woman shouldn’t give the wrong impression to people especially those that are uncovered. They shouldn’t think ‘oh look at this covered woman’, it’s obvious from what she is wearing that she is a covered women, they shouldn’t think that a covered women is shallow. I think a covered woman should look good, be stylish, clean, and trendy. (Büşra)

Büşra’s criteria for being headscarved resemble Barbarosoğlu’s statement for headscarf identity. Büşra’s descriptions of an ideal women fit Barbarosoğlu’s definition:

“Reform in clothing starting point was to be aesthetic. The religious sect without realizing or realizing has identified with this. ‘Headscarved but stylish’, ‘headscarved but elegant’,

'headscarved but urban'... With these definitions religious women can fit into the public sphere. These definitions are accepted."<sup>103</sup>

Büşra cares about her appearance and believes that a headscarved woman should be stylish and trendy. Even though she highlights the necessity of hiding one's body shape. She believes in giving a good impression. It seems that Büşra's excerpt on appearance is similar to the second narrative. But Büşra's views on fashion differentiate itself from the second narrative. In the following response, Büşra explains her understanding of fashion:

Yes I think there is a *tesettür* fashion. I don't know if this is a good thing or a bad thing. This is debatable. When I think about '*tesettür*' fashion I think about a girl that wears a '*şal*', full makeup, tight trousers and a short top over the trousers. You see this especially in websites that sell *tesettür* clothes. You can also see this in Instagram, Facebook, boutiques on billboards. For instance if a girl that is newly covered goes into this store to buy *tesettür* clothes, she would end up buying stuff that is nothing to do with *tesettür*. This is what *tesettür* fashion has come to.

One could see that Büşra thinks that not all clothing items are appropriate to *tesettür*. Therefore, it seems, she describes the 'inappropriate' *tesettür* styles. It is noticeable that she in fact illustrates the stylish stereotype of headscarved women. About *tesettür* fashion she thinks of this image. She also highlights that 'stores are full of these 'inappropriate' *tesettür* pieces', Büşra thinks that it should not be an excuse; one should be very careful to buy things for *tesettür*: "Someone who wears *tesettür* has to be sharp and thoughtful... When they go into a store and if there isn't *tesettür* clothing then they shouldn't buy anything from that store for the sake of it. They have to search for *tesettür* clothing or go to a tailor." Moreover, Büşra has the notion that *tesettür* fashion is something that is 'created'. This is in contrast to the second narrative because we see the idea that fashion was created and seen as a project:

I think people who do not wear *tesettür* have created this, for instance Jews and Christians that are against our religion have created this *tesettür* fashion. It's because of them that *tesettür* fashion is created. They did this to threaten our religion. Like I said before the girls on the billboards are not actually real covered girls they are models. They don't represent covered girls.

Büşra is not the only interviewee who assumes that *tesettür* fashion is created. Zeliha has the same approach. She cares about her appearance as well as others and

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<sup>103</sup> Fatma Barbarosoğlu, *Şov ve Mahrem*, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2006), 148.

cares about the cleanness and wearing clothing that suits her. She is not interested in having trendy clothes; instead she prefers to have cloths that suit her as well as being appropriate to Islamic norms. Zeliha says that she does not approve ‘extreme’ fashion.

Yes there is a fashion. They are trying to create a fashion. They are trying to fit everyone into a specific category. And because of this I try not associate myself with this hype. They’re trying to force everyone to dress the same but staying away from this is not right. Then you grab attention by not following the trend. Like I said before, encouragement is important. How are you going to encourage the younger generation if you stay away from fashion? The younger generation would want to follow the trend. Yes I am stylish; try to wear nice clothes but I’m not ambitious. To be stylish you don’t have to be ambitious. (Zeliha)

When talking about *tesettür* fashion with Zeliha, she did not hesitate to criticise people who followed trends ‘ambitiously’. But she does acknowledge that in order to encourage and reach to the young generation *tesettür* trends are needed. Young headscarved women like to have stylish, trendy clothes. This is one of the ways that this group does not completely give up on fashion despite its ‘unfavourable’ features.

*Tesettür* fashion changes according to what the big firms/ highstreet stores produce. If they produce colourful headscarves then naturally people buy these. So it’s more to do with what the store produce that determines what’s in fashion. (Selin)

For Selin headscarved women should wear their clothes in accordance with *sünnet* [acceptable in Islam]. She cares about having a modern appearance. But at the same time, like the other interviewees, she is not happy with the *tesettür* fashion because most of them are not appropriate to Islam:

What the fashion designers create is not Islamically appropriate. But because they design this and it’s in fashion people wear them. So all we could do is pick clothes out of this range. But sometimes it’s so tempting, it’s our *nefs*. A particular clothing might not be suitable but we end up purchasing it because we like it.

Selin told a different side of this fashion. According to Selin, sometimes people buy *tesettür* clothes (which are indeed ‘properly’ *tesettür*) just because it is fashion. But in fact people should wear these pieces for the Islamic/*tesettür* appearance anyway. She says that this is one of the reasons for the change of headscarved women:

Now *ferace* has started to become fashionable. In the past this wasn't the case. *Ferace* is appropriate for me because it's loose clothing. It's not tight. But one should always buy clothes that are appropriate Islamically and appropriate for their body type not because they are in fashion.

This narrative has the most reactive approach about the *tesettür* fashion magazines. It is clear that the first and third narrative does not have favourable thoughts on *tesettür* fashion. But first group did not talk about *tesettür* fashion magazines. They had only said it is not appropriate as well as the fashion itself. However, interviewees of the third group openly criticized:

My cousins follow it. All they think about is fashion. Their life becomes fashion. This is not right to being obsessed with fashion. For example they get happy when they go shopping. Shopping makes them happy. If you go into this cycle you can't get out. For instance I like watching soaps. And some like fashion. You can't prohibit them. I like looking at clothes but I don't wear them. (Zeliha)

When I look it's actually not Islamically appropriate. Teenage girls do this a lot. They wear skinny jeans. But uncovered girls were skinny jeans as well. There's nothing that separates them. They wear skinny jeans and tight dresses and call it fashion. When I saw *Modanisa*'s<sup>104</sup> fashion designers they were all uncovered people. I thought to myself how they are going to make that empathy with us. I think there is this problem. (Selin)

I think it's disgusting. I never paid for such a magazine. Like I said before, it is non-Muslims that have created such a hype. The articles, pictures, the layout of it are nothing to do with Islam. I think it has been created to attract teenagers. (Büşra)

As well as others, Hülya thinks that these magazines are inappropriate to Islam. According to her, the aim of fashion is to demonstrate the beauty of woman, it is not to demonstrate woman as a Muslim. Therefore, she says, one should ask whether Islamic fashion magazines are there to help Islam.

This narrative claims that *tesettür* fashion is something made or created. This is a new approach among the other narratives. The first group argues this issue with 'self/us'. In other words they do not look for the 'other' in order to find the reason for the 'wrong choices' which results with inappropriate appearances. They accept that people from 'us' produce and consume them. So there is no one else to blame. On the other hand the second group is against the notion that *tesettür* fashion is something that is created. However, in the third group, the new appearances and

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<sup>104</sup> *Modanisa* is Turkey's first an online fashion and shopping website for modest dressing.

choices of wearing styles are harshly criticized. They mostly think that *tesettür* fashion is created to attract teenagers. Interviewees think that the new styles are inappropriate to *tesettür*/Islam; therefore, we see in their excerpts that, ‘some’ must be created this. It is probably derived from the question, “why Muslims create such non-Islamic items or styles?” Here, the suspicion goes to conspiracy theories. There are confusions, suspicions, denials to the source of inappropriate styles for headscarved women and it seems these have responded with conspiracy theories: “This must be created”. Also Büşra goes further with conspiracy theories and says “it is non-Muslims that have created such a hype”, for the Islamic fashion magazines. She believes that “Jews and Christians that are against our religion have created this *tesettür* fashion”, because she does not associate these designs and styles might be created by headscarved women or Muslims. When I told Büşra what she thought about designers, stylists and producers of these *tesettür* fashion magazines that were also headscarved women. She responded that headscarved women did this for money. She thinks that headscarved women who design such magazines do not necessarily mean it is for *tesettür*. Those women are working for money and they are not ‘proper/real’ *tesettür* women. To sum up the issue, it seems they observe a corruption that they cannot associate with Islamic identity, and explain it within conspiracy theories.

Today, as many of the interviewees mentioned, *tesettür* fashion is spreading extremely fast and social media has been more effective than the magazines. In the social media we see that there are lots of professional and amateur designers who define *tesettür* trends. According to Büşra, they started these pages, boutiques for gaining money. Since a competition environment had been started, designers started to change *tesettür* clothes to be different from the others. She thinks that this situation is awful.

Lastly Hülya says that she cares about her appearance and being properly dressed. But more importantly, she cares if Allah appreciates her clothes. According to Hülya, being careful does not mean to wear black from tip to toe. One should not grab attention, but she should be clean and properly dressed. She also thinks that one should be modern as well. Hülya does not follow fashion; it is not her priority. But she says that sometimes she can buy fashionable/trendy pieces. However, she is harsh to evaluate the *tesettür* fashion and its followers:

It's the younger generation that have created this particular fashion. 18-20 year olds that wear headscarf have created this phase. All we think about now is what we should wear, what headscarf we should use, which headscarf would look good on which dress. Social media supports this as well. Whatever we wear, we post it on social media. The number of likes determines what we wear. Everyone now wears the same clothes. They try to get accepted to that system. Or they wear in that particular way to have the authority to speak or to give the impression that they have that authority. They want to give the impression/message that they are there. 'Don't think we don't exist. We follow fashion as well.' (Hülya)

In this group, it seems that all interviewees care about their appearance and have stylish clothes. They prioritize the 'nice modern look'. They do this in order to avoid giving a negative impression. But when the word comes to fashion their language changes. The use of words and tone become harsher. They all highlight that fashion is something that is created. Interviewees see *tesettür* fashion as a 'project' to attract the young generation in particular. It seems that when the interviewees prioritize proper *tesettür*, they also criticise *tesettür* fashion because it has nothing to do with Islamic values/rules. According to Simmel, someone who does not care about fashion actually adopt it as much as a snob; but he or she makes it through a refusal category. It means being distanced from standardization of fashion becomes a fashion<sup>105</sup>. The third group can be example for this understanding of fashion. It is because even interviewees' excerpts are in a refusal way, we do not observe this 'refusal' from their appearances. In shopping or styling choices they adopt different way; they have fashionable items for their clothing. Thus even if they claim that they are against the idea, they in fact adopt it. (Figure 7 illustrates casual clothes within two young women's image that shows today's common appearance of young headscarved women).

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<sup>105</sup> Fred Davis cited from Georg Simmel, *Moda, Kültür ve Kimlik*, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1997), 179.



**Figure 7: A Store Window Shows Casual Clothes**

When we compare the first and the third narrative the interviewees have Islamic concerns on appearance and fashion. Both do not have favourable thoughts on *tesettür* fashion. But in the first group, interviewees preferred to explain the controversy of the issue. Their language is more analytical, they try to understand what was going on rather than criticise. For instance, they mentioned the necessity of *tesettür* clothes. But they also make a point that it goes beyond the necessity; it is becoming consumption frenzy. They do not discuss its production side. On the other hand, interviewees do not harshly criticize the consumers in order to defend their

notions. They also emphasize young women are in a phase. One should not judge young headscarved women because they probably change after a while. In other words, the interviewees of the first group focus on the consumers' side. However, the third group harshly criticises both sides. Interviewees claim that *tesettür* fashion is created to attract young headscarved women. Some even suppose that non-Muslims are responsible for this. They expect young headscarved women should be properly dressed in accordance to *tesettür*. Therefore, we can say that the first narrative has more neutral tone than the third narrative. These two groups have Islamic concerns, however, the way they interpret is diverse.

Throughout the three narratives, the second narrative is the only one which has favourable thoughts on fashion/*tesettür* fashion. Because of this, the third and second narratives have opposite features. But it should be noted that, it seems the second and third group care about the 'good' and stylish appearance to represent the headscarved women properly. However, they have rigid differences to define and explain some issues. For instance while the second group is against the notion of '*tesettür* fashion as a project'; the third group assumes the *tesettür* fashion is something created. In this narrative the concept of 'creating' has a negative connotation, something which is done to negatively affect the young generation. Thus, in the third narrative the interviewees refer to Islamic terms to explain how it might affect the young generation negatively.

#### **4.5. The New Didactic Style: A Role Model for Other Muslims**

Headscarved women's choice of language, style, tone all give an indication of their approach to particular issues. In this section there are some responses that indicate the thoughts and approaches directly. Some responses given during the interview distinguish and differentiate themselves and this in turn helps one to compare the narratives. In the third narrative, we will see that their approaches to 'self and other' have some aspects from other two narratives. But it is clear that like the second group, the third group also differentiates the 'self' from the 'other'.

Firstly Büşra was telling what a headscarved woman should be as an individual in society. She underlines some criteria. All interviewees have some thoughts and views on how a Muslim woman should be as an individual and as a headscarved

woman. But, from Büşra's following excerpt we see that she desires to be a successful woman who is strong enough to oppose the 'other':

When someone wears headscarf they have to be educated. They have to personally develop themselves, educate themselves, they have to know, they have to be aware of things. They have to have an opinion in a lot of stuff. Because even if we like it or not, the society divides between headscarved and uncovered women. And this is always going to happen. This can't be solved. It's a reality there's a headscarved versus uncovered person.

For example in class, your classmates especially your own sex they treat you like a stranger. You expect your own sex to be more helpful, you expect them to be more caring... But because everyone in class is uncovered they see you as a monster, something different. They distance themselves from you. For instance if there's going to be a group work, they form their own groups and you are left on your own. (Büşra)

Zeliha thinks that "a Muslim woman should stand on her feet, be independent. These make one happy and give satisfaction". In Zeliha's interview she gave short responses. But when word came to work/working of woman she became very excited and enthusiastic to speak about it. Her responses were longer and detailed. It seems that working was at the centre of her life:

It gives you prestige. You wear a headscarf and you work. You have a nice life. People get impressed by this especially those that you meet new. People around you are like that as well they get impressed.

She says that her career choice was not the best choice. It was (computer engineering) popular at that time and that is why she chose this. But, she mentions that she would have liked to do something that was worthwhile. Financially her current position is 'good'. In addition to this, her previous manager had emphasised that "you could only see headscarved women cleaning the building but now you can see them as managers. And to be working here is a privilege so the effort you put in should reflect this." Zeliha takes this into consideration/takes this on board.

There's a big separation between those that like Muslims and those that don't. Those that don't like Muslims have so much anger and rage. And if you're next to such people they take it out on you. I haven't got that much knowledge on politics. So I don't want to be in a position to defend myself. But I come across such things. I get asked questions like 'are you going to be like Fadime Şahin?', 'Why did you wear a headscarf?' Some people think headscarves are fashionable. 'Did they pay you to wear headscarf? Did you cover so that you have a better chance of finding a job?' I get asked these kinds of questions. But it's actually the opposite.

If I were an uncovered woman I would have had a better career. It is ignorant people like this that I always come across. (Zeliha)

Hülya differentiates between ‘self’ and ‘other’, but this is not referred to as much as the other interviewees. She accepts the difference of the lifestyle or the aim of life. However, according to Hülya, a Muslim should focus on herself and not to dismiss the (Islamic) aim:

If you’re religious then you can’t be successful. If you’re religious then your prohibited to do stuff, you have no knowledge. You can’t even think futuristically. That’s what people think of you.

Our aim should not be to get accepted into the community/world. We haven’t been created to do this. The one that has created this does not want us to do this. Our priority should be to follow the God’s command. What people say what people wear, how this makes people happy should not be the priority. (Hülya)

As well as other interviewees, Selin uses a language that suggests the ‘other’. But we see two different ‘other’ in Selin’s responses. First, she tells about being an ‘outsider’. This experience of being other illustrates that headscarved women are the ‘other’ for some in a sense. She indicates this categorization that making by ‘other’, but she makes this difference through making categorization as ‘other’ as well. According to Selin, to simply put, the ‘other’ treats them as the ‘other’. Or one could suggest that society helps produce its own ‘other’. In the following excerpts Selin describes headscarved women as ‘weird’ and ‘outsider’. This description suggests that headscarved women belong to a group that is considered different. But she also separates between headscarved and non-headscarved people. It seems that it is not only one group that does the separation:

When we go places we can experience difficulties... For example places where there are uncovered people and as a headscarved person you go into that place. These people look at as you an outsider and weird. It is to do with these people’s mentality.

My dad always says why they should always be in a good place. We should be in a good place, in a better place/position. We should be able to practice our religion. We should do good things. We should be helpful/useful to others. (Selin)

She makes emphasis on the differences and the ‘other’. Nevertheless, she thinks that Muslims have responsibility to better represent and help ‘them’. She does not only focus on ‘them’:

As a Muslim we should be useful/ helpful. As Muslims we should be role models and set an example. We should portray Islam in a good way. We should explain/ talk to them.

As a headscarved person we should be a role model. Our outer appearance affects this. This is out of our control. We try to live our lives as God asked us to. For woman, this is to be careful about her outer appearance and to wear a headscarf. We should be a role model to teenagers, to those that have covered recently. We should explain in a nice way. Set an example. (Selin)

In this narrative interviewees have thoughts on both 'self' and 'other'. There is an explicit differentiation. We understand from their responses that there are two different 'others'. The first one is the 'other' who show the features of particular stereotype of headscarved women. This stereotype had been explained in the beginning of this chapter; the 'other' image is criticised by the interviewees in the previous sections. These stereotypes of headscarved women are 'others' for their 'inappropriate' appearances. The second 'others' are people who have different lifestyle and have unfavourable thoughts towards them. Interviewees differentiate them because they have a secular mind-set and lifestyle. On the other hand, they emphasize their own responsibilities and solutions. These responsibilities centre on Islamic connotations.

In the first narrative however, we do not see any differentiation of 'self' and 'other'. Even if they had some difficulties in social life, they did not prefer to talk about the 'other'. The responses given in the first group indicate that the interviewees do not have the 'other' in their repertoire. This is in contrast to the third group. Although the first and third groups have an Islamic reference to explain some issues, there is a difference about it as well. The first group has Islamic concern in terms of community. They have self-responsibility; however, they do this for Islamic community. They have some notions and suggestions for the all Muslims. But the third group emphasise responsibilities within a perspective of self.

When compared to second narrative, the differentiation is similar. But the way interviewees interpret the 'other' is slightly different. Second narrative's tone and style of the other is more like an 'enemy/rivalry'. Their language can be interpreted as a competition. However, in the third narrative the attention is not only on the 'other', they refer to their (headscarved women) responsibilities. The second narrative cares the visible success and beauty in order to draw attention of the

'other'. The third narrative seems to have similar tendency, but it has Islamic concerns as well unlike the second narrative.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Ever since Muslim women started to be visible with their Islamic headscarf in urban life, they became leading subjects of some discussions. In this process, there were either specific or uncertain causes for the conflicts and disputes. But in the end, all debates further carried controversy. That is to say, when something about headscarved women's appearance or any other related issue is on the agenda, it was connected with the past experiences and disputes. Although the issues became distinct and new, comparisons to the past were made. This added to the complexity of the issue. Thus, every new topic of discussion led to complexities which contributed to even more complicated and intertwined discussions.

The appearance of headscarved women is the most evident topic of discussions. As we had mentioned, Muslim women's attire did not reflect a range of tastes or other features before the 1990's. There was either a 'traditional' or an 'urban' styles of covering in Turkish cities. But today, in 2017, we have seen a wide range of attire as we cannot easily 'interpret' any headscarved woman's appearance in a certain way. Variety of clothes has increased; now people have more options. As long as variety and alternatives increase, the outlook of headscarved women have started to be seen as individual choices rather than images of standard masses.

The appearance of headscarved women has always been the start of a heated debate. However, it should not be considered an essential part for the understanding of individuals. New appearances of headscarved women and the possible outcomes that come with this cannot be separated from the present. The new participations or increasing of participation in urban places have created new opportunities and experiences. These experiences make them rethink on both morality and practises. In other words, we see that there are changes in appearances and visible choices as well as mentality and in morality. Ultimately, headscarved women live changes through continuous self-reconstruction.

Nonetheless, today there is a misleading attempt to 'analyse' the new appearance and visibility of headscarved women. The change has evaluated different

headscarved women as same and one person. Common (visible) features are accepted as proofs of same way of change. On the other hand, there were also discrete aspects of change as well. These were ignored by the ‘classifiers’ which only focused on the visible aspects. But if we inquire the individual point of views, arbitrary assumptions for the headscarved women have been eliminated.

The three narratives that have been analysed and evaluated portray inspiring diversity in responses to arbitrary assumptions that claim sameness. The interviews were conducted with twelve randomly selected participants. I was surprised with the unexpected reactions of interviewees because I had presumptions on certain topics so therefore I was expecting certain responses. As interviewees have some common attitudes and notions, they also have unique approaches in terms of interpreting their way of life. This is because their stories and anecdotes haven’t finished yet. In the end of the interviews, three narratives emerged. These narratives are not representative categories; rather, they may contribute to comprehension of different perspectives through three narratives.

We can see a remarkable difference between interviewed headscarved women who would be considered as they have more or less similar way of life and mentality at first sight. In the beginning, it is difficult to imagine such differences in their views. Because, they have more or less similar backgrounds (Islamic family environment and common clothing). But, before conversations on specific topics were analysed, interviewees’ language and approaches also add to the uniqueness and variety of responses. Therefore, the first narrative is different from the other narratives as it has a ‘mature’ approach to the controversial issues. Rather than making a superficial discussion, they focus on the self and how to better themselves. Interviewees’ use of Islamic terminology is also noticeable. These features are inseparable in the first narrative. Second narrative is distinct with a language emphasis on success and career. They rarely use Islamic concepts; there is a certain absence of Islamic point of view in contrast to the first narrative. Lastly, the third narrative uses Islamic language and strongly focuses on the other headscarved women who have ‘inappropriate’ appearance or behaviour. So, here there are distinct narratives of headscarved women even they are impossible to categorize into rigid categorizations of having diverse lifestyles.

As mentioned previously the assumption that headscarved women are considered as same or one type of person is not valid in this thesis. The responses of headscarved women to these claims are not similar or they cannot be grouped into categories. Rather, their responses and reactions have been unique, each individual's personal perception and way of interpreting something is different. We should consider this while analysing these narratives as well. That is to say, some approaches have been told by three narratives do portray neither types of character nor types of reactions. We may find out more diversities and unique thoughts and reactions if we carry the research further. Thus, so far, these narratives are not a limitation for variety of women; they are presentations of some experiences.

The discussions about headscarved women often seen as *critiques* today. Even arguing a new fact about headscarved women has become known by a few harsh critiques. As a result, criticism on headscarved women creates the agenda about them. I wanted to inquire interviewees' opinions and attitudes about criticism to understand the reflection of the issue on the subjects. I have found genuinely different ways of looking at the problem. Interestingly, it seems that all interviews have a consensus on the issue of criticism, as most of them were saying: "no one has to criticise someone". But if we focus on responses of interviewees, certain differences do come out.

Firstly, it should be noted that there is a stereotype which is continually criticised. This was discussed in the previous chapter. In this sense, even interviewees do not have remarkably different appearances, the second narrative's interviewees are examples of headscarved women who have been criticized because of their appearances. And not surprisingly they are against criticism of anyone. According to them, one should be respectful to one another. Correspondingly, they do not have critical language in general. Indeed the interviewees of the same narrative cannot show exactly the same approach as this study does not claim to portray 'types of people'. Nevertheless, it is obvious that this narrative has its particular approach among other narratives. In addition to this, the issue of change was evaluated with the issue of criticism because discussions are about its unfavourable and negative results. The second narrative is pleased with the change because they are defending its results such as increasing visibility and number of headscarved women.

The first narrative shares second narrative stance to criticism; being respectful to other's choice. The first narrative's interviewees were careful with their choice of *tesettür*. Nonetheless, they do not despise women who have 'inappropriate' *tesettür*. Both groups did not use critical or negative language to express their thoughts on this matter. Still first group actually has different thoughts that they do not reflect onto attitudes. First groups not happy with the current situation of headscarved woman and the change. However, they 'know' it is because women do not have Islamic consciousness because they do not improve themselves accordingly. Therefore, they use tolerated language; interviewees believe that everything can be better in the future. This attitude makes them have unique approach in this issue.

Contrary to these, the third narrative certainly does not have a tolerated approach towards different (inappropriate) applications of *tesettür*. Interviewees harshly criticise the 'inappropriateness'. They want to see headscarved women in a better way; therefore, they think that they should be warned for their 'mistakes'. Interviewees are also pessimistic about change. I come to this conclusion from the responses they gave me. But their other responses reveal their different attitudes. When I directly and openly asked about 'making criticism' they mostly changed their 'approach'. This can be an example for constructing identity while interviewing. For instance, one of the interviewee was harshly criticising inappropriate appearances of some headscarved women, but when I ask directly about the issue of criticism and her opinion on it, she responded this in the middle ground. Her explanation was conducted in a more balanced manner.

As we see from this example, some act in a different way from what they actually said. It seems that she actually criticises someone, but since the act of criticising is probably assumed by her as a negative/bad act, she preferred to have softer tone. This is an example of someone contradicting one self.

We said that discussions about headscarved women are mostly centred on critiques; critiques are made because the assumption of headscarved women harms the 'good *representation*' of Islam. In other words, negative criticisms are done for the inappropriate appearance and behaviours of headscarved women. These women are criticised because they 'should be' very careful of themselves since they 'represent' Islam with their Islamic headscarves.

This Islamic representation issue is more or less similar in the first narrative as they really care about the right representation of Muslim identity. However, the maturity of the interviewees illustrates the responses given. They do not criticise. Instead, they prefer to encourage them to get better. For the first narrative, this issue is more about the Islamic morality. However, in the third narrative they put being activeness and (proper/nice) appearance in social life beyond this.

On the other hand, the second narrative was not defending the Islamic representation by reason of one should be free to have her personal choice. According to them, it is not fair to expect Islamic representation from headscarved women; everyone goes through stages and phases and therefore one should not judge. However, when we evaluate interviewees other responses, it is difficult to say that they are completely against the notion of representation. Interviewees of the second narrative truly priorities the chic, nice appearance and being successful in career. So in terms of success and appearance, they defend the good representation of headscarved women. This is another approach about representation. We may come across with this discussion narrowly in daily life. However, we see that it has more dimensions while observing the actors. Comprehending the representation issue is difficult and complicated as even the subjects are sometimes indecisive in what to think.

The need of having comfortable and chic attire in cities and the growth of *tesettir* clothing industry has been reflected in the appearances of headscarved women. Tastes and choices are changing simultaneously with the increase of alternatives. In such situations, people decide their clothing items according to taste, trend, or Islam in variable levels. A headscarved woman may appreciate some items or refuses to wear (or even producing of it). They have reasons for every kind of decision. Today, the decisions of headscarved women can be easily and carelessly criticised. However, we see in this study that, analysing these choices accurately will only be able to be done when we take into consideration of their thoughts and motivations. In this study, twelve interviewees seem to have clothing style which is common today. More specifically, only two of them were slightly different with their long coats for their outfit. Rest of them have more or less similar, modern clothing items. Indeed they have individual touches and interpretation of styles. For instance, some have more fashionable and elegant style and some have a more casual,

comfortable look. But in the end, the clothing items can be found in any shops today. However, interviewees' responses are very diverse when deeply speaking about the on-going fashion issues. This should be considered for avoiding temporal generalizations and assuming masses are similar.

All interviewees emphasise that they care for the good and proper appearance. But, interviewees of the first narrative give priority to the Islamic rules and norms. Their most distinctive approach among the others is the concern with the consuming feature of the fashion. In other words, they like the variety of clothes; however, they claim that *tesettür* fashion is becoming a consumption problem rather than a solution for the Islamic dress. Although they 'warn' the negative ways of *tesettür* fashion, they do not blame the industry and people who follows it entirely. On the other hand, the third narrative would seem similar with the first narrative in terms of the focusing on the appropriateness to *tesettür*. However, they harshly criticize the *tesettür* fashion and some of them even go further and claim that it is an 'evil project' to destroy Muslims. Still, in the third narrative the interviewees took good care of their appearances and wanted to leave a good impression. Contrary to some of their choice of clothes (modern and trendy), they are too reactive to the notion of fashion. As far as I observe it can be about interviewees' negative association of the concept of fashion. So they might feel that they should be reactive to the fashion issue. Furthermore, it can be about the identity construction while interviewing. These diverse approaches are interesting for seeing the complexity. More distinctly, there is the approach of the second narrative that completely admires the changes in *tesettür* fashion. They value the good representation of headscarved women within the nice, proper appearance adjusting by modern/trendy pieces of fashion industry. Only twelve women's thoughts on fashion were used to illustrate the diversity of opinions. So therefore, it is much easier to imagine the difficulty of comprehending the issue in a broader sense.

During the interviews, I realized that some of the interviewees were making differentiation of '*self and other*' while speaking about some issues. When I was preparing for the interviews I did not think this sort of differentiation to inquire. However, in the end of the interviews it came out as one of the most significant marker of the different narratives; and it has become bolder while transcribing the interviews. For instance, in the first group we do not see any differentiation of 'self

and other' which emphasizes the difference of lifestyles. They prefer to focus on their good or bad sides. This group's approach is more to do with (Islamically) better themselves. Therefore, one could suggest that we do not see complaining, blaming or even mentioning the 'other'. On the other hand second group frequently mentions the 'other'. Interestingly, every action of headscarved women which can be associated with the success had been enthusiastically emphasizing as a 'response' to the 'other'. We see the 'other' as an opponent/enemy in the second narrative. "The subject is always to some extent alien to the situation in which it finds itself, as it is defined not only by its belonging but also by its resistant and estrangement"<sup>106</sup>, says Touraine in the title 'The I and the Other' of his book. In this sense, one could suggest that even the presence of the 'other' is a sort of motivation for the second narrative, for having more successful/good looking representation. The third narrative has similar differentiation of 'self and other' as the second narrative. But in addition to this approach, they use more Islamic language to express this difference.

Interviews that I conducted have revealed unusual facts and dimensions within different understanding of headscarved women. These differences also shaped the narratives. Still, there was an only issue that all agreed on. This was the 'working of women'. The working of woman was an issue for me that I expected to see diversity between the interviewees. However, these different women would defend the working of women whether it is for the necessity, a contribution, or being productive. The working of women has always been a controversial among Muslims. The extent to which it is appropriate Islamically since few decades. Today it is observable that there is an increase of encouragement of working of (Muslim) women by their families and the society. But I think it is remarkable in this study that different narratives occurred by diversities and little or great details; this fact (working of woman) had not shown any inconsistency between interviewees. They would completely defend; and even their hesitation to the questions was similar. Most of them argued that headscarved woman should definitely work but that she should be careful if she was a mother. In this case, she should balance both working and motherhood accordingly. On the other hand, the interviewees of the second narrative, who were considered as a 'younger generation', shared similar concerns. Even though they were career driven, they emphasized the same dilemma: they really

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<sup>106</sup> Alain Touraine, **Can We Live Together?**, (Cornwall: Polity Press, 2000), 80.

want to be successful in their careers, but they were not sure what would happen if they were a mother in the future. They concluded that they are going to try to find a way to balance this.

This agreement indicates a new matter for headscarved women. Having (higher) education was a controversy in the past; but today *even* working of woman is no longer considered as controversial. It is becoming common and normal among people who have different mentalities. Therefore it seems that controversial topics change through the renewing process in the city. For instance, in the beginning of the 2000's there were young headscarved women who consider themselves different from both traditional and radical Islam. New, modern Islamic identity has been emerging in the city by these young headscarved women<sup>107</sup>. On the other hand, if we evaluate the interviews that shed light today, one could suggest that emerging of a new Islamic identity was a process: now there are those headscarved individuals empowered in cities. It seems to me that, the consensus on the working of woman demonstrates the 'end' of the distance themselves from any (Islamic) movement/group. Today they continue to evaluate and explain facts within individual experience.

An individual comprehends and interprets their religion and its required practises differently in each stage of her life. The time period between the beginning of youth and the ending of youth has led to changing interpretations. And this change reflects the mentality and appearance. As Hebdige argues, style has meanings; displays a resistance. But this is not always as a reaction; it can be a *negotiation* as well.<sup>108</sup> In Islamic dressing or *tesettür* clothing, new styles and choices are not accepted unconditionally; the new trend is debatable especially for the old generations. We see the young generation as constitutive actors for the change. In some cases, young generation's practises may be the mainstream whether it is given or created by them; sometimes even old generation seems to adopt the (new generation's) styles. In this study, it is also remarkable that the first and third group, which are between the ages twenty-five and fifty-five, do not unconditionally accept the new appearances and styles; and the second group, those interviewees who are

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<sup>107</sup> Kerem Karaosmanoğlu, Sema Genel, "A New Islamic Individualism in Turkey: Headscarved Women in the City". *Turkish Studies*. Vol.7, No.3 (September 2006): 473-488.

<sup>108</sup> John Storey, *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture: Theories and Methods*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 120.

between the ages nineteen and twenty four are faces for the new styles. So therefore, I suggest that the generation difference is effective for the change to some extent; but it is not the only one. The young starts to construct their identity by trying the new styles/things, but their identities are still being formed through experience. Each individual interprets and applies something in accordance to her way of experience.

There are differences between the experiences of different generations; and the difference of experiences effect the attitudes and thoughts of individuals. For instance, some generations of headscarved women were confronted with obstacles in their education and working lives, new generations do not have the same obstacles. These are probably only some 'bad memories' told by the old generations. Different generations do not experience the same things and this is probably going to be a reason for difference in understanding and practice. In this sense, it is interesting and worthy to see reappearance of the 'banned era's concepts and practises. They are (the turban style or stylish using of hats) becoming new styles and appliances of these days which is far from the 'uncomfortable' past. Because of this, we witness that some ask: 'did the headscarf fight led for this?' However, the change of thoughts and practises is inevitable since headscarved women construct their future by their personal experiences in the city. It can be easily observed by the present situation with regards to the notions on the working of woman.

Prevalently, there is a tendency to 'explain' anything to do with headscarved women as they are a homogeneous group of people. Being effected by some changes can be true for headscarved women; but its effects to the personal stories are dismissing. Therefore, we can only discuss 'the change' itself in this particular issue. Even one suggests that there is an observable change which seems to indicate the same way of experiences for the people; the change becomes unique within individuals' interpretation. This is revealed from interviewees' self-emphasis in all narratives. That is to say, the change becomes an individual interpretation and practise.

Therefore, this thesis aims to show fractions from elapsing experiences. There are rapid changes. Every single factor that we encounter during understanding effort is not going to be similar to each other; they will be blended through unique interpretations of different issues in different times. Thus, today's meaning is not similar with yesterdays; and tomorrow's is not going to be similar with todays. There

is the change that headscarved women participated, created or witnessed. Women's interactions with change bring it to the further changes. The resistance, rejection or adoption of change becomes coherent while diversity is present in the society within its richness. Headscarved women are just individuals changing through urban life.

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