

ISTANBUL BILGI UNIVERSITY
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**THE CONSTRUCTION OF MATERIAL AND VISUAL CULTURE
FOR THE CHANGING MUSLIM FEMALE PORTRAIT IN 2000S:
THE CASE OF ISLAMIC FASHION MAGAZINES AND A
VISUALITY-BASED SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORK**

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ÖZET

2000LERDE DEĞİŞEN MÜSLÜMAN KADIN PORTRESİNE BAĞLI OLARAK MADDİ VE GÖRSEL KÜLTÜR İNŞASI: İSLAMİ MODA DERGİLERİ VE GÖRSELLİK ODAKLI SOSYAL MEDYA AĞI

Bu çalışma, çeşitli sayıda görsel ve yazılı kaynağa başvurarak son on beş sene içerisinde şık bir biçimde örtünmüş Müslüman kadın görünümünün ne manaya tekabül ettiğini analiz etme girişimidir. Kamusal alanda şık veya zarif Müslüman kadın portresini sergilemeye atfedilen kişisel, sosyal ve dini önem, öncelikle Instagram hesaplarındaki ve popüler semtlerdeki (Erenköy ve Bağdat Caddesi) Müslüman kadınların aşırı görünürlüğü ve daha sonra üç farklı İslami moda dergisi üzerine odaklanılarak anlatılmaktadır. Bu çalışmadaki ana amaç, Müslüman kadınların yeniden şekillendirilmiş kimliklerine bağlı olarak bu süreçte yeni oluşturulmuş maddi ve görsel kültürün inşasına işaret etmektir.

Tezde vurgulanan bir diğer önemli nokta ise İslami elbise uygulamalarının sürmekte olan dönüşümlerinden dolayı üst kesimle Müslüman entelektüeller arasında oluşan gerilimdir. Alternatif görselliğin oluşumunu, İslami yaşam tarzının yepyeni yorumunu ve bunla ilişkili olarak yeni Müslüman öznelliklerini araştıran tez Müslüman kadınların tesettür performansları ile dindarlık arasındaki bağlantıyı analiz etmektedir. Çalışma, Müslüman kadınların medya kaynaklarındaki mevcut temsilleri

ile tesettürün kabul edilmiş ana akım yorumu arasındaki farklılıkları sunmaktadır. Bu farklılık, kadın bedenselliğini örtmenin mevcut temsili fonksiyonu sebebiyle çağdaş Müslüman kadınların bir *profanlaşma** süreci yaşıyıp yaşamadığı sorusuna Müslümanlar için referans kaynağı olan Kuran ve hadisler göz önüne alınarak dikkat çekmektedir.

** Profanlaşma kutsal şeye saygısızlık, kutsal olanın içeriğinin boşaltılması veya değerli olanla bağların koparılması manalarına tekabül etmektedir.*

ABSTRACT

Drawing upon a wide range of visual and written sources, the study is an attempt to analyze what it corresponds to look a fashionably covered Muslim female in about last fifteen years. Personal, social and religious significance attached to display an elegant Muslim female portrait in public is elucidated by focusing on three different Islamic fashion magazines and the exorbitant visibility of *Muslim females* on Instagram accounts and in the popular districts such as Erenköy and Bagdat Street. The main objective in this study is to point out the construction of the newly-formed material and visual culture through the current refashioned identity of Muslim females in this process.

Other important point that is highlighted in thesis is the tension between Islamic intellectuals and the upper class due to the ongoing transformations of Islamic dress practices. While exploring the formation of the alternative visibility, new interpretation of Islamic lifestyle and accordingly new Muslim subjectivities, the thesis analyzes the connection between the religiosity and tesettür* performance of Muslim females. The study presents the difference between the current media representations of Muslim females and the acknowledged mainstream interpretation of tesettür, which raises the question of whether contemporary Muslim females

experience a process of profanation due to the current representational function of covering female corporality by taking the hadiths and the Quran into consideration as the source of reference for Muslims.

** The word “tesettür” stands for something more than just covering the hair with a headscarf or a shawl but it denotes not only the expected outer look but also morality defined for Muslim females in the Islamic law.*

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“All the things that adorn woman, all the things that go to enhance her beauty, are part of herself... making... the woman and her dress, an indivisible whole”

Baudelaire in *the Painter of Modern Life*

The Islamic order of society is established not only on the regulation of inner and outer spaces but also on the privacy of women. The act of veiling refers to the mahrem sphere. In conforming to this cultural standard, Islamist women underline their difference from Western civilization and uphold the hiddenness of female sexuality... These people, who will be in control of prestigious positions in society in the near future, do not stand outside society but, rather, "are certainly inside it."

Nilüfer Göle

INTRODUCTION: THE INCREDIBLE RISE IN UNCOVERING *TESETTÜR*¹ IN 21TH CENTURY

Is it possible to become the representative of both fashionable elegant outlook and Islamic modest posture? The concept “Islamic Fashion” implies the fashionable clothing preferences in conformity with Islamic principles concerning the appropriate display of the Muslim female body in public. Islamic fashion festivals conducted in Malaysia and London in 2014 set their goal as to build an updated visual and cultural

¹ In this study, *tesettür* and *head-covering* is used in order to refer to contemporary Muslim females’ religious sartorial performance rather than *veiling* which includes the covering of the face and even of the eyes for particular cultures.

reference from which Islam can be related to the modern world through the creative arena of fashion divorced from political, economic and social strife². This goal is noteworthy to portray the importance of this popular concept for contemporary Muslim females who wish to experience the modern world as Muslim women who prefer head-covering. On a large scale, fashion is believed to be able to change the perceptions of Islamic culture in the world since it is a universal language which plays a vital role in the modern world through the media tools³. Accordingly, this impressive concept, Islamic fashion, is avid for resisting the culturally formed Muslim female stereotypes in the Muslim world and its followers seize on this special form of fashion to reshape the polemical narrative that have been defining them for years. The visual and the material landscape to develop the network of Islamic fashion is extensive and varied; the social media tools, Muslim fashion bloggers and lastly Islamic fashion magazines have been collaboratively operating to generate fashionable Muslims who yearn for visual distinctiveness through their veiling with the presentation of various sartorial possibilities that combine the ideal of fashion and that of Islam for Muslim women especially since the beginning of 2000s.

²Friedman, V. (2014) "Reading the Subtleties of Islamic Fashion". Available online at: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/27/fashion/reading-between-the-seams-at-the-islamic-fashion-festival-in-malaysia.html?_r=1 (last accessed on 01.01.2015).

³ See the further; <http://www.islamicfashiontrend.com/festival.php>

What is the essence of *tesettür* or what does the appropriate form of *tesettür* signify in the Islamic context? Islamic fashion concept in this study is used to define the ever-shifting covering styles of Muslim females with their striking sartorial preferences that seasonally change due to fashion trends. At this point, how we can evaluate this distinct form of covering in terms of the mainstream interpretation of *tesettür* as a sacred duty for females gains importance. What will be highlighted in the thesis is that there is ambivalence between the current interpretation of *tesettür* and the acknowledged interpretation of this sacred duty in Islam according to Fiqh⁴. Here, it is crucial to state that Fiqh decides the rules concerning the worldly and religious matters by respectively analyzing the Quran, Sunnah of the Prophet and then, if it is necessary, the comparison which corresponds to appropriation of the rules in the Prophet's times to the contemporary times (Abu Zahra, 14-5). Thus, the normative analysis of the recent chic constitution will be conducted upon the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet in addition to the certain Islamist intellectuals' standpoints. In this study, I want to figure out the considerable shift in the representation of head-covering female figure in Turkey which has considerably been under the impact of the fashion trends. According to mainstream Islamist intellectuals, there appears a contradiction in the recent configuration of fashionable covering practice in comparison to the accepted form of *tesettür* for Islamic jurisprudence. Accordingly, what will be sociologically examined in the main chapters is how Muslim females

⁴ Fiqh which means to know and to understand in Arabic refers to the science of Islamic law; in a broader sense, it includes all Muslim canonical laws.

have been beyond this detected conflict through normalization process and how they generate not only secular but also religious legitimacy forms at the same time since they tend to perceive this formation not as a discrepancy. However, it seems that they experience a significant tension in their newly-formed identity so that they are able to show the possibility of being both a “Muslim” and “fashionable and modern” female at the same time.

The Arabic word “tesettür” stands for something more than just covering the hair with a headscarf or a shawl since it denotes enveloping outer garments that is suggested to be used in public in the Quran which will be elaborated in Chapter 2 by focusing upon the transgressive acts in terms of the Qur’anic verses and hadiths. To specify with the norms of *tesettür* confirmed through the Islamic law, the comprehensive word “tesettür” can be examined with its stem in the Arabic verb “se-te-ra” which means to cover and to hide something. In this light, this verb is used with different forms in three Quranic verses which refer to the concealment in the first one, shield in the second one, screen in the third one (Ece). Accordingly, *tesettür* implies to cover oneself, to gird oneself, put a screen between the oneself and the others or to conceal oneself in or behind something while it metaphorically includes wince, fear and modesty (Ece). Thus, it is obvious that *tesettür* as an inclusive term represents the covering responsibility whose measurements and the requisite ones are absolutely established in Islam. This study mostly uses just the words head covering

or headscarf to refer the present reconfiguration of *tesettür* since this comprehensive practice have not been totally applied upon Muslim female bodies in about the last fifteen years . Thus, this study also offers an evaluative perspective of the Islamic journals which are more sensitive to religiosity and more intellectual in Chapter 3 so that how these types of journals, and its intellectual and sensitive staff tackle the Islamic fashion issue and accordingly Islamic fashion magazines can be indicated, as well.

To discuss it in a broader sense, the journal piety-based *Vuslat* whose motto is “from today’s rejuvenation to the construction of the future” spared a *tesettür* volume named as “The Victim of Fashion: Tesettür” in August 2013 with its impressive editorial article that mentions about the contemporary state of *tesettür*:

As *tesettür* has conformed to the fashion criteria, it has lost its substance and its objective. Here comes a *tesettür* has been hijacked to mean “look at me” instead of a *tesettür* within the frame of hijab understanding (that have been demonstrated as the essential meaning above)⁵. It is modified as style rather than a religious duty (*farz* in Turkish) required of all Muslim women.

⁵ All translations belong to me.

Accordingly, it is a fact that the recent configuration of *tesettür* includes skinny jeans, short skirts or the garments which reveals the female body lines and the unconventional attitudes displayed in the public space including social media channels and the popular fashionable places. This study does not aim at criticizing individuals but basically the aim is to illustrate that there is something quite ambivalent or conflictual in the portrayal of the *tesettür* as a religious duty in the exemplary cases of its recent conspicuous configuration in public space in terms of its mainstream interpretation. To what extent we can define this distinct lifestyle as Islamic in tune with the acknowledged constitution of *tesettür* in Islamic law? What kind of paradoxes appear between the new style of fashionable dressing and what the Quran and hadith put forward for the appropriate form of covering? This study is conducted within the framework of these questions by means of the supportive theoretical backgrounds so as to point out that this newly-fashioned lifestyle and the perception of the worldly life in accordance with the modern world are tokens of the degeneration or paradoxes in the understanding of Islamic lifestyle that actually aims to be oriented towards the simplest way of living without luxury and glossiness regulated with the sense of God-conscious on a large scale. As Chapter 2 elaborates, one of the main concerns in this study is that Muslim females in this context seem to arrange their lives in such a way that rather than attempt to achieve the perfectness as a Muslim believer by means of their unique guide's, Prophet Muhammad, ethics and practices, they are prone to fit in the modern consumerist capitalist beauty definition for obtainment of the most perfect form of visibility in the modern world.

In Turkey, since the publishing of first Islamic fashion magazine in 2011, there is a growing interest in Islamic fashion ideal which fairly preoccupies hyper-conscious Muslim females on social media, as well. In the very beginning, these fashion magazines claim to battle against nudity and sexuality which have been generously displayed in the world fashion magazines such as Vogue and Elle. The irreconcilable combination of the adjectives “fashionable” and “Islamic” brings forth some striking portrayals of tesettür on the social media and the colorful pages of these magazines at a rapid rate. The clothing dilemma between dressing in fashionable and modern way on the one hand, and in a faithful and modest way on the other hand, has been demonstrated as a resolvable issue by means of the support Islamic fashion magazines and its editorial staff who actively use the social media. Through these media tools, it seems that Muslim females are motivated to believe in the reconciliation of Islamic and fashionable adjectives in their sense of identity which expresses both belonging to the modern culture and the need to sustain Islamic belief at the same time. Though the basic aim has been implied to combine fashion and style attitudes with the Islamic values in Muslim females’ lives in 2000’s in Turkey. This individualized interpretation which appears not to exist in a devout Muslim lady’s life in terms of the supporting hadiths and the Qur’anic verses has been discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Correlatively, the important thing was the idea that image has turned out to be a substantial issue for the new cadre of Muslim ladies who are considerably sensitive to the contemporary fashion trends and accordingly conspicuous consumption, which has been elaborated in the last part of Chapter 1. For that reason,

it is probable to state that Muslim females have generated a new kind of ethos in which physical appearance is of paramount importance rather than their ultimate Islamic ethos which is supposed to make a believer to unconditionally submit to what God asks in the Quran and Sunnahs⁶.

Excessive indulgence in the joys and entertainment of worldly life are not appreciated in the sacred text and the related hadiths since worldly pleasures are assumed to distract a believer from the remembrance of what the creator asks to do in this world. As the Prophet is believed to be the major guide for the appropriate form of Islamic way of living, a Muslim believer is expected to design his/her way of life with a similar consciousness towards the world life. Believers are oriented to be neutral towards the world life, which refers to neither full love nor total ignorance as the sacred text defines the worldly life as “the enjoyment of illusion”, “so little and trivial”, “play and amusement” with its attractions “wealth and children”⁷. In this light, the idealized modest outlook that is exemplified in the Prophet’s life does not correspond to the excessive brightness and ostentatiousness Muslim women display on their social media accounts and in the popular public spaces. However, what is appreciated in the appearance through tesettür is not to go extreme by enabling them to adapt their covering style according to their wishes as long as they are in tune with

6 The exemplary behavior and attitudes the Prophet Muhammad display for his followers is called “Sunnah”.

7 Quran, Al-An’am 6:32 ; Quran, Al-Tawba 9:38; Quran ‘Ali’Imran 3:185; Quran Al-Kahf 18:46.

the measurement concerning this issue in Islam. In other words, a female in tesettür is supposed to ask herself “Does God comply with my veiling style?” whenever she feels herself between the competing outward appearance of a modern female and that of a pious⁸ Muslim woman.

The image of “modern” woman is an integral and an indispensable aspect of any secular modernization project. Simmel highlights the reason of this fact with the logic of fashion that governs the molding of appearance in modernity and is driven by the coexistence of two opposing forces: on the one hand, the desire to express one’s individuality through the clothes one wears, and on the other, a desire to blend in with the crowd so as not to draw attention to oneself (1971, 294–304). As the unveiled, educated, westernized woman has been the icon of the Turkish modernization, the fashionably covered Muslim women on rapidly expanding media and in the popular public spaces seem to subvert the defining features of the modern woman with their own alternative preferences upon their outlook through a modern lifestyle which ranges from voguish outlook to newly-fashioned conspicuous rituals such as baby-shower and celebration of the decision in veiling. Drawing theoretically on fashion, gender and Islamic studies with the textual analysis of the visual and written materials in these fashion magazines and accordingly on the social media, this study

⁸ Pious Muslim can be defined as the one who has or shows a dutiful spirit of reverence for God or an earnest wish to fulfill religious obligations; Available online at: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/pious>. (last accessed on 01.01.2015).

aims at exploring the processes of modification through the avant-garde of veiled or Islamic fashion upon Muslim females so as to generate a majority of the modern, fashion-conscious Muslim woman in public space. The representation of veiled femininity is processed upon beauty, elegance, style and thereby consumption. The acknowledged Islamic ideals that are supposed to direct a Muslim's life are oriented towards ideals of modern consumer culture which focuses on "perfecting physical appearance". For Giddens, in contemporary consumer culture, "the project of the self becomes translated into one of the possession of desired goods and the pursuit of artificially framed styles of life" (cited in Negrin, 198). Accordingly, this situation can be pointed out by the headlines of Islamic fashion magazines' covers which are full of the desired goods such as special style guide for you: hundreds of combinations, Bag file: 520 new models, Trend: 2011 summer colours, Spring: 2013 World Trends, Most Chic: 12 Details, Trend pioneer 700 pieces.

A news headline⁹ "Turkish Fashion Designers Make Muslim Style Chic" in Bloomberg Businessweek also signifies an evident evolution in the society and the fashion in Turkey. The depiction of the ex-editor in chief of *Âlâ* magazine in the news, Zeynep Hasoğlu, who is the new editor in chief of *Hayyat* magazine bears

⁹Topol, S. (2013) "Turkish Fashion Designers Make Muslim Style Chic". Available online at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/articles/2013-04-18/turkish-fashion-designers-make-muslim-style-chic>. (last accessed on 25.09.2014).

importance in drawing attention upon the divergence between the modest Muslim lady figure and that of Islamic fashion understanding:

Âlâ's new editor in chief, sits behind a giant desk, her brown eyes amplified with dark eyeliner and mascara. She wears a black blazer with matching pants, her tiny frame weighted by a massive tiered rhinestone collar necklace. Stiletto shoes complete her outfit—a look that many of her readers want. She flicks through her iPad as she describes an unfulfilled need of affluent women who have money to burn but little understanding of how to spend it. They don't know about Islamic designers because Muslim fashion has been a word of mouth industry.

To analyze this recent but essential formation in the lives of Muslim female actors, this study will use the Islamic fashion magazines in Turkey (*Aliyyül-Âlâ*, *Aysha*, *Hayyat*) as concrete instruments. It will convey the personal impressions and observations from their lifestyle and their sharing on the social media (especially on Instagram) and the spaces they generally assert themselves such as Bagdat Street (a famous upper-class district in Istanbul), Erenkoy (the conservative upper quarter of Bagdat street) and popular spaces like Huqqa. Instagram which is the most popular social media tool among these females can be defined as a theatre stage where real Muslim female actors perform like pleasant-looking classy “covered” models of these magazines. Although this study initially aimed to focus on just newly-founded

Islamic fashion magazines and its unique concept “Islamic fashion” in Turkey, it has been directed to focus on above research sites since these spaces (including Instagram and popular districts) enable them to perform in tune with the appreciated sensibilities in these fashion magazines that claim to convey international fashion to these ladies “without infringing on Islamic values”. The snapshots of celebrated Muslim female portraits and forms in these magazines are not only displayed on Bagdat Street but the brands and the boutiques referred to and generally advertised on the magazines also take place in Erenköy since this popular district is mostly favored place to shop by the new cadre of Muslim females in 2000s.

As the demands of the conservative Turkish Muslim women who have been educated and fashion-conscious with disposable income have not met by the Turkish universal fashion magazines like Vogue and Elle, a new type of fashion publication has started to offer an alternative since summer 2011 for a newly-introduced Islamic lifestyle by satisfying their unfulfilled need and desires in this realm. These fashion magazines, marked with its own type of fashion, targeted at the growing number of well-groomed covered females in Turkey with a monthly selection of clothing advices including anything from scarves / shawls to bags, interviews with both famous designers and Muslim designers, and with businesswomen, conservative travel options and some articles on Islamic duties. What was claimed about the first Islamic fashion magazine, *Aliyyül-Âlâ*, meaning the most beautiful of the beautiful in Turkish, is that it

surpassed the issues of Vogue and Elle in terms of sales figures with its first issue. *Aliyyül-Âlâ*, which is called just “*Âlâ*” in public is also a pioneer in being the first fashion publication for conservative Muslim ladies in the world.

As the founders of *Aliyyül-Âlâ*, Mehmet Volkan Atay and Burak Birer who actually had marketing background drew attention to the fact that there was a lack of communication between Islamic textile producers and their target group by emphasizing the existence of a younger group who prefers “mix and match” from the Islamic clothing market and that of the well-known brands. Relying upon their belief in the coexistence of Islam and fashion, these fashion magazines are designed as a guide so as to offer a wide array of options indicating where they can shop, what kind of clothes they can combine regarding the trends of each season for the conservative Muslim women of Turkey who has been enjoying a decade of prosperity since the triumph of AKP (the Justice and Development Party).

Aysha, whose name corresponds to the Prophet Muhammad's knowledgeable and precious wife, has been published for “life and style” advice since January 2013 by two uncovered women Pınar Kücüksabanoglu as the ex-organizer and Hulya Ozerdemli as the ex-editor of the well-known Turkish magazine “Samdan Plus” which focuses on the social lives of the celebrities. As different from *Âlâ*, this

magazine is composed of many authors from diverse backgrounds such as the actor Hasan Kacan , the fashion designer Emel Acar and the popular preacher Cemal Nur Sargut who wrote an article concerning the perfect human being (insan-ı kamil) in Islamic ethics with its striking motto “the feminine window that is opened from Istanbul to the world”¹⁰. Another important contributor as a sociologist, Umit Meric takes place in this magazine not only as the evaluator of the content of each issue but also as a writer marked with her sociological approach, which leads to an article called “fashion with a sociological approach” in the first issue of *Aysha*. Improving and keeping the values in the essence of woman which brings forth the Jannah below their feet alive is claimed to be the main mission of *Aysha* magazine¹¹, thus, their target audience is underlined as the ones who want to live in tune with the Islamic values and principles. However, whether the depicted lifestyle is in accordance with the Islamic principles or not remains the readers’ opinion when they come to the end of this study.

Hayyat, first published in January 2014, takes its name from the word *Hayyat-ı Mahir* in Ottoman Turkish which means the talented tailor since this magazine

¹⁰Oğhan, Ş. (2012) “Medyada Örtülü Rekabet” . Available online at: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/pazar/22261377.asp>. (last accessed on 23.04.2014).

¹¹(2012). “BİR DEVRİN DEĞİL BİR ÖMRÜN DERGİSİ YAYINDA; AYSHA! KADRODA KİMLER VAR?”. Available online at: <http://www.medyaradar.com/bir-devrin-degil-bir-omrun-dergisi-yayinda-aysha-kadroda-kimler-var-medyaradar-ozel-haberi-92552>. (last accessed on 23.04.2014).

forms its staff especially with the conservative names which directs the Islamic fashion with their designs, their blogs or their accounts on Instagram¹². The first volume includes Safiye Ekiz as the fashion editor, Esra Seziş as the style consultant and well-known Muslim fashion designers such as Kuaybe Gider, Kubra Tekin, Suheda Aydın and Gönül Kolat who actively use Instagram, as well. With the motto “Conservative Woman Magazine”, the magazine claims to be designed for the ladies who attach importance to the aesthetics and the life quality to introduce firstly the conservative fashion and then, the resonant stream flow and trends in the world via its specialized editors. The other sections in this magazine covers “beauty and health”, “food”, “art and culture” and “sightseeing spaces”.

The most crucial part of observation for this study has been carried upon the social media channels. Instagram as the key indicator of this distinct lifestyle adopted by Muslim females has enabled its users to upload and edit their photographs by entering a brief description of the photograph and specifying location information since 2010. Hashtag which provides a searchable query for others to find your photo can be formed with just one word or a short sentence to mark the photo with this specific hashtag. The privacy depends on the users, however, in our case, most of the fashion conscious ladies make their accounts open to public; therefore, it is possible to encounter many interesting discussion that arises due to the alluring

¹² (2013). “Yeni Bir Yıl, Yeni Bir Dergi Hayyat” . Available online at: <http://www.haberler.com/yeni-bir-yil-yeni-bir-dergi-hayyat-5486820-haberi/>. (last accessed on 25.04.2014).

visuality in the shared photos of these females with special reference to becoming a conscious veiled lady. Although this study can be reasonably concretized in addition to the colorful pages of Islamic fashion magazines, the supportive visuals concerning glamorous outlook of veiled ladies on their open-accessed accounts on Instagram will not be utilized due to its respect for the rights of privacy.

It is claimed that Instagram is not a social networking tool since it is just about having an audience for what one produces or participating in the others' photos as the audience.¹³ In this light, the Muslim ladies in this case also seem to attach importance to audience issue since we see that popular account owners, namely fashionably Muslim ladies, share the other ladies' accounts so as to increase the number of the audience for the other fashionably conscious ladies on Instagram or they thank their followers when the number of followers reach thousands¹⁴. Thus, it appears that sharing the appealing photographs in this visual society not only visually connects all the users but also aims at broadcasting the newly-formed visuality that have been constructed in the modernized potent habitus, which will be elaborated in Chapter 2. To put it another way with the popular concept of 21st century thanks to widely used social media channels, *selfie* can be defined as a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically one taken with a smartphone or

13(2011). "Why Instagram is so popular". Available online at: <http://techcrunch.com/2011/11/27/why-instagram-is-so-popular/>. (last accessed on 25.04.2014).

14 They share their own picture which thanks the whole followers and says them "so glad I have thousands!"

webcam and shared via social media¹⁵. Considering the points underlined for the contemporary *tesettür* of Muslim females, it can be assumed that selfie of new Muslim female selves can be recorded since this widely used social platform among fashionable Muslim ladies generously declares the recent performance through their interpretation of *tesettür* to the public though it is supposed to be a representative of female privacy according to mainstream interpretation. Correlatively, how the borderlines between the public and the private have seemed to be violated in terms of Islamic principles in the light of hadiths and Quranic verses will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

This group of females seem to produce a distinct life style for their contemporary way of living. The 2000's Muslim female youth reorients themselves towards modernity by fashioning all aspects of their life, which refers to be attuned to the sensibilities and aesthetic preferences of the modern world as chapter 3 discusses this issue in the light of the supportive hadiths and Qur'anic verses concerning the perception of the world. These illustrated shifting requirements of the beautiful lifestyle in the today's world of veiled ladies can be called as "the cross-fertilization of Islam and modernity" (Kömeçoğlu 2007, 68). This shows that the meaning of "beautiful life" in Islamic circles that respects all the sayings of the Prophet and the Quran has gradually

15 Available online at: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/selfie>. (last accessed on 25.04.2014).

started to undermine the religious sensibilities but has acquired and featured modernist individualization of the stereotyped expectations within the secularized modern space as Chapter 3 elaborates this issue within the frame of profane world's signs. This is because individual reconstruction of attitudes towards Islam appears to prevail in their lives so the issue is the distinctive discourses and practices of these Muslim females in order to make sense of new focus on subjectification of Islamic norms for a Muslim female in this context.

New body projects can be distinguished from more traditional ones not in utility, severity but in their social significance . . . In indigenous cultures, the body, especially the skin, often appears as a surface upon which social hierarchies are inscribed or codified . . . In contrast, the modern body is understood not as a collective product of inscription, but as a personal projection of the self. Bodies then become understood as exteriorizing an “inward depth”

Victoria Pitts 2003

CHAPTER ONE: CHANGE IN MUSLIM FEMALE SELVES

The image of modern woman is one of the crucial constituents of the Turkish state in the early decades of the twentieth century. This is because the main principle of the nation-state formation in Turkey is secular modernization which encourages women to present themselves in western style of clothing as the new republican women of Turkey. Turkish Republic which was founded after the Ottomans was aimed to found a new “European” state since the nationalist elites of the time equated modernity with Westernization which has been highly appreciated as the forerunner of “the highest level of civilization” in the modern world. Bryan Turner has also stated that the reforms of the Republic project was “consciously mimetic in that it took Europe as its specific model of adaptation” (168). Thus, what is projected in order to catch up with this ideal is to adopt almost anything left from the ancient regime to the

Western standards so that they can have the similar civilizational status like the West. One of the important parts of these reforms was the regulation of clothing and appearance laws so as to mark the modernity on the self, especially for Turkish female citizens of that time. In other words, the state used the figure of modern and secular Turkish women so as to reflect a vision of modernized Turkey. The new founding myth was conducted through the convergence around new identity construction of the republican citizens. Therefore, the politicized nature of clothing in the nation-state formation actually means that a woman's identity is actually defined by what she wears on her body. So, it becomes a crystal-clear fact that modern lady of Turkish nation-state has been what she preferred to wear or how she appeared.

Secular modernization primarily deals with breaking the relationship with the ancient regime which is founded upon Islam as its ideological and religious basis. What is needed was a radical break with the ancient regime, namely the past and its traditions, and this can clearly be achieved with the bodily practices by lessening the impact of Islamic principles on the female body. If we consider clothes as one of the important carriers of the collective memory, the desired clothing style of the republican elites is also the formation of a new social structure which aspires to form sameness with the same kind of clothes signed with their Western style in the collective memory. However, it is important to state that these identity politics may not only produce an outer-sameness on the female bodies but also attributes a remarkable difference in their identities. That's because this western style of clothing and thus western like appearance generates a group of women who can be labeled in the same category due

to their clothing style that is opposite of the traditional looking ones. However, we also sense that they also attempt to possess distinctiveness within this sameness by making little changes in their appearance rather than just focusing on the clothes. Thus, from this sameness- *identique* appearance, they try to constitute a distinct identity or self.

Dress can function “as a means of authenticating social categories, legitimating and contesting authority, and as a means of producing and reproducing values” (O’neil, 66). Accordingly, the new values attributed to the westernized clothes are actually in relation to the essential characteristic of a women. The essential woman can be defined with her particular historical and cultural formations, which implies that “she speaks a particular language, consumes particular products and eat particular foods and *most importantly* dresses in particular ways” (Sayyid, 9). These particularities were actually the norms of western women, which were transposed into Turkey as the universal attributes of definition for “a modern lady”; therefore, every woman’s way of being needed to be directed towards this ideal. What has been expected from new Turkish women was to be dressed in “modern” fashion, in other words, to carry these particularities upon their bodies so that they can be called as the modern and secular but universal female beings as a member of the modernized Turkish republic.

The depicted western like and secular appearances are not in accord with the covered figure of Turkish women. Secular mindset has labeled the veiling practice as a

deviant attribute for the modern and secular female identity starting from the foundation of Turkish Republic. As decorating or reshaping our bodies can be considered as a process of inscribing meaning on the body, the covered bodies of the female Muslims were exposed to a radical shift in the already-inscribed meaning of their bodies. This is because the secular modernization required to change the approaches towards their life-styles and aesthetic values due to a profound transmission from Islamic to a Western culture. The social organization of life previously framed by Islam was totally directed towards modern secular way of life (Göle 2002: 51). This shift makes itself evident especially with the increase in the physical and social visibility of women in daily life. The representation of the modern lifestyle was supported with the photographs of uncovered women in European clothing with diverse hair-styles and shiny make-up who enjoy and even dance in a mixed party or a ball. Concomitantly, since this period, the favored stance of the female body was turned into a westernized one rather than the traditional Islamic one in which a woman strives for not displaying her body lines explicitly in the public sphere where they can encounter with the males' gaze.

When we think about all these, it is not surprising to see that Islamic clothing has had an intriguing context in Turkey as the veiling is laden with the stigmatization of western-mind set in modernized Turkish social life (Sandıkcı and Ger 2010, 16). In a Muslim majority country, head-covering was banned in public places for the preservation of “secular” and “modern” life in Turkey for many years. Especially in

the 1980s, head-covering had political connotations as it was explicitly presented as a reaction to the increased secularization imposed by the state. Concomitantly, the covered Muslim ladies were portrayed as non-modern and a kind of threat for the well-being of the secular stereotype, thus, the others of the Turkish secular worldview and lifestyle. Alongside negative connotations of head-covering in the 1980s and 1990s, the rise of Islamist movement triggered “the formation of market networks for believers and the development of specialized businesses for Islamic goods” (Yashin 2002, 223). Thus, it is not totally wrong to state that a new consumption-oriented religious upper class started to emerge towards the end of 20th century in Turkey though the process of adopting the characteristics of “modern” bourgeoisie started in 1990s.

When we look at the head-covering issue in 2000s, we see that the powerful negative stigmatization of covering has mostly been released. A new reconfiguration of *tesettür* and that of Muslim female selves have been constructed in Turkey after the Justice and Development Party [AKP] came to power in 2002. New consumption practices are being developed and highly supported by the newly formed Islamic middle classes and these practices are reflected into everyday life with the “Islamization” of urban ways of life like patronizing restaurants, supermarkets and hotels, foreign brand-name products and most importantly “Islamic fashion” (cited in Kılıçbay and Binark by Göle, 499). In contrast to the negative connotations, the political leaders have empowered the visibility of Islam and Islamic principles in the

public space. Moreover, having a Muslim female identity has been reconstructed with the stylish look provided by “fashionable” pieces in the wardrobe of the upper middle class veiled ladies. Especially the head-covered first ladies of the political leaders with their refined elegant clothing, take place in the media, which points out the emergence of a new stage for the covered ladies in Turkey. The discussion about the covered and the uncovered ones has started once again. However, what is emphasized in these discussions this time is that the head-covered ones are also women, thus, they may also need to mark the endowed female beauty with their outer appearance. The supported idea forms the urge for the emphasis of the refashioned beauty of the head-covered females in millennium Turkey. It appears that the new ideal caused tesettür to gradually lose its unique function to work as an instrument of drawing the border lines of female privacy. The emphasis upon “they are also women” has functioned in the media as a formula to lessen polarization between the covered and the uncovered categories:

They are also women: they can prefer brands according to their tastes.

They are also women: they have their own dressmakers and choose diverse multicolored fabrics instead of décolleté.

They are also women: they can have make-up or wear colorful high-heeled shoes.

They are also women: they have their hair-dresser; they have their scarves done in the coiffeur.

They are also women: they can call their husbands with their first names (various deductions were conceived when Mrs. Erdogan, the wife of

the President of Turkish Republic, said “I miss Tayyib” that is the first name of the President) (Barbarosoğlu 2013: 70)

The new meaning attributed to head-covering rather than aforementioned ones, is in tune with fashionable look of modernized lifestyles; therefore, it seems that tesettür has become beyond the matter of covering the female body lines in this context. Although “a fashion for the ones in tesettür” has been formed in Turkey since the early 1990s, what has been presented in the public sphere in 2000s by the urban middle-class Muslim females differs from religious / traditional or political presentation of head-covering. This is because Muslim female actors become more and more concerned about refined urban look upon their bodies. Moreover, what takes attention in this exclusive visibility is how much they pay attention to exhibit a pleasing modern outfit in the public space in which they declare their own alternative way of life in contrast to the secular one. They demarcate their way of life with their modern preferences and their distinct attitudes in the public realm; it is important to note that these special preferences range from classy clothing and accessories, aesthetic facial expression, unusual eating places, special parties and newly-fashioned rituals, and luxury vacations, etc.

In contrast to the traditional version of veiling, there is a wide spectrum of the variety in their covering styles and the colorfulness of their outfits. Chic and colorful dresses, most of which from the well-known brands are the mostly favored ones instead of loose and covering clothes preferred for the sake of the sacred duty in the Quran. The

changing clothing preferences in tesettür point out the shift in both the meaning and context of the covering, as well. Thanks to the political and accordingly economic power¹⁶, they mark their newfound status with the trendy pieces that will locate them as modern women by distancing themselves from the ones who are covered carelessly or “traditionally” and the similar look of the uncovered moderns (Sandikci and Ger 2010, 28). In other words, they seem to pursue to display an appealing image within the limits of Islam, which directs them to indulge in shopping activity more and more. Whether they preserve the Islamic limits or not, is the biggest point to scrutinize in this study; however, they generally claim that they do not prefer this newly fashioned-lifestyle so as to make themselves attractive or feminine with their fashionable outlook.

A special term “Süslüman”, the combination of “The Adorned” (Süslü) and “The Muslim”, (Müslüman) was coined for the aforementioned group of females by the university youth; however, this term is critically evaluated in May 2013 by Nilay Örnek who was a columnist in Aksam newspaper at that time¹⁷ (See figure 1.1 below). What makes them call as “Süslüman” is the crucial point to highlight so that the emergence of a new kind of Islamist elites in Turkey can be clarified within this

¹⁶ According to 2012 data, the expense amount upon clothing reached 224 billion dollars for Muslim consumers; Turkey takes place at the top with its 25 billion dollar expense. Available online at: <http://www.haftasonueki.com/islami-moda-pazarinda-turkiye-basi-cekiyor.html>. (last accessed on 23.04.2014).

¹⁷ Örnek, N. (2013). Available online at: <http://www.aksam.com.tr/yazarlar/kim-bu-suslumanlar-sorusuyla-basladi-her-sey/haber-207168>. (last accessed on 20.08.2014).

study. When one looks at the photographs in the popular Islamic fashion magazines or the social media accounts of Muslim females in Turkey, the described female figures are not far away from the narration in Örnek's article:

... Well-educated, young, beautiful, rich and headscarved ones. They constantly share their exaggerative lifestyle, quality brand goods, golden USB or rose embossed sunglasses, stylish combinations marked with their designers on Instagram...



Figure 1.1

These young head-covered women lead wealthy lives and they do not abstain from showing their classy way of living with all details on the social media. Firstly, they can organize any kind of party for special days in the popular hangout places in which both female and male Islamic actors can attend and have enjoyable time together. Moreover, they can also have special parties just for the sake of enjoying the day with a female group. For instance, a group of head-covered ladies in a private university organized a ball to dance and have fun together to celebrate the end of

term. A participant of this party who experienced that kind of enjoyment in a hotel with a head-scarved DJ clearly expresses her shock because as a covered lady, one can feel estrangement from that luxurious and flamboyant world, which seems to be far away from the dominating simplicity in the Prophet's life described by many Islamic intellectuals. Most of the girls come to the hotel with their own cars under concealment of their abaya that is the traditional black all covering costume of Arabic countries. When they enter the saloon for the ball, they take their abayas off and the clothes they preferred for that night is not much different from that of the uncovered ladies because miniskirts, short evening dresses or low-cut dresses, high heeled shoes were combined with shiny make-up and flamboyant hair designs. When it comes to how and where they choose their clothes, there seems to be two options; the first one is to find the pieces from the secular shop windows such as Mango, Zara, Yargıcı, İpekyol (the popular brand names on Bagdat Street) etc. and the other one is to shop from the boutiques in Erenkoy which not only sell the famous designers' costumes from the secular world but also their own conservative haute couture for the covered ladies. The second option tries to preserve the basic principles of covering because they both cover the arm and breast, and are not generally short-cut. These anecdotes indicate that these ladies formulate a new Islamic bourgeoisie aesthetics in order to adopt their outfit to the fashionable and tasteful look so that they can be totally included in "modern" sect of contemporary world. That is to say, they become progressive by reshaping their outer appearance within "Islamic fashion" norms. We see the change from the single way of covering to multifaceted form of covering

emphasizing its being appealing to the public eye in which the demands of modern world seem to prevail against the demands of Islam from female Muslims.

It is important to remember that the word “style” is a little bit problematic for a Muslim covered lady when we look at the covering as a sacred duty in terms of religious aspects according to the mainstream interpretation of tesettür. Taken under consideration the source of reference for Muslims, the Quran and related hadiths point out that there is certain criterion for correct representation of tesettür which defines both the expected form and consciousness behind the duty for the Muslim female believers. That is to say, what matters is not to pretend to perform covering but to conform into the law for tesettür according to the Islamic jurisprudence. However, this recently re-constructed concept of Islamic fashion appears to focus on the non-traditional status of the covering practice by adorning it with the powerful modern components so that creative arena of fashion generates an updated visual and cultural reference from which Muslim females can be related to the modern world¹⁸. Therefore, it is crystal clear that the represented image of Muslim females in the public sphere has not been framed by the pure form of religious act or political act of the 1980s as will be discussed in the following chapters.

¹⁸ This is also the official goal of the Islamic Fashion Festival in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2014: Available online at: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/27/fashion/reading-between-the-seams-at-the-islamic-fashion-festival-in-malaysia.html?_r=0. (last accessed on 01.02.2015).

The clash between the religious and modern world ideals trigger the change in the way the Islamic self has been expressed in Muslim females' lives since 2000s because they actually seem to transpose not only the meaning but also the context the covering is identified to the "modernized" forms. This is because these young covered actors show their individuation strategies within their covering style to express themselves in the public sphere that mostly concerns about aesthetic fancy. The new identity they formulated for the reconfiguration of their veiling style is in close relation with the personalization and aestheticization of a religious practice by means of fashion as one of the crucial components of the modern world. Although it is said that the Koran or the sayings of its Prophet do not have specified ways of covering, the basic idea is dressing by not revealing the female body lines in order not to attract attention of the foreign male gazes. The depicted lifestyle and covering styles on Instagram and Islamic fashion magazines' pages mostly are not in accord with this kind modesty with the claim that there is no exact consensus on what the most suitable way of covering is in Quran. This claim actually eases new starter of covering to search for a nice looking way of dressing that is compatible with the urban chic female profile.

Actually, two types of disintegrations exist in the lives of the veiled ladies in 2000s; fashion conscious head-covered females and the traditionally covered ones. The personalization and aesthetization of dressing for the young covered actors really

have a big role in their everyday life. When we look at mass-produced Islamic clothing, they include long skirts and long-sleeved shirt or just long and loose dresses. However, personal preferences and original combination define their difference and their personal taste from traditionally covered females and secular ones' (See figure 1.2 - 1.3 - 1.4 below as example combinations on the magazine). The fashion editor of *Âlâ* magazine, Hülya Aslan, presents a column in which she gives advice to be "in style" starting with the saying that "style is intrinsic to the individual whereas fashion belongs to the mass". The first advice is to develop your own style in your wardrobe and then with the questions "What? With What? and When?" to offer possible chic combination, and special clues are provided to combine the pieces in the readers' wardrobe according to the highlighted trends. The language they use here needs to be emphasized: "We chose the favorite colors of the season and Spring's hit pieces" with the portrayal of head-covered and uncovered models. What takes attention in this column is exemplary combination images that are formed with much emphasized luxury-world brands pieces such as Carven, Mcqueen, Isabel Marant in addition to the local ones. A brand new Muslim stereotype that represents the achievable "beauty ideal" with certain standards appears to become more and more popular thanks to these fashion magazines. Actually, these magazines are like an insistent attempt to legitimize this distinct Muslim female stereotype and identify the new portrayal of Muslim females through the lens of fashion. Furthermore, this legitimization is processed upon specific emphasis on the need of the covered ladies to appear chic and beautiful especially in outer and public space through adopted

secular language. The personal taste directs the Muslim female to adorn themselves in tune with the appreciated Muslim female figure in the magazines. That's why, it is clear that these magazines are the propagandists of idealized Muslim female figure of fashion and beauty rather than the humble pious portrayal of Muslim female in 2000s' Turkey . Here, something more important than the piety comes to the scene with totally new presentation of tesettür that has been assumed as one of the signs of individual piety since its pious performance in 1990s. When we shed light upon the general definition of the secularization, what directly comes to mind is the loss of piety and accordingly the decline of religiosity. These symptoms seem to put in the missing part of the depicted portrait of the new configuration of the Muslim females in 2000s' Turkey, which points out the signs of secularization in the conservative Turkish Muslim females' way of living.



Figure 1.2; Figure 1.3; Figure 1.4

Beauty is generally used as a kind of controlling instrument to define the standards of the feminine image in the modern world. In order to be appreciated by the society, women need to strive for the idealized form of beauty definition constructed by the body politics of popular culture since “looks are important but inconsequential for men, but they are a defining feature for the woman, both in terms of how others respond to her, and how she experiences her own self” (Tseelon, 78). As the requirements of this beauty myth are constantly changing, a woman needs to meet them in order to achieve that idealized form; therefore, beauty myth occupies a crucial place in a woman’s life. When we look at the special relation between Muslim females and beauty in our case, it appears that the reconstruction of Muslim female stereotype is totally appearance-based in terms of beauty and accordingly fashion, as well.

When one looks at visual texts especially in the Islamic fashion magazines, what directly takes attention is a smiling and sparkling made-up face with the clothed ideal body form adorned with the latest trends and fashion. These fashion pages are also supported by the clothing and fashion advertisements of different brands. The common point in all of these photographs taken for the fashion magazines is that the perfect body which is covered with trendy pieces of the season with a well-formed body-shape is on display. Concomitantly, as a certain fact of the modern society, the size of the body needs to be kept as small as possible to have a proportioned body shape on which the chosen clothes can be seen more delicately. When it comes to the

ones who do not possess the standardized body size; for instance, we see that the editors of these Islamic fashion magazines allocate a part in which the readers ask for suggestions to ameliorate their body shapes with the style editor's tricky suggestions for these types of bodies. The body shapes are categorized as pear-form, apple form, hour glass form and lastly the rectangular form. What is tried to be taught to the readers is firstly to decide what type of body shape they have and then how one should get dressed according to that body-shape. Thus, we firstly see the descriptions of these body shape and some suggestions regarding the selection of suitable clothes, and then interestingly famous names possessing the described body shape are stated from which it is advised to get inspiration. These famous names are given from the Western media ranging from Shakira and Jennifer Lopez who have pear body-shape to Kate Moss and Victoria Beckham who have a rectangular body-shape. The fact that these famous but foreign names are the exemplary names for the delineated body-shape for the target audience who are the "Islamist modern women" in the Islamic fashion magazines constitutes not only an irony due to the expected dominance of Islamic ideology but also a proof for the explicit dominating effect of the consumerist beauty idealization determined by the West and that of modernity perception in the media. At the end of these pages, we see the questions which have come from the readers regarding these issues in which the readers states their body sizes and physical features like the skin color or eye color to get some advice to look more beautiful as a covered lady. It is important to point out in one of the questions, the reader asks how to make herself feel beautiful with her headscarf as a newly-

covered lady in a foreign country by declaring her features from her face shape to the status and the color of her eyebrows. Thus, regardless of being a covered lady who is expected not to draw attention upon her outlook, the basic concern of a woman seems to possess a better outer appearance via various beautifying bodily adornments. Accordingly, the data appears to suggest that these Islamic fashion magazines targeted at the Muslim women favor the universal stereotyped beauty ideals with their supportive visual and written texts.

Considering the studio shooting for the fashion pages with a covered model in Islamic fashion magazines, the fact that how trendy pieces can be combined with the other accessories such as colorful silk scarves, classy shoes and bags, the trendy jewelry like cute collarets so as to display a stylish appearance is exemplified with numerous eye-catching photographs. Besides, these images have some hints in the one side of the page showing the comments of the fashion editor of the magazine while there appears the explanatory notes in which the chosen pieces are given with their brands and their prices on the other side of the page. Thus, the readers in front of these colorful pages are incited to have a look and try these pieces on their bodies in the afore-named stores so that they can check whether they would fit upon their bodies as they do perfectly in these colorful pages. To exemplify with the comments of a fashion editor for the displayed clothes upon the covered model in 21th volume of *Âlâ* magazine; in the first image, there is a combination of different pieces chosen from Gucci with an emphasis on the change of the brand's designer which thus

endowed the brand with a more aesthetic femininity with its new stylish pieces whereas in the second one there is a lady who just wear a skinny jean by DKNY and a short cardigan by Gucci with an emphasis upon the blood- red shawl the lady wears (See the figure 1.5 - 1.6 below). Thus, what is encouraged to internalize in the readers' mind set is to feel the need to confirm with what is ascribed to the female models in these images, and as a result, the readers are expected to decorate their bodies within the standardized frame of beauty applied to these fashion images by means of the fashionable exclusive garments' selection.



The figure 1.5 ; 1.6

Why the attractiveness is a problematic issue in terms of Islamic ideals for a female Muslim bears importance at this point so as to critique these kinds of alluring photographs. Many Islamist critics accused these magazines and their followers with

the evidence of this verse in the Quran by saying that “what you carry upon your head is not a rag but the 31th verse of Surah An-Nur (The Light)”¹⁹:

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 and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women ... (*Quran*, An-Nur 24:31)

As stated in the Quran, the basis of tesettür lies on not “exposing” the adornment of the female body. However, the clues for the perfect make-up and the trends in fashionable clothing pieces that enable Muslim females to possess glamorous look becomes the focus of attention for the readers in these Islamic fashion magazines. That is to say, what is promoted is to expose the adorned beauty of females with appealing beautifying techniques. Thus, the foregoing discussion implies that although the latest Muslim female myth in Islamic fashion magazines is built upon fitting into highly valued female beauty and charming physical visibility via the

¹⁹(2014). “31’inci ayetli tepki Asena’lı partiyi iptal ettirdi”. Available online at: http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/81085/31_inci_ayetli_tepki_Asena_li_partiyi iptal ettirdi.html. (last accessed on 20.08.2014).

models that have exceptional looks with their stylish covering in these colorful magazine pages, the idealized form of tesettür according to the sources of reference is not in tune with the physically attractive looking of the aforementioned group of Muslim females. On the contrary, the sacred book asks the Muslim females not to display themselves in public in addition to preserve their private parts as stated in one of the related verse above in the Quran;

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 Allah Forgiving and Merciful. (*Quran*, Surat Al-'Aḥzāb (The Combined Forces) 33:59)

Thus, Muslim females are expected to display neither female posture nor their adornment in the public sphere; however, one of the biggest contradictions in this case is implicit revelation of what is supposed to be covered step by step, which will be elaborated in the chapter three.

RESTIGMATISATION FROM WITHIN

Young covered ladies generally prefer two types of covering materials; silk shawls²⁰ and brand-name colorful headscarves. In one of the now extinct fashion magazines called as “Enda”, serious advice is given for the styles of pretty head-covering according to the shape of the face with a special emphasis on the first thing to decide whether the color suits the wearer well or not. As Tseelon has done a Goffmanesque analysis to explain the relation between beauty and stigma, the reconfiguration of the stigmatized figure in Muslim females’ lives can also be explained with this point of view:

Stigma is a state of being discredited because of falling short of identity norms, by deviating from expectations and this attributes are generally discrediting through culture- they can be either embedded in one’s body, personality, behavior or history or group membership. But his emphasis is on the relationship between discreditable attributes and the stereotype (Tseelon, 88)

Starting from 1980s, the stigmatization reached the peak point due to its rapid increase in 1990s. Although the Turkish modernization worked this stigmatization

²⁰ Silk shawl that has vibrant color options are new fashionable garment to cover head. Some conservative veiled ladies prefer them so as not to use their brand-name headscarves that cost between one-two billion daily because the prices of these shawls range from 100 Turkish lira to 300 Turkish lira. How young veiled ones prefer to wear the shawl will be discussed in the second section of the study.

process upon the head-scarf for long years till 2011, now another stigmatization process seems to have restarted in Muslim females' social lives. The Islamic fashion magazines and alluring social visibility of fashion-conscious covered ladies on social media produce distinct stigmatizing conditions that are being regulated by the beauty system. The quality of physical appeal decides whether one will be disfavored or not in the eyes of Muslim females. When one enters the door of a boutique in Erenköy where most of Islamic fashion trends are determined, a covered female can easily detect whether one is appreciated with her appearance or not on that day via a pair of disapproving eyes without a single utter. The beauty ideals and physical glamour really matter in such a public sphere where certain beauty form is made essential for the Islamic "femininity" in contemporary world of the aforementioned Muslim females' group. The scale from normality to deviance in terms of the expected covered fashionableness constitutes the expected self of Muslim females in this modern society; therefore, being included within this scale appears to mold the favored self-concept in this sociology. Carelessly dressing or not having a certain fashionable look may lead to low self-esteem that can cause a kind of shyness in oneself. To exemplify, in some conversations with the customers of this boutique or who rarely visit these boutiques, they admit that they feel an absolute uneasiness when they share the same environment with the ones in Erenköy that have a classy appearance because of the fashion conscious females' tendency to search in every nook and cranny²¹ with their eyes upon the clothing. This is the case especially when

²¹To search in every nook and cranny: scrutinize every part of something; "didik didik etmek" in

one encounters the customers who come to shop from the boutiques in Erenköy or in some cases with some salesladies in these boutiques. As Tseelon emphasized that beauty is a role and perceiving the self as beautiful is contextual, and not constant throughout the life cycle, the beauty perception for a veiled lady really matter so as to be approved within the newly constructed Islamic social strata that is sensitive to beauty and fashion principles in Muslim female appearance (87).

The stigmatization criteria for a covered female has totally changed because refashioning of a gendered Muslim identity functions upon beauty and fashion nowadays; thus, how much the covered females perform this body politics determines whether or not one belongs to the degraded group who cannot represent the radical move to elegance and glamor in veiling. The discredited attributes are decided upon beauty and fashion in the contemporary Muslim society whereas the head-scarf was a single attribute to make the Muslim females to pay social prices due to the secularist stigmatization upon the tesettür practice coded as a deviation from the modern world in the past. Furthermore, Islamic fashion magazines of Turkey consciously support this refashioned stigma by inducing pleasant dressing and concomitantly pretty visibility in the society with their combination contests that is regularly arranged and their “in style” column that presents the favored form of the outfit for a veiled lady. The unadorned or unimproved Muslim female body has been transformed into a reason to have negative feelings or shame for their visibility in the public sphere.

Consequently, this beauty addiction is not in tune with either politically Islamic or traditional body presentation of a Muslim female lady. First, those ladies were historically stigmatized by secularist gaze and now they are being stigmatized by the fashion-conscious Muslim women, which points out the double-stigmatization process upon Muslim female covering. It seems that they are inured to ignore some of the borders for Muslim female veiling drawn by the Islamic principles in order not to expose another stigmatization once again due to their physical appearance. Here, it is crucial to highlight that the tesettür is not for exposing the female body or beauty but for the sake of putting a kind of shield to preserve the female body from the male gaze since Islamic perspective requires the female body, which is connoted as “vulnerable”, not to display itself in the public due to “possible” physical or psychological harassment coming from other’s gaze.

SECULARIZATION OF MUSLIM FEMALE SELVES

The clash between the Islamic ideal and present beauty ideal of the covered ladies constitutes a more and more complex position day by day due to the powerful media means that appreciate the formation and display of a fascinating appearance of female body. Therefore, what comes out is that the only token indicating their Islamic identity or concern is their covering hair in diverse forms. When one speculates about how beauty ideology is constructed and how it is practiced in the case of

fashion with a special emphasis upon adorned visibility of a covered female in the public sphere, what comes to mind is that whether or not Muslim female selves are implicitly in the process of secularizing their way of life. This is because their way of life is rested upon the importance attached to the visible self that is tried to fit into the idealized form of beauty and fashionable look rather than focusing and designing their life according to the ultimate aim of a Muslim to work for their well-being in the hereafter according to the Islamic ideology. In Turkey, if we can state that the need to possess a luxurious and distinct life is the secular ideal of modern world, fashion and leisure activities can be categorized as the by-products of that view. Therefore, it seems a clear fact that the new Islamic strata encoded as the “others” of the modern Turkey has increasingly internalized the secular modernity more and more thanks to their creative re-appropriation of their choices in their lifestyle by means of the reconstructed harmony of Islamic and modern principles. While displaying above-depicted distinct actions in terms of Islamic principles, their hashtags or tags on the social media are full of world brands that also signify their fashion-consciousness and importance of hyper-feminine appearance though the essence of covering is not to reveal the femininity to avoid carnal attention as stated in many Quranic verses. Present forms of covering marked with its eye-catching materials show that Islamic symbols and principles have started to be expressed through capitalistic forms of consumption as Kömeçoğlu has stated the ambiguous desire to accommodate “the modern” while remaining Islamic in his article “Islamic Patterns of Consumption” (2007: 61). Under the hashtag of “such a Sunday” in the

photographs shared on Instagram, the names of book side by side in the shared image are “Fashion and Mentality”, “God Created Me Like This” and the foreign *Elle*, *Vogue* and *Aysha* magazines. These books appear to indicate the in-betweenness of Islamic female selves once more. Moreover, these fashion-conscious females generally tag their clothes with their brands; for example, under the title “Here is my Umrah²² combination” we see many luxury brands have been given as hashtag, however, the same girl can appear with the night hangout costume in an exclusive café that is generally visited by the conservative elite group three days later. These examples highlight the clash between the need to be marked “modern” and the urge to remain in the Islamic chain. Here, it is important to signify that by means of what they consume or purchase, they actually reconstruct the context and the meaning attributed to the traditional connotation of head-covering. In other words, they define their new selves with what they carry on their bodies, which refers to not only the covering style but also all clothing pieces, food, cosmetics and even accessories like silk shawls and special jewelry, pointing out their understanding of “modern” identity. Accordingly, we can say that what they understand as modern is the presentable form of modern female beauty with the defining accessories, especially brand-name pieces for a veiled lady, upon their bodies. In fact, the word “modern” is used very much with this connotation in these fashion magazines since we see many

²² The Umrah is a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, performed by Muslims that can be undertaken at any time of the year. In Arabic, Umrah means "to visit a populated place". It is sometimes called the 'minor pilgrimage' or 'lesser pilgrimage', the Hajj being the 'major' pilgrimage and which is compulsory for every able-bodied Muslim who can afford it. The Umrah is not compulsory but highly recommended ("Umrah." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 13 May 2014. Web. 15 May 2014.).

references to “modern appearance” and “modern style” with the decorated covered or uncovered models on the colorful pages of these magazines.

Principally, the represented lifestyle in these Islamic fashion magazines and on Instagram implies that Islamic circles have an increasing purchasing power thanks to economic development provided by the moderate Islamic party, AKP, since 2002. This economic power enabled the emergence of Islamic *nouveaux riches* and this segment of society that acquired secular and modern education transformed the newly acquired economic capital into social and cultural capital (Kömeçoğlu 2007: 57). This economic empowerment transposed the political context of covered ones into moral and cultural representation of their Islamic selves in everyday life with the new patterns of consumption. As Islam is not just a religion but it presents a certain way of life for its believers, many Islamist intellectuals have criticized this distinct group to challenge the requirements of Islamic faith by translating their Islamic way of life into a lifestyle committed to the modern consumption routines. It seems that their lifestyle starts to signify their social status in the public sphere rather than signifying their modest way of life surrounded by the Islamic principles.

Bourdieu denotes the relationship between “the symbolic aspects of consumption and the making of distinctions and the marking of differences between groups whose position is established both by their socio-economic position in the system of economic capital, and by their position in the systems which transmit and reproduce

cultural capital” (Kömeçoğlu 2007: 58). Their consumer items reproduce their “modern” but “Islamic” selves with concomitant up-to-date Islamic social and cultural status by differentiating their identities not only from lower-class traditional Islamic ones’ but also from the secular elites’ who do not prefer signifying their Muslimness by covering their heads. The appreciated consumption ideals promote luxury shopping not for the sake of satisfaction of some human needs but that of “religiously” and personally gratifying looks. This latest commitment seems to resolve the long-lasting tension between religious modesty and fashionable, tasteful and beautiful appearance in the public sphere where the display of elegant looks signifies high social standing. This fact indicates that these females redefine the borders surrounding their Islamic life because what they emphasize with their distinguished stylish outfit is their individual modern interpretation of the covering style rather than the mainstream interpretation of tesettür.

BODY PROBLEMATIC

Consumer culture pays attention the outer body that refers to appearance as well as the movement and control of body in social space (Featherstone 1982; 18). To highlight upon the formation of a new culture for the new generation of Muslim women, appearance and management of impression of outer body bear a big importance as observed both on the media means and in the public space. Consumerist way of life directs people to have a close relation with their bodies and

to make themselves to be satisfied with their alluring female body. As Baudrillard points out, female body possesses exchange value besides the use-value in the consumer culture, this case is the reflection of a sum of signs and codes loaded value upon Muslim female body:

The ethics of beauty, which is the very ethics of fashion, may be defined as the reduction of all concrete values-the use values of body (energetic, sexual) to a single functional “exchange-value” which itself alone, in its abstraction, encapsulates the idea of glorious, fulfilled body (quoted in Karacan, pg 74)

Accordingly, the first imperative is to make women to dislike their bodies' look and then they are made to believe that consuming the new goods may help them to ameliorate the status of their body. Therefore, the changing attitudes of Muslim female selves can be evaluated as the sign of a new consumerist philosophy in their lives since they constantly feel the absolute need to exchange the satisfying images that is produced with different styles of covering and colorful clothing out of aesthetics concerns. The conspicuous aspect of this new configuration of covering increase its availability thanks to the Islamic fashion magazines that present Muslim women to new clothing habits, new garments, new styles harmonized with redefined consumption patterns. Distinct and exclusive forms of Muslim female corporality have been generated with the exposure of exemplified images in the vivid fashion pages of the magazines so as to express the “modern” world of Muslim females. The

readers of these magazines are inspired by a new language in which voguish look of Islamic female body is displayed and instilled in their consciousness. Concomitantly, beyond the function of hiding the female body, covering has started to be preferred by the new cadre of Muslim female ones as a symbol of exquisite outlook and affluent way of life.

The expression of this re-constructed world functions by entitling particular set of items as acceptable and some others as unacceptable for this newly-constructed exclusive space. To support this statement with the observed data, what takes attention in the young veiled ladies' clothing between ages 15-20 is that tesettür in their mind seems to be very far away of the idealized form as a sacred duty in the Quran as detailed above. These young covered ones generally frequent Bagdat Street with the ones who have the similar style of covering and clothing, especially at weekends. Some just go window-shopping and then takes photos inside the exclusive brands' stores on the street to share below the hashtag of the brand-name on their Instagram accounts. However, some others just wander around and have enjoyable time with their friends in the diverse refined cafés situated on this popular street. Both groups take attention of the "rest", others on the street, because these ladies generally display eye-catching garments for showing their pleasantly marked appearance in public place.

It is clear that they follow the fashionable trends by reinterpreting and applying them into their clothing. Although tightly fitting clothes are not favored in the Quran and hadiths that underline not to reveal the curves of female body, these ladies mostly prefer skinny jeans or big and colorful flower-printed fitting trousers with short and vivid colored tunics, which disclose female hipline measures to the public gaze whereas the endings of the tunic can be covered swinging lacework that shadows the curves of female body in a more striking way. The comfortable stance in choosing softer way of covering their bodies with the “modern” styles make them feel easy about the on-going in-betweenness (between “being modern” that signify representing updated or fashionable styles upon their covered body and being “the other of modernity” referring to the stigmatized position of tesettür for long years). Their reinterpretation of covering their body within the modern styles has enabled them to empower their visibility in the public space. Accordingly, the negative connotation of the covered women in the streets, especially Bagdat Street, has almost being transformed into the neutral one because the sight of a covered women in depicted appearance has become a normal sight in the streets. This is because the Muslim female actors transformed their preference of head-covering into a fashionable clothing practice which presents an alternative way of living that is not stuck between the secular and the religious realms of the world.

One of the crucial objective of this study was to understand why Muslim females place so much value upon Islamic fashion concept and accordingly the chic

appearance of covered female body though Islam expects Muslim to possess perfection not in outer appearance but in Islamic sensibilities. In other words, why do they care so much for something that is essentially non-utilitarian for their faith and its expectancies for the world-life according to their sacred text? Evaluated in terms of study of values, the first motivator of this idealization among Muslim females, Islamic fashion magazines bear importance since “as cultural products , they circulate in the cultural economy of collective meanings, providing recipes, patterns, narratives and models for the reader” (Moeran 2004: 260). This is actually the case for the Islamic fashion magazines in Turkey as well since we observe that there is a gradual construction and cultivation of an “Islamic” femininity that embodies elegance, quality, and stylishness, high-class and allure (Moeran 2004: 260). This can easily be detected when one looks even at the cover of the first and the last issues in terms of bodily postures and mimics of the cover girls. The content analysis and the reactions taken from their readers illustrate that the primary concern is with appearance as the main focus of interest since we find pretty much emphasis upon sophistication and elegance upon feminine apparel (Moeran 2004: 263). Image through clothing is justified and legitimized by reference to the world brands, the conservative fashion designers’ choices with colorful “in style” pages or famous fashion designers in Turkey such as Nedret Taciroğlu and Dilek Hanif who have conservative veiled customers such as Hayrunnisa Gül.

Bourdieu states that both fashion and fashion magazines are the products of “a vast operation of social alchemy” (cited in Moeran 2004: 271). This elaborate transformation process functions upon the mixture of written and visual images in both textual material and advertising parts of these magazines. By this way, they uphold a field of values and then integrate them into image-clothing as a whole upon modern Muslim female portrait, which has also been reflected into the Instagram world. Thus, we can say that especially Muslim females on Instagram bestow symbolic values on fashion goods and brands to mark their refashioned beauty and exclusive visibility in their “public” Insta-accounts. The value Muslim females bring to bear in their interaction with the fascinating aura of fashion through these media means confirms the popular epithet “Süslüman” (connoted by University Youth) since what is ultimately good and desirable for these females in life turns out to achieve the prescribed beauty and elegance ideal with the possible adornment techniques discussed in Chapter 2.

Here, it is important to give place to the interview conducted by a news agent Dorian Jones from Voa News in USA. He pays attention to the fact that the fashion industry is booming in Turkey as a result of a youthful population and a vibrant economy. The emergence of a new fashion magazine called *Âlâ* -- whose target audience is the young Islamic professional woman attracts attention. Therefore, the video reflecting the preparation for the photo shooting of *Âlâ* magazine in July 2012 shows three speakers starting from the editor of *Âlâ* Magazine, Hulya Aslan and then Tuğba Tunç

as the fashion editor and lastly a head-scarved women in the street who has expressed her thought upon this magazine (See the figure 1.7; 1.8; 1.9 below):

Hulya Aslan: This magazine aims at conservative women who need *alternatives in their lifestyles* since the other magazines do not represent them and they could not find the things that correspond to their needs and desires. They did not offer them *a lifestyle they aspire to*. Before a covered sister would not even enter university. They *did not have a way of life they wanted*. They are constantly being exposed to obstacles but in the last ten years, the situation has changed. With these changes, need and demands increased. By answering these demands, *Âlâ* magazine has gained incredible success.

Tugba Tunç: I want a *modern, covered, attractive, elite* women who are *tastefully* dressed, who *know how to dress* with feminine, covered, chic clothing. I want to say it with all my sincerity. This is my goal because this is how I am. I *love being like this and I want to see this in my magazine*.

The woman in the street: The stores we can shop are very limited. *Âlâ* magazine helps us because it offers us alternatives such as recommending outfits, stores, places that are appropriate for women like me.²³

²³ The transcription of the video and the emphasis with the italics belong to me: (2012) “Turkish Fashion Magazine Targets Female Islamic Professionals”. Available online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxCkio095ic>. (last accessed on 20.06.2014).



The figure 1.7; The figure 1.8; The figure 1.9

This alternative way of living has been promoted with its own magazines entitled as “the magazine for a beautiful lifestyle” that is associated with aesthetical, tasteful looks, elegant posture via the graceful covered beauty. That kind of portrayal of Muslim female has been presented like the common norm of head-scarved ones in 2000s. When one reads and especially watches how the ex-fashion editor of *Âlâ* magazine, Tugba Tunc, expresses her zeal to popularize the vogueish appearance of covered women in Turkish society, it does not become hard to predict what is tried to put in the veiled ladies’ minds as “taken for granted” by means of fashion pages in this magazine. This elegance connotation entitled upon the alternative way of life for modern “Muslims” becomes legitimized with the belief that Quran and hadiths emphasize “the importance of beauty and the Prophet’s interest in dressing

beautifully” (Sandıkcı and Ger 2010, 27). This expression is not gendered at all. Although this saying is a very conflictual issue in the religion in terms of its interpretation and references to the world life, the followers of this new lifestyle try to find some kind of religious legitimacy for their new way of living, which will be probed in the Chapter 3 in detail.

REFLECTIONS OF CONSUMERIST WAY OF LIVING

“Lasting, often expressive objects that served us in the past are being set aside for the quick, shoddy, replaceable commodities with which we now surround ourselves. Powerful mechanisms of social life press us in this direction.”

CHARLES TAYLOR

Paraphrasing Baudrillard, consumption and consumerism do not just refer to the need, desire or pleasure because consumerism actually does not negate the needs a consumer feels about an object. Baudrillard defines the consumption by pointing out “the experience of lack” as its main source (Norris 2006: 470). Longing for consuming cannot be consummated at once because this longing is an insatiable and irresistible one. He also defines consumption in two acts by relying upon two meanings of the French “consommer”; firstly the sense of “fulfillment or completion” in terms of “consummation” and secondly annulment or negation in terms of “using

up, wearing out”, thus there is a circular relationship which has no end between the consumer and the object for consumption (Norris 2006, 469). In this sense, the fashionable clothing and elegant outlook chosen and displayed in the fashion magazines and on social media firstly light the fire to consume or to feel the sense of fulfillment by completing what is lacking in the outer appearance with the possession of the new fashionable clothes for each new season. Later, we see that the “compulsion to consume” coined by Baudrillard is again activated by the new fashion trends and its fashionable clothes presented in the new volume of the fashion magazines or in the daily outlook poses shared on the social media (Baudrillard 2001, 30).

In the article “More Than Just a Fashion Magazine”, Brian Moeran defines the fashion magazines by explaining them both as cultural products and as commodities, which support the argument we have followed above since it shows how deeply the consumerist ideology in terms of the capitalist production and the maintenance of consumption has been inscribed within fashion magazines as it has been the case for Islamic ones:

As cultural products, magazines may be said to circulate in a cultural economy of collective meanings. They provide how-to recipes, illustrated stories, narratives and experiential and behavioural models – particularly in the realms of fashion and beauty – in which the reader’s ideal self is reflected and on which she can herself reflect and act. As

commodities, magazines are products of the publishing and print industries and important sites for the advertising and sale of commodities (especially those related to fashion, cosmetics, fragrances and personal care). (2006; 727)

Accordingly, the fashion magazines from the universal ones to the Islamic Turkish ones can be demonstrated as prominent pieces of that communicative apparatus in order to incite modern women towards this way of thinking by placing the consumption ideology into the fashion system which develops in a constant change. This claim can also be elaborated with the definition of the fashion system as such:

...Fashion system entails systematic and changing styles of dress, adornment and conduct: ‘grammars’ of fashion (bodies of rules and forms) that underpin codes of dress behaviour; consensual denotations of power, status and social location; and recognized codes of self-formation through the clothes and bodily adornment (Craik, xi)

Considering the content in these fashion magazines and on the social media, it can be deduced that the fashion system has been defined and promoted with the visuals and written texts within these media tools and their followers are oriented to the progressive acceleration of consumerism.

Mike Featherstone, in his article “The Body in Consumer Culture”, underlines that consumer culture conjoins “the inner body” referring to the maintenance of body vis à

vis the aging process and “the outer body” referring to the self-management of the appearance (1982:18). This indicates that the consumer culture attributes a great deal of importance to the bodily representation and the pleasant appearance of the body. The popular media press, in this case the fashion magazines and then conservative fashion representatives in the social media, foster the incessant proliferation of the stylized images of the female body. Thus, the consumer culture unconsciously leads people to search themselves for imperfections upon their bodies by comparing themselves with the ideal body images represented by means of these media tools focused on the fashion. These results provide confirmatory evidence for why these females always concern about their outlook or how to elaborate their appearance better each day with their poses on social media and the questions the followers ask the fashionista-designer icons among head-covered females on social media for styling their *tesettir* better.

Accordingly, when one looks at the pseudo-world represented in these fashion magazines, the chosen items shown in the visual texts of these magazines and the specific hashtags on social media under the outlook photographs are mostly comprised of the world-brands like Gucci, Valentino, Prada, McQueen which can be listed as luxury brands within the consumerist way of thinking. Thus, what is processed upon the bodies and into the mind-sets is the internalization of a stereotyped appearance composed of universally accepted fashionable items with an emphasis on the impulse to consume what is newly produced more and more. What

is idealized in these media tools is actually to make female bodies adhere to these “fashionable” items which are automatically perceived as pleasant possessions as Baudrillard also elaborates this way of thinking in “the Consumer Society”:

Today, we are everywhere surrounded by the remarkable conspicuousness of consumption and affluence, established by the multiplication of objects, services, and material goods ... As the wolf-child becomes wolf by living among them, so are we becoming functional. *We are living the period of the objects: that is, we live by their rhythm, according to their incessant cycles.* Today, it is we who are observing their birth, fulfillment, and death. (30; emphasis by me)

Thus, it is not surprising to see that the consumer lady of the contemporary times is deliberately directed to obtain the objects that give her satisfaction since she feels herself happy each time she displays these favored items upon her body either on the street or on the social media. Thus, the ideal appearance turns into a precondition for a contented and delighted look and sense since these bodies are conditioned to become self-pleased by displaying the similar outlook portrayed in these fashion magazines or in that of the fashion conscious ladies on social media such as Hulya Aslan and Esra Seziş²⁴. Besides, this romantic story in which the consumer lady is endowed with the need and strong impulse which leads her to search for the

²⁴ These females are important names for Islamic fashion world; Esra Sezis, the first art director of *Âlâ* magazine, works as a fashion and style consultant for “conservative” ladies with her active website in which she writes about style advices or fashion news in tune with the world brands. Hulya Aslan is the fashion editor in *Âlâ* magazine and mostly uses her Instagram account to advertise many new Islamic fashion brands by wearing their pieces and giving details about their chicness.

fashionable items giving her both satisfaction and bliss is repeated each time the obtained items loses its charm due to the enchantment of the newly fashioned items taking their places in the stores and then in the fashion magazines' colorful pages and on the social media accounts of the Islamic elegance idols. Thus, it can be deduced that each choice a Muslim female makes in terms of clothing actually reflects the culture which has been formulated within these media tools regarding the posture, the outer appearance and even the size of the body.

To continue with the beauty ideal prescribed within these media tools, all of them seem to pinpoint that women from each part of the world unites in one common concern which is defined as “inescapable bond of beauty” (Moeran 2010; 492). As fashion is the indispensable part of beauty, these magazines and accordingly the hyper-fashion conscious Muslim females on social media make use of this concern by combining the fashion and beauty ideals for aspiring their readers to have best looks with their suggestions. Thus, a kind of obsession with style, fashion appears to prevail in their lives and concomitantly a growing love of clothes, jewelry and cosmetics, which encourage not only the consumerist approach but also the marketing of new products for the formation of Islamic fashionable bodies.

To portray the issue in Norris's terms, what is done to celebrate consumption and to elaborate its signification is to found an extensive communicative apparatus so that the act of consumption and the desire to consume start to be considered as an

irrepressible need of a modern human being (2006: 458). Thus, the production of these fashion magazines and the extensive usage of social media play a crucial role in promoting the consumerist way of life in Muslim females' lives which have been oriented towards consumption in all means. That's why, it is possible to assert that the sort of woman appeared in this realm is continually transforming but constant woman, which have been suggested by Peter Corrigan in *Sociology of Consumption* (95). The constancy seems to reside in two main areas; as a Muslim woman and as a consumer woman; however, transformations upon the social level for marking their social status and the personal level for the sake of a "new" Muslim female, new clothing style, new food and the like. In other words, these females seem to preserve their "Muslim" title as a covered lady but they explicitly pursue change-oriented life in all means. This shows another reflection of the contradictions in the contemporary state of Muslim females.

The basic difference between the universal fashion magazines and the Islamic ones in terms of the modeling images may be shown with the focus on the celebrities in the universal ones regarding the first volumes of Islamic fashion magazines. Nevertheless, when one looks at their last volumes, we see that not only foreign models but also Turkish famous models strike sparkling poses both in the covered state and the uncovered one for these magazines (See the figure 1.10 and 1.11 below). This is because today's popular heroes have become not the builders of empires or the inventors and achievers but our celebrities, "beautiful" people of leisure who

display a philosophy of enjoyment rather than discipline and toil (cited in Featherstone; 1982, 19). What is underscored with the demonstration of these kinds of images is that self-improvement of the outer appearance need to be the ultimate preoccupation of the modern females. These media tools make the Muslim females to believe the possible applicability of that enchanted world into their own lives thanks to the represented pseudo-world in the fashion magazines and the social media which are concentrated upon youth, health, physical beauty and charm coded as the ultimate providers of the “bliss” in their private lives. This pseudo-world is reinforced with various prescriptions of the beautiful look by the advertisement of the cosmetics and multifarious fashionable brands; for instance, we see the advertisements of the cosmetic brands which has the certificate of the halal cosmetic and personal care products so as to “add color one’s style and preserve the health of the skin” with a kind of persuasive undertone behind them.



The figure 1.10 ; The figure 1.11

As an important part of fashion theory, “trend” concept is often employed to delineate the medium that drives fashion as it is used to describe what a majority of people at a given time and place agree to be the right way to dress (Valentin). In theory, Georg Simmel in his essay “Fashion”, published in 1904, argues that the trend process is hierarchical, with the lower classes imitating the fashion behavior of the higher classes so as to reach a higher social status. This is because the ones being imitated by the lower classes wish to preserve their sense of distinction; therefore, they feel the

need to change what they wear. This process forms tension between consumers longing for distinction and for identification (Valentin). This social process prompting trends is actually the case between the conservative fashion designers on social media and their followers. Trends can also be examined with the consumption ideal of the hyper-feminine females in 2000s. Here, another term “obsolescence” gains importance to mark the existence of consumerist way in their public space. The style obsolescence is described with the fact that fashionable clothes differ for each season to trigger consumption because although the clothes for a season can be still functional, they are thought to lose their distinctive quality by wasting their symbolic value in fashion (Valentin). This makes the consumer feel the urge or the need to replace their clothes with new ones for the new season. Thus, the obsolescence can be listed as one of the important incentives of consumption need for being categorized as a fashionable being. The obsolescence functions not only in the glamorous appearance but also in many realms of their way of living such as paying visit to the popular newly-opened spaces or organizing newly-fashioned rituals just for ladies, which will be elaborated in the following lines.

The lives of green “bourgeois”, connoting the Muslim nouveaux riches, are regulated by many components of modern consumption ideals ranging from the clothes and accessories from luxury brands to the modern home decoration, westernized furniture, luxurious summer holidays, special celebrations for different events such as

baby-shower, first veiling ceremony, cakes for Umrah visit and being a hafız²⁵ and lastly regular night hangouts in exclusive cafés named as Huqqa, Market Bosphorus, Messt, Şazeli, Dubai Cafe and Al Fakheer Shisha Lounge. These different concepts are connoted as “Conservative Entertainment” or “Halal Entertainment for Muslim” in many Turkish newspapers. Ayse Böhürler writes a detailed article named as “While trying to become religious, our irreconcilable contradictions” in order to demonstrate the dramatic shift between the old generation Muslim females and the contemporary chic Muslim females²⁶. Paraphrasing her, Muslims females have constructed their outward appearance but with an empty inner world since “tesettür”, which has been under the influence of capitalist world, and the integration of consumption goods shaped with Christian symbols result in a life with no philosophy. However, her generation, connoted as the older generation in her article, reduced their lives to minimum since they gave up their aesthetic tastes by making themselves anti-chic as a part of their pious religiosity. While the saying “You look so fashionable” was regarded as an insult in the past since it implied that there was something deficient in their faith, the most popular concepts in the contemporary world of Muslim females since 2000s have been chicness, stylishness and elegance which were absolutely refused in the past due to the Prophet order on simplicity.

²⁵ person who has learned the Koran by heart

²⁶(2015) “Dışımızı imar ettik ama içimiz bombos”. Available online at: <http://t24.com.tr/haber/ayse-bohurler-disimizi-imar-ettik-ama-icimiz-bombos,279015>. (last accessed on 20.01.2015).

Starting with the special celebration parties which integrate Christian symbols into the new lifestyle of Muslim females, many covered females have baby shower parties towards the end of their pregnancy with the baby Mevlud²⁷ in the end. Moreover, some veiled ladies also have baby Mevlud in big saloons like a wedding celebration after the baby shower ceremony. Considering that the birthday celebration with a cake is a part of Christian culture, another hybrid concept party is the celebration of the holy visit with a cake upon which Kaaba²⁸ is photographed after the fashionable Umrah tours in luxury (See the figure 1.12 below). When a Muslim female finished memorizing the Quran, a big celebration party is held with the cutting of a cake whose cover is decorated with the first two pages of the Quran (See the figure 1.13 below). Moreover, after “bachelorette”²⁹ parties in which all ladies wear evening dresses exposing cleavage, these ladies share their photographs on social media by covering themselves haphazardly. In Fashion Week Istanbul, the increasing number of the covered females and the display of covered models are highly appreciated by this cadre, however, that there are no clothes displayed for the conservative sect in the 2015 Spring/ Summer collection has been evaluated upsetting by reminding that the world brand DKNY produced special collection on Ramadan concept³⁰. Lastly, when

²⁷ A religious ceremony in which Quran is recited so that the new born baby can lead a life as a good Muslim; it takes place after the birth of the child according to Islamic culture.

²⁸ Islamic holy site in Mecca which is a black stone cube shaped building is the direction Muslims must turn when praying.

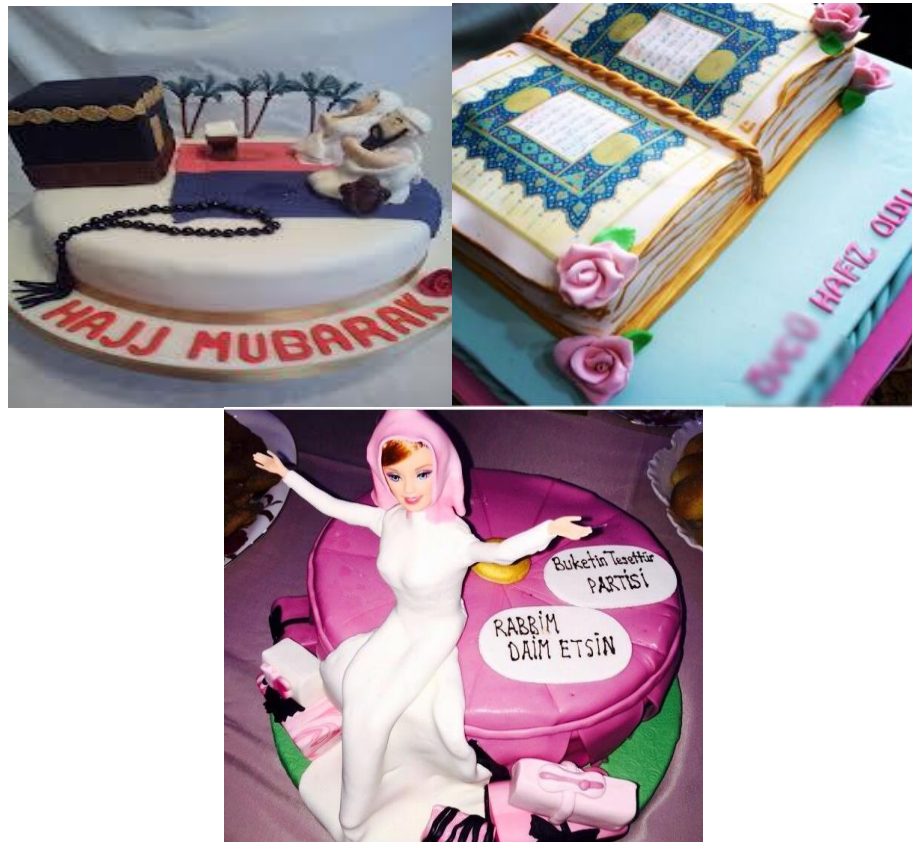
²⁹ Henna nights are mostly transformed into the Bachelorette concept parties which is also a part of Christian culture.

³⁰ “Moda Haftasında Başörtülü Manken”. Available online at: <http://esrakigili.com/moda-haftasinda-basortulu-manken/>. (last accessed on 25.11.2014).

young Muslim females decide to veil, the mothers give a celebration party just for them which is so similar to a wedding ceremony in terms of its details and luxury (See the figure 1.14 below). This celebration party takes place as such: after the recitation of Quran at first and a speech concerning the importance of the veiling, the young lady is being taken to the stage in company with Islamic hymns and is head-covered with sayings of Allauekber³¹. Lastly, everyone celebrates the young lady with the presents and they leave with small presents as a token of this special day's remembrance.³² After all divergent “absurd” ceremonies for halal entertainment, Böhürler asks when we will face with the fact that the one who has not philosophy cannot have a religious live, which implies that all these entertaining events actually indicate that they lead a religious life without concern about its essence. However, her article further warns these ladies that if one says I am a Muslim lady, then she has to seize upon its philosophy.

³¹ Allahuekber refers to the fact that God is the most in the magnitude and sublimity

³² The details concerning the first covering ceremony is taken by Barbarosoglu's article; Barbarosoğlu, F. (2014) “Her güne yeni bir adet: Baş örtme törenleri”. Available online at: <http://www.aksam.com.tr/yazarlar/kim-bu-suslumanlar-sorusuyla-basladi-her-sey/haber-207168>. (last accessed on 01.01.2015).



The figure 1.12; The figure 1.13; The figure1.14³³

When it comes to the popularity of spending time in the aforementioned exclusive cafes and restaurant which are situated in elite areas near Bosphorus, the most favored place is Huqqa which means “bottle” in Arabic that refers to shisha. It is connoted as Islamic Reina³⁴ since the newspaper questioned this voguish place with the headline “Is it a night club without alcohol?”. Its most striking feature is probably its being open for twenty four hours like a normal night club. There are three hundred

³³ The sayings upon the celebration cake; “Tesettür Party of Buket” “May God make it last”

³⁴ One of the most popular luxurious nightclub in Istanbul with alcohol

items in its menu from which you can order using an iPad. Prayer room, mini shorts, backgammon and non-alcoholic mojito or margarita concepts come together to define this exclusive space³⁵ (See the figure 1.15 below). In an interview conducted by a Turkish newspaper Radical, a young individual states her/ his preference of this space just with one word; trendy. In another interview with a lady in Huqqa who lives in Erenköy, she explains why she loves Huqqa so much as such:

I do not wander around Fikirtepe (a poor district) though I passed there by car. In any case, those people do not go to Bagdat Street to drink coffee. I do not want to pass time in the municipal's cafe by the sea side since I do not like that place's aura. I am optimistic for this world, I want to see beautiful spaces and I want to hang out in more decent spaces. So what? We will just enjoy ourselves by drinking our coffee or tea in company with nice view³⁶.



The figure 1.15

³⁵ Özcan, N. (2013) "Postmodern helal eğlence". Available online at: http://www.radikal.com.tr/hayat/postmodern_helal_eglence-1143740. (last accessed on 01.05.2014).

³⁶ Ibid.

The owner of this elegant space claims that they opened Huqqa so that the conservatives and non-conservative can come together comfortably and enjoy together in order to eliminate the isolation in these two groups in the public space, which cannot be possible in a real night club. Although there is an emphasis upon the adjective non-alcoholic for this space, the interviewer gets a conflicting answer when asking the owner if he uses alcohol or not: “I just prefer not selling alcohol”. In such sociology, one can see a group of covered females or just uncovered females who wear mini-skirt and high-heels or the mixture of these two in a table, which is claimed to enable social cohesion between these different sects. Thus, many Turkish newspapers and many crucial journalists researched this conflicting sociological fact and probably the most ironic headline for this place was “there is no need for alcohol, the atmosphere makes you drunk”³⁷. The other popular spaces for nights out that have been discussed in many news columns are important to highlight so as to portray the common features of what is called “Halal Entertainment”. Al Fakheer was opened in Bebek (by the sea side) by Elçin Azizov who designed this space after visiting all of the Middle East. It has 26 private areas that are divided from each other with curtains and each takes VIP service; each customer can watch a TV by smoking water pipe or can just spend time with Ipad in company with designed fruit plates in flames in the dim light. Messt Cafe that is situated in Nakkaştepe (near Bosphorous) is called as the

³⁷Bilgin, Ç. (2013). “Alkole gerek yok ortam sarhoş ediyor”. Available online at: <http://www.posta.com.tr/PostaKarnaval/HaberDetay/Alkole-gerek-yok-ortam-sarhos-ediyor.htm?ArticleID=189658>. (last accessed on 01.01.2015).

“SunSet (a Grill&Bar by the sea side near Kuruçeşme) of the conservatives”³⁸. Messt Cafe has a fascinating view that shows both bridges in Istanbul with its special prayer room. In Summer Ramadans, Messt Cafe organizes tarawih prayer after breaking the fast on the meadows towards that wonderful view. Şazeli is also very popular with its huge garden in which lux restaurants and cafe with different concepts welcome its customers near Çamlıca (a conservative but upper-class district). It has many kinds of coffees and water pipe service, as well. Probably the common points of all these remarkable spaces are the prayer rooms, pipe service and their fashionable aura that has attracted many Muslims since 2000s.

Another hotly debated issue concerns the new epithet made for the head-covering females who mostly visit these popular spaces; “Shawl, flats, 35”³⁹ which refers to conservative “tiki”⁴⁰. This definition for a group of head-covering beautiful ladies who jovially chat to each other in Huqqa becomes so popular that many people remember and call the girls who have a standardized colorful silk shawl on her head, a flat on her foot and carry a brand bag with such a constant angle that corresponds to 35 degree. The image of a covered girl who smokes water pipe with chuckles and

38_Hakan, A. (2012). Available online at: <http://www.gazete5.com/haber/ahmet-hakan-muhafazakarlarin-yeni-mekanlarini-yazdi-231355>. (last accessed on 22.012.2014).

³⁹ This term is coined by a journalist; Cinmen, I. (2013) Available online at: <http://www.haberturk.com/yazarlar/isil-cinmen/863960-muhafazakar-burjuvazinin-reinasi>. (last accessed on 01.01.2015).

⁴⁰ No exact English equivalent since it is a slang term; the ones who is addicted to the brands and elegance in all means are called as “tiki” girls.

loud laughter or orders a non-alcoholic mojito is normalized for this group of ladies in the evenings. These examples on spatial dimension of a new cultural fashion point out that the consumerist point of view shows itself especially in the recreation; therefore, the popularity of these newly-fashioned spaces bear importance to highlight the intersection between the earthly life and religious one which causes severe transformations in Islamic way of life since the blessing of the modern life are converted into the objects of desire rather than the Islamic perception that sees them as the traps of the ephemeral world according to the sacred book of Muslims. Uğur Kömeçoğlu puts forwards the claim concerning this commentary as such;

The more the peripheral Islamic actors have access to central urban life and economy, the more they may seek Islamic sources of reference to redefine or redraw the boundaries of their world (2007: 59).

However, attributing the capitalistic forms of consumption an “Islamic quality” also manifests the ambiguous desire for the demand to accommodate the modern while remaining Islamic (61). These newly-formed rituals adopted mostly by Christian ones and excessive focus upon the luxury and fashion become more efficient communicators of the pecuniary standing these Muslims want to display in public space. This evident standing in public signifies an image of the “first class” Muslim in public life. This is because their inspirational motivation is fashion and accordingly trend, however, the emphasis upon such a luxury and consumption cannot be

explained with Islamic modesty which is supposed to be main motivator in a Muslim's lifestyle. Modern understanding of consumption adopted for Islamic life result in flexible Islamic norms that surround especially hyper-conscious Muslim females in this case. For instance, while a modestly covered Muslim female cannot let a single hair escape the scarf in public according to mainstream expectancy, nowadays the fact that the new generation of Muslim females, mostly called "şallılar"⁴¹, haphazardly cover their hair in company with an alluring heavy make-up and stylish clothing becomes such a common portrait in the public space.

⁴¹ The ones who prefer wearing colorful silk shawls

*There is a fickle, teasing goddess
 Fantastic in her tastes, playful in adornment,
 Who at every season seems to flee, return, and rise again.
 Proteus was her father, her name is Fashion.*

VOLTAIRE

CHAPTER TWO: TRANSGRESSION OF BORDERS

The term “fashion” comes from the root “modus” in Latin which is defined as the border that is not formed (Barbarosoglu 1995: 27). Accordingly, the essence of “fashion” as a concept is comprised of “limitlessness, indefiniteness and boundlessness” which points out its open-ending ideals without bordering lines in a fashion follower’s life. Thus, it can be deduced that fashion possesses a dominating power when it comes side by side with another concept like “Islamic Fashion”. In Muslim females’ lives, due to the process of fashionable covering in all aspects, the allure of fashionable look in tesettür gradually decreases the expected dominating effect of Islamic borders that define the private parts of Muslim female body and accordingly the borderlines drawn by the Islamic jurisprudence. When we also look at the Qur’anic verses about private part of female ones that needs to be preserved, it is possible to see that the borders concerning this issue is also highlighted.

Correlatively, the most remarkable one between these verses, the surah An-Nur definitely explains the private part of women that is called as “ziynet”⁴² in Turkish as such:

“Tell the believing men that they shall subdue their eyes (and not stare at the women), and to maintain their chastity. This is purer for them. God is fully Cognizant of everything they do. And tell the believing women to subdue their eyes, and maintain their chastity. They shall not reveal any parts of their bodies, except that which is necessary. They shall cover their chests, and shall not relax this code in the presence of other than their husbands, their fathers, the fathers of their husbands, their sons, the sons of their husbands, their brothers, the sons of their brothers, the sons of their They shall not strike their feet when they walk in order to shake and reveal certain details of their bodies. All of you shall repent to God, O you believers, that you may succeed.” (The Quran, *An-Nur* 24: 30- 31).

As it is shown in the verse above, the borders of the covering for Muslim females are emphasized and the related responsibility is put upon the Muslim women. Although the Muslim femininity requires the covering of the whole female body except for just the face, hands and the feet that is not categorized as “ziynet”, Muslim females (many

⁴² *Ziynet* actually means females’ parts of bodies which are adorned, however, the term refers to the fact that Muslim women are forbidden to display both the adornment pieces and the attractive parts of their bodies

young and head covered Muslim females) seem not to pay a sharp attention upon those kinds of Islamic borders in 2000's Turkey. Some of the covered females argue that the borders concerning tesettür are just about not showing the private parts; thus, it is not about how to cover them. Some others claim that it is their way of covering and their own interpretation, which can be judged only by God. However, the general argument about the religious legitimacy of the modern head-covering which idealizes elegant outlook in public is that women's disposition is prone to beautify and adorn themselves and to endear themselves to others, which is drawn from the many sayings of Prophet Muhammad. Correspondingly, what is ignored at this point is that they are expected not to show their adornment in the presence of the strangers, which is also underlined in the Quranic verse above. Prophet's two sayings below about the borders of female adornment and tesettür as a sacred duty are also supportive of this reasoning:

A woman who goes out by *garnishing and perfuming herself* in a way men can detect is *under the wrath of God* until she returns to the house. (Al -Taberânî)

There are two types amongst the inhabitants of Hellfire whom I have not seen yet: Men who have whips like the tails of cows with which they beat people, and women who are *clothed yet naked*, who will be inclined [to evil] and are inclining others [to it]. *Their heads are like*

the humps of the two-hump camels tilted to one side. They will not enter Jannah (Paradise) or even smell its odor. (Sahih Muslim, Clothing and Adornment, 3971)

As it has been stated in these hadiths, tesettür is not just covering the skin in terms of the Islamic principles since it concerns about how you wear your headscarf, the material of clothing, whether you prefer skin tight clothing or loose ones to hide the shape of the female body and how you take care of yourselves in means of adornment (perfume, make-up). Although most of Muslim females in this case claim that there is no clear definition of how to cover just by relying upon the verses in Quran, many supporting hadiths in relation with the verses of the Quran define the borders of Muslim women' clothing and adornment in public life. Moreover, one of the related hadiths critically judges the “clothed but naked”⁴³ covered ladies since they are connoted as naked despite being apparently clothed: “There will be, in the last days of my Ummah (nation), women who are dressed and undressed. Curse them: they are accursed.” (Al -Taberânî). Concomitantly, there seems a kind of misjudgment about the acknowledged meanings concerning that tesettür does not have certain borders so every Muslim female can decide how to cover themselves; however, the mainstream interpretation of these sacred sayings does not accept this way of understanding and such a tesettür performance which misconceive the license given for adaptable nature

⁴³ “There will be women who will be dressed but they will be naked. Their heads will be like the humps of camels. They will not enter Jannah and will not even smell the scent of Jannah while it can be smelt from a far distance.” [Sahih Muslim]

in tesettür according to the conditions of the age without transgressing the Islamic borderlines drawn in the Quran and the hadiths. Accordingly, in our case the defined borders of proper tesettür for the sake of the Muslim females' protection seems to be loosened⁴⁴. To shed light upon this loosening in term of the Islamic fashion magazines, the administrative assistant of *Ala* magazine's explanation below in the interview for BBC Turkish bears importance:

The magazine does not have a mission to save Islam. This magazine does not dispossess anyone of their faith. We *do not appeal to pious people*. We do not adapt anything by taking from Quran. We appeal to conservative *females who give emphasis upon visuality and perceive dressing as pleasure in life*.⁴⁵

Here, the audience is what Ali Bulac calls “conservative laic” who makes head-covering as unique symbol of their religiosity and whose actual ultimate aim, excellent morality of Islam, is directed only to “beautiful lifestyle”⁴⁶. For Göle, this

⁴⁴ “O prophet, tell your wives, your daughters, and the wives of the believers that they shall lengthen their garments. Thus, they will be recognized (as righteous women) and avoid being insulted. God is Forgiver, Most Merciful.” (The Quran, 33:59)

⁴⁵ Poyrazlar, E. (2013) “İslam’ı kurtarmak gibi bir misyonumuz yok”. Available online at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2013/10/131023_ala_elcinpoyrazlar.shtml. (last accessed on 20.08.2014).

⁴⁶ This interpretation is made with title “From Enviably Ethics to Enviably Lifestyle” by one of the famous veiled intellectuals, Hilal Kaplan, who has column in *Yenişafak* newspaper; she states that the main purpose of the lifestyle guide is to confine the difference between the veiled and the unveiled into a sterile word like “lifestyle” and then ,if possible, to make what is left from that difference

is actually because inventions of new modes of Islamic covering signify the changes in the domain of fashion, through which new elaborations between beauty, femininity and sexuality are manifested (2010a, 111). In other words, these magazines open the gates for the actualization of women's nature by putting the emphasis upon "fashion" which presupposes that its lovers will not keep what they get each season for the following season. Therefore, what is projected with Islamic fashion is not just elaborative clues about stylish covering but the clash of two contrasting concepts within new form of Muslim females' covering; fashion that is ever changing and Islam that has a relatively fixed nature for its principles.

By taking into consideration that the ultimate aim of tesettür is to conceal femininity in the public, some exemplary cases upon social media will be evaluated below in terms of infringement of Islamic laws as called by many Islamist intellectuals. This is because most young head-covering Muslim female users on social media, especially on Instagram, do not refrain from the display of the femininity via their various alluring poses that are regularly shared on their publicly open accounts as most of the fashion conscious ladies around Bagdat street do, as well. Here, it is crucial to point out what Islamist intellectuals and many theologians present as evidence in order to

trivialise : See the further: <http://yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/HilalKaplan/guzel-ahl%C3%A2ktan-guzel-yasam-tarzina/28149>

indicate that new individualized interpretation of tesettür is not in accord with what the Creator asks Muslim females. Especially Islamist intellectuals reminds Muslim females to clean up their acts by reminding the warning in the Qur’anic verse below because they interpret this verse as not to swagger and not make a show of their adornment (elegant or stylish covering for this case) in public, which was connoted as the habit of the pre-Islamic age of ignorance:

“And abide in your houses and *do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance* ... obey Allah and His Messenger...” (The Quran, *Surat Al-‘Aḥzāb* 33:33).

Firstly, one of the most common poses on Instagram is that a group of young head-covering females strike poses by bringing their colored lips front in front of the camera. When one person warns them or asks them why they prefer tesettür if they do not want to comply with its essence, they become furious and state that it does not concern anyone because it is their personal account. However, it is not actually personal because it is open to public, thus, it is open to every one’s gaze regardless of the male or female follower who encounters this distinct photo. Secondly, according to the “ziynet” definition in the Quran, the hemline and arms’ length should cover the wrists and ankles of the covered one which has mostly been disregarded by this new cadre of fashion conscious Muslim females. These stated parts of female body are

publicly considered as the most attractive parts of a covered female body since there is a conception in the conservative public life that men can be seduced by the ladylikeness of a covered lady through the gaze of their delicate wrists and ankles which are the only obvious things to see on a covered lady⁴⁷ (See figure 2.1; 2.2 below). To exemplify upon this reasoning, some of the beautiful looking covered females on Instagram do not take care of this strict border because some of them just cover their hair and wear big earrings, which means that their necks are open to the gaze or some others cover their whole hair with the shawl and draws it a little back to show the front part of their hair with big brand name sunglasses, whose head-covering is categorized as very stylish but out of the borders for the Islamic jurisprudence. Some others on Instagram share the photographs of their wrists with their accessories upon it or that of their ankles with their bejeweled sandals.



The figure 2.1; The figure 2.2

⁴⁷ This fact has been emphasized in many dialogues I have conducted during my researches by the head-covering females.

Thirdly, in one of my conversations with a veiled mother, she states that she has a special tailor and has her sew a topcoat that is cut above her ankles and a skirt from the same fabric that is also cut under their knee. However, when asked about her covered daughter who prefers close-fitting clothes and skirts that is cut under her knees without taking a topcoat on her, she says that “What can I do? She likes that way, thus, have it sewn like that”⁴⁸ Here, we have two questions to scrutinize: first, if one have their clothes sewn, why she (as a conscious Muslim) doesn't apply the covering principles into their clothes as she is the one who decides the length or the largeness in the pieces as a supposedly conscious covered lady and second, why she doesn't warn her daughter about her skinny and short pieces that uncover her female posture in public. Here, it is important to state that this mother and daughter underline that they regularly attend religious *sohbet(s)*⁴⁹; thus, they are actually anticipated to have awareness about the essence of *tesettür* which is expected to direct their way of covering, as well. Lastly, one can see that a young covered female ironically shares photos of lingerie underclothes and colourful petticoats from a world-brand underclothes store *Calzedonia* with her comment “summer pieces have already come!” These snapshot cases unpack the underlying fact of transgression of borders between public and private connotations in a Muslim female's life in terms of the point of sacred references for all Muslim shown in this chapter.

⁴⁸ “ Ayy ben napıym ki ? O öyle seviyor oyüzden öyle giyiniyor.” in Turkish with her striking exclamation.

⁴⁹ “Sohbet” means that female ladies come together to listen religious speech given by a sincere lady who is equipped with most of the religious issues.

BLURRING OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE IN THEIR WAY OF LIVES

The woman in tesettür is anticipated to preserve their privacy regardless of their being in public; that is to say, they can simultaneously remain both in private and public realm thanks to their concealment of feminine features in tesettür. However, the aforementioned cases upon the Insta-covered females, the appearance of head-covering females who live around popular Bagdat Street and the popularity of Islamic fashion magazines for this special group appear to suggest that the content and meaning constructed in their perception reverse expected public and private distinction in young Muslim females' lives. This is because Muslim females are being oriented to be conspicuously visible with their feminine traits and to display themselves in the presence of all others. To elaborate on what is public and private within this context, we need to comprehend that the distinction between public and private functions upon "what is hidden or withdrawn versus what is open, revealed or accessible with the underlying criterion referred as *visibility*" (Kömecoglu 2001, 13-4). Accordingly, preference of visibly appealing outlook for a covered lady contains conflicting points since these females are not only visibly appealing but also assume that they are representative of the expected proper form of tesettür that actually corresponds to concealing alluring feminine traits according to the Quran.

It seems that Muslim female actors in this context broaden the designated private issues so much that there forms such a tiny difference between how they present themselves in public and in private. In other words, *tesettür* used to be perceived as a blessing means of their safeguarded and concealed form of visibility in public; however, in 2000's Turkey, what is observed is something disparate because modern form of covering that is *prettified* through Islamic fashion concept is transposed into the public realm so as to accentuate their visibility upon their bodies with their hyper-conscious perception of all methods of female adornment. Therefore, it is not surprising to see a covered female on Instagram share her sunburned ankle that has a decorated black henna tattoo with the comment “ brought henna from Umrah⁵⁰ and we applied it.”. Moreover, Henna application upon the wrists and ankles have become very popular in the popular conservative entertainment spaces. A henna maker regularly serves the customers by applying whatever model upon their hands or wrists while the customers chat. Modern Muslim females do not refrain from sharing their henna tattoo upon their ankles with their short skirt, which also directly takes attention in public (See figure 2.3; 2.4 below).

⁵⁰ Umrah corresponds to something more than a religious duty in this context since it has been turned into a fashionable trip even among the uncovered and the celebrities let alone the aforementioned covered females in 2000s' Turkey.



Figure 2.3 ; Figure 2.4

Here, what comes to mind is that why these ladies display such transgressive actions although they are expected to present modest loose covered female lady figure in public life regarding the Islamic principles? What is the idealized impression they wish to emphasis with their new interpretation of covering? When considered from the secular point of view, head-covering is just a material symbolizing their religiosity regardless of the new modernist interpretation with its diverse forms in their exclusive habitus. However, the story we have been covering till here shows something different in terms of this renewed covering practice. When one look at from outside especially in their mostly visited places, these females can be easily recognized by not only the secular uncovered females but also modestly covered ones. These fashion conscious females can be inscribed with the posturing for the elegance and beauty that qualify their recent covering style as a kind of prestige in 2000s. In comparison to this exclusive social class, the other group of covered females has the conscious of why and how they are expected to perform tesettür as

their religious duty so as to consent the Islamic jurisprudence, which is highly appreciated by many Islamist intellectuals. This is because they think that the others of these fashion-conscious females do not conceive world as just physical, material and corporal expressions of individuals in the society.

*MAKING-UP “THE CONSERVATIVE BEAUTY” THROUGH ADORNMENT
TECHNIQUES OF THE MODERN WORLD*

When one looks at the cover pages of Islamic fashion magazines or insta-covered ladies on their accounts, what takes attention is how other bodily adornment techniques such as henna, make-up, nail polish and even cosmetic surgery play important role in these females’ lives. Hyper-conscious Muslim females about beauty pay remarkable attention to their facial look and skin care as much as they do to fashion. Here, cosmetics do not serve to disguise defects on the facial expression since it has become an accepted part of their “beauty” routines as a technique of self-presentation and prestigious imitation (Craik, 156). Visible makeup such as colorful applications on lips and eyes constitutes a big part of these Muslim females’ daily beauty routine since it is nearly impossible to see a young covered lady without make-up neither on Instagram nor in Bagdat Street. This is because hashtag “#nomakeup” on Instagram is especially specified under the photos, which points out

that this is an unusual display of their covered facial expression. Popular insta-females answer their followers' curious questions about which brands they prefer for makeup and how her face looks like porcelain-like that points out its flawlessness thanks to her everyday makeup that is displayed in her photos (See the figure 2.10 and 2.11 below):

Ladies, I got too many mails and messages about the cosmetics I use. Then, I decided to introduce you with my team. Here they are; under eye concealer blush, Chanel mascara, Clinique BB cream (a kind of concealer), Mac eye shadow for brightness of eye contour and eye pencil and brow powder.... (Brand names in capital)

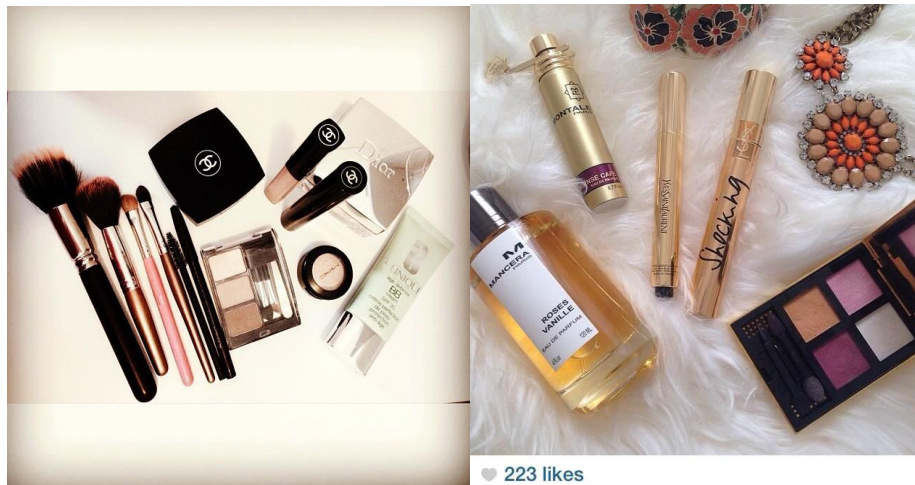


Figure 2.5 ; Figure 2.6

As Figure 2.5 and Figure 2.6 illustrate, very detailed list of cosmetics above is like a makeup tutorial for the followers who can be categorized as prestigious imitators that really wish to possess that gilded facial look. Moreover, eye shadowing in concordance with their clothes' color on that day is another way of presentation of their self-grooming. In *Şov and Mahrem*⁵¹ [Show and Privacy], the contemporary situation of Muslim females is elaborated upon the fact that what is connoted as mahrem becomes a means of show in public in their newly-fashioned lifestyle. Barbarosoglu also draws attention to the fact that when Islamic rules become “out” in a list, they are presented as a set of principles that can be easily relinquished as it has been the case that putting on socks is “out” whereas eye shadowing in tune with the colors of headscarf is “in” (94). How does it become “in”? To have a kind of religious deduction, applying surma (kohl) to eyes is the Sunnah⁵² of the Prophet who states that it is beneficial for the health of the eyes by giving strength and clarity of vision, thus, it will be better if it is applied before sleeping. Therefore, it can be inferred that eye shadowing in the same color of headscarf seems to be substituted with applying the kohl. Accordingly, due to the context of these fashion magazines and the increase in fashionable way of displaying themselves, the threshold defining the Islamic borders in Muslim females' lives is being pushed forward towards a context that is not thoroughly cultivated by Islamic jurisprudence.

⁵¹ Mahrem means private and secret

⁵² Sunnah means the way of life prescribed as normative for Muslims on the basis of the teachings and practices of Muhammad and interpretations of the Koran Available online at: <http://www.seslisozluk.net/?word=sunnah&lang=tr-en>. (last accessed on 25.12.2014).

Furthermore, many makeup artists share their covered customers' make-up faces without showing their hair since insta-females prefer going these artists for professional makeup application when they attend special events. These photographs are divided into before and after makeup poses, under which exclamations of shock or shocked emoji faces are stated by the followers because there becomes a striking difference between the natural face and make-up face. Another popular facial decoration technique these makeup artists do is to decorate the eyebrows, to curl eyelashes and to give shadow on the eyebrows in accordance with the color of their skin, which is called as "medical eyebrow design". For instance, a covered female, who just covered her hair with her shawl in the photo she shares on Instagram, have their eyebrows decorated for the first time and give special thanks to the makeup artist by stating that she strongly advises this technique to all followers in her comment below the photo. Moreover, under these comments, we see that another girl who has taken an appointment for eye-shadowing curiously asks that whether hers will be as beautiful as this one in the photo. Here, it is important to give place Islamic point of view concerning these kinds of designations:

I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) says: "Allaah has cursed the woman who does tattoos and the one who has them done, the woman who plucks eyebrows and the one who has it done, and the one who files her teeth for the purpose of

beauty, altering the creation of Allaah.”⁵³ (*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, 5931; *Sahih Muslim*, 2125)

As stated above, changing the nature of something God bestowed upon females is evaluated as a serious challenge because Surah Al-Nisa in the Quran states that Shaytaan said to Allah: “*and indeed I will order them to change the nature created by Allah*” (*The Quran*, Al-Nisa 4:119). Accordingly, curling eyelashes or decorating the eyebrows for the sake of a prettier look is categorized as a severe intervention into the natural endowment by God which is always highly appreciated in the Quran as the most generous and as the utmost beauty. In this light, Islamic perspective assumes that everything God created is so beautiful since God is the holder of endless beauty; thus, eyebrow or eyelash shaping for the personal grooming are connoted as the activities to abstain from so as not to go against what God bestowed upon females. However, some of Muslim females claim that the saying “plucking the hair in eyebrows” above actually refer to making them thinner; thus, it is not related to designing them into a prettified form with these kinds of techniques, as well.

Moreover, Islamic fashion magazines also offer many clues for perfect make up ranging from great combination of red rouge and black eyeliner with the saying that

⁵³ However, it is permissible to remove the hair between the eyebrows since it is not accepted as part of the eyebrows.

“which women would not want to look fresh as much as spring and as lovely as summer; the secret in all is in makeup” to the presentations of new products of the brand names in cosmetics and their feedback about the trials of the products such as skin care creams, concealers, new mascara and even perfumes. Here, it is crucial to assert the relationship between the makeup and femininity in order to elaborate on the visible essentiality of makeup in females’ lives upon the examples above:

Make-up is a woman’s secret projection of her desired self-image. In western cultures, it has become an integral step to realizing femininity as an achieved set of characteristics As a body technique, makeup constructs sexual attributes (hence the use of signifiers of sexual arousal such as red lips, dilated eyes and reddened cheeks), in addition to attributes of selfhood and status. Make-up inscribes the attributes of personality onto the social body. Beauty is the achievement of make-up as a positive declaration of the self. As with other body techniques, the application of makeup is ritualized and routinized (Craik, 154).

Correspondingly, the makeup application overrides in Muslim female lives so that their “private” femininity that needs to be concealed can be manifested as an expression of their personality. They cover their body in their own way and mark their femininity with the perceivable or sniffable markers such as coloring and sharpening their facial expressions through make-up or perfuming themselves by

choosing seasonal perfumes that are shared as alternatives on Instagram by popular ladies for the followers, as well. When it comes to the other beauty care sessions especially Insta-covered females concern, the first one is manicure and pedicure sessions they regularly have. Ironically, they take photo of their visits to the coiffeur with an unusual pose in which she lays out her feet into water-filled basin while she sips her drink with her under comment “Care is everything”. In another account, a covered lady shares her manicured nails with her comment “ the season of French is opened” to which a male follower shows his appreciation with the comment “Nail polish is divine for women!”⁵⁴.

As stated in the quotation above, makeup reveals the sexual attributes by marking female beauty for public gaze. Therefore, aesthetic appearance concern leads to aesthetic operations such as fleshy lips and well-rounded cheekbones or upturned noses that are denoted as implication of sexual attributes (See the figure 2.13 below). Doll-like smiles or looks of these ladies take attention of the followers because they generally ask how they manage to look so beautiful and under these kinds of photos. Interestingly, we can see that one of the followers says that if I covered one day, I would like to have that appearance within it. This is certainly because beautiful self-image is the most important urge a woman wants to possess; therefore, in this group

⁵⁴ “Kadında oje candır.” in Turkish.

of Muslim females, aesthetic concerns take precedence over the religious duties upon the female body, in other words, female outlook.

Another prominent point in the new way of Muslim females' body decoration is the increase of wearing abaya that is loose black dress from head to toe and used generally in Arabian Peninsula. Although abaya is an overgarment that is used to make the contours of female body invisible in public space, fashion conscious ladies in our case make their femininity more cognizable by choosing their fabric more glittering; applying a remarkable makeup on their faces or wearing jeweled open-toe sandals on their feet. A boutique owner can apply bordeaux rouge on her lips when she prefers black abaya for the pose she strikes on her Insta-account. Some Insta-females prefer wearing it on holy nights by sharing their poses within with the hashtag #holynightstyle⁵⁵; however, they have cat eye makeup that expose the shape of the eyes and that of color with the application of thick eyeliner on their eyelids

Abayas are also worn on special events such as girl to girl parties organized for night entertainment; thus, they can prefer night dresses with cleavage by taking their abayas till the entertainment place. Insta-females attend these kinds of organizations and strike poses with their abayas and heavy makeup that is detectable even from the

⁵⁵ #kandilstyle

photograph. It is worth noting that they set forth their beautified corporeality within this garment, which make the others look at these ladies more and more in the public. Ironically, even covered females state that they even feel the urge to look these women, who look more attractive than they do with their normal covering, many times when they encounter them in public. This means that this black enveloping outfit cannot cover the feminine corporality in this context as opposed to the proper *tesettür* conceived by mainstream interpretation. For this reason, there forms a big contradiction because what is displayed is the exacerbated visibility of the “invisibility” within the veiling. This outfit takes the attention of not only covered but also the uncovered ones since the head-covering women with their black abayas do not verbally need to express themselves but their corporeal performances within this outfit express themselves sufficiently enough for the inquisitive eyes’ questioning the eye-catching blackness upon the “covered” corporality.

As a result, the list of ins and outs reproduced for the sake of Islamic fashion is the clear statement of the fact that this individualized type of covering, presented as Islamic fashion and registered with the special fashion parades, isolates most of the female corporality from Islamic principles. Accordingly, this type of alluring covering style becomes a metonymy for the head-covering as a religious duty through the transgression of borders defined for *tesettür* in Islam. All kinds of body decoration techniques discussed above aim at fulfillment of femininity through the female

covering in Islam aspires fulfillment of what God orders females that is protecting their modesty and honor by allowing display of their femininity only within the defined borders in Islam. Concomitantly, it can be stated that the threshold of public realm for Muslim females moves further by taking many things from private realm with a kind of naturalization of what is private into public. This is because many explanatory cases above have been the taboo of covered Muslim females in the public such as makeup or displaying their femininity with their clothing, which have actually been coded as the possible activities in private realm. However, it appears that nearly all private acquisitions for a covered lady can be experienced comfortably within public in the presence of strangers nowadays. That's why, In August 2013, this issue was reflected even into Twitter with the hashtag "Head-covering is not a style but a farz" (refers to the certain order God asks from female believers) and the list of "incompatible with tesettür" became a "Top Trend" on Twitter (See the figure 2.8 below).



Figure 2.7⁵⁶

FORMATION OF A POTENT AND EFFECTIVE HABITUS

The adherence to modern sartorial rules rather than sacred ones in the new cadre of Muslim females can be elaborated with Beauvoir's description of "bondage of elegance" which emphasizes that each lady actually expresses their personality through their taste or preferences in their way of dressing and accordingly living. That they are in search of ultra-glamorous look through the aforementioned

⁵⁶ It is one of the visuals shared on Twitter for the hashtag "Head-covering is not a style but a farz". It gives the difference between the proper covering and stylish covering.

techniques of body decoration ranging from different way of covering to cosmetics is closely related to formation of a potent and effective habitus of new Muslim female generation in 2000s in which the attributes of modern self are constituted by the appearance achieved through body decoration (Craik, 150). To expand on the drudgery of elegance upon Muslim female bodies, we need to find a consistent answer for what makes these women to have an insatiable desire in the elegance and the prettiest look:

Elegance is really just like housework: by means of it, the woman who is deprived of doing anything feels that she expresses what she is. To care for her beauty, to dress up, is a kind of work that enables her to take possession of her person as she takes possession of her home through housework; her ego then seems chosen and recreated by herself ... The least sophisticated of women, once she is 'dressed', does not present herself to observation; she is, like the picture or statue, or the actor on the stage, an agent through which is suggested someone not there - that is, the character she represents, but is not. It is *this identification with something unreal, fixed, perfect* . . . that gratifies her; she strives to identify herself with this figure and thus to seem to herself to be stabilized, justified in her splendor (cited in Wilson, 125-6)

The quotation seems to validate the view that elegance becomes the marker of their modern public visibility and a way of expressing their modern perception. In addition, all of them enable them to satisfy with their femininity even though they are practically assumed to cover feminine attributes of their bodies. However, as Beauvoir stated in above quotation, what these females characterize themselves with, is something splendid but artificial. Their identification with the splendid outer decoration leads this beauty concern to become one of the biggest engagement or occupation in their lives. This is because the only crucial reality generated with artificiality is the body decoration for the sake of their perfect look and it becomes the main inscription of their beauty-based habitus in which “public and private” terms for Muslim female visibility are exposed to reinterpretation.

When it comes to the formation of the pretty outer appearance oriented habitus, the importance of decorative rituals on Muslim female body portrays the perfection ideal upon the outer appearance in public. The mechanics of generating prettiest appearance is internalized with the remarkable importance attached to the visible Muslim self. The techniques of cosmetics for better facial expression and better appearance suggestions are not only presented with the combination examples in popular head-covering females and “conservative” fashion designers’ accounts on Instagram but also observed on Erenkoy district or Bagdat street by scrutinizing the others’ garments while wandering around. They are directed to “feel visible, observed

or on the show” by making *what is desired to invisible in the public* visible till the bitter end (Tseelon, 54 / italic emphasis by me). To exemplify, these ladies feel visible on the street by choosing eye-catching pieces for covering or insta-covered females want to feel observed or on the show by taking attention of their followers with different combination pictures each day on their accounts. The best proof of this deduction is that insta-females who are fashionably covered share the account of the other fashion-conscious insta-females’ account with such sayings “Do you still not follow her? Then, you miss a lot!” or “Early in the morning, let’s become colorful! I invite you such a beautiful account. The purpose: Visual Fashion” by tagging her name’s account and sharing this profile’s picture.

Umberto Eco underlines the exterior behavior that forms a kind of relationship between the society one lives in and the outlook one performs in that society since the garments impose a specific demeanor on person, which directs the person to live towards the exterior world (Tseelon, 60). In this context, the worries of elegance oblige these females to remain attractive, pretty and even in some cases stimulating since their lives are oriented towards that kind of idealization in their appearance within public. Then, how do they prepare themselves for this outlook? The formation of trendsetter “conservative” fashionistas (fashion bloggers/ designers and boutique owners on Instagram) are probably the important components of this idealization in the newly-formed habitus whose members appear to substantially occupy themselves

with beauty in all means. These fashionistas have been acting like the performers for *their spectators*, who are namely new cadre of fashion conscious Muslim covered females, in this newly formed glamorous habitus since 2000s⁵⁷.

As body decoration is almost exclusively considered as a process of inscribing meaning on the body, as a ‘semiotics’ of the body, these fashion idols for their followers underline remarkable physical visibility of covered female beauty by sharing their combination photos, special videos for how to wear a shawl/scarf both easily and beautifully or presenting what they have chosen for their wardrobes from diverse brands (Craik, 149). Each pose these fashion ladies strike for their account (including the pieces they bought and then take picture for their followers) actually function as a kind of implicit nonverbal tutorial for the internalization of desired dispositions of Muslim female visibility, which fosters the modern self-presentation of Muslim females within their fashioned Islamic habitus. Being fashionable and elegant in posture operates as a border drawing tool for the members of this new habitus. Accordingly, the spectators, followers of these fashion icons, actually appreciate the display of gracious qualities that are possessed through various body decoration techniques upon covered female body. Therefore, it is probable that these conservative trendsetter females on Instagram and the new cadre of Muslim females

⁵⁷ You may look at the following names’ Instagram accounts to have a further sense: Esra Seziş Kığılı , Kübra Tekin, Gönül Kolat, BBTLB, Merve Dağlı For Ladies, Büşra Erdoğan Toroman, Hülya Aslan and Safiye Ekiz. (Most of them will be discussed in Chapter 3)

imbibe and improvise their new self-presentation, dress codes, bodily postures, aesthetic and cultural tastes, and leisure activities in their daily life since their new habitus performs as a source of improvisation to conform “this new life” frame which underpins the emphasis of modern way of living upon the Islamic one (Göle 2002; 185-8). To elaborate on how the covered females of this newly formed trendsetting habitus choose their clothing or combinations in everyday life, we need to state that we have two different covered females’ groups such as the ones who live or shop around Bagdat Street or Erenkoy and the other ones who have an Instagram account to put their everyday outfit on display on social media.

Starting with the first group of females who are known as a special Erenkoy community and pay very much attention to their appearance in their regular home meetings and weekly religious conversation sessions which is composed of two sessions: firstly, their reading religious texts and listening its interpretation by the preacher and secondly their tea time with diverse kind of food and chatting with each other. They generally prefer brand name bags, shoes and scarves like the young ladies on Instagram; besides, they mostly prefer having their clothing sewn so as to have a unique combination. However, they can also make some kind of combinations by choosing some top pieces from Burberry, Tommy Hilfiger or Beymen Club that are exclusive brands on Bagdat Street with their sewn skirt whose models are taken by the aforementioned world brands since they explicitly confess that they go these

brands showrooms and take photo of the short skirt models in their fitting rooms so that they can show the model to their tailors.

Furthermore, the fashion conscious females of this popular district are concerned with wearing the same clothes again and again; therefore, boutiques in Erenkoy generally produce their own haute couture for their customers who want to have a unique outfit display even in order to attend parent-teacher meetings of their little children. When one asks about the high prices ranging from three hundreds TL to one billion TL in these boutiques, the quick answer comes from shopkeepers who say that “these pieces will be only in your wardrobe, thus, it is worth that price”. Therefore, they not only follow the world brands’ fashion but also construct their embodied difference through fashioned dress codes with their salient public visibility.

Continuing with the second group who actively use their Instagram account and mostly younger than the first group, they are enthusiastic to express and display how they make their clothes sewn with different colored fabrics or how they combine different pieces, big brand-name sunglasses, bags and most importantly brand name headscarves which are hastagged one by one with their brands under their photos. Their covering style turns into a kind of spectacle each day; however, their Prophet states that belief and modesty are tied together, if one leaves, the other leaves too (Al-

Hakim). Therefore, the ostentatious look a covered female displays clashes with the idealization in the correlated hadith above which points out the importance of guarding “modesty” for the sake of the sincerity of the faith for God a believer possesses.

When one look at the comments under these kinds of photos, we generally see how the followers appreciate their ways of dressing and ask them where they buy their pieces one by one. When the account owner does not answer about where she has bought the pieces, the followers imploringly ask for taking information about the clothing pieces on this popularized covered female outlook again and again. To show just what they wear on that today, under the hashtag “#todaysdetails”, most of these trend-setter head-covering Muslim females take photo of their clothed bodies from the top without showing their faces. What is generally emphasized in these kind of photos are the brand names of the sunglasses, watches or bags, etc. These females like purchasing not plain clothes but eye-catching pieces and they generally follow the upscale fashion and trends very closely since the practices and rituals for the sake of beautiful outlook are normalized into their everyday life. #notdepressedwelldressed” hashtag of one of the popular conservative fashion designers on Instagram fashion world can be presented as living proof of this deduction because this hashtag actually points out that if a covered lady was not well-

dressed one day, she could feel depressed since choosing best-suited clothes has become an indispensable part of her daily contentment in this elegant habitus.

For Gökankşel and Secor in their article “Veiling Fashion”, veiling-fashion signals the emergence of *a new female subject* who navigates the multiple cross-currents of femininity, piety, modesty, sexuality, class, age and urbanity. Tesettür-fashion involves constructing anew not only ideas about femininity, but also of taste, social status and distinction (13). The aforementioned photos are generally taken from the wealthy family’s young female members and the followers regardless of their income want to know how they form such an elegant and beautiful posture with their personal covering style. The followers even ask how they wear the scarf in such a nice way because they think the popular fashionista looks perfect in her elegant covering style. Accordingly, it can be deduced from the elaborated data above that the public imagination gradually internalizes the beautified alluring portrait of fashionably covered Muslim females.

To give a more detailed description, a young head-covering female takes photo of their new red flats whose brand is worldly famous Valentino besides its shoe box on which the brand name Valentino is written in capitals (its cost is two billions TL). In order to see the exact portrayal of a new urban Muslim bourgeoisie’s consumer

lifestyle and point of view, one can look at the comment the owner does when she shares it on her account and her friends’:

The account owner: “Indecision! Should I take the skin-colored one? Nowadays whatever I buy, I have the same kind of ebbs and flows (with a sulky faced emoji) It is a goer, goodbye! (With an indeterminate faced emoji and a hand to slap as the other emoji)

Her first friend: I think you should buy camouflaged one?

The account owner: It is not for me but for you, baby. Skin colored is good one, *but I could not get accustomed to that, doesn't it have an annoying type?* (With sulky faced emojis) (By tagging her first friend)

Her second friend: (she is an Islamic fashion blogger) Dear, as you have a very light skin color, nude one does not suit you. You made the best choice (with a kissing emoji).

The account owner: I think red patent leather is not for me. I could not make peace with these shoes. *Our relationship is over before it began* (an emoji that grits its teeth). As I am Casper, even the nude one looked darkish on me (with an emoji whose eyes comes tears due to laughter) (tagging her second friend)

What takes attention in this Insta-conversation, the young head-covering female who buys Valentino questions firstly the color of the shoes and then its material rather than its function or comfort. Here, what comes to mind is Thorstein Veblen's concept "leisure class" who consumes just to emphasize the higher social status. This is the exact example of conspicuous consumption as the owner mentions not to wear it once after she has just bought and shared on Instagram. Moreover, patent leather is assumed as a marker of this kind of consumption by Veblen who categorizes it not as a kind of material that can fulfill a humanistic need (Erkilet, 31).

Accordingly, we can deduce that female members of this new "Islamic" habitus perform new forms of covered visibility with the reinterpretation of self-grooming for Muslim female outlook and there forms radical shift in Muslim female corporeal rituals. The standardized patterns of new Muslim female physicality are directed towards public Islam in which the borders and the meaning of tesettür are challenged due to the blurring of what is Islamically defined as mahrem⁵⁸ for head-covering Muslim females in Islam. Personalization and aestheticization of the sacred practice become the new norm of Muslim females since many Islamist intellectuals believe that they have transformed the essence of tesettür into a fashion material. The

⁵⁸ private or secret in English

existence of the covered followers who ask every detail upon the Insta-fashionista's clothing in the photos they share on their accounts each day and the comments under these kinds of photos constitute the big part of motivation in this impressive transformation. Ironically, these questions starts from "where did you buy your pants?" and end with "I am really wondering which number your shoes are?" by adding that "she looks gorgeous with her outfit". Exhibiting pleasing and trendy look, and framing fashion "as an inescapable reality of women's lives and even as a holy means of inspiring others to cover" become the main justifications of their fashion consumption ideal in this conspicuous habitus (Sandıkcı and Ger,28). Especially inspirational outfit examples for the uncovered ones mostly appear on some of these fashion designers' Insta-accounts since they also possess a remarkable number of uncovered followers who leave such comments under their daily combination photos:

"You are my idol. Whenever I see your beauty, I ask myself whether I should veil"

"Whenever I look at your photos, I want to veil"

"Thanks to sweet girls who smartly dress up like you, I have been thinking about covering myself, of course if God grants upon me!"⁵⁹

⁵⁹ You may look Gönül Kolat Susam's account to see such further comments of their followers.

Moreover, the uncovered ones who think about covering but have worries about possessing elegant look also constitute important part of the audience for the Islamic fashion magazines since Gülsüm Cicekci, the “uncovered” coordinator of *Âlâ* magazine, explains that beauty is a crucial term for a woman regardless of being covered or not and states:

The magazine’s target audience is constituted by conservative women and young ladies who are between 18-45 years old. We got calls for thanksgiving since there are women who have concerns about whether they would look pleasant or not if they cover or the ones who have just covered choose our magazines as the guide for their new way of clothing.⁶⁰

What motivates these females to follow Islamic fashion ideals and its followers or to have the wish inside to “cover” themselves in tune with Islamic fashion designs is an intriguing but crucial question to underline here. What kind of concerns do they have? ; Do religious, aesthetics or social ones really direct them to this way of dressing, or does the combination of these three influence them?. Gökarıksel and Secor answer this question as such;

⁶⁰ Poyrazlar, E. (2013) “İslam’ı kurtarmak gibi bir misyonumuz yok”. Available online at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2013/10/131023_ala_elcinpoyrazlar.shtml. (last accessed on 20.08.2014).

The allure of fashion and the attraction of its ever-changing designs become vehicles for the spread of veiling among women, and this mass veiling is seen as a metonym for the Islamicisation of society (2009; 15).

However, using fashion in this manner changes the practice of covering and that of Islam significantly since the already multivalent *tesettür* is transformed into a free-floating signifier, in Baudrillard's conception, with fashion (2009;15). This is because head-cover has become a means of spectacle for Muslim females of this study rather than a marker of Muslim females' modesty or piety in Islamic terms according to the mainstream evaluation of Islamic fashion. Thus, it would not be wrong to state that even head-covering is unmoored from its meaning by clashing its essence with that of fashion. Although there seems a big mass of females who have preferred head-covering since the 2000s⁶¹, the combination of head-covering and fashion has not produced a genuine example of perfect submission of what God asks Muslims for the

⁶¹ According to the 2014 research about women' covering done by American Michigan University, Turkey becomes the third in preference of covering among seven Arabian countries. The Second is Egypt with %65 and Turkey has %63. According to the report, %32 of Turkish women prefers not totally covering their hair. The form of veiling that covers head and the neck is preferred by %46; (2014). "Türkiye'de 'Kadının başı açık olmalı' diyenlerin oranı yüzde 32". Available online at: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/25530691.asp>. (last accessed on 20.01.2015).

devout and modest presentation of being a Muslim woman who is supposedly expected to imitate the lives of female modesty idols in Islamic history.

Most importantly, routinized choice of attractive and fashionable clothing makes this new group of Muslim females to actualize their feminine and modern identity with a dominant feeling of normality upon this new way of defining themselves since nearly each covered lady wishes to fulfill this normality in their lives. Here, it is important to enlighten “the normality” feeling engraved in this particular way of dressing the Muslim female body in this new age:

Routinized practices, with their repetitive, recursive, shared, and orderly nature, reduce the complexity of decision making, create a comforting world, and give individuals “a feeling of normality” (Ilmonen 2001, 14). In a Gramscian sense, the feeling of normality manifests an established habitus (Bourdieu 1984; Holt 1998). The spread, visibility, and frequency of a particular way of dressing, which contribute to the feeling of normality, imply *a potent and effective habitus* (Sandıkcı and Ger , 31).

These body routines are reinforced through the photos and under-comment advices shared on Instagram, and the key points of styling for covered females in the Islamic fashion magazines. Furthermore, conservative fashion designers on Instagram and the

elitist haute couture boutiques in Erenkoy have a formative role in empowerment of feminine and modern identity of head-covering Muslim females in this new habitus that is consolidated by modern sensitivities more than the Islamic ones. In other words, the spread, visibility and frequency of this “normal” way of covering Muslim femininity have been achieved thanks to the active usage of media mechanism by the fashion ladies on Instagram and the columnists of Islamic fashion magazines in which the boundaries are increasingly blurred due to the channeling towards fashionably covering. The fashionistas and the ones who closely follow them seem to strive for changing the aesthetic norms and taste structures in the veiling of Muslim females since 1990s so much that the practices of modernity, individuality and fashion have started to function as to regulate the female body not totally in association with Islamic rules in this newly forming habitus of 2000s.

Concomitantly, as we have mentioned about the root of “fashion” concept as limitless in the beginning, it seems that Islamic fashion actualizes itself beyond the limiting borders for Muslim females in terms of Islamic jurisprudence. This is because the morality and the essence of fashion celebrate the freedom of adorning female body by uncovering or bringing forth the feminine beauty whereas Islam asks Muslim women the opposite. Alexandru Balasescu argues that fashion forms a kind of biotechnology that shapes recognizable bodies and recognized subjects and this discipline is worked upon body and self since wearing different clothes means different prescribed

attitudes and the self is actualized by the choices in clothing style (31). Accordingly, their stylish clothing makes head-covering Muslim females to take place in public with the most visible form of Muslim female corporality shaped by fashion; thus, they generate anew ideal that presents identifiable chic female “covered” bodies in public. The similar sparkling appearance of covered female figures in public can be probably illustrated as the visible proof of this reasoning. As body decoration is the technique of self-actualisation of personhood and habitus, in this case, decorating the female body in tune with the fashion ideals of each season not only conceives their modern personality but also supports the empowerment of their new habitus (Craik, 153).

*No longer a sense of a higher purpose; a loss of meaning;
The fading of moral horizons which flatten and narrow our lives.*

Gone is a "Heroic dimension to life"

Charles TAYLOR

CHAPTER THREE: MODERN YET PROFANE

Modern Presentation of Muslim Female Selves

According to Jean Baudrillard, modernity is a code and the fashion is defined as its emblem (cited by Kawamura, 26). Thus, what is emphasized is that fashion can only be considered within the framework of modernity, which can be clarified with Baudrillard's approach to modernity: "in culture... modernity defines itself by the rate of change tolerated by the system without really changing anything in the essential order." (26). In this light, it can be suggested that modernity makes everything to undergo a shift in itself. We can also consider what is meant with the change without a change in the essential order by relying upon Agamben's theory of the signature upon the modernity. While modernity forms its own concepts, it actually transposes the old concepts into new images. That is to say, modernity is actually a "signature" which is capable of carrying the objects by endowing them a new appearance but without changing their essence. As sartorial changes are proposed as the first step for the modern society, fashion is connoted as an important

marker or sign of the modern society. Thus, fashion can be defined as one of the signs existing through the signature “modernity”.

The term “fashion” is mostly associated with “an exclusive description of western elite fashion” which has been flourished out of the western modernity (Craik, X). However, Marie Akou states in her article entitled "Building A New "World Fashion": Islamic Dress In The Twenty-First Century" that Muslims have been building a new “world” fashion called “Islamic fashion” which is distinct from Western one with a special reference to Turkey as a major apparel-producing country for both the West and the Islamic world (405). To reiterate from the first chapter, modernization process in Turkey was conducted over the female body especially in the early Republican period. However, since the 1980s, there has been formed an Islamisation process upon female body again. Starting from the 1990s, head-covering females gradually imitate the latest trends in the world fashion more and more in 2000s. When we look at where the Islamisation process, which has been conducted via Islamic fashion in this case, stands in 2000s, it seems that this new world fashion of Muslim females actually causes westernization to continue as an undercurrent within this process. The actors of this study who are depicted as elegant, fashionable, modern Muslim ladies sustain a new form of westernization as they wish to possess not only a covered body but also a fashionable and stylish appearance at the same time. Reproducing the new version of western fashion in tune with some covering ideals or the adjustment of the western fashion to the Islamic one do not principally

construct an authentic fashion style since Western or secular fashion is the major constituent of what is called Islamic fashion in this context. The small excerpt from the interview with the first head-covered fashion editor of *Âlâ* magazine, Esra Seziş, who defines herself as the first head-covering fashion and style consultant in Turkey has evidential value for the identified relation between Islamic and Western fashion (See figure 3.1 below):

Fashion does not differentiate between the covered and the uncovered ones. That is to say, according to the trend colors of the season, I choose my clothes that are appropriate for my own lifestyle. If the short leather skirt comes into fashion in the season, I prefer either using its longer form or using it with jackets. I adopt the fashion to my lifestyle.⁶²



Figure 3.1

⁶²(2013). “ESRA SEZİŞ ” BEN DE KENDİMİ TESETTÜRLÜ OLARAK GÖRMÜYÖRUM.BEN KAPALIYIM”. Available online at: <http://www.endadergi.com/esra-sezis-ben-de-kendimi-tesetturlu-olarak-gormuyorum-ben-kapaliyim/>. (last accessed on 20.01.2015).

That's why Islamic fashion magazines give special columns to foreign brand-names in their each volume with such titles: "The revolutionary woman who reversed the fashion; Coco Chanel and Her story ; World's leading brands and how they became famous: Elie Saab, McQueen, Lanvin, Oscar de la Renta ; Exemplary combination details from the luxury world brands such as "Carven, Alexander McQueen, Isabel Marant".

For Göle, women are defined as auxiliary actors but significant signifiers of Islamism and modernism; however, there is a special emphasis upon the shift in the image of the ideal woman from "modern yet modest" in modernism to "Islamic thus modest" in Islamism (1997a:67). As signatures are precisely what "orients and determines interpretation and efficacy [of signs] in a certain context", the new interpretation of modernity as a signature for the chic actors in 2000s lifts the effectiveness of its sign, fashion, more and more every day (Garner, 582). Hence, the term of the third phase for these covered actors can be connoted as "Islamic *yet* modern *thus* attractive" due to the differing semiology of Muslim female bodies through Islamic fashion ideals.

The effects of Islamic fashion practices upon Muslim female selves can be assessed upon how Islamic fashion followers define and perceive themselves within this process. It is also crucial to read corporeal configuration of modernity through

“Islamic fashion” and identify its compatibility with Islamic ideals in order to identify its effects upon the Muslim female selves more clearly. Interest in wearing fashionable but preference in not totally covering clothes seem to be the synthesis of Modernist and Islamic convictions in their exclusive habitus which can be described “as unselfconscious orchestration of fashion practices” (Entwistle, 51). Here, it is important to emphasize the term “unselfconscious” to detect how fashion conscious Muslim females have adopted their elegant performances marked by their exclusive clothing in public space. This is because many Islamist intellectuals evaluate the fashionableness concern as a reason for the decrease of religious concerns in this group of Muslim females whose fashionableness and elegance concern seem to prevail upon the Islamic ones. In comparison to this social class, a group of head-covering Muslim females who have pretty and considerably pleasant apparel in tesettür appears on the social media whose display of a balanced life between the worldly and religious issues are highly appreciated by many Islamic intellectuals.

One of the remarkable books concerning modernity and its side effects is Charles Taylor’s *Malaises of Modernity* in which “how much of price in bad consequences one has to pay for the positive fruits of modernity ideal” has been evaluated (50). Paraphrasing Taylor, the malaise which is a vague sense of mental or moral ill-being is gnawing; pervasive dis-ease with the culture of narcissism, the spread of an outlook that makes self-fulfilment the major value in life and that seems to recognize few external moral demands or serious commitments to other (Ibid, 55). Correspondingly,

new Islamic visibility of Muslim females is like the affirmation of Charles Taylor's remarkable detection since modern self-presentation and corporeal visibility of Muslim females function as a kind of malaise in their supposedly Islamic way of life as the mainstream understanding of Islamic way of life in the modern world has not totally welcomed this new version, which will be elaborated in the following lines through the Islamic scholars' point of views. Although these females are enabled to choose for themselves their pattern of life and to determine the shape of their lives in a various ways so as to be marked with their modern outlook, a noticeable "loss of meaning" in the sacred order of the Muslim females' way of lives seems to constitute their newly-constituted habitus. This is because they are claimed to challenge the normative corporeality of their covered existence by putting pre-existing Islamic structures behind their new modern selves by the Islamic world.

According to Puneet Bansal, we wear our bodies and fabricate ourselves through clothes (20). Accordingly, different styles in Islamic fashion, colourful clothing preferences and elegant combinations are like the enunciation of the emphasis upon modern self for the public visibility of the covered females in XXI century. When visible subjectification gains importance in public, the pre-established form of *tesettür* appears to be subverted due to the emphasis upon aesthetically covering female body. What is observed over these special fashion magazines and fashion bloggers' accounts on Instagram is that they propose idealization of modern self-presentation upon Muslim feminine identity. When one looks at the interviews with famous

fashion designers, they emphasize women's fashion to be “modern, attractive, powerful one with luxurious style in line with minimalism” (HAYYAT / Volume 8). Thus, the aforementioned loss of meaning in these lives actually corresponds to “the fading of moral horizons” and “concentrating on the self” in their redefined way of living, which leads to objectification of tesettür as a sacred duty (Taylor, 10).

Nilüfer Göle studies on Turkish Islamism that was conducted in the mid-1980s which resulted in publishing a book entitled *Forbidden Modern*. In it, she highlights the difference between the pre-established form of tesettür with its ideals and the new modernist way of stylish clothing/ garments for the covered ones in the XXI century. It is stated that there was no exaggerated appearance in *tesettür* in those years since Muslim females were depicted to strive for being totally in tune with what is defined as hijab⁶³ in the Quran and many hadiths. The data yielded by her study provides strong evidence that there is no connection between tesettür and rendering women appealing with their tesettür in the years of study. The description of the Muslim females here totally differs from that of the fashionably covered ones of the XXI century with recognizable changes in the images and perceptions of Muslim female body, which is the actual concern of this study:

⁶³ Hijab is an Arabic word which possesses the meaning “cover, conceal, hide, screen, and shelter” and it is used to refer to islamic dress code for women that corresponds to modest dress in broader terms.

In the face of modern women who exhibit their femininity by the care they give to their bodies and clothes, Muslim women conceal their femininity behind veiling and thus present the "sacred body" against the "aesthetic" one. They once again mark their difference from Western modernism. Veiled women, like their predecessors, enter into public life with the slogan "Personality but Not Femininity." (Göle 1996; 130)

New Islamic actors, as they re-appropriate modernity, challenge the Western mode of modernism. In other words, Muslim actors enter the historical stage through the Islamist gate, and once they are actors on the stage, an interplay is engaged between "Muslim" and "modern." (Göle 1996; 133)

Thus, the interplay between being a Muslim and becoming modern may reverse the slogan above since the feminine outlook can be conceived as the primary part of new visibility form of covered females since the beginning of the XXI century considering the whole beautifying sessions discussed in Chapter 2. This interplay has gained so much strength that the term modern has been observed to play the main role over a Muslim female outlook in most of the media stereotypes and the different sartorial possibilities they generate in public. Columnists in Islamic fashion magazines and the fashion designers on Instagram play a symbolic image-maker role for the idealized images of fashion and beauty upon covered female body. As fashion magazines believe that “definitions of the self and social worth are only driven by the physical appearance”, what these iconic figures in Islamic fashion realm and their followers

present is “aesthetic body” that is connoted as the visible form of their modern way of living in their exclusive habitus (Moeran, 496). Under the title “Make a difference in your clothing style” in *Âlâ*, young covered females strike poses on a street and they state their favourite combination pieces, book and film, and lastly where their each clothing is from on the right bottom corner of the page (See figure 3.2 and 3.3 below).



Figure 3.2 ; Figure 3.3

Hence, the ones who expressed themselves with the motto “personality but not femininity” in Göle’s quote find fulfilment only in the display of the sacred body as a Muslim head-covering female. This defined female figure points out the importance of being a pious Muslim in their lives rather than the worldly achievements. On the contrary, the covered actors of 2000s in this case explicitly assert that our appearance should be pleasant; thus, we can exhibit our femininity even if we prefer covering clothes since we are also women. The reliance upon this assertion

accelerates in 2000s and the Islamic fashion magazines constitute the backbone of the display of “aesthetic body” as the expression of new modernist outlook for Muslim females in 2000s. When we look at the production stage of these magazines from the first volume to the following ones, we see an explicit transition in their cover pages from modestly covered female figure whose eyes look down to the uncovered attractive models who use the headscarf as an accessory. This change also identifies the exchange of the sacred concerns with the aesthetic ones in their lives. Furthermore, the images in the recent cover pages of *Âlâ* magazine seems to feature the femininity rather than modest Muslim female portrait in order to correspond to the aesthetic body concern constituted for the Muslim females in present times. On the basis of the currently available evidence, it seems that the Islamic borderlines in the recent volumes of these magazines become more and more obscure compared to the first ones (Figure 3.4 and 3.5).



Figure 3.4 ; Figure 3.5

Here, the following questions come to mind “Is there a code of dress to abide by in order to be considered as *modern*?” and “How to reorganize our visible realm through clothing preferences as a Muslim female in 21th century?” As Entwistle undermines that our dress forms a visible envelope of ourselves, clothing preferences and accordingly following fashion trends to show the most presentable way of clothing gradually constitute the modern selves for Muslim females in the modern public space (44). The existence of a high number of designers, covered fashion bloggers as the supposedly “aesthetic authorities” of Islamic fashion establish appearance based stereotype for the ideal modern selves for the new cadre of covered Muslim females (See figure 3.6). These fashionistas are the most well-known and strictly observed ones on Instagram and Facebook since the number of their followers is about a hundred thousand. They give advice on fashionable look to conservative females in diverse media as they are considered pivotal in shaping the fashionableness for Muslim females in this context.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ You may look at the interview in Turkish with some of “aesthetic authority” figures in Islamic fashion:(2013). “Tesettür modasını onlar belirliyor”. Available online at: <http://www.aktuel.com.tr/dergi/2013/09/19/tesettur-modasini-onlar-belirliyor>. (last accessed on 20.06.2014).



Figure 3.6

Compared to the mainstream understanding of *tesettür* in Islamic law, the change in the way Muslim females express themselves through ultra-modern pleasant garments and brand-name accessories takes attention of an observer eye since the emphasis in their covering is on their hyper-feminine appearance of their fashionableness rather than on their modesty or piety represented by loose, unadorned simple garments for the performance of their religious duty. Interestingly, the understanding of modernity for these fashion conscious females is supposed to function upon adorning their female body more and more with the need of preserving femininity while still covering some parts of body as it has been the case in the most of the popular media representations of Muslim females. When one looks at the answers for “Why am I reading *Âla*” or some famous names’ comments for these fashion magazines, it is

clear that the meaning of modernity is used in processing of the modern selves of the members of this exclusive habitus:

Fashion Designer, Rabia Yalçın, talks about *Âlâ* Magazine: It is according to a metropolitan woman. Women find something for themselves from *Âlâ* magazine. An important step forward! Women are conscious that they are in metropolis, thus, they want to *become more modern*.

Clothing Consultant, Esra Kavurmacı comments on *Âlâ* Magazine: Women want to be beautiful. The criteria is not “being veiled” or “not being veiled”. Women want to be beautiful at all times. Now *dressing well and looking nice* has started to occupy bigger in their agenda.

The winner of the one-year subscription of the ‘Why am I reading *Âlâ* magazine’ competition is Tugba Kaya who strikes a pose with her black sunglass and black shawl for this column:

There are a lot of women who prefer covering as many as the ones who do not prefer covering in the world, however, there needed a new way to announce the voice of the covered section. *Âlâ* has opened this way! It has brought new breeze for the veiling world. It became be more “*Âlâ*”⁶⁵ than we had thought or even dreamed of. *Âlâ* is our voice in public. (February 2013)

⁶⁵ “*Âlâ*” is used with the meaning “superb, excellent, wonderful and splendid” here.

These commentaries clearly identifies the importance attached on the pleasant looking covering style in this social class. These quotations provide evidence that there is a reliance upon the fact that fashion practices are supposed to generate the modern subject for contemporary Muslim females. According to the claims of the readers, as the new voice of modern Muslim females, Islamic fashion magazines also enables the covered females to be appreciated since it improves the look of the modern female body within the new reinterpretation of fashion for the covered elegance. Islamic fashion, conservative fashion designers and the fashion idols on Instagram, these magazines, namely the sources of current fashion trends, are perceived as the reinforcement of Muslim females' hidden modern taste of fashion and their modern selves that have been claimed to remain behind *tesettür* for years.

There seems to be a remarkable relation between women's sartorial identities and their sense of self. This is because this social seems to evaluate other covered females or themselves according to the dimension prescribed by the quality of visibility in terms of the voguish stylishness. That qualified visibility actually refers to conforming to the standards drawn for a fashion conscious modern covered female of the XXI century through the aesthetic authorities in Islamic fashion world. As fashion is connoted firstly "as a modern practice and secondly as the aesthetic form of self-expression", being in tune with fashion trends while remaining "covered" becomes the modern tool of their self-expression for Muslim females (Balesescu, 122). The close attention upon fashion practices are presumed as the marker of their modern

identity and the alleged sign for the possible association between leading modern way of life and being a fashionably covered Muslim lady. This fact actually affirms Göle's commentary on "modernity":

Modernity functions as a fetish. In non-Western contexts, modernity's manifestations are overemphasized, as are the performances of belonging to modernity. (Göle 2002; 184)

Accordingly, the modern Muslim identity and Muslim perspectives displayed in the public and on the media suggests that voguish elegance of female body comes into prominence rather than representing modestly covered Muslim female figure. The importance of the fashionable look within the "covered" femininity are defined by the fashion editor of *Âlâ* magazine, Hulya Aslan, as *conservative aesthetics* and she explains what *fashion* means for a conservative lady in an interview for a newspaper as such:

In an interview I did with the designer, she told me "fashion is about getting dressed, not about getting naked". This is really what it is. People do not look more elegant with many decollates or many colours. On the contrary, they look more irritating but I do not emphasize this because I am a woman with a headscarf. What is essential is to look elegant and aesthetic while covering the femininity. This makes women much more self-confident. It doesn't matter if their head is covered or not. A conservative woman can be stylish and

elegant as long as she knows her body size. The harmony is essential; modest clothes, suitable accessories and suitable scarf or shawl⁶⁶

This explanation seems to propound that only when fashion functions in the conservative realm, it will foster the expected aesthetics for an elegant outlook, which means that women cannot assumed as totally fashionable without conforming to the conservative ideals. Moreover, being fashionable has been associated with having self-confidence. Ironically, Aslan asserts that aesthetic appearance in tesettür can be displayed without actually displaying feminine attributes. However, the acquisition of new mode of Muslim female visibility in Islamic fashion magazines is processed with uncovered appealing cover girls who decorate their hair with a colorful shawl or headscarf with their attractive facial expression and cover their bodies with *modern way of dressing* (See figure 3.7, figure 3.8, figure 3.9 below). Muslim fashion magazines are filled with photographs made and styled by well-known and popular stylists and fashion designers of the secular fashion world, such as: Discover your style with Aysun Kaba who is a popular stylist of fashion industry: Tips on being stylish easily / Dress in a modern way, but don't be a victim of fashion / following each trend is almost like flirting with each man you meet. (*Âlâ* / March 2013)

⁶⁶(2014). "Hülya Aslan: Moda soyunmak değil giyinmektir". Available online at: <http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/yasam/170405.aspx>. (last accessed on 20.06.2014).



Figure 3.7 ; Figure 3.8 ; Figure 3.9

In terms of the relation between the self and body image, Tseelon notes that a certain type of dressing is remedial or booster of low confidence since women's sense of self, self-worth, is frequently a fragile one (61-2). These sayings explicitly respond to the questions of how the sartorial sloppiness has not been appreciated for a covered female in public and how the elegant outlook is motivated and appreciated within

their exclusive habitus. Especially young females give priority upon the beauty much more than they could do because head-covering ones were associated with *unpleasant epithets*⁶⁷ in the past due to the political pressure in Turkey. Interestingly, in an interview with two uncovered females on Bagdat Street, they repeatedly underline that they appreciate the pleasant clothing and especially the choice of colourful pieces for head-covered females with a great emphasis on the term “modern”: “This should be certainly *modern way of covering*” or “I really welcome the *modern way of tesettür*”.

To annotate these commentaries from a different point view, Efrat Tseelon highlights that body image and self-concept are closely related:

The self- defining role of the appearance of objects and procedures is evident in the feeling of “incompleteness” experienced in their absence. In the theory of symbolic self-completion, Wicklund and Gollwitzer (1982) suggest that low self-esteem is compensated by extending the self through objects. What characterizes a self-completing object is a peculiar dynamics of dependency on that object. It echoes the relationship between people and their artificial limbs (63-4)

⁶⁷ Veiled ladies were called as “Sıkma baş (head spin), hediye paketli kafalar (head like a gift-box)” etc. by the secular elites

Accordingly, those young Muslim women seem to perceive the possibility of having quality and pleasant clothing as a self-completing object in order to inscribe their modern self-presentation because the modern way of dressing is presented as the marker of their modern self-definition within their cosmopolitan imaginary. This fact can be supported with the commentary below that is applauded as the one of the best ones for “Why I am reading *Âlâ* magazine”:

I read *Âlâ*! Because I want to support it. It has come up to support us, and to treat us with honor. It has esteemed us. Up until now, clothing industries for covered women have tried to keep us in a single stereotype as if we have to be like that. They worked with no vision and without thinking hard. They designed models for oldies or models which have no relation with the new world’s visions, and all they could do was to embellish them with some beads. I am an esteemed and successful doctor in a private hospital, which people from high society often visit. As a covered employee, I try to show that a doctor can both be covered, elegant and stylish. I also try to motivate others and to present myself in a nice way what many people would inwardly want to experience. Thus, I need stylish models of good quality which appeal to me but which do not lack in being covered enough. Our magazine provides this to me in a very good way. I warmly applaud you for your efforts. Dr.Feyza Göktekin” (March 2013)

This commentary is the reinforcement of a self-assured image thanks to the making of new modern self and of a new habitus in which subjectification practices are achieved

under the label of beautiful modern way of living through the new modernist interpretation of an Islamic way of life. The words chosen by the readers reflect the fulfillment of what has been missed for many years. This “fulfillment” occurs not just for the possibility of fashionable but also for “conservative” clothing. It also enables the satisfaction of women’s self-reliance which has been oppressed within their personalities due to the political pressures of 1990s’ Turkey.

CRITICISM OF HEAD-COVERED MUSLIM FEMALE INTELLECTUALS AND THEOLOGY PROFESSORS TOWARDS ISLAMIC FASHION AND PROFANATION VS ITS COUNTER-CRITICISM: DESECRATION, VIOLATING THE SACRED, DEPRIVING THE SACRED CHARACTER, DEGRADING OF SOMETHING WORTHY OF RESPECT

Many head-covered Muslim female intellectuals in Turkey harshly criticize the concept of Islamic fashion from both a female’s and a Muslim’s standpoint. The language they use for the criticism can be similar to that of Western feminists. They generally draw attention to the paradoxical nature of Islamic fashion practices that are served as a modern understanding of Muslim femininity within Islamic fashion magazines by the means of hadiths and Quranic verses. One of well-known conservative head-covered writers, Sibel Eraslan, starts her commentary about Islamic fashion magazines with the saying that tesettür does not become tesettür when it turns into a kind of show. During last decade, the way the female body has

been dressed and presented in public space has been changed with the term “Islamic Fashion”. It has been actualized with the exchange of terms *visibility and privacy* that is conceived through *tesettür*. Although *tesettür* used to gray female body as the Quran and hadiths suggest, fashioned Muslim female appearance makes the female body more visible which fosters head-covering Muslim women to possess a striking corporeality in public. This is because these females conceive “visibility” as capturing a modernized image through the new modernist way of their clothing and *tesettür*. There forms a striking question: What can “being visible” signify in the modern world for a Muslim woman? :

The way of existence in the modern world and especially in the postmodern understanding is defined by ‘visibility’. Being seen by others means being noticed by others through drawing their attention. In the category of pleasure - aesthetics, the hierarchy of seeing- being seen mostly reveals itself through the ones who “possess fame” in the categories the supervisor and the supervised. Those who seek for fame voluntarily bow to surveillance... Being visible means to venture being observed by many eyes. And it is something that can be directly related to a decline in one’s faith and people’s awareness of being seen/ supervised by the Creator (Barbarasoglu 2013, 15-6).

As stated above, being visible becomes the perceptive vehicle of possessing a higher form of life that has been personally embodied in women’s everyday life as a marker of modernity in the modern world. However, as underlined above, gaining the

visibility in modern terms vitiates the consciousness of being under surveillance of the Creator. Thus, the fashion conscious Muslim females' outer look signals the described desecration process in their newly adopted life-style. Moreover, being more visible is also the enforcement of those magazines for the aforementioned group of Muslim females though those magazines are claimed to be produced as the battle against femininity and its nudity which has been generously displayed in many worldwide known women magazines such as Elle, Vogue and Marie Claire. Therefore, those magazines seem to portray a conflicting figure with their first ideal, battle against nudity, because they uncover what they claim to cover by making the female body charming for the others' gaze with attractive attire. To reiterate, those magazines do not display the nudity but they do more with the proper Muslim dress according to the mainstream interpretation since Muslim female dressing on display is conceived in a dynamic and diverse world through Islamic fashion magazines by making the covered female figure more glittering in public space. This forms a contrast with one of the hadiths⁶⁸ concerning the ideal dressing of Muslim females since the magazines implicitly announce especially in their cover pages, that *tesettür* can tolerate to expose the feminine adornment so as to reshape it in tune with the modern world requirements or its "idealized" appearance. In other words, they

⁶⁸ 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 and not expose their adornment ... And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment (Quran, Surah An-Nur 24/ 31).

attempt to make tesettür accessible to the public space by presenting its fashionable and contemporary look as a modern product.

Barbarasoğlu also draws the attention to the relation between the desire to be more visible and the faith in God. Accordingly, the increasing visibility in public unconsciously triggers the undermining of the pious Islamic faith. Corresponding to the intellectual analysis of Fatma Barbarosoğlu, nowadays, what seems to bear more importance in Muslim females' lives is being integrated within "beautiful, covered but with modern clothing" rather than having the consciousness of being under surveillance of the Creator. Taken under consideration the Quran and hadiths as the source of reference about the proper Muslim dressing, modernization image upon the covered female body can be connoted as a challenge in the normative visibility of Muslim female actors for this case. What is implied with the normative image according to the acknowledged interpretation of tesettür as a sacred duty is the modest preferences for covering the femininity with loose garments so as not to unveil female body. This normative image defined in terms of Islamic principles has not been verified by one of the owners of *Âlâ* magazine, Mr. Atay, in an interview when a theologian criticized them by saying that "A woman's desire to present herself is fundamentally un-Islamic" since women should be submissively behind rather than putting themselves forward:

‘That's not our understanding of Islam. We don't believe that women should hide themselves. Even the veiled have the right to follow stylish fashion’⁶⁹

Nevertheless, Barbarosoğlu idealizes unmodern representation of female corporeality in public life from the point of view of a Muslim female believer since what is strongly underlined above is the discrepancy between the ideals of modernity and that of Islam. Her book entitled “Imaj ve Takva” (Image and Taqwa)⁷⁰ compares those two contrasting terms with the cross-examination of Islamic standpoint and that of modernity:

It is necessary for taqwa to be out of the agenda of religious people in order to build the desired (modern) images because there is no image if there is taqwa; and there is no taqwa if there is image... The image is open to the effects of the eyes that look at it from the outside; while the taqwa is free from all the effects to the point that it escapes from all eyes and hides in the eye of the heart. The image is the product of a world in which being seen – being much more seen- is privileged.

⁶⁹Silver, K. (2012). “It’s Vogue for the veiled! Turkish fashion magazine created for women who wear headscarves”. Available online at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2093129/Al--Turkish-fashion-magazine-created-women-wear-headscarves.html#ixzz3ShnsTLqL>. (last accessed on 25.04.2014).

⁷⁰ One of the more complete definitions and explanations was provided by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah. He states that Taqwa “includes doing everything that Allah has enjoined whether it is waajib (obligatory) or mustahabb (recommended), and avoiding all that He has forbidden, whether it is haraam (forbidden) or makrooh (disliked).”: Available online at: <http://www.iqrasense.com/about-islam/taqwa-the-cornerstone-of-islamic-faith.html>. (last accessed on 25.10.2014).

Taqwa is the guide of people who aim at being a “friend of God” and reaching the truth through the elimination of all images. (2002: 19-20).

As highlighted in the quotation above, if one wants to become a pious believer, s/he is expected to preserve her/his God consciousness. In other words, what bears importance for a Muslim is the internal appearance with which the Creator evaluates his servants rather than the outer appearance. This is because the problem of being visible and the concern for possessing the modern look contradict that of an idealized Muslim portrait in terms of taqwa. The women in this case attend regular sohbet to improve their Islamic knowledge but they also have those meetings to show their elegance and fashionable look to the other attending women as stated by many interviewers I talked with. Therefore, it appears that the missing point in their lives is that they prioritize what modernity firstly prioritizes since their own interpretation of an attractive but Islamically appropriate appearance require the individualization of their tesettür understanding. That’s to say, they seem to prefer modern image rather than do everything as the Creator asks, which has been defined as “taqwa” since their individual fashion sense in dressing practices does not follow what Islamic jurisprudence offers. However, it is important to state that the Islamic faith is classified according the level of Taqwa a believer possesses rather than the visual beauty or material possessions. There is overwhelming evidence corroborating this notion in Quran and many hadiths:

Allah does not look at your outward appearance and your wealth; rather He looks at your hearts and deeds (Sahih Muslim, 2064)

Wahb bin Munabbih (one of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad) said: “Imaan (Faith) is naked, its clothes are al-Taqwa (Piety / God-consciousness), its beauty is al-Hayaa (Modesty) and its wealth is in its Fiqh (Understanding).” (Sifatu al-Safwa (2/291))

The perception of the world in the modern and Islamic thought lies at the heart of the discussion on taqwa and image. The popular phrase about functioning of the modern world is “all the world is a stage and all the men and women merely players” which is stated in Shakespeare’s famous play “As You Like It”. However, Islam stresses that the worldly life is just an amusement and diversion since the life in the hereafter is the goal of the ones who have taqwa⁷¹. Therefore, Islamic thought emphasizes that the world is a kind of evanescent station in which a believer is tested with various mischief and troubles so that s/he can be bestowed with the eternal life according to the amount of their good deeds in the Islamic perspective. What is the difference between these two distinct approaches? The basic and the most obvious difference is the spectator(s). Modern perception puts all other people into the place of the Creator

⁷¹ “And the worldly life is not but amusement and diversion; but the home of the Hereafter is best for those who fear Allah , so will you not reason?” Surat Al-'An`ām (The Cattle) 6:32 / “And this worldly life is not but diversion and amusement. And indeed, the home of the Hereafter - that is the [eternal] life, if only they knew.” Surat Al-'Ankabūt (The Spider) 29:64

who is accepted as the only spectator in the Islamic thought. Correspondingly, the underlying argument in favour of this reasoning is that the fashion conscious women in 2000s would not care about their appearance as much if they did not attach importance to the thoughts of other people about their selves. Taking a middle-ground position, it can be claimed that the world is a stage in which believers do their best just for the sake of possessing taqwa and all other people are just mere players. The same purpose may direct those female believers to act accordingly to the principles of their Creator. Through the modern way of tesettür styling or the elegant habitus the fashion conscious women have constructed, Muslim females assume that they have to generate a new lifestyle and act in tune with its requirements so that they can gain value in the eyes of other people in the “modern” public space rather than that of the Creator according to many Muslim intellectuals. Thus, what has more importance in their lives is others’ thoughts about them rather than God’s, whose principles are expected to totally regulate a conscious Muslim believer’s life.

To portray the issue from Islamic intellectuals’ point of view, the article “İslami Gençlik Kabuk Değiştiriyor” (Islamic Youth Changes Its Cover) in *Aksiyon*, which is one of the most popular weekly news magazine in Turkey, discusses the reasons behind the radical transformation of Muslim Youth in 21th century. It is argued that Islamic believers have felt disturbed by certain communities who define Muslims as a community who could not manage to discard a Muslim portrait of an Anatolian

peasant who does not know how to enjoy or have a holiday⁷². In order to shed this image, Muslims aim to generate and show a new “appearance and lifestyle” which can reflect their economic power. It is important to point out that they intend to prove that “while we fulfil our religious duties, we also know how to taste the worldly pleasures insofar Islam permits it”. Accordingly, Fatma Barbarosoglu explains this situation with the consumerism ideal of modernity while Ali Bulac interprets this with the argument “the city converts their lives” in the same article:

Sociologist Fatma Karabıyık Barbarosoğlu: Before 90's going on holiday and whether it was appropriate to do was a subject of a constant debate. Whereas after 90's five-starred vacation culture was established by the means of advertisement. Five-starred hotel vacations mean internalizing new behavioral and consumptive structures. What are these new consumptive structures? It is the way of trying to reach ostentatiousness in order to prove the maintainability of a better quality and more sumptuous life. This situation has been reinforced by 'ultramodern new rich' Muslims.

Ali Bulaç: In my opinion, Islamism hasn't yet settled on any decisions on how to respond to the modern world. It has been consuming the

⁷²Bilici, E. (2000). “İslâmî gençlik kabuk değiştiriyor”. Available online at: <http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/aksiyon/haber-5979-26-isl%C3%A2m%C3%AE-genclik-kabuk-degistiriyor.html>.. (last accessed on 20.06.2014).

modern world. That is not joining in the massive globalization; on the contrary; it is getting drifted away by the trend and thus leading to homogenization of these two movements.

Considering both quotations, it can be deduced that the new interpretation of clothing or covering the female body for Muslim females in this exclusive habitus does not correspond with an Islamic response to the expectancy of the modern world. As the both intellectuals highlighted above, all that is solid in an Islamic life starts to melt in the way the modern world acts so as to make a show for their modernized lifestyle. There is ample support for this claim in the photographs of Muslim females on Instagram which range from an attractive pose of a fancy pair of shoes that show a female's feet and its alluring ankle cuff to the nails painted in tune with the dominant colour of their clothing (See the figure 3.10 and 3.11). That is to say, elegance starts from the non-prohibited area of the Muslim female's body such as feet, face and hands according to Shari'a⁷³. Muslims who want to exist in the modern realm face a considerable change of balance between the modern and the sacred; hence, "the modern image" draws attention to this remarkable divergence in the way Muslim females express themselves in the public space in 2000s.

⁷³ Islamic religious law which formulates religious, political, social and private life a Muslim believer should possess



Figure 3.10 ; Figure 3.11

Göle in her interview about Burqa (an enveloping outer garment used by Afghan Muslim ladies in France) explains that one of the most crucial features of modernity is its enlightening everywhere since its lighting does not allow any dimly place let alone shadowy one; therefore, she defines Burqa as “Dark thus Beautiful” ⁷⁴. As it desires full transparency without dimness, the term “mahrem” which refers to the secrecy and the concealment of femininity in Islamic jurisprudence is subjected to desecration process through the light of modernity image. On the basis of the evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that Muslim female’s elegant dressing reveals as a starting point for the desecration of the main purpose behind tesettür act according to Islamic law since fashion-focused Muslim women base their public space with the fashion ideal and their elegant stance in the covering style.

⁷⁴Tekerek, T. (2010). “Karanlık ve güzel burka”. Available online at: <http://arsiv.taraf.com.tr/yazilar/tugba-tekerek/karanlik-ve-guzel-burka/11428/>. (last accessed on 20.06.2014).

The key aspect of this argument is that there seems to be no ideal equilibrium between Islamic body and modern body according to these Muslim females since physical corporality rather than the sacred one seems to be dominant in this context. When considering this aspect in terms of body and spirit dualism, it is noticeable that spirit loses its importance while the body progressively comes forth. It is necessary to point out that body and its image overcome the spiritual consciousness a Muslim female should possess as an obedient believer since spiritual matters lose its omnipotence over the bodily expression. This orientation towards physical body actually shows its power especially when one analyses the visual media used on the Instagram or in the Islamic fashion magazines. When a new boutique opens under a banner of a “Islamic Fashion”, the runway shows uncovered females with pop songs playing in the background become a part of the celebration party whose attendants are fashion conscious head-covering females with their wondering eyes on the stage (See the figure 3.12 and 3.13 below). This parade actually lends support to the claim that modernity implicitly causes spirit to lose its effect in the new way of life while bodily concerns explicitly prevail. Bryan Turner summarizes this issue by underlining the change of control mechanism in individuals’ lives in the modern societies in his book entitled *Body and Society*:

.... Self-regulation was for many centuries part of a religious discipline which aimed to control soul. In modern societies, asceticism is designed to produce an acceptable social self, particularly a self that conveys sexual symbolism. The body as a project is incorporated within the world of fashion and consumerism. In contemporary society, the self is a representational self, whose value and meaning is ascribed to the individual by the shape and image of their external body or more precisely through their body image. The regulatory control of the body is now exercised through consumerism and the fashion industry rather than through religion (1984; 23)

As underlined above, the common focus in these females' lives is the spectacle of a female body in its covered form. This is because the modern soul is claimed to be exercised through external perception of the body rather than the training of the soul an idea opposing the Islamic ideal. The following examples and what has been underlined in the previous chapters provide confirmatory evidence in the availability of claims above for the contemporary society new Muslim females have constructed.



Figure 3.12; Figure 3.13

The foregoing discussion implies that religion experiences a process in which profane and sacred realms are intermingled. What Islam proposes for women's way of life has been so trivialized that religious knowledge and application of what religion asks their attendants lose its validity in this new way of life. This causes an individual to become an independent entity from the Creator as elaborated in the previous quotations by Fatma Barbarosoğlu; thus, religion loses its omnipotence upon a Muslim's way of life, which allows women to act according to their own reasoning. Here, it is worth noting the interflow of the profane and sacred world upon the sophisticated female figures and the prevailing narrative about their lives in the Islamic fashion magazines. The represented female figures in Islamic fashion magazines are different from the idealized figure a Muslim lady is supposed to display according to Islamic perspective. When we look at the language used for the

narration of the wife of a Saudi Prince, one can interpret what is highly appreciated for a modern Muslim woman within this newly-constructed context (See figure 3.14 above):

The Desert Princess Emire el Tavi: graduated from the University of New Haven in Business; a Muslim woman with her fluent English and a powerful style whose name is on everyone's lips wherever she is invited; the wife of a Saudi prince; her favourite brands are Dolce Gabbana, Ferry, Burberry. In a country in which a woman cannot drive a car alone, a princess who is unafraid to say that she enjoys painting, writing poems and riding a horse a lot; the princess who is totally opposed to the portrait of a Arabian woman constitutes a strong example for Mediterranean women. (*Aysha*; Volume 8)



Figure 3.14

And probably the strongest thing to say about her is that “a woman with her thick and black hair extending to her waist and with long black eyelashes does not hesitate to

show herself”. As the most potent symbol of the profane world is the human body, the beauty of body is emphasized once more here with the appreciation of its showy stance in the public. Another trend-setting popular figure known worldwide is Sheikhha Mozah⁷⁵ who is described as elegant but conservative role model for Muslim ladies in ‘Foreign Style’ of the magazine: (See figure 3.15 and 3.16 above):

Sheikha Mozah: a noble, elegant and powerful lady. She has her own style in dressing her noble posture. Her favourite brands are Chanel, Dior and Valentino from which she generally prefers to choose her clothes. She dresses plainly but flamboyantly, which requires refined taste (Aysha , volume 4).



Figure 3.15; Figure 3.16

⁷⁵ The second of the three wives of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, former Emir of the State of Qatar. She generally prefers close-fitting clothing from world-brands by covering

Again another portrait that is presented in *Aysha* magazine belongs to the popular Turkish model, Tugce Kazaz⁷⁶ who strikes both uncovered and head-covered poses for the magazine (See figure 3.17, 3.18 and 3.19 above). What grabs attention in the interview in the magazine is that she not only prays five times a day but also fasts; however, the cover page of magazine is presented with her feminine uncovered face whose hair is decorated with a headscarf and combined with a pair of big earrings (*Aysha*, volume 6).

Correlatively, what takes attention in these magazines is that they seem to prove the possibility of combining what is profane and what is sacred by sparing one page to religious issues and another page to something out of religion but concerning all women. For instance, when we look at the volume 7 of *Aysha* magazine that is dedicated to Ramadan month⁷⁷, the design of the pages is ironic in that one can see a worldly thing that refers to the world fashion and then a religious one in which the stories of who tergiversated Islam.

⁷⁶ Before her marriage to George Seitaridis in 2005, she converted to orthodox Christianity and settled down in Greece. After three years of marriage she ended up divorcing and came back to Turkey. Kazaz continued her career as a model and then decided to become a Buddhist. After being treated like a "servant", she became a Muslim again. Tugçe Kazaz made radical changes in her own life after becoming a Muslim. She has quitted smoking, drinking and nightlife. Kazaz was one of the bravest models of the time. As one of few people modelling both in Paris and America, she ended her profession with a snap decision. Kazaz, who recently took part in a headscarf fashion show, announced her decision of not wearing low cut dresses for her job or in her private life.

⁷⁷ The most valuable month for Muslim in which all Muslims fast for the sake of God and it is connoted "as the sultan of eleven months".



Figure 3.17; Figure 3.18; Figure 3.19

Respectively, the foregoing discussion implies that the difference between the uncovered and the covered, or the sacred and the worldly are so minimized in this new way of life of Muslim females in the 21th century. While there are numerous magazines for the secular way of live, conservatives meet their needs through the modern way of life those Islamic fashion magazines and social media foster. Bearing the previous points in mind, how can one define this substantial process which causes a change in the representation of Muslim femininity? With special reference to Weber's theory, Charles Taylor underlines the desecration process as "disenchantment of the world", in which people are no longer sacrificed to the demands of supposedly sacred orders since modern freedom was claimed to be possessed by breaking loose from older moral horizons (3). Therefore, it seems that

although modernity develops the level of civilization, it exposes the Islamic culture into a loss or decline in its essentials in this context as the accepted interpretation of Islamic way of life or that of *tesettür* is not in this way. It is a fact that these people are enabled to shape their pattern of life or to decide whether they will espouse the will of God or that of the worldly concerns; however, they no longer give in supposedly vital demands of the sacred realm that transcend them. The available evidence suggests that wonders of the “disenchanted world” occupy their way of thinking and then accordingly their way of living more than transcendental concerns as many Qur’anic verses and hadith predict this process in the world life.

From an Islamic point of view, the depicted world of the new cadre of Muslim women in each chapter of this study identifies one of the biggest concerns of the Prophet for the ummah⁷⁸. This is because the attractiveness of the world is claimed to consummate the faith of a Muslim, which gradually causes him/her to be alienated from the religious concerns since The Prophet Muhammad states that “The things I am afraid of most for your sake (concerning what will befall you after me) is the pleasures and splendours of the world and its beauties which will be disclosed to you (*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, 544). What is implied in the hadith is that if a Muslim’s mind structure is not based on the Quran and hadiths, one cannot resist the temptation of the worldly indulgence. That is to say, one cannot live in accordance with rules of Islamic faith without maintaining the omnipresent Islamic infrastructure in every phase of their life. Therefore, the Quran reminds its believers:

⁷⁸ Muslim community; the followers of Prophet Muhammad

O mankind, indeed the promise of Allah is truth, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver.
(*Quran*, Fatır “Originator”, 35 : 5)

These facts denote that the tendency for worldly goods is very probable but still not appreciated since there are diverse sayings that underline not to count on the world and its “enchanting” tastes in the Islamic source of references. Muhsin Toprak, both a research scholar and a writer, draws attention to the negative side of the worldly matters in his article “Dini Hayatı Kemiren Tehlike:Dünyevileşme” (Gnawing Threat for Religious Life: Profanation)⁷⁹. He claims that social standpoints and thought patterns enable a negative side of excessive consumption and concentration on economic materialism to arouse in Muslims’ lives since by this way these people take the world as a goal rather than seeing it as a vehicle for the sake of servant hood and winning the hereafter with respect to the Islamic standpoint. This is because the amount of labour over worldly goods seems to overreach religious ones, which causes a decline in terms of a faithful servant hood “in the eyes of God” according to the Islamic perspective. The most striking hadith concerning this issue is: "Let the slave of Dinar and Dirham of Quantify and Khamisa (i.e. money and luxurious clothes) perish for he is pleased if these things are given to him, and if not, he is

⁷⁹Toprak, M. “Dini Hayatı Kemiren Tehlike: DÜNYEVİLEŞME”. Available online at: <http://www.yeniumit.com.tr/konular/detay/dini-hayati-kemiren-tehlike--dunyevilesme>. (last accessed on 20.10.2014).

displeased!"(Sahih Al-Bukhari, 137) The border drawn in hadith above is very rigid since the inclination for materialism connotes a very risky state in which a Muslim will be discarded due to his/her love for the material goods. Accordingly, the substantial point to emphasise here is that pious Muslim believers are supposed not to satisfy their needs with the ephemeral worldly possessions.

On the contrary, Ali Bardakoglu, the previous Turkish Religious Affair Administrator, interprets the profanation as equilibrium between the world and the hereafter by seeing the world as an important step for the life after death but not by disregarding the world on the basis of The Prophet appliances⁸⁰. In his words, caring for the worldly affairs bears another inclination since it signifies the orientation towards the world so that the glory, the reputation and the mercy of Islam reign over the world as the Prophet and his companions did. The discussion focuses on the question of what religiosity implies for a Muslim. Religiosity is consciousness in which a Muslim has to preserve that they are always under the contemplation of God in terms of the aforementioned point of view. On the basis of the evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that fashion conscious head-covering Muslim women need to question themselves whether they are in tune with the God's orders and expectancy upon them. To concretize this impressive fashionableness in the newly-formed habitus through this reading, these females are expected to ask

⁸⁰(2012). "İslam Dünyasında Dünyevileşme-2". Available online at: <http://www.hazargrubu.org/hazar-akademi/din/585-islam-dunyevilesme.html>. (last accessed on 20.06.2014).

themselves whether God complies with the way women express themselves in public through their attention-grabbing visual distinctiveness especially by considering the correspondent hadiths and verses of the Quran as a Muslim believer. That kind of internal revising can only be crystal clear in the mind when considered in terms of the hadiths and verses in the Quran discussed as evidence for this reasoning since shari'a is expected to be situated as the principal scale in Muslims' lives according to many Islamic theologians. Bardakoglu also introduces that the result of perceiving religion which is focused on symbols and visual scale and its correspondence with the world itself since visual perception and symbols are misleading so much that we do not feel the need to become a devotional believers. This evaluation actually accords with the whole situation of Muslim women in terms of fashion:

“Whoever will wear a dress for display or fame in the world, God will make him wear the dress of ignominy in the Hereafter.” (Abu Dawood, Clothing 24)

When one looks at photographs on Instagram or fashion magazines, probably the first word to define them is “exaggeration” since they mostly represent heavy make-up, bright colors, extravagant accessories and contrasting scarves or silk shawls, which all have been discussed in the previous chapters. One of the Islamic female intellectuals, Ayşe Yaşar Umutlu, denotes this situation as “fetishism” of covering

since they try to make themselves more attractive through Islamic fashion⁸¹. This interpretation also identifies a clothing style that just concerns corporeality yet more voguish image through exclusive clothing choice. However, the before mentioned hadith does not seem to validate such a view because presenting yourself with such high-toned outlook for the sake of conspicuousness is not highly rated in Islam. Though one can easily categorize the features of a fashionable Muslim lady from her appearance, what is worth analysing is whether their clothes are intended for ostentatious display or not. Keeping these females' own intention aside, a foreign look can anticipate such an intention by looking at their appearance, which was the case especially in the part "Restigmatization Within" of the first chapter that mentions about feeling the absolute need to display fashionable appearance especially when Muslim females meet fashionably covered ones in Erenkoy or on Bagdat Street. Hence, the objective of this warning in the light of the hadith above reminds the believers not to exhibit a sense of superiority through their distinguished clothing, which is one of the intriguing criticisms voiced for Islamic fashion ideal these days by many Islamic scholars, as well.

Daniel Bell's argument in favor of Bardakoglu's arguments presented above runs as follows "the modern cult of 'infinitely' remaking the human being is a debased

⁸¹Umutlu, A. "Örtü Fetişizmi ve Âlâ Dergi". Available online at: <http://www.bilgiagi.net/ortu-fetisizmi-ve-ala-dergi/64500/> . (last accessed on 20.06.2014).

understanding of what religious cultures have understood as the need for transcendence, which causes *a disconnection between a believer and his religion* though religion is the cultural system that, across time and space, has done the best job of giving symbolic expression to the human confrontation with finitude” (De la Fuente, 113; emphasis done by me). In Bell’s terms, modern obsession with fashion and constant desire for experimentation in this realm is a type of social amnesia that disconnects people from the sacred; therefore, it can be argued that the Islamic fashion ideal for the covered Muslim females in 2000s has caused the potential for being a pious and conscious believer to decrease by depriving them from its sacred concerns. All the observation in this study and the voguish depiction of the princesses as an ideal Muslim female figure in the Islamic fashion magazines corroborate the claim that rather than secularization, as religious symbols have lost their control over upon human psyche, what is actually experienced is a cultural process denoted as the “Great Profanization” (Ibid, 113). This process indicates the weakening of the sacred sensibilities an individual is supposed to ground her/his life on as Bell diagnoses the modern culture’s transformatory power of religion and leisure into a series of lifestyle choices and consumer “tastes”.

Then, is the new cadre of Muslim females who are aware of the competency in the “Islamic fashion ideal” that causes them to lose the sacred Islamic sensibilities which are supposed to form a life-affirming and constructive ethos in every realm of their

Islamic life till the end? To respond to this question in relation to the discussion on the body and spirit relation, it can be stated that they actually induce their bodies to become profane since their bodies are either implicitly or explicitly relieved from its spiritual concerns since they are attuned to beauty, elegant appearance rather than the religious responsibilities upon their bodies. Examining whether they gradually break their connection with the sacred or not is a difficult question for evaluation in this study; however, the general reaction to these kinds of warnings especially on social media when one tries to criticise their divergent form of covering is that “I can cover as much as listen to my nafs”⁸². Even this answer which is a defensive mechanism illustrates the underlying tendency they yield.

Different Islamic platforms also denounce latest Muslim females’ covering style as a major reason for this desecration process in the Islamic community. “Tohum [Seed]”⁸³ is an Islamic intellectual journal which is published by Religious Vocational High School Alumni Association for three months with its motto “Awakening...Just like a seed”. The first article welcoming the reader in the 150th volume devoted to “One said tesettür?” delineates fashion as something that absorbs the subcultures like a hurricane and ruins them like a dragon through the medium of the groups who do not notice what is the purpose of their actions since they lose their

⁸² the urge or power which push humans into material desires or mischief in Islamic terms

⁸³ See further in : <http://onder.org.tr/yayinlar>.

measure and essence (Otağ,8). The underlying argument against fashion is that it has transformed Muslim females not only into ‘the charm center’ but also into the street fashion models by taking them out of the protectiveness of Islamic rules though females are connoted as escrows of God in Islam (Ibid, 10). In other words, it is claimed that positioning the fashion as an authority for a female Muslim actually refers to a clash with the sacred realm, which has been implicitly and inwardly assumed to be embraced by the new cadre of Muslim females. Another critical voice in this journal belongs to Yıldız Ramazanoglu, a popular covered Muslim intellectual, who states that Muslim females become prominent to transform their bodies into a spectacle realm though *tesettür* has been expected to denote simplicity, humbleness, humility and spiritual profundity according to the shari’a (29).

In order to see the portrayal of the “head-covering” issue within public, “the Analytics of Degeneration” discusses different interpretations of *tesettür* in today’s world in the light of sociology. According to Meryem Atlas, there is no unique cause to explain the degeneration in Muslims’ lives; thus, the manifestation of degeneration in Islam should not be just the recent outlook of the covered Muslim females on Facebook or Instagram (55). However, it is a fact that there is an atypical formation for the exclusively fashionable head-covering practice especially through social media sources. To elaborate on the topic, many covered females follow Hulya Aslan who is a fashion editor of *Âlâ* magazine because she shares her personal fashion

choices on Instagram daily with the special references to each piece's brands which are mostly conservative haute couture boutique designs and world brand accessories. When looked from the perspective of Taqwa, invisibility as the most beautiful form of covering idealizes the Muslim female figure as obscure and invisible silhouette in Atlas's words as opposed to the recent case of the exorbitant form of covering adopted by the new cadre of Muslim females in public. Correspondingly, Atlas puts forward the difference between fashion and tesettür that fashion desires to concretise women as an entity that depends on its body while tesettür corresponds to weakening physical charm in such a way that women can reach prominence just with their own existence (Ibid, 56). It is worth reminding that her discussion confirms that Islam orders tesettür for women so as to make them visible comfortably in public in tunes with the essentials of covering practice but not to totally disregard themselves. However, whether that visibility has certain borders or not and whether they are flexible for change in the Islamic jurisprudence has been overlooked by the newly discovered and modernist lifestyle of Muslim females since 2000s.

RELIGIOUS LEGITIMATION WITHIN

Wherever the will to develop a new lifestyle arises, there is a way forward.

Rudolf Bahro

As Islamic fashion magazines' popular concept, beautiful lifestyle's central component is a new focus on the individual. Therefore, the underlined emphasis upon the self in the new lifestyle point out that there is a more urgent need to give meaning to the experiences of modern life and to the ultimate questions arising from exposure to the modern world (Leger,113). This reasoning is actually consistent with the fact that modern rationale requires the individualization of any belief. The reflection of this individualization can be examined in the status quo of the new cadre of Muslim females since they mostly prefer applying what they interpret within their "refreshed" or "modernized" Islamic borders. Religious modernity relieves the individual consciousness from the dominant codes of religious meaning that presents the symbolic armature for traditional societies in the form of collectively accepted norms and shared values (Ibid, 113). In other words, the religious authority lose its influence upon the discourses and the practices of Muslim due to the idealization of Islamic modernity in public space. However, what has been displayed so far in the potent habitus of modern Muslim women which is connoted as challenge for the sacred canopies of a traditional Muslim society through the new-fangled interpretation of the representation of their faith. The critics of the visuals in the social media and the magazines illustrate a break with religiously prescribed structures which have been supported with many hadiths and Qur'anic verses. The codes of meaning that bind these females in their effective habitus are generated by the deregulation of some of the religiously accepted norms since religion has become a matter of choice or preference in their modernist lifestyle. Therefore, what is shared in this realm as a

part of their self-interpretation is the religiously legitimated norms of everyday life and the individualization of the way they represent their faith. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann evaluates this situation as such “Religion evaporates upward in the modern world” (45). This is because the orientation of a modern man has been directed towards the loss of depth in religious consciousness, which causes religion to lose its status and being taken-for-granted according to these two scholars. Thus, the data gathered in the study suggests that these females lead a distinctive life with their “peculiarly modern form of religious manifestations” which is coined by Peter Berger in *Sacred Canopy* (130).

From the previously mentioned works, it is obvious to say that the modern form of religious personality is represented in various forms by the new cadre of Muslim females in 21st century. However, the modern perception starts functioning from the non-forbidden realm as the summary of the whole forms discussed in this study. This means that rather than the borders, they first work on the accepted rules since we generally see the beautification focuses firstly on the face and the feet, which are not conceived as mahram in Islamic law. As elaborated in chapter 2 in the light of the corresponding points of references from hadiths and the Quran, the form of tesettür they display does not totally correspond to the proper tesettür that has been acknowledged by the mainstream interpretation since they may let the hair being shown above their foreheads or we can see heavy make-up application on their faces

in many cases. When it comes to “normal” acts of these females in everyday life, a fashion conscious head-covering female strikes a pose in which she crosses her hands in a church as the wall behind her back is painted with two Christian priests. Under this photograph shared on Instagram, she writes a hashtag “what if something happens to me”⁸⁴ which refers that she is not totally sure about whether her act is appropriate or not in terms of Islamic principles. In another photograph that is situated in a Mexican restaurant, two women propose a toast with liquor-like drink in the cordial glasses probably without any alcohol in it (See figure 3.20 below). What takes attention here are the lady’s hashtags such as #downthehatch #oopsnowtheywillattackme #whocares #enjoyable which takes at least ninety-two likes by her followers. The comments below are generally about making fun of this situation by means of religious terms such as “We are in the three months”⁸⁵ Mrs..... ?” or “God forgive us”. In addition to these kinds of photographs on social media, *Âlâ* magazine also founded a social media site called as “*Âlâ* Lodge” in which followers are given the chance to discuss fashion and popular brands with their followers in addition to sharing their photos about their own styles.

⁸⁴ Her saying corresponds to “başıma bişe gelmiyecekse” in Turkish.

⁸⁵ Three holy months that end with Ramadan in Islam.



Figure 3.20

Moreover, this Islamic fashion magazine that is broadcasted with the motto “the magazine for stylish women” organised “*Âlâ* Fashion Party” just for females with another motto “Some things are just between girls” and “Are you ready for the biggest party ever?” in which a Turkish singer, Burcu Güneş and a belly dancer , Asena would take place, and the winner of the competition for the head-covering cover girl would be awarded with five thousand TL⁸⁶. In *Âlâ* Lodge, the followers are remarkably motivated with the possibility of enjoying the unfamiliar but the fashion-conscious head-covering Muslim females who prefer displaying a feminine portrait in such an exclusive and special party only for females. Consequently, though religion

⁸⁶ However, this plan had to be cancelled since the fashion editor of *Âlâ* magazine, who was the main broadcaster of this special event was seriously threatened due to this luxurious night out and its incompatible content in terms of Islamic principles. Some radical theologians sarcastically asked these ladies “Are you the Ummah of the Prophet who prefer patched clothes?” by accusing this magazine of abstracting the term veiling from being a religious phenomenon due to its reduction into the mob of the fashion. For more detailed information see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hWES76UxW8>.

continues to be relevant in terms of its basic motives, the exemplary cases given above show that the religious infrastructure the society is supposed to relate to is gradually being dismantled since these females are increasingly occupied with their modern identity in such a community rather than the expected pious one that has been defined in many hadiths and the Qur'anic verses. Here it is important to share Ali Bulaç's impressive argument about the perception of tesettür act in the modern times:

At this point, tesettür is not an object that covers the body but becomes a symbol that is composed of very tightly fitting pants and blouse. A woman's covering rules as 'a symbolic religiosity' while body rules as a trunk against the religion. However, no matter how unholy and impious clothing of the body is, even if it is against the Islamic law (in the Quran and hadiths or Islamic jurisprudence), it does not make them feel under pressure because of their consciousness since they have covered their hair⁸⁷.

As elaborated in the quotation above, the material used for covering the hair gives the sense of performing tesettür as a sacred duty in a way. The depicted portrait of a covered female figure above is also the case for most of the photographs shared on social media on these females' accounts. Nevertheless, when one warns them that there is something contradictory in their covering style, the answers are somehow

⁸⁷ Bulaç, A. (2014). "Muhafazakâr laik!". Available online at: http://www.zaman.com.tr/ali-bulac/muhafazakar-laik_2212833.html. (last accessed on 20.09.2014).

religiously legitimated in most of the cases. There are two kinds of legitimacy the interviewers gave; one side thinks that they can display what is expected from a Muslim that far while the other side thinks that they perform what the God asks them to do with their recently developed outer-look. Moreover, some of the fashion conscious females on Instagram also emphasize that they do not claim with their appearance that they are the best example of “proper Muslim female dressing” in terms of Islamic principles. When a lot of harsh criticism upon the first volumes of Islamic fashion magazines was made concerning the degeneration of Islam by the Islamic world, *Âlâ*’s first Art Director Esra Sezis affirmed that the notion of Islamic fashion contradicts the ideal Muslim female models in the Islamic history who are defined as the symbols of taqwa in the Islamic history:

"[The magazine] is only meant to be a helping guide for conservative women -- where can they shop, what clothes can they combine,". "[I]n short, there cannot be Islamic fashion; just details." (August 20 interview with the Turkish daily Sabah)⁸⁸

However, it seems far beyond just details since the cover photographs of those magazines are so similar to that of Vogue and Elle in terms of stance, the positions of eyes and hands the cover girls display and that of the fashion conscious Muslim

⁸⁸ Letsch, C. (2011). “Turkish Women's Magazine Searches for Intersection of Islam and Fashion”. Available online at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/11/turkish-womens-magazine-searches-for-intersection-of-islam-and-fashion/248804/>. (Last accessed on 20.09.2014).

females do for their Instagram accounts. This is because their poses and outer appearance become much more detailed, attractive and glowing; thus mostly feminine. The other impressive answer that these females give when they are criticised about their stylish covering is that one cannot know the other's faith and no one cannot judge them except for Allah by referring to one of the Quranic verses which shows that only God can know what is in the heart of a believer:

O you who have believed,.... and do not say to one who gives you [a greeting of] peace "You are not a believer," aspiring for the goods of worldly life; for with Allah are many acquisitions. You [yourselves] were like that before; then Allah conferred His favor upon you, so investigate. Indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, Acquainted. (Quran , An-Nisa 4:94)

The other thought-provoking response is that they do not see themselves in *tesettür* but just covered, which suggests that they just prefer covering clothes in addition to their own interpretation of head covering⁸⁹. According to the dictionary of religious terms, *tesettür* which means hiding behind or in something with a special reference to “ziynet” parts of the body which are compulsory to cover according to Islamic law actually implies not just physical covering but also the notions such as privacy,

⁸⁹(2013). “ESRA SEZİŞ ” BEN DE KENDİMİ TESETTÜRLÜ OLARAK GÖRMÜYÖRUM.BEN KAPALIYIM”. Available online at: <http://www.endadergi.com/esra-sezis-ben-de-kendimi-tesetturlu-olarak-gormuyorum-ben-kapaliyim/>. (last accessed on 20.01.2015).

modesty, morality and sense of embarrassment ⁹⁰. Thus, what draws attention in this statement is that the female does not fully oblige herself to totally perform the expected disposition in tune with Islamic principles; in other words, she both accepts what is missing in her tesettür and evades herself from the severe criticism concerning her covering style. It can be speculated that tesettür gains representational meaning in which its different norms are identified in tune with the requirements of the modern world and this results in the formation of social differentiation in the collective identity of Muslim females in the Islamic world. This is because one cannot find a certain relation between religiosity and tesettür practice in this context. Consequently, regarding the first group, the data shown for the legitimacy seems to suggest that they are actually aware of their condition; however, some of them directly express it while some others reasonably attempt to eliminate the criticism with the special references to the Quran.

The other legitimation is thoroughly based on Islamic verses. When asked about why they generally prefer luxury brands or presenting such an opulent look, they immediately present religious evidence as such:

"Allah loves to see the effects of His blessing on His slave." (Tirmidhi, 2819]

⁹⁰ Available online at:
<https://kurul.diyaret.gov.tr/SoruSor/DiniKavramlarSozlugu.aspx#.VJHsTHvjXP>. (last accessed on 20.11.2014).

“Verily, Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty. Arrogance means rejecting the truth and looking down on people.” (Sahih Muslim, 91)

Lastly “O people, Allaah is Good and does not accept anything but that which is good” (Sahih Muslim, 1015). .

Accordingly, as a servant of God who is bestowed with financial potential, they believe that they need to display it with their outfit as a token of thanksgiving to their God. Although these hadiths seem to suggest that a believer is required to show what s/he is financially bestowed and Allah only anticipates to see nice and appealing things on a believer, the beginning of these hadiths refer to a contrasting point with this type of legitimation:

No one will enter Paradise who has an atom's weight of pride in his heart." A man said, "What if a man likes his clothes to look good and his shoes to look good?" He said, "Allah is beautiful and loves beauty. Pride means denying the truth and looking down on people." (Sahih Muslim, 131)

The available evidence seems to suggest that Muslim believers surely need to become the symbol of beauty and goodness but they need to exhibit that portrait through their disposition and attitudes in public. Moreover, a lot of verses in the Quran refer to the destroyed societies due to their hyper-interest in outer appearance and adornment in

accordance with their wealth⁹¹ since what is essentially glorified as a pious believer is the one who do his/her best to obey the orders of God, to abstain from His prohibition and to abide by whatever He asks His followers⁹². In other words, it is an absolute fact that God loves seeing the effects of His blessing upon his servant but He does not like its being taken into extremes since related hadith also identifies that wretchedness, which refers to letting oneself go and not caring the one's clothing, comes from one's faith (Abu Dawud, 4161). Moreover, the ones who pay high attention to the beauty of images, forms and outer appearances which Allah profoundly condemns in the Quran by calling them as hypocrites (Munafiqun in Arabic) in the Surah Al-Munafiqun:

And when you see them, their forms please you, and if they speak, you listen to their speech. [They are] as if they were pieces of wood propped up - they think that every shout is against them. They are the enemy, so beware of them. May Allah destroy them; how are they deluded? [*Al-Qur'an*, Al-Munafiqun 63:4]

⁹¹ Two different translation of the same verse: "How many a generation have We destroyed before them, who were more imposing in respect of gear and outward seeming!" ; And how many a generation have We destroyed before them who were better in possessions and [outward] appearance? (The Holy Qur'an, Surah Maryam 19:74)

⁹² Available online at: <http://www.ihya.org/kavram/kavramlar-ansiklopedisi/dt-1183.html>. (last accessed on 20.10.2014).

The findings based upon the observations and readings in this study identify the conflicting points in the dissenting legitimization forms modern fashionably covered Muslim females have generated. In other words, showy appearance with good posture and beautified clothing styles in *tesettür* have been celebrated by this group of females in many ways; however, the attributed points they use for justification do not actually correspond to what is really signified in the actual sacred sayings used for the sake of religious legitimization.

In another substantial hadith concerning this issue, it is stated that the thing the prophet is afraid of most for his followers' sake, is the worldly blessings which Allah will bring forth to them and this blessing connotes the pleasures of the world (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 435)⁹³. In fact, this hadith provides confirmatory evidence for the question why the Muslim believers are expected to portray the humbleness and modesty in the world since the pleasures of this world is connoted as something negative for Muslim believers' faith and accordingly their position in the life after death. However, the orientation towards the worldly pleasures not only in these magazines but also in lifestyles exhibited on the social media has been critiqued by many Islamic scholars. This situation is addressed by Muslim preachers as "the apprehension of the world without the hereafter".

⁹³ **435:** Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri: Allah's Apostle said, "The thing I am afraid of most for your sake, is the worldly blessings which Allah will bring forth to you." It was said, "What are the blessings of this world?" The Prophet said, "The pleasures of the world."

To exemplify, *Aysha* magazine runs a conflicting marketing strategy that provides its buyers with a chance of Umrah with its motto “*Aysha* makes you win; we send our eight readers to go on Umrah; special guidance and counselling for women included”. It is broadcasted as an invitation for the holy journey since Umrah is one of the best ways to respond favourably to the invitation⁹⁴. This example also confirms another legitimacy process because a significant religious component is utilized for the sake of worldly goods’ celebration. In Berger’s terms, they aim to appropriate a system of religiously connoted aspirations and interests by exposing a radical challenge to Muslim females’ “sacred canopy” that actually exists for the sake of protecting them from the whole possible uneasiness in the modern public life. Along similar lines, Bardakoglu develops the claim that there remains a big realm within our religiosity when we focus just on symbols, forms and visuals; thus, we actually separate our lives for the sake of this realm by saying that “Oh my God, we have made the best; thus, leave this realm with me”⁹⁵.

All in all, the whole religious legitimacy these females indicate is the enunciation of their voguish styling in tesettür since they believe that what is exhibited is “normal and modern” form of tesettür as a corresponding response to the modern world. Thus, they actually assert that they perform this recent profile of stylish covering as a token

⁹⁴ Responding favorably to invitation is highly appreciated in many hadiths.

⁹⁵ (2012). “İslam Dünyasında Dünyevileşme-2”. Available online at: <http://www.hazargrubu.org/hazar-akademi/din/585-islam-dunyevilesme.html>. (last accessed on 20.06.2014).

for particular aesthetic tastes which signals the cultivation of a modern self in this context as opposed to the other group of Muslim females who promote a more austere and homogenous collective self-image.

The expansion of new possible ways of looking Muslim is the result of overriding interest with fashion ideals rather than signaling the sense of submission to the Creator through tesettür as a component of collective identity of Muslim females. New conservative yet fashionable thus modern reconfiguration of sartorial choices is based on their individual styles, which differ from the other visual portrayals in public that belong to the covered or the uncovered. Emma Tarlo in the article “Islamic Cosmopolitanism” writes that well-chosen and elegant pieces for their veiling is a total challenge to the sartorial expectations which are symbolized with pure and almost sacred aura a Muslim lady should represent with her tesettür (146). Although their distinctive clothing and covering styles have been firmly condemned by many Islamic intellectuals, these females are persistent in depending on religious evidences for their particular appearance. Accordingly, they seem to keep their connection with the sacred realm by means of their “symbolic” tesettür and, legitimating hadiths and the Quranic verses. However, what is culturally and materially processed in their new lifestyle is profanation which corresponds to impoverishment of the sacred potentials in a “conservative” lifestyle according to Muslim theologians. These females claim that they do not need to show others that

they are good Muslims but they feel the need of doing so just towards God so the outer appearance seems not be the first way of showing their faith towards the Creator.

If anything goes, does anything really matter? . . . It is this process that we can identify at work in what people wear nowadays. If people can wear whatever they want . . . then it matters very little what people wear . . . Without norms . . . there can be little in the way of a system of values or meaning at work in what people wear. And so the meaning of clothing flattens out, it empties, it fades.

Andrew Hill

CONCLUSION

The recent advent of popular “Islamic fashion”, its transgressive⁹⁶ effect upon Muslim females’ discourses and practices, the counter-arguments of Islamic intellectuals, and the supportive hadiths and verses in the Quran concerning the ongoing debate of this issue have been analyzed in this thesis. Considering the Islamic references as source of guidance, it is probable that this recent formation in the understanding of tesettür may lead to the corrosion of the sacred duty for Muslim females that is supposed to be devoutly embodied in tune with the requirements of the age. This study tried to present a qualitative analysis of the changing clothing preferences of Muslim females through media stereotypes of Muslim appearances and its reflection upon their attitudes on the wider social network. The considerable

⁹⁶ This adjective is used to identify how Islamic borders appear to be disregarded in terms of Islamic law concerning Muslim females.

shift in their way of life was articulated through the new interpretations of Islamic sartorial norms, which mark Muslim covered ladies as “visibly Muslim” (Tarlo 2010). Thus, this study tried to explore the new connotations attached on the covered outlook of a Muslim female since it has been observed that Muslim females in 21th century increasingly prefer expressing their identity, perspectives, standpoint for the world and faith through their style and dressing in *tesettür*. The main concern of this study was to point out this complex array of social, aesthetic, personal and political incentives behind the idealization of chic and elegant appearance for Muslim females that are on display both in the Erenkoy district, Bagdat street and on the media including Islamic fashion magazines and social media accounts. Universal blueprint of the beauty perception, clothing style, becoming trendy and thus fashionable are contextualized through their newly-discovered Islamic forms in the magazines *Aysha*, *Aliyyül-Âlâ*, *Hayyat*. The “modern” females of these magazines are not only represented with the stereotyped style of clothes, beauty perception but also delineated with the same kind of adjectives like stylish, self-assured, well-educated, independent, notable and prestigious. The ambivalent interplay between the ideals of Muslimism and of modernity cause multiplicity of the paradoxical visuals appear on the social media accounts which can be connoted not only private since it belongs to an individual but also public since it is open to everyone. The clash between the essence of *tesettür* and the voguish appearance of Muslim head-covering females penetrates into the everyday life of Muslim females as a response to the hyper-modernized image of *tesettür*.

The study has sought to know what kind of image has been gradually defined in these fashion magazines and how the new manifestation has been articulated on the social media and in the public. Accordingly, the study was also set out to explore the concept of Islamic fashion so as to clarify the reasons behind the meaning Muslim females allocated and circumscribed on this concept in their lives. As attempted to elaborate in the main chapters, the whole study focused on whether the ideal of chicness or modern image through head-covering was as to refashion / modernize Islam or to adopt it to the modern way of appearance. Thus, there was a need to resituate and redefine the *tesettür* performance in the Islamic fashion context deployed by new cadre of Muslim females and those aesthetic authorities from whom these females have been motivated with an incredible variety of sartorial strategies.

In order to attain this goal, my concern in the first part of the thesis was the remarkable alteration in Muslim female selves. For Featherstone, in our modern consumer culture that was adopted by Muslim females in this case, a new conception of the self has emerged— namely, the self as performer—which places great emphasis upon appearance, display, and the management of impressions rather than duty... and morals... Increasingly, the self is defined primarily in aesthetic terms (cited in Negrin, 9). Thus, what matters in this context was actually how one looks and what kind of impression they mark in the public rather than what they do or achieve in terms of Islamic duties. As opposed to the defined features of modern

Turkish women in secular modernization process, new wealthy, religiously conservative middle class or upper middle class has been exhibiting a pleasing, modern, tasteful look to denote their new-founded status through multi-layered outfits of visible Muslimism. Fashionable forms of *tesettür* for the elevated fashion consciousness of the Islamic bourgeoisie who prefers representing an affluent form of Islamic covering style have been prompted with the sparkling visual materials of these magazines and of the regularly shared voguish outfit photographs on Instagram as opposed to Islamic dress marked with its “non-modernity”. What has been offered in the Islamic fashion magazines and on the social media by the aesthetic authorities of the conservative chic cadre are a refined urban taste of “normal” modern world’s branded garments both in the world and in Islamic fashion industry. Therefore, there is an alternative definition of fashion for the covered women in which they wish to be “modern, thus progressive rather than being called backward, being part of the normal contemporary world, and having an elegant and aesthetically pleasant appearance” (Sandıkcı and Ger 2010, 29). In other words, the image they try to show via the Islamic fashion was actually a hybridization of the Islamic values with a secular modern aesthetic thought. At this point, it was prominent to remember that the consumerist ideology has been integrated within the concept of Islamic fashion by celebrating the desire and the need for the consumption of fashionable clothing as a means of displaying both modern and fashionable body figure for the Muslim females. The transformation of the head-covering woman which has been well-groomed with fashionable clothes confirming to the trends of each season was

presented as an alternative formulation of modernization process into their lifestyles that have been reflected into their clothing style. Correlatively, new kinds of cultural fashion gained importance in this context of contemporary conservative culture. Newly formulated celebration cakes for the pilgrimages and other sacred visits or first-covering act and the new popularity of “Islamic” non-alcoholic bar-café like spaces such as Huqqa manifested the dominating effect of in-betweenness in their popular life-style. This new acculturation entails individual reconstruction of attitudes towards religion by glossing over some of the acknowledged interpretations and morals of Islamic culture since the mainstream standpoint cannot make sense of these trendy dimensions of consumerism. The distinct understanding of enjoying the worldly life with the new forms of enjoyments in “halal” ways has suggested that there has been a prominent emphasis upon the popular saying “carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero”⁹⁷. The new cadre of Muslim females attempted to combine a different rationality with Islamic way of life since the main incentive in the variety of these new fashionable cultural constructions has been to enjoy the day as much as possible in contrast to the Islamic way of living for the sake of a better hereafter as underlined in many hadith proposed in the chapters.

After the construction of the framework and the contemporary state of Muslim females, especially in the second chapter I tried to show the tension between the new

⁹⁷ “seize the day, trusting as little as possible in the next day” which is from a poem by the poet Horace in 23 BC. Available online at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carpe_diem. (last accessed on 02.01.2015).

cultivation of female appearance (the decorative embellishment conducted for Muslim females) and a pious/devout Islamic point of view produced by Muslim intellectuals since the overvalue put upon the ultra-glamorous look by means of various adornment techniques were criticized as projection of alluring but not devout Muslim subjects in the contemporary Muslim society. The idea that Islamic fashion magazines and the social media network always feature beauty and elegance concern through feminine covered appearance has signified the transition from the piety to the body which was connoted as accessible, visible and thus non-confidential. Hence, the second chapter of thesis tried to shed a light upon the altered circumscription of the private parts of body, namely *ziynet*⁹⁸ in Islam, in the contemporary ultra-modern Muslim society. This attempt was made concrete by means of common example cases from garnishing, perfuming female body to nail polish, henna and professional make-up on the social media as a manifestation of the related hadith for “clothed but naked”⁹⁹ females in the future followers of the Prophet Muhammad. Regardless of the symbolically promiscuous tendency of such beautifying sessions, the measurements of being a devout Muslim lady in *tesettür* have been considerably transgressed in the light of crucial hadiths and Qur’anic verses shown in the chapter. To put it differently, *tesettür* has been transposed from privacy to publicness by means of social media and the vivid content of Islamic fashion magazines since the new

⁹⁸ See the chapter two for its discussion in detail.

⁹⁹ Muslim, Clothing and Adornment , 3971

Muslim female portrait has been defined upon the performativity of female body in terms of elegance, beauty, chicness and thus stylishness.

What this reasoning suggests is that it is not possible to found a relationship between religiosity and *tesettür* act for this case since, as many interviewers also implied, being covered within the aforementioned trendy norms has been connoted as a token of purity and glamour for the bride-to-be Muslim females. The important thing was the idea that Muslim females have been experiencing a process which starts from urbanization and goes through ‘profanation’ as Giddens also identifies the troubles in high modernity;

Under the conditions of high modernity, the body has become a self-reflexive project, integral to our sense of who we are. While in pre-modern societies, modifications and adornments of the body were governed by traditional, ritualized meanings, the body in modernity has been secularized and is more frequently treated as a phenomenon to be fashioned as an expression of an individual’s identity, rather than in accordance with some traditionally given system of meaning. In contemporary culture, we have become responsible for the design of our own bodies (cited in Negrin, 9-10).

The new rationality that focused on the cultivation of the perfect Muslim female body performance in the public space was one of the crucial key points to understand why stylish dressing has become such an important issue for Muslims and a major topic of media tools in this context.

The third chapter took the process of the profanation in the divergent lifestyle of Muslim females as a mechanism that resulted in debased forms of Islamic practices with the new “Islamic” configurations of what the secular world had idealized. One of the crucial points in the last chapter was the irresistible urge to defiantly assert the newfound Muslim female identity on a social network while labelling this identity as a modern person by means of individual fashion sense. The adverse effects of the “modern” concept marked upon these conservative females since 2000s were underlined by considering this formation as refashioning of “Islamic” modernity that has been conducted upon the clothing preferences of the females as the republican modernity project had been carried out upon the female body, as well. For that reason, it was argued that Islam underwent a transformation which led to superficial configuration of Islam in response to the highly-esteemed modernity ideal within this exclusive habitus. That is to say, what has been celebrated through the process of Islamic but modern Muslim female production was to pay excessive attention upon appearance of being a Muslim woman. To elaborate on this reasoning, likewise the head-covering signifies fulfillment of the requirements for perfect Muslimism from

the uncovered ones' point of view, partial covering of the female body appeared to be assumed as completion of the identified modern Muslim female. Since this context took the performance of *tesettür* into account as elegant, stylish and pretty appearance in addition to the diverse adornment techniques for feminine allure. This situation is basically summarized by Giddens as such:

The limitations of the postmodern aestheticization of the self, where the fashioning of one's appearance is taken as an end in itself rather than as a vehicle for expressing one's values and beliefs (31)

The performativity of the aesthetic body in *tesettür* opposed Göle's concept concerning 1980's Muslim females "personality not femininity" and resulted in metaphorically "modern yet profane Muslim females" in the public space. This fact was associated with a break with the sacred realm because it was generally pointed out that their actions were motivated not by the accepted Islamic rules but by the pleasures of the worldly life by the Islamic world. At this point, what was always kept in mind was the stated hadiths' warnings upon the splendors and beauties of the world which was claimed to be disclosed to the ultramodern chic Muslim females. Accordingly, the studio shootings of Islamic fashion magazines with the foreign models for "Islamic chicness" and the excessively marked media stereotypes of

attractive Muslim appearances through new sartorial fashion on Instagram could be illustrated as the outputs of the aforementioned inclination upon this- worldliness.

What gave the twist to this standpoint that had been grounded on the debasement of Islamic ideals was the variety of the religious legitimacies for the justification of what these females have achieved in the public space through the media tools. Hence, overly elaborate striking challenges into the sacred realm were assessed in the consideration of correspondent hadiths and the Quranic verses which were also utilized by Muslim females for the legitimacy. As performers, Muslim females were also in apprehension in the face of discrediting and disapprovals of Muslim intellectuals and the other pious Muslim community in the public arena. However, such disapprovals and discrediting seem to be disregarded on a large scale or attempted to be refuted in the frame of the religious legitimacies based on the Quran and hadiths. Muslim females did not refrain from the exposure of feminine corporeal expression on Instagram or on Islamic fashion magazines by being able to “play it cool”¹⁰⁰ with counter-arguments based upon the Islamic facts. To put it differently, new social practices in the newly-constructed habitus of ultra-modern females were tried to be justified by using Islamic claims like “Verily, Allah is beautiful and He loves beauty” and “Allah loves to see the effects of His blessing on His *kul*.” (Sahih Muslim, 91; Tirmidhi, 2819).

¹⁰⁰ The phrase used by Uğur Kömeçoğlu (2001)

All these descriptions and the way of thinking these females follow lend support for what Lucy Sargisson elaborately writes about founding a utopia like “Heaven on Earth”. Transgressive utopianism is defined as intentionally and deliberately unreachable and unattainable and internally subversive since it arises from discontent and attempts creative imagining of how things might be better (Sargisson 2000: 2-3). The context in this study also “transgress, negates and even, implicitly or explicitly, weakens the spiritual ideals” of Islam in most of the before mentioned cases since they attempt to generate issues and space in which some newly discovered and brand new forms of being a Muslim lady occur with new secularist ideals such as fashion, modern and elegant appearance, “well-dressed-not-depressed” and “outfit-of-the-day” hashtags on the social media (Ibid, 5). Moreover, the data yielded by this study provides convincing evidence that an alternative reality is founded through stretching the conventions of the Muslim female portrait so that it forms the representation of the world from another “Islamic” perspective with their contra popular assumptions about tesettür in their potent habitus (Ibid, 7). This is because the acts and the sayings of both the conservative Muslim fashion designers and the fashion idols of the head-covering Muslim females on Instagram indicate that they gesture towards an alternative way of living as a head-covering Muslim female in 21st century. This fact causes them to lead a subversive life in terms of Islamic system and its values in which they are expected to be guided and governed.

Considering details of this study, there is a new formation to make Muslim females to engage in attaining and maintaining “the fashionable body portrait” with a set of instructions on how to wear garments and accessories in order to represent a glamorous “covered” look for *tesettür* as a sacred duty. In Sargisson’s words, this recently developed formation aims to change the status quo of gendered reality of Muslim females by means of provoking them to think differently about the notified outer look of a Muslim female, which actually points out the transgressive function of the utopian way of thinking in the development of Islamic fashion.

Islamic fashion magazines and the extensive usage of social media network are components of new forms of public visibility that Muslim females have acquired in the last fifteen years. This delineated process needs to be seen as new life style formation for Muslim females as a performative process which has a specific corporeality and spatiality, and a peculiar perspective on world life in 21st century Turkey. The design of such an Islamic way of life seems to be hybridized with secular culture since as stated in the chapters with much evidence; the result is not totally authentic but hybridized female visibility for the covered Muslim females in 2000s. Moreover, Instagram and Islamic fashion magazines bring *tesettür* together with an emancipatory publicness since religious boundaries for the expression of *tesettür* in the presence of all others have been cancelled out as opposed to the Islamic principles. Thus, these media channels can be connoted as the prime mover of the

modernist Islamic sociability since this kind of unbounded publicness displayed in this realm cannot be identified with the acknowledged Islamic lifestyle deduced from the Islamic sources. The main reason for Islamic actors to value new embodiments and accordingly “modernist” performative repertoires is that they want to try different public behavior and actions, everything from appearance, dress codes and styles to new forms of sociabilities. It is a matter of readapting, testing, reacting and mostly crossing the taken-for-granted Islamic limits. (Komecoglu 2001, 273). This is because the photographs (on Instagram, in fashion magazines or in the popular public spaces elaborated in the chapters) attempt to discover female body behind tesettür, of which ultimate aim is to hide and to preserve the female bodylines and curves from the public gaze. This fact also leads to the normalization of such a charming form of being in “tesettür” in the public. As a result, it is possible to suggest that following the Islamic fashion ideals has been converted into a genuine engagement since it means much more than a hobby or enjoyment for Muslim females in this newly-formed visual and material culture.

The readers of these magazines and the followers of the conservative aesthetic authorities on Instagram as a modern individual are asked to become role players who produce an even performance every time since appearance, gesture and bodily demeanor start to be taken as expressions of self (Featherstone, 28). In order to be included within this standardized society, “the performative self” forces the body to

adapt itself to what is ascribed as the standard of beauty and body-esteem. Following this argumentation, we can say that these media tools actually transmit the values of the secular world into the “conservative” realm. As underlined by Göle, the secular self is defined as “a set of bodily practices to be learned, rehearsed, and performed, ranging from ways of dressing (and undressing), talking and socializing with men to acting in public” (2010b, 48). When we look at the portraits of the Muslim “covered” women depicted on the media in terms of not only outer appearance but also the way of life and thinking, these modern but “conservative” women actually familiarize or habituate their performative selves to the principles of the secular self. Much more importantly, the habitations of the secular are not transmitted implicitly but imposed upon the bodies as a must of the modernity process (48). Thus, what is stated as a performative self since the beginning is already accustomed to the assimilation of the real self into the secular one due to the acculturation process conducted by the modernity project.

In this light, it is possible to state that these women are now familiarize their performative selves with the rules of how to become a secular self by means of the inscribed meaning upon their bodies under the influence of the modern body decoration techniques proposed by these media tools. In other words, the excluded bodies of the modernity project are now transported into the center of the newly-formulated modern but conservative culture. However, they try to achieve this by making “what is private turn into a public” which has been stated as a crucial signifier

of the modern consumer society by Baudrillard and Arendt (Norris, 458). Captivated by the consumerist point of view which has been mediated by the endless consummation of objects, the content of these media tools has made what was constructed as a private object in Islam “explicit” by firstly having it molded by the beautification process modernity project proposes and then by displaying it in different “costumes” which have been constructed as the newly-designed covering clothes. This kind of self-fashioning enables the formation of a “secular but exclusive and potent habitus” in such a Muslim culture which have been exposed to a series of changes that have been promoted as a new way of life by the modern bodily decorations. The articles emphasizing the responsibilities ascribed to Muslim women in Islamic fashion magazines, or the sharing of some hadiths and verses in the Quran by fashion-conscious conservative designers or hyper-fashion conscious women on Instagram appear to remind the Islamic principles. Nevertheless, the fostered body decoration in all means for a Muslim female through the media tools constitutes a new more visible exterior of an invisible interior by setting a play between the public self (decorated body, skin) and the relationship between the self and the habitus (Craik, 154).

The literature analysis conducted in this study indicates that the Islamic fashion magazines can be considered as “the Vogue” for the covered, as coined and strongly supported by the foreign western media, thanks to the ongoing transformations of Islamic dress practices in major cosmopolitan centers of Istanbul. Since the new form

of Muslim female portrait seems to be limited to the covering of the hair and of some parts of the body with either skinny or flamboyant fabric as opposed to accepted mainstream interpretation of tesettür. The contemporary dress codes of Muslim female fashionableness combining conservative values with high fashion and beauty ideals can be shown as one of the best demonstrations for how body is used to form a specific culture which is based on Western aesthetic ideal of femininity within this context. Though fashion and Islam are believed not to take place in the same place for Muslim intellectuals and theologians, we see their “perfect” combination in these magazines and on the social media network by emphasizing the radical shift from a localized Islamic aesthetics to a more cosmopolitan style of Muslim female clothing which has been modified by the universal adornment of female body through the alluring products of fashion system.

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