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THE COMPARISON OF THE MODERNIZATION PROCESS IN JAPAN  
WITH THAT IN TURKEY BY MEANS OF ATTIRE AND ETIQUETTE

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JAPON MODERNLEŐME SÜRECİNİN TÜRK MODERNLEŐME SÜRECİYLE KIYAFET  
VE ADAB-I MUAŐERET AÇISINDAN MUKAYESESİ.

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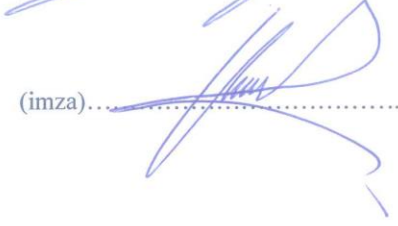
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	iii
Table of contents .....	iv
List of figures .....	vi
Abstract .....	vii
Özet .....	vii
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Methodology, Layout and Research question.....	1
1.2 Politics of Clothing.....	2
<b>2. JAPANESE MODERNIZATION</b>	
2.1 Pre-modern Japanese Society: Tokugawa Period (1603-1867) .....	7
2.1.1 Traditional Japanese Dressing .....	9
2.2 Modern Japan .....	12
2.2.1 Meiji Restoration (1868-1912) .....	12
2.2.2 The Modernization Process .....	13
2.3 Wardrobe Modernity in Japan .....	16
2.3.1 New codes of clothing and grooming .....	16
2.3.2 New codes of etiquette ( <i>Reigi</i> ) .....	22
<b>3. TURKISH MODERNIZATION</b>	
3.1 Ottoman Empire (1299-1922) .....	27
3.1.1 Traditional Ottoman Dressing .....	28
3.2 Modern Turkey .....	35
3.2.1 The birth of the Republic of Turkey (1920-1923) .....	35
3.2.2 Reforms of Modernization .....	36
3.3 Wardrobe Modernity in Turkey .....	37
3.3.1 New codes of clothing for men .....	38
3.3.2 New codes of clothing for women .....	42
3.3.3 New codes of etiquette ( <i>Adab-ı Muâşeret</i> ) .....	47

<b>4.</b>	<b>COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WARDROBE MODERNITY IN TURKISH AND JAPANESE CONTEXTS</b>	
4.1	Geographic location and national identity .....	52
4.2	Cultural heritage .....	55
4.3	Religion .....	57
4.4	Leadership characteristics and the display of the civilized image.....	61
4.5	A break with the past / Self-defense concerns .....	63
4.6	Women’s visibility in society .....	65
4.7	Clothes as symbols and eclectic dressing .....	67
4.8	Education levels .....	71
<b>5.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>73</b>
	<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>79</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 2.1</b>	<b>Three Japanese women</b>	<b>.....11</b>
<b>Figure 2.2</b>	<b>Imperial Family</b>	<b>.....17</b>
<b>Figure 2.3</b>	<b>The new bow</b>	<b>.....23</b>
<b>Figure 3.1</b>	<b>An idealized image of Turkish women</b>	<b>.....31</b>
<b>Figure 3.2</b>	<b>Images of four brothers</b>	<b>.....42</b>
<b>Figure 4.1</b>	<b>Western at work, Japanese at home</b>	<b>.....69</b>

## **Abstract**

After the emperor Mutsu Hito gained power in 1868, Japan underwent a series of reforms which we call the Meiji Restoration that changed the political, economic and social landscape. During this process, the country transformed from an agrarian country to a thriving manufacturing one, from an isolationist island to a world power. Western science and the Western forms of government were adopted as well as the Western attire and etiquette, the latter being the concern of the first part of this thesis.

Mustafa Kemal was a general who founded the Turkish Republic out of the ashes of Ottoman Empire in 1923. Under his guidance, the regime turned to the West and implemented a series of political, economic, social, and religious reforms which aimed to achieve a secular nation-state. The second part deals with the Westernization of the Turkish wardrobe which was among these reforms.

The concluding part ventures to analyze Japan and Turkey comparatively, in the ways they proceeded along their projects of modernization, by focusing on their renewed wardrobes and codes of etiquette. This thesis examines how the two countries in question offer significant parallels in some aspects of their modernization processes yet differ hugely in some others.

## Özet

1868'de Japonya tahtına oturan İmparator Mutsuhito, Meiji Restorasyonu'nu başlattı. Ülkesini dışa kapalı, feodal bir orta çağ adasından örnek aldığı Batılı devletler seviyesine çıkarmak için politik, ekonomik ve sosyal birçok değişime gitti. Değişime gidilen konulardan biri de, bu tezin ilk bölümünü oluşturan kılık kıyafet ve adab-ı muaşeret idi.

Mustafa Kemal, 1923'te Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun küllerinden yeni bir Cumhuriyet kurdu. Yeni rejim, laik bir ulus devleti hedefleyen bir dizi politik, ekonomik, sosyal ve dini reforma imza attı. Tezin ikinci bölümü bu reformlardan Türk gardırobunun batılılaştırılması meselesine odaklanmaktadır.

Son bölüm ise Türk ve Japon modernleşme süreçlerinin kılık kıyafet ve adab-ı muaşeret konularında hangi noktalarda farklılık, hangi noktalarda benzerlik gösterdiğinin karşılaştırmalı analizini yaparak, nedenlerini ortaya koymaktadır.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Methodology, Layout and Research question**

Herewith, in this thesis, I venture to investigate the sartorial modernization of Japan and Turkey, by providing a comparative view. Japanese and Turkish modernization projects both on separate and comparative basis are, indeed, not understudied subjects of study. Nevertheless, the two counties' wardrobe modernization processes have not yet been scholarly studied on a comparative basis. This very thesis will hopefully provide a noteworthy novelty to the relevant literature.

The research question of this thesis is as follows: "How does the modernization process of Japan compare with that of Turkey by means of wardrobe and etiquette?" Throughout the study, I conducted literature review as a research method.

The first chapter of this thesis ventures to explore how, throughout history, clothing functions as a symbolic instrument. It further investigates- in attempt to provide a general view to the politics of clothing- how clothing laws have been used by rulers, or why they were implemented at the first place.

The second chapter of the thesis aims to explore the series of reforms that was implemented after the emperor Mutsu Hito gained power in 1868, which we call the Meiji Restoration. During these reforms that changed the political, economic and social landscape, the country transformed from an agrarian

country to a thriving manufacturing one, from an isolationist island to a world power. Western science and the Western forms of government were adopted as well as the Western attire and etiquette, the latter being the main focus of this chapter.

The third chapter studies the story of Turkish modernization process, and sets forth how under Mustafa Kemal's guidance, the regime turned to the West and implemented a series of political, economic, social, and religious reforms which aimed to achieve a secular nation-state, again by taking the sartorial modernization at the center of interest.

The fourth chapter ventures to analyze Japan and Turkey comparatively, in the ways they proceeded along their projects of modernization, by focusing on their renewed wardrobes and codes of etiquette. This chapter, as well the concluding one, supplies the reader with an examination on how the two countries in question offer significant parallels in some aspects of their modernization processes, yet, differ hugely in some others.

## **1.2 Politics of Clothing**

The history of clothing is as old as the history of mankind. One of the ways that people express themselves is by speaking through their clothes, as if to say, "This is who I am, and this is what I do". Clothing not only reveals one's social class and gender, but also occupation, religious affiliation, and regional origin.

Throughout history, clothing has been used as a powerful tool by rulers to generate certain symbols. In his article, Metinsoy specifies how clothing functions as a symbolic instrument through which the authorities transform the society or show the main ideological motivations and policy choices.

Almost all governments, even before the modern era, pursued politics of symbols in order to legitimate their rules or socio-cultural order. During the interwar period, Stalin adopted a worker uniform to emphasize on the working-class characteristics of the Soviet regime; Mao wore clothing similar to that of Chinese peasants and workers in order to show how he represented these social groups; Hitler and Mussolini liked to wear militaristic uniforms to demonstrate that they heavily relied on the army force and pursued offensive policies.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, variations in clothing choices are subtle indicators of how different types of societies and different positions within societies are actually experienced.<sup>2</sup> Since the earliest recorded times, rulers and governments across the globe have been concerned to regulate the dress of their subjects, thus state intervention in clothing became widespread in history. The power holders promulgated laws in order to modulate gender, communal and social relations within and among their administrative, military and subject classes.<sup>3</sup>

From the Assyrians to the Aztecs, or the Abbasids, rulers had implemented various dress regulations. The Ying dynasty, for example, had abolished the code of dress imposed by its Mongol predecessors and returned to what was considered a more properly Chinese style.<sup>4</sup> What is more, in premodern Japan, the Shogun prohibited people from wearing specific items, in case it was not suitable to their social rank. As per the rules, only higher-ranking people were allowed to wear certain items, mainly to protect social hierarchy

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<sup>1</sup> Murat Metinsoy, "Everyday Resistance and Selective Adaptation To The Hat Reform In Early Republican Turkey." (*International Journal of Turcologia / Vol: VIII No: 16*, 2013), 10.

<sup>2</sup> Diana Crane, *Fashion and its social agendas: Class, gender, and identity in clothing*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Donald Quataert, "Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829." (Cambridge University Press: *International Journal of Middle East studies*, vol. 29, No.3,1997), 404.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Ross, *Clothing: a global history*. (Cambridge: Polity print, 2008), 16.

and maintain order. In the 13th century Burgundy, for instance, the points on the shoes of commoners could reach only 6 inches, but the prince's could be 24 inches.<sup>5</sup> The Ottoman Empire might offer another example of this, since many clothing and headgear regulations were made for members of different religious, ethnic and occupational communities of the empire which maintained and reinforced gender, religious and social distinctions. After the promulgation of the republic, however, as Turkey set its sights on modernization and Westernization in the early decades of the twentieth century, clothing reform took the center stage. The new state now used clothing as a constitutive element in its establishment and aimed to create a model public citizen that will support it.<sup>6</sup>

In his book, *Clothing: a global history*, Robert Ross discusses the ways in which, some half a millennium ago, the rulers of societies from Peru to eastwards Japan attempted to impose rules correlating, by decree, social status with forms of dress. The regulations, which covered much more than just dress, are collectively known as sumptuary laws.<sup>7</sup> The author successfully provides an explanation to the reasons why the ruling governments mainly regulate the clothing of their people.

First, the dress can be a sign of political allegiance or its converse. Secondly, rulers and others with power may wish to use their power to impose what they consider to be the moral behavior of their subjects. Thirdly, clothing has been used to indicate rank, and thus, regulations are frequently adopted to ensure that those who are considered inferior, don't behave in ways unbecoming to their

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Batterberry and Ariane Batterberry, *Fashion, the mirror of history*. (Crescent, 1977), 88. in Donald Quataert, "Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829." (Cambridge University Press: *International Journal of Middle East studies*, vol. 29, No.3, 1997), 404.

<sup>6</sup> Mary Lou O'Neil, "You are what you wear: Clothing/appearance laws and the construction of the public citizen in Turkey." *Fashion Theory*, 14(1), 2010, 65.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Ross, *Clothing: a global history*, 9.

status, primarily by aping the behavior of those who have considered to be their betters.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, along with the clothing, another way of one's representation of social identity is through practices of etiquette and manners. The word etiquette denotes good behavior or propriety.<sup>9</sup> The rituals of etiquette both demonstrated each individual's position within the social network and were the means by which individuals could negotiate and maneuver that position.<sup>10</sup> The crucial contribution to the literature is with Norbert Elias' work, "The history of manners: The civilizing process", in which he makes an anthropological examination of the emergence of etiquette and manners. As Jorge Ardití who studies the history of mores notes,

As we know from the work of Elias, the word used to speak of breeding and politeness was *civility*, a word that had itself come to replace another, *courtesy*. Civility, quite an ancient term was first associated with the booklet of Erasmus of Rotterdam, published in 1530, called *De civilitate morum puerilium*. The book spread the idea that propriety of behavior meant something important for the conduct of civil life- of life, that is, within the spheres of the body politic.<sup>11</sup>

Elias also argued that rules of etiquette and manners arose as a means of socializing, and also for maintaining social order. To him, manners demonstrate an individual's position within a social network, and act as a means by which the individual can negotiate that position.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>9</sup> Jorge Ardití, *A genealogy of manners: Transformations of social relations in France and England from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century*. (University of Chicago Press, 1998), 1.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Van Krieken. *Norbert Elias*. [electronic resource]. (Routledge: London, 1998), Bilgi Library Catalog, EBSCOhost (accessed May 2, 2018), 85.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>12</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etiquette>, available on 9.05.2018

As noted, laws on clothing and etiquette are carried out by the rulers and governments for many reasons. They generally express a concern for morality and strive to maintain social discipline and order. Almost in all cases, the dress reforms are used as tools for demonstrating who is in charge and who holds the power from then on, as a means of disciplining behavior. In some cases, states intervene with their people's dress in attempt to build a national citizenship. Furthermore, throughout history, the dress had been a major symbol for civility and modernity and many leaders made use of the symbolic force of new dress codes by embracing the Western attire, like Atatürk of Turkey and Meiji of Japan did in the modernization epochs of their countries.

## CHAPTER 2

### JAPANESE MODERNIZATION

#### 2.1 PRE-MODERN JAPANESE SOCIETY / TOKUGAWA PERIOD (1603-1867)

While Japan, an island nation in the Pacific, had an emperor, the country was led by shoguns, the military commanders. The emperor ruled the country but only in name. The shoguns who came from the most powerful families were the actual leaders. Japan was ruled by the Tokugawa Shogunate from 1603 to 1867.

Japan was a feudalistic society with a well-defined social hierarchy among its people. The emperor would sit on top as the figurehead. The *Shogun*, the *daimyos*, and the *samurai* would follow the hierarchy from top to bottom. Daimyos were the powerful landlords who were given land in exchange for their service and loyalty. The samurai was the most respected warrior class of the empire who pledged their loyalty to the daimyo and the shogun. The peasants and artisans came beneath the samurai class, and the merchants were at the very bottom of the hierarchical ladder who had no power at all.

Confucianism was the prevalent belief system in Japan. Shintoism and Buddhism as religions were also quite common.

The social structure of the Tokugawa era was marked by *Sakoku* (isolation) policy, which lasted for 200 years, all trade and contacts with foreigners were prohibited, except for an island off Nagasaki where Dutch and Chinese

merchants were allowed to trade.<sup>13</sup> The Shogun prohibited any Japanese to leave the island as well. He was concerned that a local lord might get help from a foreign country in order to topple him. Thus, if any Japanese citizen was found to have gone abroad and then returned, he was executed.<sup>14</sup> Although there was an understanding of the absolute power of the Emperor, centralization was limited, as the lands all across the island were controlled by the *daimyos*.

The country at the time was not industrialized in any way. Manufacturing was non-existent, and most goods were handmade. Technologically, Japan was far behind the rest of the world, though the 200 years of the Tokugawa shogunate enabled to sustain its economic power due to prosperous agriculture and commerce. High-quality crafts such as silk, porcelain, writing papers, folding fans were traded across the island.

Due to the growth in commerce, in time, the merchants became wealthier than the samurai class. Having achieved more prosperity, they could live better, but they still resented their social status that was at the very bottom of the society. The Samurai, on the other hand, were discontent too, as the stipends they received from their daimyo remained low and had not changed to reflect the country's newfound economic prosperity. In the 1850s, just as the shogun and the landlords were struggling to defuse the domestic tension in the country and to find a solution to the samurai impoverishment, Westerners showed up on Japan's doorstep for the first time. The people of Japan now were to decide whether to stick with centuries-old traditions or to abandon them.

In 1853, American Commodore Matthew Perry sailed into Edo Bay with steamships, and handed a letter written by the American President Millard

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<sup>13</sup> Takatoshi Itō . *The Japanese Economy*. Vol. 10. (MIT press, 1992), 8.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 8.

Fillmore, addressing the emperor.<sup>15</sup> The letter was asking for commercial intercourse. In 1854, the Treaty of Kanagawa was signed between the two countries which opened up the doors of Japan for US trade.<sup>16</sup> The Americans were able to get privileges like low taxes on import. Later, other treaties followed the Treaty of Kanagawa, giving other capitulations to the Western countries such as Britain and the Netherlands.<sup>17</sup>

In the meantime, Japanese nationalists had increased in number and started feeling utterly displeased, as they believed the foreign influence had grown too much in the recent years. In 1867, a revolt of the daimyo broke out, in which the samurai fought in order to restore the emperor to direct rule. The reformists toppled the isolationist shogunate that had ruled the country for nearly 250 years and restored a new regime, a more forward-looking one.

### **2.1.1 Traditional Japanese Dressing**

The native clothing of the Japanese people was a kimono, which refers to the principal outer garment of the dress, a long robe with wide sleeves, made of various materials and in many patterns.<sup>18</sup> The material of a kimono would vary in type and design according to the season. The colors and design would describe a complex message system; the brighter colors were reserved for the youth, the more subtle colors for the more mature. A sash, called the *obi*, was wrapped around the waist of the kimono. *Nagajuban*, a plain robe was worn

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<sup>15</sup> William Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*. (California: Stanford University Press, 1972), 88.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 98-117.

<sup>18</sup> Encyclopedia of fashion, [http://www.fashionencyclopedia.com/fashion\\_costume\\_culture/Early-Cultures-Asia/Kimono.html](http://www.fashionencyclopedia.com/fashion_costume_culture/Early-Cultures-Asia/Kimono.html), available at 20.03.2018

underneath the kimono. Japanese clothing was not traditionally accented with costly or decorative accessories, particularly jewelry, hats, or gloves, as Western dress is.<sup>19</sup> Instead, all of the expression of taste and elegance was focused upon the kimono.<sup>20</sup> The Japanese kimonos have differed in many ways according to social hierarchy, occupation and age. The elite had their own court wear and the samurai had their distinct outfit.

Men wore a traditional skirt-like attire over their kimono, called the *Hakama*. Traditional wooden sandals were used as footwear that came in various types. *Zori* sandals were used in formal occasions. *Geta* sandals were raised on two teeth that prevented the kimono to get dirty from rain or snow, whereas *Okobo* sandals were the platform ones. These were worn with formal socks, called *tabi*.

The beauty standards of women were very significant in pre-modern Japan. By Tokugawa tradition, a beautiful upper-class married woman was expected to have a skin that was whitened through makeup, eyebrows that were shaved and painted again on the forehead and a mouth like a rosebud. Furthermore, she would, by tradition, keep her hair long, lacquered with oil, and to have her teeth blackened so as to highlight the whiteness of her skin.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Ibid



**Figure 2.1** Three Japanese women, (c. 1877-1900), in their kimonos, geta and okobo sandals, and their hair decorated with kanzashi ornaments. Reprint by Stillfried studio of Beato's original photograph. Source: <https://okimonoproject.wordpress.com/2015/04/24/japanese-clothing/>, available on 30.04.2018.

As Toby Slade, who surveys Japanese clothing culture puts it;

In Japan, pre-Restoration fashions are mostly to do with patterns and fabrics, rather than form, and they conform to socially accepted patterns of life rather than acting as challenges to them. While mercantile culture increasingly dominated Japan in the Edo period, rational self-interest was still an inadequate foundation for statehood. Clothing still functioned as an element of custom and community structure. Modern social forces, which deracinate, alienate and atomize were not yet in existence, and therefore, the use of clothing as a means of self-actualization and identity, was not yet important.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Toby Slade, *Japanese Fashion, a Cultural History*. (New York: Berg, 2009), 40.

## 2.2 MODERN JAPAN

### 2.2.1 Meiji Restoration (1868-1912)

In 1868, Emperor Mutsuhito restored the power and started the Meiji Restoration. He was only 15 years old when crowned and his rule lasted 45 years which marked the birth of a new Japan. His government consisted of a small cabinet of advisors. When he took over, the country was militarily weak, the economy was primarily agrarian, and the island was controlled by too many landlords.

Emperor Mutsuhito was an ardent supporter of industrialization, Westernisation, and modernization. In fact, even the title he adopted “Meiji”, meant “the enlightened rule”. His government was concerned that Japan would not retrieve its sovereignty unless it modernized. The adopted slogan was *bunmei kaika* which meant “civilization and enlightenment”. Therefore, a series of reforms were instituted that changed the political, economic as well as the social landscape. He aimed to summon an imperial, stronger and centralized power. In order to do this, feudalism was to be abolished and the daimyo and the samurai classes were to be eliminated. In 1868, Meiji issued the Charter Oath, recognizing the freedom of each individual to pursue their own calling and urging the abandonment of traditional ways.<sup>22</sup> As Cemil Aydın states;

When the Japanese state declared its commitment to Western-inspired reforms and recognized the legitimacy of the Eurocentric world order in the famous five articles of the Charter Oath, it could speak about the radical changes necessary in the country as a revival of Confucianism: “Abolish coarse customs from olden times and stand by the ‘Fair Way of Heaven and Earth’.... When the Meiji

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<sup>22</sup> Ayse Zarakol, *After defeat: How the East learned to live with the West*. Vol. 118. (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 34.

Emperor declared that his subjects would “seek knowledge in the world and promote the conditions of the emperor’s reign”, all knew that this meant the recognition of the superiority of the civilization in Europe and in America, and the necessity to learn from it.<sup>23</sup>

### 2.2.2 The Modernization Process

The abolishment of feudalism united all classes of Japan and it brought a new sense of equality among the people. Now that the old Confucian-based social order was dismantled, all citizens were equal before the law where no citizens were above or below anybody else. The samurai and daimyo classes were removed from their privileged status. The daimyos had to give up their domains in 1869 and samurais had to give up their swords.<sup>24</sup> The government now allowed commoners to adopt surnames and recognized marriage between the old classes. The abolishment of feudalism also created a centralized political structure that would allow Meiji to establish authority in every corner of the empire.

Later a constitutional monarchy was established, that was very similar to the German model of government, where you had an emperor, a Prime Minister, and a legislative body. In 1889, the new Meiji constitution took effect and the people of Japan were now made into *kokumin*, national citizens.

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<sup>23</sup> Cemil Aydin, *The politics of anti-Westernism in Asia: visions of world order in pan-Islamic and pan-Asian thought*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 26.

<sup>24</sup> The samurai fought many times in attempts to get their privileges back. The major fight against the Westernised imperial army was the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877, in which the modern arms of Meiji defeated the samurai warriors. D.Colin Jaundrill, 2016, *Samurai To Soldier: Remaking Military Service In Nineteenth-Century Japan*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, eBook Collection, 2016), 131.viewed 5 April 2018.

The Meiji government aimed to industrialize the country so that Japan could compete with the Western powers. They needed a much stronger economy to revise the unequal treaties that imposed unfair tariff agreements and exchange rates upon Japan and finally remove the country from their semi-colonial status. The government itself sponsored the industry with capital to have them establish private corporations and build railroads and steamships. The missing technical expertise was supplied through hiring experts from the West.

Moreover, the Meiji leaders established a Western-styled education system and made it compulsory which increased literacy rates. They also deemphasized the Confucian morality of the old system but emphasized more maths and science in the new curriculum. Now girls gained access to education, however they still held a secondary position in society. Schools for girls were opened, who as mothers would eventually play the greatest part in shaping moral attitudes within the family.<sup>25</sup>

One of the countries' new slogans was *kaikoku joi*, "Learn from the West so that it can be defeated." There had already been a tradition of learning from the West even during the strict isolationist times. The Netherlands was the only state that was allowed to trade with Japan, and a cultural interaction had developed between the two. The people read the Dutch textbooks that were brought home by these merchants. This was known as 'Dutch studies'-*Rangaku*, which triggered the interest in European knowledge.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, many Japanese men were sent abroad to study the Western science and technology and foreign teachers were invited to Japan.

The Japanese had their own method of "*selective borrowing*". Throughout history, Japan had already traditionally been great imitators. They had already

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<sup>25</sup> Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, 352.

<sup>26</sup> Aydin, *The politics of anti-Westernism*, 209.

imitated a lot of things from China before. But now they were aware that China was in decline<sup>27</sup>, they turned to the West to study and implement what they wished for in Japan by ‘selective borrowing’. That is to say, they selected what they thought to be beneficial for them, left the Western ways that they thought to be unnecessary to adopt.

A massive military reorganization started under the new motto, *fukoku kyohei*, “rich country, strong military”. An imperial army was built with modern uniforms and armament by copying the Prussian and British models. This was followed by the creation of a universal military conscription policy in 1872, meaning all young men were supposed to conscript in the army.

Before Meiji came to power, the Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples coexisted next to each other. As Meiji was crowned, he also became the head of religion and he ordered elements of Buddhism and Shintoism to be separated and the latter to be elevated and privileged as a state policy. Therefore, Shintoism now became dominant over both Confucianism and Buddhism.

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<sup>27</sup> As in case of the Opium Wars

## 2.3 WARDROBE MODERNITY IN JAPAN

### 2.3.1 New codes of clothing and grooming

When Meiji took over, the new government promoted a Westernized version of attire which replaced the traditional Japanese dressing as part of the attempt to become “modernized”. In 1872, *Dajokan order for the adoption of Western dress and grooming* was regulated for the court members, officials and the soldiers.<sup>28</sup> The society was also encouraged to embrace the Western principles of behavior so that the West would see Japan not as a backward but as a civilized and enlightened country. From the early Meiji period on, -in Cemil Aydın’s words- the character and the mission of the Japanese nation were defined and redefined.<sup>29</sup>

The Meiji rulers were the pioneers in adopting the new ways of dressing. A new Western-inspired court uniform was introduced to the officials. The emperor himself adopted military-style European garments for official ceremonies. He had his hair combed in an European fashion, and grew Western-style facial hair as well as a mustache that resembled a ‘Kaiser’. Likewise, the Empress accompanied Meiji in a Western attire to make an exemplary to the public.

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<sup>28</sup> Selçuk Esenbel, “The anguish of civilized behavior: the use of Western cultural forms in the everyday lives of the Meiji Japanese and the Ottoman Turks during the nineteenth century.” (*Nichibunken Japan Review*, 1994), 174.

<sup>29</sup> Aydın, *The politics of anti-Westernism*, 3.



**Figure 2.2** The Imperial Family dressed in Western attire except for the children who still don the traditional kimono. (1900). From left to right: Princess Kane, the Crown Princess, Princess Fumi, the Emperor, Princess Yasu, the Empress, the Crown Prince and Princess Tsune.

Source: <http://www.wiki-zero.com/index.php?q=aHR0cHM6Ly9lbi53aWtpcGVkaWEub3JnL3dpa2kvRW1wcmVzc19TaMWNh2Vu>, available on 19.03.2018

The military uniforms were redefined as part of the efforts to modernize the army by taking the German model as a reference point. Comfortable straw sandals of the samurai were replaced with durable army boots. Entrepreneurs in Osaka founded firms to manufacture buttons.<sup>30</sup>

After the collapse of the feudal system, the samurai were forced to surrender their swords and to cut off their top knots. Though, not only for the samurai, for the ordinary people as well, the top-knots were traditional symbols of

<sup>30</sup> Although native Japanese dressing had no need for fasteners, the modern army and navy uniforms required buttons of various kinds. The demand also increased as ordinary Japanese people started adopting Western style garments from day to day.

manhood. The government faced opposition on this, some even threatened to kill themselves instead of cutting their hair the Western style.<sup>31</sup> Yet again, by the end of the century, it was hard to find a man with a top-knot in the streets of big cities.

The press played a strong role in the dress reforms. The Japanese newspapers were circulated that reminded the public to quit old bad habits and cultivated the idea of “a civilized nation”. They also propagated new designs of fashion. Soon enough, many people, especially the urban population began to appear with Western outfit.

In fact, a few months after the legislation of the Dajokan order for the adoption of Western dress, the empress showed up before the public with natural eyebrows and natural white teeth. In the cities, the old traditions ceased rapidly, while in the country it was a slower process. Especially white teeth gained acceptance very quickly among the women. As Toby Slade states,

White powder, a surviving vestige of the Edo period, remained a paramount element of makeup in the early Meiji period. The arbitrary reference for whiteness as a measure of beauty remains to this day... The ceremonial distinction in makeup use was retained in the early Meiji period in some rural areas, however, at the same time, many traditional cosmetic practices like teeth-blackening and eyebrow-shaving and eyebrow-painting were discontinued and died out.<sup>32</sup>

Yet, Japanese women were still considered the inferior sex. If a woman abandoned the oily lacquered hair and wandered around with her hair loose, it may have been considered a betrayal to tradition, however, a man changing his hairstyle as per the Western standards would have been found progressive and

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<sup>31</sup> Professor Kyunghye Pyun’s lecture video, *Fashion, Identity, and Power in Modern Asia: Modernization of Dresses and Cultural Cross-dressing*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1VEKieK9x8>, available on 19.03.2018

<sup>32</sup> Toby Slade, *Japanese Fashion, a Cultural History*, 116.

modern. By the late Meiji years, Japanese women wore Western hairstyles considered suitable for the kimono, like the Edwardian fluffy chignons.<sup>33</sup> For social occasions, they combined the chignons with large hats just like the women of London or Paris.

As the modernization efforts proceeded with the adoption of Western attire, the native clothing was modified as well. The Tokugawa kimono which was the attire of the samurai/merchant classes and its risqué variety worn by the famous beauties of the courtesan quarters had an elegant erotic air about it provided by the décolleté of a shapely long neck and a slight frontal opening of the long skirt which revealed the charming footsteps of a lady in motion.<sup>34</sup> It was now to be changed into a shorter and more modest version with somber colors, and to be wrapped around the body more tightly, so that it became less revealing and erotic.

Ordinary Japanese women would continue to don native clothing as per their traditional role of the dutiful wife and devoted mother, while the elite women would get Westernized education and represent a compatible look with Western attire in public. However, they too changed into native clothing at home. The fact was that Western clothing was not suitable for Japanese lifestyle. In a traditional Japanese home, *tatami*, made from rice straws, was used as flooring material. It appeared that Western dresses were impractical and uncomfortable for sitting on tatami flooring as they were designed to sit on chairs and tables. Besides, in a Japanese house, the tradition is that you needed to remove the shoes at the door. With *zori*, traditional Japanese flip-flops, it is easy to get in and get out of the house. However, Western shoes were hard to use and quite impractical in this case.

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<sup>33</sup> Esenbel, “The Anguish of Civilized Behavior”, 175.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 176.

Nevertheless, wearing European hats became popular in time. Carrying black umbrellas and pocket watches, wearing rings became high fashion too. Men made such odd combinations such as wearing coats that were made out of European wool over their traditional kimono or wearing a kimono over pants. Using both Asian and Western attire made way for -what Selçuk Esenbel calls- ‘a hybrid fashion of their own interpretations’. Yet again, due to the high cost, it must be noted that especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, Western attire was limited to urban places and wealthier port towns. It was mostly preferred by the well-to-do families and the professionals.

The civil servants put on Western attire to work and then usually donned native Japanese attire in the household. So, it appears that in the rural places and inside the house, it was more common to wear traditional Japanese attire. It has been suggested that the continuation of a Japanese way of life in the private realm helped ‘placate’ the psychological stresses suffered during ‘modernization’, by being able to be ‘Japanese’ at home.<sup>35</sup> Esenbel further explains;

The combination of being “Japanese at home, Western at work” helped the Japanese people preserve the nascent qualities in the private realm. This was through Japanese pragmatism towards Western culture that combines *Wa* (Japanese qualities) and *Yo* (Western qualities) in a flexible formula of eclecticism to serve as the basis for modern Japanese national identity in a bi-cultural civilization.<sup>36</sup>

Western attire, Western food as well as Western architecture would show the modern world that Japan was an equal to them and that they would finally agree to revise the terms of its unequal treaties in favor of it. The bureaucrats

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<sup>35</sup> Susan Hanley, “Material Culture: Stability in Transition” in Marius B. Jansen and Gilbert Rozman, eds, *Japan in transition from Tokugawa to Meiji*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), in Esenbel, “The Anguish of Civilized Behavior”, 177.

<sup>36</sup> Selçuk Esenbel, “The Meiji Élite and Western Culture”. *Japan, Turkey and the World of Islam: The Writings of Selçuk Esenbel*. (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2011), 154.

who had the most contact with the Westerners, like the diplomats for example, were the ones who were expected to adopt the Western attire the quickest, as they had the chance to impress them the most. That is to say, the main drive for the Meiji elite to promote the adoption of Western attire was political and in fact rather pragmatic. Selçuk Esenbel thinks of the elite men and women who were dressed in their Western finery more as *actors and actresses*, as a matter of fact, she finds this ‘experiment with Westernization’ rather theatrical.<sup>37</sup>

Even the dowry of a Japanese girl now consisted of traditional Japanese accessories, as well as Western ones. Taïke Lebra states that in the dowry, the family would arrange a native court dress, a Western dress, and again a Western tiara for the bride to wear in social gatherings.<sup>38</sup>

The Western attire that the Japanese put on were displayed in balls and parties, mostly thrown for foreign diplomacy. This was when European architecture was introduced in Japan. Rokumeikan and The Deer Cry Pavilion became the stage for balls and entertainment. Especially Rokumeikan ballroom carried a huge symbolic meaning for the Meiji modernization efforts which was used as a diplomatic tool to impress the Western elites.<sup>39</sup> The men who attended these balls had to put on Western clothes, and if their wives were accompanying them, likewise. In fact, the more one climbed up the social ladder, the more strictly they had to adopt the new looks.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 157.

<sup>38</sup> Taïke Lebra, *Above the Clouds: Status Culture of the Modern Japanese Nobility* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), 230 in Esenbel, “The Meiji Élite”, 157.

<sup>39</sup> The building itself was designed by a British architect in 1883, using thoroughly Western architectural elements, leaving out all the Japanese elements.

### 2.3.2 New Codes of Etiquette (*reigi*)

Before the Meiji rule, the rules of propriety for the Japanese people were based on the ancient Confucian order. Yet, the rules were different for each class of the Tokugawa feudal system. The new Meiji government imposed new principles of etiquette, manners, and public morals, which were binding everyone, regardless of their status. The drive was -again- to be worthy of a place in the civilized Western world.

Many books on manners and propriety were published that cultivated new codes of behavior to the public. The books consisted of information about civilized ways of how a citizen should socialize in public. Topics ranged from how to set a table to how to do makeup for women. One textbook warned that while Japan may win a lot of battles, she will be doomed to lose all at the conference table by a lack of knowledge etiquette, for Western powers use etiquette as a tool in war and competition.<sup>40</sup> National education was also used as a tool to diffuse the new codes of morals. The school textbooks were teaching students ceremonial manners as well as the ethics and morals of the modern world. How to dress according to various occasions, how to shake hands and how to eat in a civilized manner using forks and knives were among the topics. The Japanese habit of smacking the mouth while eating was to be abandoned, to start with.<sup>41</sup>

Now that the Westernized way was not to sit on the tatami floor, but on a chair, the Japanese bow to greet someone had to be changed accordingly. The bow

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<sup>40</sup> Esenbel, “The Anguish of Civilized Behavior”, 183.

<sup>41</sup> Selçuk Esenbel, *Japon Modernleşmesi ve Osmanlı: Japonya'nın Türk Dünyası ve İslam Politikaları*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), 132.

was revised to be performed in 3 levels that one could perform while standing, even when sitting on a chair.<sup>42</sup>



**Figure 2.3** A woman shows how to bow while standing next to an European chair- the solution to a Meiji problem. Source: Selçuk Esenbel, “The Meiji Élite”, 159.

As mentioned before, the kimonos were now to be worn more tightly to eliminate sexual expression. Bathing gender mixed in public bathhouses was prohibited as well as the extreme nudity in public. Furthermore, some nude statues were put down. The scenes of the male construction workers or farmers working in flannel shirts in public were no longer acceptable and they were imposed to put on more proper clothing. The Western standards of hygiene spread in the country. European-style perfume debuted on the Japanese market in 1872, as well as the French soap.<sup>43</sup> As Sheldon Garon notes;

The middle classes made common cause with the state to modernize what they regarded as the backward and the unruly elements of the society. They eagerly joined

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>43</sup> Toby Slade. *Japanese Fashion*, 117.

in official 'moral suasion' campaigns, to promote thrift, improve hygiene and eradicate popular 'superstition' in urban neighborhoods.<sup>44</sup>

As for eating habits, the Japanese consumption of tea, fruit, sugar and soya sauce had already increased during the Tokugawa era. Now people were promoted to consume beef instead of their traditional food; fish and rice. The sight of Japanese avant-garde people eating out in the restaurants drinking whiskey, wine, beer or sipping coffee in the cafeterias was becoming more common. The primary shift in tastes that accompanied early economic and social embourgeoisement was a more conservative adoption of samurai tastes, previously inaccessible, financially and legally, to other classes.<sup>45</sup> As Meyer notes,

In the early decades of the Meiji Restoration, a mania for the Westernized customs developed in the urban society.... Now Buddhists married, raised families and ate beef. (Sukiyaki was supposedly invented because of the Western taste for meat dishes.)<sup>46 47</sup>

At the dinner parties or balls, one was supposed to bear in mind that the Western world would treat women politely, thus keep the door for them and pull their chairs out of courtesy. In other words, the Japanese men were now expected to treat their wives and daughters just so, especially when the Westerners were around. They were active in an unprecedented glittery social life of ballroom dancing, teas, charity balls together with the Western residents

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<sup>44</sup> Sheldon Garon, "From Meiji to Heisei: The state and civil society in Japan." *The state of civil society in Japan*. (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 53.

<sup>45</sup> Toby Slade, *Japanese Fashion*, 41.

<sup>46</sup> Milton Walter Meyer, *Japan: A Concise History*. (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009). *eBook Academic Collection (EBSCOhost)*,(accessed April 19, 2018), 162.

<sup>47</sup> Sukiyaki is a dish of thinly-sliced beef.

of Tokyo. The aristocratic women were even obliged not to refuse a dance offer from a foreign guest.<sup>48</sup>

Moreover, sports also came into Japanese life with the Meiji rule, before which the people did not play sports of any kind, for entertainment. In 1873, an American teacher who taught in a Japanese school introduced the game of baseball, which has continued to rank as one of the most popular sports of Japan up to the present day. Swimming, cycling and tennis gradually took part in Japanese life, and it meant the introduction of new sports clothing.

To conclude, after the emperor gained power in 1868, Japan underwent a series of reforms by the Meiji Ishin, the so-called Meiji Restoration, that changed the political, economic and social landscape. The ruling cadre aimed to achieve the goal of advancing to the level of contemporary civilization. The modernization steps -as Eisenstadt calls it- pushed Japan into the modern world and shaped the major contours of the patterns of modernity that developed in Japan.<sup>49</sup>

Japan stands alone as the one major non-Western nation to have made the full transition to a modernized society and economy with relatively little turmoil and extraordinary success.<sup>50</sup> In Roosevelt's words, "Japan, shaking of the lethargy of centuries has taken her rank among the civilized, modern powers."<sup>51</sup> In the almost fifty years of Meiji's rule, the country transformed from an agrarian country to a thriving manufacturing one, from an isolationist

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<sup>48</sup> Esenbel, "The Anguish of Civilized Behavior", 176.

<sup>49</sup> Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, *Japanese civilization: A comparative view*. (University of Chicago Press, 1996), 23.

<sup>50</sup> Edwin O. Reischauer, *Japan, the story of a nation*. (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1990), 115.

<sup>51</sup> <http://russojapanesewar.com/TR.html>, available at 02.05.2018

island to a world power. As Japan modernized its political structure, concurrent changes were proceeding in economic and social life.<sup>52</sup> This process was epitomized by the motto *Bunmei Kaika*, civilization and enlightenment. Western science and the Western forms of government were adopted, as well as the Western attire and etiquette rules, the latter of which I had intended to convey in the second chapter of this study.

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<sup>52</sup> Meyer, *Japan: A Concise History*, 155.

## CHAPTER 3

### TURKISH MODERNIZATION

#### 3.1 OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1299-1922)

The Ottoman empire was one of the longest-lasting empires in modern history, spanning from 1299 to 1922. At its peak during the 16th century, the multicultural empire covered more than 15 million subjects stretching out to three continents. However, from the 17th century on, the glorious state gradually lost power and some of its mighty lands. Without conquest of new territories, the empire was deprived of tax revenues. The Ottomans, unable to keep up with the changes of the time, went through a centuries-long period of slow decline. The Ottomans instituted reforms called *Tanzimat* in effort to regain power, however, the state was ruined by wars and continued to shrink.

Ottoman Turkey was a traditionalistic society with a prescriptive value system. Virtually all spheres of life were theoretically under the authority of the religious law, the Shari'ah.<sup>53</sup> In the early 20th century, the state was dissolving, yet the first World War was at the door. The Ottomans whose economy had long been controlled by foreigners were now facing financial bankruptcy. Then emerged nationalistic ideologies, especially in the Balkans, which later sought for their independence. As a result, the empire shrank even further. Later, during WW1, the Ottomans sided with Germany. The end of the war meant defeat for the Central Powers. An armistice was concluded, and the Ottoman Empire was dissolved. The Treaty of Sevres was signed which divided up the

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<sup>53</sup> Robert N. Bellah, "Religious aspects of modernization in Turkey and Japan." *American Journal of Sociology* 64, no. 1 (1958), 2.

country between the allies. The Sevres inflamed the Turkish nationalist movement for whom the terms were humiliating and totally unacceptable. The leader of this movement was a young soldier called Mustafa Kemal. The history of modern Turkey began with the triumph of this group of nationalists, who led a war of independence and liberated their country.

### 3.1.1 Traditional Ottoman Dressing

When the Ottoman Empire reached its peak in the 16th century, the cotton weaving industry had developed into an advanced state. The Ottoman sultans started wearing kaftans (robes) made of the most expensive fabrics. Especially during the rule of Sultan Süleyman *the Lawgiver* (1520-1566), regulations were made to arrange dress codes for Muslim and non-Muslim communities separately, as well as the tradesmen, soldiers, and administrators. The non-Muslim minorities in the empire such as Jews, Armenians and Christians were subject to a dress code that was differentiated from the Muslim majority. The Muslims were to don a white *sarık* (a headpiece that is wrapped around by a turban cloth), whereas the non-Muslim subjects were to don yellow or black ones to differentiate themselves.<sup>54</sup> Yet, later by the end of the 16th century, the turban was totally outlawed for the non-Muslims.

All the communities had their own dress styles distinct to themselves. The people working in the palace, the artisans, the members of the religious orders all had different dress codes. Even within the same group, the items of clothing have differed according to their age, gender or marital status. The *ulema*<sup>55</sup> and

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<sup>54</sup> Kamuran Özdemir, “Cumhuriyet döneminde şapka devrimi ve tepkiler” dissertation thesis. (Eskişehir Anadolu Üniversitesi, 2007), 7; Orhan Koloğlu, *İslam’da Başlık* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1978), 7.

<sup>55</sup> Ulema is the the learned in Islamic sciences who were vested with authority to express and apply the commands of the shariah. Halil İnalçık, “The nature of traditional society”, in Robert

the janissaries all had their distinct headgears particular to their rank. Clothing marked ranks within the official hierarchies, acknowledging and rewarding service to the ruler. One glance at the robes, informed all -rivals and allies alike- of the precise rank and place of an official.<sup>56</sup>

While the Palace and its court displayed showy clothes, the common people were only concerned with covering themselves.<sup>57</sup> In this period, Ottoman men wore outer items such as *mintan*, *zıbın*, *şalvar*, *kuşak*, *entari*; headgears such as *kalpak* or *sarık*; shoes such as *çarık*, *çizme* or *çetik*.<sup>58</sup> The state officials and the ones who could afford it, put on embroidered kaftans, however, the commoners mostly put on *cübbe* robes and the poorest put on a vest in general. The headgears especially, were the indicators of one's belief and socioeconomic rank. *Kavuk* was one of the most popular headgears for the Ottomans. Furthermore, the ordinary people mostly wore conical hats called *külah*, and the notables and the religious wore distinct types of *sarıks*. Facial hair was common among people and practices of facial hair occurred not only in a cultural specific, but also in a religion-specific manner.<sup>59</sup> As Alimen points out, starting from the 16th century in Europe, Turks came to be imagined and depicted as “the ones with moustaches.”<sup>60</sup>

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E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow, ed. *Political modernization in Japan and Turkey*. (NJ:Princeton University Press, 1964), 45.

<sup>56</sup> Donald Quataert, “Clothing Laws, State, and Society”, 406.

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.turkishculture.org/fabrics-and-patterns/clothing-593.htm>, available on 09.03.2018.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Nazlı Alimen, "The Fashions and Politics of Facial Hair in Turkey: The case of Islamic men." *The Routledge International Handbook to Veils and Veiling* (2017), 117.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

Ottoman women, on the other hand, wore *zibin*, *hırka* and baggy trousers called *şalvar* inside the house. For special occasions, they wore a *kaftan* or an *entari*. The fabrics were generally made of lively colors. Outside the house, the women would have to cover their dress with a kind of a plain overcoat called *ferace* as well as their hair with a *veil*. In time, *ferace* was replaced by different types of *çarşafs* (loose robes to cover the body) that became popular instead. *Çarşaf* was often complemented with a *peçe*, the face cover. Peasant women of Anatolia, however, were generally not veiled, in the sense that they did not wear the face veil, the *peçe*, but they generally covered their hair and would pull their headscarves over the mouth in the company of male strangers.<sup>61</sup> The dresses of women would vary in detail according to their place in society. A married woman dressed differently than a single woman, or a widower in some particular ways. By the final years of the Empire, at least in İstanbul, the *çarşaf* had evolved from its original *torba çarşaf* (sack *çarşaf*) to the fashionable *tango çarşaf* (the shortest form of the cape).<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Hale Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish: Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey 1923-1945*. (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2013), 80.

<sup>62</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 82.



**Figure 3.1** An idealized image of women wearing peçe and çarşaf (on the right), yaşmak (in the middle), and a peasant woman wearing a peştamal-style headscarf. *Historie de la Republique Turque, Redige par la Societe por l'etude de l'histoire Turque* (Istanbul: Devlet Basımevi, 1935), 93. Source: Hale Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 89.

The influence of Europe began to show up in the Ottoman empire by the 17th century, starting with the rule of Ahmed III. The *ferace*'s of women became more colorful and embroidered. The Westernization of the attire continued at a higher pace during the rule of Mahmud II, which led to an admiration towards the Western fashion and paved the way for conspicuous consumption. Alongside Westernization, the royal family in the palace ordered their clothes from Europe. Wearing French shirts and ties for men and décolleté dresses for women became high fashion in the elite circles of the big cities, as well as shaking hands and dancing. The upper-class urban women dwelling in big cities such as İstanbul and İzmir started to show up in social life more often and their dresses became more fashionable as well. High heeled boots replaced

their slippers and they used umbrellas that matched their *çarşaf*.<sup>63</sup> They read fashion magazines and compared themselves with their Western counterparts. However, westernized upper and middle-class urban Muslim women's appearance and behavior (the transparency of their veils, with a small number of women even appearing in public unveiled; their increased public visibility; and husbands and wives appearing in public together) angered the conservatives, who perceived such changes to be a manifestation of moral corruption and social decay.<sup>64</sup>

Alongside his many other bureaucratic and military reforms, Sultan Mahmud II, in Donald Quataert's words- *in effort to control and reshape society*-enacted a clothing law of 1829. The law specified the clothing and headgear to be worn by the varying ranks of religious and civil officials. It sought to eliminate the clothing distinctions that long had separated the official from the subject classes and the various Ottoman religious communities from another by bringing a homogenizing status marker- *the fez*- as a headgear.<sup>65</sup> Sarık was replaced by the fez, a claret red cylindrical hat made of felt. Wearing a fez, non-Muslims would also look the same as Muslims, thus it provided a symbol of equality among all Ottoman subjects before the Sultan, a full decade before the Gülhane Edict of 1839.<sup>66</sup> The fez would remind the subjects of their common identity as Ottomans. This sense of equality made the minorities embrace the wearing of the fez even more enthusiastically. Yet again, the differentiation continued in women's attire. While the Muslim women wore yellow shoes, the non-Muslim women were made to wear black or dark colored shoes in order for them to distinguish themselves. Besides, the non-Muslims

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<sup>63</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 81.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 83.

<sup>65</sup> Quataert, "Clothing Laws, 403.

<sup>66</sup> Series of reforms which ensured that all subjects of the empire were equal before the law.

were supposed to wear light-colored ferace, whereas the Muslims wore them in red, blue and green.<sup>67</sup> By the middle of the nineteenth century, the non-Muslim subjects of the empire such as urban Greeks and Armenians frequently opted for completely Western outfits and European hats.<sup>68</sup>

The officials and the middle and upper classes welcomed the use of fez, however, some people like the conservative artisans did not like the idea. They believed the fez to be the headgear of the ‘infidel’. Besides, now that the Ottoman fez was worn by members of every religion, it undermined the superiority of the Muslims over the non-Muslims. Thus, at the beginning, they mostly preferred to use the fez by wrapping fabrics around it.

The military uniforms were also redefined as per the European models. In fact, Mahmud II mimicked European fashion himself and dressed just like a Western commander, only wearing a fez. He took pains with not only the looks but also with his surroundings. He preferred to live in the European-designed Dolmabahçe palace, rather than the oriental Topkapı Palace and did not enjoy wearing a kaftan like his predecessors.

Although there were reactions against wearing the fez at the beginning, in time it was accepted by the Ottoman society fully and became the symbol of ‘Ottomanism’. By the beginning of the 20th century, it also became the symbol of ‘Islam’. However, as the Ottoman Empire began to lose power, this symbol, the fez, became a subject for mockery in Europe. In the eyes of a Western person, it became the symbol of a falling civilization.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Melek Sevüktekin Apak, Filiz Onat Gündüz, Fatma Öztürk Eray, *Osmanlı Dönemi Kadın Giyimleri*. (İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları: 1997), 97 in Özdemir, “Şapka devrimi”, 12.

<sup>68</sup> Esenbel, “The Anguish of Civilized Behavior”, 185.

<sup>69</sup> Orhan Koloğlu, *İslam’da Başlık*. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1978), 58.

During the Tanzimat and the Meşrutiyet eras of the 19th century, the elite ladies wore the same fashions as the Meiji elite women of Tokyo except that she had to do it at home and not in public.<sup>70</sup> They preferred puffy skirts, the thin-waisted corsets, and the chignon hairstyle.<sup>71</sup> The Sublime Porte bureaucrats wore Western trousers, jackets, and shoes. They showed a preference for redingot jackets and well-ironed pants who went ‘*a-la-franga*’ in style, a term used for people who had adopted Western ways. The term, though, was used in a rather disparaging tone as it referred to people who lived the Western way of life without having internalized the Western culture, manners, and science in the mind. These cultural changes were in part a consequence of increasing contact with the European culture, and in part they were initiated and promoted directly by the state, to be reinforced by increasing interactions with Europe.<sup>72</sup> On the other hand, the rest of the Turkish population including the artisans, the commoners, and the villagers kept to their modest native dressings.

When the Turkish war of liberation was being fought against the allies, an ancient Turkish headgear made of fur, *kalpak*, became popular among the people. It became the symbol of the Turkish resistance.

Esenbel also states that in the Ottoman empire, propriety or *Adab* was very important for the close elite circle around the palace.

*Adab* in Islam meant to be cultured. The emphasis was on the ethical and practical meaning of the word, and it meant courtesy, good upbringing, and so forth. The Ottoman gesture of greeting, *the temenna*, as the three-phase hand greeting, the first

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<sup>70</sup> Nora Şeni, “Fashion and women’s dress in the satire press of Istanbul in the end of the nineteenth century”, *From the Perspective of Women* (Istanbul: İletisim yayincilik, 1990), 44–67, in Esenbel, “The Anguish of Civilized Behavior”, 186.

<sup>71</sup> Esenbel, “The Anguish of Civilized Behavior”, 186.

<sup>72</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 22.

one touching the heart, then the lips, and finally the head as an expression of loyalty and deference. Kissing the hand of those who were older or in authority was customary. Eyes were to be kept to the floor while talking to a superior or a woman, and hands and feet were to be kept away from sight as much as possible.<sup>73</sup>

As it appears, in the Ottoman society, covering the head was just as important for men as for the women. It was believed that a proper Muslim man should cover the head. The headgear distinguished the people during their lifetimes and were carved in stone on their tombs after their death.<sup>74</sup>

## **3.2 MODERN TURKEY**

### **3.2.1 The birth of the Republic of Turkey**

Mustafa Kemal emerged as a triumphant commander and a national hero at the battle of Gallipoli. Refusing to accept the terms of Sevres Treaty, he organized a Turkish liberation movement and took command of the army. Mustafa Kemal and his nationalist comrades established a provisional government in Ankara, later declared the new capital, and successfully regained all the occupied regions of Anatolia, what we now call Turkey. The Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923 and Mustafa Kemal became its first president.

Both the sultanate and the caliphate were abolished which brought the 600-years-old Ottoman dynasty to an end. A year later, the first constitution of the new republic was promulgated. During Mustafa Kemal's presidency of 15 years, Turkey underwent a dramatic modernization process. A broad range of comprehensive and swift reforms were made which changed the cultural, religious and economic spheres of the country.

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<sup>73</sup> Esenbel, "The Anguish of Civilized Behavior", 191.

<sup>74</sup> Bernard Lewis, *The emergence of modern Turkey*, (Oxford University Press, 2002), 101.

### 3.2.2 Reforms of Modernization

The republic was successfully founded and now Turkey belonged to her own people. However, the task ahead was daunting. The nation was tattered, impoverished, and mostly illiterate. Mustafa Kemal who was later given the name "Atatürk", meaning *the father of the Turks* by the Grand National Assembly, initiated a series of radical reforms that aimed to transform the new republic into a modern country.

Sheria was abolished and the state was declared secular. The clause that recognized Islam as Turkey's official state religion was erased from the constitution.

In 1926, new penal, commercial and civil codes were enacted. Polygamy was made unlawful and civil marriage became compulsory. The new law recognized the equal rights of women in divorce, custody, and inheritance and later in 1934, women were granted suffrage and equal rights as men, years ahead of many Western countries.

In 1928, the Arabic script was abandoned, and Latin alphabet was adopted. While the religious schools were banned, secularized primary education was made compulsory. The religious lodges and brotherhoods were abolished. The day of rest was changed from Friday to Sunday as per the Western countries and the call for prayer was also to be announced in Turkish, no longer in Arabic.

According to Mustafa Kemal, the basic economic goal for the primarily agricultural country was to make it self-sufficient, mostly free of foreign aid. Now, one of the most challenging tasks lying ahead was to pay off the Ottoman debts. Since the Republic lacked the necessary finances for building industries,

the government had to take over the role of state ownership. With the newly imported machinery, the harvest has improved, and new factories have erected.

### 3.3 WARDROBE MODERNITY IN TURKEY

The reforms that had been carried out after the inception of the Turkish republic to achieve the goal of a more modern and secular nation also included changes in the appearance. In attempt to join the ranks of other contemporary civilized nations, the new administration urged the people to adopt Western clothing by getting rid of the clothes that symbolized the old order, the fez to begin with.

As the demise of the Empire unfolded, the fez became increasingly associated with military, political, and cultural inferiority, and in addition to being a marker of Muslim faith, it became an object of mockery and contempt on the part of Europeans.<sup>75</sup> Mustafa Kemal personally experienced this mockery himself. In 1911, as the ship that was taking him to Tripolitania had a break in Sicily, the Italian children threw lemon peel at him, making fun of the fez he was wearing.<sup>76</sup>

Another incident, as he wrote in his memoirs, happened in Belgrade while he was traveling with his friend Major Selahattin Bey. Children, -Serbian this time- made a mockery of their fez as they were waiting for a train at the station.<sup>77</sup> These experiences annoyed Mustafa Kemal and triggered him on the necessity to get rid of this degrading headgear. According to him, the fez was

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<sup>75</sup> Camilla T. Nereid, "Kemalism on the Catwalk: The Turkish Hat Law of 1925", *journal of social history* 44, no. 3 (2011), 710.

<sup>76</sup> Özdemir, "Şapka devrimi", 20.

<sup>77</sup> Nereid, "Kemalism on the Catwalk", 710.

the symbol of ignorance and orientalism and remained -in Lewis' words- "the last bastion of Muslim identification and separateness."<sup>78</sup> Similarly, many more members of civil bureaucracy were bothered with the fez and associated it with the underdevelopment of the empire.

Now that the republic was proclaimed, at first the hat and then the dressing reforms were enacted starting from Atatürk's visit to Kastamonu on August 30, 1925. It was the first time he appeared before the public bareheaded, greeting them by waving his panama hat.<sup>79</sup> There he gave a speech, later referred as *the Hat sermon*. "Masters," he said,

"A civilized, international dress is worthy and appropriate for our nation, and we will wear it. Boots and shoes on our feet, trousers on our legs, shirt and ties, jacket and waistcoat- and of course, to complete these, a cover with a brim on our heads. I want to make this clear. This head-covering is called 'hat'."<sup>80</sup>

### **3.3.1 New codes of clothing for men**

On November 25, 1925, the Hat law was enacted that made it mandatory for all citizens of the Turkish republic to wear European hats in public. The wearing of the fez was prohibited by the law throughout the country as well. Fez-wearing was now a punishable crime and perceived as treason.

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<sup>78</sup> Lewis, *The emergence of modern Turkey*, 268.

<sup>79</sup> The reason why he chose Kastamonu as a starting point was puzzling, as this city was known to be rather a conservative one in Anatolia. The reason he later explained was that he never had a chance to visit there before, meaning the people of Kastamonu had not seen him yet. Thus, he wanted to be saved in their minds as an image wearing Western clothes and a hat.

<sup>80</sup> Lewis, *The emergence of modern Turkey*, 269.

The dress codes for the religious officials were also regulated. They were prohibited to wear the black robe and the white sarık outside the religious premises.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, no one else was allowed to wear the ecclesiastical dress that was reserved for the clerics.

Now that wearing the fez became a punishable crime, and wearing the hat was made mandatory, there grew a huge demand for hats. Western hat makers made loads of shipment to Turkish ports. The massive demand also made the way to open up new schools for manufacturing hats and Western attire which led fashion to become a thriving sector. One “*sepetçiler okulu*” was established to produce straw hats to meet the demand for hats without having to import them. However, European hats were pricey and not everyone could afford them, so they bought caps instead, which were much cheaper. To enable the state officials, including the religious officials to purchase hats, they were offered advance payments by the government.

Among the society, there were the elite families who had already enjoyed the Western attire long before the hat law was enacted, as well as the conservative and lower-middle-class people for whom the image of a hat-wearing person was very low. There was an expression used among the people that called someone with an unpleasant character ‘gavur’ (*infidel*), yet someone with even worse character ‘şapkalı gavur’ (*infidel with a hat*). This idiom exhibits clearly how the Turkish society approached the idea of hat-wearing. In fact, for the Ottomans, there had always been a connection between faith and the headgear. To them, wearing a hat was equivalent to falling out of the Islamic faith. When Mahmud II introduced the fez, the religious dignitaries opposed it announcing that it was the ‘invention of the infidel’. Nevertheless, in time it was accepted by the Ottoman society. Some people used the fez by wrapping a turban around

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<sup>81</sup> Meaning, outside working hours, the clerics had to take their ecclesiastical dress off and wear a hat like everybody else.

it that summoned a religious meaning to it. Likewise, when the hat was introduced in 1925, the people clung tight onto the fez, thus the hat became the invention of the infidel this time. As they believed, keeping the head covered during prayer was an indicator of respect to God, hats with brims were especially believed to be profane as it prevented the worshipper's forehead from touching the ground during namaz.<sup>82</sup> To eliminate this concern, the directorate of religious affairs announced that it was alright to perform namaz either bareheaded or with the hat.<sup>83</sup>

Yet again, there raised opposition against the hat and dress reforms and many reactionary resistances broke out in various cities that were silenced with force. Inspectors were sent to the cities to check whether the people had adopted the new headgear who sent reports to Ankara. Police forces were assigned in the cities, as well as the gendarme in the countryside to collect the fez in case people still put them on.<sup>84</sup> Ones that disobeyed, faced the consequences; they were either fined, jailed or given the death penalty.

One Islamist scholar İskilipli Atıf Hoca who wrote a booklet called “Frenk mukallitliği ve şapka” (French imitation and the hat) in 1924, in which he expressed the European hat was an act of kufr against sharia, alongside alcohol, dance, and theater. He was tried by an Independence Tribunal which were

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<sup>82</sup> Stephanie Cronin, ed. *Anti-veiling campaigns in the Muslim world: Gender, modernism and the politics of dress*. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 14.

<sup>83</sup> The religious people felt more comfortable with the Oxford-style bowler hat because their brims were shorter, which is called *melon şapka* in Turkish. The ones who could not afford one, especially the peasants, mostly preferred a villager's cap with a visor (kasket) and often wore it by turning its brim back especially in mosque. Murat Metinsoy, “Everyday resistance and selective adaptation to the hat reform in early republican Turkey.” (*International Journal of Turcologia / Vol: VIII No: 16*, 2013), 16.

<sup>84</sup> Özdemir, “Şapka devrimi”, 97.

reinforced with extraordinary powers and executed in 1926 for his involvement in anti-hat protests.

It was not a very easy transition for the officials to be working bareheaded indoors when they were accustomed to the fez for a century. Many people refused to put the new hat on their head. In many places, the men withdrew from the street and public life for a while to protest the Hat Law covertly.<sup>85</sup> A group of people who did not want to put on the hat by any means, migrated to Syria or Hatay, hoping the sultanate would regain power sometime soon.<sup>86</sup> Metinsoy states that the pressure of social milieu also played a big role in the rejection of the hat. Wearing a Western hat became an object of mockery, especially in the countryside. People might be laughed at by his companions.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Metinsoy, “Everyday resistance”, 16.

<sup>86</sup> Hatay was the mandate of France by then. Özdemir, “Şapka devrimi”, 94.

<sup>87</sup> Metinsoy, “Everyday resistance”, 20.



**Figure 3.2** The images of four brothers demonstrate the shift from the fez to the kalpak and then to the European hat in the transition from the Empire to the Republic. Top left, a fez-wearer; top right, and bottom left, kalpak-wearer; and bottom right, a bowler hat-wearer with a bow tie. Source: Hale Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 30.

### 3.3.2 New codes of clothing for women

Late Ottoman and early Republican urban Muslim women wore the veil in varieties of ways reflecting their social class, economic means, cultural and ideological positions, fashion trends, and personal tastes.<sup>88</sup> In fact, long before the proclamation of the republic, starting from the 19th century, there was an

<sup>88</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 80.

ongoing debate on the perception of women as one of the objects of modernization and the controversy on their veiling.

Pro-Western intellectuals like Dr. Abdullah Cevdet was advocating against the veiling of the women in his bulletin *İçtihat*. Kılıçzade Hakkı likewise wrote his infamous article 'A very wakeful sleep' in which he manifested that women should get education and socialize without having to cover themselves. Ziya Gökalp, the preeminent ideologue of Turkism, ardently pressed for the end of seclusion and veiling practices during the Young Turk era, just prior to the founding of the republic.<sup>89</sup>

While both the Westernist and the Turkist intellectuals pressed against the veiling of the women, the Islamists argued in favor of it in their publications. Şeyhülislam Mustafa Sabri Efendi, the most senior religious official of the empire, was among the people who strongly opposed the incorporation of European fashion for women. According to him, Westernization, as a path of progress, had turned out to be a path that would lead the empire into a deep abyss.<sup>90</sup> Mehmet Akif, the author of the national anthem, also criticized the imitation of the Western looks. According to him, this sickness was going to cut off the links with the consciousness of their own identity.

In fact, the modernization of the attire made a start from the army uniforms, then continued with the civil bureaucracy and ended with the public. When it came to women, çarşaf and veil were discouraged while to replace them, coats, scarves and Western attire were encouraged. As Adak lays out, first contrary to what is usually thought, Kemalist policy in women's dress, although it

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<sup>89</sup> Cronin, ed. *Anti-veiling campaigns*, 44.

<sup>90</sup> Binnaz Toprak, "Politicisation of Islam in a secular state: the National Salvation Party in Turkey." in Said Amir Arjomand, ed. *From nationalism to revolutionary Islam*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1984), 120.

ideally favored total unveiling, did not try to eliminate headscarves or turbans women used to cover their hair. Second, the use of *peçe* and *çarşaf* was never outlawed in Turkey. Rather, anti-veiling campaigns were local initiatives.<sup>91</sup> Unlike Reza Shah of Iran, Atatürk never actually banned the veil, it was anticipated to be a mild transition and was left to the time and forces of fashion.<sup>92</sup>

The modern dress implied unveiling or removing the face veil (*peçe*) and the replacement of the *çarşaf*, the women's two piece outerwear that covered the entire body, with a *manto* or overcoat.<sup>93</sup> Thus, in the 1920s and 1930s, first *manto* and *eşarp* and later *manto* and hats emerged as modern alternatives to the women's *çarşaf*, *peştamal*, and other forms of traditional or regional dress.<sup>94</sup> Providing overcoats (*manto*) free of charge was an important part of the dress campaign carried out by the government, as replacement for their *çarşafs* and *peştemals*.<sup>95</sup>

As Atatürk promoted the modernization reforms on the basis of Western values, his wife Latife Hanım set a role model for the Turkish women. The changes that the Turkish women went through were reflected the outer world

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<sup>91</sup> Before the 30s, there had been a number of anti-veiling campaigns, again, initiated at the local level. The earliest example was a decision by the members of the Trabzon Turkish Hearth in 1925. Women members were to remove their *peçes* and *çarşafs* and men were to wear hats. A year later wearing of the *peçe* was banned within the city. Sevgi Adak, "Women in the Post-Ottoman Public Sphere Anti-Veiling Campaigns and the Gendered Reshaping of Urban Space in Early Republican Turkey" in *Women and the City, Women in the City: A Gendered Perspective of Ottoman Urban History*, edited by Nazan Maksudyan, (Berghahn Books, 2014), 37-41.

<sup>92</sup> It was not until 1935 that a ban on the veil was proposed at a congress of The Republican People's Party, and even then, no action was taken. There were however, municipal orders against the veil in some places. Lewis, *The emergence of modern Turkey*, 271.

<sup>93</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 88.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 262.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 125.

through her, who was Western-educated and rather sophisticated. She accompanied Atatürk on his tours of Anatolia, during which she appeared before the public without the *çarşaf*, although still wearing a headscarf. In the Ottoman rule, however, the wife (or the wives) of the sultan never showed up in public. The Ottoman women held back from participation in the social and professional life, having to spend their lives mostly in the household.

The republican regime displayed an egalitarian attitude towards gender roles in a centuries-long male-dominated culture and tried to eliminate the traditions and practices that separated men and women in social life. In 1926, women had been given equal status as men and the new republic started producing well-educated women who acquired various professions. Professional life meant interaction with men and contribution to the economy of their newly founded country. The republican regime constructed its civilized, Western image by publicizing photographs of women unveiled, women athletes in sports uniforms and men and women interminglings in tea salons and at republic balls.<sup>96</sup> As Kasaba and Bozdoğan notes, images and photographs of *LaTurquie Kemaliste* in the 1930s, the propaganda films of the 1950s, and countless other representations of the official history of modernization still offer the most powerful visual tropes of this ethos of the making of a thoroughly modern nation out of the ruins of an old empire. Unveiled women working next to clean-shaven men in educational and professional settings, healthy children and young people in school uniforms, the modern architecture of modern buildings in republican Ankara and other major cities are among the most familiar images.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Yusuf Sarfati, *Mobilizing Religion in Middle East Politics: A Comparative Study of Israel and Turkey*. (Routledge, vol.57, 2013), 45.

<sup>97</sup> Sibel Bozdoğan, and Reşat Kasaba, eds. *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*. (University of Washington Press, 1997), 5.

The ones that set an example as the ‘modern civilized woman’ in the balls and parties were the wives of the state officials and MPs. Those attending were mostly wealthy families, ruling elites, soldiers, and bureaucrats who were acquainted with the Western lifestyle.<sup>98</sup> Some ordered the ball dresses from Europe, some bought it tailor-made from the city.

During the Ottoman rule, balls and parties were thrown on special occasions and for a limited amount of people, mostly for foreign guests, which, needless to say excluded Ottoman women. The first Republican ball was thrown by Atatürk in İzmir in 1925.<sup>99</sup> The Turkish women participating in balls in open interaction with men, partnering with them in dances signified a revolution. Women were encouraged to dance with men routines like foxtrot, tango, swing, charleston, and waltz. Nothing seemed to prove better how a person has become civilized, other than mix-gender dancing. In the modern circles, not knowing how to dance was equated with being “backward” and failing to meet the standards of the time.<sup>100</sup>

The balls were in a way used as an ideological instrument by the republican regime to achieve Mustafa Kemal’s project of modernization. Mustafa Kemal attended these balls in person as well as other senior bureaucrats. At first, there was not much participation, the ones who attended remained rather reserved. The balls in general had not been embraced by the masses, they only appealed to a mere minority. After all, for a society that had lived a gender-segregated

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<sup>98</sup> D. Fatma Türe, *Facts and Fantasies, Images of Istanbul women in the 1920s*. (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 119.

<sup>99</sup> Doğan Duman, “Osmanlı’dan Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemine: Batı kültürünün bir yansıması olarak Balolar.” (Ankara: *Turkish Studies International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*. Volume 11/1, 2016), 50.

<sup>100</sup> Arzu Öztürkmen, "Zamanı Eylemek, Eğlenmek: Cumhuriyet Dönemi Eğlence Biçimlerini Yeniden Düşünmek." *75 Yılda Değişen Yaşam Değişen İnsan: Cumhuriyet Modaları* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1999), 182. in Elif Mahir, “Etiquette Rules in the Early Republican Period.” (*Journal of Historical Studies*. 3, 2005), 20.

life for centuries, it was hard to partner with each other in dances, as a civilized person was required to behave in a ball.

Newspapers were being circulated that argued *çarşaf* and veil were backward and primitive, and that it has got nothing to do with good morals. The national press continued to promote modern dress in the 1930s, by disseminating images of modern men, women, and families in photographs, and especially in advertisements.<sup>101</sup>

Throughout the brief history of the Turkish Republic, women were discouraged from wearing the veil and the headscarf, in favor of more progressive Western attire. The urban Turkish women of higher economic and educational status eventually adopted Western forms of dress and many became ardent supporters of reform.<sup>102</sup> Yet again, a portion of the society was reluctant to adopt the new codes and hesitant to remove the *peçe* or *çarşaf*, thus the old and the new practices carried on side by side.

### **3.3.3 New codes of Etiquette (*Adab-ı Muaşeret*)**

As the Turkish people were not accustomed to wearing European hats, after the enactment of the hat law, funny sights occurred. Those who could not afford or supply one wore odd accessories that resembled hats, some wore women's hats. This happened in some cases due to lack of etiquette, in some because of the lack of supplies, and in others out of fear of authorities. A

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<sup>101</sup> Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, , 51.

<sup>102</sup> Marlene R. Breu and Ronald T. Marchese, "The power of cloth: Popular culture that intersects socio-political boundaries." in Ronald T. Marchese, ed. *The Fabric of Life: Cultural Transformations in Turkish Society*. (New York: Global Academic Publishing, 2005), 91.

regulation was made by the government that specified the basic principles of using a hat for the state officials. According to this regulation, the officials, for example, were expected to be bareheaded within their offices and to greet their superiors with a little nod of the head and a slight bow. The two founder-leaders of the new state, Atatürk and İnönü were also very influential on the bodily attires and lifestyles of politicians and bureaucrats as well as other civil servants. Atatürk was usually clean-shaven after 1923, but İnönü kept his moustache.<sup>103</sup>

The practice of handshaking came into Turkish people's lives as well. If someone who wore a hat were to greet a friend outside, he would do it by taking the hat off with the right hand. If it wasn't a formal greeting, a slight lift of the corner of the hat would be enough. The formal greetings would require both taking the hat off and the bow towards the front. The women, however, were always to be greeted in a formal way. Besides, it was inappropriate not to be bareheaded at all times when indoors.<sup>104</sup>

Newspapers were published to inform people the etiquette of wearing hats, as well as the books. Abdullah Cevdet wrote a book on European etiquette in 1927, "*Resimli ve Mükemmel Âdâb-ı Muâşeret Rehberi*", in which he taught how to make home visits, kiss the hand of a lady, celebrate the New Year, serve Medoc after second courses, and how to keep fit with exercise (for women).<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Alimen. "The Fashions and Politics of Facial Hair, 118.

<sup>104</sup> Özdemir, "Şapka devrimi", 54.

<sup>105</sup> M. Şükrü Hanioglu, "The historical roots of Kemalism." in *Democracy, Islam and Secularism in Turkey*. ed. Ahmet T. Kuru and Alfred Stepan. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 47.

The fact that this book was distributed by the state to the public for free shows us the importance the republican regime attached to the issue.<sup>106</sup>

Yılmaz also believes that it was also through textbooks that students learn about modern dress:

Textbook references to dress reforms presented the Hat Law to students not only as a law to be followed, but also within the context of requirements of civility: civilized people must appear and act in a civilized manner. Mitat Sadullah's *Yeni Yurt Bilgisi* (Knowledge of the Homeland) textbook for fourth grade students includes a set of "Civilized Rules Which Everybody Should Respect in Town and City Life."<sup>107</sup>

In her Ph.D thesis, Faith Childress argues that during the Atatürk period, the educational system became an instrument for change in many aspects of government and society and that the school textbooks were used to gradually articulate the reforms of the adoption of Western dress.<sup>108</sup>

Now that republican balls were organized in the country that required Western-style dancing, many private dance schools were opened, and the press circulated informative pieces on the rules of dance. Issues like the invitation to dance, the proper suit and gloves for balls, the manners during and after the dance were all explained in detail.<sup>109</sup> These balls taught men and women to

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<sup>106</sup> Ayşe Çavdar, "Adab-ı muâşeretin sınıfsal manzarası." *Sabit Fikir güncel edebiyat dergisi*. (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2013)

<sup>107</sup> Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 53.

<sup>108</sup> She states that the same illustration in the 1925 and 1928 editions of the same first grade reading book portrayed men and women dressed differently. In the 1928 edition, women's head scarves disappeared and the female teacher in the illustration appeared in a short sleeve dress and high heeled shoes. Faith Childress, "Republican lessons: Education and the making of modern Turkey", (2002), 157 in Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 54.

<sup>109</sup> Elif Mahir, "Etiquette Rules in the Early Republican Period." (*Journal of Historical Studies*. 3, 2005), 20.

show off their modern clothing and newly learned manners and entertain together in the same space.<sup>110</sup>

Consequently, the dress reforms of the new Turkish republic signified the end of backwardness and the start of a democratic and secular regime that is ruled by law. During Mustafa Kemal's presidency of 15 years, Turkey underwent a dramatic modernization process. A broad range of comprehensive and swift reforms were made which changed the cultural, religious and economic spheres of the country. Westernization of the Turkish wardrobe was a part of the modernization project the new regime aimed to achieve. As for them, culture and civilization were inseparable, and borrowing European civilization meant borrowing European culture as well, including its dress.<sup>111</sup> With the promotion of the European hat for men and the discouragement of the veil for women, the new dress codes became important political symbols of modernity. Westernized attire was now anticipated to help the population transform into modern and civilized citizens who would suggest a unified Turkish national identity.

In sum, this chapter tried to convey the sartorial modernization project of the Turkish state, that was implemented after the inception of the republic and how the promotion of the Western attire has also become a tool to institutionalize modernity.

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<sup>110</sup> D. Fatma Türe, *Facts and Fantasies*, 119.

<sup>111</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 32.

## CHAPTER 4

### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WARDROBE MODERNITY IN TURKISH AND JAPANESE CONTEXTS

Modernization is a global project which almost concurrently, although with different pace in different regions, was launched into our world.<sup>112</sup> According to Therborn, the simplest historical definition of modernity is “an epoch turned toward the future” characterized by the expectation that the world of the future will be better.<sup>113</sup> This expectation follows from the idea of progress in its modern meaning: not just forward spatial motion, but qualitative improvement through reason and scientific experimentation.<sup>114</sup>

In the classic work, *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey*, Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow, compiled papers that analyzed the modernization experiences of Japan and Turkey. According to them,

Modernization is a historical concept that includes such specific aspects of change as industrialization of the economy or secularization of ideas, but it is not limited to these. It involves a marked increase in geographic and social mobility, a spread of secular, scientific and technological education, a transition from ascribed, to achieved

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<sup>112</sup> Touraj Atabaki, *The state and the subaltern: modernization, society and the state in Turkey and Iran*. Vol. 66. (London: IB Tauris, 2007), intro xv.

<sup>113</sup> Göran Therborn, *European Modernity and Beyond: The trajectory of European societies, 1945-2000*, (London: Sage, 1995) in Carter V. Findley, *Turkey, Islam, nationalism, and modernity: a history, 1789-2007*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 15.

<sup>114</sup> Findley, *Turkey, Islam, nationalism*, 15.

status, an increase in material standards of living, and many related and subsidiary phenomena.<sup>115</sup>

Japan and Turkey present us with an important opportunity to study how and why states have implemented clothing laws in attempt to modernize and in which ways they succeeded or failed. What Hale Yılmaz masterly states applies to both Japanese and Turkish cases.

Modernizing or revolutionary states have used clothing regulations to erode old social and communal distinctions and to create and promote new social distinctions and new identities. The importance of clothing laws lies in the fact that they are never simply about the clothes the subjects or the citizens wear, but rather they are reflections of the broader cultural, political, social, or economic concerns and changes.<sup>116</sup>

In this fourth chapter, I intend to analyze Meiji Japan and Republican Turkey comparatively, in the ways they proceeded along their projects of modernization, by focusing on the Westernization of their wardrobes. As countries that missed out on Renaissance and Reform eras, they offer significant parallels in some aspects of their modernization processes yet differ hugely in some others.

#### **4.1 Geographic location and national identity**

Geographic location plays a key role in analyzing the modernization processes of the two countries. Japan to start with, is an island nation, thus, it has naturally defined borders. Within these natural borders, Japan had a racially homogenous population that spoke a common language, only with dialectical

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<sup>115</sup> Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow, eds. *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964), 3.

<sup>116</sup> Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 23.

differences. The given features could not offer a more fortunate combination for a successful modernization process.<sup>117</sup> There had also been a rigidly-defined social hierarchy among the people for a centuries-long period of time, yet there remained no significant disagreement within the society. Moreover, a sense of national unity had been deep-set in the island for long centuries, alongside a national Japanese identity. When the Emperor regained power from the Shogun, all he had to do was to polish the feeling of “Japaneseness” and elevate it.

In the Turkish case, on the other hand, the land was reduced to the boundaries of what we now call Turkey, from an empire that stretched over to three continents.<sup>118</sup> It had a heterogeneous and diffuse population composed of various faiths and ethnicities that spoke divergent languages.<sup>119</sup> Besides, the people lacked a sense of unity, not to mention a Turkish national identity; a feeling of belonging to a nation. The people hardly called themselves Turkish, although the West called them so for centuries. The very word *Turk* was used until the beginning of the century as a condescending designation for the

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<sup>117</sup> It is noteworthy to state that the “Japanese cultural and ethnic homogeneity” is a lately-contested issue. Many minority organizations are expressing their ethnic identity within Japan and an increasing number of scholars are showing interest towards the subject.

<sup>118</sup> Turkey is in land, twice as big as Japan; yet Japan was roughly twice as populated as Turkey in the timeline around which both countries have started their modernization processes. Turkey’s population was counted as 14 million in 1927, and Japan, 33 million in 1870.

<http://www.wiki-zero.com/index.php?q=aHR0cHM6Ly9lbi53aWtpcGVkaWEub3JnL3dpa2kvRGVtb2dyYXBoaWNfaGlzdG9yeV9vZl9KYXBhb9iZWZvcmlvfdGhlX01laWppX1Jlc3RvcmlF0aW9u>, available on 16.03.2018

<http://www.wiki-zero.com/index.php?q=aHR0cHM6Ly90ci53aWtpcGVkaWEub3JnL3dpa2kvMTkyN19Uw7xya2l5ZV9uw7xmdXNfc2F5xLFtxLE>, available on 16.03.2018.

<sup>119</sup> Yet it was even so, after the Turkification policies that led to the Armenian deportation of 1915 and the population exchange between Anatolian Greeks and Muslims living in Greece. Anatolia has undergone a dramatic demographic transformation. See Ayhan Aktar, Conversion of a ‘country’ into a ‘fatherland’: the case of Turkification examined, 1923–1934. *Nationalism in the troubled triangle*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 21-35.

unlettered peasantry of Anatolia.<sup>120</sup> When asked, an Anatolian peasant would most likely say that his nationality was Islam, not Turkish. Moreover, Turkey's Ottoman heritage of nomadic, tribal and feudal features still held as unfavorable components for its modernization. For a population that was used to identifying themselves as members of a tribe, family or religious order for many years, it was hard to embrace the idea of national citizenship.

What is more, the abolishment of first the Sultanate, second the Caliphate, then the declaration of the official state religion no more to be "Islam", all led to an identity confusion for the Turkish people. It was not until the loss of the Balkan-Christian population in 1912-1913 that a substantial portion of the Ottoman elite shifted to a Turkish national consciousness.<sup>121</sup> Only after the proclamation of the republic, the Turkish national identity was reinforced and lifted for the public. Now, officially, every Turkish citizen was considered a Turk regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.<sup>122</sup>

In contrast to the Turkish experience, Japan had a well-integrated population with a well-defined Japanese identity. Meiji therefore was spared the time the Turkish republican regime had to spend, struggling to build a national identity. Japan also was fortunate to avoid ethnic conflict of any kind that Turkey faced a number of times, because of its racially homogenous population.

Hereby I also need not to forget to mention that a counter-argument for the "Japanese uniqueness" theory has been developing, one among the *nihonjinron*.<sup>123</sup> In his book, "The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness", Peter Dale

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<sup>120</sup> Ward and Rustow, eds. *Political Modernization*, 460.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, 460.

<sup>122</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 3.

<sup>123</sup> *Nihonjinron* is a genre of texts that focus on issues of Japanese national and cultural identity which generally assume the uniqueness of the Japanese people. Some theses of the *Nihonjinron* include that the Japanese race is very unique to the point that it has no affinities with any other

discusses whether the Japanese really constitute a culturally and socially homogenous racial entity whose essence is virtually unchanged from prehistoric times to the present day. Harimu Befu also argues that comprehension of the unique features (of Japaneseness) supposedly requires belief in *nihonjinron* not rational or logical understanding, but an intuitive insight into Japanese culture that only natives can achieve.<sup>124</sup> Ando Shirley states in her article that the theory of Japaneseness is not based on research but on ambiguous explanations about culture and tradition.

#### 4.2 Cultural heritage

Cultural heritage also plays a massive role in the performances of the two countries that are on the path of modernization. The native Japanese heritage had been more flexible if compared to Turkish, as cultural borrowing had already been a Japanese tradition for long, and definitely nothing to be ashamed of. Japanese script, to begin with, was originally Chinese. Their literary, artistic and architectural genres and styles, Buddhist and Confucian thoughts and institutions, and many aspects of their political, legal, economic and social systems had been initially borrowed from China and subsequently naturalized in Japan.<sup>125</sup>

The Charter Oath of Meiji, in this context mentioned “*Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world.*” As the Treaty of Kanagawa opened up the doors

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race and that living in an island country, cut off from the rest of the world, the Japanese enjoy distinct seasons that shape Japanese thinking and behavior making the Japanese an extension of nature itself. Ando Shirley, “A Look at Nihonjinron: Theories of Japaneseness”, (Otemae Journal 10, 2009), 33-42.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, 34.

<sup>125</sup> Ward and Rustow, *Political Modernization*, 442.

of Japan, people benefited from all different kinds of academic textbooks coming from all around the West. They had access to important books of mathematics, astronomy, botany, pharmacology. One after another, during the 1870s, the thoughts of Mill, Bentham, Spencer, Tocqueville, Guizot and Rousseau concerning civil liberties, natural rights, utilitarianism and rational positivism became available in Japanese translation.<sup>126</sup> At the end of the day, the Japanese people quite pragmatically selected and studied what they thought to be profitable for them, and had no trouble adopting the Western ways of what we might call modern, including the attire. This is in fact self-evident, as in the year 1869, the best seller book in Japan was called *Seiyo Jido*, “The Conditions of the West”.<sup>127</sup>

For Turkey, on the other hand, cultural borrowing was not a common phenomenon. Along the same line as the Japanese, the Ottoman script was taken from the Arabs, as well as the religion. The literary forms were borrowed from Iran too. Nevertheless, when the issue was “learning from the West”, which also harbored the confirmation of Western superiority, it suddenly became problematic. The Ottoman Muslims, convinced that Islam was the last Abrahamic religion, the one true religion, were used to thinking they were undoubtedly the superior ones. They had an exaggerated estimate of their own value and importance as an Islamic nation which made them belittle the people of other faiths. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the non-Muslim minorities of the Ottoman Empire were made to wear distinct outfits to distinguish themselves, as it held importance to tell the Muslim from the non-Muslim. As a matter of fact, when the fez was introduced as a unifying headgear by Mahmud II, the Muslims, feeling they lost their superiority over the non-Muslim subjects of the empire, were rather uncomfortable about it.

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<sup>126</sup> James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*. (New York; London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), 175.

<sup>127</sup> İbrahim Okur, *Japonya, Bir Yükselişin Kısa Hikayesi*. (Bursa: Okursal Kitapları, 2009), 21.

Along parallel lines, after the promulgation of the republic, it was just as hard an assignment for the Turkish people to adapt to the Western way of dressing, given that they have considered it culturally inferior, and -even- infidel for centuries. Thus, it took the Turkish people a longer time- if compared with the Japanese- to overcome the sentimental struggles one faced along the orientation stage of modernization. In the Japanese case, since Japan did not have any abstractive philosophy or specific religion, Japanese did not hold hostility toward Christian Westerners as much as the Ottomans. The Japanese were willing to adopt whatever was favorable for themselves.<sup>128</sup> Due to the ease of their cultural borrowing for many centuries, the people had not undergone the pangs of cultural alienation when they put on the Western attire or the Western hat. In sum, speaking of cultural borrowing, we are dealing with two dissimilar countries.

### 4.3 Religion

Obviously, religion played an intensely crucial role in the modernizing performances of the two nations. Islam, to begin with, in its original conception, embraces theology, ethics, law and government, polity and society.<sup>129</sup> This all-embracing Shariah became the stronghold of traditionalism in Ottoman government and society introducing, as we may note in passing, a major difference between the Turkish and the Japanese modernization processes.<sup>130</sup> Although the Turkish state was declared secular, the Shariah courts were ended, and the sects and religious convents were abolished, the

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<sup>128</sup> Fumika Ochi, *Interaction between East and West concerning visual culture and fashion: Focus on Japan and Turkey*, MA thesis, Bilgi University, 2017, 32.

<sup>129</sup> Ward and Rustow, *Political Modernization*, 443.

<sup>130</sup> Halil İnalçık, "The nature of traditional society", in Ward and Rustow, 44.

Ulema remained a stubborn hindrance to progressive change in most cases, including change in the attire. Any attempt to renew the clothing codes or introduce new clothes triggered popular and religious backlashes.<sup>131</sup> Peaked caps, hats, especially homburgs and panamas, were signs of being a non-Muslim. Also, apart from their symbolic meaning, peaked caps and close-fit suits, jackets and pants were not suitable for praying in mosque because they made it difficult to perform prayers five times a day.<sup>132</sup>

In the Japanese case, after the crowning of Emperor Meiji, he became the head of religion as well, just like the Ottoman sultan-caliphs who were assigned the chief Muslim ruler. Although for the Japanese case, ‘the head of religion’ carried a more symbolic meaning than practical, Meiji ordered elements of Buddhism and Shintoism to be separated and the latter to be elevated over Confucianism. Yet, Confucianism was an ancient set of rules, more a humanistic tradition and a way of life. It had been embraced by the Shogunate as it supported the feudal system and social stability. Buddhism on the other hand, dealt primarily with the after-life. Meiji leadership needed a more this-worldly religion, a native one, Shinto in this case, with which the modernization endeavors could be reinforced. Hence, state Shinto was formulated out of the ancient nativist mythology. Carol Gluck states that it was created to be ‘the instrument of a modern monarchy that reflected Western principles and forms of ideology couched in a more Japanese context.’<sup>133</sup> The new leadership believed that the privileged Shinto doctrine and the state polity could back one another in providing the citizens’ obedience to the modernized

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<sup>131</sup> Metinsoy, *Everyday Resistance*, 14.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

<sup>133</sup> Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: ideology in the Late Meiji Period*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) in Esenbel, “The Anguish of Civilized Behavior, 171.

state. The government also included in the constitution of 1889 a clause guaranteeing freedom of religion.<sup>134</sup>

Shinto, furthermore, was formulated on the basis of understanding the world through reason. The rules and the teachings were thus, not unchangeable.<sup>135</sup> Islam, on the other hand, was not open for questioning and as a revealed religion, changing anything in it was unthinkable and considered an act of *kufur*, heresy. Crucial to the topic at hand, neither the Confucian thought, nor a Buddhist, or a Shintoist priest raised a religious opposition to any of the progressive changes, including the modernization of the Japanese attire. Niyazi Berkes writes in his travel memoirs, that religious conservatism is something Japanese people simply do not know anything about.<sup>136</sup>

There had also been a spread of Christianity in Japan, starting from the 16th century. After the collapse of the Tokugawa rule, Meiji leaders lifted the old ban on Christianity. Catholic missionaries as well as the later comer Protestant and Evangelist priests visited the country frequently and built up schools, hospitals and orphanages. By the end of the century, somewhat less than one percent of all the Japanese professed to be Christians.<sup>137</sup>

In Japan, transitivity between faiths was also possible, for example, one could celebrate his/her wedding in Shinto tradition, whereas organize a funeral ceremony according to Buddhist principles, and does not get condemned for

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<sup>134</sup> Robert N. Bellah, "Religious aspects of modernization in Turkey and Japan", 5.

<sup>135</sup> İsmail Tokalak, *İslam Ülkeleri Neden Geri Kaldı?: İslam Ülkelerinin Ekonomik, Politik, Sosyal Gelişimi*. (İstanbul: Gülerboy Yayıncılık, 201), 285.

<sup>136</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *Asya Mektupları*, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999), 239.

<sup>137</sup> McClain, *Japan*, 271.

it.<sup>138</sup> In the Ottoman Empire, however, conversion from Islam was inadmissible.<sup>139</sup>

Besides, religion did not hold as an intense and significant a place in Japanese people's lives, as it was the case in Turkish people's lives. What counted for the Japanese, or in other words, what united them, was their "Japaneseness". In fact, when we translate the words 'national' and 'religious', we end up with the same word in Japanese language, meaning, there is not a concept of religiosity apart from the nationality.<sup>140</sup>

Moreover, the historical rivalry between Christianity and Islam presented a very different psychological environment from the Buddhist and the Shinto animistic heritage of Japan, one that did not pose an immediate threat to Westerners.<sup>141</sup> Besides, there was not a predominant clerical class in Japan, not comparable to the Turkish ulema, anyway. Ulema resisted political, economic, social changes that might lessen their dominance or power over the people, or Western novelties that might jeopardize their vested interest. They hotly rejected the newly introduced hat, claiming it was an infidel garment as it prevented the head to touch the ground during the performing of the namaz. Hence, Japan was fortunate enough to spare the troubles of religious resistance to change and thus, religious revivalism. One other major point to note is that, Shinto as a religion was more suitable for secularization, thus it is not, unlike Islam, an all-embracing religion that raises the claim to organize every domain of life, including the state affairs.

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<sup>138</sup> Osman Selim Kocahanoğlu, *Yeni Türkiye'nin Doğuşu: Cumhuriyetin Kuruluş Hikayesi*. (İstanbul: Temel Yayınları, 2013), 145.

<sup>139</sup> Selim Deringil, "There is no compulsion in religion: on conversion and apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire: 1839–1856." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42.3 (2000), 565.

<sup>140</sup> Berkes, *Asya Mektupları*, 228.

<sup>141</sup> Esenbel, "Modernization of Japan and Turkey", 221.

#### 4.4 Leadership characteristics and the display of the civilized image

If we examine the leadership characteristics of the two reformers, the countries in question show parallels. First, both ruling elite cadres considered their modernization projects synonymous with Westernization. Second, modernization, as a process, requires determination and persistence. Mustafa Kemal and Meiji definitely showed the qualities of a decisive and persistent leadership who systematically modernized the political, economic and social landscape of their countries, including the attire of their people. Both leaders were determined to make the appearance of the public conform to what they envisage as the civilized standards of the advanced nations and also made exemplars out of themselves for the public, as well as their wives, to encourage the adoption of the Western wardrobe.

Furthermore, both Meiji of Japan and Atatürk of Turkey propelled the Westernization of the attire and etiquette in order to display a crucially civilized image to the outer world. Alev Çınar argues that one of the reasons why the female body, especially women's clothing and public visibility, became a significant means through which the state could display Turkey's new image as a secular nation-state in the early years of the republic was the European perceptions of the Ottomans, which were shaped by Orientalist representations of veiled women hidden behind the harem.<sup>142</sup> Atatürk himself was utterly annoyed when the fez became the object of mockery in Europe. "Uncivilized people", he said on one occasion, "are doomed to remain under the feet of those who are civilized."<sup>143</sup> The Meiji leaders were also very sensitive about foreigners making fun of them.<sup>144</sup> "So foreigners will not laugh

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<sup>142</sup> Alev Çınar, *Modernity, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey*, (University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 60 in Adak, "Anti-Veiling Campaigns" in *Women and the City*, 48.

<sup>143</sup> Mustafa Baydar, Atatürk diyor ki, (İstanbul Varlık yayınları:1957), 46, in Lewis, *Emergence of modern Turkey*, 268.

<sup>144</sup> Esenbel, "The Anguish of Civilized Behavior", 181.

at you” was written on many tablets in public spaces to inculcate the new image of Japanese society.<sup>145</sup> Both leaders attached great importance to achieve a civilized image worthy of respect in the eyes of the West. Meiji however, was more concerned on the “Western audience” than was Atatürk, even to the point of obsession. Meiji believed that only by achieving the adoption of the Western attire, style and etiquette, meaning, proving the world that Japan is one among the civilized league, would the unequal treaties successfully be revised. The extinction of the eyebrow-shaving and teeth-blackening practices clearly came about because these customs appeared strange, even revolting to the eyes of foreigners who came to Japan, and in ordinance issued by the Grand Council of State in 1870 prohibited them.<sup>146</sup> Thus, it would be fair to say that, Meiji, in a distinctive way, carried out the reforms of dress pragmatically, as one part of a particular political agenda.

Another fact that needs to be mentioned is that the reach of both countries’ reforms was often insufficient. In both cases, the adoption of the Western dress was limited to urban upper middle classes, as the modernized dress was mostly worn by the professionals and the elite. In the country, and at home however, many still wore traditional clothing. In the Turkish case, rural and tribal women were affected the least, because of their limited contact with the market and the big cities and also the lack of economic resources.<sup>147</sup> In fact, the modernization projects of both leaders were top down experiences, imposed from above upon obedient Turkish and Japanese citizens. It was neither the

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Slade, *Japanese Fashion*, 116.

<sup>147</sup> Hale, *Becoming Turkish*, 82.

Japanese nor the Turkish mass public that had demanded it as a result of inner dynamics.

#### **4.5 A break with the past / Self-defense concerns**

As noted, Meiji as a leader was more concerned on the “Western audience” than was Atatürk, however, Atatürk was more concerned for the Western attire, mainly for the Western hat, for more nationally domestic reasons. For him, the fez symbolized the Ottoman past he wished to cut links with. The new republican regime also aimed to separate the Turkish population from the rest of previous Ottoman populations in Balkans, North Africa and Arabian Peninsula, who continued to wear the fez. In this regard, the abolition of the fez was a part of nation-building process which emphasized the difference of Turkishness from the Islamic community (*ummah*).<sup>148</sup> Now that the empire had been dissolved, abolishing the fez, and making the wearing of it punishable by law, proved a definite rupture that signified the end of a backward era and the start of a secular state.

When Emperor Meiji declared that his subjects would “seek knowledge in the world and promote the conditions of the emperor’s reign,” all knew that this meant a recognition of the superiority of the civilization in Europe and America and the necessity to learn from it.<sup>149</sup> Although we could also mark Meiji’s Charter Oath -especially the clause that specifies “Evil customs of the past shall be broken off and everything based upon the just laws of nature”- as a signifier of a rupture with Japan’s feudal past, it is not just as solid a break as for the

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<sup>148</sup> Metinsoy, “Everyday Resistance, 11.

<sup>149</sup> Aydin, *The politics of anti-Westernism*, 26.

Turks who had to fight an extremely bitter war for its independence and at the same time lost a mighty empire to build a nation-state.

Another point worth looking at is that Japan's move of modernization was first carried out as a measure of self-defense against the imperialistic West that was marching towards Asia. İnalçık contends that Meiji personified the idea of reform as he experienced a challenge of foreign intervention.<sup>150</sup> This challenge was partly eliminated by building a remarkably strong army based on Western models.

If we looked at the Turkish case, we will also see a country that strived to remain uncolonized and independent throughout her history, although she had been alarmed by foreign attacks and fought against them continuously. Yet again, by the 19th century much of its finance had been controlled by Western powers. Only after the triumph of the war of independence and the conclusion of the Lausanne Treaty, was Turkey relieved of her security concerns. Thus, the Japanese national security fears were more intense of a drive for its modernization, if compared to the Turkish case which felt herself more at ease after 1923.

However, what we could mark the two countries as similar in this respect would be their strong intentions to remain free from the capitulations and foreign intervention. The Meiji rule, as stated many times in the second chapter, wanted the revision of unequal treaties that imposed unfair tariff and exchange rates upon Japan. It was a common goal for the successor of the Ottoman Empire, as it had suffered from it similarly, given that for a time she even lost the collection of the state revenues to the Western powers. Thus, Japan's main drive to modernize came out of the fear of imperialistic intervention that might come in the future, whereas Turkey's main drive for

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<sup>150</sup> İnalçık, "The nature of traditional society", in Ward and Rustow, 45.

modernization came out of the sufferings of what she had gone through in the Ottoman past.

#### **4.6 Women's visibility in society**

By means of visibility of women in the society, the two countries in question have been developing in analogy. Both the Ottoman and the pre-modern Japanese women had been segregated from men in the society for many centuries. With their projects of modernization, balls had been used as ideological tools to present a vision of emancipated and modern women. Men and women entertaining together and partnering in dances, in complete Western fashion and groom, was a revolutionary phenomenon for such intensely paternal and traditional societies as Japan and Turkey. Both countries implemented new schools of etiquette, using methods that ranged from propaganda to persuasion. The new rules were initially promoted by the elites. Both Japanese and Turkish women read fashion magazines and journals and compared themselves with their Western counterparts. Both countries' presses promoted the new codes of dress and new codes of etiquette. Children textbooks also contributed to the promotion of civilized manners. The famous Rokumeikan Building and The Deer Cry Pavilion became the stage for the ballroom dances and receptions in Japan, so did Ankara Palas for Turkey.

However, as Meiji took pains with the civilized imagery of Japanese women, yet again he fell short in providing them with civil rights. In 1889, the Meiji Constitution determined the definition of a family with father/husband as the head. The Civil Code was also announced similar to the French model which was revised later in 1898, according to which, monogamy was the only form of recognized legal marriage. However, the new code subordinated women to the head of the family, vesting all the power in his hands, as before. The primary duty of a woman was to provide the head of the household with a male

heir and always remain well-mannered and virtuous. Once a woman got married, she could no longer testify in court or do business without the husband's consent. The Meiji women were still denied voting rights and involvement in politics.<sup>151</sup> As much as a Japanese woman looked enlightened and modern, dancing with men at the balls in complete Western high-fashion dresses and Victorian hair, wearing accessories such as umbrellas, jewelry and hats, they remained far behind their Western counterparts when it came to their rights.

In the Turkish case, however, the emancipation of the women was just as important for Atatürk, as the civilized imagery of them. Women were given rights that were radical even for the time. Together with the Westernized look, the Western mentality was as well to be adopted. In fact, for him, the image was the easier task to accomplish, the harder task was to abolish the backward mind-set and the superstitions. In this respect, Falih Rıfkı Atay calls the hat and dress reforms “not a matter of headgear, a matter of the head itself”.<sup>152</sup> As Hale Yılmaz puts it;

In the post-Ottoman era, women's issues, including their appearance, rapidly evolved into a fundamental concern for the new Turkish regime. Women came to symbolize the secular modernity of the new Turkish nation, and their inclusion in the emerging national community (through education, employment, and other forms of participation in public life) came to be seen as a requirement of national progress.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> During the Meiji Restoration, the key phrase the Japanese would have used to describe their goals for women was *ryosai kenbo*, meaning “good wife and wise mother”. Japanese women of the Meiji era, by Angie Jo & Andrew W. Yoon, <https://andrewy12.wordpress.com/2010/05/29/japanese-women-of-the-meiji-era>, available on 19.03.2018

<sup>152</sup> Özdemir, “Şapka devrimi”, 41.

<sup>153</sup> Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 77.

In sum, in spite of its shortcomings, the Turkish republican regime seems to have prioritized the place of women in society, their political participation and their rights and, if compared to Japan, not only in appearance, but also in essence. After all, as Jenny B. White states, Turkey was one of the most important success stories of women's empowerment in the early twentieth century.<sup>154</sup> As Adak puts it, redefining women as equal citizens in the public sphere was at the heart of the Kemalist understanding of women's emancipation. In other words, the public sphere was the milieu where women would be refashioned as modern, equal, and active citizen subjects.<sup>155</sup> It should be underlined, however, Kemalist perception of women's emancipation did not envision women's participation in the public sphere as a denial of patriarchal gender roles. In other words, women would be part of the public sphere as asexual subjects and their primary role as mothers and house managers would remain intact.<sup>156</sup>

#### **4.7 Clothes as symbols and eclectic dressing**

Throughout the history of mankind, people distinguished themselves through their clothes. Yet, it is noteworthy to state that in the 19th century's world it held much importance how you dressed than today, especially for the civil bureaucracy. By the way you dressed, you automatically showed where you politically stood. Clothing had also been one of the major symbols of civilization and modernity. It made a representation of who you were and whether you were progressive or patriot enough. As Ross masterly puts it, since clothing is, inescapably a demonstration of identity, wearing clothes- or for that matter not doing so- is inevitably a political act, in the widest possible

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<sup>154</sup> Jenny B. White, "State feminism, modernization, and the Turkish republican woman." *NWSA Journal* 15, no. 3 (2003): 145.

<sup>155</sup> Sevgi Adak, "Anti-Veiling Campaigns" in *Women and the City*, 48.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid*, 65.

sense of that word.<sup>157</sup> In the Japanese and Turkish cases, Western attire as well as the Western manners became symbols of modernity and carried strong political messages for an individual.

In the Turkish case, the fez, as well as the *çarşaf* and the face veil came to politically symbolize backwardness by the 1920s in Turkey, so did the traditions of teeth-blackening and eyebrow-shaving in Japan. Instead of wearing the traditional long hair done up in a top-knot, men cut their hair.<sup>158</sup> Certain items of clothing, like hats in the Turkish case, or certain ways of grooming the hair, like in the Japanese case were particularly important, as these symbols sent instant signals of ascribed and aspired social status. In Turkey, speaking French and using European-style furniture also became symbols of modernity.<sup>159</sup>

Japan and Turkey also show some parallel developments in their mixtures of Western and native cultures, of modernity and tradition as well. Japan definitely went after a certain eclectic way of using the two ways: a combination of *Wa and Yo*. Japanese inside, Western outside, or in other words kimono at home, Western dress at work. The common people were much more flexible in their choices, while the elite who got in interaction with the Westerners more often, were expected to be more cautious with their dress. This *Wa and Yo* formula gave the Japanese people a comfortable feeling, a cushion so to say, thus it provided them a chance to prove 'modern' by the Western attire and at the same time, preserve their Japanese identity by the traditional attire. This saved them the psychological pangs of a cultural shift, such as this. After all, as Walter F. Weiker puts it, in some situations a degree

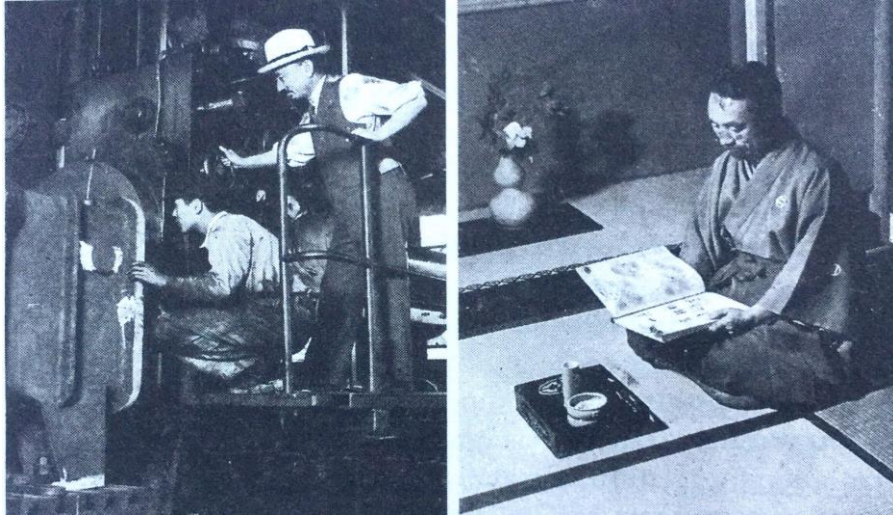
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<sup>157</sup> Ross, *Clothing*, 12.

<sup>158</sup> Meyer, *Japan*, 162.

<sup>159</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 22.

of traditionality can be both functional in resolving certain problems of development, and more satisfying psychologically to individuals undergoing rapid change than full modernity might be.<sup>160</sup>



**Figure 4.1** Western at work, Japanese at home. Wa/Yo modernity ideal. Edgar Lajtha, *La Vie Au Japan*. Source: Selçuk Esenbel, *Japon Modernleşmesi ve Osmanlı*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), 264.

Furthermore, due to this flexible formula, the disengagement of the common people with the elite was not observed in Japan as much as in Turkey, the latter of which in this case, failed to develop a hybrid dress code such as Western outside, Turkish inside, like Japan did. However, in like fashion, Turkish people in the streets and in the marketplace opted for a different mixture of clothes. Men put on their heads neither fez or turban nor new hats, but conical hats, woven skullcaps, brimless or less brimmed hats like peaked (kasket). Many continued to wear their traditional headgears in private realms, they took them off in official places and town centers.<sup>161</sup> In his book that portrays a

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<sup>160</sup> Walter F. Weiker, *The modernization of Turkey: from Atatürk to the present day*. (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1981), introduction xvii.

<sup>161</sup> Metinsoy, "Everyday Resistance, 40.

record of two years of travel to Turkey by late 1920s, Harold Armstrong states his observation on how the ordinary people eclectically dressed after the Republican reforms. He mentions that the people mainly kept their old-fashioned shoes and trousers and mixed them with European coats and hats.<sup>162</sup> Esenbel also states that there was a certain eclectic pattern for the veil as well, as the veil and the Western dress were not interchangeable for the women.<sup>163</sup> Weiker believes that preservation of many basic traditions, alongside modernization, including those of religion, folkways, and ties of kinship is one of Turkey's achievements of its modernization. Retention of these traditions has helped cushion the trauma of many Turks subjected to rapid changes of many kinds.<sup>164</sup> Nevertheless, it remains a fact that the orientation stage for the modernized attire were more traumatic for the Turkish people if compared with the Japanese, due to above stated reasons.

Another aspect that Japan and Turkey shared in their projects of the 'modernization of the wardrobe' was that both nations had difficulty to afford the newly introduced Western items. Especially for the low-income people the new dress codes meant new costs. In fact, in the Turkish case, poverty was both a reason and an excuse for failure to comply with the local decrees.<sup>165</sup> Even though the state officials, as well as the religious officials were offered advance payments to purchase hats, or Sümerbank production of affordable overcoats were promoted, the cost still held a hindrance in the adoption of it.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Harold Armstrong, *Turkey and Syria Reborn: A Record of Two Years of Travel*, (London: J. Lane, 1930), 122. in Murat Metinsoy, 27.

<sup>163</sup> Esenbel, "The Anguish of Civilized Behavior", 187.

<sup>164</sup> Weiker, *The modernization of Turkey*, 241.

<sup>165</sup> Yilmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 126.

<sup>166</sup> Sümerbank was a major state-owned economic enterprise that pioneered Turkey's industrial development, including its textile industry, which produced high quality, relatively inexpensive textiles for mass consumption, *Ibid*.

A kimono, also, was very cheap and extremely durable, in this respect considerably cheaper if compared to Western clothing, which were somewhat much less durable. In his trip to Japan, Niyazi Berkes was surprised to find out that Japanese women took pride in donning the kimono that once belonged to their great-grandmother.<sup>167</sup>

#### 4.8 Education levels

It is also noteworthy to state that during the 200 years rule of the seclusionist Tokugawa Shogunate, the island had developed an advanced and peaceful economic, cultural order while in Ottoman Empire there were continuous struggles. Meiji Japan also inherited relatively much higher rates of literacy from the Shogunate, if compared to what Turkish republic had inherited from the Ottoman Empire. By the end of the 19th century, Japanese society was a highly literate one and could increase its total literacy from about 20 percent in 1868 to close to 80 percent for all of the population.<sup>168</sup> R.P. Dore also estimates that on the eve of the Restoration, perhaps forty to fifty percent of all Japanese boys and fifteen percent of the girls were receiving formal schooling outside the home.<sup>169</sup> Turkey on the other hand, had a very low level of literacy and secular education by the beginning of the 20th century. Recent studies suggest the literacy rate of the general Muslim population was probably only 2–3 percent in the early 1800s, which however increased to a sizeable 15 percent by the end of the nineteenth century, due to new schools and

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<sup>167</sup> Berkes, *Asya Mektupları*, 219.

<sup>168</sup> Esenbel, “The Anguish of Civilized Behavior, 169.

<sup>169</sup> Ward and Rustow, *Political Modernization*, 455.

educational reforms.<sup>170</sup> As a matter of fact, before the early 19th century, the Ottoman state never accepted responsibility for the basic education of its subjects. Hence no formal system of public education then existed.<sup>171</sup> After the proclamation of the republic, even at the primary level, the state was only able to reach a limited segment of the population. The overall primary school attendance rate was lower than 40 percent in 1927.<sup>172</sup> Since education, - to borrow from Frey-, will provide the state with its first opportunity to mold the ideas and opinions of its citizens, the school system is a major agency for inducing consensus.<sup>173</sup> Japan in this respect made a way more advantageous start with its modernization.

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<sup>170</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, "Ottoman population 1830-1914: Demographic and social characteristics." (Wisconsin University Press, 1985) in Esenbel, "The Anguish of Civilized Behavior, 170.

<sup>171</sup> Frederick W. Frey in Ward and Rustow, 211.

<sup>172</sup> Jessica Selma Tiregöl, "The Role of Primary Education in Nation-state-building: The Case of the Early Turkish Republic (1923-1938)." PhD diss., (Princeton University, 1998), 185, in Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish*, 244.

<sup>173</sup> Frederick W. Frey in Ward and Rustow, 206.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

Japan and Turkey have had to undergo a dynamic yet at times a traumatic pace of civilizational shift in the process of constructing modernity.<sup>174</sup> As part of social experiments aimed at the creation of modern societies, the ruling cadres promoted the Western wardrobe. This promotion in both cases contained economic, social and psychological components. The efforts propelled by Meiji Japan and Republican Turkey both strived to parry the security concerns that arose from the threat of Western imperialism. The adoption of the Western clothes symbolized both countries' aspirations for civilization and modernity. The new attires as the European hat, pants, and dresses as well as the abandonment of the fez and the veil, the top-knot or eyebrow shaving, and teeth-blackening practices provided powerful symbols that signified a break from their Ottoman and Tokugawa pasts. After all, in revolutionary epochs, the targets and implications of radical changes in symbols are as important as the content of those symbols and novelties.<sup>175</sup> The symbolic changes through the transformation of the wardrobes and rules of etiquette of the two societies

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<sup>174</sup> Selçuk Esenbel, "A Comparison of Turkish and Japanese Attitudes Toward Modern National Identity." *Japan, Turkey and the world of Islam: The writings of Selçuk Esenbel*. (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2011), 201.

<sup>175</sup> Metinsoy, *Everyday Resistance*, 11.

served to erase the “backward” image and achieve a civilized one worthy of respect in the eyes of the West.

By means of leadership characteristics, the radicalness of the Meiji reform quest compared in spirit to the radicalness and iconoclasm of the Turkish Republican Revolution after 1923 under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.<sup>176</sup> Both leaders aimed for rapid and progressive change in wardrobe in order to stand upon a similar footing with the Western world, yet, Meiji specifically had a political agenda to revise the unequal treaties imposed upon Japan. Both were persistent and decisive enough to take the necessary steps toward the reforms. Yet, Atatürk, in particular, aimed to go beyond cosmetic modernization and included women’s emancipation in his reforms. His main concern was with women’s segregation and exclusion from the public sphere.<sup>177</sup>

In this study, the wardrobe modernity stories of Meiji Japan and Republican Turkey have been compared, and the findings show that Japan had major favorable components on the way of implementing the reforms. To start with, the feeling of uniformity among its people and a well-defined national identity paved the way for a Japanese nation-state, while the Turkish people lacked the feeling of belonging to a nation. Turkish population was ethnically, religiously and linguistically diverse. On the other hand, having a racially homogenous population, common language, and religion, Japan had the advantage of not

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<sup>176</sup> Selçuk Esenbel, “Remarks on the Modernization of Japan and Turkey in the 18th and 19th centuries.” *Japan, Turkey and the world of Islam: The writings of Selçuk Esenbel*. (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2011), 219.

<sup>177</sup> Sevgi Adak, “Anti-Veiling Campaigns” in *Women and the City, Women in the City*, 42.

having to deal with any ethnic or religious-based uprisings. Furthermore, the geographical advantages of Japan- that being a secluded island with naturally defined borders, and yet, for centuries- enabled her to pursue modernization reforms easier.

By means of religion, Japan and Turkey have been markedly different. In the Turkish modernization movement, the principal difficulties stemmed from the religious basis of the traditional society and state.<sup>178</sup> As stated, Shinto as a religion was more suitable for secularization, thus it is not, unlike Islam, an all-embracing religion that raises the claim to organize every domain of life. Furthermore, the Islamic scholars, ulema, could be a challenge for Western novelties, the Western attire not being an exception to this. The newly invented religion, state Shinto, on the other hand, raised no claims against dressing and living within a Western fashion. Yet, neither prevalent religions in Japan constituted a clerical class, comparable in number or dominance to the Turkish ulema anyway. Berkes also states that the Japanese people took pride in their nationality, not in their religion.<sup>179</sup> On the contrary, and most apparently, in Turkey, religion had been the main indicator in people's self-identification.<sup>180</sup> Thus, Japan spared the problems of disentanglement of religion and politics of secularization which have so seriously beset the endeavors of Turkey.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> İnalçık, "Traditional society", in Ward and Rustow, *Political Modernization*, 63.

<sup>179</sup> Berkes, *Asya Mektupları*, 211.

<sup>180</sup> Findley, *Turkey, Islam, nationalism, and modernity*, 61.

<sup>181</sup> Ward and Rustow, *Political Modernization*, 443.

Japan also inherited a way more favorable economic condition from the Tokugawa period, having enjoyed a prosperous and equally peaceful time for more than two centuries, while what Turkey inherited from the 20th century Ottoman Empire was an economic ruin of bitter wars. Since education provides the state one of the most effective ways to implement its policies and ideals to the people, -in this case the ideal of becoming a modern and civilized citizen-, a much lower level of education also comes up as one of the reasons why Turkish modernization lagged behind the case of Japan's rapid modernization.

Furthermore, in contrast to Japan, the Ottoman Empire had been in interaction with the West since the end of the middle ages, due to frequent wars and economic relations between them. The Ottoman interest in Western culture as a medium of reform was quite late and began with the first serious steps taken toward reforming the major military institutions of the Empire in the eighteenth century.<sup>182</sup> The geographical closeness was also significant, it was already a part of Europe. Japan, on the other hand, was ruled by an isolationist government with little interaction with the West and geographically it was a remote small island, which remained free from pressure of outsiders for centuries, unlike the Ottoman Empire which had been under constant threat of Europe. Due to its intense historical interaction with the West, one would normally expect that the Ottoman Empire or its successor Turkish republic would have carried out its Westernization policies more successfully if compared to a secluded island. On the contrary, as Murat Belge mentions, the Turkish modernization had lagged behind that of Japan and had not reached its

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<sup>182</sup> Esenbel, "The Anguish of Civilized Behavior", 167.

speed, depth, and will.<sup>183</sup> It even seems that, after all, the closeness of the Turks ended up being a disadvantage and the remoteness of the Japanese ended up being an advantage in the adoption of the modernization endeavors.<sup>184</sup>

Keeping some things traditional or native like the kimono or the veil helped the people ease the pain of an alien culture and avoid the stress of modernity. Although Turkish people also developed a certain eclectic way of dressing, like a pair of traditional pants combined with a Western hat, Japanese people's confrontation with a foreign culture was much less traumatic when compared to Turkish people's, due to their *Wa and Yo* formula. This, the Japanese people also owe to their more flexible cultural borrowing tradition which definitely becomes a problem for the Turkish people when it comes to the adoption of Western novelties. For them, this was - what Lewis calls- 'the stigmata of inferiority'<sup>185</sup>. At the end of the day, the two countries had a different pace of adoption of the Westernized wardrobe and etiquette, but most apparently, while in Turkey it was a very uneasy transition and many resistances broke out in various cities, the Japanese achieved this without social unrest.

In both cases, at first the Western attire was limited to offices and urban and wealthier areas, yet, in time the adoption increased, and the traditional wardrobe gradually gave way to the modern. Both projects of wardrobe modernity had at least in some respects revolutionary consequences. Meiji

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<sup>183</sup> Murat Belge, *Militarist Modernleşme: Almanya, Japonya ve Türkiye*. (İstanbul:İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 394.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid*, 395.

<sup>185</sup> Lewis, *The emergence of modern Turkey*, 101.

Japan and Republican Turkey both have propelled the modernity of their wardrobe and etiquette successfully, yet it seems evident that- if compared to Turkey- Japan had more favorable components to undergo an enviable modernization and had fewer problems to deal with along the way. The above-mentioned features could not have offered Japan a more fortunate combination for a successful modernization. Thus, the modernity penetrated the Japanese society in deeper dimensions and the Japanese people achieved more integration.

The two countries present us with an important opportunity to structure an understanding of how and why states implement clothing laws in attempt to modernize and in which ways they succeeded or failed. I hope that this study will contribute to our ability to make further comparisons on Japanese-Turkish modernization processes.

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