

THE MEANING OF MODERNITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF TURKISH
IMMIGRANTS IN THE U.S.

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department
of Sociology
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By
Feyza Aslan
July, 2014

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the ways Turkish-Americans reason and discuss modernity. The purpose of this study is to discover broader issues of culture and how it fits into the larger scheme of meanings surrounding life. Contemporary debates depend on what culture is and how it is linked to people's views and practices. Culture is often assumed to motivate individuals' action through internalized values and beliefs. However, Ann Swidler suggests an alternative framework, a cultural tool kit, which indicates how culture is utilized and how it is related to action. In the scope of this study, I employed Swidler's (1986; 2001) cultural tool kit approach to explore what Turkish-Americans think about modernity, what resources they have for thinking about modernity and also how they think about it, in order to retrace how culture operates in the lives of ordinary people. Studying modernity in the context of national identity and experience provides a useful analytic for examining Turkish history. Drawing from qualitative interview data, Turkish negotiations concerning what it means to be modern revealed the complexities and contradictions associated with modernity, as well as how it is expressed, negotiated and challenged in daily life.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Modernity has been and continues to be such a transformative and constitutive part of the social, political, cultural, and economic life of Turkey that it has been at the core of scholarly debates of Turkey for generations. Modernity has also been a central paradigm in Western literature and the U.S. context. Thinking of my interviewees as cultural resources themselves, I wanted to know how they mixed, adopted and distanced different components of the culture of modernity related to both Turkey and the U.S.

Various concepts and interpretations of modernity reveal the agency behind these reconstructions and redefinitions. As Swidler states, “cultures are complex and contradictory, and even a common culture can be used in very different ways” (2001:6). Studying modernity as a cultural object provides a significant place where we can see “culture in action” and how peoples are active agents. Thus, the cultural tool kit approach provides a valuable opportunity to see how individuals use culture creatively in multiple ways when they talk about modernity.

Indeed, understanding the meaning of modernity necessitates not only a delving into ample theoretical discussions, but also a look at particular spaces in daily life. Discovering areas where modernity has been expressed, negotiated and challenged in daily life can demonstrate an all-inclusive image of modernity. Therefore, this study's subsequent chapters will illustrate modernity as well as its relationship with controversial areas such as gender, religion and traditional culture which constitute auspicious grounds when one is looking for different instances of modernity.

How Does Culture Work?

There has been a broad survey of sociological work on culture as it has been identified by sociologists, past and present. For Durkheim, culture has been viewed as a key component of social functioning as it provides shared norms and values. However the Marxist tradition sees culture as more of a set of ideologies that consolidates the power of the dominant classes. While both functionalists and conflict theorists observe culture in a more objective form, a symbolic interactionist would view culture as an intersubjective realm where meanings and symbols are created by subjective responses and reactions which lay emphasis on agency (Wray 2014). The term “agency”—reactions of individuals—has been very central in the discussion of culture and its relationship with human actions.

The early insights of culture and action delineated by Weber (1946) and Parsons (1937) assumes that action is formed by culture, as culture provides absolute ends or values which orients actions. The alternative analysis of Ann Swidler (1986) asserts that culture influences action more by shaping a repertoire or an oddly assorted tool kit of habits, skills, and customs from which individuals build strategies of action. For Swidler, explaining human action with regard to values or interests is an inadequate assessment since actions are not built up one by one by having one end goal in mind at each act, or, but rather made up from greater accumulations that she refers to as “strategies of action”. Swidler sees culture as influencing action as it forms the capacities which these strategies of action are derived from. Instead of being one united system which channels action in a constant direction, culture has more various, mostly contradictory symbols, rituals, stories, and directors to action. Thus, individuals are not passive “cultural dopes” (Garfinkel 1967; Wrong 1961), but

more creative and skilled social actors making use of a cultural tool kit or repertoire as they pick up divergent fragments when assembling lines of action. Rather than considering the individuals as passive recipients and interpreters of a common cultural material, drawing on Ann Swidler's approach to culture and action, this study explains the various and multiple ways how the culture is used by Turkish immigrant in the quest for the meaning of modernity.

Analyzing "The Culture in Action"

Since the mid-1960's, three main developments transformed the ways in which culture was studied and analyzed (Swidler 1995). The focus on analyzing culture shifted with Geertz's approach in the 1970's (i.e., *thick description*) from how people's actions are shaped by culture to what culture means to the individuals who engage with it. For Geertz (1973), the central task of cultural analysis should be public vehicles of meanings. This redefinition of the object of cultural analysis gave a new direction to the study of culture to accessible public objects from subjective aspects of culture. Another revolution in cultural analysis originated with the focus on embodied and institutionalized practices, by the works of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) and Michel Foucault (2011). Locating culture in social practices revitalized cultural studies to draw attention to human agency and analysis of institutions. The third important impact on cultural analysis was the focus on power and inequality (Lamont and Wuthnow 1990). This approach defines culture itself as a form of power. With the focus on inequality, Bourdieu (1984) claims that culture is used in creative ways in a system of inequality by actors to advance their own interests. Swidler's main understanding of studying culture is rethinking how culture works. Swidler (2001) defines culture as a set of symbolic vehicles –including rituals, stories, sayings–

which people share and learn, but more importantly for her is how culture is used by social actors. She believes that “cultural analysts have been interested in describing how one culture differs from another, leaving aside the question of how actors might navigate among competing cultural systems and how the polysemy and multivocality of cultural symbols might shape the ways people actually bring culture to bear on experience” (2001:3). Hence, for her, people do not merely have different cultures; they have diverse and creative manners of organizing and using a common culture. She uses “the repertoire of an artist” as a metaphor to describe the ways culture is like a set of skills:

Perhaps we do best to think of culture as a repertoire, like of an actor, a musician, or a dancer. This image suggests that culture cultivates skills and habits in its users, so that one can be more or less good at the cultural repertoire one performs, and such cultured capacities may exist both as discrete skills, habits, and orientations and, in larger assemblages, like the pieces a musician has mastered or the plays an actor has performed. It is in this sense that people have an array of cultural resources upon which they draw. We can ask not only what pieces are in the repertoire, but why some are performed at one time, some at another. (2001:25)

We can see that such an approach addresses two main issues which constitute the backbone of this study of modernity. The first is, cultural diversity, including the variety of cultural resources available to particular individuals and groups. Second, it accounts for the multiple ways people hold or use culture.

Culture From Outside In: Various Cultural Resources

Considering cultural diversity and the various cultural resources, we need to look deeper into what culture looks like. Jepperson and Swidler (1994) suggest that culture is more like a metaconcept, which encompasses a fundamental contrasts instead of a unified entity. The broad semantic field of culture includes a list of the following:

Codes, rules, schemas, models;
Identities, practices, recipes, strategies, norms, values;
Convention, custom, tradition;
Symbols, signs, rituals;
Knowledge, discourse, representations, doctrine, ideology;
Ethos, style. (P. 360)

This outline, which remains open-ended, shapes the cultural equipment which comprises the cultured capacities of individuals. Cultured capacities make up the actor's basic repertoires for action and form a strategy of action (Swidler 2001). In exploring the cultural capacities one must not only look at what goes in the minds of particular individuals, as Swidler (1995, 2001) believes that there are larger settings that influence action "from the outside in." These contexts Swidler names are codes, contexts and institutions. According to Swidler, these three resources make up a fundamental connection between culture and action as they structure the external environment of meanings that directs individuals, and supplies those meanings consistency. Thus, these resources have been essential in this study when looking at the way external features shape and reinforce the ways Turkish immigrants approach modernity.

Swidler (2001) defines codes as "a self-referential system of meanings in which each element in the system takes its meanings not from its inherent properties or from some external referent, but from the meanings created by the code itself" (p. 162). Such a definition implies that whatever individuals think about codes, they are nonetheless powerful because of their widespread acceptance. Swidler (2001) provides an example of codes with a study of Christmas gift-giving in Middletown (Caplow 1982). Giving Christmas gifts is in Middletown's culture as people spend a great amount of time and money buying gifts. However the interviews with Middletown residents revealed that people do not have faith in Christmas gift giving.

In fact, they are highly critical of it. Many of them express their concerns about the commercialization of Christmas and the fact that buying and giving gifts are a waste of money. Caplow (1982) found a simple semiotic code which explains why people still give Christmas gifts. People believed that the value of the gift signaled the related importance of the receiver. This study explained that what guides human actions is not mostly what goes inside the minds of individuals but the publicly shared knowledge of how their attitude would be perceived by others.

Context is also another important domain in studying culture because the influence and power of a particular culture depend on the social context. When the context implements public cultural consistency, the culture becomes more influential and coherent (Swidler 1995, 2001). At first, context can be considered as face to face meetings or public settings where ideas are debated and challenged. The dynamics of such meetings can influence the ideas discussed and make them become more consistent and cohesive even when the participants are ambivalent and unsure. Secondly, the context can indicate general situations such as political contexts. When political and ideological divisions exist, ambivalent meanings are enforced to take part of a position. For instance, in revolutionary situations, cultural manners and worldviews become more distinctive and oppositional despite how doubtful or undecided individuals might be.

The institution is another factor that generates cultural meanings. Swidler (1995) defines institutions as “well established, stable sets of purposes and rules backed by sanctions” (p. 36). Swidler (2001) demonstrates that middle-class Americans’ perceptions of love are strongly influenced by the institution of marriage despite the fact that their ideas might contradict it. This reveals that institutional

restraints can provide consistent life strategies as well as coherent cultural narratives and performances. For example, individuals who take marriage seriously would be looking for a cultural strategy that sustains marriage and may refrain from other strategies which harm marriage.

Institutions can also create cultural coherence by stipulating a publicly shared culture. Such coherence does not occur as a result of the shared experiences, but is due to the fact that individuals try to overcome and negotiate the same institutional complications. Swidler (2001) explains that during her interviews, the respondents articulated *the myth of romantic love* very persistently not because they agreed with it but because it was related to the problems of marriage.

Codes, contexts and institutions are part of the resources that people use to construct strategies of actions. Since culture is a metaconcept and it includes a great range of symbols, beliefs, rituals, practices and habits (Jepperson and Swidler 1994), it might not be possible to name all the resources of culture, which is why rather than “what” it is, “how” culture is used forms the significant part of Swidler’s theory of culture.

In the scope of this study I want to see how culture works *from the outside in*. I will investigate the various cultural resources (codes, context and institutions) Turkish immigrants have in relation to modernity. I will examine the larger contexts related to both Turkey and U.S that Turkish people are bound to when they talk about modernity, and how particular code, contexts and institutions affects Turkish immigrants’ engagement with strategies of action that they present as an expression of a modern or non-modern lifestyle.

Culture from the Inside Out: Multiple Ways of Using Culture

Culture equips a person's actions by shaping their internal capacities and also by helping individuals carry those capacities into action when a related occasion appears (Swidler 2001:71-72). Culture instructs the internal capacities in four main ways. First, culture imparts the capacity to be a certain sort of person. People learn and practice being a certain kind of self via the culture they are embedded in. Culture shapes the limits of the life one can be able carry out and establishes a personality that is appropriate to that particular life. For instance, people who organize their actions according to moral values will live in a particular way and try to be a certain kind of person.

Secondly, culture enables people to externalize skills, styles and habits. For Swidler (2001) such skills and manners can be "anything which someone is good at, from practical skills such as knowing how to dress in a suit; to subtle matters such as exploding in violence when one's honor is violated" (p. 73). For her, what constitute the cultural difference between individuals are the different skills and habits the individuals have. Such skills and habits are also the main reason why someone might feel uncomfortable in an unfamiliar milieu.

Thirdly, culture indicates group membership (Swidler 2001:74). People operate culture to express their group affiliations and differentiate themselves from others. For Swidler (2001), the evangelical Protestants are an example of how the culture of a group membership could be effective in maintaining a distinctive identity.

Finally, culture offers ideas and descriptions that constitute a view of the world (Swidler 2001:75). According to Swidler (2001) some people live according to grand theories and ideologies, but others who follow their personal drives might

refrain from larger ideologies. These four ideas exemplify how culture affects internal capacities. All these previously mentioned styles, skills, habits and internal capacities is a result of culture and these aspects constitute the cultural tool kit which forms the “strategies of action” one can choose from. Observing the strategies of action is crucial when analyzing how culture works *from the inside out*.

Swidler (2001) defines strategies of action as general solutions that could be employed to various life problems and complications. “Relying on alliances with family, developing one’s individual capabilities so as to do well on the job market, joining a gang and protecting its turf, developing a wide network of casual acquaintances, building a group of fictive kin with enduring mutual loyalties, all these are characteristic strategies of action of some groups or individuals” (p. 82-83).

Swidler (1986, 2001) makes a case that the strategies of action individuals have at present, shape the kind of goals they wish to attain, as opposed to the idea that the ends or goals determine one’s strategy of action. To put it another way, strategies of action are not an outcome of rational or pragmatic thoughts to reach an objective, instead what people want is a result of capacities of action which are molded by culture.

Consider the culture of poverty argument as an example, Swidler (1986) claims that the culture of poverty argument asserts that people from a culture of poverty are believed to have no motivation to live a different type of life because their culture does not contain the kinds of values and aspirations that perhaps the middle-class have. She disagrees and thinks that culture is not “a set of preferences or wants” but more of “a set of skills and habits”. Thus, “if one asked a slum youth why he did not take steps to pursue a middle-class path to success (or indeed asked oneself why

one did not pursue a different life direction) the answer might not be "I don't want that life," but instead, "Who, me?" (p. 275). She believes that one cannot easily pursue a life which requires unfamiliar skills, styles and habits. It can be obviously seen that Swidler's focus is on *means* not *ends*.

This understanding of culture in relation to action is what made Swidler's contribution to cultural studies so unique. In her analyses, Swidler (2001) reveals that the way culture works is very dynamic and complex. Individuals draw from multiple cultural resources, utilizing several rationales, with little worry about the consistency among them. People think creatively, appropriating some cultural elements, while rejecting others, and even people who have similar cultural resources can use these very differently. Following Ann Swidler's theory, I will also explore how culture works *from the inside out* as I intend to analyze the various, complex, and even contradictory ways Turkish immigrants use their cultural capacities when they talk about modernity. I will also look at how Turkish immigrants organize their conduct in relation to modernity, while strategically drawing from the multiple resources they have.

Western Modernity and the U.S

It is difficult to pin down the idea of modernity because different, even conflicting, interpretations of modernity are constantly at stake. Durkheim, Marx, and Weber are prominent theorists of modernity. Durkheim characterizes a modern society with high level of anomie. Marx identifies modernity with complex systems of labor in a capitalist society, producing workers who are alienated from the products of their labor. Weber's perception of modernity has been referred to cultural pessimism. His understanding of modern society is based on bureaucratization, intellectualization

and dissatisfaction with the world (Kim 2003). For Giddens (1990), modernity refers to “modes of social life or organization which emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence” (p. 1). This definition associates modernity with a certain time period and with an initial geographical location. That’s why the concept of modernism, in one way or another hints at Western societies. For Huntington (1993) Western ideology rests on principles such as “individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state” and these principles often have little correspondence in non-western societies (p. 40). This frame of reference, namely the classical perspective, encapsulates modernity as a linear, uniform, expected and teleological evolution, starting from the West spreading to other societies and ending up transforming those societies from traditional and, backward to modern, civilized and Western (Thornton 2005; Kaya 2011).

Tradition has often been contrasted with modernity. Similarly, traditional societies have been considered as an opposite form of modern societies. In this understanding traditional societies reflect an undeveloped structure with conventional and primitive economies, technologies and social and political institutions. Although today, these ideas are found problematic, the traditional-modern opposition has been a fundamental model in classical western social theory (Simic and Custred 1982; Harrington 2005). Durkheim's (1933) mechanical and organic solidarity; Tonnies's (1957) concepts of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*; and Robert Redfield's (1941) folk and urban distinction are all reflections of this dyad. The traditional-modern dichotomy also found some grounds in the American social theory. American

anthropologist Robert Redfield (1941) characterizes a folk/traditional society, depending on moral order and traditional norms. The traditions are regarded as sacred and other undertakings like economics are secondary in this conception. For him a modern/urban society reflects a pragmatic, instrumental and goal oriented society. People integrate into social life, not according to traditional norm or orders, but specialized abilities and knowledge. Such an understanding highlights certain aspects of traditional and modern societies as opposed to each other, thus it replicates the classical western traditional-modern dichotomy.

The western modernity or so-called European modernity occupied the sociological analysis during the nineteenth and early twentieth century (Harrington 2005). We can analyze the western modernity in three main dimensions: the cultural, political and social-economical dimensions. The cultural dimension contains the rise of the natural sciences and the decline of religion. The political dimension encompasses the rise of the state, civil law, and ideas of democracy. Lastly, the social-economic dimension encompassed capitalist economy tied with industrialization and urbanization (Harrington 2005). All these three aspects of modernity also reflect the basic notions of western societies, thus such an understanding of modernity is nothing but the definition of western societies.

An important aspect of the cultural dimension, the decline of the religion, called secularization by scholars, needs more explanation since it is one of the most crucial and controversial areas in the discussion of modernity. What has basically been argued, is that modernity leads to the decline of religion. Peter Berger (1967) contends that secularization is a “process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols” (p. 107). This

process involves the separation of the state and religions, and also the gradual decline of the role of religion in the formation of the modern self. In this sense, secularization manifests itself both as “an objective social-structural process” in which it acquires an institutional quality and as “a subjective cultural process” which indicates that as modernity disseminates throughout society, more and more people “look upon the world and their own lives without the benefit of religious interpretations” (Berger 1967:107). At this point it is important to mention the argument about “the American exception” in the secularization debate. A group of scholars such as Lurance Iannaccone (1988), Rodney Stark and William S. Brainbridge (1979), have challenged the secularization paradigm by emphasizing prevailing religious vitality in the U.S. Drawing from exchange theory and economic analysis these scholars argue that the United States is a religious open market where low degrees of regulations and restrictions permit religious pluralism to thrive. This open market stimulates competition among different religious groups. This drives religious leaders to pay more attention to different demands and also makes individuals retain many options in the market of religion. These factors generate a higher level of religiosity in the U.S. (Gill 2003). The American exception delimits the secularization theory to European territory and makes it difficult to assign the entire west to a significant decline in the religious commitment.

It is exactly this western centralism that propelled scholars to bring the classical views of modernization into the debate and challenge the West’s domination on modernization (Kaya 2011). This opposition to the western monopoly generated and discussed the theory of “multiple modernities” (Eisenstadt 2000; Arnason 2001; Wagner 2001). The model of multiple modernities, which have also received special

attention in Turkey, presumes modernity not as uniform progress towards final integration, but rather as a fluid and unrestricted evolution, which contains “ongoing reconstructions of multiple institutional and ideological patterns” (Eisenstadt 2000:2). Such a view of modernity implied a variety of options on the definition of modernity and what constitutes a modern society.

When we consider modernity in the context of the U.S, it is indeed very difficult to draw a straight line of modernity, in the sense that modernization and globalization are mostly melded with Americanization, and generally, they have often been considered identical (Bergthaller and Schinko 2011). The aspects of modernity which are pervasive in the American context are individualism, universalism, and rationalism (Simic and Custred 1982). The U.S case has been regarded as unique, not only due to its technological advances, high degrees of economic resources or urbanism, or but also the values which motivates these advances. Despite the fact that the heterogeneity of ideals is an important feature of the contemporary U.S, abstractions such as independence, self-determination, and individualism have prominent effects on ordinary lives of Americans (Simic and Custred 1982). Among the latter abstractions, “individualism” has been emphasized as an important feature of American society. It has been argued that today, values related to “status and honor as the product of group membership” have been replaced “by the idea of individual accomplishment and reputation” (Simic and Custred 1982:169). Similarly, anthropologist Vera Erlich (1972) notes “the desire for complete independence” as the leading force in the American society.

In the American social theory, the interpretation of rationality and universality is also important. In this sense, a rational society is an “optimal functioning system”

tied to economic and bureaucratic tasks (Simic and Custred 1982:170). The specific needs of individuals are not viewed as essential unless they contribute to the society's economic and bureaucratic needs. The concept of rationalism and universalism are related. Universalism relates to "the application of a single set of standards so that privileges and obligations within a society are distributed on the basis of the same objective criteria in terms of which people compete exclusively with respect to their particular abilities"(Simic and Custred 1982:171). Both concepts imply society as a highly specialized functioning system in which social life no longer relies on subjective matters such as kinship but more on objective ties.

Since this study also wants to explore modernity and its relation to gender roles, it is important to emphasize a couple of related issues. Modernity has been understood as an opportunity for woman's emancipation as it emphasized individualism, liberalism and as it reconstructed gender roles in a less traditional more equal sense. However, modernity has also been challenged by feminists in theories related to "the gendering of modernity" (Harrington 2005). In this concept, the idea of modern theory, culture and society is a gendered construct and disregards women. This challenge does not only include an attempt for a correction of the modernity theory, as Harrington (2005) notes it implies two ideas: "First, it registered that the project of socializing women has tended to rely on a rather problematic dualistic distinction between 'sex and gender'. Second, it has shown how the woman who was animated in the project of the socialization of women was too homogenous and in particular too exclusively endowed with white European bourgeois and heterosexual characteristics" (p.240). Such arguments reveal that gender and particularly the question of women is one of the other controversial areas of modernity.

Modernity in Turkey: Field of Tensions

“Islam is unique among world religions, and Turkey is unique within the Muslim world. Turkey [is] the exception within the exception.”
Gellner, Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey, 1997 p.233

When Gellner underlined Turkey’s specificity, he was quite right. Turkey constitutes a rare exception, not only because of its religion and its unique standing within the Muslim domain, but also to its sole and distinctive historical adventure of modernization and the various, yet even conflicting interpretations of modernity which this adventure ingrained. Modernity is like a main narrative wherein contending and multiple narratives exist, many of which seeks to challenge and defeat one another (Cinar 2005). These differing narratives have been discussed by scholars, debated by the media and asserted by politicians. The way modernity is discussed as well as imposed by politicians, media and academia make up part of the codes, contexts and institutional resources Turkish people might be influenced by and from which they may derive strategies of action. It is important to note that this is also part of the story of Turkish immigrants’ cultural resources, as they navigate life in countries like the U.S. It is vital to not to take their home country's tensions and experiences as a main vantage point when analyzing their understanding of modernity. It is also very crucial to emphasize that modernity has been a controversial issue in Turkey, and it is not possible to give place to all the various interpretations and practices of modernity. This study will only examine the prominent narratives of modernity and their effects on people’s lives, particularly in areas such as gender, religion and traditional culture. Thus, the researcher is aware that the interviewees might be influenced by many other outside resources that are a result of their unique life experience.

Scholars have interpreted Turkey's modernization experience in various and even contradictory ways. After World War II., Turkey was praised by scholars as a very successful model of modernization. The Turkish case has often been cited by scholars such as Daniel Lerner (1958) and Bernard Lewis (1969) as a successful adoption of Western norms, styles, culture and institutions. Turkey was also depicted as evidence of the achievability of the "modernization project" in a chiefly Muslim country. Per contra, during the late 1960s and the 1970s, critical voices started to declare that Turkish modernization was far from being an exemplary success story, but more of a historical failure (Bozdogan and Kasaba 1997). These alternative approaches contended that little was owing celebration in Turkey's modernization experience. By the end of the seventies "modernization" even became a dirty word, and authors such as Lerner and Lewis were mentioned only as examples of studying Turkish modernity in an incorrect way (Bozdogan and Kasaba 1997). Such dissimilar and contradicting views on Turkish modernity were not a typical characteristic of the earlier stages of the Turkish republic, such conflicts and ambiguities on modernity have been more like a continuing trend which even can be observed in today's Turkey.

When looking at the history of modernization in Turkey the most generally accepted idea is that the origin of modernization can be traced back to the Tanzimat regulations era starting in the year 1839. To attain this objective, a substantial effort was put forth to change the Ottoman institutions in order to make them more akin to those of their European counterparts (Kasaba 1997). This period prepared the way for the emergence of Kemalism which was the ideology Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and his followers. Modernization was more authoritatively imposed to the society by Mustafa

Kemal Ataturk the first president of the Turkish Republic. Mustafa Kemal's revolutions and the Kemalist ideology constituted the backbone force of modernity in Turkey (Cinar 2005). However, it is important to differentiate Kemalism from Ottoman modernization in the sense that modernization during the Ottoman Empire was aimed at a gradual alteration in some areas of society while Kemalism endeavored toward a revolutionary change in all segments of the society (Kaya 2004). While Mustafa Kemal Ataturk has been generally regarded as an important figure in Turkey's modernization adventure, his efforts and ideology were not welcomed in all segments of the society. As it later will be explained many scholars have been considering Ataturk's revolutions authoritarian yet antidemocratic. That's why Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's revolutions and Kemalism has been regarded as one of the most controversial areas in the modernization debate in Turkey. Kemalism can briefly be described as "the attempt by Mustafa Kemal and other modernist elites to establish a secular and progressive nation state after the model of the civilized and modernized West" (Karasipahi 2009:11). According to the Kemalist vocabulary, "modernity, civilization, and Westernization were seen as one and the same thing, understood primarily as a way of life and a universal norm that all modernizing countries were expected to adopt" (Cinar 2005:5).

During the 1980's the attractiveness of the Kemalist ideology started to decline. Three main shifts led the discussion on modernity into different directions. First, in the 1950s an alternative political party, the Democrat Party, was elected. This regime conceptualized modernity as more of a technological and economic development and redefined the previous understanding of modernity articulated by Kemalists. The second shift came during the 1980s with the rise of the Motherland

Party who employed practices based on a new understanding of modernity which was based on liberal economics, consumerism, and a mixture of local elements with global trends. The last transference appeared in 2002, with the election of the AKP (Justice and Development Party), which is generally cited as a moderate religious party. The AKP has been interpreted as a result of the growing power of political projects inspired by Islam (Cinar 2005).

While Kemalism has been a central theme in the discussion of modernity, there is not a scholarly consensus on the consequences of the Kemalist influence. For scholars like Tarik Zafer Tunaya, Niyazi Berkes, Ergun Ozbudun, and Feroz Ahmed, the Kemalist interpretations and application of modernity have been regarded as positive attempts to alter Turkey into a democratic society (Yavuz and Esposito 2003). While this narrative still exists in Turkey, there has been a significant rise in challenges posed by critics of Kemal's approach.

Kemalist modernity has been disputed and challenged because it is considered a top down, nation-building project occurring from above through the Kemalist revolution, not a self-generating, societal process demanded by people, nor a result of popular movements (Cinar 2005; Karasipahi 2008). The Kemalist project of Westernization, which has generally been regarded as modernization, was criticized as being "an unconscious adoption" or "a blind imitation of Western concepts and principles" that disregards local culture and values (Karasipahi 2008:191). For other scholars (Keyder 1997; Yavuz 2003; Kaya 2004) Kemalism was not a blind imitation; rather it was a particular interpretation of the idea of Western modernization. Kemalists have been recognized as not being dedicated to all the aspects of modernity (Keyder 1997). As Yavuz states (2000) "the history of Turkish modernity reveals that

Kemalism stressed republicanism over democracy, homogeneity over difference, the military over the civilian, and the state over society”(p.34); therefore, the Kemalist interpretation of modernity in Turkey has been criticized because of its contradictions with liberal political concepts and Enlightenment values of modernity. The Kemalist project of modernity meant embracing and adopting all the cultural dimensions of modern Europe, allowing local culture no greater space than that of the folkloric (Keyder 1997).

Although this modernity project failed to take root in society, many aspects of it have indeed been successfully institutionalized into the constitutional system. The fact that it has been institutionalized does not mean that it is a natural product of a societal consensus or a democratic development. Quite the reverse, this institutionalization has been just an outcome of harsh authoritarian actions, oppression, and elimination of rivals through dictatorial power (Cinar 2005). These authoritarian actions and oppression can be analyzed throughout Turkish history. Theoretically, modernization distanced itself from the Ottoman-Islamic legacy. While opposing every aspect related to the past, the Kemalists also disregarded the previously traditional and religious parts of the society. For them, tradition and modernity were incompatible terms as they regarded the former inconsistent with modernization. Opposition to the Ottoman past and the traditional as well as religious fragments of the society led to a remarkable increase in the gap between the Kemalist reformers and the rest of the society (Karasipahi 2008). In Turkey the depiction of Islamic individuals as provincial, lower-class actors is a product of the urban secularist discourse which Kemalists have carried on “in order to define its own western identity and to justify its authority” (Demiralp 2012:511).

In order to understand the Kemalist interpretation of modernity, it is very crucial to realize the two core pillars of the Kemalist concept of modernity: positivism and secularism. First, positivism was seen as a means in order to legitimate the Kemalists' modernization efforts. Positivism prepared the ground for the social engineering process and the reconstruction of the Turkish society (Gole 1997). The idea of positivism retains inherent value for Western societies; it embodies the transition toward the West as universal, rational, and achievable for all societies. Thus, the positivist motto of *progress and order* strongly motivated the Kemalist elites' social control attempts. As a consequence, social groups critical of these aims have been viewed as threats to unity and progress (Keyder 1997).

As positivism encouraged Kemalist elites in their interventions, part of that process of social engineering was secularization. As Yavuz and Esposito (2003) state, secularism in Turkey was seen as the only route to modernity, progress and state power. Thus, in order to be a modern and western country, Islam had been strictly controlled by the Turkish state. Controlling Islam was not the only prerequisite for modernity; to establish a secular and modern life it was believed that all ties with Ottoman heritage needed to be eradicated (Gole 1996; Kasaba 1997; Karasipahi 2008). In order to become a modern and western society the Kemalist reformers endeavored to abolish any aspect of the society which was related to the Ottoman-Islamic heritage: the caliphate, which symbolized the unity of the Muslim Ummah, or body of Believers, was abolished (1924) and the Seriat courts were dissolved (1924). All madrassas (Islamic schools) and tariqas (religious guides) were eradicated (1994-1995) and the Hat law prohibited the fez (Ottoman hat) and necessitated western style hats (1925). The Lunar Hicri Calendar was replaced by the Gregorian calendar (1925)

and the Swiss Civil Code was adopted (1926). The Arabic alphabet was replaced by the Latin alphabet (1928) and the second article of the 1924 constitution which stated Islam was being the state religion was deleted (1928) (Toprak 1987). The stated interventions were not limited to the ones mentioned; redefining the popular culture was also part of the social engineering process (Keyder 1997). Throughout Turkish history, it is possible to recognize that “the state was involved in matters from the clothing of its citizens to the music they were to listen to, and from the type of leisure activity they would be engaged in, to the type of family relations they would have”(Cinar 2005:15).

Ironically, even though the new state followed a harsher policy in order to change the society, Islam was still needed as a nation-building tool. However, only the official version of Islam, which was presented by the Directorate of Religious Affairs was acceptable and legitimate (Topal 2012). In this ideology, secularism was an ideology adopted by the state in order to exclude religious and ethnic minorities (Yavuz and Esposito 2003). Therefore, “the more secularism is used by the state elite as a political project to control religion, the less pluralistic and less democratic the state has become in governing its society” (Keyman 2007:216).

Throughout the 20th century the Kemalist attempt of modernity has been challenged by Islamist, liberal, Kurdish, and Marxist movements that produced alternative projects of modernity. Among these, the contemporary Islamist movements, initiated during the 1950s and continuing to grow after the 1980s, have been named as the most significant challenges to Kemalist modernity, which is still influential in today’s Turkey (Cinar 2005).

It has been argued that the inherent paradoxes of the Kemalist ideology and the crisis of the Kemalist modernization paradoxically contributed to the upsurge of Islamic movements and intellectuals in Turkey (Karasipahi 2008). Nilufer Gole (1997) proposes the idea that Islamic movements are not only a reaction to the Kemalist domination, but also represent a counter model of modernity which contributed in the creation of Islamic elites. In this context Islamism appeared to be a political expression of the Islamic-Turkish identity which challenged the secular Western modernity. In the same vein, Yavuz and Esposito (2003) remark that adverse to its aims, the Kemalist project of modernity promoted an opposite image: Islamic ideology. Thus, they consider the religious revival in Turkey to be an internal dialectic of Kemalist modernity. The religious movements in Turkey have been just an outcome of this internal dialect. Keyman and Icduygu (2005) concur with these ideas as they specify that Islam provided a powerful symbolic and cultural resource for the societal relations and social identity formations of Turkish people. Paradoxically, access to urban life, liberal education and political expression, all regarded as modern developments, and are also contributing to these groups' Islamic redefinition of life and world (Gole 1997).

Contemporary Islam has been regarded as an alternative modernity as it criticizes both traditional interpretations of Islam and Kemalist modernity. As Gole stated, "it is radical both in its critique of traditions, (which are) considered responsible for the passivity and the 'enslavement' of Muslim people, and in its desire to set up a radically different civilization based on the Islamization of all spheres of life from the conception of the self, to the organization of the life-world, and to the politics of government" (Gole 1997:54). One example of an alternative interpretation

of modernity promoted by an Islamic movement could be the Hizmet (Service) movement also known as the Gulen movement which is a civic, Islamic-rooted movement inspired by the Turkish scholar and preacher, Fethullah Gulen. Gole names the Hizmet movement's engagement with modernity as an “integrated approach”, maintaining the valuable parts of the past and integrating it with science and technology (1996). For Gulen, the ultimate goal is not reaching modernization; rather the main mission for societies should be *civilization*, which means a reconstruction of society and individuals in terms of ethical values (Thomas 2005). As Aras and Caha (2000) underline, this movement is an attempt to engage modern life as it “reconciles modern and traditional values” and “seeks to construct a Turkish-style Islam, remember the Ottoman past, Islamicize Turkish nationalism, re-create a legitimate link between the state and religion, emphasize democracy and tolerance, and encourage links with the Turkic republics”(p.10).

Islamic movements have also been considered as an attempt to seek a place in the modern world for a Muslim identity and also to engage it. As the rejection of the dominant white culture was revealed in the phrase "black is beautiful," similarly, the motto "Islam is beautiful" is attaining the same sort of power in the modern contexts (Gole 1997:89). Thus, for scholars such as Gole, Islamism is more concerned with accepting modernity rather than rejecting it. Islamic pop music and fashion shows are only a few of the signs of the infiltration of modernity in the Islamic community (Keyder 1997). However it is defined, it can be seen that the contemporary Islamists and Kemalist secularists are struggling to define a cultural model of Turkish identity (Gole 1997).

In line with this debate, advocates to the theory of “multiple modernities” (Gole 1996, 2009; Kaya 2005, Kentel 2005; Kaya 2011) associate modernity with civil and political involvement. Islamists who are socially and politically active agents are considered “modern” by these scholars, although they do not fit the classical definition of Western modernity (Kaya 2011). What makes them modern is, as Kaya mentions (2011) “their act of protest, in other words their self-reflexivity, which they build up against the detrimental forces of globalization, and their participation in public life” (p. 583).

The multiple modernities approach suggests that there are multiple modernities, as Cinar (2005) marks modernity has multiple ideas, various interpretations and challenging projects. For Cinar, what makes them modern is their attempt to alter the society in line with a pack of social and political ideals. For her, “the Turkish case clearly illustrates that modernity is neither exclusively Western nor Eastern, neither foreign nor local, neither universal nor particular, neither historical nor atemporal, neither old nor new, but at times it can be all of these at once, or it can emerge in the ambiguous space in between these binary opposites” (2005:8). Modernity can take various forms: it can be considered as Westernism; Easternism or Islamism; universalism as well as particularism. She asserts that modernity in Turkey can take the form of production and consumption of Western culture; or blending local aspects of culture in with Western or universal forms; it can also be merely local and authentic. All of these different and opposing interpretations are considered as modern enterprises because they are part of a nation building project.

The “woman question”. It can be observed from the above discussion that religion serves as an important site for the contestation of modern projects. Thus, as

Keyman and Gumuscu states, “it is not possible to think of Turkish modernity without reference to Islam” (2014: 121). Another central theme in the discussion of modernity has been the “woman question”. In Turkey's modernization process, women were represented as the constructors of a “new life” (Gole 1997); that is why both Islamists and Kemalists regarded their answer to the woman question as a central point in their arguments. Every revolution describes an ideal man, but it was the figure of an ideal woman that became a symbol of the reforms of the Kemalist revolution (Keyder 1997). Thus, it can be seen that gender relations, in the context of modernity, have been mainly discussed under the woman question.

Until the 1980s, Turkish society mostly agreed that the Kemalist modernization project had emancipated women. Not only educated women, but also non-professional women were pleased with the benefits and opportunities the Kemalist reforms supplied (Arat 1997). The Kemalists reforms gave women the right to vote and to be elected during 1930s. Women were able to attain free secular education and also able to enter the labor force, both as professionals and as laborers (Kavas and Thornton 2013).

This consensus was challenged by two main groups: young feminists who came from the secular and Kemalist tradition, and Islamist females. The new generation of secular feminists discovered that their private lives were oppressed and restricted under the public expectations of the republican project of modernity (Arat 1997). The Kemalist state endeavored to create and commercialize an ideal type of “free” woman by restricting her agency. Women were liberated as they became more visible in public; however, at the same time they were also objectified as they were not granted autonomy (Ince et al. 2009). This ideal type of woman presented by the

Kemalist state characterizes a woman who was emancipated, but not liberated (Kantiyoki 1987). Women gained access to the public realm, but they were disappointed as they realized that their contributions were firmly defined by the male leaders (Berkday 2009).

Muslim women were also challenging the Kemalist interpretation of modernity. They criticized the westernization and secularization attempts of Kemalists. Islamists underlined the stance of women in Western societies. In their view, western women were “super-consumers of imperialist goods” (Kaya 2004:132). Thus, they were objectified by imperialist powers. However, it has also been argued that Islamist women have not been rejecting every aspect of western modernity. It is asserted that Islamist women rejected the traditional status of women and generated a new identity under the circumstances of modernity. As Kaya notes (2004) this “new identity formation takes place which, in contradictory form, includes both tradition (the women’s veiling and physical appearance) and modernity (women’s education and participation in the public sphere)” (p.135). Islamist women were employing the means and arrangements of modernity to reject both Kemalist modernity and the traditional status quo. They were arguing rationally; using modern technology; receiving high education and similar to the Kemalist modernizers, they intended revolution (Kaya 2004).

Veiling has also been considered part of this new identity construction. For Gole, “the veiling of women today, signifies the political participation and the active voluntary reappropriation of an Islamic identity by women” (1997:56). Thus, contemporary veiling in Turkey has been distinguished from the traditional image of Muslim women. Contrary to that image, a rising new Islamist female identity is

young, urban, educated, publicly visible, politically active, and dressing in a variety of style and colors. This new identity, compared to traditional Muslim, resembles more the secular and self-confident modern women (Gole 1997).

As I have argued, Turkey has a unique platform from which different kinds of modernities have been discussed and debated. The Turkish experience of modernity is neither similar to the western experience nor to its Muslim counterparts. It must be emphasized that what makes Turkey very unique and distinctive from other non-western societies is the fact that Turkey's path to modernity never included an external colonial power (Cinar 2005). That is why Turkey, throughout its modernization journey, has been depicted in various, controversial and even conflicting terms: as a Western image in the East, an Eastern image in the West (Strokes 1994) or as a representation of a "European Islam" and a "modernizing context" in the Middle East (Kaya 2004:10). However, this depiction is not a simple demonstration of a bridge country between Western and Islamic civilizations. As Kaya (2004) states, "Turkey includes features from both Islamic and Western civilizations, but these features take on new forms: the Turks in Anatolia interpret both Western and Islamic values in their own ways and, therefore, they are neither fully Islamized (in the example of Islamic East) nor are they Westernized" (p.154). Regardless of how differently it has been interpreted, what has been named modernity has a transformative power in the ongoing societal-political order and identity constructions in Turkey. I believe this study provides a unique contribution as it explores how larger contexts about this field of tensions shape the cultural capacities of Turkish immigrants and how they draw the lines of their actions in their everyday lives with regard to modernity.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODS

Research Questions

I am exploring the relation of culture and modernity in two ways. First, I aim to see how culture works “outside in”. In this respect, I was not concerned about subjects’ personal opinions, but mainly about seeing how they believe modernity is discussed and defined in both Turkey and the U.S. regardless of whether they agree with it or not. Second, I wanted to see how culture works “inside out”. For this, I examine how people use their “cultural toolkit” to understand the different elements of both Turkey and the U.S creatively and come up with their own explanations and actions. In line with this idea I defined three main questions:

- 1) How do people understand modernity?
- 2) What resources people use to understand modernity?
- 3) How do people mobilize these resources (how do they use culture)?

Methodology

In this study grounded theory is employed to understand and explain the Turkish immigrants’ responses to the modernity question. Basically, grounded theory is an attempt to derive theories from an analysis of the patterns, themes, and common categories discovered by the researcher rather than generating a hypothesis to be tested through observation (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Specifically, I consider this study as a grounded theory approach in the sense that I have employed Ann Swidler’s framework, yet in a broader and abstract social concept with a richer and more detailed data collection. Besides, this research’s topic of interest has not been studied before; owing to this unique character, theories needed to be explored in a natural setting where grounded theory facilitated this exploration due to its inductive nature.

By this way, I tried to present an insider's perspective into the events that occurred throughout the study as data are collected and analyzed.

I followed the steps Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1998) suggest to control biases while retaining sensitivity to what the data says in the grounded theory approach: 1) Thinking comparatively: comparing numerous incidents and different perceptions related to the Turkish immigrants so that I could gain some perspective when examining the actual data. This also helped me avoid biases that may otherwise arise from interpretations of initial observations. 2) Obtaining multiple viewpoints: I have been sensitive to capturing different points of views of my participants. As Strauss and Corbin indicate the importance of applying different techniques to provide a variety of viewpoints, I performed in-depth interviews with memoing and concept mapping to enrich my data. 3) Periodically step back: as data accumulate, I started framing interpretations about what is going on, and kept checking the data against my assumptions to see whether my interpretations really fit the data. As Strauss and Corbin (1998) claim, "the data themselves do not lie"(p.45). 4) Being skeptical: as I began to interpret data, I considered all my interpretations as assumptions and tested those interpretations with new observations 5) Follow the research procedures: grounded theory based approach allows for flexible data collection as the theoretical framework evolves, but as Strauss and Corbin (1998) highlight there are three significant techniques that I followed: "making comparisons, asking questions, and sampling based on evolving theoretical concepts" (p.46).

Research Relationship

As I am a Turkish immigrant living in Houston, there was a possibility for influences of my identity and background on my research. Although my participants

and I have the same nationality, I abstained from assuming that we might have the same conceptions, implications and perception of issues related to modernity. This distancing was necessary for me to develop useful and ethically appropriate relationships with them.

Another concern related to status and power has been about my researcher identity. Although my role in the relationship was “researcher”, I endeavored to emphasize my role as a “student” for two reasons, firstly, defining myself as a student “acquiring information” has a less superordinate relationship structure, and, secondly because Turkish society is culturally sympathetic towards students. I maintained this notion when I recruited participants at the beginning of each interview. This indeed helped me establish a relationship better than a researcher-interviewee relationship that might have been viewed as more intimidating.

As I presented in the literature the modernity project had consequences for religious and traditional life. As a researcher, I had to be more conscious and sensitive about how people might feel about issues related to religion and tradition. Also, I had to refrain from any kind of judgment related to their perceptions. To avoid these kinds of problems I carefully and clearly explained the purpose of my study, what I was asking them to do, and what would be done with the data. Incidentally, wearing a headscarf—indicating my religious identity—might have inevitably biased some people’s responses to some questions, because modernity and religion is definitely considered connected in Turkey.

Site and Participant Selection

In line with Swidler’s (1986) conceptualization of culture as a toolkit, it is important to reveal various ways that social actors utilize their cultural toolkit by

focusing on the way they understand, mobilize, change, construct or reconstruct their codes, symbols and concepts of modernity. That's why I aimed to talk to enough people who had enough life experience to establish as well as test their own thoughts and perhaps alter what they once believed about modernity. That is why most of my interviewees were adults in midlife who have been living in the U.S, particularly Houston for more than 10 years. I included a substantial number of second and 1.5 generation individuals to find out how the U.S experience shaped their understanding of modernity.

My selection criterion for inclusion was based on various facts. While Ann Swidler (2001) during her study "Talk of Love" interviewed a homogenous group of middle-class Americans, for the purpose of the current study I interviewed a group of Turkish immigrants living in the U.S, who formed a heterogeneous group that contained internally homogenous subgroups such as 1.5 generations, adults supporting the Gulen Movement and those who have no relation to the movement. The reason for that was to identify various cultural resources that influence these Turkish immigrants' conceptions of modernity. Specifically, I aimed to interview a variety of groups, including seculars, religious individuals (both those affiliated with the Gulen movement and not), second generation and 1.5 generation Turkish-American youths. The reason why I wanted to differentiate secular and religious groups is due to the tight historical relation of modernity projects and religion as well as the conflicts embedded in this relationship in the Turkish context. Also the reason why I wanted to identify people related with the Gulen movement is that Gulen movement has become increasingly important in "defining the contemporary global Islamic experience" (Voll 2003:238) and also because it has its own unique and specific response to

modernity. I tried to reach out to second and 1.5 generation participants to be able see whether and how their understanding of modernity is different from the first generation. The second generation consists of those who were born in the U.S but their parents were born in Turkey. The 1.5 generation is defined as “offspring who themselves are foreigners, but who have arrived as children; what constitutes arriving as youngsters ranges from before age 7, before age 13, and before age 15 depending on the study and data availability”(Boyd 2009:342). In the scope of this study 1.5 generation has been identified as immigrants who arrived in the U.S. under 10 years of age.

Another reason for collecting data from heterogeneous groups is related to my research goals. Because I was interested in how peoples’ understandings of modernity were shaped by experience, I sought to interview people who have different experiences related to modernity, with certain assumptions in mind, such as 1) Religious groups might have a different understanding of modernity since many of them experienced the exploitation by modernity projects; 2) Secular groups who were historically supporters of these projects might have a different attitude toward modernity; 3) Second generation and 1.5 generation Turks might be less influenced by the Turkish context of modernity; 4) Gulen movement advocates might tend to have a certain view toward modernity shaped by Fethullah Gulen.

The last reason for the heterogeneity is that this variety would enable me to see how different people employ multiple, sometimes contradictory, cultural understandings of modernity at the same time. My interview questions also included some related to gender, so I aimed to interview approximately the same proportion of

males and females in order to observe how different gender groups approach these questions.

I employed purposive sampling in order to select participants who fulfilled the needs of my research. With purposive sampling technique I was able to capture the different categories of Turkish groups which I have previously mentioned. I obtained a sample of twenty Turkish immigrants living in Houston, Texas. The group consisted of ten males (50%) and ten females (50%). In my study group I had fifteen first generation (75%) and five 1.5 and second generation (25%) Turkish-Americans. Regarding the identity of my participants, three out of twenty considered their identity as a combination of secular, religious and liberal aspects (15%), five as liberal (25%), three as liberal and religious (15%), one as secular and religious (5%), two as secular (10%) and six as religious (30%). Defining an identity as both secular and religious might be seen as a contradiction, however, the interviewees emphasized a secular identity as being against politicization of Islam and religious in the sense that they were practicing Muslims. Also in Houston, the Gulen Community has a large and active association named “Raindrop Turkish House”, which is defined as “a non-profit, educational, charitable, social and cultural organization founded by Turkish-Americans in Houston in 2000” (Raindrop Turkish House Website 2013). I was able to coordinate with them to select nine of my participants (45%) from the Gulen movement group, whereas the remaining eleven (55%) did not consider themselves belonging to a religious group. Finally, I considered the education level of the participants another important variable. In this sample, seven people hold a Bachelor’s degree (35%), five have a Master’s degree (25%), one person has a PhD (5%), two are high school graduates (10%) and five are undergraduate students (25%).

Data collection

I employed theoretical sampling as the form of my purposive sampling technique, which is congruent with my grounded theory approach. Theoretical sampling is defined as “the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides which data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges” (Glaser and Strauss 1967:45). This had been an inductive way to gain information.

As I aimed to assess the meaning of modernity, I gathered the data from semi-structured interviews. The unstructured nature of semi-structured interviews provided me a better opportunity to learn Turkish-Americans’ present day understanding of modernity. During the interviews I dealt with modernity most centrally as a part of personal biography, asking immigrants what they have learned about modernity when they used to live in Turkey, whether or how their views have changed, and what they currently think about it. I tried to explore not only general thoughts on modernity, but more subtle and challenging matters such as whether modernity is incongruent with tradition and religion, and how modernity is related to gender. I wanted to understand how people recognize signs and symptoms of modernity and what people find most confusing about it.

The data were collected through one-to-one interviews in only public areas that were most convenient for both investigator and subjects. Before the interview the participants were asked to sign a consent form and to fill a demographic form on background information. The interviews lasted from 60 to 90 minutes. Although these questions and times were merely a guide of the interview sessions; it was the participant’s responses which led the direction and length of the interview, where for

instance, one of the interviews took two hours. Interviews were conducted in the language preferred by the participants. Also interviews were audio-taped with permission from the participant to ascertain an accurate account of the interview, which was replayed for analytic purposes, and anonymity was assured during the course of the recording.

My interview process represents an extended discussion on the respondent's general views on modernity, and personal experiences that have affected his or her views. Considering the abstract nature of my research topic I structured my questions around certain themes, which I derived from literature. The interview questions were open-ended, both in the way that the questions were semi-structured, and also in the way that I tried to maintain a dialogue to follow what people were saying by asking for clarifications as well as generalizations and examples. As culture is related to action, I was anticipating beforehand that people might contradict themselves and have incoherent and coherent ideas simultaneously; therefore, to observe this I suggested complications during the interview with "yes, but what if..." questions.

As modernity is such an abstract topic, I am aware of the difficulty the interviewees might face in defining modernity. Thus, along with semi-structured interview questions I provided fictive scenarios related to modernity and also pictures of veiled women who appeared in fashion shows and magazines in order to initiate a discussion on the image of modern religious woman. These additional items were used as a prompt to help the interviewees elaborate their ideas on modernity. The fictive scenarios and pictures were placed either somewhere at the beginning or at the end of the interviews, depending on the situation and the judgment of the interviewer. In cases where the interviewee is not able to readily talk about modernity, talking on a

fictive scenario turned out to be a good starting point to discuss modernity. For example second or 1.5 generation youth were more capable to discuss modernity when an example is provided via an image. However an educated adult was able to discuss modernity thoroughly and starting the interview with a fictive scenario would influence and narrow their approach. In those cases those additional items was deferred to the end of the interview.

Data analysis

My first step in analyzing my data was reading the interview transcripts. While reading my transcripts I also took observational notes as well as memos and tried to establish ideas and assumptions about themes and categories. Writing memos (memoing) and mapping concepts facilitated the exploration of themes and relations clearly while also contributed in forming the theory.

I performed open coding, axial coding and selective coding to analyze my data. With regard to Strauss and Corbins' (1990) conceptualizations, the open coding was my primitive classification of themes. I came up with codes as I investigated the data carefully. As I reanalyzed these initial codes with axial coding, I was able to pinpoint the main categories in my data. Lastly, with selective coding I tried to reveal the central theme of my data.

Validity

While I covered some validity issues there were some others that need to be explained. First of all it is important to address the threats of my research. Although, I tried to establish an open and comfortable conversation environment with each participant, I considered my headscarf as a potential source of bias for non-religious participants in their responses to questions. On the other hand, coming from the same

country, sharing some aspects of the same culture, religion and language provided me an insight that many foreign researchers would not have, and with this insight I was able recognize many orientations shared mostly by insiders. I had been also familiar with the complexity of ideas and attitudes of the Gulen movement as they are derived from a flow of cultural meanings, religious resources and social aspects rooted in Turkish society. This set of shared cultural resources with my participants helped enhance the reliability of my data, yet, they were also my main risk factors. There was the danger to distort the interaction with the assumptions that could be taken for granted about each parties' identities. On one hand, I was potentially susceptible to draw hasty conclusions that confirm my initial assumptions; on the other hand, as I try to escape from them I could easily drift apart from what is really going on. To cope with this situation, I tried to keep myself conscious about my research goals and my intention, and tried to convey these goals to the participants clearly and consistently.

Validation was maintained as I double checked with the interviewees in the course of the interviews, regarding the validity of my interpretation and conclusions. This has been a crucial step for me to avoid possible misinterpretations of the data. This process has also been an important step to recognize my possible biases and flaws in my reasoning or methods.

I have been more concerned about the internal generalizability of my data rather than the external generalizability. Because the Turkish immigrants do not have a long history in the U.S. many features of Turkish immigrants might change as they settle deeper and adapt to the host country culture. For example, we might or might not find a totally extreme understanding of modernity when the third generation participants emerge.

Ethics

Regarding ethical issues, I considered sampling very important to interview people representing various ideas in the Turkish community; otherwise my findings might have harmed people whose ideas would be excluded because they were not interviewed. As a researcher, I am aware that I need to respect my participants' rights, needs, values, and desires. I have always been aware of the religious and cultural settings of the Turkish community as well as the Gulen movement supporters and I tried to pose my questions in the most appropriate way to these settings. Although this movement is usually known to be a very open movement and the participants usually appeared to be very willing to talk, I still used caution that there might be some issues of emotional harm. I remained sensitive and respectful to personal as well as cultural reasons that they might be uncomfortable while answering my questions.

All findings and results presented next are that of actual facts stated in the interviews. All participants' experiences and perceptions have been portrayed as they did so in the interviews, no false information or accusations was included in this final report. As a researcher, I kept seeking facts, and although my personal experience, my own thoughts, and feelings can shed light on my way, but can never be facts themselves.

CHAPTER THREE: FINDINGS

Culture From Outside In

This section explores the larger settings, codes, contexts and institutions, which influence action “from the outside in.” As previously mentioned, such settings are fundamental to the understanding of the external environment of meanings that surround individuals and provide them strategies of action. While engaging with the codes, context and institutions, the reader will be introduced to the various cultural resources of modernity, how they shape and reinforce the ideas of individuals, and how individuals deal with these social realities. Such an approach addresses an important related issue: how structural realities and publicly-accepted symbols and meanings can be very significant even when we as individuals are opposed to them.

Several interview items sought to capture the codes, context and institutions in order to bring light to the social structure which surrounds Turkish Americans. However, on many occasions, these codes were brought into the discussion by the interviewees themselves. Following each respondent’s name in parenthesis are their age, identity and category. Items related to identity are: Rel for Religious, Sec for Secular, Lib for Liberal. Those who have a mixed combination of identities have been represented with both labels. For example, someone who considers themselves to be both religious and liberal is marked “Rel & Lib.” Items related to the categories that each individual belongs to is: GM for Gulen movement, 1.5 Gen for 1.5 Generation, 2nd Gen for second generation and Others for first generation Turkish immigrants who are not involved in the Gulen movement. The only two respondents which were 1.5 generation Gulen movement supporters were indicated as 1.5 Gen & GM. This is provided to enable the reader with a clearer sense of who is speaking. As an aside,

most of the interviewees used the word modernity, modernization and being modern interchangeably, which I will also follow that discourse throughout.

Codes

This section explores the codes –publicly available systems of meaning– which signal a semantic message to the recipient. We can see that many semiotic codes come into play when the interviewees articulate the dominant understandings of modernity. We can observe that certain determinants, such as the dressing style, hijab (head scarf), religiousness, Western lifestyle, elitism and luxury, constitute a semantic code which delivers a message to the recipients about whether a person is modern or not. All of these determinants were mostly related to the dominant understanding of modernity in Turkey and found to be less relevant within the understanding of modernity in the U.S. Thus, this section is inevitably engaging with mostly the Turkish perspective of modernity.

One of the most pervasive semiotic code is the dressing style of an individual. All of the interviewees agreed that one's outfit significantly indicates modernity, especially in a country like Turkey, whereas only 5 (25%) of the respondents had that belief for the U.S. The outfit or the dressing style of a person indicates their level of modernity in different ways: in Turkey, someone who is identified as “modern” usually follows fashion trends, frequently wears designer clothing, and dresses less conservatively.

Ayşe (42, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) explains how outfits can be significantly important and relevant to being modern in Turkey:

I think being modern means following all the different trends in fashion. There is something new every year, and people are practically chasing after these trends. I look at America though, and everything seems to have remained the

same for the past 30 years. In Turkey people kill themselves going into debt just so they can be up to date with the new season of clothing so they will not be seen as “late.”

Another important code was religiousness. 17 (85%) of the interviewees agreed that reverence for religion was an implication of the rejection of modernity in Turkey, while that was considered the case for the U.S. by only 4 (20%) of the respondents. One major sign of religiousness, which came up during the interviews was the headscarf, where 17 (85%) of the respondents claimed that wearing a hijab (head scarf) was deemed another sign of anti-modernity in Turkey, while this number was only 3 (15%) for the U.S. Hande (50, Lib, Other) speaks of her own past experience with the head scarf to highlight the prejudice of others:

Turkish people, including my own family, conflict modernity and religiousness. There is a general belief that if you are modern, you should not be religious. I am the only one who wears a head scarf in my family and I get a lot of negative reactions from them because I do it. They did not speak to me after I started wearing it because they saw me as an anti-modern person, but I do not agree that I am.

Similarly, Tamer (44, Rel& Lib, GM) explains what kind of images headscarf and religiousness bring into the minds of people:

In Turkey, the word “modernity” brings to mind images of promiscuity, hence why a woman wearing a headscarf would not be described as a modern woman. Due to the difficulties Turkey has faced in the past, it still harbors prejudice against those who are religious, labeling them as being simple-minded and bigoted. With that in mind, it is easy to see why people turn to clothing as a determination of someone's level of modernity. A modern woman is always described as one who does not wear a headscarf. I guess the shortness of a skirt and the exposure of skin is what marks modernity in Turkey.

Besides being aloof to religion, another indication of being modern in Turkey is having a “Western lifestyle.” 13 (65%) of the respondents articulated that aspects of Western popular culture such as Western music, TV shows, and dressing styles are important indicators of modernity in Turkey. Aylin (18, Lib, 1.5 Gen) reveals the conflict she faces with her Westernized cousins in Turkey:

There is an infatuation with the Western lifestyle that both baffles and amuses me. My cousin is like that too; she only listens to American music and watches shows from the US. That is not modernity, though. When I go to Turkey, I expect to live the Turkish lifestyle, but she expects me to bring America with me when I come. We clash at that point because I want to leave behind my American identity and solely do Turkish things in Turkey, but she wants to watch Vampire Diaries with me. I can watch that in America, but she cannot. She expects me to be completely Westernized and out of touch with my Turkish self, and since I am not, my actions tend to irk her.

Mert (59, Sec, Other) voices the same concerns as Aylin, but with a focus on designer clothing:

[People] think that getting to be modern has to do with adopting everything from the West. The simplest example is how my relatives ask me to bring over really high-end designer clothes that I do not even buy for my children. This is all completely affectatious behavior. Buying Chanel perfume or scarves is the equivalent of being modern in Turkey. The biggest problem is the feeling of depression and emptiness our people feel when they do not own everything made in the US or Europe.

Moreover, 18 (90%) of the interviewees believe that Turkey's view of

modernity is based on materialism, the characteristics of high-class culture and elitism, leading a more luxurious lifestyle. However, only 6 (30%) of the interviewees believe that materialism is a sign of being modern in the U.S. Cemal (34, Lib, Other) relates the understanding of modernity in Turkey to material wealth when he makes a distinction between the understanding of modernity in the U.S.:

The Turkish concept of modernity focuses on the elite lifestyle, luxury and materialistic things. Someone may describe himself as being modern simply because they own a pet. However, if we were to ask an American, they would say that modernity lies within human interaction: a person who knows how to speak in public, how to treat people in public, who remembers to greet others and excuse themselves when necessary. That is what modernity would be in America.

Similar to Cemal, Mert (59, Sec, Other) explains how Turkish people think that being modern has to do with being elite and upper class: "rich people walk around with their pet dogs and have maids and chauffeurs, thinking that they are modern, but really, they are not." Upper-class culture, secularity, and modernity appear as interrelated

issues for many respondents. Aylin (18, Lib, 1.5 Gen) gives an example of how Turkey views the upper class who lack religion as being modern through the famous Turkish TV show “Avrupa Yakasi”:

I personally do not think money has anything to do with modernity; it just means that you did well in college. In America that is not viewed as being “modern” but in Turkey, most of the “modern” people are wealthy, and the poor people are generally religious and anti-modern. At a seminar I attended yesterday, we observed that the TV show “Avrupa Yakasi” portrays accomplished, modern characters with secular names like “Yagmur, Toprak, Cem, Doga,” whereas the less educated characters, usually maids and butlers and whatnot have names that come from the Quran, such as “Nurullah, Muhammed, and Zeynep.” I think this is an accurate depiction of Turkey’s mindset when it comes to religion. Usually, if you are religious, people think you just do what your religion tells you and that is why you wear your scarf and you never try anything new. I am sure that if I were to be living in Turkey, no one would be able to determine that my favorite food is sushi, due to the fact that I wear a head scarf.

When it comes to the U.S., Ismail (18, Lib&Rel, GM&1.5) expresses what he observes as the perception of modernity. He explains that people in the U.S. view modernity as mostly related with popular culture and he says that modernity in here is “keeping up with everything that happens in America, from the fashion to social media to technology.” He further mentions that people believe that “following what is popular and knowing far too much about celebrities’ lives and trying to imitate them and their dressing style” makes them modern. In line with Ismail, Kerem (21, Lib, 1.5 Gen) introduces another sign of being modern when he describes the image of a modern woman in the U.S.:

The image of the modern woman right now in the U.S is like a woman that is very slim, usually blonde. That is how she is portrayed through magazines and stuff. Slim, blonde, tanned, dresses very nicely, that is the modern woman. The modern man is a man with a slim suit and a tie. I agree with these definitions because that is just how most workplaces are for men. For women, that is the image of them, and that is how most women try to be off of that image. They dye their hair and get a tan to look more modern.

As can be noticed from the views of the interviewees mentioned above, most of them are highly critical about the codes that describe being modern. The dominant understanding of modernity in Turkey, which relies on the previously mentioned codes, was very pervasive and powerful during the interviews, even when individuals strongly disagreed and rejected it. Some respondents are aware of the fact that they are manipulated by these generally-accepted public meanings. They complain that they are bound by these ideas, no matter what thoughts they might have personally.

Tamer (44, Rel& Lib, GM) is one interviewee who thinks he has been influenced by these socially constructed opinions. While explaining what he thinks about the image of a modern woman, Tamer mentions that a modern woman is one who “is intellectual, open-minded, has an interest in fine arts and humanities and lives with good morals.” It is obvious to him that, modernity is more about personality and lifestyle that is not related to appearance. However, he continues:

I realize that my thoughts can be quite conflicted on this matter. I ask myself if I would still consider a woman wearing a black veil which covers her whole body and face to be modern, regardless of the way she dresses, and I know that I probably would not. I am aware that this is not necessarily the right thing to think, but it has been placed into my subconscious and hammered into my brain. It should not be important whether a woman dresses this way or that, but rather, what they interest themselves in.

Unlike Tamer, some of the respondents seem less aware of being constrained by these codes. To illustrate, many interviewees presented views contrary to the dominant understanding. However, in specific questions I observed that they were using the dominant understanding of modernity as their main reference. In many occasions, interviewees simply shifted frames when they were talking about modernity, less concerned about coherence and typically contradicting their previously-mentioned ideas.

For example, Ayse (42, Sec & Rel & Lib, GM) believes that modernity is related to human rights, freedom and democracy. She is strongly against perceiving modernity as related to material goods. Human rights, freedom and democracy were a main narrative during the interview with her. For instance, Ayse states that the government's interference with the way people dress is an abuse of freedom and human rights, which makes it anti-modern in her eyes. For her, it is crucial that Turkey joins the European Union, as it will play a large role in the modernization of Turkey as she says that "in the European Union, human rights, justice and freedom are put more into play," and that if Turkey joins, "they will be more freedom." In Ayse's opinion: "under current circumstances, America is the world's most modern country because there are independent thought and freedom here." However, she states that she does not believe Turkey is modern because "there is not enough freedom for independent thought." As evident as it is, human rights and freedom are her main references of modernity. However, when I asked if there was a downside to modernity, she responded that:

It might be a handicap at times because it might create conflict between one's personal beliefs and materialism. It is very important for a Muslim not to be attached to the world, but once you enter that mindset, it can become very dangerous, because valuing money tends to distance people from religion.

Q: But was modernity related to wealth and materialism?

That is how people view modernity in Turkey. We have not been able to see modernity as democracy.
Regardless of how much Ayse states that she sees modernity as a form of freedom, she still considers it a handicap because "people generally view modernity as something materialistic" and "stray away from religion because of their affinity for money." This hints to us that whatever individuals think about modernity, the

knowledge of codes influences the individual's ideas because of their widespread publicity.

What is more interesting is that she even contradicts her own thoughts when I ask if modernization frees a woman. Although she thinks that modernity is directly related to freedom and human rights, she is reluctant to agree that modernity is a positive contribution because it gives women freedom:

Modernity may have freed women in a way, but I feel that women who leave their children at home with nannies to pursue materialism have it worse now. They work full-time and do not give attention to their children, which upsets me. Those kind of women are neither hundred percent effective at home or in the workplace.

We can observe the same situation in Meliha (40, Rel&Lib, GM). For Meliha modernity is “a renewal, namely, improvement towards a better life.” For her, modernity is not related to the way she dresses, or whether or not she dresses promiscuously or wears her headscarf differently. She defines modernization by explaining that “something that you use wears out in time and the flaws become more noticeable as the interest in the good of the general public wanes. Renewing and improving these things is what modernity really is.” When she explains why she is modern she uses the same discourse again “I consider myself to be quite modern. If we revert to *my* definition of “modern” –renewing oneself to fit the current situation of the day–then yes, I am modern.”

While “renewal and improvement for the betterment of society” constitute her main understanding of modernity, during the interview she expressed a strong opposition toward the understanding of the relation of modernity with one's outfit, and she continues to do so, at every turn trying to challenge such an understanding:

In today's world, there is still pressure to dress a certain way to be considered modern. Unfortunately, if you wear a head scarf in Turkey, you are seen as not

being in with the current trends, and that you are brainless. A whole generation was raised promoting this mindset, although wearing a headscarf has nothing to do with modernity. In fact, banning head scarves is completely anti-modern and anti-democratic. I feel that the ban was completely a political move made to make a statement that has nothing to do with modernity itself. However, when I asked the negative sides of modernity she explained that she personally started dressing more *modern* by wearing pants and switched to a more comfortable style of tying her head scarf just so she could fit in better:

If you desperately try to fit into a crowd to achieve modernity, you might ignore something really beneficial. For example, my dressing style used to be far more conservative than it is now, but I had to adapt so I would not call attention to myself. I wear pants and wear my head scarf in a more comfortable way now.

The contradictions we observe in both Ayse's and Meliha's cases indicate how the dominant understanding penetrates into the process of thinking about modernity. Another aspect which gives codes power is the fact that they assign membership to a specific category. Individuals measure whether or not people can belong to the "modern" category through codes. Whether they agree with a specific code or not, individuals are still concerned with how others will categorize them depending on their engagement with the dominant understanding of modernity. This situation is evident in the case of Ismail (18, Rel & Lib, 1.5 Gen & GM). Ismail views modernity as "following trends, having a nice car, being social and rich." He also claims that he finds modernity "meaningless." However, the social pressure of everyone else's infatuation with modernity has influenced his thoughts when he explains that, "the modern lifestyle is meaningless because money is given a lot of value, but nowadays most people view modern life in a positive way, which means that if you disagree with them, they might not think so highly of you anymore." According to him, "people leading a modern life are happier" because "they look better to others and that makes them feel better. People who dress nicer and have nicer cars and homes are

happier people.” This explanation reveals that although people might be critical about modernity they refrain from being perceived as anti-modern due to the negative response such an idea receives.

Cases such as, Tamer, Ayse, Meliha and Ismail are all examples of the ways codes can penetrate our ideas, beliefs, and even our most well-elaborated and rationalized conclusions. Interviewees were constrained by their knowledge of the dominant understanding of modernity in Turkey and how they would be perceived by others depending on their engagement with modernity. Thus, the knowledge of such understandings inevitably enters their ideas and makes them hold contradicting ideas.

Context

Continuing to look at the structural realities which affect action, our second dimension is context. Culture depends on the social context. When the context enforces public cultural coherence, the culture becomes more effective, systemized, and unified (Swidler 1995, 2001). In the case of Turkish-American view of modernity, the social and political context of Turkey gave coherent meanings to modernity. The societal realities of Turkey, which surrounded the meaning of modernity, made the interviewees think and talk in a certain kind of way. They believed that the social and political context has polarized the society in many ways. One of the existing polarizations is this: religious people are perceived as being against modernity, while modern people are considered against religion. This reality seemed to aid in shaping the views of most of the respondents even the ones who belong to the 1.5 generation.

16 (80%) of the interviewees stated that there is a conflict between modernity and religion in Turkey and that some portion of the general public hold the belief that

a religious person cannot also be modern at the same time. Mert's (59, Sec, Other) comment explaining the relationship between modernity and religiousness sums up the situation perfectly: "those who deem themselves as religious in Turkey do not believe that modern people can be religious; and those who deem themselves as modern people do not accept any other idea of modernity that could somehow incorporate religion into it."

This divergence has also been infused into personal opinions of most of the respondents. For example, despite being a 1.5 generation, Aylin mostly considers atheists and agnostics as the most modern people in Turkey. She claims that it is either them or those who "claim to be Muslim, but do not practice anything or care about Muslim values." Mustafa seems to have the same mindset regarding this matter; when I asked whether or not there were groups in Turkey that were against modernity, his response was:

There are people in Turkey who are against modernity. They are the ones who want Turkey to be dictated strictly through religious values. I think that it is the religious groups who do not want modernity. They might see it as going against Islamic values, with the promotion of promiscuity and the decline of conservatism. There are groups like that in America, too. The Amish live the way people did 100 years ago, but their opposition is mainly directed towards technology rather than the place of religion in modernity.

While the clash of religion and modernity seems to be accepted as a recurring theme in Turkey, 16 (80%) of the respondents refuse the idea that the same claim can be made for the United States. Meliha's (40, Rel&Lib, GM) believes that while Kemalist groups in Turkey see a conflict between religion and modernity, this issue is less relevant in the U.S.:

Those who follow Kemalism think that religion is opposed to modernity. If you look at the religious side of Turkey, there are probably people who also agree that there is conflict, but there are also those who do not agree with this. In America, such things are not a topic of discussion; this happens more often

in our country. In America a religious person is not perceived as someone who is antimodern. There is no conflict. People agree that you can be as modern and religious as you would like at the same time.

Meliha's comment points to another social reality of Turkey. There is a political separation between the ones who advocate Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's ideology (Kemalism) and the ones more critical about it. Ataturk, who was the founder of Republic of Turkey, implemented several reforms that some interviewees considered to be examples of modernization and others considered to be dictatorial top-down attempts to Westernize Turkey. This political polarization remained another context which clarified and unified the meaning of modernity. Many of the interviewees, regardless of whether or not they agreed with the fundamentals of Kemalism, they continually referred to Kemalism regardless of how relevant it was to the question.

Mert (59, Sec, Other) was one of those, who was a strong advocate of Ataturk's ideology (Kemalism). When I asked what modernity is, he explained it with reference to Ataturk and brought an issue about people against him into the discussion of modernity:

What I mean when I am talking about modernization is the interaction and competition of people in branches such as art, science, technology, sports. This is what Ataturk was trying to accomplish. He never said "I am going to shut down your mosques, make you leave your religion, and get rid of religious leaders." Unfortunately, some groups have made such accusations anyway to give themselves more credibility.

For Selin (31, Sec&Lib, Other), the time of Ataturk was the most beneficial one in terms of modernization of Turkey. Although some of the rules were forcefully inflicted upon the public, they were "right", because Ataturk was a reliable leader, and leaders are like parents in that they "know what's best for their children". That being the case, people had to accept the new regulations eventually. However, she believes that there are some groups that are against Ataturk's revolutions:

There are those who don't accept what Ataturk has done for Turkey's modernization. They claim that he "ruined everything"; these people are mostly from the more religious group. They're the ones who believe that everything should have stayed Arabic and that women should have "known their places."

Many other interviewees, although they were not in agreement with Kemalist groups, still persistently employed the knowledge of this political separation. Yet, they kept referring to it for their own purposes: maintaining a distance to this ideology and justifying their disagreement. For instance, when I asked about the general consensus on the understanding of modernity in Turkey, Hande (50, Lib, Other) relied on the argument presented above to emphasize that she was opposed to it:

When you picture modernity in Turkey, you mostly think of Ataturk's influence. The most significant part of modernity is dressing style in Turkey. If your outfit fits the Ataturk mindset, then you're modern, but if it doesn't, you aren't. This is an antidemocratic approach, and I'm definitely against it.

Everyone should dress the way they want to.

Meliha (40, Rel&Lib, GM) brought this issue when I asked her whether or not Hijabi models that participated in fashion shows and took place in magazines represented modernity. Even though it was not that relevant to the question she used Kemalism again to defend her own opinion:

I don't see this as a form of modernization. This doesn't fit my concept of modernity, but if you were to ask someone who advocates Kemalism—who are coincidentally the people who are often imposing modernity on the nation anyway—they would state that it's exactly what modernization is. Such an act is basically saying "look, I can take even the most religious girl and put her in tight clothing and make her model as a way of exposing her". This would be an indication that the girl is losing her conservative values, but it wouldn't represent her entering a more modern lifestyle. Again, I completely disagree with this idea, but [Kemalists] don't.

The culture of Kemalism especially yields coherent opinions when the relationship of modernity and religion is asked. Many of the interviewees referred to Kemalism when they were elaborating on the question about modernity vs. religion. Abdullah (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) in response to this question:

People will have different thoughts on whether or not a conflict even exists. If one is to view modernity as something that is opposed to religion, then they'll label Ataturk as being secular. However, those who view modernity as a big leap towards Westernization will see him as a revolutionary leader. The discourse about the conflict between Kemalism and religion was also available in the observations of the 1.5 generations. When I asked to identify a modern lifestyle in Turkey, Ismail, too, gave examples of people with Kemalist views: "I feel that Kemalists think not praying would be considered one of the most modern things in Turkey."

The social and political contexts of Turkey became prevalent in the respondents' opinions and positions on matters, as well as the way they handle them. The fact that the issues previously mentioned are the main point of argument in discussions about Turkey's modernity clearly shows the power and influence these contexts possess. It is impossible to ignore that the strong division of these social and political contexts urge the division of individuals as well, thus demanding and enforcing cultural coherence over the ideas in the process.

Institutions

This section reveals how larger institutional demands contributes, forms and reinforces the meaning of modernity. By investigating how the Turkish-Americans construct action around institutional constraints, we can develop a broader understanding of what reproduces the cultural meaning of modernity, and how social realities are actually shaping this understanding. At this point it is important to note that the institutional realities, which were shaping the meaning of modernity, were mostly related to Turkey, because institutional structures, particularly the state, were involved in matters related to modernity, whereas this was not a distinctive feature in the U.S.'s relationship with modernity. Institutional constraints have a wide

implication over cultural meaning, these matters included a great range of political and social issues, however, in the scope of this study only the most distinctive and pervasive ones will be examined.

One of the most powerful institutional constraints which influenced the meaning of modernity was the state's interference in religious practices particularly issues like the headscarf. This constraint was providing coherence, as many female interviewees were shaping their understanding of modernity around their negative experience and suffering from the headscarf ban, which played a major role in Turkey's past history. Although the ban is lifted now in Turkey, the memories of it were still very apparent and influential over the individual's ideas. What makes the headscarf ban part of the modernity discussion is the fact that it was a policy implemented to maintain the separation of the church and the state. As many interviewees acknowledged, in order to be a modern and secular country any religious practice and symbol had to be separated from the areas of the state, with education being one of the many.

Having this background information, we can see that the female interviewees who either wore the headscarf and experienced the injustice of the ban, or simply witnessed to it, construct a particular understanding of modernity in line with their own personal experiences. For most of them, modernization should include "rights and freedom", which enables you to "practice any religion and openly wear the headscarf" while also "respecting individuals' free will".

Ayşe (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) experienced the headscarf ban in Turkey. Although she could finish medical school with her scarf on, when she graduated, she was left with one choice: she had to take it off in order to work. She explains that this

was the reason why she came here. When I asked her what a modern lifestyle is like she explained that: “like a lifestyle you have here in the U.S.” A lifestyle in the U.S. is modern for her because, as she explains, “in Turkey, things like not being able to express your religion at work through your clothing, or being judged by the school you send your child to. These things make life a living hell.” However in here, “you can continue to coexist while holding onto your religious beliefs. A Sikh can work at NASA or the Pentagon with his headwear without anyone calling them out for being antimodern.” Thus, for her “alterations in irrelevant things such as clothing doesn’t seem modern.” When I asked her personal opinion on modernity, she answered with the headscarf still on her mind:

Being provided my basic rights is what modernity is to me. Making someone take off their headscarf isn’t modern to me at all. Modernity lies in one’s thoughts and what they bring to the world, which can be improved through better education. Opening the doors of universities to any given person, regardless of race, gender, or any other form of identity is modernity, because it enables the exchange of different ideas. I disagree with a form of modernity that relies on the appearance. Restricting someone’s dressing style is an abuse of their freedom and everyday human rights. Even if modernity is being used solely to bring beneficial things to society, this should be done so in a democratic fashion, with the public being able to put forth their own approval and voicing their needs and opinions.

We can observe that, given her past experiences, Ayse’s perception of the state is that their oppressive form of banning specifically religious things makes the modernity they are trying to create one that is “solely based on appearance”. As we can see from the response given, Ayse’s belief is that, since Turkey’s modernity is based off of clothing and appearance, the government feels “an obligation to interfere with how people are dressing”. This interference has led Ayse to form a completely opposite view of modernity that does not fit the one in her own country.

Tugce (24, Rel, Other), who has also experienced many problems due to wearing the headscarf, has likewise formulated an opposition towards the conventional Turkish understanding of modernity. She believes that the headscarf ban was an awful thing that obliterated the concept of free will in Turkey:

Until very recently, it was impossible for women in headscarves to be seen in certain places. This is horrible. Actual modernity is someone's ability to be able to enter those places of my own free will, showcasing my personality however I want to. This is who I am, I wear a scarf, I am a Muslim, and you can't take that away from me. It's my religion. Taking that away from people, that's not being modernized.

During the interview with Tugce, we can see that the constraints of the headscarf ban were informing her ideas and influencing her to construct an opposite concept of modernity that relied on "individual free will". Her emphasis on issues related to the headscarf ban was always followed by an emphasis on free will and this duality was central during our interview. When I asked her whether she considered herself modern or not she explained that: "I am modern because I show people who I am, I am strong, I have my own free will; just because I wear this scarf doesn't pull me back from anything." Again, while comparing the US and Turkey, Tugce makes the same argument regarding the lack of free will in the banning of headscarves:

What basically separates America and Turkey and makes U.S. more modern is that in the U.S., people act upon free will to do whatever they want. In America, government gives people their free will. First of all, it gives 'us' our free will. We are Muslims. We go to school with our scarves on. In Turkey this is being implicated just now due to the recent role of the government. Aylin (18, Lib, 1.5 Gen) is another interviewee which constructs an

understanding of modernity in line with her personal experience in Turkey. She says that when she visited Turkey after she started wearing the headscarf, people's opinions had changed towards her and this negative reaction from them has

influenced her own opinions and thoughts on modernity. Her explanation was as follows:

Whenever we went to Turkey for the summer, my cousins would invite me to their school so that I could explain my experience in the U.S. to their English class. I remember the English teachers always offering to buy me food and showing me affection. But after I started wearing headscarf I was not allowed in their school anymore now that I'm representing my religion. From that day on, I decided to never be like them. Being modern should mean being open and accepting; I didn't change as a person when I put a piece of cloth on my head, but I got a lot of different reactions from people that suggested otherwise. This prompted me to do the exact opposite of what I had to go through so that less people would feel alienated while representing their religions.

Institutional demands also give cultural coherence because such demands shape cultural formulas. This could be observed in conversations with individuals who had dealt with the state's Westernization policy. Most of the immigrants agreed that at the initial stages of the Turkish Republic, the state favored complete Westernization as the path to modernity. However, most of the interviewees were critical of this idea of adopting all aspects of the Western culture. Dealing with the state's ideas on Westernization, and finding them problematic, the Turkish immigrants were generating a new understanding of modernization: selective adoption. This cultural formula meant selectively adopting positive aspects of the West (structure, economy, technology, etc.) leaving aside its negative aspects (Western lifestyle and culture etc.) that could harm our religion and cultural values.

Hande (50, Lib, Other) was applying this cultural formula while she was explaining her ideas on Westernization. She believes that we should adopt the positive, influential sides of the West, while leaving behind the "misconstrued concept" that we need their lifestyle, dressing style, and their family values in order to become modernized, as it presents the risk of losing our own values. There is, she

argued, a high risk of us losing respect for our elders and becoming disengaged with our families if we completely adapt to the West. She goes on to say:

You don't necessarily have to become Westernized to achieve modernity. They're two completely different concepts. There is no need to dress and think like Europeans do, especially considering how Europe as a whole has made a lot of mistakes and has many flaws. We should have let ourselves pick up the good traits only, but Turkey went ahead and got the whole package, with all the good and bad bundled together. We could've adapted some European aspects into our country without completely degenerating our own culture. Unfortunately, we couldn't keep the two separate, and as a result, lost our tradition, culture and family values, all in the face of becoming modern. Meliha (40; Lib& Rel; GM) is applying the same cultural formula in the

discussion of Westernization. She believes that we should be aware that "every civilization has their pros and cons" and that we should have only adopted the economy rather than the whole thing:

There are positive influences of the West, too. The civilization is more evolved, as is their economy and their industry. Adopting these things is what being modern is. However, we should still be wary, since Turkey seems to accept these things as a package deal. Not everything in that package may fit, so you have to tailor it to your liking, but we seem to prefer trying to squeeze ourselves into the ways of the west without tailoring anything, even if it's uncomfortable. The media makes it seem like it's better to wear what's presented to you without tailoring it in order to "fit in," which is an antimodern and antidemocratic understanding.

Abdullah (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) seems to have formulated a similar idea regarding the pros and cons of Westernization and how we should adapt it while still holding onto our own roots:

It's a completely wrong approach to take in all of Westernization because it will have flaws. We can't refuse everything from our culture and attempt to copy some other civilization instead. You can't "copy paste" something and expect it to work out the kinks on its own. The pillars of modernity should be knowledge and religion; we can acquire the knowledge from Europe, but we have to provide the religion on our own so that there isn't a collision of ideas and values.

Just like all the other interviewees, Tamer (44, Rel&Lib, GM) is against complete Westernization, emphasizing that the rise of the republic after the collapse

of the Ottoman Empire was what urged such imitation. He believes that in their desperation to become modern, Turkish people have turned to imitating France:

[Westernization] is a perception that only came to Turkey after the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Everything was modelled after the French, giving us the false implication that Europe provides the best of everything. Yes, if you're going to become "modern", the best resources are in the West, but they tried to take Europe as a whole.

He continues by explaining that his understanding of modernity is totally different.

We shouldn't turn our backs to our own history and our Ottoman values while trying to become more modern. The French way of dressing and dancing, things like that... when you describe these things to people, they automatically think of actual modernity, but I have to disagree. I associate modernity with culture, music, and art... I'd like to incorporate them into modernity without having to turn our backs onto our Ottoman roots.

These examples reveal that shared culture of institutional realities can create cultural coherence even when individuals disagree with these institutional structures. It could be observed that the Turkish-Americans were highly critical about the state implementation of modernity, and therefore, they were constructing an opposite understanding of modernity while dealing with the state's obligations.

Culture From Inside Out

This second section will attempt to answer the question of how individuals deal with the structural realities that lie behind the meaning of modernity. Do they simply adopt them or not? If they refuse accommodating these cultural meanings of modernity, how do they abandon or challenge them? This section will demonstrate that individuals cannot be seen simply as cultural consumers, making every cultural meaning surrounding them their own, but rather as active agents changing, reappropriating, using and putting aside relevant parts of culture for their own purposes with various strategies of action.

For that purpose, I will be looking at two dimensions: First, how individuals in each group (1.5 Gen, GM, Other) employ the specific cultural materials unique to each group respectively in order to assign different meanings to modernity. Second, by analyzing only a group within itself, I aim to observe how individuals use the common cultural materials in distinctive ways.

Monocultural Modernity and 1.5 Generations

The most distinctive feature of the second generation Turkish-Americans is that they are not influenced by the Turkish understanding of modernity as much as the other groups. Rather, their understanding of modernity is associated with life in America. Such an understanding has played a huge role in their perception of the matter. Furthermore, perhaps unsurprisingly, 1.5 generations were the respondents who revealed the strongest affection towards America. Most of them defined the U.S. as the best representation of a modern country. These can be seen from the conclusive responses, where 5 out of the 7 1.5 generation respondents believed that the major influence on their thoughts about modernity was their U.S. experience. The reason why the 1.5 generations' approach toward modernity is more monocultural is, on the one hand, related to the above considerations, and on the other hand is shaped by the fact that they have fewer cultural resources and limited knowledge about the perception of modernity in Turkey.

It could be observed that 1.5 generations are drawing from a pool of common cultural materials, such as fashion, American popular culture, free will, individual freedom and being open to different ideas, and so on. What they pick up or put aside from that set of cultural materials from the U.S. is also strategically employed in their definition of modernity. For example, Kerem (21, Lib, 1.5 Gen) and Ismail (18,

Lib&Rel, GM&1.5 Gen) are two second generation individuals who construct an understanding of modernity in line with the U.S. culture. According to Kerem, the U.S. is currently the most modern country in the world; hence he chooses to identify with it:

Everyone knows America. It's been modern from the very start anyway, since it's a country whose origins derive from Europe. American fashion, film, Hollywood, the celebrity lifestyle...these are what are really modern. People look at America in the hopes that they can figure out how to dress or how to make successful movies. America is a big influence on all the other countries. For him, modernity can be achieved through Westernization, which undoubtedly will

lead to Americanization. For him these two constitute an essential part of modernization:

Westernization is really important. Think of the most modern place you know.... America. Everything's new. For me, modernity is the same thing as copying America. Everyone is influenced by famous people that live in America and this makes people do what they want to do because of them. America is modern because it influences everyone else. Living here has really narrowed down my idea of modernity and finalized it. When I go to Turkey for vacation, it seems a little bit different; some places aren't as modern as others. In America, there are certain standards that you live under, and most of those aren't put into play in Turkey.

For Kerem, modernity means "newness, the latest trends". He gives examples like "the way you dress, your forms of entertainment, whom you're seen with, keeping up with whatever's new and trending." In addition, he considers the U.S as the "driving force" of modernity, because it "always has something new and fresh" to offer. When asked "what if another country has something new?" his response was as follows:

Most of what I view as modern comes from America anyway. For example, if some new form of technology was founded in China, America would get it and make it viral anyway. It would be really hard for China to become modern off of just one thing. America, on the other hand, has so much to offer in terms of modernity; everyone looks to America.

Just like Kerem, Ismail also identifies America as the pillar of modernity. He believes that modernity in the U.S. is "all about following all the latest trends: fashion,

technology, social media.” He also adds that “following popular things and knowing far too much about celebrities and trying to imitate them through dressing style and lifestyle, that’s what modernity is here.” He expresses that he agrees with the American style of modernity. Kerem and Ismail are both monocultural in the sense that they have lack of cultural resources related to Turkey. While many immigrants point to the negative aspects and controversies regarding the concept of modernity in Turkey, Kerem and Ismail seem less aware of it. While Ismail simply answers questions about Turkey’s modernity as “I don’t know”, Kerem believes that the perception of modernity is a universal concept and “Turkey and America would both agree on it”.

On the other hand, Esin (20, Rel, GM) and Tugce’s (24, Rel, Other) mindset are much different from Kerem and Ismail’s, as their personal experience has urged them to believe that Turkey and the U.S. have completely different understandings of modernity. What makes them monocultural isn’t their lack of resources to base opinions off of Turkey’s modernity, but rather, their adherence towards the American way of modernization and the fact that they stay away from the Turkish belief of modernity. Esin explains the situation as follows:

How modernity is understood in Turkey and in America is very different. In here, modernity really is in the minds of people, but in Turkey, there is more importance placed on status and wealth. How much you spend determines your modernity status, which seems odd to me. I’m more on America’s side with this one. Modernity is more in the minds of people, which means being open-minded and respecting others.

Esin’s response to the question of what shaped her views on modernity most was “America”. She explains that people have always been kind and understanding towards her in the US; and their open-mindedness and acceptance has left a positive influence on her. She says that while there’s prejudice against religion in Turkey,

people in America are completely fine with her praying, and that this is how modernity should be. She brings forth another example of the American influence that has affected her idea about gay rights:

I understand that some American values have been implemented in my brain. I notice this a lot when I go to Turkey for the summer. For example, when it comes to gay rights, living here has made me respect the idea... I respect everyone now, and I think this is modern.

We can observe a similar situation with Tugce's experience in America. The way she has lived here has helped her understand modernity in the "American manner". She believes that America is a modern country and the reason for this is because "people are free, they have free will. They pursue their own aims; nobody forces them to do that. There will obviously be growth when people are doing their own things willingly."

Tugce explains that "being an individual, having free will, doing whatever you want to do" is what makes people more modernized. Being an individual and having your own free will was crucial in Tugce's perception of modernity and she explains that is what she found in the U.S. "I prefer American side, because I was raised here, I was raised as an individual person" she marks. She believes that Turkey is less modern because "it is more collective, it is more like a group thing." Tugce thinks that Turkey, being a more collectivist place, is antimodern. She also regards herself as modern because she was raised in the US. When I asked her why she considers herself modern she explained that:

It just went that way in America. America had set grounds for being modern; it fit me. It would be harder in Turkey. For example, my dad's side of my family is very collectivist. They choose what they want you to be, whoever they want you to get married to. That would have been hard. If I were to live with them, I would've maybe live like them, think like them, act like them. Since I was raised here and my dad doesn't think like them, that's what pushed me to be modern.

As previously mentioned, the 1.5 generations are drawing from a common cultural repertoire related to the U.S., such as keeping up with the trends, being open rather than judging, etc. These were narratives that I frequently came across during the interviews; however they differed in the style and ways they brought these cultural materials to bear. While Kerem and Ismail were constructing a line of action which was bound by the U.S.' understanding of modernity; Esin and Tugce's different strategy of action relied more on picking up the U.S. understanding of modernity and leaving behind the one in Turkey. What these individuals have in common is that they all see modernity as a positive influence that the U.S. has successfully implemented in everyday life. In whatever way they define modernity, it can be seen that they are all strongly positive about it. At this point it is important to question what sort of strategy they would implement if they viewed modernity more critically. The answer to that can be seen in interviewee Orhan (19, Rel, Other), who views modernity in both countries objectively and critically. While the other second generation interviewees see America as having reached the pinnacle of modernity, Orhan seems to believe that there are a lot of flaws and cons in both of the countries' systems. Orhan believes that there should be a completely different and new comprehension of modernity that is far more universal than what either of the countries provides. Orhan seems to be far more aware of the defects of the Western world and these defects are mostly related to discriminatory practices toward minorities that exists in the Western domain.

Orhan is also highly critical about the perception of modernity in Turkey, which strongly relies on Westernization. Also, for him the concept of modernity in the U.S is different than the one in Turkey. The fact that America is already in the West, he believes that people will associate modernity mostly in line with the latest

technology and advancements. When he explains his personal understanding of modernity, which happens to be different than the other second generations, he constructs a line of action which goes beyond both understandings:

If I lived in Turkey, I would look to the West for modernity as well, but since I already live here, my concept of modernity is different, because I have no intention of imitating western ways as someone who lives in the US. I don't see it as an ideal for me since I'm aware of what's already happening here; I personally see aiming for what's better as a goal for modernity. Instead of trying to be like the people here, I think it's more rational to take the best of everything. The modernity aesthetic shouldn't rely on a country, but rather, an ideal lifestyle.

He believes that experiencing both Turkey and U.S gives him a multidimensional perspective. For him, someone who has only seen the priorities of one country as modernity is close-minded and incapable of completely understanding modernity. As someone who has been in both cultures, he sees modernity differently from others:

I didn't just live in one society, and I feel really lucky for that. My understanding of modernity goes far beyond the concepts provided by both countries. I've seen two different countries, two different perspectives. This made me realize that what we're aiming for should be different than what it really is. My idea of modernity is far more general and universal, but someone who has just lived in America may see it as being completely based around technological advances and whatnot, simply because they have no other experiences or resources that can prove otherwise.

Orhan has a distinctive strategy of action compared to other 1.5 generations. He is critical about both understandings of modernity (the U.S. and Turkey) and he reconstructs a new understanding of modernity that is not limited to neither of the perceptions:

For me modernity is moving forward. The lines that separate different cultures and identities are slowly blurring over time; people are becoming more globally aware as it gets easier to travel. Cultures are intermingling and living together. Rather than seeing modernity as an American or Turkish thing, I see modernity as a more worldwide thing.

He explains that his understanding of modernity is more like a global concept which cannot focus on a single country and picks the most beneficial things from each country to make the ultimate package:

That being the case, Turkey might lack in modernity due to our lack of proper law and rights, which is an issue that I think should be eliminated to achieve the ultimate form of modernity. The biggest conflict against modernity in the U.S. is the economic difference between the classes; I'd still say this was an issue that needed to be fixed, even if it was in another part of the world, like Africa. I won't say "this is more important to achieve modernity than that" or anything; every country needs to make improvements to obtain modernity, in my opinion. For a positive advance, I'll take anything that's given from any country that'll make the world more modern. If I lived in Africa and was riddled with problems regarding poverty, I wouldn't look to America and their issues with discrimination and say it's less significant.

Kerem, Ismail, Esin, Tugce and Orhan are all representative cases, when one is looking at the creative ways individuals can put culture into use. While explaining their understanding of modernity, the 1.5 generation Turkish-Americans are drawing largely from a common set of cultural repertoire related to the U.S. However, they differ greatly in the styles and the purposes of this engagement. Individuals selectively appropriate cultural resources for their own purposes. Kerem and Ismail are perfect examples showing that culture influences individuals' strategies of actions. Since they lack Turkish cultural resources, their strategy of action was limited to constructing an understanding of modernity only in line with the U.S. Moreover, Esin and Tugce are very important examples of showing how people can use culture for their own purposes. Since they are critical about Turkey yet positive about the U.S. they are navigating their cultural resources in order to justify a perception of modernity associated with the U.S. Finally, in the example of Orhan, we saw how agency can come into play while people are forming an understanding of modernity. All these

examples constitute a reality of how diversely culture shapes individual strategies of action and how common cultural materials can be used differently.

Integrated Modernity and Other Turkish-Americans

People who mostly fall in this category are first generation Turkish immigrants who do not associate themselves with the Gulen movement. As we will observe in the next chapter, people from the movement have a strong emphasis on their religious identity and thus mostly discuss modernity's engagement with religion. However, people from this category have not necessarily defined themselves as religious. I have observed they have a more strong emphasis on cultural values and Turkish tradition. People from this group have an integrated approach toward modernity in the sense that they believe modernity should involve both Western values and Turkish culture. Thus, for them being modern means preserving your Turkish identity and values but also benefitting from the West.

As people tend to be cautious about their identity, they are worried that they may lose their identity as they get modern. Mert (59, Sec, Other) is one who feels cautious about the risk of losing one's cultural values and national identity as modernity starts to influence a society. He states that:

The biggest negative impact modernity has had on society is that it makes people snooty and distances them from their family and their old values and culture. The minute you lose your values, you lose yourself, and it means that modernity has ruined you.

Similar to Mert, Hande (50, Lib, Other) thinks that people associate modernization with Westernization and they think that "the more modern people get, the more independent and isolated they become" and soon they will "no longer be a part of any culture or group." She states that "people don't even celebrate most of their

cultural holidays nowadays; they find it unnecessary as they become modern.” She adds that:

People think losing their values is a way to modernize themselves, but they are all degenerating their lives. People believe that modernity is absolute freedom and “nobody can say anything about it,” and people are forgetting where they come from and are losing their traditions.

Hande is also critical about modernity and she explains that people believe getting modern is all about “doing what Americans and Europeans do.” However, she did not consider the Western domain more modern than Turkey since she believes that Turks have more “humane values,” which obviously “makes them more modern”. She further explains these moral values with the following example:

For example, if I get you a gift, you'll get me one in return. We Turks share a lot and that's very modern. However, in America, it's everyone for themselves. Your family isn't responsible for you. They can disregard their children's problems by saying “it's your problem, not mine.” In here people are mostly on their own, more individualistic. If that's their perception of modernity, I'd much rather we stayed antimodern.

Selin (31, Sec&Rel&Lib, Other) believes that it is not possible to be modern and religious at the same time, she sees a conflict between religion and modernity. She says that if she would suddenly decide to wear a headscarf she would not be able to follow a modern lifestyle anymore: “a lot of things I personally like doing can be considered sins according to Islam. I like drinking, swimming, I don't dress conservatively. One cannot be religious and very modern, there is an obvious conflict. While Selin finds Islam and modernity conflicting she has a totally different view regarding Turkish culture and traditions:

Islam and modernity might contradict, but our traditions don't. Traditions are different. People can be modern and traditional without any conflict. Our traditions provide us personality. When I think of a modern person, I think of someone who has left one foot in the past to respect their traditions, and one in the present, opening themselves to new things as well.

Since people in this category emphasize their culture and values as very crucial, while talking about modernity they employ a strategy of action that basically molds their culture with the aspects from outside resources. We can see this strategy of action when Caner (40, Sec&Rel, Other) explains why he has opted for a more modern self-presentation. He considers himself modern since he is “having a certain lifestyle as a Turkish person, and also adapting to the lifestyle of the U.S.” He thinks that he is open to new innovations, but that doesn't mean that he is “going to throw aside [his] culture and [his] past.” He concludes “modernity is taking the good things and leaving behind the bad ones”.

Similarly Cemal (34, Lib, Other) employs the same strategy when he replies to what have influenced his ideas on modernity:

I've had some positive influences from the U.S. in terms of modernity, but that doesn't mean that my Turkish culture hasn't had a good influence on me either. I try to take both of them as examples.

Mert (59, Sec, Other) more creatively employs this strategy while deriving from various resources. He mentions that some of the Turks here are living a fully Americanized life and see that as modern. He believes that your culture doesn't stop you from adapting to the American lifestyle. We should combine the two cultures in order to reproduce something better, he says. In the following quote, Mert clarifies the need to extract from multiple cultural materials:

For example, I try to take the best of both cultures and raise my children according to both countries' values. In Turkey, people place a lot of importance in respecting elders and treating them kindly. Our culture emphasizes hospitality towards guests and caring about neighbors. Here, if your neighbor was dying from hunger, you probably wouldn't even know. However the ethic codes of U.S are more promising. For example, it's really common in Turkey for people to cheat, academically speaking. It's not seen as a real crime. Here, there's an honor code and people don't cheat and be aside of it. America, too, has problems of its own, especially in the illegal

substances issue, but out of the two, America has a better living system for sure. I find this to be a positive influence.

While people from this category were employing a strategy of action which always tied modernity to culture, that strategy became less obvious for the ones who care about religion more. For instance Hakki (33, Rel, Other), who defines modernity in line with human rights and justice, emphasizes that these aspects were included in Islam centuries ago. He considers his religion as the most modern one as it “protects everyone’s rights and freedom”. He exemplifies this by revealing facts about Turkey: “women weren’t allowed to vote until 1923, but Islam has given value to women since the beginning”. For him since Islam has already been providing modern aspects, “if people are practicing it correctly, then they don’t really have much to take from the West or Europe, as they would already be modern.”

Resacralization of Modernity and the Gulen Movement

Members of Gulen movement have an idiosyncratic understanding of modernity, which yields a distinctive approach towards modernity compared to other groups. What seems to be different about them is that people from this group think about modernity in a more cohesive nature. They are cohesive in many ways, such as the way they describe modernity and the strategies of action they employ. While the adults in the Gulen movement more or less responded to my questions in a very similar fashion, the 1.5 generations constitute an exception, which I will elaborate on later in this section.

One major characteristic of the Gulen movement separating it from other groups—in addition to the members’ holding cohesive ideas—is the fact that they have more cultural resources spanning over the domains of Turkey, the U.S. and Gulen movement itself. The availability of these various cultural resources allows them to

engage in a more dynamic relationship with modernity, where they were able to question, challenge and reappropriate the aspects of the prevailing understanding of modernity.

There are three reasons why I named Gulen movement's approach to modernity "resacralization of modernity". First, the interviewees from this group do not consider religion and modernity as separate spheres. Second, they think that the boundaries of modernity are defined by religion, which means that anything that falls outside the boundaries is considered non-modern. Third, their definition of modernity is embedded with religious tenets. The examples that demonstrate these observations will be presented below.

Islam as a modern religion. As previously mentioned, none of the Gulen movement members tend to see religion and modernity as separate spheres. For them religion, particularly Islam, is compatible with modernity, and even overlapping. The interviewees mentioned that Islam already contains aspects of modernity, and in fact, during the time of Prophet Muhammad a version of modernity was established in people's lives. This can be seen in the thoughts of Abdullah (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM), who states that "Islam is already a modern religion; it meets all the requirements for modernity. Therefore, there's no way it could be 'modernized' further." Like Abdullah, all other members felt uncomfortable with the idea of modernizing Islam and had a strong feeling that Islam was already modern.

Abdullah also mentioned that there has been a major prejudice against Islam from the very beginning, which leads to misunderstandings regarding democracy. For him, the things that modernity requires, such as "liberalism and democracy," already

existed in Islam and later arrived to the Western world. He particularly emphasizes the women's rights in Islam as:

In time of our prophet, right when little girls used to get buried because everyone wanted sons, Islam built a foundation that included women's rights and showed justice for even the smallest thing. You're telling me that there's conflict when Islam provides modernity, anyway? Not likely.

In line with Abdullah, Ayse (42, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) emphasizes that the core components of modernity such as liberal values and justice are already an integral part of Islam. For her, as these concepts were already included in Islam, it is obviously a modern religion. She continued with the concepts of human rights and democracy as they constitute the main foundations of modernity and claimed that "Islam has always tried to show fairness to everyone and advocated social justice" while also making sure that people from different social statuses didn't feel alienated by each other and were all provided the same advantages. She concluded that "if that is what people see as modernity, then clearly Islam is modern."

Meliha (40, Lib&Rel, GM) is another interviewee who regards Islam not only as "a modern religion", but even entailing the highest level of modernity. As she adds that, "whatever Prophet Muhammad brought are the most universal and modern to this day. It provides everything that one needs to be modern, whether thinking sociologically, psychologically, or in terms of health."

For the members of Gulen movement, modernity and Islam co-existed at the initial stages. However, they had a common opinion that this harmony gradually decreased due to incorrect interpretations of Islam. According to this view Islam drifted apart from the main aspects of modernity and eventually became separated.

Abdullah (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) expressed that the commonly articulated ideas deeming Islam and modernity incompatible did not stem from the essence of

Islam itself, but emerged because of conservative societies' converting to Islam. He further explained that the conflict between Islamic groups arose as their cultures clashed with the general understanding of liberalism and modernity. Thus, the conflict was not a result of Islam per se, but rather came from the cultural aspects of such societies. As a result, Islam and modernity became distant, as he claimed:

“unfortunately, as the time passed, support for education and learning seemed to decline. Then a general close-mindedness settled over people's eyes, and left Islam in the dust of modernity.”

When I asked about viewpoints which hold that Islam and modern science are incompatible, most of the respondents answered in a similar fashion. They claimed that such arguments result from the lack of knowledge of Islam and unfortunately, misrepresentation of it by Islamic societies. As Tamer (44, Rel&Lib, GM) explains:

Unfortunately, people think that way because when you look at Islamic countries you will see that... You know stuff like women are not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia. We need to ask are those examples really representing Islam. Looking at those countries will it be fair to say that Islam is an antimodern religion? To me that wouldn't be right. First, you need to examine the teachings of Islam and then look at whether any discrepancy with your definition of modernity exists.

The relationship between modern science and Islam came up during our interview with Abdullah as well. He argued that the idea that finds religion and modernity incompatible was a result of the West's experience with the church and he directed such arguments to Christianity, not Islam:

I personally believe that most of the conflict between religion and modernity derives directly from the West. During the Middle ages Christianity and science came into conflict. This was what brought forth the Renaissance. The opposite happened in Islam, though: as people got less religious, they also became more dimwitted and insensitive to science. I think they used what Islam already possessed to achieve Renaissance, since Islam was the most improved civilization at the time.

Rediscovering the sacred. For the members of the Gulen movement Islam's previously mentioned history with modernity is crucial. Many members explained that Fethullah Gulen focuses on this point and draws the attention to the forgotten aspects of modernity in Islam. This is why this movement's approach is not sacralization, but more of a resacralization since the members believe that Mr. Gulen is not offering an alternative to Islam, but reinterpreting it in the correct way and revitalizing the fundamental values of Islam from the time it first emerged. Thus, the movement considers itself as engaging with modernity as they are simultaneously rediscovering the sacred.

While explaining the movement's engagement with science, Tamer (44, Rel&Lib, GM) emphasizes the following point:

Since Muslim countries didn't necessarily produce scientists and innovators, it was normal for people to see conflict between Islam and modernity. With this movement, these doubts are being erased from the minds. However, if you would ask me whether the movement brings something new...umm. I am not really sure. There are some new things of course, but I believe it is more like improving the way Islam is interpreted rather than providing an alternative.

Abdullah (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM), who claimed that he never recalls disagreeing with Gulen's viewpoints, says that he particularly agrees with Gulen's thoughts and explanations about an understanding of religion which is isolated from science that "Gulen criticizes what has *become* the understanding of Islam as something separated from science and not integrated with society."

Meliha (40, Lib&Rel, GM) shares this idea along with many supporters; for her Mr. Gulen's approach to Islam is what makes the members of the movement modern and religious, and she finds this approach really attractive:

The things that our prophet brought were really a version of modernity--human rights, democracy, and education...whatever you can think about modernity. Islam brought all that and I think the Gulen movement really

focuses on these core aspects of Islam. Their understanding of religion is not narrow-minded and something limiting people; not a corrupted or out of date system that fails to address present issues. I think this is what enables people in this movement to be both religious and modern. They're open-minded and capable of understanding human rights, which is what makes them modern. Yeah..that's what I really like about it.

Ayşe (42, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) also explains what she likes about this movement. She is very supportive of Mr. Gulen's emphasis on both scientific and religious knowledge:

During a certain period of time, we Muslims became isolated from knowledge. Education in Islam became less prevalent and less effort was put into it. I was really impressed by the metaphor the movement uses: be like a bird with two wings, one wing being religious knowledge and the other being positive sciences. For me that is a very modern approach.

Being both modern and religious. What was interesting about the members was that, when I asked them whether it was possible to be modern and religious at the same time, they claimed that it was possible and people from this movement were a perfect example of it. Thus, considering themselves part of that movement, all of the interviewees defined themselves as both modern and religious.

Abdullah (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) finds himself modern, as he takes part in this movement, because in order to participate in this movement he states that he needs to be open and very social, which results in being modern. He believes that the possibility of being modern and religious can go both ways, depending on which religion one follows, adding that "some religious interpretations can be more conservative and less open to social things". He says that "if someone lives a seclusive religious life with no outside interference, it'll block any means of modernity." He thinks he has an advantage of being modern by means of this movement:

Our advantage by taking part in this movement is that we're a social movement and thus I have to be an outward looking person, not an

individualistic one. On the other hand, how much I interact with people and try to represent Islam strongly correlates with my level of religiousness. This in turn pushes us to be more socially engaged with people and opens countless doors for us.

Meliha also believes that they are different from many other Islamic groups; people from this movement show people that it is possible to be modern, open and yet religious, and for her “this is what this movement is really working to achieve.” She goes ahead and explains that “it doesn’t make them any less religious that they’re more modern than most other Islamic groups. I think that their understanding of religion really fits the era we’re currently in. So, they don’t have to give up religion to become modern.”

Describing modernity with religious tenets. Defining Islam as a modern religion was not unique to the movement; it is not uncommon to see that other interviewees who define themselves religious also find Islam very modern. As we have observed at the end of the section on integrated modernity, Hakki (33, Rel, Other), who defined modernity as “democracy and justice”, was seeing Islam’s teachings as the most universal and modern. However, what is interesting and distinctive about people from the Gulen movement is the fact that their personal definition of modernity is inseparable from religion.

One of the many examples of this is Tamer (44, Rel&Lib, GM), who finds the dominant understanding of modernity as “spiritless”. He questioned the existing frame of modernity by asking “why shouldn’t modernity mean living for others?” He further explained this to me as “living a life for others is important for us [people from the movement], the more you sacrifice your life for others, the closer you get to God”. When I asked what modernity means for him, he explained that:

It is accepting people as they are, being open, advocating for democracy. Indeed, these are universal values that everyone would want to have. I think we should also add Fethullah Gulen's ideas about love and faith to that. Meliha's (40, Lib&Rel, GM) definition of modernity also presents a religious

flavor by considering it "something that should benefit you both in this world and in the one hereafter" and adding a comment as "it should provide the means that raise the standards of living in this world and in the hereafter." Ayse (42, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) also has a very similar understanding when she explains the role of modernity as: "it should address my needs regarding both this life and the hereafter."

While defining modernity as "figuring out your purpose in life and acknowledging, accepting, and believing in your creator" an interesting conversation between Fatma (48, Rel, GM) and me occurred:

Q: Is modernity related to deities in any way?

Yes, it definitely is.

Q: Can an atheist be modern then?

If an atheist hasn't been able to pinpoint a creator in their world, but still remain modest, they can be considered modern by the general public, but not in the true meaning of modernity. I suppose they can be modern to an extent, because they're still humanists, but what I mean by real modernity matches up with Islamic values.

Drawing the boundaries of modernity through religion. People from the Gulen movement interpret modernity in ways that are informed by their religious perspectives. Even if the dominant understanding of modernity gives them more freedom, people from the movement prefer not to go further and they choose to stay within the borders of religion. Thus, they choose to construct modernity with cultural tools from religion. For example, Fatma mentions that while democracy is a concept that comes with modernity, she claims that her religion comes first: "my religion keeps me grounded, so it doesn't matter whether or not democracy gives me more to

work with, because I'm not going to cross the line and accept. I think this is what's modern."

Many supporters of the movement believed that they do not necessarily need to agree with what public defines as modern. Many of them argued that if something goes against their religion they would not keep on calling it modern. Thus, again what demarcates modernity is: "religion." We can see this in Rasim's (44, Rel, GM) ideas as well. Rasim stated that religion plays a major role in his decision-making process and he explains that "it might seem a cliché to say this, but I don't think that there's ever a conflict between my freedom and religion. I use my faith as a reference for the things I do. For me, modernity is what's in my religion: if my religion doesn't approve of it, I don't consider it a modern thing of any sort."

Questioning modernity. People from the Gulen movement are highly critical about the dominant meanings of modernity. They think that the dominant understanding of modernity is related to individualism and materialism. Thus, they believe that a new understanding of modernity, which relies on moral values and empathy, should be constructed. For example, Abdullah (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) comments that people have become "soulless" due to the idea of individualism and materialism. For him people seem to have lost all of their humanity since, nobody feels the need to help others. He concludes that a better understanding of modernity should include "humane values and science. One can't work without the other."

Similarly, Fatma believes that defining modernity in terms of material aspects and wealth is not fair, since it prevents poor people to be considered modern as well. She elaborates on this as follows:

If we try to correlate living standards with being modern, then we're not giving those who are "less fortunate" their share of modernity. Even saying something like "you're antimodern because my country uses elevators while yours still hasn't discovered" is taking away someone else's ability to be modern. Trying to confine modernity to certain standards is unjust. There's a lot of advancement in materialism, but just because it hasn't reached a certain group or country doesn't make those people less modern.

Like many other respondents Tamer's (44, Rel&Lib, GM) main criticism of modernity is regarding individualism. He mentions that he is disturbed by how individualism is promoted in the U.S. He questions this by asking "how can a country be modern if all anyone cares about is what happens to them?" He explains:

Why caring about others and sharing, living with other people isn't considered modern? I mean, from what I've seen for example, if some kid's happy and his friend isn't, he really doesn't care. Living in the U.S. sort of pushes you to become apathetic; that's really awful. You go to work with your own lunch, you go home to your own room, while your kid is in their room, everyone's in their rooms by themselves. Everyone is pushed to become individualistic; it's a force against nature.

According to these interviews, the Gulen movements' understanding of modernity is far beyond the dominant understanding of modernity. It was remarkable that when I asked what was shaping their ideas of modernity, all of them—resolutely—stated it was the Gulen movement that had shaped their ideas and made them become modern individuals. Most of them had personal life stories related to becoming more modern after entering the movement.

For example, when I asked Rasim (44, Rel, GM) what shaped his idea of modernity the most; he explained that "the movement changed my life drastically as it opened completely new doors for me." He explained that he came from a family background that favored men all the time and before he engaged the movement, even the smallest of requests from any of his four sisters angered him. He explained further that "my sisters had to serve me and do all my work at home and that wasn't a request of mine, but a demand." However, he talks about how he changed after he met the

movement “after I met the movement and become molded with it, I haven’t even made my sisters hold my jacket for me. I believe that the open-mindedness of the movement has made me a better man.”

Meliha (40, Lib&Rel, GM) has another life story related to the movement and how it helped her become modern. She explains that before the movement, she was completely against the Kurdish having any say in Congress and even publicly argued with a Kurdish woman against it. She perceived the Kurds as ridiculous and rude for wanting to speak their own language. However, with the help of her school teacher, who was from Gulen movement, she said that she even became friend with the Kurdish woman whom she argued with and soon after her views on Kurdish rights changed. She continued as follows:

Now I believe Kurds, Armenians... all minorities in our country should be able to live their culture and participate in Turkey’s administration. Our country is also *their* country; they should be able to live however they want to. This movement shaped my ideas a lot. I don’t read books or follow the news a lot, but I have learned a lot about democracy and acceptance from Fethullah Gulen’s philosophy. It’s so funny for me now that when I was young I thought being modern meant listening to rock music or things like that, that’s all superficial. What’s modern about me is my thoughts and my viewpoints, which the movement has strongly aided in shaping.

Ayşe (42, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) is another person who believes the movement shaped her ideas in a special way, “the movement has played the biggest role in shaping my views on modernity”. She explains that she discovered the true meaning of democracy through Fethullah Gulen’s ideas. She explains that before knowing him, “anything related to the West, including democracy” were introduced to her as something “anti-Islamic,” so she was prejudiced toward such ideas. However, later she explains that “it is not the democracy itself but the way it was implemented in the

society that was questionable, and the movement really helped me open my eyes to that.”

Negotiating Conceptions Related to Modernity

This section deals with controversial issues related to modernity in order to take a closer look at the various strategies of actions individuals could employ. We observed that Turkish immigrants use culture creatively when they were discussing these issues. Such issues consist of various topics, such as the congruence of religion and modernity, the image of a modern woman, supporting gay marriage, and how to incorporate religion into activities like basketball and ballet. These topics are really beneficial in the observation of strategies of action people use when dealing with these controversial issues.

What individuals feel the most inner conflict about are, without a doubt, religious values, family values, and culture. The reason why these individuals are constantly struggling with these values is due to the dominant understanding of modernity that doesn't fit their ideals. As an example, 18 (90%) of the interviewees stated that a very religious person won't be perceived as a modern one. However, they also mentioned that such an understanding is more common in Turkey. Since a significant number of interviewees (16 or 80%) considered themselves more or less religious and 18 (90%) of them saw themselves either really modern or not at all, it was very important to look at how they dealt with the general belief that conflict arises between religion and modernity. While the interviewees were negotiating both religious and modern sides, they were employing various strategies of action which I will analyze in this section.

What can be observed from their answers is that religious values affect the way people think about modernity. It draws certain borders and limits to their ideas of modernity. Even if it causes inner conflict, the individuals refuse to go past their religious boundaries. Tugce (24, Rel, Other), as a believer of modernity is relying on “free will”, is a prime example of this. According to her, no opinion should be forced and everyone should be allowed to “do their own thing”; she also states that no one should be judged by the “way they live” because “people should be open to everything”. Tugce’s reaction to those who judge her for wearing a headscarf is: “I have my own free will”. However, when handed a theoretical situation where modernity and religion clash, we can see that Tugce drastically changes her opinion and leaves the previous ideas that she held so strongly:

Q: Does modernity have a negative effect on women’s lives?

It might lead them down the wrong road. I have a friend like that. She used to wear a scarf, then she started to sleep around with people. She took off her scarf, thinking that she was being modern. She thought sleeping around with people was being modern, and that’s not a good thing!

Q: Maybe she chose that life with the “free will” you were just talking about.

That might be... but we have a religion to follow... She later explains that “because we are strong. God made us strong and we should never give up our religion in order to be modern.” Similarly, when the topic of headscarf models in magazines came up, she showed an extreme reaction, going against her own philosophy that people should be “open to not judging others”. Her explanation was that what these women were doing was “completely and totally against religion”. When shown a picture of a Turkish lady with a full face of makeup and a really eye-catching outfit, her response was:

If she's religious, then what is she doing up there? That's not being modernized. Yes, she is wearing her scarf and stuff like that, but part of being religious is: You shouldn't be provocative towards other people...I don't agree with this.

She was also extremely opposed to the lady with the headscarf in the Turkish fashion program "Bugun Ne Giysem?" ("What shall I wear today?") who was wearing a very tight and revealing outfit, claiming that it was "horrible" and completely unacceptable by religious standards. "Even a Christian won't put on makeup if her religion tells her not to do so. I'm against what you're showing me right now. This isn't appropriate."

So we understand that for Tugce modernity means having your free will, being open *unless* you contradict your religion. While Tugce sees a contradiction between modernity and religion, she believes that one should follow their religion. Much like Tugce, 5 out of the 6 1.5 generation speakers believed that it was not possible to be modern and religious at the same time. However, not all of them preferred to follow religion when it contradicts with modernity.

Kerem (21, Lib, 1.5) is one example of this understanding. He explains that "if you stay loyal to your religion *and* you try to get modernized, it's very difficult because they don't agree with each other." He gives an example of such contradiction when he explains that "I'm a fun person. I like drinking, going to bars. People drink, it's a daily thing. It's modern and it's everywhere. It's very difficult to do that and follow your religion, obviously, especially for us." However, unlike Tugce, when his religion and modernity clash, he chooses modernity instead, because, he claims that "modernity is a kind of lifestyle here, and you have to adapt to survive." He explains that "as much as I hate to admit, being modern wins most of the time within myself. It's weird because living here, you have to adapt. I've been living here so long and I learned to adapt. So it's kinda become a habit where being modern wins all the time."

The 1.5 generation respondents don't only face conflict regarding modernity. Aylin (18, Lib, 1.5 Gen) goes off on a different path and says that family values and cultural identity is what clashes most with modernity in her world:

We live in a "melting pot", as they like to put it. We're supposed to be open to new things, and if we're not... if we're just living in our own community amongst our own people, that's really antimodern. For example, it's a great thing that my little sisters can learn about their Turkish culture at the Turkish cultural center, since they grew up in the U.S. and have very limited knowledge of it. However, I feel like we, as a Turkish community, have blown this thing way out of proportion. If you only interact with one or two Americans on average per day simply because you can get everything done among other Turks, then you're being completely antimodern.

Although Aylin finds living a completely Turkish life as antimodern, she has the same feelings about a completely American lifestyle:

I mean, then again, I look at all the people who don't identify with the Turkish community here in the States, and they've completely lost their own identity. That's becoming Americanized, not modernization. If someone chooses to introduce themselves as an American to a group who don't know that they're Turkish, that's antimodern.

Aylin is negotiating both sides of her cultures and believes that in order to be really modern one should hold on both sides:

One should identify as a Turkish-American in order to truly be modern. Modernity isn't *just* being Turkish or American, separately. No one has ever said I'm only Turkish, since I grew up here. America and Turkey are both parts of me.

Aylin is also engaging with some conflict at the personal degree with her family.

When I ask her issues of modernity, conflicts and disagreements consistently came up during the interview. One example of this is Aylin's view about her parents engagement with the Gulen movement. While Aylin refrains from identifying herself with the Gulen movement, Aylin's parents are devout followers of the movement, which tends to be awkward for her, as she can't relate. She says:

Being modern for me means being open. All I want is to never be close-minded. My mom's a really radical follower. If a religious leader tells her to do something, she'll do it without even questioning it. And you know, it's her

life, and I don't want to think of her as being anti-modern, but it's very odd for me. I can respect her choices as long as she doesn't force them on me. We disagree quite a bit on these matters, but I tend to try not to push it too far, because it's unnecessary. She likes being a follower; it makes her happy. If someone were to tell her to leave everything behind for the movement and move to Africa, she'd gladly do it in the wink of an eye. So would my dad. Personally, I think if that were to ever happen to me, I'd sit and ponder it for a while, you know, really think of the pros and cons, and how it affects my future and my career. We have really different priorities, my parents and I. I'm the most problematic one in our family when it comes to things like this. During the interview Aylin strongly emphasized one's own independent actions. For Aylin, the preferences people make with their own agency and rationale makes them modern. However, the decisions people have to make regarding external features such as the public, family, and religious constraint are not very modern. As Aylin mentions above, as long as her family does not *force* her to do anything against her will, she is willing to respect them. However, there are occasions that Aylin had not agreed with her parents, but had to follow their ideas simply because they wanted her to. For Aylin, having her family constantly impose their beliefs upon her is extremely antimodern. This comes up when I ask her about whether or not there can be conflict between religion and modernity:

Obviously, there can be a serious amount of conflict. If I were to have to go to a place with alcohol in order to get a promotion, my parents would be violently opposed to this and forbid me from doing it because it goes against what they want. For example, I was given the opportunity to go on a New York college trip in high school, but my parents refused because it was a coed trip. Even if conflict shouldn't arise, it still does. I think some people force conflict upon themselves; they create problems where problems shouldn't exist.

However, when I asked her what kind of conflicts she had faced, she admitted that she had not come across many because she does not live a "completely religious" lifestyle:

I like to think of myself as someone who's both religious and modern. If I was independent from my parents, I would've gone on that New York trip, since it would've been beneficial for my academic future. Forbidding me from going

was a really antimodern move on my parents' part. If I had a kid, I would evaluate everything first before agreeing to probably let them go, but my family didn't even consider it. They abruptly said "no" and left it at that, which was really antimodern of them.

I gave Aylin some theoretical scenarios where religion causes inner conflict, to understand how she would respond as a girl with a headscarf and who's coming from a religious family. Her explanation on dating was as follows:

I'm against dating, but it has nothing to do with religion. It's my personal philosophy that you're way too young to date in high school. I know this is probably bad for my future, but religion is one of the last things that I consider in situations like this. People don't see my refusal to date as antimodern simply because they know it's *my* choice rather than my religion's. If my reason had been because my parents didn't allow me to date, that would've been perceived as an antimodern approach. It has nothing to do with my family or religion. I don't want to date, so I don't. I remember a girl at our school who used to go around rejecting guys by telling them that she promised her mom and god that she wouldn't date, even though that wasn't really the matter—she was just really bad at saying no to people in any other way. She shuns her religion by doing that *and* it makes her look antimodern. I don't think I'd ever do something like that, which is why I identify with religion and modernity at the same time.

This way, Aylin identifies her "antimodern" actions as her own choices rather than that of her religion, which is why she still finds them modern. This strategy of action places her in a position where she's capable of making antimodern choices without losing any of her modernity. This makes her religious and modern at once.

While observing the pictures of the women on the magazine, like the others, Aylin, too, feels that they represent the idea of modernity that is imposed by the media. She believes that a woman "feeling the need" to wear makeup and dress in tight clothing is due to the pressure put on by people. She thinks they do it so they can still seem modern, even though she believes that it makes them antimodern, as it limits their free will since they are doing that because of societal pressures. She said:

These Turkish magazines are designed completely to promote capitalism. Why are these women wearing makeup? Because a modern woman should be a beautiful woman, not a plain one. That's what they want you to think. That's

capitalism. American magazines use photoshop, making women think “wow this person is gorgeous, I have to be like this if I wanna be a normal woman”. Why should these women [in the magazines] be modern? Clothing has nothing to do with modernity. I’d have to know this girl’s personal beliefs and lifestyle in order to label her as a modern person. She could be a really close-minded person, so how can I know whether she is modern?

She states, however, that it is “modern” if the woman chooses to do it herself without any influence from anyone, even if she takes off her scarf, because “it is her choice and it is our job to respect that.” She explained her ideas as below:

When girls secretly take off their headscarves after leaving the house, the message they’re giving is “my religion may require something ridiculous like this but I’m breaking free in my own way”. I think these people haven’t really grasped the true definition of modernity, and in their attempt to be modern, they’ve made themselves even more antimodern... However, if a girl is discovering herself and does it of her own free will without trying to make any statements, then I don’t see a problem. Her relationship with God is between the two of them. It doesn’t affect me. But if she’s doing it to be modern, then that’s closeminded because that means you think modernity has one mold that you have to fit into. I believe modernity states the opposite of this. It’s supposed to shatter the single-minded image.

While moving on, as we can see above, Aylin mentions that “someone’s relationship with God is between the two of them.” Defining religion as something between you and God is a common cultural trope many Turkish-Americans used. However, they used it in different ways for their own purposes, depending on their point of view. By using the same cultural frame, different interviewees were able to justify contradicting ideas.

Ayşe (42, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) and Sibel (63, Sec, Other) are two examples of how common cultural materials could be used in order to justify totally opposite ideas. As we mentioned religion was not very significant for Turkish-Americans who fell into the integrated modernity category. In fact, those who defined themselves as “secularists” responded to an intensely religious life and the headscarf in general, with opposition.

As one of these people, Sibel (63, Sec, Other) identifies herself as a secular person and believes that the headscarf is something worn from “familial pressure.” When I asked what people think about modernity in Turkey, she says: “Well, they’d look at you and find you antimodern, since you are wearing a headscarf and probably they would look at me as modern since I am not wearing it, which, to some extent, I agree.”

While Sibel refrained from answering questions related to the headscarf ban, she did not sound very supportive of the freedom of headscarf, either:

I think it’s best not to be a fanatic when it comes to religion so that you can be both modern and religious. Everyone is religious in their own ways. There’s no third party between someone and God, so if I were to say that I’m religious, no one would have the right to judge or doubt me, or vice versa. I don’t see a woman wearing a headscarf being more religious than me. They’re not perfect just because they’re wearing it and performing prayers. Religious practices should be kept private, anyway, between God and his creation. You can’t tell know what a modern person does at home in their own time. Maybe they pray until the sun comes up. However, women who wear headscarf are not keeping their practices private and I feel that are trying to show off their religion through clothing and are doing it as a way of advertisement.

We can see that Sibel believes that “religion is something that should be between you and God” and that praying should be “kept secret”, so no one should be able tell whether one is religious or not. Wearing an outfit that projects your religion penetrates her personal philosophy, that is why it is “wrong” and, although she refuses to directly say she is against headscarf it is obvious that it is not according to her thoughts.

Ayşe (42, Rel&Sec&Lib, GM), on the other hand, considers herself religious, secular, and liberal with the help of the Gulen movement. Like Sibel, she’s against the politicizing of Islam, while at the same time being religious (as a hijabi). She sees herself as a liberal person because she gives importance to human rights, freedom and

democracy. Ayse goes on a different track than Sibel to defend an opposing argument. While Sibel thinks the “religion should be between the person and God” her ideology excludes those who wear headscarves, Ayse uses an approach that works for those both wearing and not wearing headscarves. She believes that dictating what women wear is wrong as she explains “religion belongs to the person. Islam advises us to cover ourselves, but no one can say that someone not wearing headscarf is going to go to hell. They could just as easily get into heaven, too.”

Ayse continues the same discourse when it comes to the issue about the current government in Turkey, which is defined as a moderate Islamic party. When I asked what she feels about being governed by a party that is associated with Islam, she explained that she cared more about their political actions than their religious preferences:

In politics, a person’s beliefs aren’t as important as the actions they’re putting forth. If they’re working to improve the country, then they’re doing it right. However, if there is a prime focus on religious values, like banning miniskirts because they’re too provocative, is a threat to the public. They should be working to give equal rights to everyone regardless of their beliefs. The only upside to the AK party being in charge is that they can sympathize with me, as we have similar backgrounds, but I still say that the main priority is finding people who govern well. They could even be an atheist, not pray, or even pretend to be Muslim, for all I care. It’s not for us to judge. It’s between them and God. It’s a personal thing, not a political thing.

It was again this same discourse “religion should be between the person and God” that made Ayse turn against the politicization of Islam:

Religion and the government shouldn’t be together anyway. That’s what we’ve been taught. Politics, government management, these are things that have different priorities than religion does. It’s hard to keep the two in check. Come voting time, we choose what we think is the best in terms of government, not religion. Our religious lives shouldn’t interfere with politics. Similar to Ayse we can see that all the other Gulen movement supporters in this

sample are against politicization of Islam, although they were highly religious. People

from the Gulen movement had many sides that in question they had to negotiate. While trying to negotiate different sides of them, they utilized different strategies, as we will explore next.

The Gulen movement supporters' strategies of actions were more evident when we discussed the most controversial topics. For example, a follower of the Gulen movement identifies as both democratic and someone who accepts others as they are, but at the same time, we can observe that they put religion before anything else. To see how they deal with these two topics, we hand them the matter of gay marriage by placing in front of them two scenarios: "if your state was doing a vote on gay marriage, what would you vote for?" and "if you were to hire someone, would you hire a Gulen movement supporter who isn't that well equipped for the job, or a gay person who is extremely qualified?"

In their answers, one can observe that they go through an extreme process of negotiation in order to remain both religious and democratic. For the first scenario, those in the movement stated that they are respecting gays' personal preferences, however, they consider voting for gay marriage as solely promotion and against religion. In the second scenario, each one of the interviewees said that they would hire the gay person. Tamer (44, Rel&Lib, GM) is one of the people who applied this strategy of action when asked the question about voting "I was listening to a radio program where a Christian pope said 'I don't approve of it myself, but I respect their choice.'" "I like his approach" he concluded. "If I were to vote, I'd go with what my religion says, probably." When I asked him whether this will make a conflict between advocacy to human rights and religion, he expressed that:

As I've previously stated, we're trying to build a community founded on common values, but we wouldn't mind those kind of people being among us. I often take people on trips to Turkey, as part of my job, and surely there are some gay people among my guests, which doesn't bother me. You coexist with these kinds of people, so we would never approve of any sort of injustice to them, but we also won't advocate homosexuality. I mean, at least I wouldn't. If I'm working with someone like that, I will respect him. I might not vote for his rights, but I won't refuse to work with him, either. People can vote for Democrats or Republicans, but still live together, so why can't people who votes for and against marriage do the same?

When it comes to hiring a gay who qualifies for the job more than another Gulen movement supporter, he further mentioned that:

If I were to refuse to hire a qualified person because of their personal choices, I'd be wrong, because these are two different things. Being with gay people, working with them, I have no problem with things like that. I'd give the job to the person who knows how to do it best, rather than someone I can identify with. If they do their job right, why should it matter to me?

The three different groups of Turkish-Americans gave answers to gay

marriage based on their own understanding of modernity. For example, the 1.5 generation youth who believe that modernity has to do with "being open", "free will" and "doing your own thing" are the group who gave the most positive answers on the matter. Those in the integrated modernity category, who believe that culture is more important than religion, all said no, but most of them stated that it's less about religion than it is familial values. However, those in the Gulen movement who wish to remain being open and relying on religious constraints had different strategies of action that we could observe above.

Being open and engaging with people was essential for the members of the movement. As I wondered how they interacted with people in circumstances which conflicted with their religion, I asked about hand shaking with the opposite sex. Since there is a belief that hand shaking with the opposite sex was not favored in Islam, I asked them what they do in circumstances where hand shaking would be perceived as

modern. All of them replied that they don't refuse to shake hands when the other party attempts, in order not to hurt their relationship. Although she is not very comfortable about it Ayse (42, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM) prefers shaking hands for that reason:

Although it personally makes me uncomfortable, I still do it so that I don't create unnecessary barriers. If I'm going to be in dialogue with someone and not shaking their hand is going to interfere, sure I'll do it. In fact, I'm usually the one to offer my hand first to get rid of people's prejudices. If shaking someone's hand is going to help them understand that Islam is modern, I'll do it.

Another topic that those in the Gulen movement who want to maintain their religious and democratic identity is the topic of their kids branching out in different ways. They were given a scenario where their kid wanted to try an activity that did not meet all religious requirements, like wearing a revealing outfit for ballet, and asked how they felt on the subject.

Those in the movement scrambled to balance their religious and democratic sides while still stating that they would not be too happy about it. However, all the movement interviewees stated that they were completely against forcing their kids to do anything they didn't want to, or restricting them, so they said they would provide alternatives or, at the least, tell them what they believed would be best and let them make their own decisions based off of that. Abdullah (40, Sec&Rel&Lib, GM), too, defends this position by saying:

In situations like this, I tend to try to simply explain what I believe is right for my kid and put emphasis on our own values, but I still let them choose their own way. I won't show any negative reactions to their decision, and I won't try to manipulate them in any way. This is a modern approach, since I'm simply explaining what I think is right rather than forcing it on my kid. I'm not trying to guide her, but rather, educate her. I would never say she has to wear the hijab or wear certain clothing, but I'd support her to make own mind on it, since it's more beneficial in the long term.

The last thing I asked those from the movement was a matter of modern science. The most controversial issue that I could bring about was evolution. They had

two ways of approaching the idea of science; one of them was to refuse evolution as a theory due to the fact that it's not appropriate to Islam, which they say doesn't make Islam any less modern or accepting of science. Meliha (40, Lib&Rel, GM) defends this by saying:

As the name itself states, evolution is nothing but a theory. Some people have their theories; I have my own, too. I have my personal religious beliefs, but I don't think I have ideas that are exclusively out of science itself. I think that my personal theories are modern, too. Many contradicting theories can exist in science. Everyone has their opinions, and the modern thing to do is to put forth all of these beliefs and exchange ideas. Being able to form new theories based on different knowledge without pressuring anyone to take on your beliefs is what's modern.

Another strategy of action was negotiating religion and science and not seeing the Islamic view as one hundred percent incompatible with evolution. For example Rasim (44, Rel, GM) explains that "Islam accepts Adam and Eve, not evolution" however, he believes that "God has the will to do anything, thus he could create through evolution if he wants."

A final note should be made about the Gulen movement: the participants who are in the movement refrained from giving simple yes or no answers to the questions above, but rather, found alternatives that fit them better. They kept asking why modernity should be in a certain way and who defined it, which shows that they don't take the definition of modernity for granted. Tamer (44, Rel&Lib, GM) is one example of this as he tries to challenge and alter the previous meaning of modernity:

Modernity doesn't necessarily mean listening to Western music all the time, or doing their style of dance. I'd love for my daughter to take up Turkish art classes or something. Isn't someone who's skilled in Turkish art modern, too? We're being controlled by others' ideas too much; we should have our own idea of modernity too.

All these examples exhibit the multiple ways one could employ culture by using strategies of action. This section also revealed that modernity is something

cultural and social as much as it is personal. Individuals try to negotiate the ways modernity is understood and the way they want to see it. Examining the controversial issues regarding modernity revealed the complex relationship between agency and social structure.

Discussion

This study goes two ways; it first analyzed how the structural realities inevitably shaped Turkish-Americans understanding of modernity; second how individuals negotiated, appropriated and reconstructed the meaning of modernity by using various strategies of action. By examining the structural realities as well as the strategies of action we tried to reveal the complex relationship between culture and social structure.

The *culture from outside in* section analyzed the structural realities, which constitute codes, contexts and institutions. These three aspects have been fundamental to the understanding of the external environment of meanings that surround individuals and provide them strategies of action. We analyzed that many codes such as the dressing style, hijab (head scarf), religiousness, Western lifestyle, elitism and luxury, delivered a message to the recipients about whether a person is modern or not. As can be noticed from the findings most of the interviewees were highly critical about the codes that described being modern. However, we also realized that such publicly-accepted meanings related to modernity were still very powerful even when individuals were opposed to them. Whether they agreed with a specific code or not, individuals were still concerned with how others will perceive them depending on their engagement with modernity. Thus, the knowledge of the codes inevitably

penetrated the interviewees' ideas and made them carry incoherent and even contradicting thoughts.

We also realized that the social and political context could strongly shape the interviewees' understanding of modernity. The societal context of Turkey gave coherent meanings to modernity. The interviewees consistently mentioned the polarization in the Turkish society and how it shaped the dominant understanding of modernity. Many respondents believed that religious people are perceived as being against modernity, while modern people are considered against religion. The political divergence between the ones who advocate Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's ideology (Kemalism) and the ones who are more critical about it was also another important context which was enforcing cultural coherence over the ideas of the individuals.

The institutional demands were another aspect which reproduced the cultural meaning of modernity as many respondents mention. The institutional constraints such as the state's interference with religious practices (e.g., headscarf ban) made most interviewees develop an understanding of modernity related to their personal experiences on such issues. Institutional demands also gave cultural coherence because individuals were producing similar cultural formulas while dealing with institutional constraints. For instance, many individuals found the Turkish State's Westernization policy adopted in the past as very problematic. Many respondents believed that at the initial stages of the Turkish Republic, the state favored the idea of adopting all aspects of the Western culture. Dealing with the state's ideas on Westernization, the Turkish immigrants were generating a cultural formula that emphasized adopting positive aspects of the West (structure, economy, technology,

etc.) leaving aside its negative aspects (Western lifestyle and culture etc.) that could harm their religion and cultural values.

It is important to note that the codes, contexts and institutions the interviewees discussed was mostly related to the dominant understanding of modernity in Turkey and was less relevant within the meaning of modernity in the U.S. This reveals that the Turkish experience of modernity is more powerfully enforcing cultural meanings of modernity. As we revealed in the literature review, the Turkish experience of modernity has been a controversial issue since the society has been imposed to different, even conflicting, ideals and projects of modernity. Thus, it was reasonable and predictable to realize how individuals are influenced by the ways modernity has been discussed and debated in Turkey.

We have also observed the various strategies of action which the interviewees have employed in section *culture from inside out*. That section explored how individuals negotiated the dominant understandings of modernity while reconstructing new meanings. *Culture from inside out* revealed that the respondents do not simply adapt common understandings of modernity; they were more like active agents, changing, reappropriating parts of culture for their own purposes with various strategies of action. We observed that our three groups of interviewees (1.5 Gen, GM, Other) assigned different meanings to modernity and used common cultural materials in distinctive ways.

The 1.5 generation Turkish-Americans understanding of modernity was named as Monocultural Modernity. The concept of Monocultural Modernity implied that the Turkish-American youths' approach to modernity was mostly tied with their experience in the U.S. The 1.5 generations believed that modernity is best represented

in the U.S and “modern” is equivalent to U.S. culture. Another aspect which shaped their understanding of modernity was their lack of resources and limited knowledge about the discussion of modernity in Turkey. Thus, they were not able to construct a line of action that was derived from the culture of modernity in Turkey. Some 1.5 generation respondents who had knowledge related to the understanding of modernity in Turkey was still categorized as monocultural due to their adherence towards the American understanding of modernization and their distance from the belief of modernity in Turkey. Whether they have knowledge about the Turkish understanding of modernity or not what the 1.5 generations had in common was the fact that they modernity as positive part of the U.S. culture.

The adults that were not part of the Gulen movement constituted another category which was defined as Integrated Modernity. People who mostly fall in this category are first generation Turkish immigrants who do not associate themselves with the Gulen movement. People from this category have an integrated approach toward modernity in the sense that they believe modernity should integrate both Western values and Turkish culture. Thus, for most of them, being modern means holding on your Turkish identity and while benefitting from the positive aspects of the West. The people from this category have a strong emphasis on the Turkish identity and culture, they are however less concerned about religion since most of them have not necessarily defined themselves as religious.

Members of Gulen movement had a unique approach towards modernity compared to other groups. We observed that people from the Gulen movement are cohesive in the way they describe modernity and the strategies of action they engaged. Turkish interviewees who were from the Gulen movement had more cultural

resources compared to other groups. The available resources related to Turkey, the U.S. and Gulen movement itself enabled them to engage in a more active relationship with modernity. The respondents from the Gulen Movement were questioning, challenging and reappropriating the aspects of the dominant understanding of modernity with their cultural tools related to the movement's culture.

The Gulen movement's approach to modernity was named Resacralization of Modernity since their understanding was powerfully dominated by their religious beliefs. It was obvious that the respondents did not consider religion and modernity as separate spheres. Thus, for them Islam contains the essential aspects of modernity, and during the time of Prophet Muhammad a version of modernity was presented by the means of Islam. As time passed, what made Islam and modernity seem incompatible was the misinterpretations of Islam. For them, that was the essential reason of the understanding of modernity as contradicting with religion.

Scholarship has been interested in Gulen movement's approach to modernity. One understanding of the Gulen movement's engagement with modernity, relies on the idea that Fethullah Gulen has an "integrated approach", which integrates certain aspects of modernity such as science, education and democracy while merging them with Islam (Gole 1996; Mitchel 2005). Relying on interview data, I argue that the relationship between the members of the movement and modernity is much more complex. Thus, I offer "resacralization of modernity" as a model and believe that it provides a better picture of the members' engagement with modernity.

The model of Resacralization of Modernity implies that people from the movement are not simply integrating aspects of religion and modernity, which already implies that religion and modernity are separate domains, rather they believe that

modernity was already part of the sacred at the time when Islam emerged. Thus, by rediscovering the sacred with the thoughts of Fethullah Gulen, they were able to construct new meanings of modernity.

As Swidler argues “culture inculcates diverse skills and capacities, shaping people as social actors, to be sure – by providing them tools for constructing lines of action” (2001:7), this was very evident in the case of Turkish immigrants. 1.5 generations’ actions were limited due to their lack of cultural resources. While Turkish immigrants, who did not associate themselves with the Gulen movement were selectively incorporating and integrating resources related to both Turkish and American cultures. Individuals from the Gulen movement were reappropriating the dominant cultural materials of modernity and were changing the whole dynamics of their engagement with modernity with the help of the ideas of Fethullah Gulen.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION

This study looks at culture in multidimensions and multiple angles. While observing how culture works “outside in” we were able to see how the socially constructed realities can powerfully shape the way we look at the world even when we disagree with them. On the other hand, by examining how culture works from “inside out”, we were able to see how individuals were creatively employing strategies of action and introducing new meanings of modernity to the world.

This study contributes to the literature in unique ways. First, it contributes to the sociology of culture in terms of revealing an exclusive picture about the relationship between social realities of modernity and how individuals’ agency can navigate their own understanding of modernity while competing with the dominant meanings. Observing Turkish-Americans turned out to be a very efficient way of dealing with culture sociologically. Because, throughout this study the individuals were surrounded with controversial issues related with the various understanding of modernity and were employing multiple strategies of action. Second, we offered a new model to understand Gulen movement’s approach to modernity, called resacralization of modernity. Furthermore, while Ann Swidler observed a homogenous group of middle class white Americans when employing the cultural toolkit approach. Unlike Ann Swidler, I tried to employ a multidimensional approach by looking at inter-and intra-group dynamics, hoping to contribute to application of this theoretical framework.

We have observed that the structural realities, which constitute codes, contexts and institutions, have wide implications, even when respondents were opposed to them. We came to agreement with Ann Swidler (2001) that in many occasions

cultural meanings can be organized more by “external contexts with which they have to deal” and less by “what goes on inside people’s head” (p.30). However, we also witnessed that individuals were not simply cultural consumers being affected constantly by the enforced meanings of modernity, but more like active agents who employed various strategies of action as they questioned, challenged and reappropriate the available meanings. The conclusions of both of sections “culture from outside in” and “culture from inside out” will complement one another while demonstrating the beauty of the relationship between social structure and human agency.

APPENDIX: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Demographic Questions

- 1) In what city were you born?
- 2) What is your age?
- 3) What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?
- 4) If you immigrated to the United States, at what age did you immigrate?
- 5) What is your recent job title?
- 6) Have you joined any social, religious movement? Is it influential in your thoughts?
- 7) Which one of the following describes you best?
 - a) Secular
 - b) Religious
 - c) Liberal
 - d) Other (describe) _____

Questions on Modernity

Modernity and the State

- 1) Do you consider Ataturk's reforms as a contribution to Turkey's modernization process?
- 2) Do you think that in order to become a modern country the state should intervene peoples' lives and implement reforms? Do you consider this as a good thing or a bad thing? Why?
- 3) Do you think that it is necessary to ban religion from politics and education in order to be a modern country? Do you consider these practices as modern?

- 4) Ataturk says that: “we want to modernize our country. All our efforts are devoted to form a modern, in other words, an occidental government. Is there any country that wants to reach the civilization and doesn’t head towards West?” (Ataturk 1961:68). What do you think about Ataturk’s opinion on modernization?
- 5) Do you believe modernization is equivalent to Westernization?

Modernity and Religion

- 6) It has been argued that modernity leads to the decline of religion. In other words, as societies become more modern, the social significance of religious commitments will decrease. What do you think about this argument?
- 7) Do you consider yourself as both a religious and a modern person? Did you have any challenges related to your modern and religious identity? If so, how did you overcome?
- 8) Are religion and modernity perceived as contradictory concepts in Turkey? Do you think there is a related perception in the U.S.? Do you have any real observations on this issue in Turkey or in the U.S.?
- 9) Some people believe Islam and modernity are incongruent. They make an argument that the aspects of modernity such as modern science, rationalism and individual free is incompatible with Islam. What do think about this argument?
- 10) Could you elaborate on positive and negative consequences of modernity?

Modern and Traditional Dichotomy

- 11) Do you think that modernity is something inevitable?
- 12) Do you think that a modern society is good and should be sought after? What do you think about traditional societies?

- 13) An objection to modernity is that, modernity intends to transform the world into a small village and thus destroy customs, different cultural identities and traditions all over the world. Do you believe that as more countries become modern the world is going to be a monolithic single world?
- 14) Do you believe that different traditions, cultures and customs does not have a place in a modern world?

General Questions about Modernity

- 15) Some people might think a modern way of life must also be presented with outlook. Others might think being modern is in the mind not in fashion. What do you think about both arguments?
- 16) What does “living a modern lifestyle” mean in Turkey? What does it mean in the U.S? What's your opinion?
- 17) If there are any, could you please describe in which ways has your U.S. experience influenced your ideas on modernity?
- 18) If there are any, could you please describe in which ways has your Turkey experience influenced your ideas on modernity?

Women and Modernity

- 19) Do you believe that “modernity emancipates women”?
- 20) Did modernity contribute to the women’s lives? Did modernity have any negative influence to the women’s lives? What about gender relations?
- 21) What are the indications of being a modern woman in Turkey and in the U.S.?

Questions Based on Pictures

- 22) Nowadays there is a rising trend about Islamic Pop culture. There is a representation of modern women within that culture, both in Turkey and the U.S.

I want to give you some examples of the magazines and TV shows to ask your opinion about the image of modern

Muslim women depicted in them.

A. Turkish Ala Magazine: Ala is a Turkish magazine, which specializes in Muslim style and trends. Ala Magazine is named as “Muslim’s Vogue” or “Turkey’s Cosmopolitan” (Zaufishan 2011). Ala Magazine was also described as “an inception for showing a passion for indispensable fashion, while offering the perspective of real Muslim women” (Zaufishan 2011).



Image 1. Ala Magazin Cover, February, 2013, Ala Magazin Website



Image 2. Holiday Celebrate Issue, December 2013, Aquila-Style Website

B. International Magazine Aquila Style:

Aquila magazine is an international digital magazine, the word “aquila” refers to intelligence in Arabic. Aquila Style Magazine aims to “represent modern Muslim living” and “explores the triumphs and challenges modern Muslim women would go through” (Aquila-Style 2014).

C.Turkish Fashion Show: ‘Bugun Ne Giysem?’ (What shall I wear today?) and the case of Ayse Dogan. Aye Dogan was a hicabi finalist of the Turkish Fashion show “Bugun ne Giysem?” Ayse Dogan has been appreciated by the jury and the popular media as a symbol of the modernization of Turkish Muslim women (Civaoglu 2012).



**Image 3. Bugun Ne Giysem Premier
Tr-portal Website, December, 2012**

Gulen Movement (For the Interviewees from the Movement)

- 23) Do you consider the Gulen movement as a modern movement? If so, what makes it modern?
- 24) If there are any, could you please describe in which ways has the Gulen movement influenced your ideas on modernity?

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