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VEILING FASHION, CONSUMPTION CULTURE AND IDENTITY: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS FOR INTERPRETING THE VEILED TURKISH WOMEN'S CHANGING CLOTHING PRACTICES

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Abstract

Covering the body with clothes happens to be one of the primary vital needs for humans throughout the history. However in Islam, it turns into a religious order and practice based on Islamic decretals for Muslims. The Islamic dressing style of women is called as 'veiling', as mundane; a quite visual and distinctive sign differentiates Muslim women from their fellows based on using proper pieces of garments but as ethereal; a symbol loaded by deeper spiritual meanings inside and is supposed to be sustained by proper behavioural patterns defined by Islam. Hence, veiling practice, related with both sartorial and religious mechanisms, can not be interpreted without analyzing its symbolical, social, bodily and religious meanings in tandem. Under the changing circumstances of modern life, blurring interpretations of religious orders and the deeper and complex meanings of veiling, this study aims to analyze the veiled women's clothing choices and practices related with their religious and consumer identities in the light of increasing purchasing power of Muslims and their rising visibility as religious/Muslim demandants in the consumptionspace. As a case of Turkey, it is aimed to analyze the veiled Turkish women's changing clothing practices in consideration of veiling fashion as a 'phenomenon' and a leading effect, within changing religious-political-economical-socio-cultural contexts for the post-1980 period in Turkey. Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics grounds the qualitative analysis and interpretations of the study. Finally, it is aimed to reveal how the veiling turns into a commodity of consumption and fashion by losing its religious meanings and how Muslims turn into an untapped and viable segment in this Islamic consumptionspace.

Keywords: Veiling, Fashion, Consumption, Identity, Islam, Muslim Women, Islamic Consumptionspace, Hermeneutics, Gadamer

1. INTRODUCTION

Covering the body is a social but also a *fıtri* (inborn) need for humans who have subtle emotions and the need of covering the unsightly things. The *Qur'an* explains the first covering practice of human in the surah of *Et-Taha (20/121)*: *'…And Adam and his wife ate of it, and their private parts became apparent to them, and they began to fasten over themselves from the leaves of Paradise…'.* Feeling the nakedness and becoming aware of the self and the other was the first step into civilization and the act of socialization. Covering the body became the first reflex to defeat the emotion of shame. This practice is arranged by some decretals in Islam, based on the needs of humans for etheral and mundane purposes. During the time humans did not only cover themselves but learned how to dress as sartorial. Covering the body can be primitive but dressing is a need matching with the civilization (Erdoğan, 2008: 53; Duman, 2001). Furthermore the proper dressing style in Islam, the veiling, has definite rules especially for Muslim women. In this study, it is aimed to analyze the veiling issue for women in Islam, the veiled Turkish women's changing clothing practices in consideration of 'veiling fashion' based on an interpretive qualitative analysis following Hans-George Gadamer's (1989) philosophical hermeneutics.

2. THE VEILING IN ISLAM AND THE ISLAMIC CONSUMPTION CULTURE IN TURKEY

2.1. The Meaning of Veiling in Islam

Covering the body is an ancient behavior and *Qur'an* did not bring brand new practices about it. Before the revelation of the surahs of *An-Nur* and *Al-Ahzab*, in the Arab society, women were used to cover their bodies

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in a variety of ways. However, women's independent identities were not legitimized by that society (Aktaş, 1998). With the rise of Islam, it was highlighted that there is no discrimination between men and women as human beings and the main aim of men and women is to pray to *Allah* and sustain a proper Muslim identity *(Adh-Dhariyat: 51/56; Az-Zumar: 39/6; Ali-Imran: 3/195; An-Nahl: 16/97)*. Those days, women were differentiated into two; the *independent women* and the *cariyes* (Altıntaş, 2001). The *cariyes* (bondswomen) were like commodities, they were used to be bought and sold to the others with no respect, also were used as an object of unmarried sexual relationships (Demir, 1994). They were used to display their body and not used to wear any veiling. Hence, men were used to recognize them by easily looking on their attiring. The independent women were usually married and aristocrat, urban, coming from the rich families, also were so careful to differentiate themselves from *cariye*s with the help of conservative attiring styles (Altıntaş, 2001).

In Islam, the dressing up should be halal, clean and appropriate for health, tectorium and suitable in terms of aesthetics without making discrimination between women and men (Erdoğan, 2008: 54-55). While interpreting the veiling practice for women, the words about veiling and cloth cast should be evaluated in Arabic language's and that age's context with the help of *tefsir* (hermeneutics). In *Qur'an*, the specific directions for women about how to be veiled are stated in two surahs; *An-Nur (24/31-60) and Al-Ahzab (33/32-33-59)*, in detail. As it is stated in the surah of *An-Nur* '*…guard their private parts…*', the word of 'furuc' (private parts) is the plural form of 'ferc' refers to the perineum, in other words, the genitals (Duman, 2001). Muslims should 'cover and protect their *avret*s (genitals)' – setr-i avret – to protect their decency from *zina* (adultery*)*. However, Muslim women are not supposed to cover their hair, head, neck, part of the arms and legs between elbows and fingertips and feet when they are with their *mahrem*s (the men who are not legally possible to marry; the son, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, father-in-law, son-in-law) (Apaydın, 2001). The word of 'humur' (*An-Nur: 24/31)* is the plural noun of 'hımar' means the 'headscarf' or 'scarf' that covers the head (Kurtubi, 1997, XII: 230). The word of '*cuyub*' is the plural noun of 'ceyb' means the 'collar' helping head go into the cloth easily. The meaning comes to the point that Muslim women should use their scarves releasing upon their collars by preventing their necks and dewlaps to be seen (*Al-Ahzab: 33/59*). The word of 'cilbab' means a large cloth that covers the body, seamy or seamless, sometimes includes the head and the shoulders, if necessary covers the woman's face excluding one eye or two eyes (Beşer, 1987: 104) or means the 'outer garments'; a large *burqa* (Öztürk, 2001) that a woman cover her body when she goes out of *mahrem* spheres.

In the surah of *Al-Ahzab* (33/33) it is ordered to Muslim women that '*…do not display (teberrecne) yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance…*' and Muslim women were banned to amble since the word of '*teberrecne'* means ambling and '*teberruc'* means showing their *ziynet*s and beauties to men (Taberi, X: 294). *Ziynet* includes all the things used to garnish the self (Duman, 2001) and can be differentiated into two; the *physical beauty* including face and body beauty and the *arranged beauty* which is held by using garment and jewellry (Kurtubi, XII: 360). According to the main religious sects of Islam*; Hanbeli*s*, Hanefi*s*, Maliki*s *and Shafii*s, women should cover their body excluding their face and hands but for *Hanbeli*s the face and hands are also *avret*, for *Hanefi*s the feet are excluded and for *Shafii*s except the praying practice, the woman's all body is *avret* when she is with *na(non)mahrem*s (Beşer, 1987: 95-100). It is important to cover the physical beauty especially for young women who have sexual charm to protect themselves from the disturbances of men (Bursalı,1998: 263). Veiling is also about arranging the behaviors, protecting the eye and the body from *haram* (ill-gotten) and *zina*.

2.2. The Rise of Islamism, Islamic Consumption and Veiling Debates of Post-1980 Period in Turkey

In 21th century, the effects of Islamism showed itself at the levels of national identity among belief, attitude and morality spheres and political Islam started to become a shelter to sustain Muslim identity and is correlated with Islamic revivalism (Nafi, 2012: 13-16). 'Islamist' is used to point out the ones who highlight the principles of Islam about the daily life along with the ethereal principles (Şentürk, 2011: 19-22). Islamism is a modern and receptive movement, aims to re-interpret the religion according to the needs of time, turning back to original resources and struggling with the inconvenient powers and notions against to the core of Islam (Karpat, 2001: 27; Akdoğan, 2000: 311). Islamism came up more visible in Turkey in 1960's, fed the tradition of *Milli Görüş Hareketi* (National Vision Movement) and turned into a conservative ideology with the power of Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-*AKP* (Justice and Development Party) (Türköne, 2012: 64-71). After 1990's in Turkey, Islamism did not remain limited around an elite class but spread among the ones who feel themselves religious, too (Aktaş, 2007: 53-55).

2.2.1. The Predisposing Factors of Islamic Revival and Islamic Lifestyle in Turkey

2.2.1.1. The Economic and The Political Factors: The Islamic Parties, Liberalization Movements, The

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Emergence of Islamic Capital and Business Elite

In Turkish political life, the Islamic idelogy became more visible with the help of; *National Order Party* (Milli Nizam Partisi) and *National Salvation Party* (Milli Selamet Partisi) of 1970's and *Welfare Party* (Refah Partisi) of 1980's, whose goal was to represent the interests of SME's in Anatolian cities (Başkan, 2010). In 1980's, with the help of *Turgut Özal*, Turkey stepped into an important socio-economical transformation programme based on Neo-liberal fiscal policies (Beriş, 2008) with the aim of engaging with capitalist market environments. Islamic capital (Green capital) and Islam economy, which started in Arabic countries in the previous decade, rised in Turkey. By being engaged with capitalist economy by keeping the religious concerns, Islamic establishments like participation banks seduced the religiously sensitive citizens in terms of their capital management (Özulucan and Deran, 2009). After 1990's, the Islamic capital ideology was defined by SMEs of Anatolia, called *Anatolian Tigers* and *MÜSiAD* (Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association). While the private sector was growing, they all empowered and supported each other to establish a positive atmosphere for religious people to trade and to get more revenues. They had a direct effect on the Islamic political parties' concerns and economy in Turkey (Başkan, 2010).

In 2000's, *AKP* came to power and supported the Islamist business elite, hence the power of Islamic capital and the rise of Islamic bourgeois. The new Muslim bourgeoise, roots coming from 1980's, became more visible in Turkey that 'competes over the country's ideological and cultural orientation, is less dependent on the state and more embedded in Turkish–Islamic culture, demands a limited government power, larger political sphere and freedom for civil society' (Mellon, 2006). When the democratic discources combined with *green capital*, the new 'politically aware Muslim-selves' showed up from within an Islamic-socio-cultural group with high economic power and religious concerns (Göl, 2009). After 2000's, Islamic businessmen gained the trust of religious-middle class by adopting prescriptions of Islam to their business style (Başkan, 2010). As a result, a new market for Islamic Lifestyle and a new consumer segment showed up.

2.2.1.2. The Socio-Cultural Factors: Westernization project, Türban Issue, Feminist Movements and New Muslim Feminine Identities

During the first period of Turkish republic, the women's veil, attire and body was an important issue for the politics for that the Western discourses were imported, internalized in the name of being modern and the veiling became the symbol of backwardness for women. *Atatürk* strongly defended to dismiss the veil from the agenda of the country (Vojdik, 2010). The women's new Westernized-modern public visibility and identity was used strategically to promote Turkey's new secular identity (Çınar, 2008). The urban women could adopt themselves easily but the rural ones stayed conservative, protected their values and traditional identities and lost ground from social and political spheres (Vojdik, 2010). However, Islam continued to be powerful in social life and created a symbolic system to form community's and individuals' identities. In 1980's, *türban* (headscarf) became a sign or emblem to protest secular arguments and created debates (Kadıoğlu, 2005).

From 1980's to 2000's, the practice of veiling has constantly gained new meanings because of Islamist social and political mobilization, engagement with global market economy, fusion of neoliberalism and Islamism. These transformations caused the rise of new representations of Islamists in socio-economic spheres with new demands economically grounded and culturally loaded (Kuran, 2010). The visibility of covered women on the university campuses in 1980's became a problem for secularist. In February 1997, the headscarf was identified by the *National Security Council* as an 'Islamic threat' or *irtica* on the well-being and security of the country and it was banned in public offices, classrooms and universities (Çınar, 2008). After *AKP* came to power the president's, prime minister's and lots of ministers' and deputies' wifes who were using headscarves started to be criticised but also regarded as role models by religious groups (Toprak and Uslu, 2009).

During this period, the veiling gained a dual meaning that consists of the practice of Islamic faith and an indicator of social class, lifestyle and status in Turkey. This 'phenomenon' can be recontextualized under the effects of pragmatist consumerism, neoliberal market environment and changing practices of everyday social life (Kuran, 2010). Under consumerist pressures, the veiling also became an issue of fashion next to politics and culture (Gökarıksel, 2012). After 1980's, debates of gender roles, feminism movements and the manipulations of media on gender images affected the perception about veiling, headscarf and Muslim woman image. Islamic feminism rised and Islam and feminism started to be interpreted together by reinterpreting the sacred texts and empowering the women. The educated women coming from urban created a new elite group that queries men's privileges and bans violating women's rights for religious freedom and gender equality, and the role of women at home and in society to form a basis for feminist movements of Islamists. They pointed the big role of media about the image and representation of veiled

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women (Vojdik, 2010; Aldıkaçtı Marshall, 2008). They started to broke the perception about veiled women of being solid, passive and narrow-minded by participating communicative activities and business life to proof that veiled women are not bondswomen, luster, limited, ordinary, dependent, narrow-minded, rude, etc. (Aktaş, 2007: 22-34). These attempts were empowered by a strong religious middle class support, religious communities (like *Gülen* and *Nakşibendi)* and their educational and social welfare institutions, periodicals and newspapers, TV and radio channels (Balkan Ekşi, 2008) which developed new public faces and spheres with its own identity politics (Duran, 2010). Even though the debates about *türban* issue still continue in Turkey, in October 2013, the administrative arrangement which is about 'the independence for the headscarf in public realm' has accrued with the public mandate published by the official gazette.

2.3. The Birth of Veiling Fashion and Veiled Women As Consumers

2.3.1. Veiling Fashion and The Global Marketplace

In the global marketplace, Islamic fashion or veiling fashion is getting more and more attantion. The marketers are heartily concerned about the scope of the market since there are 800 million Muslim women all around the world ready to demand and consume and 40% of that is about 25 years old. What makes it even more attractive is that the development of Muslim fashion stems from a young demographic. *Bloomberg* has estimated that the global Muslim fashion market could be worth $96bn. The 16 million Muslims in the EU, a potential clothing market can be valued at US$960 million to US, $1,5 billion a year. The Arab fashion industry is outstanding and some Arabic style outfits can be sold for as much as USD $10,000 in where the Muslim population has a high purchasing power. Well-known international brands like *Hermes, Gucci, Christian Lacroix* are also trying to break into the Muslim market with scarves and other veiling components. A new generation of highly-talented designers such as *Elie Saab* and *Robert Abi Nader* are leading the veiling fashion globally. Some products of Qatari designers cost as much as $20,000. Saudi princesses sometimes buy 15 to 20 evening gowns for as much as $20,000 each. They also ask designers like *Channel* and *Gucci* to design bags and high heels to finalize their attires. In cities like New York and Brooklyn, designers are opening Muslim model agencies and supporting the modesty on the catwalk. Malasia has an *Islamic Fashion Festival* and Indonesia has an *Islamic Fashion Consortium* whose chairwoman hopes to establish Indonesia as a global centre for Islamic fashion (muslimvillage.com, 2011; www.bloomberg.com, 2010; www.ttistextiledigest.com, 2012; thepurplesharepoint.blogspot.com, 2010; www.guardian.co.uk, 2012). Veiling fashion is a growing phenomenon all around the world and the brands which melt the fashion and religious concerns at the same pot seduce the target segment.

2.3.2. The Rise of the Islamic Consumptionspace and Veiling Fashion Industry in Turkey

The rise of the Islamic consumptionspace in Turkey coincides with the period of 1980's and 1990's. Specialized businesses for Islamic goods and services ranging over clothing, halal food, vacations, entertaintment, etc. came along to meet the changing demands of new Islamic bourgeosis. The veiling fashion producers shifted their strategies from producing homogenized and conservative ones to produce modern styles by being affected the trends of global fashion networks. They also educated and motivated their consumers. The young and educated urban women became the first representatives of new style of women's modest dressing (Gökarısel and Secor, 2010a; Sandıkçı ve Ger, 2007). In 1980's, as an example, İstanbul Unkapanı district was established as an entire shopping center for veiled women's need of shopping for modest dressing. The veiling stores' names were quoted from Islamic terminology like 'Tehvid', 'İhvan' and 'Hak'. A well-known sector leader company called 'Tekbir Giyim' was established in 1982 and in 1990's it arranged veiling-fashion shows by using famous Turkish models, also gained a high brand-name awareness by using effective marketing techniques. It turned the veiling into commercial and framed it as the fashion leading a new understanding for veiling in the contexts of marketing and consumption (Sandıkçı ve Ger, 2007). After 1990's, the number of veiling fashion firms rised, like *Aydan, SetrMS, Selam* and *Armine,* etc. differentiating themselves by proposing showy catalogs, advertisements, *haute couture* collections including *haşema*s (veiling swimsuit) and bridal gowns and even fashion shows (Gökarısel and Secor, 2010b). However, modest dressing and the related sector is a roughly defined sub-sector among the Turkish apparel industry. It was estimated that approximately 200 firms were operating within this context in 2010, usually located in İstanbul and Konya. Lots of firms are SME's and the annual earnings are reported between 250,000 and 2 million Turkish liras (TL) (Gökarısel and Secor, 2010a).

On the other hand, media highly supports the marketing activities of this new-born sector. After 2000's, there is an increase on the numbers of veiling fashion magazines which are important instruments following the latest fashion and informing the consumers, like *Ala*, *Aysha* and *Enda* magazines in Turkey. The target segment of them consists of veiled or religious Muslim women who seek for an Islamic lifestyle and consumption. Modest dress designers like *Pınar Şems Kavak, Tuğba Kuşçuoğlu, Kuaybe Gider, Pınar*

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Akşam who are veiled and educated Muslim women started to rise in the market. Their designs and the women who use their products are both displayed in these magazines and the media. The Islamic fashion industry created a 'modern' but 'religious' veiled woman image through new consumption practices and commercial products. These new images and identities were legitimized and privileged over the old ones by using fashion, media constructs and contemporary commercial representations (Sandıkçı ve Ger, 2007). Fashion products support personal identities, lifestyles and represents cultural norms and society through attiring practices. Since the fashion industry changes body image and beauty ideals over time, consumers demand those products to reflect the preferred images and lifestyles (Moody *et all.*, 2010; Apeagyei *et all.*, 2007).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. The Objective of The Research

In this research, an interpretive qualitative analysis based on Hans-George Gadamer's (1989) hermeneutical tradition was used. The aim of this analysis is to explore the participants' personal and social world related with their personal perception and particular experiences of the research phenomenon, in detail. It combines hermeneutics and phenomenology as a guide to understand the phenomenon from the point of view of the participants (Smith and Osborn, 2008: 53). The concepts of Gadamer (1989); *hermeneutic circle of understanding, prejudice, linguisticality of understanding, historicity, fusion of horizons and lived experience*, were adopted and used to analyze. The aim of the research is to portray accurately the research phenomenon by moving constantly from the whole to the part and back to the whole to respresent the findings faithfully and to create the hermeneutic circle of understanding.

3.2. The Sample and The Data Collection

In this research, a non-probability sampling strategy called *snowball sampling* was used by considering the concept of voluntary participation. A fairly homogenous and small sample was selected through purposeful sampling. According to the literature, the number of participants for phenomenological studies can range from 1 (Dukes, 1984), to any number. Three suitable participants were selected from the author's business environment. The ages range from 26 to 35 and all participants are married, are veiled with their own will, are from *Hanefi* sect, are administrative personnel, have license degree, have no children, are from middle-income group. Other personal information and names were kept confidential. Pre-interviews were conducted with prospects to give information about the research and to ask for their voluntary participation and it was assured that they have suitable qualities. Furthermore, *individual, in-depth, semi-structured interviews* were used to collect data. It allows the researcher and participant to engage in a dialogue whereby initial questions are modified in the light of participants' responses. Each interview was conducted in different days at the office of author; 11th, 13th, 23rd of September 2013, by the researcher herself, on an individual basis. The interviews were audio-recorded lasting an average of one to two hours. Mostly open-ended questions were based on the literature review and the pursuit of the researcher. As an instrument, the veiling fashion magazines (*Aysha* and *Ala)* were introduced to the participants in the second part of the interview to make them talk about the research phenomenon deeply. All the interviews were transcribed word by word so as to represent the original interview as far as possible. After the interviews, it was gone back to participants to validate data analysis representing the views of participants as faithfully as possible, to make clear the fact that all interpretations are anchored in the experiences of participants' texts of research interviews. The trustworthiness of qualitative research process (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 328) was ensured with these steps.

3.3. The Data analysis and Limitations

The data analysis was based on the continuous dialogue with the text to reach the deeper meanings. The researcher transformed hermeneutically what was said into an understanding of the original experiences of the participants by moving from part to whole. The researcher's interpretations were arranged in an order to create coherence forming the hermeneutic circle. Finally, it was aimed to reveal the fusion of horizons between the researchers' frames of reference and the texts being interpreted and to give the reader insight into that aspect of the phenomenon, which was being discussed. However, there are limitations of this research. It was considered only the veiled Turkish women and the veiling debates of post-1980 period in Turkey. The sample was limited by only three participants who have similar demographic. Only four volumes of magazines were selected to use in the research due to the lack of time to scan a sizable magazine content in a limited interview schedule. The exploratory and descriptive nature of this reseach does not claim generalizability beyond the convenience sample employed and the specific context. Neither any hypotheses were developed prior to the research nor they were tested.

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4. FINDINGS

When it is asked participants, about the meaning, aim and rules of veiling is Islam, they agree that it is *farz* (religious duty) for Muslim women as they give evidence from Qur'an *'The veiling is mentioned in Qur'an, in the surahs.'*. They mention the main rules of veiling; it should not reveal the shape of woman body and the organs like breasts and buttocks, should be floaty not stretch, the headscarf should be hung down from the head over the breasts, shoulders and dorsi, the cloths, socks and headscarves should not be transparent and not reveal the color of the skin and the hair, the hands, feet and the face are excluded from the veiling, the hemlines should end just above the ankles. It is stated that even the transparent is forbidden, women sometimes use thin headscarves, especially in hot climates like İzmir, and use short-sleeved shirts and short skirts and pants. They stress that veiling is not just a practice of 'covering the body' but it is also a philosophy, a lifestyle including behaviors, emotionsv and thoughts for all men and women. As one participant says *'The veiling is a symbol, a message. When you look at a man, you can not understand easily if he is a Muslim or not but if you see a woman who is veiled you say that she is a Muslim'*, veiling is perceived as the most featured trademark of Muslim women. It is added that the veiling is not an easy bodily practice for women, it differentiates them from the other women by bringing a high value and modesty, happiness and spiritual pleasure since it is believed that it adds some sacredness to women's statue and personality. The veiling turns into a 'divine shield' as one participant say *'With the help of veiling, Muslim women became much more precious in the public's and men's eye.'* and claim that veiling says 'stop' to men, signifies the frontiers between a Muslim woman and a foreign man, prevents the harm, protects women from the men's glares and *zina*. Eventhough younger women are found more sexually attractive as one participant says *'An old woman is not attractive in the eyes of the men and in youth, veiling becomes more important to protect ourselves from men's glare.'* and youngers are perceived more responsible to obey veiling regime but they are found to make compromises more than the elders since they have more tendency to adopt themselves to their environments, thoughts of others and their self-desires are higher about beauty, sexuality and consumption. Elderness is related with giving up mundane or feminine desires, including the beauty concerns and consumption. When a veiled woman is found to be using modern pieces of veiling garments and styles, it is claimed that her consumer identity and self-awarenessness about her sexuality become prominent more than her religious identity and level of piety. It is found that expectancies of the different roles; being a mother or a business woman, and life stages; being a young girl or and old woman, also have a differentiative leading effect on choosing veiling and attiring styles.

Participants agree that the politic regulations or bans are highly effective on the religious people's religious routines and lifestyles and create some problems for veiling usage, leading them compromise on veiling unvoluntarily. As veiling becomes an important part of veiled women's identity, any ban or regulation affects their perception about their identity as one participant says *'If you wrest something from a person's belief, it damages the identity. Lifestyles are also formed around beliefs.'* and just after they cause changes on both consumption and attiring routines unwillingly. The prejudices of unveiled ones and calling the veiled ones as 'the other' gives damage to veiled women's psychology and lead them to convert their attiring for not being perceived as old-fashioned, ignorant, narrow-minded, etc. Participants are against the idea that veiled women have no identity, no personal choice, no capacity to control their own life or arrange their own lifestyle just for using the veil. It is believed that veiled women struggle a lot to make an appearance in the society and prove themselves as modern, clever, working, self-confident and independent women. They use veiling fashion and consumption to sustain this effort more visibly, especially in the last decade. It is also discussed that the visibility of veiled women sometimes affects the veiled woman image wrongly if the featured veiled woman is not a good representative of veiling and Islam.

When the discrimination between 'türban' and 'başörtüsü' mentioned, they claim that 'türban' gained a political meaning in Turkey but for them there is no necessity to discuss this if a woman covers her head by obeying the main rules of veiling. It is mentioned that, some religious groups' veiled members internalized a specific style of scarf tying and the other people differentiate them by looking on their tying styles. However it is believed that a veiled woman uses loose and careless tying styles, it is perceived as 'başörtüsü' on the head and the woman is perceived as the one who is not related with politics and is not so conscious about her piety or religious duties. It means that she can choose more modern or secular type of attiring in the name of fashion and can compromise on veiling more. It is claimed that they can not totally give up using a piece of garment or a rule of veiling but increase and decrease the usage or obedience according to the circumstances and personal piety consideration from time to time. It is found that veiled women commonly criticise themselves in terms of fitting and carrying the right Muslim woman image or not and the reasons of their changing choices of attiring. They stress that a full commitment to the veiling rules or Islam is not possible at this age due to secular lifestyle pressures, regulations and bans.

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It is found that the first role models for Muslim women are the Prophet Muhammad's wifes who used veiling firstly. A role model is highly important in a Muslim woman's life since the veiling is a bodily practice and women learn how to veil not in a day but in a long time period. Participants claimed that, in the last decade, veiled women started to follow and imitate a group of role model rising in the media as 'modern veiled woman' who prefers using much modern, secular type of apparel with sophisticated scarf tying styles, who does not act self-effacingly, who reveals herself next to her husband at coctails, organizations, etc., using make up, high-heels and luxurious jewelleries. It is confessed the fact that these styles or behaviors are not matching with the ideal role model for Muslim women. However following and imitiating these kind of veiled women who have a high statue or a worthy job, wealth and a modern-luxurious lifestyle trail and tempt the others and lead the trends especially about attiring. Lots of veiled women try to differentiate themselves and reveal their personal dressing style by using different tying styles, combinations of veiling pieces and selections of sporty or classical type of garments based on occasions. It is stressed that the veiled women of this age can not attire like her grandmothers since they participate more in communal living and business life in where secular pressures are higher and public acclaim is important for an independent identity.

It is believed that Islam is not a block against consumption, buying brand-new products or latest technology. Also they mention that lifestyles and daily demands are highly related with the environment the person live in. The city life demands more and brings more sacrifices about veiling as one participant *says 'How can you dress oldfashioned cloths, like the peasants wear, in a big city like İstanbul or İzmir where lots of different people live in?'*. Participants are agree that it is appropriate to demand in sync with income and changing lifestyles and rised incomes changed the consumption patterns of religious groups, too. They also hold the produces of Islamic products or services responsible which feed the market and satisfy demands. It is stressed that a veiled woman is just like any female who has the same desires to be beautiful, chic, charmy, etc. However, even if the basic needs for consumption are the same, there are sore points based on Islamic decretals for veiled women. At this age, exceeding religious meanings, different veiling and headscarf tying styles became the symbol of different income levels, lifestyles and age groups of veiled women. Furthermore, as one participant says *'Now, the only difference between a veiled and an unveiled woman is the former puts a 'başörtüsü' on, that's it!'*, it is believed that the veiled women also became distant from the core meaning of veiling after fashion and consumption addiction and they started to prefer garments which are not suitable for veiling in the name of being in sync with the environment and circumstances.

Participants claimed that when a woman decides to use veiling, it makes a significant change on her 'lifestyle' and 'social practices'. It also changes the attiring choices or other consumption choices as one participant says *'I do not choose to go to the cafes where men and women do not sit seperately and not use alcohol but I never bought skinny pants after using veiling'*. It is mentioned that being in business life pushes veiled women to choose more modern-Western styles, not traditional ones. This is linked with gaining the acceptance of others and not to be alienated. They stress the main reason to make compromise on veiling as not being able to find proper garments as one participant says *'I can not obey all rules of veiling because I can not find suitable cloths!'*. Also they suffer from the high costs of the veiling garments and these problems affect their consumption habits and style of veiling. Furthermore, it is found that each woman choice the pieces that make them feel comfortable about their religious 'watch out-points'. The 'unwritten but learned veiling regime' are accepted by veiled women including; not using an external apparel if a skirt is worn since it is combined with a blouse covering the buttocks, combining the pants with at least a medium-length coat, like a tunic, not revealing the shade of the underwear, not prefer using high-healed shoes and perfume and speaking or laughing aloud due to making noise and taking attantion.

It is found that, the coherence of the product with veiling rules and the quality stand out while discussing what veiled women look at first in the consumption process. The brand addiction is found to be low among participants and high prices are not related with quality. They are aware of the veiling brands and sometimes they buy branded ones but usually seek for good fabric and proper designs. Being in business life is a rising factor affecting veiled women's product choices in terms of quality and convenience. Obscuring the underwear marks and skin color is found to be a sign for a good product quality. Also, comfortable designs, not revealing body shape and not straitening the body but helping body move unconstrained and fabrics, preventing swelter, keeping cool, thin not revealing the hair, skin color or underwear mark are highly seeked to buy and wear in hot weathers, especially in office or social environments. However, as the participants stressed the fact that it is a serious problem for veiled women to find all these qualities in one product as one participant says *'I can not find such a kind of scarf that is thin, keeps cool but also does not reveal my hair and does not block my hearing. I can not find it and use this one on my head now unwillingly!'*. They try to find their own solutions by combining the cloths, like wearing a long sleeved blouse that does not reveal the skin color in a sleeveless thin tunic that can not be worn alone in hot weathers. On the other hand, they mention the fact that this kind of combinations are found styleless but they have no other choice if they do

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not want to compromise on veiling rules. They stress that who has the higher income also has the power to demand and lead the producers and change the type of supplies.

In their consumption routine, they usually shop when their needs rise and they are aware of the changing colors, fabrics or styles. They do not lean towards expensive stores and expensive veiling garments, do prefer to shop from real stores to see the product and check its convenience at first hand and have no brand addiction and store loyalty. Involvement rises when they seek more expensive pieces like topcoats since it covers the posteriors and should be quality. Satisfying the need with a middle-to-high quality&price becomes more important. Supplementary products like handbags, shoes, etc. are mentioned and included in the basket of veiling garments shopping. For participants, it should be called a veiling brand if only it produces proper veiling garments for veiled women but it lacks in the market (*Alvina, Tekbir, Aker, SetrMS* are mentioned). They shop from other brands too which are not veiling brands but produce proper pieces like *Pierre Cardin* and *LC Waikiki*. In the low-middle income group, using branded scarves and tying the scarf by showing the brand behind becomes a practice to make a differentiation. Also they claimed that the sensitivity of brands about Muslims' values and Islam becomes important to choose or switch the brands. They suffer from the lack of product range and old-fashioned styles. It is a practice to visit İstanbul or Konya to find and buy latest and fashionable proper veiling garments.

Participants agree on that each woman has her own perception about fashion and is affected by fashion one way or another even if they find it usually wasteful or unnecessary. Fashion is highly perceived to be related with wealth, luxury and western-style garments. Feeling happines and sense of piety by using a garment or a style is very important to choose, buy and use the products for a long time. They are aware of 'veiling fashion phenomenon' but criticise it due to appealing more to Muslims who have a luxurious lifestyle and high incomes. Also producers or designers are criticised for focusing on high revenues, not the exact needs of Muslim women. *Haute couture* products of designers are found expensive and unaffordable even if all veiled woman desire them to buy for special days or ceremonies like wedding or engagement or to follow the veiling fashion. On the other hand, the level of awareness is low about veiling fashion magazines among the participants even if they find magazines the most important leading instrument about veiling fashion. The most important reason is that they find them appeal to wealthiers, not for the ordinary veiled ones since they find it totally commercial. They believe that catalogue models who are colored-eyed, brown/blonde-haired, tall and slim do not represent the Muslim veiled Turkish women. By this way, it is believed that a Muslim woman stereotype who is 'rich, stylish and religious' is tried to be created and promoted opposing the secular modern women. They do not smile on glossy photos, veiled women in chichy styles with full make up, any that kind of content which is not related with Islam in these magazines. However, they find magazines suitable if they increase the Islamic content level and decrease the ads and consumption promotive content. The wifes of ministers, business women, intellectuals or celebrities who are veiled are claimed to be turned into role models, promoted and imitiated by others with the help of these magazines. Contrastively, fashion and luxury are found approppriate for the wealthiers due to their income level and lifestyle as one participant says *'The richer buys whatever she likes but the poorer can not exceed her limits in terms of income. The poorer can not practice the appropriate veiling as she can not afford the right garments but the richer buys the fashion or creates her own fashion, can easily have someone sew her need.'*. They claimed that fashion reconstitute the veiling one way or another and veiled women adopt it when they become wealthier. Once for all, changing the consumption habits under the effects of consumption culture or trends and loosening the rules and compromising is highly criticised. The inner conscience is pointed out as the final authority to question the self in the light of changing circumstances.

5. CONCLUSION

For Muslim women, veiling is both a sartorial and a religious practice under Islamic decretals which differentiates them from their counterparts. However, this bodily practice is not only affected by religious orders but started to be managed under a variety of pressures coming from the modern life circumstances, especially the rising veiling fashion phenomenon in the last decades. This research analyzed the veiled Turkish women's changing clothing practices in the light of veiling fashion for the post 1980-period, in Turkey. According to the research results, veiling becomes an important part of veiled woman identity. Any ban, regulation, environmental pressure or change has a direct effect on both consumption and attiring practices of veiled women. This makes veiling as the subject of religion, politics, social life, economics, fashion and consumption issues integrally. Rising as consciously demanding consumers, veiled women whet the producers' appetite in the market and consumptionspaces when the economic returs are considered. To understand this segment better, it is needed to examine these consumers closely, listen to their 'what-out points', discover their unspoken 'veiling regimes' and produce for their exact needs. The visibilty of veiled women in public spheres, social and business life will increasingly go on in the near future and lead

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researchers, marketers and producers focus on these identites more.

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