

**Unveiling The Secret Stories:
Conservative Female Blogosphere in Turkey**

by

Melike Ash Sim

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

Design, Technology and Society

Koç University

August 15, 2016

Koc University
Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

This is to certify that I have examined this copy of a master's thesis by

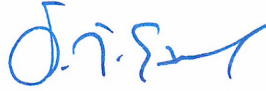
Melike Aslı Sim

and have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by the final
examining committee have been made.

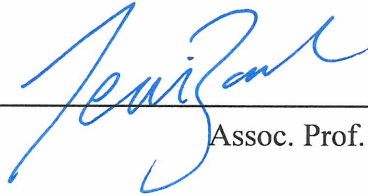
Committee Members:



Asst. Prof. Ergin Bulut



Asst. Prof. Özgür İlke Şanlıer
Yüksel



Assoc. Prof. Lemi Baruh

Date: _____

To my family



ABSTRACT

This study examines the conservative fashion blogosphere in Turkey from a gendered perspective, focusing on how blogging reshapes conservative women's cultural environment and how these women negotiate disclosure, privacy and modesty in an age of extreme self-display. This thesis presents and discusses the findings from the content analysis of 27 fashion blogs in Turkey about the practice of blogging with respect to the questions of "self-realization", "publicity", "emancipation", concerns about privacy and self-branding. It also examines how female bloggers negotiate their activities and conservative identity with the tenets of Islam. The findings reveal that home remains to be the "proper place" for conservative women but at the same time, online interaction extends their private sphere to the public realm. Creating their own fashion styles as well as their own definitions of Islam, conservative female bloggers of Turkey also collaborate with the veiling fashion industry. Thus, as an advice-giving tool and a brand-making platform, the blogosphere provides employment opportunities for these bloggers. Given its integration into the neoliberal economic system through a conservative framework, Turkey and its female blogosphere constitutes a good starting point to investigate the complicated articulation of Islamization with the global market system. This study, reconsidering the arguments of the digital media literature from a gendered perspective, is the first to adopt a content analysis method in this specific topic. Thus, besides being methodologically unique, it also contributes to the domain of communication studies through the lens of feminist theory embedded within a non-Western context.

Keywords: fashion blogging, privacy, veiling, publicity, Islam, content analysis

ÖZETÇE

Bu çalışma, Türkiye’deki muhafazakâr moda blog dünyasını, blog yazmanın muhafazakâr kadınların kültürel dünyasını yeniden şekillendirmesini ve günümüz gösteri çağında bu kadınların kendilerini açığa çıkarma, mahremiyet ve tevazu konularını nasıl tartıştıklarını, toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifinden inceliyor. Bu tez, Türkiye’deki 27 muhafazakâr moda blogunu, “kendini gerçekleştirme”, “şöhret”, ”özgürleşme”, “mahremiyet” ve “markalaşma” yönündeki blog yazma pratikleri açısından içerik analizi yöntemiyle inceliyor ve tartışıyor. Ayrıca, kadın blog yazarlarının bu platformdaki aktivitelerini ve muhafazakâr kimliklerini İslam’ın şartlarına göre nasıl müzakere ettiğini araştırıyor. Sonuçlar gösteriyor ki; ev muhafazakâr kadınlar için “uygun alan” olarak kalırken, çevrimiçi etkileşim özel alanın sınırlarını genişleterek onu kamusal alana dönüştürüyor. Kendi moda stillerini yaratırken, İslam’ı da kendilerine göre tanımlayan Türkiye’nin muhafazakâr kadın blog yazarları, aynı zamanda tesettür moda endüstrisi ile de işbirliği yapıyor. Böylece blog dünyası, hem bir tavsiye paylaşımı mekanizması hem de markalaşma platformu olarak blog yazarlarına iş imkânları sağlıyor. Muhafazakar bir çerçevede neoliberal ekonomik sisteme entegre olan Türkiye ve onun kadın blog dünyası, global pazar sistemine karmaşık bir şekilde eklemlenen İslamlaşma sürecini araştırmak için iyi bir başlangıç noktası oluşturuyor. Bu çalışma, dijital medya literatürü argümanlarını toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifiyle yeniden ele alan ve bu konuda içerik analizi yöntemini kullanan ilk çalışma olma niteliğini taşımaktadır. Bu anlamda, yöntemsel olarak tek olmasının yanı sıra, batı-dışı bağlamda feminist teori perspektifiyle de iletişim çalışmalarına katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: moda blogu, mahremiyet, tesettür, şöhret, İslam, içerik analizi

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has greatly benefited from the academic guidance of my supervisor Ergin Bulut and my co-supervisor Lemi Baruh. I am thankful to them for their advice and comments on the earlier drafts. The working process with them made the research intellectually challenging and interesting for me.

I would like to present my special thanks to Hakan Sim for his support and encouragement, and to Svetlana Multinovic for her very useful comments on every piece of my thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank all my family for their patience and support through this whole process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iii
Özetçe	iv
Acknowledgments	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables	vii
Introduction	8
Section 1: Blogging as A Trend and Fashion Blogging	11
Section 2: Veiling Fashion in Turkey	14
2.1 Reconfiguration of Veil in a Neoliberal Islamic Context	14
2.2 The New Muslim Woman	18
Section 3: Methodology	19
Section 4: Findings – Unveiling the Stories	21
Conclusion	33
References	37

LIST OF TABLES

<u>TABLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Figure 1. Content of the blog post	22
Figure 2. Private Information	24
Figure 3. Mother and Child Relationship	25
Figure 4. Husband and Wife Relationship	26
Figure 5. Third Parties.....	27
Figure 6. Fashion Styles	30
Figure 7. Islamic Values.....	32

INTRODUCTION

The infrastructure of Web 2.0 has enabled Internet users to interact and collaborate with each other, allowing social media to become one of the most powerful tools with a major impact on our communication styles, socialization and self-formation processes. Serving as a platform where “self” is made and remade, web 2.0 stands as a medium for women to wriggle out their gender roles and negotiate patriarchal hegemony. Specifically, blogs appear as a reflexive medium for women to interact and communicate with each other, and also provide the digital spaces through which they reflect on their status in the society (Zareie 2013). The blogosphere has become a promising site which offers Muslim women a wide range of possibilities to discuss social norms and hierarchies, and at times challenge authorities in their countries. Social media played a significant role in the Arab Spring in Middle East in late 2010, where Arab women redefined their activism, empowerment and resistance through social media. The Western world was introduced to “a new image of women in the Middle East: women who are courageous, independent, and technologically savvy” (Eltantawy 2013:765). Similarly, in Afghanistan, female bloggers resisted patriarchal attitudes by posting about prostitution, poverty and their causes, despite death threats. In these contexts, social media opened possibilities for leadership and empowerment among Arab women (Radsch and Khamis 2013).

Despite the effective use of blogs by non-Western women, studies of social media have remained decidedly Eurocentric, where Middle Eastern women are depicted as “oppressed”, silenced and in need of Western intervention. As argued by Nahed Eltantawy, “The traditional image of the Middle Eastern woman that has long dominated Western media is one of an oppressed and exoticized creature, controlled by men and religion” (2013:765). Veiling has also intensified the stereotypical image of Muslim women who needed to be liberated from their patriarchal roots. The veiling of Muslim women regarding its symbolic meaning has remained

a controversial debate in the West (Gabriel and Hannan 2011). Mahreen Kasana targets the Orientalist view that dominates the Western scholarship: “A political reality surfaced and became uncomfortably obvious. Nonwhite voices, particularly Muslim and female, were treated and received as anthropological projects but rarely as sources of personal musings, in comparison to the kind of treatment White female bloggers received” (2014: 237).

In spite of the persistence of such Orientalist depictions, Muslim women participate actively in blogging scene, and yet, research on the presence and representation of Muslim women on social media within non-Western contexts such as Turkey is limited. As feminist scholars indicate, patriarchy is embedded in the laws, state institutions and social norms of Turkey, affecting women’s self-formation in private, socio-economic and political life (Kandiyoti 1991, Kogacioglu 2004). Yet, the relationship between the rising phenomenon of blogging and how it may affect women’s self-formation in patriarchal societies remains to be a vague issue that deserves further attention with particular focus on digital media and feminist theory.

Deploying content analysis as the main method, the study casts light on the fashion blogging practices of conservative women in Turkey, as well as their motivations and expectations behind such practices. The fashion blogosphere is a fertile ground for exploring the blogging activities of these women as it represents the tastes of the conservative Turkish women, their own definitions of Islam and relationship with veiling fashion. Thus, this analysis will enable us to explore such dichotomies as Islamic/secular, modern/traditional and pleasure/exploitation by digging into the visual terrain. The content analysis was conducted on a sample of blog posts and opinion pieces published in Blogger.com, Wordpress.com or personal websites by “conservative” female bloggers in Turkey. The blogs were chosen randomly by searching keywords such as; “Islamic fashion”, “modest fashion”, “Islamic blogger”, “tesettür fashion”, “conservative fashion” in Google. The term “conservative” here

refers to female Muslim bloggers, who practice their religion according to Islamic rules and codes and wear headscarf or veil. The term “conservative” is chosen as it implies a traditional or restrained style, favoring traditional views and values. It is a productive term to define women who are bound by Islamic principles and who are specifically veiled. Given that not all Muslim women are necessarily veiled, other alternatives such as “Muslim female blogosphere” or “Islamic female blogosphere” were not preferred, since neither would sufficiently define the bloggers concerned here.

Drawing on the emerging work on the role of new communication technologies in generating socio-political changes in non-Western societies (Eltantawy 2013, Zareie 2013), this thesis investigates how these bloggers, through their media making practices, negotiate their conservative identities in relation to the tenets of Islam and how Islam’s principles interact within the realm of web 2.0. By tenets of Islam, I understand a principle, belief, or doctrine generally held to be true by members of the religion and referred to Islamic sources of guidance, the Qur’an, Sunnah¹ and scholarly rulings (Boulanouar 2006). At the same time, these are operational definitions in that being conservative is shaped relationally and through material practices within the everyday, and in this case, blogging. It is this very fluid and contested nature of what it means to be conservative that I aim to uncover through this study. Given the scarcity of content analysis on blogging from a gendered perspective within non-Western settings, this research is an important contribution that examines the narratives and disclosure practices of Muslim female bloggers as they navigate a conservative domestic sphere and a mediatized global culture. Specifically, this study seeks to understand what motivates these women to blog about fashion, consumption and child-rearing and what role their conservative politics and class distinction have to play in their digital identity formation. As far as their practices within social media are concerned, the conditions of this performance - state politics,

¹ The recorded sayings and behaviour of the Prophet Muhammad.

rising Islamic bourgeoisie, and the articulation of neoliberalism with Islam – present a complicated picture with respect to how blogging can be understood in the context of Turkey.

The outline of the thesis is as follows. Section one reviews the literature on women’s social media participation and specifically fashion blogging. Section two is divided into two parts. The first part concentrates on the literature on the veiling and veiling fashion, examining the socio-political situation in Turkey based on the dichotomy between Islam and secularism. The second part concentrates on the construction of the “new Muslim woman” in Turkey. Section three explains the methodology of this study and illustrates the details of the content analysis conducted. Section four presents the findings of the study, discussing issues such as private life, self-branding and publicity, commercial tendencies and relationship with Islam. Finally, further research possibilities are discussed.

1. BLOGGING AS A TREND AND FASHION BLOGGING

In the ongoing debates between Western and non-Western scholars about the role of social media in women’s lives in patriarchal societies, it is widely expected that “social media could be an empowering tool for women, enhancing their participation in several facets of their lives, including the legal, economic, political and social aspects” (Arab Social Media Report 2011: 9). Given the important role of social media and blogging during the Arab Spring, women’s involvement in public sphere as activists has been realized via the affordances of digital media. While claims regarding historical ruptures stemming from technology might be misleading, the traditional portrayal of Middle Eastern women also started to partly change thanks to the opportunities of digital media and specifically blogging.

As Diane J. Schiano (2004) suggests, in spite of being highly personal, blogging has gained widespread popularity as a form of online communication. Jill W. Rettberg (2008) offers

a comprehensive overview of blogging and its evolution over the last decade. She defines a blog as “a frequently updated website consisting of dated entries arranged in a reverse chronological order so the most recent post appears first” (2008:19). Tunney and Monaghan (2010) explore blogging as a form of participatory media that creates collaboration and connectivity. Scholars such as Henry Jenkins (2006) have emphasized the co-creativity aspects of social media where fans are empowered by being involved in cultural production². It is important to state that social media platforms have materially broadened the access and ease of production, inviting users to co-create content and value (Jenkins 2006; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010).

Fashion blogs are subsets of blogs that cover the fashion industry, clothing, and personal style. Parallel to the rise of weblogs and the effect of new media, fashion blogging has grown increasingly. According to Blogger.com, slightly more than 2 million bloggers, as of July 2010, were classified as being “with an industry of fashion” (Rocamora 2011: 409).

Scholars have examined fashion blogging from a variety of perspectives. In her qualitative study, Tara Chittenden (2010) uses fashion in order to examine the identity construction process of ten teenage female bloggers, while Minh-ha Pham (2011) evaluates the political limits and possibilities of fashion-themed blogs. Sarah Banet-Weiser (2011) draws attention to “self-disclosure” in the context of a post-feminist era wherein young women are encouraged to use social media to brand themselves. Specifically, fashion blogosphere stands as a critical platform where user participation becomes a particular form of labor for promoting fashion products. Along these lines, Alice E. Marwick argues that bloggers constitute the

² Scholars have criticized Jenkins for his tendency to overstate the creativity of users and neglect processes of exploitation. For instance, Christian Fuchs (2014) draws attention to extraction of surplus value within spaces such as Facebook and Google. Similarly, Mark Andrejevic (2011) argues that user participation in social network sites is a form of exploitation and alienation since users’ time and energies have been utilized as an unpaid form of work. However, this pleasure vs. exploitation discourse is not the particular focus of this thesis.

promoters of neoliberal capitalism as enabling self-actualization through entrepreneurial fashion blogging where cultural labor turns into a capitalist business practice (2013b). Women turn to digital media to “be social”. By foregrounding their creative aspirations above all, bloggers are able to reconcile internal motivations with expected demands of audiences and advertisers. Jefferson Pooley has coined the concept of “calculated authenticity,” manifested in “carefully curated identities” and the strategic performance of the self as brand (2010: 72, 83).

Adam Arvidsson’s research points to “‘socially recognized self-realization’ as participants’ primary motivation for online social production” in which people collaborate, both for achieving pleasure and also peer recognition (2008: 332). As Mark Deuze (2007: 77) suggests, “people seem to be increasingly willing to participate voluntarily in the media making process to achieve what can be called a networked reputation”. This is also closely related to what Marwick calls as “micro-celebrities”- a term used to address being famous within a niche group, either via self promotion or through the recognition of others (2013a). She describes “micro-celebrity” as a fan-based self-presentation technique adopted within social media in order to gain publicity and attention. Thus, dressing up for their audience, it is possible to assert that on a personal level, achieving self-realization and publicity becomes one of the main concerns of fashion bloggers’ online social production.

It is reported that Turkey is one of the largest users of Internet in the world with over 42 million active social media users which constitutes 53% of the population, with 37% of them being female (Smartinsights.com 2016). There is no recent study shedding light on the numbers of female and male bloggers in Turkey, but based on Erol Isik’s research (2005), the percentage of female bloggers in Turkey was 26.5 whereas male participation was 37.2% (the rest is not specified).

Isık (2005) aims to draw the profile of Turkish bloggers, while Alper Sarıkaya (2011) discusses the definition of blogging evaluating blogger experiences along with their motivations. Erkan Saka (2008) considers blogging as a research tool for ethnographic fieldwork, whereas Bakla and Arıkan (2011) explore language learning through blogging. Recently, a specific study has been taken on “mommy blogs” and representation of motherhood in Turkey (Parmaksız and Melis 2012). However, fashion blogging in Turkey, especially from a gendered perspective has not been studied.

2. VEILING FASHION IN TURKEY

2.1. RECONFIGURATION OF VEIL IN A NEOLIBERAL ISLAMIC CONTEXT

Given the rise of veiling fashion industry locally and globally, Islamic fashion is one of the most explored topics in Western and non-Western contexts and has become topic of interest for various sorts of disciplines from fashion studies to sociology and anthropology. Focusing on Britain, North America, and Turkey, Reina Lewis (2015) examines Muslim fashion opposing the suggestion that being a Muslim is incompatible with Western modernity and analyzes the ways young Muslim women negotiate their cultural identity using fashion. Gabriel and Hannan (2011) target the ill-informed thoughts upon veiling as a symbol of cultural backwardness in West and propose new ways of looking at the issue, including more empathy, less subjectivity and careful examination of the motivations of veiled Muslim women. Based on Qur'an, the meaning behind veiling has also been explored by Elif Deniz, who reported that “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” (2014: 247). Veiling and covered dress have often been discussed in instrumentalist terms, as women cover “for acquiring freedom and movement” or “as a form of identity politics” (Tarlo and Moors 2013:5). By veiling, the body of the woman

is produced as a site of religious stratification as well as cultivating the distinctions between piety and class (Gökarıksel and Secor 2013). Post-colonial scholar Saba Mahmood (2005) underlines the necessity to look from the perspectives of women who are covered and underlines that there is a religious motivation behind this covering.

Much has been written about the veiling fashion industry in Turkey in relation to Islam and capitalism (Gökarıksel and Secor 2009, 2012), modernity and civilization (Göle 1996) and how it is connected to neoliberal policies experienced in Turkey (Gökarıksel and Mitchell 2005, Kılıçbay and Binark 2002). For instance, Cihan Tuğal argues that “although neoliberalism was imposed from above and resisted from below, it came to be embraced in Turkey in the name of Islam and democracy” (2012: 23). Many scholars conducted research on the social and political implications of headscarf which has been a debated issue since the formation of the Turkish Republic based on secularist principles (Sayan-Cengiz 2016, Özcan 2015).

The relationship between veiling and the fashion industry in Turkey has deepened within the context of neoliberal economic restructuring, the subjection of the veil to new regulations, and the resurgence of Islamic identities worldwide (Gökarıksel and Secor 2009). According to Gökarıksel and Secor (2009) veil is regarded as traditional while fashion is identified with modernity and they may seem incompatible with each other. However, with an increasing diversity of brands and ever-changing styles, veiling-fashion has been on the rise in Turkey. As they state, “veiling is undertaken in relation to the moral code of Islam, but fashion, as consumption works as part of an ever-shifting economy of taste and distinction” (2012: 847). So, practitioners of veiling fashion try to negotiate their cultural identity between Islam and aesthetics, politics, and pleasures of their socio-spatial environments (Gökarıksel and Secor 2012).

According to Elif Deniz, “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” (2014: 242). The rise of neoliberal politics and conservatism under the AKP rule has caused a growth in the veiling³ fashion industry in Turkey. Foreign capital investment as well as Islamic enterprises were encouraged. Based on Gökarıksel and Secor (2010)’s survey, 200 veiling-fashion firms in Turkey have been in operation within the context of a burgeoning Islamic market. Along with the party politics, the visibility of veiled women who dress up modestly has risen and a new form of dressing called *Tesettür* (originally means a cover or curtain in Arabic) has become popular among the new Islamic bourgeoisie women. With the rise of conservative parties in politics after 1980s led this new rich Islamic class grow in urban areas which also brought the development of new *tesettür* firms using the term in order to market their products. “Tekbir” (saying *Allahuekber* which means Allah is the one and only) is the foremost and largest veiling-fashion company both in Turkey and in the world.

Being a controversial issue, “female headscarf has been an iconic and multilayered symbol of the struggle between the secularists and Islamists over Turkey’s democratization and whether the headscarf is a symbol of religious freedom or the oppression of women” (Özcan 2015:699). Wearing headscarves in public institutions were banned in 1980s with the purpose of not damaging the “modern” image of a secular, democratic Turkey. According to Gökarıksel and Mitchell, the reason was that “for them veiling is a practice not only of ‘dark and distant lands’ but also of the ‘dark and distant (Ottoman) past’, when Muslim women’s veiling was the norm” (2005:147). As F. Sayan Cengiz points out “headscarf has come to represent portrayals of society as polarized between two sections: Islamic and secular” (Sayan Cengiz 2016:3).

³ Veiling here refers to various forms of head coverings adopted by Muslim women, including headscarf, hijab, not full-face veils, known as niqab or burqa since they are not very common in Turkey.

According to her this is problematic since “the headscarf gets to be loaded with essential connotations: women with headscarves are attributed a fixed and reified identity, marked as being representatives of one lifestyle pitted against the other” (Sayan Cengiz 2016:3).

However, the rise of the AKP as the governing party transformed these dynamics. The Kemalist state is being transformed and Turkey has undergone neoliberal and conservative changes. While legally lifting the headscarf ban in Turkish universities, the AKP also kept politically targeting women’s bodies by intervening in women’s rights in issues like abortion, number of kids etc. Marriage and family life, especially motherhood is being promoted⁴.

Yıldız Atasoy states that “under the specific conditions of Turkey, changes in the Kemalist state are transforming the old modalities of public space organized for state dominated ways of life, including religion and private space has long been crafted for the home, family, and faith” (2009: 18-19). Aiming to reconfigure society through a neoliberal-discursive synthesis (Atasoy 2009), AKP’s “the return to ‘Islamic roots’ approach was an essential element in the ideological quest for the inclusion of Islam in the neoliberal market and the religious legitimacy of capitalist development itself” (Moudouros 2014:4).

Statistics prove an increase in headscarved women’s images in newspapers between 2002-2012, a period where the “ideal woman image for conservative middle and upper classes is redefined” (Özcan 2015:701). As a veiled woman, First Lady Emine Erdoğan’s fashion choices, as well as conservative programmes and commercials in pro-government TV channels support the veiling fashion industry. Specifically, Emine Erdoğan has been the topic of many newspapers and “her fashion choices became the focus of two-page spreads and interviews”

⁴ President Erdoğan’s statement in the opening ceremony of KADEM (Women and Democracy Foundation)’s new building that “a woman is a half woman if she rejects motherhood” is an example of such interventions (Erdoğan June 5, 2016). Additionally, state incentives will be given to those who are married before the age of 27 (*T.C. Resmi Gazete*, 14 December 2015).

(Özcan 2015: 706). Backed by the support of political and social environment, the digital era witnesses more women creating their own styles.

2.2. THE NEW MUSLIM WOMAN

The ideal image of a secular woman was a modern, unveiled one who needed to be liberated from her patriarchal ties while AKP's "ideal woman" image (Özcan 2015) is modern, urban, veiled, tasteful, educated and mother. Currently, a new Muslim bourgeoisie appears as the veiling fashion industry grows with their clothing and consumer life styles. "The 'conservative Muslim bourgeoisie' did not find it difficult to adapt to the economic circumstances in an open economy regime, and the 'moderate Islamic' AKP government managed the economy reasonably well" (Buğra and Savaşkan 2014: 172). The 1980s relatively modest headscarf style has been replaced by today's colorful, shiny, diverse head coverings and leggings, jeans and tunics. The new Muslim woman is defined as fashionable, "increasingly savvy about creating her own style, who wants to catch the eye, and who is often able and willing to pay the price has entered into the public imagination" (Gökarıksel and Secor 2009: 14). Thus, veiling-fashion is involved in constructing new ideas about femininity, taste, social status and distinction (Saktanber 2002, Secor 2002). According to Göle, "the new veiling represents the public and collective affirmation of women who are searching for recognition of their Muslim identity through its expression-that is, through Islamism" (1996: 23). Thus, producers and consumers of veiling fashion construct new Muslim subjectivities where conservative women who were once pushed to the periphery have now become part of the mainstream culture with the advent of neoliberalism and conservatism that Turkey is facing currently.

As supporters or members of veiling fashion industry in Turkey, conservative fashion bloggers use blogs as an advice-giving tool or a brand-making platform where they can show their works, exchange their views with their audience and gain publicity. They interact and

collaborate with each other, unite and form informal groupings, turn their hobbies into job opportunities promoting their own or other brands. A mutual collaboration between brands and fashion bloggers continues by attending to blogger events, fashion shows or award ceremonies. Branding and advertising becomes an indispensable part of fashion blogging as this mutual relationship is reinforced.

Modesty is an important tenet of Islam and sometimes this notion can be challenged by the secret stories narrated in blog posts. Through these stories and visuals shared, blogs appear as platforms where private and public spheres are blended and blogging reshapes conservative women's cultural environment. Furthermore, being part of a celebrity culture at a certain level constitutes the negotiation of a conservative community structure with the contemporary display culture. In this respect, it is useful to investigate the tensions between private and public spheres to see how conservative female bloggers in Turkey present themselves in their blogs. Therefore, it is important to see how these bloggers reflect on, represent, construct and reproduce their identities as individuals, content creators, and members of an online community.

3. METHODOLOGY

Focusing on variables such as *blog topic*, *blog posts*, *blog titles* in terms of identifying the key narratives, I have conducted a quantitative content analysis of 27 fashion blogs. The data obtained was then used for a qualitative analysis of the texts posted. Although blog posts may contain photos or other multimedia content, the analysis is limited to the textual material. The 27 blogs from which data were collected belong to amateur or highly professional and popular blog writers. These blog writers are all conservative Muslim women in Turkey and are veiled. The blogs examined in this study are fashion blogs and bloggers are self-defined fashion bloggers. The content of their blogs are concerned with veiling fashion. 19 blogs use

Blogger.com as their main interface while two bloggers' interface is Wordpress.com. Six other bloggers have their own websites.

The sample of this study was drawn between the years 2013-2016. All samples were obtained by using the random selection website Random.org. All blog posts of each blog and all the paragraphs in each post were numbered separately. For every blog, five blog posts from each year were chosen randomly by a given random generator. As a result, a total of 949 units were collected. The title, the lead paragraph and a randomly selected paragraph of each blog entry were analyzed as separate units of analyses. Titles of the blog entries and the paragraphs were analyzed separately from each other and treated as two distinct data sets.

While selecting the blogs, demographic data like gender and age of bloggers were also considered. Accordingly, young (22-29)⁵, veiled women who write personal blogs and define themselves as “fashion blogger” were chosen. The location of the bloggers ranged from metropolitan cities like Istanbul to more conservative cities like Konya.

The aim of this content analysis was to code paragraphs from blogs in terms of the personal information revealed in the blog posts, and of their relationship with the tenets of Islam, as well as to understand the main motivations behind the blogging activity. For these purposes, items were coded into six main categories with respect to blog post and unit characteristics, including self, product-brand info, private life, relationship with bloggers and readers, and morals. The coders were asked to decode 41 categories, containing origin and type of the unit, blogger characteristics, personal information and family relations, occupation and education levels, religious beliefs, fashion styles, interests, emotions, relations with the audience and other bloggers, relations with the companies, sponsors, cultural preferences, gender issues, etc. References to brand names, advertisements, fashion styles, private

⁵ Only nine out of twenty-seven bloggers mention their ages.

information, relationship with the husband and children, leisure and consumption activities, cultural preferences, opinions about social issues, morals and Islamic values were coded under subtypes.

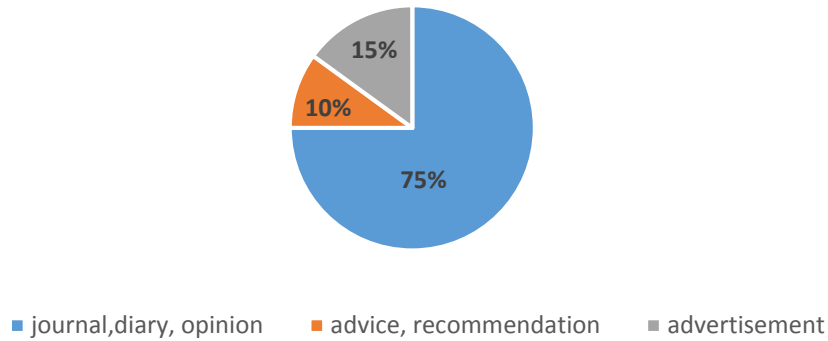
Two independent coders coded the blog posts. While the first coder coded all the units and was the primary coder of the content, to ensure a level of consistency in coding, the second coder analyzed a random sample of 95 units about 10% percent of the entire sample. Krippendorff's Alpha was calculated to measure the inter-coder reliability, or the level of agreement between the coders. The alpha coefficients ranged from 0,7161 to 1. The reliability is accepted when the alpha is greater than 0.7, and all measures were completed after the second training reaching a high level of reliability on all variables.

4. FINDINGS – UNVEILING THE STORIES

The content analysis reveals that the average Turkish-language blog is single-authored, covering different issues such as veiling fashion and personal events in the blogger's life. Blog infrastructures are open for comments and blogs contain relatively few links (only 44 out of 949). As an interface, most bloggers prefer Blogger.com for its user-friendly infrastructure. It was possible to detect that 10% of the units come from press releases or sponsors and the rest of the units are blogger's personal entries. In terms of the contents of the blog posts, units are summarized in *Figure 1*. 10% of the units give advice or recommendations mainly on clothing styles or fashion, while 15% of them are advertisements of fashion products. The rest of the blog posts are journal or diary type texts and express opinions of the bloggers mostly about fashion and other daily routines.

Figure 1

Content of the blog post



Private Life

One blogger gives an excuse to her audience why she neglected her blog lately: *“Sorry for not being here for a long time, but you know, I am a mother now.”* Generally written by young females, personal fashion blogs are primarily based on personal experiences on style and fashion. However, when it comes to “motherhood”, the findings reveal that as soon as they become mothers, their attitudes switch towards motherly issues and blogs start being neglected as motherhood comes with extra domestic labor. As a social construction, motherhood is seen as something to be proud of and worth mentioning. Thus, sometimes this results with the neglect of the blog’s fashion content and bloggers start talking about their experiences as mothers.

The results show that 8% of the units give reference specifically to motherhood experiences, 11% of them to marriage and family life, and 5% of them to their own children. Encouraged in Islam, marriage is seen “as the ‘completion’ of every human being as well as an act that protects modesty” (Boulanouar 2006:136). As the current state policies define women’s roles primarily within the boundaries of the family, the content of the blogs reveal that this role is fulfilled. On the other hand, men as breadwinners are socially expected to satisfy and comfort

both their wives and mothers. This is shown in an advertisement: *“Buy this jewellery, get one free! Make your mother happy too.”*

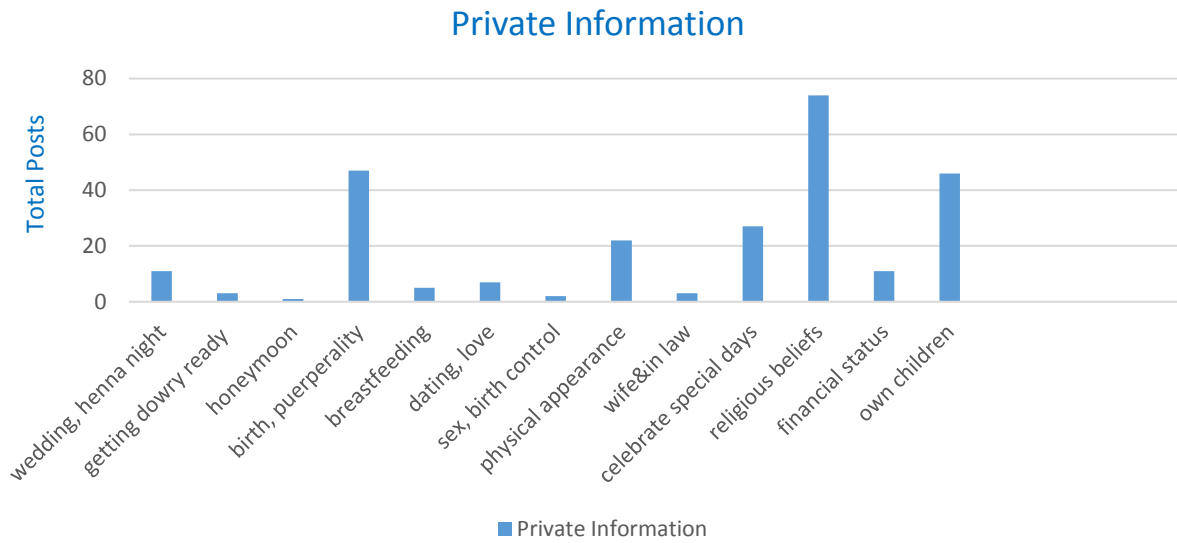
If their post is about motherhood or pregnancy, bloggers openly share private information as stated in a post accompanied by a visual of her blood coming from her back: *“This is my blood, I recommend you to try hacamat⁶ if you are pregnant. Such a relief!”* Blogs include as private information as cycles of menstruation, breastfeeding, physical body changes and shape, or details regarding pregnancy. There is also a tendency to feel to be “the best mother” since the results reveal many criticisms of other mothers for hiring a nanny, using birth control or for not breastfeeding, thus turning motherhood into a rivalry platform. One blogger criticises a mother because she eats her dinner while the nanny is taking care of the child in a restaurant: *“Is this motherhood? I confuse which one is the mother.”*

Bloggers sometimes share secret stories, including their relationship with the father and childhood memories. One blogger commemorates her father, sharing a photo of them building lego mosques when she was a child. This memory reveals that religion is learned and practices in the family, which in turn is shaped by the society we are raised in.

As shown in *Figure 2* below, in terms of the private information given, religious beliefs are those referenced most (8%), followed by references to giving birth or puerperality (5%).

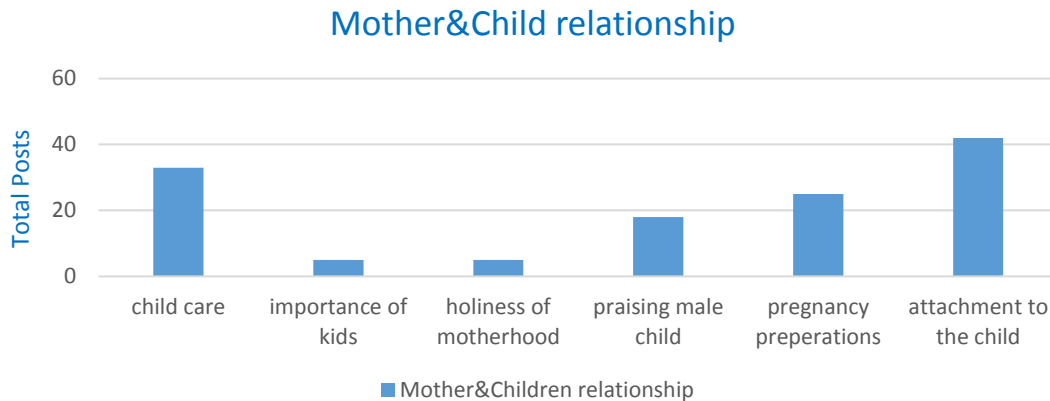
⁶ A ritual of relieving from pain via the heated cups on your back (cupping).

Figure 2



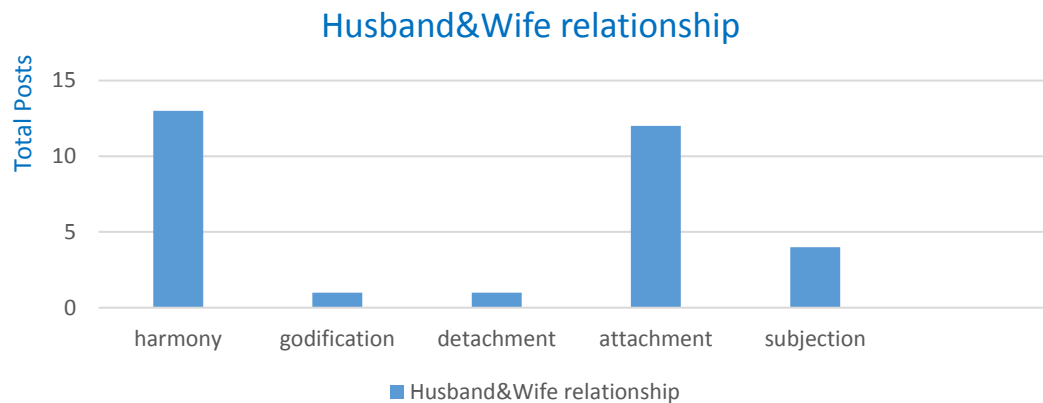
When it comes to relationship between mother and children, praising the male child is the 4th important category with 2% of the units (*Figure 3*). Even though 2% is a negligible proportion, none of the units praise the female child. One blogger reads a news report about a baby boy thrown to the garbage as soon as he was born and comments: “*Ohh, how did they throw the baby away although he was a boy?*” The gender of the child is specifically mentioned with a sense of regret. Said consciously or not, this is a sign of how patriarchy is embedded in the social life.

Figure 3



Based on the statistics for private information given above, a sub-category for relationship between husband and wife was formed. Accordingly, modern conservative women of Turkey seem to be attached to their husbands and live in harmony with them. As one blogger states: *"I wanted to share my clothes with you and my husband took these beautiful photos of me as usual."* This post shows that while she is the content-writer, her husband acts as the photographer for her blog. However, there is hardly any full subjection to the husband and no godification of him in overall blog posts as in other patriarchal societies. One and only example of full subjection to the husband appears as: *"I take my daughter and go out with the permission of my husband of course."* Since declaration of this harmony and attachment shows itself only in 1,5% of the units (Figure 4), it can be said that blogosphere serves as a platform for women to act individually. 5% of the units mention food consumption and travel activities and they are mostly done with husbands or family. On the other hand, blogger events appear as one of the independently participated events with a 2% reference in the units.

Figure 4



Beyond the topics of fashion and consumption, fashion blogs mention other topics such as hobbies and interests. These account for 10% of total blog posts. 4% of the hobbies are do-it-yourself (DIY) activities, 3% is home and decoration, 3% is recipes and cooking and less than 1% is concerned with courses or workshops they attended. Housework is taken for granted as one of the bloggers ask: “*What is your favourite housework girls? Mine is ironing*”. Additionally, there are only 6 units referring to sports activities. At most 2% of the units make reference to the cultural preferences. Units do not mention cinema or theater and only two units refer to concerts or music choices. As few as three units refer to favourite movies or book choices, eleven units refer to the favourite authors, four units mention museum or cultural heritage tours, two of them being mosques.

Figure 5

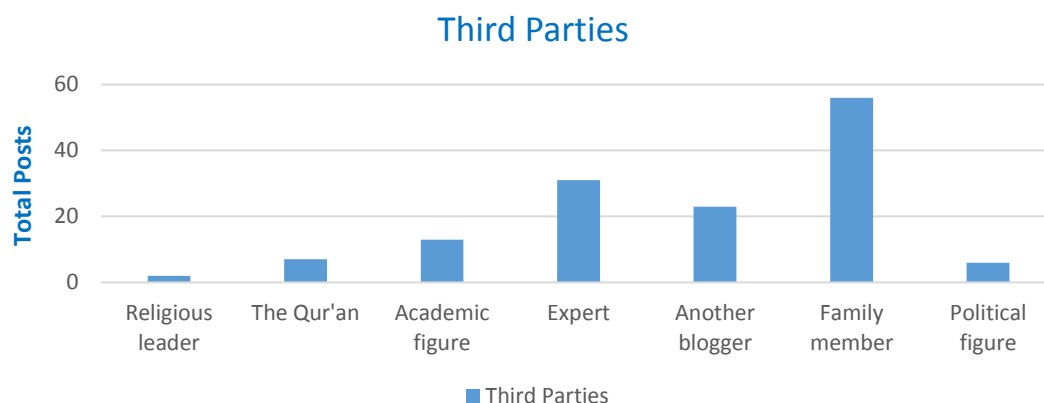


Figure 5 shows the references given to the third parties. Despite being conservative blogs, they do not give very much reference to the holy book of Islam, Qur'an, or religious leaders. This is partly because they are fashion blogs and related more with the fashion industry. The most referenced third party is the family members, which seem to comply with the cultural conservatism surrounding Turkey.

Self-branding and Publicity

Out of twenty-seven blog titles, twelve contain the real names of the bloggers. Almost 50% of the bloggers give self-reference in the main titles of their blogs and in 7% of the units they give reference to their first names. There is an increasing tendency for using first names in blog titles and this is an important strategy for publicity. Repeating one's name several times in various platforms contributes to self-branding.

While only 1% of the units give reference to bloggers' education, 5% of the units mention a profession or occupation. Only six blog posts mention university education. Among all the blogs there is only one blogger who writes bilingually, in Turkish and in English.

As for the relationship between the audience and the blogger, the findings indicate that 18% of the units mention the feedbacks of the followers or reply their questions directly. Only a few of the bloggers have closed their comment sections so that they can talk freely. Taking feedbacks and replying to their audiences is important for the peer-recognition and publicity. Being a micro-celebrity requires a treatment to the followers like valued fans (Marwick 2013a). Maintaining a “networked reputation” also lets future employment opportunities to emerge, which stand as a common factor in motivating social production. These data justify Deuze’s (2007) notion of “networked reputation” as it does not only come from voluntary act of creating labor for society, but also from defining one’s self to him/herself via autobiographical self-expression and communal interaction.

It is true to state that bloggers do not necessarily target a specifically chosen audience like veiled women or members of a Muslim society. 9% of the units specifically target a Muslim community or people who are familiar with Islam whereas the rest of the units do not mention a specific audience. Nevertheless, they usually assume that the reader is conservative, believing that non-conservative and non-veiled women would not read their blogs. Although they do not specifically address the conservative community, they believe the audience is them. This is mostly evident in the posts related to conservative swimwears called *haşema*⁷ and holiday resorts. In these blog posts, there are direct warnings to those who wear *haşema*: “*If you don’t want to be judged and be comfortable, don’t go there!*” or “*Don’t worry in this reserved place there are more of us who wear haşema!*” Thus, there is a tendency to bond with those who think alike and create a “safe” space for each other, along with a feeling of discrimination and marginalization within the society.

Commercial Tendencies

⁷ A special-clothed loose full body swimsuit which covers the whole body from head to toe.

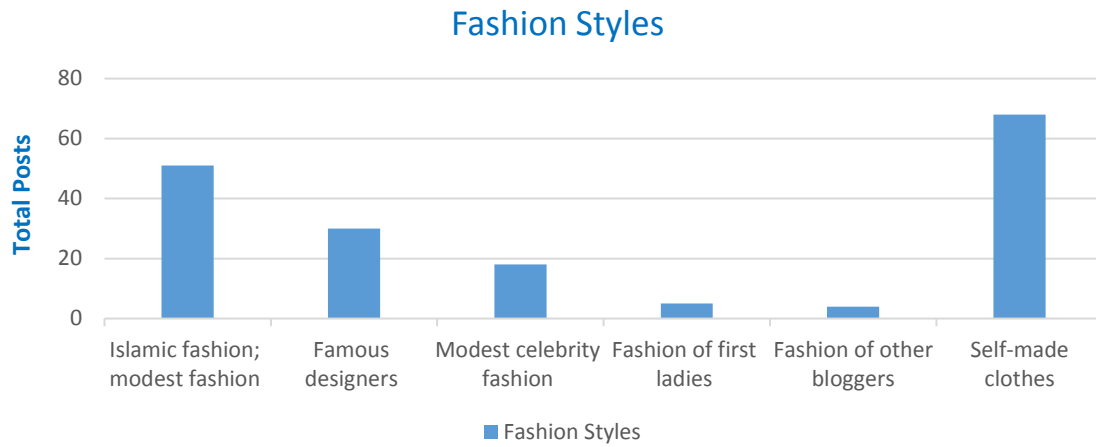
By promoting their own or other brands, bloggers commercialize their blogs by sharing advertisements, press releases or promotions. Word of mouth becomes one of the main tools of companies producing scarves, headscarves, haute couture dresses and cosmetics.

In spite of preparing highly personalized blogs, bloggers also comment on and back up veiling fashion industry. 28% of the units mention brand names; 5,5% of them are self-brands. 16% of the units contain press releases or advertisements. 1% of the units make a reference to lotteries giving presents from national or multinational brands. Regarding the free merchandise donated to bloggers, the results show that 5% of the units give reference to sponsorships and 1% of the units talk about gifts or promotions. Conservative bloggers rarely accept gifts or even if they do, they don't mention it too often.

Despite the general tendency of addressing high society, there is hardly any reports of wealth. 3% of the units give reference to very famous brands like Gucci, Dolce&Gabbana and Vakko. As shown in *Figure 6*, self-made clothes, i.e. those produced by bloggers themselves, are referenced most and fashion bloggers mostly blog about their own products. Capable of sewing and designing their own clothes, they start selling them at some point, looking forward to future employment opportunities.

Among the fashion styles mentioned, as shown in *Figure 6*, self- made clothes are those referenced most and they are followed by Islamic and modest fashion styles. Famous designers are referenced when bloggers are in search of a new trend to adapt their own veiling fashion style. By incorporating global styles that do not belong to Islamic ones, conservative female bloggers try to balance their new style between the global and local, secular and Islamic, modern and traditional.

Figure 6



Fashion as Modernity, Veiling as Tradition

Gökarıksel and Secor state that veiling fashion might seem contradictory with Islam, emphasizing that “veiling, with its powerful set of religious, cultural and political references, and fashion, an unmoored system of self-referential change associated with capitalism, modernity and a particular kind of consumer subject” (2009: 7). Therefore, the tension in veiling fashion lies between the veil’s function as modest dress according to Islam and its excess of signification in terms of distinction, status, and aesthetics (Gökarıksel and Secor 2009).

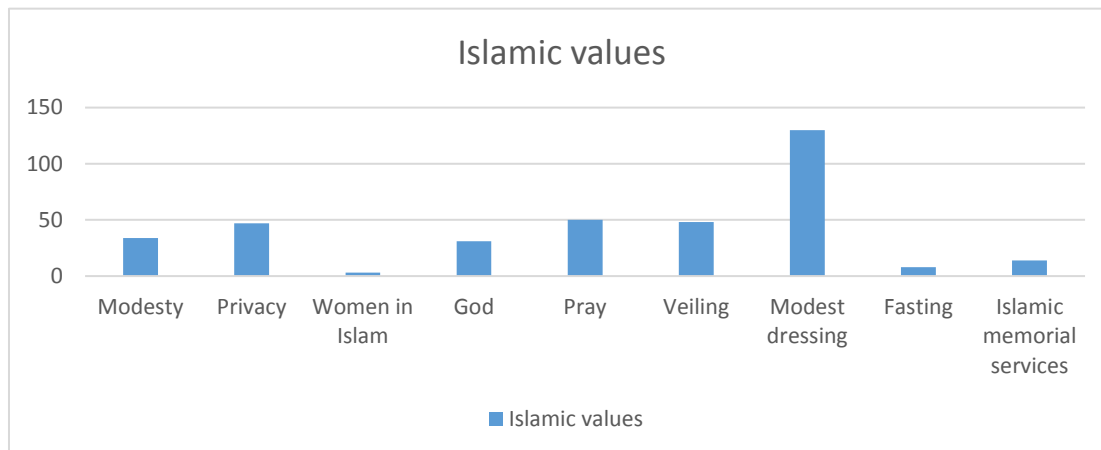
Being the central object of Islamic fashion, the headscarf is “the key to both piety and the fashionable wardrobe, a desirable commodity that women describe collecting in the dozens, changing with the seasons, and constantly eyeing in stores and on other women” (Gökarıksel and Secor 2012:852). Currently, many women follow veiling fashion and veil in a variety of ways. These ways include certain accessories like bonnet, faux bun and pin, which at the same time pose a utilitarian approach as well as aesthetic concerns. These accessories are also criticized for being tempting and seductive and not compatible with the notion of modesty (Gökarıksel and Secor 2012). This way, women are sometimes stuck between their pleasures

and their faith due to these conflicting demands. Although consuming excessive products is not welcomed in Islamic belief, women are tempted to buy various types of headscarves and seduced by the idea of shopping. This study proves that a highly visible new Islamic culture of consumption has arisen, including an Islamic fashion industry too.

Traditional and fundamentalist approaches of Islam ignore present world, believing in the next realm of existence. However, most of the bloggers follow the newest fashion trends, trying to adapt the high-fashion styles to modest dressing. Although their worldly desire seems to contradict the basic idea of Islam, it is possible to assert that women have their own understanding and interpretation of Islam. Thus, we might speak about women's agency to develop new definitions.

One blogger mentions in her blog post: *"I became veiled after I got married and now I am more careful about my behaviours. I try to avoid yelling, getting angry, talking too much and sitting improperly."* So, according to her posts, a veiled woman is expected to be more "polite" and "calm." However, there is a slight inconsistency in such behaviour in the overall blog posts. Although coarse talk, is not welcomed in Islamic framework, and Muslim woman is expected to be mild and sweet-natured, it turns out that there are 2% of the units containing severe anger and coarse talk, and 4% of them underestimate or humiliate other views. Being veiled is something to be publicly protected and that is why one blogger gets very angry and harshly criticizes the woman who said to her about her veil: *"You are beautiful, don't close it"*. One more example for coarse talk was godification of the political leader and humiliating those who are against him by using words *"heretic pigs"*. Another statement used words like *"sh***y"* and *"f***"* in relation to the social responsibility efforts of a multinational corporation (Google.com), for not believing what they do since they are foreigners.

Figure 7



“O Prophet! say to your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they let down upon them their over-garments; this will be more proper, that they may be known, and thus they will not be given trouble; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”
(Qur’an 33:59)

Defined as: “freedom from conceit or vanity, and also propriety in dress, speech, or conduct”, as reported in the verse above, modesty is central to religion of Islam. Apart from Western paradigm, Islam views public sphere as “company of strangers” rather than “outside the home” (Boulanouar 2006:138). Dressing decently means not only covering the body but beautifying the appearance as well. In the face of modern women who exhibit their femininity by the care they give to their bodies and clothes, Muslim women conceal their femininity behind veiling and thus present the “sacred body” against the “aesthetic” one (Göle 1996:130). There is a sexuality culture in Turkey that objectifies women’s public bodies in a particular way and Sehliskoğlu (2015) argues that the new veiled women are signifiers of changing sexuality culture and the very fact that we find them uncanny is a reflection of this change.

CONCLUSION

This thesis focuses on how conservative women in Turkey locate and represent their self-consciousness in the fashion blogosphere. Taking into account the socio-political situation and rising dichotomy between Islamic and secular ways of life in the current Turkey, the study is based on a text-based content analysis of 27 blogs. While the study explores conservative fashion blogging in Turkey and its relationship with the tenets of Islam, it also reveals the motivations of the female bloggers and how they negotiate disclosure and conservative identity in an age of extreme self-display.

Under the complexity and dynamics of the dichotomy between Islamic and secular ways of living in Turkey, women's bodies are once again becoming a political target for disciplinary purposes. This is reflected in the daily lives of women in such a patriarchal society, where norms and traditions along with the gender roles are inherited and transmitted. This research is the first to address blogging practices of conservative women in Turkey's blogosphere. Factors that shape conservative female blogger practices and the material formation of identities in this process are researched. The study reveals the spaces within which women seek "self-realization," "self-formation" and "publicity" in the digital world, particularly, through the practice of blogging in the increasingly male-dominant culture of Turkey.

Conservative fashion bloggers use blogosphere as a platform where they can reveal information about themselves, reflect on their daily lives and share their own styles. Redefining veiling fashion in Turkey, they aspire to become a part of a global fashion industry. The results show that bloggers feel that they give guidance to their followers and set the trends for veiling fashion.

The interaction formed among bloggers and their readers enable bloggers to extend their public sphere. Home, formerly regarded as the private sphere, is being opened very broadly and intimately to the outer world. There is a tendency to believe that they are read by those who think alike, so they feel comfortable as if there is no one from unveiled community. Cyber space becomes their public space and it is not considered outside home since bloggers write mostly from home, and address the female audience.

As feminist scholars pointed out, construction of womanhood has been an important dimension of differentiation between religious and secular groups in Turkey for over a century (Kandiyoti 1991; Özdalga 1998). One differentiation between these groups is gender equality, the other is self versus family orientation of women, and the last but not least is the proper place for women, inside or outside the home (Durakbaşa 1998; İlyasoğlu 1994). Based on the blogs' content analysis, it is underlined that home is still where women should be. If they want to work this would be part-time or home based work, so that they can take care of their children and family and do the housework. The attachments to the child and motherhood experiences become the topics shared most commonly even in fashion blogs. Although bloggers are more free in online environment, where they can wriggle out their domestic roles, they still show the signs of patriarchal practices which are settled not only in societal level but also in their thoughts. In this respect, the preceding analysis makes it clear that technologically determinist readings of blogging with respect to women's emancipation from traditional gender roles in general have failed. While women do find more space to negotiate the tensions between neoliberal consumption and Islam, traditional genders roles are far from challenged.

The analysis also reveals that there is hardly any unified veiling style in Turkey. Conservative women of Turkey create their own fashion styles as well as their own definitions of Islam. Female beauty is important and most of the bloggers specifically focus on beautifying themselves via use of cosmetics or diversifying their clothing and veiling styles. Attempting to

adapt global fashion styles to their own clothing styles reveals the collapse of neoliberal desires with Islam's command of modesty. Blogs are far from being spaces of passive consumption. They are also platforms where women turn into entrepreneurs who are capable of sewing, designing and ultimately marketing their own clothes by way of drawing on digital affordances. The target customer profile ranges from the First Lady Emine Erdoğan to TV actresses and their followers. As the targeted customer belongs to the high society, the materials used for sewing and designing ranged from real silk, kashmir to taffeta. The "Islamic bourgeoisie", risen out of the neoliberal and conservative transformation of the country after the 1980s, "has generated a demand for goods and spaces that mark a new Islamically accented performance of taste and distinction" (Gökarıksel and Secor 2012:851). Being a part of the new Islamic bourgeoisie, conservative fashion blogosphere represents a segment of urban society which is transformed into a vehicle for the nation's values and culture as the accumulation of wealth is legitimized through Islam (Moudouros 2014).

Therefore, conservative female fashion blogger appears as the young, urban female who has an average education, and her own local brand, and generally is a housewife who simultaneously works from home or part-time. She is a care-taking mother and an advisor. She dresses well, classy and elegantly, and also sets the trends of the local veiling fashion. However, in terms of cultural preferences, it can be said that she hardly ever goes to the cinema or theater, concerts or museums. On the other hand, blogger events, fashion weeks and brand gatherings are those participated independently where they smile to the cameras and give interviews. Celebrity culture is something to be fond of as the blogosphere creates what Marwick (2013a) calls "micro-celebrities".

This study adds to the literature on representation of self and self-branding techniques in cyberspace (Marwick 2013a, Eltantawy 2013, Banet-Weiser 2011). It is possible to argue that conservative fashion bloggers redefine veiling fashion through the blogosphere. Benefiting

from their religious stands, they create their own brands in which they interpret both Islam and veiling fashion and find the opportunity to gain recognition. There is a mutual relationship between the conservative bloggers and veiling fashion industry, where bloggers enjoy from the efforts they give voluntarily, in the hope that they can create their own brands in the future. The labor practiced in these blogs can be defined as “hope labor”- a term coined by Kuehn and Corrigan (2013)- which will be further analyzed in an upcoming study.

As this study is limited to a text-based analysis, further research is necessary on evaluating the visuals posted by the conservative fashion bloggers. Multimedia content gain more and more popularity along with the rise of applications like Instagram and Snapchat. When the units are read on their own, it is usually hard to understand they are conservative blogs. The advent of technology provides bloggers the opportunity to synchronize their all data by only using smart phones. Future research would definitely benefit from findings of visual expressions of communities of style. Furthermore, this study is based on a content analysis where units are randomly chosen. An ethnographic study, where in depth-interviews are conducted with the bloggers, would be an asset in order to understand the motivations behind female blogging, whether it is a path to self-realization or alienation.

REFERENCES

- Andrejevic, Mark. 2011. "Surveillance and Alienation in the Online Economy." *Surveillance&Society* 8(3):278-87.
- Arab Social Media Report. 2011. *The Role of Social Media in Arab Women's Empowerment*. 1(3). Dubai School of Government. Dubai. Retrieved June 20, 2016 (<http://www.arabsocialmediareport.com/UserManagement/PDF/ASMR%20Report%2003.pdf>)
- Arıkan, Arda and Arif Bakla. 2011. "Learner Autonomy Online: Stories From a Blogging Experience." Pp.240 in *Fostering Autonomy in Language Learning*, edited by D. Gardner. Gaziantep: Zirve University. Retrieved from <http://ilac2010.zirve.edu.tr>
- Arvidsson, Adam. 2008. "The Ethical Economy of Customer Coproduction." *Journal of Macromarketing* 28(4):326-338.
- Atasoy, Yıldız. 2009. *Islam's Marriage with Neoliberalism: State Transformation in Turkey*. London: Palgrave Mcmillan.
- Banet-Weiser, Sarah. 2011. "Branding the Post-Feminist Self: Girls' Video Production and YouTube." Pp.277-294 in *Mediated Girlhoods: New Explorations of Girls' Media Culture*, edited by M. C. Kearney. New York: Peter Lang.
- Boulanour, Aisha Wood. 2006. "The Notion of Modesty in Muslim Women's Clothing: An Islamic Point of View." *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 8(2):134-156
- Buğra, Ayşe and Osman Savaşkan. 2014. *New Capitalism in Turkey: The Relationship between Politics, Religion and Business*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

- Chaffey, Dave. 2016. *Global Social Media Research Summary 2016*. Smart Insights (Marketing Intelligence) Ltd. Yorkshire, UK. Retrieved April 25, 2016. (<http://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>)
- Chittenden, Tara. 2010. "Digital dressing up: modelling female teen identity in the discursive spaces of the fashion blogosphere." *Journal of Youth Studies* 13(4):505-520
- Çeyiz Hesabı ve Devlet Katkısına Dair Yönetmelik. (2015). *T.C. Resmi Gazete*, 36510, 14 December 2015.
- Deniz, Elif. 2014. "Veiling Fashion, Consumption Culture and Identity: A Qualitative Analysis for Interpreting the Veiled Turkish Women's Changing Clothing Practices." *Proceedings of SOCIOINT14- International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities*. 8-10 September 2014. Istanbul.
- Deuze, Mark. 2007. *Media Work*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Durakbaşı, A. 1998. "The construction of women's and men's identities in the republic: the identity of the Kemalist woman and "enlightened men." *Women and men in 75 years* 29–50. Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı.
- Eltantawy, Nahed. 2013. "From Veiling to Blogging: Women and media in the Middle East." *Feminist Media Studies* 13(5).
- Erdoğan, Tayyip. 2016, June 5. Speech on the opening ceremony of KADEM's building. Retrieved June 25, 2016. (http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/siyaset/546155/Erdogan__Anneligi_reddeden__evini_cevirmeyen_kadin_yarimdir.html).

- Fuchs, Christian. 2014. *Digital Labour and Karl Marx*. NY: Routledge.
- Gabriel, Theodore and Rabiha Hannan. 2011. *Islam and the Veil: Theoretical and Regional Contexts*. London: A&C Black.
- Gökarıksel, Banu and Anna J.Secor. 2009. "New transnational geographies of Islamism, capitalism and subjectivity: the veiling-fashion industry in Turkey." *Area* 41(1): 6-18.
- 2010. "Islamic-ness in the life of a commodity: veiling-fashion in Turkey." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35: 313–333.
- 2012. "'Even I Was Tempted': The Moral Ambivalence and Ethical Practice of Veiling-Fashion in Turkey." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 102(4): 847-862.
- 2013. "You can't know how they are inside": the ambivalence of veiling and the discourses of the Other in Turkey." Pp.95-114 in *Religion and Place: Landscape, Politics, and Piety*, edited by P. Hopkins, L. Kong, and E. Olson. USA: Springer.
- Gökarıksel, Banu and Katharyne Mitchell. 2005. "Veiling, Secularism and the Neoliberal Subject: National Narrative and Supranational Desires in Turkey and France." *Global Networks* 5(2):147–165.
- Göle, Nilüfer. 1996. *The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Isik, Erol. 2005. *Empirical Analysis of Turkish Web-logs*. Retrieved June 8, 2016 (http://tasarama.com/doc/Turkish_Blogs_Research_Report_by_Erol_ISIK.pdf).

- Jenkins, Henry. 2006. *Convergence Culture*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz. eds. 1991. *Women, Islam and the State*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Kaplan, Andreas M. and Michael Haenlein. 2010. "Users of the world unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media." *Business Horizons* 53(1):59–68.
- Kasana, Mehreen. 2014. "Feminisms and the Social Media Sphere." *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 42(3-4): 236-249.
- Kılıçbay, Barış and Mutlu Binark. 2002. "Consumer Culture, Islam and the Politics of Lifestyle: Fashion for Veiling in Contemporary Turkey." *European Journal of Communication* 17(4): 495-511.
- Kogacioglu, Dicle. 2004. "The Tradition Effect. Framing Honor Crimes in Turkey." *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 15(2):119-151.
- Kuehn, Kathleen and Thomas F. Corrigan. 2013. "Hope Labor: The Role of Employment Prospects in Online Social Production." *The Political Economy of Communication* 1(1).
- Mahmood, Saba. 2005. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Marwick, Alice E. 2013a. *Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity, and Branding in the Social Media Age*. New Haven. Yale University Press
-2013b. "They're Really Profound Women, They're Entrepreneurs: Conceptions of Authenticity in Fashion Blogging." Presented at the 7th International AIII Conference on Weblogs and Social Media (ICWSM). Cambridge, MA.

- Monaghan, Garrett and Sean Tunney. 2010. *Web journalism: A new form of citizenship?* Eastbourne. Sussex Academic Press.
- Moudouros, Nikos. 2014. "The 'Harmonization' of Islam with the Neoliberal Transformation: The Case of Turkey." *Globalizations* 11(6):843-857.
- Özcan, Esra. 2015. "Women's headscarves in news photographs: A comparison between the secular and Islamic press during the AKP government in Turkey." *European Journal of Communication* 30(6):698-713.
- Özdalga, E. 1998. *The veiling issue, official secularism and popular Islam in modern Turkey*. Richmond, UK: Curzon.
- Parmaksiz, Yelsali and Melis Pinar. 2012. "Digital Opportunities for Social Transition: Blogosphere and Motherhood in Turkey," *Fe Dergi* 4(1):123-134.
- Pham, Minh-Ha T. 2011. "Blog Ambition: Fashion, Feelings, And The Political Economy Of The Digital Raced Body." *Camera Obscura* 26(176):1-37.
- Pooley, Jefferson D. 2010. "The Consuming Self: From Flappers to Facebook." Pp.71-89 in *Blowing Up the Brand: Critical Perspectives on Promotional Culture*, edited by M. Aronczyk and D. Powers. NY. Peter Lang.
- Rocamora, Agnés. 2011. "Personal fashion blogs: screens and mirrors in digital self portraits", *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture* 15(4):407-24.
- Radsch, Courtney C. and Sahar Khamis. 2013. "In Their Own Voice: Technologically Mediated Empowerment and Transformation Among Young Arab Women," *Feminist Media Studies. Special Issue: Women and Media in the Middle East* 13(5):881-890.

- Lewis, Reina. 2015. *Muslim Fashion: Contemporary Style Cultures*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Rettberg, Jill W. 2008. *Blogging*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Roald, Anne Sofie, 2001. *Women in Islam: The Western Experience*. London and NY: Routledge.
- Saka, Erkan. 2008. *Blogging as a Research Tool for Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Working paper presented to the EASA Media Anthropology Network e-seminar. 19 May-1 June 2008. Retrieved June 8, 2016 (<http://www.media-anthropology.net/>).
- Saktanber, A. 2002. *Living Islam*. London: I. B. Tauris.
- Sarıkaya, Alper U. 2011. "What is Blogging: Towards a Definition". Pp.119-124 in *Theory on Demand #7: Image, Time and Motion New Media Critique from Turkey, Ankara (2003-2010)*, edited by Andreas Treske, Ufuk Önen, Bestem Büyüm and I. Alev Degim. Institute of Network Cultures, Amsterdam.
- Sayan-Cengiz, Feyda. 2016. *Beyond Headscarf Culture in Turkey's Retail Sector*. US: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Schiano, Diane J., Bonnie A. Nardi, Michelle Gumbrecht and Luke Swartz. 2004. "Blogging by the Rest of Us". *Late Breaking Results Paper*. in conference CHI2004. Vienna, Austria.
- Secor, A. 2002. "The veil and urban space in Istanbul: Women's dress, mobility, and Islamic knowledge." *Gen-der, Place and Culture* 9(1):5-22.

- Sehlikoglu, Sertaç. 2015. "The Daring Mahrem: Changing Dynamics of Public Sexuality in Turkey." Pp. 235-252. *Gender and Sexuality in Muslim Cultures*, edited by Gül Özyeğin. London: Ashgate.
- Tarlo, Emma and Annelies Moors. 2013. *Islamic Fashion and Anti-Fashion: New Perspectives from Europe and North America*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Tuğal, Cihan. 2012. "Fight or Acquiesce? Religion and Political Process in Turkey's and Egypt's Neoliberalizations." *Development and Change* 43(1): 23-51.
- Zareie, Ayoub. 2013. "From Blog Writing to Self-Consciousness: A Study of Iranian Bloggers", *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 91: 66-71.