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CONTESTED MODERNITIES IN TURKEY: CONSTITUTING THE MODERN SUBJECT IN BILKENT UNIVERSITY

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This thesis analyzes different ways of constituting the modern subject among the students of a Turkish elite university. The research material was gathered by interviewing thirteen Bilkent University students in Ankara, Turkey, in the spring of 2010. By applying postcolonial theory, the modern was understood as a political, rather than a neutral concept. The alternative modernities perspective was employed as a way to create an understanding of competing discourses of the modern subject. In the Turkish context, religious conservatism has challenged previous interpretations of the secular modern subject provided by Kemalist laicism in the early republic.

This thesis concludes that there was not a single way to constitute a modern subject position, but many. Competing understandings surfaced inter-subjectively, therefore modern subject positions were described in relation to certain Others. Stereotypical, spatial, temporal and ethical ways of "othering" were used. The "East" constituted the most significant internal Other for the interviewees. Differences between eastern and western parts of the country were often narrated in gendered terms. Second, modern Muslim and secular subject positions were interpreted as competing narratives of the "modern" national Self. The secular narrative had transformed from the historical rejection of religious expression in the public sphere towards a new appraisal of tolerance. The religious discourse rejected the secular modern as a form of cultural imitation and adopted a selectively modern position.

Finally, since particular signs of "modern" femininity have been fundamental to the constitution of the modern subject in Turkey, narratives of modern gender roles were analyzed both through the challenges towards the dominant sexual norm of virginity before

marriage and the sustaining of conventional gender roles within the "modern" Turkish family. This thesis sought to provide an understanding of the competing and gendered narratives of the modern subject in Turkey.

Avainsanat: moderni, subjektiviteetti, toiseus, kansallinen identiteetti, sukupuoliroolit, Turkki

Muita tietoja:

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Contents

1. Introduction: Setting the scene

Initially I got interested in the political situation in Turkey after reading some articles of the headscarf controversy from Finnish newspapers. Since I knew very little about Turkish history it seemed rather peculiar to me that students wearing Islamic headscarves had been banned from entering universities in a country where Muslims constituted a strong majority. I learned that the ban did not only concern female students but also employees of the public sector such as teachers and lawyers. The situation turned out to be even more puzzling when the ruling conservative Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, from here on AKP) that supported the lift of the ban and claimed for the right of equal access to higher education was, in turn, faced with charges of acting against the secular principles of the state in 2008. AKP managed to avoid being closed down by the constitutional court only by a narrow margin. For an outside observer, the Turkish state seemed to be at odds with its ruling party. It looked like as if the AKP was challenging the ways in which secularism had been interpreted by the state and that universities had become one of the centers of this political battle. Heated debates over the compatibility of modernity and religion had taken over the academia as well as the everyday conversations in Turkey. I became curious of this constant presence of the "modern" during my nine-month stay in Turkey in 2009–2010. What were Turkish people referring to when they spoke of "modern" women, "modern" families, or "modern" principles? Why does the "modern" have such a strong presence in Turkey?

Deniz Kandiyoti (2002, 4) has encouraged those interested in modernity to study it in its local settings. Similarly, Paul Rabinow (1995, 9) has suggested that instead of finding yet another abstract definition to be added to the meta-narrative of modernity, it would be more useful to discover *how the term has been used by its self-proclaimed practitioners.*" Turkey offers an interesting case where appeals to modernity have been used to legitimize political discourses and actions since the late Ottoman Empire. Most often it has been the Kemalist elites, followers of the revolutionary leader, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938), who have adopted the self-appointed title as "modernists." Drawing its inspiration from Western Europe, the main goal of Kemalism was to create a secular national identity for the new-born Turkish state. In the hands of Kemalist elites, the state turned into the main actor of modernization thus revealing the top-down nature of the process (İnsel 2007). Kemalists were not only keen on reforming state institutions, but gave a lot of emphasis to the 'modern' and 'civilized' lifestyle of the people. They wanted to extend modernization to the miniscule details of the daily lives of the people, such as proper dress, musical tastes and eating habits (Kandiyoti

1997, 119).

However, political life in Turkey is no longer controlled by Kemalists. New elites have entered the political stage and challenged Kemalist interpretations of modernity as Westernism (Göle 1996, 2). Political Islam has been one of the most visible competitors of Kemalism and its force finally became evident in the 2002 national elections when the conservative AKP won with a landslide victory. The party has maintained its electoral popularity ever since. Islamism has become the center of attention for social scientists working on Turkey. Instead of discarding the language of modernism and "Islamizing" Turkish society, as the Kemalist projection went, Islamists have employed and reinterpreted modernist discourses (Çınar 2005). It is from this perceived competition of modernities that this study derives its inspiration.

The university has become a central stage on which the contestation over modernist discourses has taken place in Turkey. Traditionally Kemalism has considered universities as natural allies offering and enforcing a rational and scientific outlook against the more religiously oriented set of values (Turan 2010, 154). This conventional understanding of universities as 'castles of modernity' (Göle 1996, 84) has not easily accommodated the offspring of the new religiously conservative bourgeoisie, as the headscarf ban demonstrates. This study focuses on the first private university established in Turkey, namely Bilkent University which was set up in 1984 and hosts around 13 000 students on the outskirts of the capital city, Ankara. In the Turkish context, Bilkent is often considered as an elite university with its high tuition fees and English as language of instruction. Due to the centralized entrance examination system, students arrive to Bilkent from all over Turkey. Some forty percent of them hold a scholarship, therefore Bilkent cannot be considered as a university for the upper class alone, but actually hosts students with very different social backgrounds.

Nevertheless, while I studied in Bilkent University from September 2009 until May 2010 I was frequently reminded by the Bilkent students themselves and other people I met outside of the university, that Bilkent did not represent "real" Turkey. Although I would agree that a large part of the Bilkent students belonged to the Turkish upper middle class, I would like to point out they did not form a homogenous group and were not detached from the surrounding social reality as the common projection went. Studying in a private university, Bilkent students have not been perceived as politically engaged as students from public universities

(Roberts 2010), but I would argue that it is perhaps more fruitful to study those who do not represent political extremes. A great majority of studies on Turkey in the recent decades have focused on either Islamists or secularists, or both (see Çınar 2005; Navaro-Yashin 2002a; Özyürek 2006; Göle 1996; White 2002; 2012). Those with seemingly apolitical stances can perhaps tell us more of the negotiation and overlaps that take place between these political ideologies and give a more diverse and complicated view of social reality. Since Bilkent University hosts people from different corners of Turkey and brings them together in classrooms as well as in dormitories, it creates an interesting micro-cosmos for a study. Instead of interpreting the Turkish case in deterministic ways as black and white (Kemalist or Islamist), studies that take place 'in-between' can produce new ways of understanding (Çınar 2011). Furthermore, the openness and ability of the students to share their ideas in English gave me the opportunity to ask and discuss their interpretations of modernity and the modernization process in Turkey. Thoughts represented here do not represent *all* Bilkent students, but those thirteen young men and women I interviewed.

Despite the fact that the "modern" or modernist discourses have not constituted a major interest in International Relations (IR) as a discipline, there has been an increase in the use of ethnographic methods in recent years (Vrasti 2008). Although this thesis does not follow any distinctively form of ethnography, it nevertheless also considers politics of the everyday as an interesting field of research. Rather than focusing on impersonal institutions of the state or international organizations, it wants to introduce "ordinary" people as subjects of international relations and therewith blur the boundaries between IR and other social sciences, like anthropology and sociology. From the point of view of this thesis, it is important to study how individuals reinterpret and reproduce modernist political discourses and constitute their own identities as national subjects.

1.1. Research question

This thesis asks the question of *how the interviewed students constitute their subject positions as "modern" Turkish citizens*. Through what kind of discourses and practices are these "modern" subject positions established and maintained? Understandings of the importance of the "modern" subjectivity derive from particular narratives of Turkish history, Kemalism being one the most important ones and discussed in more detail in chapters 2 and 3. There has and continues to be competing interpretations of 'modern' national subjectivity and most influential of these has been the religious-conservative discourse, which differs from the

secularist understandings of modernity in many ways. Since the "modern" is understood as a contested rather than an absolute term with a final definition, the competing ways of describing the "modern" subject in the interviews need to be elaborated further.

In addition, it has been argued that constituting modern subjectivity in Turkey has been a fundamentally gendered process, involving women's subjectivities in particular. Therefore, I want to provide a gender sensitive analysis of the narratives of the students. Questioning the neutral status of the modern should involve the inclusion of gender as an important aspect in the production of the "modern" national subject. Gendered narratives of the modern subject have included certain understanding of "proper" forms of femininity and "womanhood" while excluding others. But also these narratives have become contested with the pluralization of Turkish politics in recent decades. In short, this thesis focuses on the competing narratives of the "modern" subject in Turkey, and gender is considered one of the emerging categories of analysis.

The purpose of this thesis is to challenge the understanding of the modern as something value-free and neutral. I assume that interpretations of the modern subjectivity are produced by including some people, some ideas and some practices while excluding others. Therefore they are also discourses of power that position people in different ways. The positions are by no means stable and I believe that their content is under continuous negotiation and competition. My claim here is that talking about the modern in Turkey is not neutral, it is very much political. Conventionally it has been interpreted as including certain characteristics, such as secularist values promoted by the state, but as these policies have been challenged in Turkey during the recent decades, discourses of the modern have been employed in different ways and have received new contents. This thesis aims to reveal the discursive contestations over the "modern" subject in the Turkish context.

1.2. Subject positions, identities and questions of agency

In order to make sense of the research question, certain key concepts need to be elaborated further and their analytical use needs to be discussed. From the point of view postmodern feminist thought, Suvi Ronkainen (1999, 31–34) argues that subject positions are always limited by certain discursive practices of the society that create boundaries of what can be said in general, what discourses are possible or even necessary, and who can enter a subject position. When a person enters one, he/she interprets the world through certain metaphors,

narratives and concepts fitting in that particular context (Ibid., 35). Although she emphasizes our deep embededness in language, and the ways discourses limit our choices of expression, Ronkainen also points out that we have certain agency in relation to these discourses: we can support, sustain, deny, ignore, acknowledge, or treat them in other ways. Therefore it is important to assess from what kind of subject positions the students speak of modernity? How do they situate themselves in relation to the modern, and how are they being situated in the surrounding society?

Beside their deep connections with language, subject positions also have a material dimension. Feminist scholar Beverley Skeggs (1997, 12) has pointed out that social positions, like class, race and gender further circumscribe subject positions. In Skeggs's *Formations of Class and Gender* for example, subject positions describe the process of becoming particular subjects; becoming 'respectable' women in working-class England (Ibid.). In my case this could be described as becoming particular "modern" subjects in a private university in Turkey. Despite the differences in their socio-economic backgrounds, the students of my study acquired certain cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984) through their university education, and thus are in a position that differentiates them from other social groups. On the other hand, the university represents a transitory space (Stokes 2002, 330) that the students are expected to pass, but it does not ultimately define their social positions later in life.

If we are to treat the subject positions of the students as contextual, then we need to be aware of the significance of the university as a *space* in the construction of the modern in Turkey. As noted before, universities have been considered as 'castles of modernity' in the country (Göle 1996, 84). Secular education and the promotion of scientific thinking have been designed to produce 'modern' and 'civilized' citizens. The universities have had a double, and often contradictory, task of indoctrinating students with a strong nationalist sentiments and creating a space for scientific and critical reasoning (Turan 2010.). Although the university scene has become increasingly varied with the foundation of new private and public institutions, university students have been commonly considered as carriers of modernity in Turkey. This role can be also considered as historical legacy, since the youth was assigned with the particular task of protecting the nation in the early republic (Neyzi 2001, 412) and carrying the modernist spirit even further. However, during the 1960s and 1970s with the political radicalization taking place also in universities, politically active students were described as rebels and even as enemies of the nation (Ibid.). Today's youth on the other hand has been

considered as apolitical consumers and generally disinterested in politics (Ibid.). Young adults have therefore occupied different discursive positions during republican history.

This social context creates certain limits and possibilities for the subject positions of the students. It suggests that the students negotiate the meaning of the modern from a position from where they already considered as its representatives. It could be argued that the students can enter a certain "modern" subject position. Then it would become relevant to ask how is this modern subject position maintained, through what kind of expressions and practices? On the other hand, it needs to be remembered that subject positions do not provide us with a coherent narrative of the Self, but have their own gaps and contradictions. Also, it can hardly be expected that the interviewees experience a particular subject position in similar ways; rather they might have multiple ways of presenting their subjectivity.

Subject positions become available in inter-subjective relations, the 'Self' is narrated in a certain way in relation to the 'Other' (Ronkainen 1999, 40). It could be argued that a cross-cultural interview setting creates a sense of particular subjectivities. It has been suggested that when the interviewer and the interviewee come from different cultural backgrounds, the interviewees often adopt a role as representatives of their own culture, sometimes opening up meanings that they would not need to explain to a native researcher (Pietilä 2010b, 415). Also the way of formulating the interview questions might guide them to present their views as national subjects. This was also true in my case, since I expected my interviewees to adopt a position as "Turks" as well as university students and young men and women. Knowing that in the history of the republic, the image of the national subject had been defined to a great extent as "modern" and that there were heated debates going on the contents of this "modernity," I wanted to know if and how the students would narrate their identities as modern national subjects. Identities can be understood as a way to describe who a person is and where she/he belongs, whereas 'subjectivity' means selfhood constructed through language, power relations and embodied experience (Hasso 2005, 659). We are more aware of our identities than of our subjectivities, but we nevertheless reveal something of latter, when we discuss the former (Ronkainen 1999, 76). Subjectivity includes evaluations, orientations, and attachments to wider discourses circulating in a society.

Some feminist scholars have argued that poststructuralist deconstruction of identities and subjectivities have left only fragments behind that cannot be used as sources of agency

(Walby 1992, 34 in Kantola 2007, 56). Others have argued that it is precisely this recognition of multiple and fragmented identities and subjectivities that have given us new ways of analyzing such categories as 'women' for example (Sylvester 2002). Stuart Hall (1996, 6) has described identities as "*points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us,*" thus pointing out the ever-changing nature of identities as representations of the Self. The identification process could be understood as connected to certain forms of agency. Hall (Ibid., 4–5) suggests that identities are constructed through difference and always entail the presence of an Other. Therefore, one of the important things to be asked would be who or what constitutes the Other in relation to the modern subject position in the narratives of the students, and why and how are certain qualities associated with this Other?

Frances Hasso evaluates feminist research on the Middle East on the basis that it has been interested in everyday forms of *agency* rather than just the 'subjection' process of the Self. These have included also quotidian forms of resistance and empowerment. (Hasso 2005, 259.) Anthropologist Yael Navaro-Yashin (2002a, 129) reminds us that also participation in structures of power and not just resistance to them constitutes a relevant point of analysis. Resistance is not the only form of agency, because at the same time as our subjectivities are constituted through language and power relations, we also give meanings to ourselves and the world around us (Ronkainen 1999, 49). However, this does not happen outside of language, and thus our possibilities of agency are already limited. Nevertheless, discourses themselves are full of contradictions and ambiguities that produce contestations over meanings, and also possibilities of agency. (Ibid., 85.)

Even if we consider that the students can occupy subject positions as 'modern' subjects, or perhaps modern citizens in-the-making in a particular cultural and temporal setting, we have to acknowledge the political struggles that are involved in the constitution of the national subject (see Çınar 2005). Political life in Turkey has been marked by competition between secularist and Islamist forces, and even if we do not take this political strife as a natural given, but as a dialectic relationship between competing ideologies (Navaro-Yashin 2002a), it is nevertheless a strife that is frequently discussed and reproduced in the current descriptions of Turkish society. These political forces are also involved in the production of alternative discourses of the desired national subject that has often involved the bodies of women and placed the images of the veiled woman against her "westernized" counterpart (see Çınar 2005;

Göle 1996). Even if the students would reject the juxtaposition of Islamism and secularism, they still build their understanding of the modern in this discursive field. In the secularist discourse, Islamism has been marked as backward, traditional, uneducated and lower class (Çınar 2005, 47), whereas religious conservatism has signed secularism as authoritarian, repressive, undemocratic and culturally inauthentic. What interests me here is how the students negotiate their subject positions in relation to these narratives. How do they reproduce, challenge, ignore, accept, or resist them?

To contextualize the interview narratives, this study first detects the competing discourses of modernization in Turkish history, and then moves on to discuss the problematic of modernity as an analytical and theoretical term in chapter three. Research methods and methodological choices are elaborated in chapter four. The analysis deals with three different themes related with the constitution of the "modern" subject position, first detecting different ways of narrating a "non-modern" Other as a comparison of the "modern" Self in chapter five, which is then followed by a further analysis of the competing narratives constituting modern national identity as a Turk in chapter six. The last part of the analysis focuses on the gendered narratives of "modern" sexuality and family in the interviews. The results of study are concluded in chapter eight.

2. Politics of the modern in Turkish history

In order to discover why modernity and the modern have been so influential political terms in Turkey, one needs to take a look in the past. In this chapter, I shed some light to the roots of the modernization debate in Turkish society. The aim here is to create a context for the discussion of the modern in Turkey and to trace the multiple meanings that it has received through late Ottoman and republican history. This debate is by no means a novel invention, since it has been applied by political elites already in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Here I will trace how these different discourses of the modern have been connected to the state, whether the Ottoman Empire or the Turkish republic, and the gradual construction of Turkish national identity. Debates involving the modern have been fundamentally connected to the state and the constitution of the national subject; therefore they have not existed in a political vacuum. In order to provide a political and a historical context to the narratives of the interviewed students analyzed in the following chapters, we need to analyze the ways the modern has been employed in the past. This chapter will follow these discourses from the late Ottoman period to the more recent discussions between the supporters of Turkish laicism and

political Islam.

2.1. Ottoman interpretations

At first one has to trace the roots of the modernization debate in Turkish history. Contrary to early republican historiography depicting the Ottoman period as an era of "backwardness" or as the "dark ages" of Turkish history, later generations of historians have pointed out that modernization in its various guises was a widely debated issue in the late Ottoman Empire (Zürcher 2004; Mardin 1997). Continuous military defeats against European powers and nationalist uprisings in the Balkans made the Ottoman elites realize the dire situation of the empire *vis-à-vis* European powers. Adoption of European-style reforms was seen as the only option for the survival of the state, and this led to the introduction of the *Tanzimat,* literally meaning 'the reforms' in Ottoman Turkish (Zürcher 2004, 56). The *Tanzimat*-period was marked by important secularizing reforms to the Ottoman legislation, which applied different laws according to the religion of the people (the *millet*-system) (Ibid., 61). European powers, acting as guardians of the Christian communities of the empire, also demanded internal reforms that would improve the status of these communities in exchange for international support (Findley 2008, 17). Eager to acquire a status as a 'European power', the Ottoman court significantly improved the position of non-Muslims in the empire and introduced important reforms in the fields of taxation, bureaucracy and the military (Zürcher 2004, 56).

Although the reforms were suppressed and the Ottoman constitution (proclaimed in 1876) put aside soon after Sultan Abdülhamid II ascended the throne, this did not signify that the prevailing goal of modernization would have been discarded, on the contrary. Although the Hamidian era (1876–1909) has been interpreted as repressive and authoritarian, historian Erik J. Zürcher (2010a, 58) has described the sultan as an ardent modernizer and an implementer of the *Tanzimat* reforms, especially in the spheres of education and state bureaucracy. However, Zürcher (Ibid.) has also pointed out that during the Hamidian period modernization was given new contents when, instead of proclaiming and accentuating the European character of the reforms, the sultan began to emphasize Islam and his own position as the sultan-caliph at the heart of the Ottoman state-system. Upholding his symbolic position as the caliph, leader of all Muslims, was considered as a reactionary challenge by the European powers (Fortna 2008, 40). On the other hand, the emphasis of religion and loyalty to the Ottoman throne could be interpreted as a logical consequence following the independence of several Balkan states, which turned the empire geographically more Asian and demographically more Muslim

(Ibid., 47).

The Young Turk revolution of 1908, first considered as a liberal reform movement in Europe, did not replace the dynastic order with the rule of the people. Rather than a revolution, Hanioğlu (2008, 63, italics added) has characterized the events of 1908 as a well-planned *military insurrection* seeking to restore the constitutional sultanate of 1876. The Young Turks reintroduced the Ottoman constitution and the parliamentary system and effectively curtailed the powers of the sultan. Although re-establishing the representative system, it has been emphasized by Hanioğlu (2008) and others (Zürcher 2004; 2010b; Mardin 1997) that the Young Turks should be considered as conservatives interested in the preservation and protection of the Ottoman Empire rather than as supporters of parliamentarianism. Their main goal was the strengthening of the state against European imperialism and nationalist movements inside the empire. Perhaps due to its close links with the military, the main political organ of the Young Turks, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), continued to operate behind the parliamentary facade as a kind of secret society pulling all the important political strings but avoiding representative responsibility (Zürcher 2004, 100–101; Hanioğlu 2008, 66). The Second Constitutional period reintroduced the army as a significant actor in Ottoman politics (Hanioğlu 2008, 81).

In relation to religion, the seizure of power by the Young Turk officers signified a radical change to the previous Hamidian regime. The Young Turks have often been described as positivist materialists and strong believers in science and progress (Zürcher 2010a, Hanioğlu 2011). Familiar with European intellectual trends of the time, many of them saw that the state should be organized according the secular and rational principles rather than the existing divine legitimation of the Ottoman dynasty. However, they were not against religion per se, but perceived that a new 'purified' form of Islam would be compatible with their understanding of a 'modern' state and society (Zürcher 2010a, 60; Hanioğlu 2008, 104). In politics, the Young Turks continued the secularization process begun during the *Tanzimat* by restricting the remaining aspects of the Islamic law. Hanioğlu (2008) has pointed out that in terms of religion, the CUP attempted to legitimize its rule also in the eyes of the public by holding on to institutions representing Islam while simultaneously dismantling their political power.

The Young Turk period and the 'Young Turk mind-set' (Zürcher 2010b) help us to understand

the political and ideological direction of the following Turkish republic. However, the period itself should not be interpreted as pre-history of the republic as such, because this understanding undermines the multiculturality of the empire and overemphasizes the significance of Turkish identity (Ibid., 43; cf. Lewis 1968). In fact, the entire Young Turk period was demarcated by the uneasy relations between an official notion of Ottomanism and ethnic Turkism. The prior incorporated the diverse religious communities loyal to the Ottoman throne under the banner of Ottomanism. However, the continuing nationalist uprisings in the Balkans influenced the transformation of Ottomanism towards the sacralization of a common Muslim identity, radically different from the previous multi-cultural and multi-religious tones (Zürcher 2010a). This sense of Muslim unity was further enforced by projections of remaining Christian minorities (most notably the Armenians and the Greeks) as internal enemies conspiring with European powers for rights of national self-determination, and further splitting the empire (Ibid., 61). The massacre of the Armenians in 1914–15 and the intimidation of the Greeks have to be considered against these hostile attitudes towards Ottoman minorities (Ibid.).

Next to the Ottoman Muslim solidarity, there existed also forms of Turkish nationalism. Hanioğlu has claimed that for the CUP-leadership, Turkishness became to represent the core of Ottoman identity (2008, 83). At first, Turkism had appeared in different romantic forms of nationalism: pan-Turkism sought the long-lost connections with Turkic peoples of Central-Asia and attempted to discover the ethnic origins of the Turks, while at the same time, the 'noble' peasant culture of Anatolia also inspired early Turkish nationalists (Zürcher 2004, 129–130). However, the celebration of Turkishness partially collided with the expressions of Ottoman Muslim solidarity between Turks, Kurds, Cirkassians, Arabs, and other Muslims. According to Hanioğlu (2008, 102), Turkish identity was not however politicized in full until the end of the First World War (1914–1918), when the collapse of the Ottoman Empire became evident.

Awareness of the late Ottoman period helps us interpret the following establishment of the republic more as a part of a historical continuum rather than as a sign of a radical brake with the Ottoman past, as Kemalist history-writing projected it. Many elements that came to the fore in the Young Turk period and earlier, like the perception of the national identity as essentially Muslim on the one hand, and the secularization of the state system on the other, were carried on to the following republic with the political emphasis of ethnic Turkishness.

Although it has often been argued that the new state was radically different from the previous empire, it is also important to contextualize the understandings of modernization that have been to a great extent ascribed to the republican era. Many reforms begun in the late Ottoman Empire were continued in the republic, and more often than not, were taken to the extreme (Kasaba 1997).

2.2. Civilizational discourse in the republic

The transformation of the state from an empire to a republic did not signify a transformation within the mind-set of the ruling elite, but a continuum of the positivist and Turkist worldview of the Young Turks (Zürcher 2010b; Hanioğlu 2011). But whereas old and new ideas and institutions had existed side by side in the Second Constitutional period, in the republic symbols of the old regime were replaced with new ones. Changes of the alphabet, calendar, dress-codes, and architecture were all designed to mark a transition from the Islamic world towards the West. For Mustafa Kemal and his followers, the adoption of the European nation-state model was in itself a clear sign of modernity, especially in comparison with the Ottoman Empire (Zürcher 2010b, 232). By abolishing the sultanate, the caliphate and the remnants of the Islamic law, and replacing them with institutions and legislation adopted from Europe, Kemalists attempted to inscribe the republic as modern and progressive. Yet at the same time they preserved a tutelary form of parliamentarianism and centralized political power into the hands of the ruling party (Hanioğlu 2008, 106).

In order to understand how the early republican state legitimized its modernization program, we need to take a closer look at the concepts that were employed in that particular context. One of the most important rhetorical tools of Mustafa Kemal was Turkey's need to join the 'contemporary civilization' and to become a member among 'the civilized nations of the world' (Alaranta 2011). As Göle has argued, 'civilization' was one of the key concepts used to justify that Turkish culture did not remarkably differ from its European counterpart and therefore Turkey should be included as a member of the 'civilized' world (1996, 63). I would argue that this early civilizational discourse helps us to understand how Kemalists located themselves in relation to Europe and furthermore, how they wanted Turkey to be located. Joining the 'contemporary civilization' also acted as way to legitimize the extensive modernization program of the Kemalist regime, described as the "Turkish Revolution" (Alaranta 2011).

Although civilizational terms in current study of politics have created controversy (cf.

Huntington 1993), they were commonly used in descriptions of cultural and political differences in late 19th and early 20th century Europe. Europeans had incorporated an image of themselves as representatives of the 'civilized world' by demarcating others as 'barbarians' around them (Yılmaz 2007, 49). In these characterizations, 'Turks', as Europeans called the Ottomans, constituted the most significant 'civilizational other' for Europe (Neumann 1999, 56–57). This kind of othering had its historical roots in first medieval Christian constellations of 'Europe' as a political and geographical entity constructed in opposition to the Ottoman Muslim empire expanding from the Balkans (Ibid., 44). As the European state system started to secularize, the differences began to be inscribed in civilizational rather than religious terms, but continued to carry similar connotations of 'Muslim Turks' (Yılmaz 2007, 49). Influenced by racialist applications of social Darwinism, many European intellectuals placed Turks on the lowest ladders of racial hierarchy (Brockett 2011, 36). Western diplomats located in Istanbul in the early 20th century considered that Turks did not have a culture of their own and owed their modest achievements to the people subjected to their power (see Yılmaz 2007, 49–50). Hence the civilizational terms employed by Europeans clearly positioned Turks as an inferior race outside of Europe.

Why then, did the Kemalists adopt 'civilization' as such an important term, when it clearly marginalized Turks in European discourse? The intention of the Mustafa Kemal and his followers was to reverse this narrative, and to argue for Turkey's membership among the civilized nations of the world. They portrayed Turks as one of the most important contributors to the human civilization (Hanioğlu 2011, 163). Mustafa Kemal gave great importance to the new 'Turkish History Thesis', formulated in the 1930s as a new narrative of Turkish history. According to it, Central-Asian forefathers of the Turks had founded some of first known high cultures; the Hittite and Sumerian civilizations (Ibid., 164). Following the new historical narrative, Turkish tribes were considered as the bearers of civilization throughout human history, and as significant contributors to Chinese, Indian and Greco-Roman civilizations (Ibid.). To strengthen the claim of historical importance, the 'Sun-Language Theory' was developed to demonstrate that all languages descended from an ancient form of Turkish (Göle 1996, 63). The formulation of a new politically motivated historical narrative granted an equal status to the Turks as carriers of civilization, and reversed the negative image of barbarianism and ahistoricity. As the new regime celebrated the ancient Turkish civilizations, 600 years of Ottoman history could be considered as a mere footnote of Turkish history (Hanioğlu 2011, 165). The history thesis argued that it was precisely the 'repressive' and 'backward' Ottoman

period that had led Turks to 'forget' their historical achievements, but for Kemalists it was evident that a similar civilizational status could be reachieved (Alaranta 2011, 19).

Rather than aspiring for a competing civilization, Mustafa Kemal saw that Turkey should be incorporated as a contributor of European culture, since Europe represented the highest form of civilization (Hanioğlu 2011, 204). Because Turks had provided for the establishment of European civilization, there was no essential difference to be traced between the two (Ibid.). Whereas the previous regime of the Ottomans could be projected as incompetent of reaching the European level of civilization and introducing enlightenment to its subjects, Mustafa Kemal and his associates presented themselves as the only capable transmitters of modernization to the Turkish people (Alaranta 2011, 254). For Kemalists, the fundamental 'other' was therefore not constituted by Europe but by the Islamic political rule of the Ottoman Empire (Ibid.). The status of the greatest reformer and visionary was bestowed upon the 'father' of the nation; Atatürk.

Although the modern might not be determined in civilizational terms anymore, the students I interviewed often discussed their understandings of the modern in relation to Europe, or countries representing the "West." Similarly to the early republican elite, some of them also saw Turkey's association with Europe and its turn away from the Middle East as a sign of Turkey's "modern" character (see chapter 6.2.2.). On the other hand, relations with Europe were interpreted as more complex than the Kemalist celebration of civilizational connections would reveal on the surface; the "West" was considered still being able to determine the "modern-ness" of others. Thus modernity was interpreted as a question of status that was more difficult to attain for those located outside (or in the margins of) the "West" (see Ferguson 2005). For other interviewees, Turkey's turn towards Europe was considered as a form of 'cultural imitation' that signaled the loss of Turkey's 'authentic' identity. This narrative has often been used also by opponents of Kemalism today, who have rejected the 'false' understandings of the modern and sought to construct their own conservative, yet modern subjectivities.

2.3. Modernization from above?

The history of Kemalist modernization is often described with an extensive list of reforms, laid out as evidence of the extent of change in Turkish society after the establishment of the republic. It usually emphasizes secularization of the state through the abolition of the Islamic

law (*şeriat*) and the adoption of slightly modified versions of the Swiss civil and Italian penal codes, the new state monopoly of education and the closure of mosque schools (*medrese*), the ban of independent Sufi-orders (*tarikat*) and closure of Sufi-lodges (*tekke*) that had been important and popular parts of religious life for ordinary citizens. In the Kemalist republic, women's public roles were often emphasized and they were encouraged to move beyond the familial sphere through education and participation in professional life. It is often pointed out that Turkish women were granted universal suffrage in 1934 long before many Western European countries, but rarely mentioned that until 1950 free parliamentary elections did not take place (Zürcher 2004, 177; 209–217). The replacement of the Ottoman alphabet based on Arabic script with Latin letters, the 'purification' of Turkish language from words of Arab- and Persian-origin, the adoption of the European calendar system, and changing the day of rest from Friday to Sunday have been considered further signs of Westernization. This way of listing the reforms certainly elaborates the extent of social and cultural reforms in the early republican period, but it does not describe the political and social realities of these reforms, and sustains the Kemalist imaginary of a total transformation rather than unfolds it (Brockett 2011).

In its modernization paradigm, the Kemalist government laid great emphasis on the minute details of people's daily lives. Hanioğlu (2011, 206) has argued that this was due to the Kemalist belief that signs of Westernization adopted by the people would eventually lead to an overall social and cultural transformation. Therefore the regime invested a great amount of effort to influence the appearance, dress, musical tastes, eating habits, and social etiquette of its citizens among other things. The republican modernization program was by no means the first attempt to influence people's appearance in the Near East: Ottoman rulers had issued several decrees on appropriate attire for representatives of different religions, and declared the red felted *fez* as the mandatory headgear for Ottoman civil servants in 1829 (Çınar 2005, 61). Later on, it had been adopted as a sign of Muslim identity in a multicultural empire (Hanioğlu 2011, 207). Perhaps the association of the *fez* with the religious identity was the reason why Mustafa Kemal acted to ban the wearing of the *fez* and other religious garb by men, and introduced the European-style hat as the required adornment of republican civil servants (see Çınar 2005, 68–70). The hat law of 1925 has often been treated as an example of the detaildness and persistence of Kemalist reforms, as the wearing of the *fez* became heavily sanctioned and the opposition of this particular reform was quickly suppressed (Hanioğlu 2011, 208). This emphasis on "modern" appearance has also been transported in later

discussions of the headscarf for example (see chapter 6.2.1).

Although the Kemalist regime did not enforce a similar ban on women's veiling, Mustafa Kemal openly ridiculed the Islamic headscarf as a sign of backwardness and 'barbarism' in his public speeches and encouraged women to unveil and actively participate in public and professional life (Çınar 2005, 62). Instead of legislation, Mustafa Kemal chose to promote an image of the 'republican woman' through a set of role models (Hanioğlu 2011, 210). Pictures of women in their professional roles as lawyers, teachers, doctors and even combat pilots (Mustafa Kemal's adopted daughter Sabiha Gökçen) demonstrated how the republic had liberated its women from the repressive circumstances of the Ottoman empire and acted as an important sign of emancipation (Çınar 2005, 63). Banning of polygamy and granting full political rights to women demonstrated the equality of women as citizens of the republic and their public roles created the backbone of Turkish modernization (Göle 1996). However, others have argued that the new visibility of elite women in the public sphere did not challenge the position of the majority of Turkish women (see White 2003).

Although the republican regime encouraged the transformation of cultural habits, Ahmet İnsel (2007) notes that it was highly suspicious of certain aspects of Western societies and aspired to set the limits of the Westernization process in Turkey. Kemalists saw the fragmentation of European societies into competing social classes and interest groups as harmful for the perceived unity of the nation and wanted to preserve Turkey as a classless society. The greatest controversy of the Kemalist philosophy according to İnsel was the desire to westernize on the one hand, and the deep mistrust to any kind of signs of individual Westernization on the other. From the Kemalist point of view, the modernization process needed to be guided by the state and by the Kemalist elite controlling the state. (İnsel 2007, 129–130.) The closure of the Turkish Women's Union, founded in 1924, is an often cited example of the mistrust of signs of independent social movements by the Kemalists (White 2003; Çınar 2005; Hanioğlu 2011). The union had been founded to support the secularist policies of the government, and successfully organized an international women's congress in 1935 thus signaling the emancipation of Turkish women to the outside world (Hanioğlu 2011, 213). However, discontent with the political statements made at the conference, the Kemalist regime required the union to disband shortly after (Ibid.). As universal suffrage had been granted to Turkish women in 1934 and women were now considered as equal citizens with men, there was no need for an independent women's movement in the republic. In the

Kemalist vision it was the 'feminist state' (controlled by men) that the women owed their rights to and that would take care of those rights in the future (White 2003). Independent feminist movement did not surface again before the 1980s.

Critical descriptions of Kemalist modernization as an authoritarian top-down process have been characterized as 'postmodern critique' (Bozdoğan & Kasaba 1997, 6). Rather than giving credit for the achievements and successes of modernization, postmodernists have been perceived as unnecessarily bashing the idea of modernity and viewing it from a negative perspective alone. According to Alaranta (2011, 253–254), the postmodern critique has hidden its Eurocentric assumptions of the universality of liberal and democratic rights, and consequently ended up producing yet another totalistic narrative of modernity. It has also been considered as culture relativist, and therefore unable to criticize the authoritarian tendencies of political Islam (Bozdoğan and Kasaba 1997). I would argue that Kemalism as a national project has also been totalistic in the sense that it could only incorporate a single interpretation of modernity, understood as Westernization (see also Hanioğlu 2011). The Kemalist regime was unable to incorporate the masses into its politics of modernization, and held a paternalistic attitude towards its citizens, as did similar modernist regimes in India, China and Brazil. Because of the singularity of the Kemalist understanding of modernization, it has been difficult for the following generations to discuss or negotiate the contents of the modern in Turkey. Instead of negotiation, the state, or to be more precise, the military (perceived as the guardian of Kemalist heritage), has reacted to the perceived challenges of the Kemalist modernization project with a coup d'état on several occasions: 1960, 1971, and 1980–1983.

One of the aspects that are rarely mentioned in accounts of Turkish modernization has been the ways it affected the lives of ordinary citizens. Erik Zürcher (2010b, 47) has argued that there has been an almost total lack of social history 'written from below', capturing the experiences of the people in the early republican period. Kemalist modernization has often been narrated as having changed the lifestyle and the worldview of the elite but leaving the masses to hold on to their traditional Muslim way of life. This outlook has credited little agency to the people. Although the majority of the population were left out of the nation building process in the early republic, it has been argued that they incorporated an understanding of national identity with other, pre-existing identities (most notably with the religious identity based in Islam), thus producing a form of a 'religious national identity' after

the establishment of the multiparty system in 1945 (Brockett 2011, 3). The later critique of the authoritarianism of Kemalist modernization has also provided a basis for identity for those who have resisted the enforced laicism (see below) of the state and attempted to formulate new interpretations of 'Muslim' nationalism (see White 2012). In my research material, criticism of the modernization from above provided an important basis for counter-identities (see chapter 6.3.).

2.4. Turkish secularism and Islamist challenges

One of the key characteristics of the modernization process in Turkey has been the secularization of the state. In popular accounts it is often mentioned that Turkey is one of the few, if not the only, Muslim country where religion has been officially separated from politics. In contrast to the secular nature of the republic, the ruling Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) has often been described as "Islamist" or at least religious-conservative, therefore presenting what seems like an inherent challenge to state secularism. If there is an 'Islamist' party running a state that is known for its pronounced secularism, then how are we to interpret the relations between religion and politics in Turkey in general? What is meant by secularism in Turkey? What about "Islamism" of the current regime? And most importantly, how have Islamist interpretations differed from the secular understandings of modernity?

In contrast to popular accounts of Turkey as a secular state, Andrew Davison (1998; 2003) has questioned the nature of secularism in Turkey and pointed out that rather than secular, Turkey is best described as a *laic* or laicist state, where the state has aspired to control religion instead of separating it from the state apparatus. The original Turkish term *laiklik,* connoting with the French term *laïcite,* and translating into *laicism* serves as a more accurate title than secularism (see also White 2008; Brockett 2011). Davison (2003, 333–336) argues that whereas secularism in European thought has commonly signified the separation of 'worldly matters' from those 'of the church', and eventually started to carry non-/anti-religious connotations, in a laicist society a similar separation is only expected to take place between 'the people' and 'the clergy'. Since laicism does not suggest the removal of religion from the state, it allows for more complex relations between the religion and politics, and does not necessarily signify a decrease of influence of religion in peoples' lives as expected in secularism (Ibid., 336). In reality, there are no purely secular or laicist societies to be found and different combinations of the two can also exist.

In the Turkish case, it could be argued that by gaining control of the religious establishment, the Kemalist regime acted as a transmitter of official Islam to the population while attempting to diminish the authority of the traditional *ulema*. Of course, the new regime had no authority over religion as such, but by carefully selecting the people employed in mosques, acquiring responsibility of the education of the clergy, and controlling the contents of Friday sermons among other things, state officials sought to establish an authority over religion (White 2008, 357.). The main instrument to do this was the Directorate of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet Işleri Müdürlüğü*), established in 1924 and attached directly to the Prime Minister's office (Zürcher 2004, 187). Under the authority of the directorate, mosques and schools were transformed into state institutions, religious education in primary schools became restricted, and influential Sufi-orders (*tarikat*) that had functioned quite independently, were banned. However, the control of the state over religion was not absolute in practice, and for example, the Sufi-brotherhoods continued to operate underground (White 2008, 357).

Rather than separating religion from the state and placing it into the private sphere as conventionally explained, the republican elite wanted to promote a new understanding of 'pure' and 'true' Islam corresponding with its sense of nationalism (Davison 2003, 340). The notion of "Turkish Islam" was fundamentally attached to nationalist thinking (Zürcher 2010a). Perceived as descending from interpretations of ancient Turkic tribes that had migrated to Anatolia in the eleventh century, "Turkish Islam" was described as more gender-egalitarian and democratic than "Arab" interpretations (White 2008, 359; Özdalga 2006). Through this differentiation, Turkish Islam could be divorced from the supposedly more "backward" and "repressive" understandings of the Arabs in order to develop an interpretation of Islam compatible with Kemalist modernity. The gap between Turkish and Arab Islams was widened further when the republic replaced the Arabic alphabet with Latin letters in 1928. Synchronizing Turkish scripture with Western Europe, the reform was also aimed at distancing Turks from the Middle East as well as detaching young generations from sources of Ottoman history (Zürcher 2004, 188–189). Turkification of Islam reached its peak when the Arabic call to prayer (*ezan*) was replaced with a Turkish version in 1932 (Brockett 2011, 49). This reform was later reversed by the Democratic Party (DP) after the elections in 1950.

Interpreting Turkey as a laicist rather than a secular state helps us to overcome the inherent assumption of modernization theory that religion would have been replaced with nationalist,

and in the Turkish case, 'modernist' sentiments. As Davison (1998; 2003) has convincingly argued, the Turkish state has not divorced Islam or placed it into the private realm, but effectively exploited and manipulated it for political purposes. The Directorate of Religious Affairs, which is still part of the state establishment in Turkey today, has both controlled and financed the practice of religion in the country thus trying to create a dependency between religious institutions and the state. Next to the official Islam sponsored by the state, there exists a very diverse field of religious movements and organizations in Turkey. They often have their roots in the different Sufi-orders previously banned by the state, and have become important political players after the establishment of the multi-party system (Brockett 2011, 145). At the moment, the most widely known of these communities is the one organized around the Islamic revivalist Fethullah Gülen (Özdalga 2009, 412).

It could be argued that "Islamism" in Turkey has been formed in relation to the laicist policies adopted by the state. Political Islam appeared in the 1980s as the most important challenge to Kemalist interpretations of laicism and modernism, although the control of religion by the state had become more fluid and ambiguous since the 1950s (see Brockett 2011). "Islamism" as such has become a highly politicized term globally, and this has been the case also in the Turkish context. To a great extent, it has been the supporters of laicism, who have referred to diverse forms of political Islam as "Islamism," trying to project it as a concise political ideology aiming at the "Islamization" of the state. There has not been a single form of Islamism to be found in Turkey, but multiple varying from pragmatist interpretations of the conservative political parties to radicalism of fundamentalist groups (White 2008, 365). Due to the popularity of religious conservatism demonstrated in parliamentary elections since the 1990s, moderate forms of Islamism have been at the center of academic studies. Furthermore, 'Islamism' of the political parties has transformed remarkably from the explicit Islamist rhetorics adopted by the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP) in the 1990s to the democratic conservatism and rhetorical rejection of Islamism by the ruling AKP today (see Hale & Özbudun 2010).

The social and economic rise of conservative Anatolian bourgeoisie, the alienation of the people from ruling parties due corruption, a new generation of Islamist intellectuals combining European and Islamic philosophy, rhetoric of social justice employed by the Islamist parties, strong network of grassroots organizations have all been interpreted as reasons for the popularity of the Islamist movement in Turkey (White 2008; Hale & Özbudun

2010). In addition, it could be argued that the military regime of 1980–83 helped to create circumstances fruitful for the spread of political Islam. Perceiving communism and left-wing activism as the biggest challenges to the security of state after years of violence between left- and right-wing nationalists, the military regime introduced a new doctrine called the 'Turkish-Islamic synthesis' that defined Islam as an integral part of Turkish nationalism (Zürcher 2010a, 64). This led to the construction of a great number of mosques and the reintroduction of religion in the school curricula that were designed to enforce the laicist control of the state in the 1980s (Ibid.). On the other hand, the synthesis contributed to the political atmosphere where religion reappeared as a topic of vibrant discussions and an important source of national identity (White 2008, 369).

As the attitude of the military went from the celebration of Islam in the early 1980s to the perception of Islamism as a political threat to state security in the "soft coup" of 1997, Islamism of the established political parties has become more moderate (Hale & Özbudun 2010). First, this has been partially due to changes in the leadership of the parties. Whereas the Welfare Party leader Necmettin Erbakan wanted Turkey to withdraw from NATO and the Customs Union with the European Communities, AKP's Erdoğan has espoused Turkey's membership negotiations with the EU and, instead of a particular emphasis of Muslim entrepreneurship, generally embraced neoliberal economic policies. Both previous and current conservative parties have also emphasized strong economic and political connections with other Muslim countries (White 2008, 336). Second, secularist institutions like the military and the judiciary have effectively curtailed political Islam in Turkey (Hale & Özbudun 2010, 10). The Constitutional Court banned two of the preceding religious-conservative parties, and opened a case against the AKP in 2008, accusing the party of undermining the secular principles of the state during the headscarf debate. Therefore it is perhaps not surprising that the AKP has declared its support to secularism and rejected the titles of 'Islamist', 'Islamic' or even being a representative of 'Muslim democracy', thus trying to disassociate itself from political Islam at least rhetorically (Çınar 2005, 176). However, this has resulted in accusations that the party is hiding its "true" agenda, and still aims to radically transform Turkish society into a more religious-conservative direction.

It is perhaps in domestic affairs where AKP's conservatism has become most visible. Although the party has considered itself as secular, it has not supported the previous definitions of laicism and its implementation. This has become clear for example in the

headscarf debate, where the AKP has accentuated freedom of conscience and rights of religious expression against strict laicist policies. However, in the light of recent political events, it could be suggested that in the discourse provided by the AKP, these liberal rights extend only to AKP's supporters while those expressing criticism towards the government's policies have been simply ignored or silenced. After the stagnation of the EU-accession negotiations and the court case in 2008, the spirit of reform has been forgotten and the AKP has turned towards more authoritarian tendencies (Çınar 2011, 532). This has been most clearly visible in the complex Ergenekon case, where a number of military officers, members of the judiciary, bureaucrats, and journalists have been accused for plotting a coup against the government (Ibid.). In terms of freedom of speech, Turkey can currently be found in 148th place in the Press Freedom Index (2011–2012). However, it has to be noted that despite the air of authoritarianism, the AKP has received its mandate from the public through fair and free elections. How it has chosen to use its mandate is another question.

But what kind of new interpretations of modernity has political Islam introduced in Turkey? It has been argued that the supporters of political Islam in general have challenged the previous dominant discourses of the 'modern' (Çınar 2005; Kandiyoti 1997). Religious conservatives have argued against the strict enforcement of laicism in Turkey and constituted new kind of interpretations of the modern subject. In the particular case of the headscarf, "new veiling" (as opposed to the "traditional" ways of covering) has come to symbolize the pious Muslim Turk who is designed to replace the secularist national subject. The politicization of the headscarf has also produced new forms of agency for veiled women, which has not entirely fitted into the patriarchal norms of Islamism (see Göle 1996). The "modern" way of covering has been associated with the general growth of an "Islamic" consumer culture, where specific restaurants, hotels and department stores selling new products and services for pious consumers have been used as emblems of the "modern" conservative identity (Navaro-Yashin 2002b). For example, fashion show presenting Islamic high fashion are no longer a novel phenomenon in the urban centers of Turkey (Ibid., 238–244). Secularists have also participated in this commodification of identities through miniaturized images of Atatürk (Özyürek 2006). Both Islamists and secularists have taken part in the global consumer culture, but differ through the symbols they have chosen to represent their identities with.

New interpretations of national history questioning the correctness and the authority of Kemalist history-writing have also produced a new kind of interest into the Ottoman past.

Religious conservatives have wanted to present themselves as carriers of "authentic" Turkish culture, presenting the identities of the secularists as unorthodox. However, next to this neo-Ottoman Islamic identity (Çınar 2011), a strong emphasis on the ethnic Turkish identity can also be found among religious conservatives. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that until recently, the AKP government has been involved in an armed conflict that could be described as "ethnic" in the south-east of Turkey. According to Hale and Özbudun (2010, 157), Prime Minister Erdoğan has repeatedly employed the old nationalist slogan of 'single state, single nation, single flag' and by following previous policies, reduced the conflict to a question of 'terror' and economic disparity of the region.

On the other hand, political Islam has also been connected to a set of conservative social norms that have appeared in recent decades in Turkish politics. For example, in 2004 the AKP attempted to recriminalize adultery which can be connected to the conservative world view of the majority of its supporters (Fisher Onar & Müftüler-Baç 2011, 384). The proposal was later withdrawn due to the heavy criticism from the EU and liberals within Turkey (Hale & Özbudun 2010, 71). The party leadership has also indirectly supported the traditional gender roles by accentuating women's position of care providers within family networks and has not actively encouraged women to participate in the work force in a situation where female employment has been extremely low (Arat 2010, 873). It can be argued that AKP's conservatism has become most apparent in questions concerning the family and traditional gender roles.

Finally it has to be noted that political Islam has had diverse links with the "modern" in the Turkish context. It cannot be considered as simply "outside" of modernity or single-handedly opposing it, but having complex negotiations of the proper understanding of the "modern" and the constitution of the "modern" subject. It has further been argued that Islamists have employed equally exclusive visions of modernity, and constructed the modern discourse to fit into their political purposes (Çınar 2005). Rather than rejecting the language of modernism, they have sought the redefine it. Therefore the political boundaries constituting the 'modern' have become the subject of intense political debate in Turkish society. Before diving into the research material and the ways these historical discourses have been articulated by the interviewees, we need to take a look on how modernity has been discussed as an analytical and theoretical concept marking the relations between the "West" and the "rest" of the world. Furthermore, what kind of new analytical possibilities (and problems) have been produced

through modernities in plural, and how have contested interpretations of the "modern" subject been studied in the Turkish context?

3. Problematizing modernity from a postcolonial perspective

Modernity as a historical and political concept has attracted little attention in mainstream International Relations (IR) and has been mainly considered being too vague or meta-theoretical category for analysis. Although its pronounced presence in countless monograph and article titles, modernity is often left without further elaboration in the texts themselves (Abu-Lughod 1998, 7). Other disciplines, such as anthropology and sociology have developed more interrogative approaches towards modernity by reaching outside the Western world. In addition, postcolonial theorists have questioned the ways modernity has been produced as a discourse describing the "West" in relation to "the rest" that has seemed to be endlessly 'lagging behind' (Bhambra 2009). Postcolonial thinkers have brought to the fore the ways in which modernity has been produced in relations of colonialism and reaffirmed through economical and political dependencies and inequalities of the current world (Bhabha 1994; Mitchell 2000b). This chapter is designed to shed some light on the theoretical debates around modernity as a concept. How can they help us to better understand and interpret its politics?

In order to challenge understandings of the modern as simply a neutral condition of the current world, one needs to discover its history and the ways in which it has been constructed as a condition of the West. However, critiques of modernity have been vast, and cannot all be introduced here. Therefore I have chosen to focus on postcolonial criticism that theorizes the ways in which places outside the West have been treated in the production of modernity. At the same time it introduces possibilities for 'alternative modernities and allows us to study the ideological battles over the contents of the modern. Although Turkey was never directly colonized by European powers, its past and present are also marked by complex relations with Europe and European definitions of modernity (Abu-Lughod 1998, 18). In this study, Turkey is introduced as a setting where modernity has been vigorously negotiated and contested as pointed out in the previous chapter.

Works of postcolonial theorists have not been widely used in Turkish studies (Çınar 2005, 2). On the one hand, this has been due to social theorists wanting to emphasize the autonomous position of Turkey vis-à-vis colonial powers after the independence struggle (1922–1923). On the other hand, many have wanted to point out the voluntary engagement with European

modernity and the numerous influences Turkish nationalist elites adopted from Europe (Ibid., 1–2). Since postcolonial theory does not focus only on direct control of colonial powers over foreign lands and its postcolonial aftermath, but introduces more subtle ways of analyzing influence and power, I would argue that postcolonial theory helps us to interpret the complex relations of power that continue to transform Turkish interpretations of modernity today.

3.1. Modernity as a period or a discourse?

Modernity must be one of the most elusive terms to define in social sciences and humanities. It could refer to a historical period, a discourse, a movement, a project, a lifestyle or an intellectual trend, among others (Çınar 2005, 1). Conventionally, modernity has been treated as a historical period starting from seventeenth century Europe and associated with the Enlightenment period although historians, political scientists and cultural theorists have differing opinions on the periodization and contents of the term (Felski 1995, 12). Earliest signs of modernity have been traced to Renaissance and the gradual extension of European power that started with the discovery of the Americas in 1492 (Venn & Featherstone 2006, 458). A number of terms are often used while trying to define modernity as period, such as secularization, nation-state, human rationality, science, technology, democracy and so on, but as Venn and Featherstone (Ibid., 459) point out, they do not simplify the definition of modernity but complicate it since these terms themselves are open to problematization. Belief in human rationality and reason, science and technology and progress of all mankind has been the key characteristics of modernity as a period. Venn and Featherstone (Ibid., 458) nevertheless point out that the discourse of modernity was from the start shaped by the intense connections Europeans developed with the rest of the world. Modernity did not, in the end, develop endogenously in Europe but rather as the self-image of Europeans in comparison to the rest of the world (Bhambra 2009; Said 2003 [1978]).

Postcolonial critics have noted the silence of the colonial encounter in the discourse of European modernity (Bhambra 2009; Mitchell 2000b; Huddart 2006). Rather than considering colonialism as a product of modernity, they perceived modernity itself developing out of colonial encounters (Bhambra 2009, 77). It could be argued that the way in which Europeans invented the sense of their own 'modernity' was based on the perceived difference to 'the Other', namely the colonized. Postcolonial theorists, such as Homi Bhabha (1991 in Huddart 2006, 9) have suggested that modernity should be given a colonial and postcolonial genealogy. Instead of repressing the colonial history of modernity, Bhabha wants to turn our

attention to the experiences of the colonized (Ibid.). This line of analysis could be extended to those living at the margins of Europe and sharing the experiences of European influence without necessarily having been directly colonized (Abu-Lughod 1998).

Writing colonialism out of the discourse of modernity provides us with a historical narrative that is incorrect and insufficient. Our understanding of history and the kind of history we learn, affects the ways in which we interpret the world around us. (Bhambra 2009.) If we learn to understand modernity simply as the history of the West with its origins in seventeenth century Europe (cf. Giddens 1990, 1), it has a profound effect on the ways in we interpret the history of others. It can be argued that the historical understandings of modernity cannot be separated from normative conceptualizations, since we are aware of the implicit meanings given to modernity in history-writing (Bhambra 2009, 3). It should also be noted that "modernity" as a historical period has received its name only in retrospect (Felski 1995, 12). In other words, modernity is a way in which we imagine the history of the West while often leaving out the connections with the rest of the world.

If we treat modernity as discourse rather than a historical period, it is easier to observe its normative side. Cultural theorist Rita Felski (1995, 13) points out to the distinctive rhetorical power of modernity that becomes clear in the ways one can be 'for' or 'against' modernity in ways that cannot be observed with other historical periods, such as Renaissance. Felski argues that the symbolic force of modernity lies in the idea of rupture, which determined modernity as something radically different from the past (Ibid.). Bhambra (2009, 1 italics original) argues in a similar manner noting that the discourse of modernity is based on two fundamental assumptions; those of *rupture* and *difference*. The former marks the historical shift between the traditional past and the modern present, while the latter emphasizes the difference between Europe and the rest of the world (Bhambra 2009, 2).

Political and social theories have actively participated in the production of the meta-narrative of modernity (Venn & Featherstone 2006). For example, modernization theory of the 1950s and 1960s attempted to measure scientifically the convergence of 'backward' nations with their Western counterparts in terms of social, political and economical 'progress'. (See e.g. Lerner 1958.) In its time, modernization theory helped to accentuate the position of the West as the reference point of modernity (Bhambra 2009, 66). It provided social scientists with a powerful model for universal development that would lead the 'underdeveloped' countries to

follow along the lines set by the West in industrialization, urbanization, capitalism and political representation among others (Ferguson 2005, 167). Turkey was considered a prime example for modernization theorists that proved their theorizing of universal development. Through its secular revolution of customs, institutions and legislation, modernization theorist treated Turkey as an example of a Muslim country capable of modernizing itself (e.g. Lerner 1958; Lewis 1968).

However, modernization theory was also criticized for its attempt to fit a universal straitjacket of Western modernity on to highly complex and versatile societies of the Middle East. Following Foucault in the connection of power and knowledge, Edward Said (2003 [1978]) argued that Orientalists, the so-called experts of the Orient, asserted authority over the region and legitimated certain type of knowledge over the oriental Other. Orientalism created an idea of the East as lazy, over-sensual, cowardly, and ignorant among other things and simultaneously produced an identity for the West as its discursive opposite (Ibid.). Said (2003, 4–5) refused to treat either of these categories as real or essential and observed both as man-made discourses supporting and sustaining each other. Whether 'orientalist' or not, modernization theory can be considered as a powerful narrative sustaining the meta-narrative of modernity and measuring the "progress" of others in terms of Western development without considering the power relations or the mechanisms of exploitations between different areas.

As in modernization theory, religion and custom are still considered as denoting the past, while rationality, law and the free will of man have been imagined to represent the modern (Venn & Featherstone 2006, 459). In the context of colonialism this difference of the past and present was projected on the spatial relations of the West and the non-West (Felski 1995, 14). On the other hand, in postcolonial, or as in the Turkish case, post-imperial settings the local elites projected their modernizing gaze upon the rural people of the periphery and depicted them as victims of vicious customs, backwardness and lack of prospects (Kandiyoti 1997, 117). In this local modernist imaginary, the West represented both progress and the dangers of excessive individualization (Ibid.). Similarly as the expectations of the convergence of the non-West with European lines of modernization, in Turkey the rural majority of the population was expected to give up its "traditional" way of life and join the elite on its march towards a prosperous future. Therefore, the normativity of modernity has become visible in the exclusion of modern status from some while emphasizing "the modern-ness" of others.

"The people" become the object of modernization on behalf of the elite, and have been ignored as relevant actors.

From another point of view, Timothy Mitchell (2000b) sees history as staged in a way that excludes the subjects outside the West from the universal and singular project of modernity. On the other hand, he points out that the universalism of modernity can never be completed without those who comprise its 'constitutive outside'. Elements that do not fit with the 'modern' or the 'West' have to be written out of this staged history and projected upon those 'outside' it. Yet, he concludes, such elements excluded from modernity are able to challenge and divert the stage of history they help to constitute. (Ibid., xiii.)

3.2. Multiple and alternative modernities – new possibilities?

Sociologists and anthropologists have challenged the Eurocentricity of modernization theory with the introduction of multiple and alternative modernities. These theoretical interventions have focused on cultural developments outside 'the West', but in comparison to the earlier paradigm, they have refused to rank them (Ferguson 2005, 175). Although these two approaches carry similar names, they differ quite radically in their contents. The multiple modernities perspective concentrates on macro-historical analysis (Spohn 2010) and takes civilizations, cultures and nation-states as its conceptual units, whereas alternative modernities focuses mainly on micro-historical hybrids of local conditions and Western modernity. Here I want to explore the possibilities and problems of these approaches for the analysis of the Turkish case.

Multiple modernities theorists, like Shmuel Eisenstadt (2000; 2001; see also Wittrock 2000) have been mainly interested in the expansion of European modernity thus bearing resemblance with the earlier paradigm of modernization theory (Bhambra 2009, 66). For example Eisenstadt (2000, 13) has observed the expansion of European modernity first through North-American colonies of France and Britain, following the historical route from East Asia, India, and the Middle East, only to arrive last in Africa. Civilizations existing in these areas prior to European expansion were not been considered as modernities, they have surfaced only with the encounter of European form of nation state, capitalist market and bureaucratic system (Bhambra 2009, 66). In addition to its institutional program, modernity has also included cultural aspects which indicated ”an autonomy of man, his or her […] emancipation from the fetters of traditional political and cultural authority” as well as

"mastery of nature, including human nature" (Eisenstadt 2000, 5). Multiple modernities approach thus remains unable to interpret other modernities in their own terms. In this approach European modernity symbolizes the original modernity from which multiple modernities differed and delineated (Bhambra 2009, 66).

Multiple modernities treats 'civilizations' and 'cultures' as analytical tools and does not consider how these concepts have themselves developed as products of modernity (Dirlik 2003; Featherstone 2009). In its civilizational analysis, multiple modernities carries connotations with the idea of 'clash of civilizations' introduced by Bernard Lewis (1990) and Samuel Huntington (1993), although in a more positive sense. It treats civilizations and cultures as separate entities and ignores exchanges between them as important for analysis thus sustaining an essentialist and conservative point of view. Bhambra (2009, 67) notes the silence of the colonial encounter and wonders how European powers were able to produce an endogenous modernity when it has been perceived an impossible task for others if we follow the multiple modernities approach. Since it does not pay attention to internal differences and rifts within these "modernities," it is unsuitable for analyzing battles over the contents of the modern inside or outside Europe and therefore is not particularly helpful in this analysis.

The alternative modernities perspective introduces a different approach interested in the local hybrid forms of modernity. While considering Western modernity as useful starting point, postcolonial theorist Dilip Gaonkar (1999, 1) sees alternative modernities as products of critical engagement. In other words, rather than focusing simply on the expansion of Western modernity, the alternative modernities approach engages in site-based analysis in order to discover the 'creative adaptations' of those reinterpreting and reinventing the contents of the modern (Ibid., 16). Rather than "being 'made' modern by some alien and impersonal forces," Gaonkar considers individuals as able to create the own interpretations (Ibid.). This has not nevertheless meant that people would be completely free to construct their own "modernities" however they choose, because certain key elements of Western modernity are constantly reinvented and recycled in different forms (Ibid., 14). Individuals are therefore limited by existing definitions of modernity; it cannot be entirely reinvented. Alternative modernities are always connected to already existing definitions of modernity, therefore they cannot be considered as an entirely novel enterprise.

Instead of treating modernity as a thing or a civilization (cf. Eisenstadt 2001), Gaonkar sees

that it is best understood as a critical attitude towards the present (1999, 13). Here he follows Foucault's notion that as an attitude modernity "problematizes man's relation to the present, man's historical mode of being and the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject" (Foucault 1984, 42). This type of a conceptualization allows for critical interpretations of Western modernity also in the postcolonial context.

Gaonkar (1999, 1; 15) suggests that modernity already is a global condition, but in his view this has not resulted into convergence making all cultures look alike. He supports Charles Taylor's (1999) cultural theory of modernity which treats Western modernity as 'culture' with a distinct social and moral outlook and takes into consideration how different starting points produce different outcomes in the transition towards modernity (Ibid., 15). For example, although some institutional arrangements like "the state" have been adopted globally, local historical and cultural conditions have transformed the ways states look in different parts of the world today. Featherstone (2009, 172–173) sees that alternative modernities point out the absence of governing centers for the interpretations of modernity and allow us to broaden our view of the phenomena relevant for the construction of modernity.

Although alternative modernities seem to create new possibilities for interpretations of modernity, it has also been criticized for several reasons. First, what has been seen as the celebration of cultural modernities especially in anthropology, has led to a situation where anthropologists have been unable to interpret modernity as a global status or a political-economical condition (Ferguson 2005, 175). Studying modernity in the context of Africa, Ferguson claims that instead of just introducing wonderfully different cultural practices as modernities, anthropologists should discover modernity as a setting of hierarchy; "a condition of being first-class" (Ibid.; see also Ferguson 1999). Even in impoverished countries there are those who belong to the privileged few, and these positions are maintained through membership and rank (Ibid.). As well as inside societies, modernity can also be interpreted as a question of status on the global scale. In comparison to modernization theory that emphasized the unilinear direction towards progress and development throughout the world, Ferguson's vision of modernity as a question of hierarchy in the global political economic order is rather bleak. He interprets that this order has become more static and instead of universal development, what now matters are questions of boundaries, borders and walls (Ibid., 179).

What Ferguson seems to be suggesting here is that instead of simply cheering for a multitude of modernities, those interested in discovering the meanings of the modern in postcolonial contexts ought to treat it as a political concept creating hierarchies between people on the national as well as on the global scale. Modernities are not just apolitical reflections of culture and there are intense political debates going on in numerous sites around the world about whose interpretation of modernity is the "original" and thus more legitimate, and who can join this narrative and who is left out. In the Turkish case, Islamist interpretations of modernity are often perceived as deriving from the 'true' and forcefully transformed culture and thus considered falsely more 'authentic' than the Kemalist version (Kandiyoti 1997,114). Connecting the modern with an elite position suggests that there are other "classes" or groups that have not been considered as equal participants in modernity. Therefore it is important to see how the boundaries of the modern are constituted, and what the mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion have been. Since there is no original or authentic interpretation of the modern to be pinned down, but only a continuous struggle over its contents, modernity remains an incomplete project as Gaonkar (1999, 17) suggests.

Second, others have criticized the modernities approaches for spreading modernity too thin with the claim that when everything can be included into modernity, it becomes meaningless concept for analysis (Cooper 2005, 114). In other words, is it possible to retain the usefulness of modernity as an analytical tool when alternative modernities seem to suggest that everything can be interpreted as modern? On the other hand, to argue against the modernities perception would require some kind of conceptual boundaries or clear definition of modernity that has not yet been agreed upon. It does not seem valid anymore to ask what is truly modern and what is not, but to ponder, like Cooper (Ibid., 115) suggests, how claims for modernity are made, how are they used and, on the other hand, at times rejected? In short, how does the modern become a political question?

Third, critics of alternative modernities have also raised important questions of research ethics. Cooper (2005, 115) wonders if 'modernity' as a key concept of study encourages anthropologists and social scientists to ask relevant and useful questions in the field. In his point of view, quests for modernity might just be a way to impose one's own modernity onto others (Ibid., 114). He advises scholars and students to listen carefully and to question whether it really is 'modernity' that they hear local people speaking of (Ibid.). I would nevertheless argue that the modern as discourse has its own political history in Turkey and

that it is also frequently used in everyday debates. Similarly to Ferguson (2005), Cooper points out that interest in 'modernity' might mask more important social and political questions in need of discovery. Although modernity should not be discarded altogether, its use in empirical studies requires careful ethical analyzing.

Where I find alternative modernities opening up new possibilities of understanding is in the sense that it challenges the perception of a singular Western modernity. Although it can be questioned whether it introduces something entirely new since alternative modernities have been defined as "alternatives" in relation to Western modernity, thus sustaining the superior position of the original (see Mitchell 2000a; Cooper 2005), it can nevertheless be argued that it is precisely through this constant exchange between modernities that the relations of power become visible. If modernities were treated as in the multiple modernities approach as separate bulks occasionally colliding with each other, there would be very little to be discovered of their mutual relations except hostility and antagonism. Instead if modernities are considered as fundamentally linked to each other and continuously transformed through these exchanges, there is a vast amount of possibilities to be discovered. In addition, this way of thinking would also introduce relations between different 'alternative' modernities into the picture instead of reducing the analysis between "the West" and "the rest."

Another possibility created by the alternative modernities perspective is that it introduces individuals as narrators and relevant agents of modernity. They are no longer considered simply as objects of modernist policies, but creative subjects formulating their own interpretations of the modern. It also enables us to bring the modern down from its conventional meta-theoretical level into the field of everyday relations, where it can act as a label of a style, clothing, music, food, sport or almost any other category used to constitute oneself as a "modern" subject. Deniz Kandiyoti (1997, 118) has argued that modernity (and tradition) has become open to new interpretations and struggles in the Turkish context. It is no longer "owned" by a particular social group or a singular elite, but has become contested throughout the population. The following chapter focuses on the ways the "modern" national subject has been constituted between different political discourses in Turkey. What kind of competing definitions of the modern national subject exist in Turkey and elsewhere?

3.3. Modernity as a national project: constitution of the national subject

If modernity is not only understood as a colonizing force, but also as the project of local elites aspiring to meet European conditions of modernity, its image and form become more complicated and diverse (Abu-Lughod 1998, 18). As suggested by alternative modernities theorists, the modern becomes a mixture of Western and local norms, creating a new interpretation of modernity. It is important to note however, that neither the local elites nor the masses should be considered as merely reactionary to outside influences, but as active participants in the constitution of local forms of modernity. However, it has been argued that from its inception, modernity has been first and foremost a state-centric project in Turkey (Keyman 2007, 221). Discursive battles over modernity have been linked to nationalism: "all modernization projects operate through nationalist ideologies that define the nation in a particular way" (Çınar 2005, 8), or as I would see it, political elites that seek to construe and maintain a nation adopt a particular narrative of modernization, which is then contested by competing social forces. As witnessed in chapter 2.3., the dominant vision of modernity has been associated with Kemalism, with its particular interpretation of secularism and extensive adaptation of external cultural signs from the West, like the Latin alphabet or the European bourgeois attire. This in turn has been challenged by Islamist political forces. In the framework employed by Alev Çınar (2005), the mainstream political Islam represented by political parties and Islamist intellectuals is not interpreted as anti-modern, or anti-western, on the contrary. She argues that despite their subversion, Islamists have used equally modernist, nationalist and totalizing techniques to transform the nation towards 'an alternative future,' that for her is the key characteristic of any modernization project (Ibid., 28).

If modernity is interpreted through the national framework in Turkey, then it would be also meaningful to ask *what kind of national subjects has this project attempted to produce, and what kind of competition has been associated with their constitution*? Sociologist Nilüfer Göle (1996) as well as other feminist researchers (see White 2003; Arat 1997) has pointed out the significance of the representations of gender, and especially the formulation of the 'republican woman' as the symbol of the modern Turkish nation. To distance themselves from the Ottoman Empire, Mustafa Kemal and his followers emphasized the public and professional roles of women, thus marking women as carriers of Westernization and secularism. Special rhetorical value was given to the education of girls, professional roles adopted by women, and the introduction of national female role models, like Mustafa Kemal's adopted daughter Sabiha Gökcen, who became world's first female military pilot (Hanioğlu 2011, 210–213). At

the same time, social practices perceived as "traditional" like veiling were discouraged. Women's participation in public life was not, however, only 'awarded' to them, but also the result of the efforts of a feminist movement which had started in the late Ottoman Empire (Arat 1997).

More recently, politically active Islamist women have challenged this image of the Kemalist "citizen woman." Studying the political agency of young veiled students in Istanbul's universities in the beginning of the headscarf debate in the 1980s, Nilüfer Göle (1996) claims that these veiled women have produced an independent form of political agency that is radically different from the Kemalist image of the submissive religious woman. Young veiled university students represented an alternative vision of women's public appearance in Turkey with their headscarves and long overcoats and with their vocal demands. However, these women also faced the challenge of negotiating their political participation in relation to Islamist men who have argued that extending the public roles of women would negatively influence their primary roles within the family. The young students interviewed by Göle did not challenge these private roles, but sought to extend their duties beyond the private sphere to the benefit of their communities, thus justifying the right for higher education in new ways. Göle saw that the activism of Islamist women remained forbidden both within the secularized public sphere as well as in the Islamist community, captured in the title of the monograph: *The Forbidden Modern*.

Göle's analysis has been important in the sense that it has challenged the often employed notion of secular women in Turkey with their self-awarded status as "modern." Whereas veiled rural women have been given a role as "backward" women clinging on to traditions and thus excluded from the sphere of 'civilization' (Kandiyoti 1997, 119), these educated veiled students have challenged Kemalist limits of modernity by creating their own forms of political agency. However, the veiling issue has been also marked with class distinctions; it has not awarded a similar form of political agency to *all* veiled women (White 2002b, 194–195). Some (especially rural) women are still considered as carriers of tradition, and their veiling has been seen as apolitical in comparison to the *türban*-movement centered on the universities. Also Göle (1996, 4–5) makes the distinction between the political agency of the university students in her study, and other veiled women. (See White 2002a for an analysis of women's Islamist activism in an impoverished Istanbul suburb). In this sense, my point of view is also limited to the privileged section of society, but differs from Göle's analysis in the

way that it analyzes the multivocality (Kynsilehto 2011) of the students, instead of focusing on a particular form of political agency.

In the light of previous research, it seems clear that the image of the 'modern' national subject in Turkey has been at least partially constructed through the bodies and public roles of women (Çınar 2005), whereas there has been quite limited analysis of men and masculinities (for an exception see Altınay 2004). Deniz Kandiyoti (1997, 120) has argued that contestations of what it means to be modern in Turkey have become visible in the sphere of gender through "*individual expressions of masculinity and femininity and different norms and styles of cross-gender interaction.*" Therefore I want to include both male and female subjectivities in my analysis by asking if and how the contestations of the modern become visible in the gendered forms of agency.

The previous exclusion of veiled women from the imaginary of the "modern" national subject points out the political boundaries ascribed in this process. Drinking alcohol and not covering ones hair have become important markers of identity for secular Turks. On the other hand, political resistance from conservative and religious elites has introduced new forms of ideal national subjectivity, and the image of the veiled woman has been one of the most important symbols of this political movement. Religious conservatives have sought to transform the ideal of the "modern" secular subject towards a "modern" pious subject, and employed the international term "modern" rather than the Turkish word "çağdaş" associated with Kemalist modernism (White 2012, 48). The former is said to allow connections with both Islamic and Western civilizations (Ibid.). "Islamists" therefore have blended the boundaries between these two, and creatively borrowed elements from both to create their own sense of modernity. Notions of 'personal Muslimhood' have been considered denoting the importance of the Islamist movement, and allowing more space for individual interpretations (Ibid., 49).

On the other hand, it has been argued that since there no longer exist a clear-cut definition of Turkishness, but competing interpretations of different elites, it has become increasingly important to identify and even to demonize the Other (White 2012, 100). Therefore the Other holds an important position in the constitution of the "modern" Self. Because the constellations of the "modern" subject have most often been constituted in relation to each other, it is important to find out how and what kind of Others the interviewees describe in the interviews. Do they employ the same imaginary as the early republican elites and turn their

attention towards the rural, "uncivilized" peoples of the periphery, or do they find other ways of differentiation? On the other hand, it is also important to find out on what narratives they base their own "modern" subjectivities. Are they still established through cultural connections with Europe, and what kind of alternative ways is there to constitute positions as "modern" Turkish citizens?

Turkey is not the only context where modernity and the "modern" national subject have become the center of debate; many postcolonial and developing societies have produced their own discussions of the "modern" subject. Similarly in many places this discussion has been gendered. While modern subjectivity also involves men and masculinities, it has often been women and femininities through which modernity has become visualized. Interestingly women can be treated as both, symbols of modernization and traditionalism (Yuval-Davis 1997). Moran (2000) describes how in Liberia, for example, the idea of a 'civilized' woman was constructed in relation to her 'native' opposite, who was perceived first and foremost as a rural woman wearing traditional wrap-around clothing and earning her own income by growing crops and cultivating the land. The 'civilized' woman on the other hand has been understood as an urban house-wife, not engaging in manual labor and wearing western clothes, and often dependent on the income that her husband brings home (Ibid., 121) . In the Liberian context, the precarious situation of the 'civilized' women sometimes forces them to 'go native' and work on the land, which means that they lose their social status (Ibid.). As in the Turkish case, certain items of clothing appear as signs of 'nativeness' and traditionality in Liberia; in the former traditionality is often associated with a specific form of veiling, while in Liberia the colourful *lappa* wrapped around a woman's body has represented nativity.

In Indonesia on the other hand, modern citizenship promoted by the state and international aid organizations has been associated with family planning and the use of birth control methods (Dwyer 2000). Modern Indonesian couples have been expected to have fewer, better nourished and well-educated children. A small family size has become to represent modernity. Dwyer argues that family planning has been constituted as a national spectacle through which the state has attempted to present the correct interpretation of the national subject and its own power to determine it (Ibid., 48). This produces an interesting comparison with the current familistic discourse in Turkey, often presented by the conservative Prime Minister Erdoğan, who has frequently encouraged Turkish families to have at least three children. This discourse could be understood as a 'people as power' discourse (Yuval-Davis 1997, 29–31), where a

growing population is seen as an important resource for the state. However, seeing birth control as a condition of 'modern' citizenship has also been challenged by the Islamic movement in Indonesia. Although the Islamic groups in general have supported small family size in order to raise 'healthy, intelligent, and religious' children, they have not articulated their support through popular terms of 'family planning' and 'birth control,' but through the support of 'family welfare' (Ibid., 45). Similar discursive emphasis of the 'family' has been detected also in the Turkish context (Buğra & Keyder 2006; Yazıcı 2012).

In conclusion, how do the theoretical perspectives presented in these chapters help us to analyze the interviewees' interpretations of the modern? First of all, the postcolonial understanding of modernity introduced it as a form of a *relationship* between Europe/West and other parts of the world. Modernity represented the self-image of Europeans in comparison to their "uncivilized" or "underdeveloped" Others. This image of course did not appeal to those deemed to represent "backwardness" and "tradition" and therefore the Eurocentricity of modernity has been challenged by postcolonial and/or alternative modernities theorists, who have developed an understanding of local participation in the reproduction and employment of the modern. These theories have transformed the objects of modernization into subjects of "modernities." But instead of celebrating the creative cultural adaptations of modernity, it needs to be discussed how these new forms of subjectivity have led to an increasingly political, and even violent, competition of the dominant definitions of the "modern" subject. Cultural and political appeals to the modern have produced hierarchies in the local, the national, as well as international level (see also Felski 1995, 13–14). Constituting the "modern" national subject has been the matter of intense political debate only in Turkey, but also in other parts of the world, including the "West." In the following, I will introduce the research material used in this study as an example of the competing narratives of the modern subject among some of Turkey's well-educated elite.

4. Interviewing Bilkent University students: problems and possibilities

One of the most important ways to acquire first-hand knowledge in social research has been interviewing. Conventionally IR-scholars have favored *elite interviews* and focused on those perceived to be in possession of power or expert knowledge, like politicians, diplomats, or leaders of (non-)governmental organizations. Feminist researchers on the other hand have wanted to introduce different kind of knowledge into the discipline through interviews of "ordinary" people, and women especially (see for example Kynsilehto 2011). Although there

has not been a single feminist method, a demand of reflection of the research process and of power relations within that process, has combined different feminist approaches (Kantola & Valenius 2007, 32; Liljeström 2004). Interviewing, for example, has not only been seen as a method of gathering information, but as a complex relationship between the researcher and the researched (see for example Oakley 1981; Oinas 2001, 2004; Ramazanoğlu & Holland 2002). What particular possibilities and problems did my interviews create? These are to be evaluated next.

Answers to the research questions are detected from the interview material gathered in Bilkent University during the spring of 2010. I interviewed fourteen students altogether, eight women and six men, between the ages of 19 and 25. One of the interviews was later discarded due to a technical mistake. Unlike well-known studies and published articles focusing on particular political identities in Turkish universities (Göle 1996; Ozyegin 2009), I wanted in include a plurality of voices in my sample. The university environment provided the possibility for this as it brought students from different social and geographical backgrounds together and offered them the possibility to interact with each other. Rather than reproducing the Islamist-secularist binary, I was interested in the ways the students would negotiate their own identities between these political opposites.

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to discover the different ways to constitute a "modern" subject position among Bilkent University students. In the interviews we discussed Turkey's characteristics as a modern society, how the students constituted their own identities as "modern" Turks, what kind of different understandings of the modern existed in the country and how they could be negotiated with each other (See Appendix). Beside intial interview questions, I also encouraged the interviewees to further elaborate the ideas they connected with the modern. Therefore each interview produced quite distinct research material.

Conducting interviews in a relatively closed social environment like a university campus created certain possibilities and limitations. For me, the Bilkent campus appeared as a "closed" environment, because of the barbed wire fences around the university compound and the guards at the university gates, who controlled the identity of everyone wanting to enter. But this arrangement was by no means limited to Bilkent, other universities in Ankara had similar security control systems. Students and university employees could leave and enter the

university quite easily, but the security measures and the distance from the city made it impossible for someone to wander into the university area without clearing the purpose of one's visit. In a sense, Bilkent seemed somewhat detached from the everyday life of the capital city. For the students themselves, the tranquility and the green spaces of the university seemed to be something they enjoyed and appreciated. Although Bilkent University creates a very specific context for a study being one of the most prestigious universities in the country, the diverse backgrounds of the students also offer point of views beyond the metropolitan area. It is clear that the perspective from within the boundaries of a single university does not describe the society as a whole. Nevertheless Bilkent *is* located in Turkey, and the students of the university see themselves are members of Turkish society. Hence, I suggest that their point of view is as valid as anyone else's.

A possible limitation for the richness and variety of the interview material was the fact that they were conducted in English. In a university where English functioned as the language of instruction, my initial assumption was that the students would be able to express themselves fluently in a foreign tongue. However, the English language skills often depended of the years spent in university, thus first and second year students had more difficulties in expressing themselves than senior students. Thinking back, it would have been perhaps useful to use an interpreter to get as vivid and rich material as possible. On the other hand, with those interviewees with excellent command of English, interpretation would have been unnecessary and seemed even patronizing. The lack of Turkish skills on my part, and the limitations with spoken English probably affected the length and the depth of the interviews in some cases. Nevertheless, I would see the possibility of direct interviewing as an advantage supporting the engagement between myself and the interviewees.

In most cases my interviewees were introduced to me through mutual friends who knew that I was looking for people to interview. Some I had met in class, some were familiar to me from the campus dormitory where I stayed, and some I had never met before. I also used a snowballing method asking people who I had interviewed to think of someone who might agree to be interviewed. The students I talked with came from different faculties and had very few things in common except that they were studying in the same place and were willing to talk to a foreign student. My familiarity with some of the interviewees produced more personal accounts, but this did not apply in all cases. Some interviewees who I met for the first time in the interview also shared very personal experiences and understandings with me.

To protect the anonymity of the interviewees, I have changed their names in the material.

What about so called cultural differences? How did they surface in the interviews? Rather than trying to determine all possible cultural differences in cross-cultural interviews beforehand, anthropologist Anna Rastas (2005) has suggested us to discover how these differences are constituted in the interviews, and in relation to the topic of discussion. This allows us to interpret cultural differences as situational, constituted in the communication between the participants, instead of treating them as clear-cut pre-existing categories. In my material for example, the interviewees constituted these differences by emphasizing Turkey's historical and cultural uniqueness, by comparing Turkey with other countries and regions, by making simple comments that marked me as a cultural outsider, and by asking me questions of my own cultural background. Also I participated in this reproduction of "culture" through my interview questions and comments.

In addition to analyzing how cultural differences are narrated in interviews, Pietilä (2010b, 420) suggests that the researcher should consider the similarities between the researcher and the researched. In my case, one of the most obvious similarities was that I shared a position with my interviewees as a university student. Although I was a cultural outsider in many accounts, in the context of the university I belonged to the same group as my interviewees. In some cases, this shared academic background seemed to shift the notion of difference to those located outside of the university. Differentiating between the 'intellectual realm' of the university and the rest of the society, which was interpreted as unstable or being in a state of political turmoil, was an important way to establish a stable and "modern" subject position for the interviewees.

As suggested by Rastas (2005), the research topic might also position the researcher and the researched in different ways. If modernity is perceived as a Eurocentric concept, designed to characterize "European" identity, and to separate it from the "uncivilized" others, including the Turks (see Neumann 1999), then the perspective of the interviewees to describe the modern might be first and foremost critical or negative. Asking questions about modernity can be interpreted as implicit suspicions of Turkey's modern status and might even be considered as accusational. This could lead to attempts to confirm Turkey's modern character by confronting such accusations. Most of my interviewees discussed understandings of modernity in Turkey in a very critical way that could suggest another way of responding in a

cross-cultural setting, namely being over-critical towards one's own native context (see Pietilä 2010b, 416). Although Turkish perceptions of modernity have been historically constituted in relation to Europe, I would argue that the situation has changed from the Turkish point of view. Turks do not perceive themselves as the "backward" and "underdeveloped" neighbor of Europe, but as a fast-growing economy and a regional power in-the-making. For example, Turkey's economic success is constantly measured against the stagnant economy of the EU in the Turkish press. It could be suggested that the Eurocentricity of the modern has been turned around by fast-developing countries like Turkey which have made "modernity" into their own national motto.

In addition to reflections of the preconditions of the interviews, it is important to ask what kind of knowledge is produced through interviewing. Feminist researchers have pointed out that instead of empirical descriptions of reality, interviews should be considered as producing *situated knowledge* (Liljeström 2004). This means that rather than expecting that the interviewee would reveal some kind of a 'truth' of the interview topic, the researcher should take into account that interviews produce partial and personal accounts on a certain topic. An understanding of situated knowledge also includes the relations between a particular interviewer and interviewee, thus producing an understanding of the uniqueness of the interview material (Ikonen & Ojala 2005, 24). Often the interviewees describe their understandings of the basis what they assume the interviewer already knows and supposes (Pietilä 2010b, 416). They have their own interests in the research process and direct their answers towards a certain audience (Oinas 2004, 224). Instead of looking for deeply personal accounts, the researcher can focus on the contradictions and the limitations of the narratives, and interpret the ways the researched produce an image of themselves as competent subjects (Ibid., 219). Hence in my case the interviews produced certain narratives concerning modernity in the situated context of a private university, and these narratives or descriptions were further linked to wider political discourses circulating within Turkish society and beyond. The purpose of qualitative research has been to reveal those links that connect these narratives into a wider discursive realm (Ibid., 220).

In the analysis, I understood narratives as building blocks of discourses. Unlike narrative research that has often focused on the lives of the interviewees and their biographical accounts, I focused on shorter and less detailed narratives used to describe "modern" subject positions in the interview context. Often the interviewees connected the modern with their

everyday lives in order to make sense of the topic. They discussed their understandings of the modern by describing their families, friends, hobbies, and interests, and separated these from what they considered as "not modern" or "traditional." However, subject positions might also change within a single interview and from one interview to another (Pietilä 2010a, 222–223). Therefore the interviewees could also discuss their connections with tradition, or contest the dominant discourses of the modern and thereby constitute multiple subject positions during a single interview. In the analysis it is also important to focus on how the interviewees see themselves as members of implicit groups and on what discursive basis they construct a category of "us" in comparison to "them" (Ibid., 224).

As suggested by Hall (1999) and others, subject positions and identities are often constituted in relation to a perceived Other. Therefore also my initial focus and interest lay on narratives of 'othering' and on the discursive strategies used to exclude these implicit others from the "modern." With the analytical lenses borrowed from Lene Hansen's study of the discursive construction of the 'Balkans' as a region (2006), I noted different ways of 'othering.' In addition to the stereotypical presentation of the Other, I also studied the spatial, temporal and ethical dimensions of these discourses. These will be discussed in chapter 5. Next to the positioning of "non-modern" others, the interviewees also described the "proper" modern subjectivity and constituted their own identities as modern Turkish subjects. In chapter 6, I name two different subject positions on the basis of the analysis; the "secular modern" and "modern Muslim" subjectivities that represent two different interpretations of the "modern" subject in the Turkish context. Rather than calling interviewees "Islamists" or "secularists" I choose to use less politically charged categories. The modern Muslim subject position is not designed to undermine the religious identities of the secular interviewees, since most of them would identify as Muslim if their religious identity was questioned. The modern Muslim category does not reflect the actual practice of religion or measure any level of "piousness," it simply brings forward how these interviewees articulated their identities in comparison to others who did not mention religion as an important part of their subject position.

In the last part of the analysis, in chapter 7, I introduce narratives which constitute different forms of "modern" femininity and masculinity articulated in the interviews. Gender already appears as an important method of differentiation in the discussions of the Other and in the constitution of the modern Muslim subject position for example, but chapter 7 focuses on certain key gender issues, brought up in the interviews, namely sexuality and the "modern"

family. These questions reflected both challenges to the conservative social norms emphasizing especially female virginity prior to marriage, and the reproduction of the gendered division of labor within the familial sphere.

5. Imagining the Other

Similarly to the theorists presented at the end of the introduction also poststructuralist theorists like Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe consider identities as relational, which means that they are constituted often in relation to what they are *not* (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). In political science, the Other is often portrayed as an 'enemy', but it needs to be taken into consideration that identities are not constituted only in relation to blatant stereotypes of hostile Others, but often require more subtle forms of linking and differentiation (Hansen 2006). For example, in *Security as Practice* (2006), Danish IR-scholar Lene Hansen studies various discourses of the 'Balkans' produced by influential political institutions and individual scholars in the West during the conflict in Bosnia in the 1990s. She points out that behind the discursive constructions of the 'Balkans' in Western Europe and North-America lie several historical understandings that position the area as an Other. From the end of the 19th century, these discourses gradually changed from the romantic Byronic perception of the Balkans as a wild, unruly, yet admired and unspoiled terrain in Europe towards a discourse which positioned the area as a radical and violent Other, and thus a potential threat to European peace by the end of 20th century. Although these Balkan discourses were radically transformed, elements from previous historical understandings were recirculated by political actors during the most recent conflict.

Although the focus here is entirely different, Hansen's example of multiple ways of 'othering' and of the interconnectedness of discourses could be considered as a useful starting point for the present analysis as well. Rather than focusing solely on the production of hostile images of the Other, the analysis should discuss *multiple forms of othering in the Turkish context*. Conventionally the 'modern' subject position has been associated with the secular or 'contemporary' (*çağdaş*) lifestyle, and opposed to the 'traditional' identities which have also been perceived as religious, but as many Turkish social scientists have noted, a 'modern' way of life has also been adopted into the religious-conservative vocabulary especially by young generations (Saktanber 2010; Göle 1996; Çelik 2000). The incorporation of the modern into the religious-conservative discourse has been treated as a further sign of the dissolution of Kemalism as the hegemonic discourse of modernity in Turkish society (Çelik 2000, 201). The

appeal of modernity is still strong, and it could be argued that modern subject positions are articulated today both through the dichotomy of modern—traditional as well as a question of who/what can be considered as 'truly' modern (as opposed to a 'false' modernity). With the dissolution of Kemalism as the hegemonic discourse, the discursive struggles over the contents of the modern have become more visible than at the time of 'high Kemalism' (see Cagaptay 2006).

The employment of such terms as 'modern' and 'traditional' continue to reproduce dichotomies that poststructuralist theory has set out to deconstruct (see Norval 2000). Dichotomies like the modern—traditional have positioned the latter as inferior to the former, thus the modern has acquired its strength with the negative representation of the traditional. As much as I agree with the importance of the deconstruction of dichotomies, they are however deeply embedded in everyday language used by my interviewees (see also Ozyegin 2009, 110). Therefore they need to be analyzed as parts of the discourses the students use to describe their own subject positions. The analysis cannot however stop at the reproduction of these dichotomies, and needs to take into consideration how the modern–traditional or the modern–non-modern separations are challenged and renegotiated by the interviewees.

This chapter focuses on the identity construction of the students in the interviews through the process of 'othering'. It discusses identity with the help of the term of 'subject positions' that provide an understanding of identities as multiple and changing rather than concise and steady articulations. It follows a poststructuralist understanding of identities as relational and discursive (Hansen 2006; Jørgensen and Phillips 2002; Laclau & Mouffe 1985; Hall 1999), signifying that the subject adopts subject positions in relation to those it perceives to be its Others, but these positions should not be understood as stable. In order to adopt a 'modern' subject position, the Self needs to imagine an Other that does not 'fill' the discursive requirements of modernity and position itself in relation to these perceived Others. Instead of understanding the identity building process simply through negative opposites, I attempt to show that a sense of the Self is constructed through multiple forms of 'othering'. As Aletta Norval (2000, 223) has pointed out, the Other is not constituted only through the 'friend/foe' distinction, but there exists a variety of ways that to conceive the relation between the Self and the Other, often under-investigated by discourse analysis. For example, Lene Hansen (2006, 49) employs concepts like "Superior" and "Identical" Others to diversify the understanding of identity construction in foreign policy discourse. To understand the 'modern'

subject positions adopted by the interviewees here, we need to discover also the links that connect them to the wider discourses of modernity.

First however, I need to locate the discursive signs that mark the Other as such. Here I choose to focus on some *key representations* (Hansen 2006) and reoccurring articulations of the students that constitute difference. Differentiation is often done through certain metaphors associated with modernity and frequent stereotypes constituting the Other. Modern subjectivity can also be represented as a question of cultural tastes and styles distinguishing 'traditional' food, music, attire, behavior, body language, and accent among other things from those perceived as 'modern' (Demiralp 2012). It has to be kept in mind that by constituting different narratives of Others, implicit or explicit descriptions of the Self are provided simultaneously. Therefore it is important to ask what does the "I" become like when it is represented in relation to the Other? However, forms of 'othering' are not necessarily similar throughout the research material. To discover the multiple subject positions of the students, different forms of 'othering' are to be located; from the more explicit juxtapositions to the more subtle forms of differentiation as suggested by Hansen (2006). It also needs to be taken into consideration that subjects can refuse to participate in this discursive maneuver.

5.1. The stereotypical Other

As suggested above, the students constitute their identities in relation to a multiple set of Others. They use both stereotypical representations of difference as well as more subtle forms of othering to constitute subject positions in the interviews. First I will explore the more explicit forms of differentiation and building of political frontiers and then move on to the more complex and reflexive forms of differentiation. It has to be emphasized however that discourses of the Other are not measured against reality, meaning that the students are not interpreted to be reflecting the 'true' qualities or the essence of those that they perceive different and "non-modern", but descriptions of the Other are seen as an inherent part of the identity building process. To present oneself as a critical, rational, and diligent urban subject, one often has to imagine the Other as unaware, irrational, passive, and rural. Students' narratives of certain parts of Turkey and certain groups of people that they perceive being "far from modern" are linked to and build upon a wider set of discourses circulating in the society. These discourses do not reflect the perceptions of the entire society however, but need to be interpreted in the elite, and often secular, context of a private university.

The first question should be what kind of discursive signs are employed to represent the Other? Homi Bhabha has argued that the Other is constituted through repetitive, uncompromising and disproportioned images, and that stereotypes often consist of linked and mutually reinforcing ideas, building chains of negative meaning (Bhabha 1994, 66–84 quoted in Riggins 1997, 10). They can be interpreted as simplifications of existing differences and qualities of the Other that are bundled together to produce a "straw man" image of a certain group of people or a place (Hall 1999, 122–123). In my material for example English translation student İpek produced a number of discursive signs that are often used to describe the religious-conservative part of the population in Turkey when I asked her to describe the lifestyle of the so called traditional people. İpek herself originated from Antalya, the fourth largest city in Turkey, located in the south coast.

> TK: *"How does this* [modern] *lifestyle differ from the people that you would describe as traditional? What is their lifestyle like?"*
>
> 3: *"I think they would grow up in a small neighborhood, with just their relatives and some friends and just two or three strange people and that's all. And they would be like "you shouldn't do that, or you musn't do that because you are forbidden" or they are not going to look at you like you are a good person. I think it's because of religion. Mostly it's just religion. And the other things are like to live in a society I think, because you have to... adapt to a society and it's not like you are totally free to live especially in a small country side in Turkey or I don't know anything about* [that]... *I think if they want to be modern, I think their relatives or their family wouldn't accept them as a modern person. They would even do bad things to them because of their choice if they would choose something like that, so I think that's kind of like traditional and conservative because of religion, because of society, because of family, yea, like that..."* (Int.İpek.24042010)

İpek's description captures most of the stereotypes associated with the religious-conservative part of the population from the secular perspective. She interprets the Other as rural, living in a small community that is looking inwards rather than outwards, and controlled by strict social norms that are perceived to be deriving from with religion. She questions whether or not this kind of community has adapted to the society, and accentuates her distance from this group by pointing out that she does not have any experience in living in a community like this ("I don't know anything about that"), thus implicitly claiming for an urban and 'free' subject position that has disassociated itself from religion. An important part of the stereotypical image of the Other is the suggestion of its potential violence against those members of the community who would like become modern. In her relatively short response, İpek thus describes the 'traditional lifestyle' as rural, closed (rather than open), restrictive, non-adaptable and potentially violent.

Turkish IR-scholar Seda Demiralp (2012) has argued that there exists a deep social division in the Turkish society that goes beyond the secularist/Islamist division that has been the focus of Turkish studies for a considerable time now. According to her, there exists a class cleavage between the so called 'white' urban Turks and the rising 'black' Anatolian bourgeoisie which is often described in cultural terms. In its discourse of Islamism, the "white" upper-class has associated certain religious, cultural and even physical characteristic with the Anatolian population to define its own secularist, civilized and Westernized identity (Ibid., 512). This kind of cultural 'othering' associates certain characteristics with Islamists like skin color, accent, geographical origins, names, professions, and tastes and styles in clothes, music, and food (Ibid., 513; see also White 2012). İpek's narrative seems to resonate with the 'white' discourse presented by Demiralp. As a member of the urban upper-middle class, İpek also described the Other as rural, religious and conservative. Elsewhere in the interview she presented "*them*" as being "*obsessed with religion*". This was exemplified by the people's blind faith to the AKP-run government that was "using" religion for political purposes (Int.İpek.24042010). In her narrative, this "obsession" of Others clearly created a sense of her own rational and critical subject position, that could not be deceived by populist politicians.

Another interviewee also employed the discursive sign of 'obsession' (as opposed to rationality) to describe the Other. English language and literature student Ülkü saw that particularly the ethnic nationalist groups within Turkey's borders were "obsessed" with the preservation of "their" culture (Int.Ülkü.06052010). She interpreted this to be particularly the concern of the Kurdish and the Laz minorities rather than the Turkish majority. In her interpretation, this obsession towards the preservation of their own cultural heritage caused these minorities to distance themselves from modernity and to turn inwards. Interestingly, Ülkü herself originated from Mardin which is located in the primarily Kurdish south-east of Turkey. Despite the contradiction, Ülkü disassociated her hometown from what she had characterized as cultural obsession by arguing that the people in Mardin had been able to do both; adapt to modernity and to preserve their own culture for centuries.

To return to İpek's narrative, although she saw herself first and foremost as a modern person and as a member of a modern family, she also claimed to be traditional in certain aspects. She discussed her own traditionality with reference to relationship with the opposite sex, thus representing an entirely different narrative of tradition than when describing the Other in the interview context. This narrative will be further discussed in chapter 6, which deals more

specifically with the gendered subject positions of the students and discusses what it means to be a 'modern' man or a 'modern' woman according to the interviewees. Suffice to say here, İpek did not perceive her identity only as modern, but associated it with certain aspects of traditionality as well, thus producing a multifaceted sense of her subject position.

Nevertheless, İpek's narrative provides us an example of discursive signs that are linked in a manner suggested by Hall (1999) and others, to produce a simplified image of the Other, against which the Self can be presented. For the urban and secular identity, this process of 'othering' involves the representation of "them" as rural, religious, irrational, potentially violent, and introvert among other things (cf. Demiralp 2012). It has been suggested that the categories of "us" and "them" are so intertwined that one cannot describe the former without the latter (Riggings 1997, 6). But the constitution of a modern subject position does not only involve the caricature of the Other, it also borrows certain elements from it and recycles them in new ways, as İpek's claim for being also 'traditional' suggests. Before we move to the more ambivalent forms of othering, we need to discuss what kind of spatial identity the interviewees give the Other, and what historical roots this representation has?

5.2. Locating the Other: the 'East'

Spatial, temporal and ethical identities play a key role in the construction of the discourses concerning the Other. Hansen (2006) has used these constellations of identity in her analysis of foreign policy discourse, but I believe they can also be used as *analytical lenses* here to reveal the politics of the identity building process on an individual level as well. Spatiality, temporality, and ethicality refer to different ways of constituting the Other. Hansen considers them as theoretically and ontologically equal, but points out that they can be presented in different lengths in political texts, for example some materials can emphasize spatial identities while remaining silent of the responsibility toward the Other (ethical identity). Spatial identity confirms the relational character of identities and the existence of political boundaries. In foreign policy it is often used to refer to certain countries and their perceived characteristics, but spatial identities can also be articulated in terms of more abstract political space that can involve articulations of boundaries and subjectivities that are less precise, like 'tribes', 'barbarians', 'terrorists', 'women', 'civilization', 'the people', or 'the international community'. Hansen argues that identities are often constructed as combinations of concrete geographical and abstract political discourses. (Hansen 2006, 47.)

In the interviews the spatial identity of the Other was often located to the 'East'. As an abstract political space 'East' never received a clear geographical definition in the students' narratives, but it was nevertheless most often located within the territorial boundaries of Turkey. One of the most vivid accounts of the differences between eastern and western Turkey is again provided by İpek:

> 4:"[I]*n the East side however, there all those conservative people, everyone is conservative, they are not modern. They are not. They are not even going out to any other cities. My cousin is a doctor and she's now working in a volunteer job in [the] east, [in] Van. And she is from Istanbul and she called me the first time when she went to Van and she called me and said: "When it comes to five o'clock you can't see any single person in the street. There is just one coffee* [house]"... *And think about Van, it's a big city, and there is just one café! I didn't see a single teenager and every single woman is pregnant and because she is a doctor, she knows everything about it, she's a radiologist. And every single* [woman] *is pregnant and it's their sixth or seventh children. And they are... And she's divorced and she is living alone now. And she said that everyone is looking at her like what the hell she is doing here because she lives alone in a house. You should be married, you should do that. They are just so conservative! --- I mean... this is like a living hell, she said that, so bad... People are looking at her and it's so bad. I mean really, it's like that."* (Int.İpek.24042010)

In this narrative, the spatial difference between the two parts of the country becomes narrated first and foremost in *gendered* terms. The most important markers to describe the difference between the East, which is represented by the Kurdish city of Van, and western and central Turkey are given through description of 'women' and their social position in "the East". Recounting a narrative from her cousin, to whom she gives certain authority by describing her as a doctor and a radiologist, İpek describes how "*every single woman*" in Van is pregnant and has at least six or seven children. With this narrative, she creates an impression of an excessive population growth in the city. This kind of population discourse could be interpreted as a sign of a 'demographic race' (Yuval-Davis 1997, 30) between Turkish and Kurdish ethnicities in eastern Turkey. The Kurds constitute the majority of the population in the eastern and south-eastern provinces, and already during the early republican period state officials were concerned of the excessive 'Kurdification' of the region (Cagaptay 2006, 102–112). This is why they carefully controlled the movements of the population and the re-inhabitation of certain areas in the east after the First World War. The Kurdish rebellions in the eastern provinces up until the 1930s resulted in the forced migration of certain influential local leaders and their families (Ibid.). Although such drastic measures no longer take place, and migration from rural areas to urban centers and from east to west has been high from the 1950s onwards, this does not necessarily mean that older population discourses would have

ceased to exist.

On the other hand, İpek's narrative only describes the women in Van through the aspect of motherhood. The way that she describes their successive pregnancies can be understood as a discursive sign of the lack of women's reproductive rights, or a large number of children can also be associated with 'traditionality' and conservatism and opposed to the perceived equality and modernness of the rest of the society. In any case, the women of Van remain passive while the agency in the narrative is assigned to İpek's cousin who occupies the subject position of a professional woman living alone in an environment that is described as hostile towards divorced women. The conservative norms of the community in Van are projected against the almost heroic agency of the cousin who works as a voluntary physician. It is clear from this depiction of a 'modern' professional woman against her rural counterparts with whom İpek identifies with.

Still, all this does not explain why the spatial identity of the 'East' is described particularly through women? Nira Yuval-Davis (1997, 60) has argued in her seminal work that the emancipation of women (among other signs) has signified a move towards modernization in countries like Turkey, India, and China. As it has been mentioned before, in the early Turkish republic, increasing the public visibility of women through education, women's suffrage and professional female role models were seen as the most significant signs of Turkey's modernization. 'Modern' women were presented in magazines as taking part in the public life next to their husbands or male colleagues with their heads uncovered and wearing western clothes (Çınar 2005; Altınay 2004). On the other hand, it has been argued that the emancipation of women in Turkey was strongly an upper class phenomenon, and did not involve the majority of Turkish women (White 2003). The 'feminist state' did not seek to transform the private lives of women and continued to emphasize women's roles as mothers and reproducers of the nation (Ibid.; see also Yuval-Davis 1997). Because the public visibility of women was such an important marker of modernization in Turkey, those social classes and areas where emancipatory policies of the state did not reach, continued to represent 'backwardness' and 'traditionality'. In İpek's narrative, the position of women in 'East' acts as one of the markers of essential difference between eastern and western Turkey, when it could also be interpreted as a question of the limits of the emancipation project in the country as a whole.

> 3: "[S]o the East side is like that, they are not going out, they are not letting in, they are like that... The central, like Ankara, like Konya and stuff like that, of course they

are religious people, they are conservative people, they are traditional people, but they are modern people as well. But the West side is more like free and they are like... and they are rich of course. The West side, Istanbul, Izmir, Antalya, they are [the] *rich and the modernist sides..."* (Int.İpek.24042010)

In comparison to Van, İpek's narrative presents the 'West' as liberal and wealthier part of the country. Central Turkey, where also Ankara and Bilkent are geographically located, is described as an interesting combination of religious conservatism and modernism, although earlier in the interview İpek described people in Bilkent being like the people from the West (Int.İpek.24042010). On the other hand, she was aware of the social tension that existed between the wealthier students from western Turkey and their peers from the central region, and described the ways the prior group attempted to humiliate the latter by for example mocking the clothes they wore. However, she did not mention students who came from eastern Turkey and seemed to ignore their presence on campus. In İpek's narrative, the 'East' was not represented on Bilkent campus.

Historically, the 'East' constituted a category of difference from the beginning of the republican period in the 1920s and even prior to that. During the Ottoman period the Kurds enjoyed considerable autonomy in relation to the sultan's court in Istanbul, mainly because of the geographical conditions and distance that separated the mountainous Kurdish regions from the rest of the empire. In his assertive work on Kemalist politics of citizenship, Turkish historian Soner Cagaptay (2006) considers that in the early Kemalist vocabulary the 'East' was often equaled with 'Kurdish'. He sees that for the Kemalists, the region east of the Euphrates River, where Kurds constituted the majority of the population was considered as a particular case. This was not only due to the geographical distance and poverty of the region in relation to western Turkey, but because Kurds actively resisted the assimilatory measures initiated by the government. Because the Kurds shared the same religion with the Turkish part of the population, it could be argued that they were not considered as culturally different, but rather as an inferior and uncivilized part of the Turkish population. For example, Kurdish was not acknowledged as a separate language, but considered as a bastardized version of Turkish resulting from mixtures with Arabic and Persian (Cagaptay 2006, 21).

Despite these historical connections of the 'East' with the Kurds, it has to be pointed out that although the 'East' was used as a frequent category in many of my interviews to describe the spatial identity of the Other, it was *not* identified as specifically as 'Kurdish'. Therefore it cannot be argued that the 'East' was directly associated with the Kurds in İpek's narrative for

example. However, we can compare historical ways of understanding the 'East' as presented by Cagaptay with the present one and find some similarities. Just as the Kemalist discourse treated the 'East' as a category of difference and in many ways inferior to the rest of the country, İpek also located the spatial identity of the Other to the 'East'. Like the early Kemalist discourse that did not acknowledge the ethnic identity of the Kurds or other minorities, also İpek's descriptions left the Other without a name. Riggins (1997) has argued that while the members of "us" are often identified and acquire specific identities, others are often interpreted as anonymous representatives of a certain group, like 'the elderly' or 'immigrants'. Similarly to the Kemalists, İpek saw the 'East' as undeveloped, uncivilized, poor, backward, and conservative especially towards women. Other narratives, like the one shared by Yağmur, argued that people in the 'East' were still holding on to cultural habits that had been abandoned in the west, like polygamy (Int.Yağmur.24042010). The 'East' was thus constituted as a historical and spatial Other within Turkey's borders.

5.3. Subtle forms of differentiation

The spatial identity of the Other is linked to other dimensions of identity according to Hansen (2006). Therefore in this case the 'East' acts as a discursive space of the Other, but its temporal and ethical dimensions also need to be explored. Temporal identity refers to themes like development, progress, transformation, continuity or their lack in discourse (Hansen 2006, 48). Ethical identity on the other hand introduces responsibility of the Self over the Other. Although ethicality constitutes an important part of foreign policy discourses studied by Hansen, it does not have similar importance here, and therefore it will be discussed together with the temporal identity. This is also done because these two sides of discourse can be considered as interconnected. Since the temporal identity points out to the capacity for change (Ibid., 49), thus showing how the Other is perceived, it also brings out the question of responsibility. Is the Other perceived as essentially different and incapable of transforming itself, or does it hold some kind of potential of change? What kind of responsibility would the Self have in the transformation of the Other?

First, temporal identity needs be detected through representations of *progress* or *intransience*, as suggested by Hansen (2006, 48 italics original). These kinds of descriptions were frequent in the material. For example, computer science student Emre described the current political situation in Turkey as a movement "*backwards*" in comparison to the "*modernity fire*" people had had in the beginning of the republican period (Int.Emre.07052010). Rather than

perceiving the current political context as development or progress, Emre shared the Kemalist nostalgia towards the early years of the republic which he perceived more modern and vibrant (see Özyürek 2006). Other metaphors of temporality were used when 'modern' people were described as those who had made "*important steps*" in comparison to "*unmodern* [sic] *people who are more steady... they do not move anywhere*[.] *They just stay there*[.]" (Int.Yeşim.07052010). Biology student Yeşim contrasted this perception of stasis against 'modern' people who she saw as "*moving forward*" (Ibid.). These utterances describe very well how the students applied the universalistic discourse of modernity as a non-stoppable march through time, often equaled with terms like 'progress' and 'development' (see for example Berman 1983). It also shows how the "non-modern" Other is perceived as not participating in this process or having a negative (backward) temporal identity.

Beyond these temporal metaphors that describe the Other as non-changing and stagnant, there are other kind of narratives that include prospects of change. The capacity for change is an important quality in the discourses of the Other, because it separates the essentialized interpretations of the Other as radically different and incapable of transformation from the perceptions that acknowledge the human character of the Other and its potential. These different interpretations are often exemplified by the two understandings of the Native American 'savage' by the Spanish conquerors as described by Todorov (1992). The first example reflects the view of conquistador Cortés who saw the 'savage' non-human and incapable of change and therefore killing them could not be considered morally wrong, while the Jesuit Las Casas saw the Indians as God's creations that could not be treated as slaves, and had to be turned into proper Christians. These discourses had a very different position towards the potential of the Other; for Córtes it did not exist, for Las Casas the 'savage' could be brought from 'backwardness' to the light of 'civilization.' (Hansen 2006, 42–44.)

Although the discourses provided by the students were not as radical as those of Cortés and Las Casas, they shared certain similarities with these two ways of interpreting the Other. While İpek interpreted the East as having altogether a different nature than the West, other narratives introduced potential for change thus providing an alternative interpretation of the Other. The issue where this potential was often brought up was the education of girls in Eastern Turkey. I am not suggesting that inequalities in terms of access to education would not exist between eastern and western provinces in Turkey, but what I am interested in here is how the question of girls' education becomes yet another marker of difference between the

'East' and the 'West', and how this difference is both sustained and challenged in the students' narratives? On the one hand, this question reaffirmed the otherness of the abstract political space of the 'East' in relation to the 'West,' because the exclusion of girls from the educational system was identified as a problem of the 'East' alone, suggesting that such inequalities did not exist elsewhere in Turkey. It can be argued that as a discursive sign, it further contributed to the representation of the 'East' as conservative and unequal space towards women, and reintroduced gender as a marker of this difference. It was not education in general, but girls' education in particular that was used to constitute a separate identity for eastern Turkey.

On the other hand, some of the students who brought up the disadvantaged position of girls in the 'East' would not perceive it as a permanent condition and discussed changes that were taking place in the eastern context. For example, biology student Bariş described the issue of girls not being allowed to go to school as one of the key problems that separated eastern Turkey from the rest of the country (Int.Bariş.29042010). However, he did not perceive this as a permanent condition, and described the importance of the work of a non-governmental organization (NGO), that he saw as being able to convince reluctant parents to send their daughters to school. In his view, people in Eastern Turkey were not aware of the value and importance of education and needed to be enlightened in this respect. When young women who had been helped by the organization themselves shared their experiences with these families, the parents could easily be convinced to send their daughters to school according to Bariş. The organization also provided financial support for the education of disadvantaged girls. Although Baris interpreted "the way of thinking" as different in eastern Turkey, and saw that people were afraid to send their daughters to school, he also considered that this condition could be easily transformed when the parents received vernacular information and financial support. Despite his perception positioned the "people in the East" as ignorant and even stupid, Bariş also challenged the image of the Other incapable of change.

Another and a more personal account was shared by English language and literature student Ayla, who originated from the city of Kars, in north-eastern Turkey. Ayla described her hometown as being more conservative than Bilkent and she saw that the people there were "*a bit far from being modern*" (Int.Ayla.27042010). She demonstrated this by pointing out that in her home town she could not have worn the long pink T-shirt she was wearing when I interviewed her. She also accounted how women had to behave in certain ways in the presence of their male relatives. Ayla pointed out that if an unmarried girl would have a

relationship with a boy, this would have serious consequences in the community. By this she referred to the so called honor killings. She strongly rejected this tradition as well as others that she considered as not modern and claimed for an agency to choose the traditions she saw worth preserving.

Although she presented a rather bleak picture of her hometown, she also described transformations that had taken place within her family. Her three years older sister had not been sent to school, but the attitude within the family had altered, and Ayla described how her parents and even her grandfather had supported her studies in the university. Her mother, who barely could read, had strongly encouraged her daughter to study and to have a career in the future. Ayla's family members hoped that she could help to support them as a professional woman. Even her father had changed his mind about the education of his daughters and now supported Ayla's studies in a university, far away from home. Perhaps also the scholarship Ayla had received from the government had contributed to the approval by her family. Ayla described the change within her family as a sign of "progress", and as a way to "be modern" (Int.Ayla.27042010). Her narrative provided a personal account of the potential of change in the 'East.'

It can be argued that narratives of the 'East' provided by Ayla and Bariş both sustained and challenged the discourse of the 'East' as the Other. Although they accounted for the changes that were taking place in eastern Turkey, they continued to present the "state of mind" of the 'East' as different to that of the 'West'. They interpreted the people in the 'East' as unaware and uncertain of the benefits of education and reluctant to educate girls in particular, thus presenting the access to education as a gendered problem. At the same time, their narratives included positive accounts of the potential for change and argued that people could be influenced quite easily once they were addressed in a vernacular rather than in a top-down manner. As suggested by Hansen (2006, 40), discourses constituting the Other should be interpreted as unstable, and at times the Other can be perceived as 'becoming like the Self' thus bridging the gap between "us" and "them."

The question of girls' possibilities to go to school also brought up the importance of education as a marker of the interviewees' own identities. As a discursive sign, the exclusion of girls from the educational system acted as a strong opposite of the subject positions of the interviewees as university students. Whereas education was denied from a number of girls in

the 'East', the interviewees themselves had been granted the chance to study in a top university. Thus against the victim-position of these anonymous girls, the interviewees occupied the position of agents receiving an education and thus participating in the process of "becoming modern." As an example of this, Bariş considered that universities were the only environment in Turkey where modern people could be located (Int.Bariş.29042010).

The issue of girls' education also brought up the question of ethical identity (Hansen 2006), signifying the responsibility of the Self over the Other. In Ayla's view, the state carried the responsibility for the modernization of the East. She argued that the strong legal measures of the state against those who would not send their children to school had been effective. In her view the fear of imprisonment and hefty fines on the one hand, and scholarships provided on the other, acted as strong incentives for the parents to send their offspring to school (Int.Ayla.27042010.). In Bariş's narrative, in contrast, agency was assigned to a NGO that worked with the parents and provided the material support for the education of girls. Most importantly, responsibility for change lay upon the people themselves; people in the 'East' were expected to "*change their minds*" and to grasp the importance of education (Int.Ayla.27042010). This discursive move downplayed the responsibility of the state and the students themselves in the transformation of the Other.

On the basis of these narratives, it could be argued that the 'East' constituted a significant Other in the construction of modern subject positions by the students in Bilkent University. These articulations were connected with a wider set of political discourses that have historically disassociated the 'East' from the rest of Turkey. The extended conflict between the army and the Kurdish rebels in the eastern provinces has certainly added to this discursive divide. In the students narratives the stereotypical image of the 'East' was constituted as the negative opposite of the 'West'; "backward", "narrow-minded", "religious", and "conservative" especially towards women. In fact, difference was in many narratives articulated in gendered terms that involved the social status of women in particular. Especially the question of girls' equal opportunities to education seemed to act as a strong discursive sign to create distance between the Self and the Other and "not sending girls to school" seemed to confirm the presumably "backward" character of the 'East'. However, the image of the Other was not static; especially interviewees who had closer connections with the realities of eastern Turkey narrated the potential for change within the 'East'. Responsibility for the transformation nevertheless rested on the shoulders of the state, actors of the private sector, and most

importantly upon the shoulders of the "eastern people" themselves. In most cases, the interviewees did not recognize their own role in the discursive reproduction of the 'East' as an Other.

6. Constituting the modern national subject

The importance of the discursive signs of the Other for the construction of the 'modern' subject position have become clear from the previous chapter. Although the spatial, temporal and ethical identities of the Other have in certain ways brought up the subject positions of the students, it still needs to be investigated how the interviewees constitute their own subject positions as modern Turkish citizens.

Following Çınar (2005, 36), I argue that the modern subject position cannot be separated from the constitution of the national subjectivity in Turkey. Modern and national subject positions have been fundamentally linked; to study one without the other would lead to a partial analysis. The constitutive norms and principles that have defined the national subject have included for example secularism. However, the constitution of the national subject is no longer a singular project determined by Kemalist legacy, but is constantly challenged by alternative narratives of national subjectivity, be they Kurdish, Islamic, or other (Ibid.). These alternatives have not however divorced the language of 'modernism' but continue to argue that their national subjectivities are "authentically modern" in comparison to the secular Kemalist interpretation of the modern citizen. This has led to discursive struggles over the contents of modern national identities in Turkey and produced a whole new variety of interpretations of what constitutes a modern national subject. These interpretations can also be detected from the interviews with the Bilkent University students.

First I discuss the distinction of the secular subject position from its religious counterpart through a narrative of tolerance. Second, I want to introduce the narratives that seek to challenge the centrality of secularism for modernity in Turkey and represent new kind of national subjectivities that do not exclude everyday manifestations of Islamic identity. The constitution of the modern national subject is negotiated in relation to the everyday practices like dress codes, as well as in relation to customs and rituals like weddings (see Çınar 2005; Özyürek 2006; Göle 1996). Finally, I will study the competing discourses in relation to understandings of the history of the republic, because historical narratives form the basis for people's understandings of their national identities. The purpose of this chapter is to produce

an understanding of the various ways of constituting a "modern" Self in the social realm of Bilkent University.

6.1. Secularism as a sign of a modern subject position

Turkey has often been interpreted as unique among the Muslim countries of the world due to its pronounced secularism. As discussed in chapter 3, Turkish secularism can be interpreted originating from the late Ottoman period, when the state officials often had rather pragmatic interpretations of religious law. The pragmatism was also incorporated into the scientific outlook of the Young Turks in the early 20th century (Zürcher 2010b). After the establishment of the republic, Mustafa Kemal sharpened his understanding of secularism towards laicism which did not signify the separation of mosque and the state, but the control of religion by the state (see Davison 1998; 2003). At the same time as the Grand National Assembly decided to abolish the caliphate in 1924, it established the Directorate of Religious Affairs to control and monitor all the religious aspects of life in the republic (Zürcher 2004, 187). But instead of getting rid of religious elements, the early republican elite wanted to create a new interpretation of Islam that would fit together with their modernist worldview (Davison 2003). After all, religion was one of the key elements that held the new multi-ethnic state together, and thus it needed to be in the hands of the state. This was demonstrated among other things by the centralization of the education system and the abolishment of the *medrese* schools, closing of the influential Sufi-lodges, changes of the alphabet, calendar, and the day of rest from Friday to Sunday, as well as the call to prayer (*ezan*) from Arabic to Turkish. Religious attire like the *fez* commonly worn by Muslim men was banned by a specific Hat Law in 1925, and women's veiling was discouraged. All these measures were taken to distance the republic and its citizens from their Ottoman past, and to join the 'civilized nations of the world' as the common Kemalist phrase declared.

It could be argued that Kemalism had a very narrow understanding of the modern national subject that only incorporated the educated, privileged, urban, Turkish-speaking, secular Muslim elite. This meant that the majority of the conservative rural population and the urban poor could not occupy the position of the modern Turkish citizen. However, laicist Kemalist understanding of the ideal national subject was not the only one, and from the 1950s onwards with the establishment of the multiparty-system, religion became increasingly articulated as an important element of national identity (Brockett 2011). On the other hand, it has to be noted that "Islamism" as a political discourse is a much more recent invention in Turkish

politics, a term often used by the secularists to describe the rise of political Islam in Turkey since the 1980s. It has been argued that the mainstream political Islam represented by a series of political parties since the 1970s has undergone a significant transformation from religious radicalism towards the 'conservative democracy' of the AKP (Hale & Özbudun 2010). The religious conservative majority represented by the AKP has sought to develop a new interpretation of the national identity, based on what has been described as 'Muslim nationalism' (White 2012) or 'neo-Ottomanism' (Çınar 2011). But it would be a mistake to consider that new interpretations of a national Muslim identity would seek to replace the ethnic Turkishness at the heart of the national subject (cf. White 2012). Rather it is a question of a new kind of combination where the earlier ideal of the national subject as a secular Muslim Turk has been replaced with the pious Muslim Turk.

The discursive struggles between the secularists and the Islamists over the constitution of the national subject have been reflected in relation to cultural practices and customs (Navaro-Yashin 2002a; Özyürek 2006). Both parties sustain different rituals to establish their identities as national and modern subjects, often rejecting other practices. For example, the Islamist Welfare Party introduced celebrations of the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul in the 1990s, which was considered as a sign of their desire to return to the past in the eyes of the secularists (see Çınar 2005). However, some of my interviewees sought to challenge the rejection of religious practices by the secularists. For example, IR student Ece discussed the secularization of wedding ceremonies in Turkey. Along with other reforms, also the marriage institution was transformed when a secular civil code replaced the Islamic law in 1926 (White 2003, 151). Consequently, religious and polygamous marriages were no longer recognized and the state required all new couples to marry through civil service in the magistrate's office (Ibid., 156). A civil marriage certificate thus became one of the signs of the "modern" national subject. Religious marriages were (and are) perceived first and foremost as a rural custom, where a man takes a second wife through a religious ceremony, leaving her and her children without any legal recognition (Ibid.). Nevertheless, it has been emphasized that already in the late Ottoman period, polygamy was in fact a rare practice (see Duben & Behar 1991; Kandiyoti 1997).

Today urban pious Muslim couples can organize an additional and unofficial wedding ceremony in a mosque, which is referred in the secularist circles as the "imam marriage" (Int.Ece.30042010). Ece pointed out how these religious ceremonies were both a source of

ridicule and shame for the secularists. Although she admitted that she too joked about these ceremonies with her friends, she also expressed an unexpected desire towards this custom, and wished that she could also get married in a mosque without the fear of social judgment from her secular family and friends. She compared the secularized marriage ceremonies in Turkey to Christian church weddings and saw that laicism placed limitations upon people's private lives (Int.Ece.30042010). Despite the common secularist description of religion as belonging to the private sphere in Turkey, laic control of the state has extended deep into the private realm (Davison 2003). This is reflected in social and legal practices like marriage, as well as in restrictions of religious attire, most notably the headscarf, in official spaces like schools, public offices, and until recently in universities. It has nevertheless been argued that especially the youth in Turkey does not automatically confirm with previous interpretations of laicism or Islamism (see Neyzi 2001; White 2012). Boundaries between secular and Muslim identities are becoming more fluid, and cultural practices can be discussed and contested in new ways as exemplified by Ece's discussion of the "imam marriage."

Turkish secularism has historically been intolerant towards public as well as private demonstrations of religious identity. Perhaps Ece's discussion of wedding ceremonies and her somewhat ambivalent attitude towards the "imam marriage" could be understood as a demonstration of a new kind of secular identity. Rather than perceiving public expressions of religion like the headscarf as threatening, Ece wanted to present her secular subject position as *tolerant*. She claimed that a person can be both modern and religious (Int.Ece.30042010), thus she did not perceive these positions as mutually exclusive. Her quest for a tolerant and secular subject position was further demonstrated when she argued that her stance towards Islamism was "*exceptional*" in comparison to her friends who did not want to communicate with headscarved women (Ibid.). In comparison to the early Kemalist discourse, Ece wanted the present her understanding of the modern subject as tolerant and inclusive, rather than blatantly rejecting public forms of religious expression.

Discourse analysts Margaret Wetherell and Jonathan Potter (1992) have traced discourses of tolerance and prejudice of the white majority in the context of New Zealand. What they found out was that representatives of the white Pākehā population were keen to demonstrate their tolerance towards the Māori in the research interviews where "[E]*veryone wanted to be tolerant and no one wanted to be prejudiced.*" (Ibid., 211). Similar tendencies could also be found in my interviews; other interviewees also constituted their subject positions as tolerant

for example by welcoming veiled students into universities (Int.Orhan&Taner.15052010). Tolerant positions could also be negotiated through particular kinds of confessions and self-accusations (Wetherell & Potter 1992, 204). In my material this was done by Yeşim, who described how she hated herself after categorizing someone as traditional and religious (Int.Yeşim.07052010). She also mentioned how she perceived these people not behaving properly for the benefit of the country. In her opinion, her own pre-judgment was one of the reasons why she did not consider herself as "completely modern." Interesting was also the way in which the interviewees disassociated prejudice from themselves, like Ece did when she declared that her position towards Islamism was exceptional, and described others (her friends) as intolerant (see Wetherell & Potter 1992, 204). Presenting oneself as tolerant is one way of establishing positive identity (Ibid.), but it does not reveal the discursive limits of "tolerance."

Another feature in the presentation of tolerant subject positions was the perceived intolerance of the counterparty. Many interviewees emphasized "respect" for others as a key characteristic of a modern person, but were quick to point out how others could not accommodate to a setting of different opinions and refused to engage in critical discussion. For example, Yeşim pointed out that:

> 2: "[T]*he others also take education for example but they look not this way. They just look and see one thing and not the other things. They say that it's blue, ok it is blue. You cannot change their ideas. Because they believe it... in a very strong way. They make it like religion, like a god, you can't change it and you can't touch it. And this way the characteristics of people separate the education because I take same education as them but I can look more generally and I can listen to other people, but they cannot. They cannot because they don't want to learn new things, they just want to emphasize their own ideas and make people believe it, just believe it, not comment on that.*" (Int.Yeşim.07052010.)

Here the Other was perceived as possessing a single truth and not willing to change its point of view under any circumstances. This kind of uncompromising dogmatism could be interpreted as a discursive sign appointed to a religious Other, and presented against the critical rationality and "tolerance" of the secular subject. What is noteworthy is that in this narrative is that only one of these groups in perceived to be learning to listen and to share opinions, while the other stick to their ideas without the willingness to change. This could be compared with the temporal identity of the Other presented in the previous chapter. When I asked the interviewees how they socialized with these 'others' they often mentioned that their relations were friendly but remained superficial. Open discussions and direct engagement

with these others seemed to be avoided.

Furthermore, tolerant subject positions did not extend towards conservative policies of the current AKP-government which continued to be viewed with a certain level of skepticism and critique. The articulated respect of pious individuals did not translate into acceptance of "Islamist" policies in general. For example, Ece voiced criticism towards the ban of alcohol consumption outdoors in certain districts in Istanbul:

> 12*: "[I] know from Istanbul for instance, I have no idea of particular changes in Ankara or what happened or not, but for instance in Istanbul you cannot anymore drink in certain districts. You cannot drink alcohol outside and this has been established by the AKP government. In fact, I wouldn't prefer to make the argument that since we as the alcohol consumers, that since we are not allowed to drink alcohol that Turkey is becoming more Islamic, but I mean if you have a democratic society you have to have equal and relative freedoms to all in accordance with all the social groups that society is composed of. So in terms of expanding freedoms with reference to headscarved women in Turkey but restricting freedoms in terms of consuming alcohol in the public does not seem to me really democratic in relation to AKP."* (Int.Ece.30042010)

Next to the visibility of women's hair in public spaces, consumption of alcohol has been considered as one of the most important cultural signs associated with the secular outlook and 'modern' national subjectivity (White 2009, 5). Although Ece did not want to claim the position of a supporter of unlimited alcohol consumption ("I wouldn't prefer to make the argument that since we as the alcohol consumers"), this particular political decision gave her an opportunity to question the democratic character and the equality of the policies of the AKP. She perceived that the AKP limited the freedoms of secular alcohol consumers, while promoting the rights of headscarved women associated with Islamism. Similarly to the discussion of conservative students in the university context, the AKP was also presented as intolerant towards alcohol consumers in Turkey. The common fear of the secularists has culminated in the question of whether or not the AKP is willing to protect the interests of others than its supporters. "It is not only the right *to* wear the headscarf that must be defended but also the right of any Muslim girl *not* to wear the hijab if she so chooses […] that must be asserted," philosopher Seyla Benhabib (2009, 27) has argued.

Secular subject positions were thus negotiated in the light of what was understood as growing "Islamization" of Turkish society. Despite the strengthened control of public alcohol consumption, increasing visibility of headscarves, and loss of job opportunities in the state

bureaucracy for those not demonstrating support for the AKP, Ece asserted that she did not feel any personal pressure "*to become more Islamic or less*" (Int.Ece.30042010). It could be interpreted that she wanted to project her identity as stable in a situation of political change where the secular elite (where she too belonged) was losing its hegemonic position and becoming to represent the minority. Articulations of "tolerance" could also be regarded as ways to create a positive image of the Self and to avoid presumed accusations of the interviewer (see Wetherell and Potter 1992, 212).

What I have wanted to point out here is how these articulations of tolerance have been often followed by narratives of prejudice and intolerance of others, be they individuals or groups in the university environment, or existing political parties perceived to be discriminating against the interests of the secular segment of the population. In this narrative "tolerance" and "respect" are named as important characteristics of a modern subject and these key terms are then closely connected to one's own secular subject position through different articulations. With the projection of intolerant Others holding on to a single world view that is described with terms often associated with religion, tolerance and respect can be associated only with a single segment of the population. Because these Others cannot be interpreted as tolerant due to their inherent dogmatism, only the secular national subjects can be interpreted as modern.

6.2. Modern Muslim subject position

When sociologist Nilüfer Göle (1996; [1991]) published one of the first studies of university students wearing Islamic headscarves (*türban*) in Turkey in the early 1990s, her study caused a national uproar. Göle was considered a speaker for the Islamists, because she considered the young covered women of her study as both modern *and* religious agents. This did not fit into the Kemalist understanding of modernity that presented the modern woman as a westernized subject that did not cover her hair. Göle considered that the agency of the vocal and young Muslim women was acknowledged neither by the Kemalists who could not incorporate veiled women into their understanding of civilization, nor was it entirely approved within the Islamist movement itself. Since conventional gender roles have been accentuated by political Islam, it could not fully support the public and political activism of these women. However, covered young women wanting to enter into universities without having to remove their headscarves because of the headscarf ban, were often used as a political symbol of the Islamist parties in Turkey (Çınar 2005, 85–87). This political symbolism did not however guarantee support of these women's challenges towards the patriarchal norms within the

Islamist movement itself (Ibid.).

Whereas 'Islamist' was an accepted and often self-adopted identity during the 1980s and 90s, today even the most religious students do not want to be called 'Islamists' or religionists, but rather identify themselves as 'pious' or 'devout' (Saktanber 2010, 261). Turkish sociologist Ayşe Saktanber refers to these pious subjects as post-Islamist youth and sees that for them religion comprises an issue that is open to questioning and negotiation rather than an inviolable set of norms (Ibid., 262). Islamism is no longer understood as a reaction against Westernization (cf. Göle 1996) or a single movement, and religious identities are comprised in the context of lively public discussion of the meaning of religion in a modern world. Some of my interviewees also constituted their subject positions as modern *and* Muslim. What separated their subjectivities from other interviewees was that they actively brought up and discussed their religious identities, whereas those who I interpreted as secular often refrained from doing so, or saw religion in a negative light as an obstacle of modernization. This did not mean that "secular" interviewees would not have identified themselves as Muslims, but it is a question of priority given to religion and religious identity as a way to constitute a subject position. Articulated religious identity did not however exclude general support for secularism, but these interviewees did not necessarily agree with its laicist implementation in Turkey. This chapter asks how did this post-Islamist youth challenge secularism as a condition of the modern national subject. What kind of modern subject positions did they constitute and how?

6.2.1. The headscarf debate

One of the most important themes in articulations of the modern Muslim subject position in the interviews was the Islamic headscarf. Although there were also other important signs used to negotiate these identities, I would like to begin with the headscarf debate, because it has been the most political question in Turkish universities from the 1980s onwards. The headscarf issue does not comprise the entire contents of the modern Muslim subject position, but reflects the discursive struggle within Turkish society that feeds into the construction of subject positions. Wearing of the Islamic headscarf was banned in Turkish universities for the first time in 1982 when the state was controlled by a military regime (1980–1983) (Özdalga 1998, 39–42). The National Security Council set up by the military saw the increasing visibility of religious identities in the public sphere as a threat to the secular establishment of the state, and wanted to exclude this phenomenon from the universities. The headscarf ban

was never established as a law but as a regulation by the Turkish Council of Higher Education (*Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu*, YÖK) (Ibid.). The ban has concerned only students and teachers wearing the Islamic headscarf commonly referred as the *türban*, often a colorful silk scarf tightly covering the hair and the neck. It became particularly political in the university context whereas other forms of covering (like the headscarves of peasant women) have not been interpreted as political symbols. The ban can be connected with the historical Kemalist discourse encouraging women to remove their veils (see Çınar 2005, 62). However, unlike the *fez* commonly worn by Muslim men at the time of the establishment of the republic, women's headscarves were never outlawed, but their use was banned in public institutions, like schools and courtrooms (see Göle 1996; White 2003).

It has been argued that veiled women could not occupy a position of a modern subject in the early republic (Göle 1996). They were seen as relics of tradition, as those who had "not yet modernized" and could not confirm with the image of a national subject. In the Kemalist imaginary the ideal Turkish woman was an educated professional, simultaneously fulfilling her roles as a public citizen and a nurturing mother. She did not cover her hair, and wore westernized yet modest clothes. Discourses and practices of exclusion of veiled women from the public sphere continue to exist in the present context. One of my interviewees, engineering student Kadir described his feelings when his mother could not participate in his graduation ceremony, because she covered her head:

> TK: *"How did it make you feel that your mother couldn't attend your graduation ceremony?*
>
> 1: *That's not nice of course. I'm one of the citizens of that government, I believe that... In fact, this is not the case* [anymore]*, they can attend for now but I'm talking about 3-4 years ago, they could not attend. So you think that you are one of the citizens of this government, of this country and there is a classical saying "I'm paying my taxes". But the governors are not behaving as if my mother is an ordinary* [citizen]*, she's like a guilty* [person]*. She's not in fact. So it hurts you. But in these days that's not the case."* (Int.Kadir.11042010)

Exclusion of his mother from the graduation ceremony seemed to confirm for Kadir that his mother was not considered as an ordinary member of Turkish society. In his view, veiled women had been considered as second-class citizens in the past (Int.Kadir.11042010). The discourse of exclusion was also described by interior architecture student Zehra, who was the only interviewee who covered her hair as a sign of religious identity. To describe an extent of the headscarf ban, Zehra referred to the case of Merve Kavakçi, a representative of the

conservative Virtue Party, who became the first parliamentarian to enter a session of the Turkish National Assembly wearing an Islamic headscarf in 1999 (Int.Zehra.14052010; see also Shively 2005). This act was considered as a provocation among the representatives of secularist parties, and Kavakçi was quickly removed from the assembly, and her Turkish citizenship was revoked soon after the incident.

Zehra described the dominant discourse of the modern subject in Turkey as conservative and exclusive. She pointed out how the current understanding of 'freedom' and 'liberalism' could only incorporate a single interpretation in the Turkish context. Here "modern" people are presented as conservative as they would describe their political opponents.

> 13: *"[B]ecause people trying to be modern are actually not being modern, they are being more conservative but in the other way, they want you to be free as they think that you are... They have a freedom-understanding and you need to fit in that so being liberal... is like you need to be liberal as well for him to respect you... This is another view about being conservative I think, so this is the problem about people thinking that they are modern."* (Int. Zehra.14052010)

Both Kadir and Zehra rejected the perception that headscarved women could not be considered as modern subjects. Contrary to the expectations of the secularists, young veiled women have argued that Islamic covering (*tesettür*) provides them with the protection they need to enter into the male-dominated public realm and to participate fully in society (Çınar 2005, 76–77). They have evoked the language of equal rights and freedoms to gain access into the public institutions like the university (Ibid.). In other words, they have wanted to occupy the position of the modern national subject and to a certain extent their struggle has been successful. Since October 2010, the YÖK has followed somewhat loosened regulations regarding the headscarf. The ban has not been officially lifted but it has become easier for headscarved students to attend their classes without having to uncover (White 2012, 88). Although Kadir, Zehra and Ayla considered that the AKP-government was working to lift the ban, and had challenged secularist forces like the judiciary and the media, their support for the party in this particular issue did not translate into unconditional support for the AKP in general. Instead, interviewees with modern Muslim subject positions expressed similar distrust and resentment towards the clientelist policies of the state as other interviewees (see Int.Kadir.11042010; Int.Ayla.27042010).

In the conservative secularist circles of society protests against the headscarf ban have been

interpreted as a threat to the security of the state. The new veiling movement has disrupted the authority and power of state secularism, and the new visibility of religious affiliation in the public sphere has openly challenged official interpretations of Islam. Since the *türban*-movement has not been under the control of the secular state, and has introduced an alternative nationalist ideology, it has been considered as a threat to the secular establishment of the state. (Çınar 2005, 75–82.) Although the political situation has changed after the electoral successes of the AKP in 2002 and 2007, the perception of the headscarf as a threat to the state continued to be presented in the secular media:

> 13:*"Mmhmm..it's not that... for example, in the dormitory I was watching TV and then it was something about* [the number of] *headscarved people is increasing, it was in the news and it was like a threat, it was shown as a threat for... Turkey and the news was like this and I was watching and people were watching and then I felt so uncomfortable that I had to go to my room because... It's like you are a threat to other people, you know, they don't show any reasons for that but the way they present it, like* [the number of headscarved] *people are increasing, something is going to happen, are we going to be another Iran, you know..."* (Int.Zehra.14052010)

Zehra considered that images presented in the media had a great influence to the attitudes of her fellow students towards her. As she explained, the threat constituted by the headscarved women in the media was often not elaborated clearly, rather it could be read between the lines and in the way the news of the increasing use of Islamic head covering was presented (Int.Zehra.14052010.). These representations carried connotations with the Iranian revolution in 1979, and employed the same imaginary of covered militant women so often used to visualize the revolution in the western media (Çınar 2005, 75). The suggestion that Turkey would transform into "another Iran" with the increase of women's Islamic head covering was a common secularist slogan already in the 1990s. The headscarf was seen as a symbol of 'Islamization' of society, and thus constituted a challenge to the perceived secular and contemporary way of life in Turkey (Navaro-Yashin 2002a, 25–28.). What made this implicit threat even more powerful was that it did not come from outside of Turkey, but it was represented by certain members of the society itself. Presenting the headscarf as a threat to the secular state was a discursive strategy in its own right that undermined people with religious identities as not "properly" Turkish (they were not secular or westernized).

Although Bilkent was considered as particularly liberal in its enforcement of the headscarf ban by many of the interviewees, Zehra's description of the university environment presented

another story. According to Zehra, for many of her classmates she had been the first young woman wearing a *türban* that they had gotten to know and although the number of students covering their hair on campus was very low, only a few of her classmates and teachers had asked her about her decision to cover (Int.Zehra.14052010). Many of the interviewees also told me that they avoided discussing sensitive issues like religion with other students, or talked about them only with their closest friends. It was also emphasized that the university constituted an "intellectual space" that was considered separate from the political confrontations of the surrounding society (Int.Ayla.27042010). Universities were perceived as representing a "higher" state of discussion in comparison to the political establishment in Turkey, where politicians focused on fighting rather than problem-solving (Int.Bariş.26042010; Int.Emre.07052010). Interpreted as a political symbol, the headscarf could not occupy legitimate position in this "intellectual" climate of the university and needed to be ignored and silenced.

On the other hand, the headscarf can also be interpreted as a sign of religious belief and emotion that can be easily opposed to the scientific rationality of the academia. Perceptions of Turkish universities as apolitical spaces reserved for science alone have been challenged by pointing out that universities have been very political environments not only because of the headscarf ban, but because they have held the contradictory tasks of political indoctrination and promotion of scientific and critical thinking (see Turan 2010). Turkish political scientist and former university rector İlter Turan has pointed out that the military regime of the 1980s stripped the universities from their remaining autonomy and heavily influenced the contents of university studies in order to enforce the students' loyalty towards national values. For example, a highly ideological course concerning Atatürk's principles was made mandatory. At the same time, universities were expected to act as institutions promoting science and critical thought; tasks that was also recognized by my interviewees. However, from the point of view of state, the university was not designed to promote different interpretations of national subjectivity but was to focus on the indivisibility of the nation. Discussions could take place within given political boundaries, and more often than not, the Islamic headscarf would not be included within these boundaries.

Nevertheless, some of my secular interviewees also welcomed female students with headscarves on campus. Fox example, Bariş argued that veiled students fulfilled the role of a diligent and hard-working student better than those who had conventionally appeared as

"modern", namely students from upper class, wealthy families. According to his interpretation, these women had more academic ambitions and goals than others studying with their "fathers money" (Int.Bariş.26042010). These interviewees did not object the pluralization of the university environment. For them, the headscarf ban represented outdated political thinking.

6.2.2. Authentic Turkish identities?

Although the headscarf debate has been one of the most intense political debates in Turkey in the last decades, the struggle against the ban has been but one issue in constituting modern Muslim identity. Interviewees had multiple ways of constituting their subject positions as modern and Muslim and to challenge the previous discourses of secular modernity. Most important of them was the constitution of local and authentically modern subject as opposed to an imitated and foreign interpretation of the modern.

One of the main discursive strategies to constitute a national subject position by interviewees with articulated Muslim identities was to emphasize their connectedness with tradition and local history. This enabled them to present their identities as authentic and "truly" modern as opposed to others who were perceived to be imitating the West. The "authentic" and "local" subject position was strengthened with the presentation of others as "imitators" who had copied their way of life from elsewhere. Anthropologist Yael Navaro-Yashin (2002a, 20) detected similar narratives of 'nativeness' among secularists and Islamists in Istanbul during the first political success of the Islamist Welfare Party in the mid-1990s. At that time, political struggles of Turkey's authentic identity continued to be concentrated on the issue of gender. On the one hand, Islamist women argued that through the reintroduction of the veil, they were reclaiming "local culture" after decades of repressive Westernization and that secular women were 'not being true to themselves' and were 'copying the West' (Ibid.). I would like to add that if the Other could be presented as an imitator of a different "culture", its national subject position could also be put into question. If someone is perceived to be imitating a foreign way of life, then his/her claims for national identity can be challenged.

On the other hand, secularists had to come up with their own discourses of nativity and 'authentic' Turkishness in the heated political atmosphere of the mid-1990s. Before they had imagined themselves as being "beyond culture" that had been associated with Islamic way of life and its rituals of praying, fasting and Islamic dress codes for example (Ibid., 28–29.).

They turned again to the early republican past and Atatürk's speeches to determine what constituted "proper" Turkish comportment and style (Ibid., 21). Pious identities have also been confronted by arguing that women are either forced to wear headscarves by their male relatives, or that they have actually been paid to cover by Islamist groups (on the latter, see White 2012, 89). Hence, when claiming their positions as "authentic" and "native" Turkish subjects, both Islamists and secularists have attempted to undermine each other's way of life.

Similarly, interviewees with religious identities wanted to question the depth of the secular modernity. Zehra argued that those who saw themselves as "modern" were pursuing a lifestyle that had been adopted from elsewhere, a lifestyle that did not confirm with their social environment. She differentiated between this "shallow" understanding of modernity and "*the other modern*" that she considered being in harmony with the surrounding environment.

> 13:*"[I] again turn to these who think they are modern; I don't think they are modern... --- These people are trying to be like the ones who they like, it is not a deep thing, it's just trying to be like them... so I don't, like I said, describe them as modern but the other modern I think comes ... it needs to fit your traditions as well because you have a past, you have your city's past, your country's past, everything, you cannot ignore them, so I think even environment affects you, you can not completely lead another life... so you need to collect everything in the best way that fits to you and I think this makes you modern..."* (Int.Zehra.14052010)

I would like to point out that these interviewees did not want to disassociate themselves from modernity, but to constitute their subject positions as *selectively* modern. For example Kadir described himself as able to choose the "beneficial" aspects of modernity, while rejecting others. He mentioned that although football was considered as the most important modern sport in Turkey, he *chose* not to support any team because he considered it as a waste of time. Instead he wanted to focus on his studies which he saw as beneficial for his country (Int.Kadir.11042010). The selectively modern subject position could be contrasted against the idea of secular modernists who had "copied" their lifestylefrom the West without a form of critical consciousness. Nevertheless, Kadir did not present a clear strategy how to choose the "beneficial" aspects of the modern. The most important sign of selectively modern position seemed to be the emphasis of critical agency; hence a modern subject was not determined on the basis of his/her use of technology for example, but through a process of criticism and self-awareness, and certain loyalty towards a culture depicted as "local".

71

To establish a modern Muslim identity that was more culturally authentic than its secular counterpart, it was important to connect it with local practices. Seda Demiralp (2012, 513) has argued that secularists have created an image of the Islamists by employing certain typifications related to skin color, accent, class, customs, names, occupational groups and even tastes in food, and used these to differentiate themselves from religious conservatives. Using Bourdieu's terms, Demiralp argues that religious identities have been associated with 'low culture' while secularists have presented themselves as representatives of 'high culture' (Ibid.). Islamists have countered these discourses by arguing that they represent "the people". Counter-discursive strategies could also be detected from my research material. For example, instead of rejecting certain customs like kissing the hand of one's elders, Ayla considered this form of greeting as an important sign of respect and argued that holding on to traditions like these did not prevent her from being modern (Int.Ayla.27042010). However, although she argued for the preservation of certain practices that were looked down on by secularists, she did not want to present herself as "traditional" but used the term "conventional" instead to describe herself, signaling the pervasiveness of the traditional as the binary opposition of the modern. These cultural practices were also closely connected with national identity and required protection against outside threats. For Ayla, the European Union (EU) comprised such a threat. She argued that during Turkey's EU-accession negotiations, the EU had tried to force Turkey to ban certain customs like the use of *henna* in wedding ceremonies, and one of Turkey's popular fast-foods, *kokoreç*, which is made from lamb's intestines. Even if the government would agree on these conditions, Ayla assured me that Turkish people would never confirm with such regulations (Ibid.).

If the interviewees with religious identities considered Turkey's modernization as an imitation of the West, which in most cases signified Western Europe and the United States, and as detrimental to Turkey's Islamic character, then what kind of new contents did they consider important for national identity? As Navaro-Yashin (2002a, 20) has argued there exists no consensus on what constitutes Turkey's "native" culture. This holds true even among Islamists or secularists themselves; they do not agree on the fundamental elements of Turkish culture or how these elements are to be expressed in the daily lives of Turkish subjects. Still to argue that one represents "authentic" Turkish culture constitutes powerful argument for one's own national subject position, especially when this claim is presented simultaneously with the argument that the Other is living under a "false" understanding of national subjectivity, be it a lifestyle which has been "copied" from the West, or a religious identity that has been "bought"

by Islamists. Next to constituting a selectively modern subject position that was connected with "local" and "authentic" history and culture, interviewees with modern Muslim positions focused on the critique of laicist interpretation of secularism. Although they did not formulate new clear contents for a national identity, others have suggested that during the last decade of AKP-dominated politics, Turkey has attempted to establish a new global identity for itself (Hale & Özbudun 2010; White 2012). It has developed a new sense of pride in its Islamic past and strengthened its connections with other Muslim countries and beyond. Perhaps this sense of pride is also reflected in the line of critique formulated by these interviewees; Islam as "culture" is no longer something that needs to be marginalized in the formulations of Turkish national identity.

On the other hand, it has also been suggested that Islamism should no longer be regarded as a single political movement in Turkey (White 2012, 49). Instead, the pious youth is opting for a more personal interpretation of religion which White (Ibid.) has interpreted leading towards a more pluralist society. This has not meant however that nationalist sentiments would have disappeared; rather they have become strengthened with the recent developments like the ongoing conflict with the Kurdish rebels in the south-east of Turkey, and the Syrian civil war across the border. After an initial period of EU-membership inspired reforms and initiatives to improve cultural rights of the Kurds and the religious rights of the Alevi, the AKP has also introduced harsh rhetoric emphasizing the nation as an indivisible entity fighting against separatism (Hale & Özbudun 2010, 157). In the end, "Muslim nationalism" (White 2012) or "neo-Ottomanism" (see for example Çınar 2011) have been no less conservative than other forms of Turkish nationalism. Political struggles of the contents of the Turkish national subject continue and can be also witnessed in the following chapter that deals more specifically on narratives of Turkey's national history.

6.3. Contestations of national history

History is one of the most important discursive fields that brought forward contestations of the national subjectivity. Nations require a historical narrative in order to exist, and subjects of the nation are to be made aware of their 'common' past through education, the media and the military for example (Anderson 2006). However, there rarely exists a single narrative of national history. "Official" history of the state is often met with competing descriptions and alternative nationalisms that all contribute to the understanding of the national subject. In the Turkish case, Islamists have challenged the importance secularists have attributed to the

founding years of the republic and wanted to reintroduce the Ottoman past into the narrative of Turkish history (Çınar 2005, 138–151.). Additionally, whereas Kemalists have celebrated the early decades of the republic as the most modern era in Turkish history (see Özyürek 2006), religious conservatives have brought forward alternative narratives of repression and violence, thus producing an alternative interpretation of national history. In this chapter, I explore how the interviewees imagined the early republican period, and what conditions of "modern" national subjectivity did they see as descending from this particular era. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the position given to Mustafa Kemal in the students' narratives.

As a discursive strategy, suggestions of "imitation" did not only cover the lifestyle of the secular elite in the present Turkish context, but extended to the history of the Turkish republic. Interviewees with modern Muslim subject positions voiced their critique towards the modernization process in the republican period by challenging the Kemalist interpretation of national history as a triumph of modernization. They argued that by changing the alphabet, dress codes, laws and regulations, the early republican elite had wanted to imitate Western Europe. They did not question the establishment of the republic or the need of modernization in general and the Ottoman Empire also appeared as a failed state in their narratives. But they did challenge the legitimacy of the reforms and the extent of force that had been used to implement them.

> 1: "[B]*ut if you look at that period, there was the World War One and we had lots of problems in our country because the Ottoman Empire is [had] collapsed and a new republic of Turkey is built. There are lots of new events, lots of new improvements, lots of new movements. Everything is done to become modern. This was the reason. Our purpose is to push our community to a modern level. So what should we do? We have to quit our old habits. This is the first one. And second, we have to imitate the modern ones. For example receiving some laws from Sweden or Switzerland or Italy for example, laws related to trade from France I guess. So we just start to imitate the people, so what are they using? They are using the Latin alphabet, so let's imitate them. Everything happened in just one night. Not just this one [the alphabet reform] but also other ones... and if something disputes that, if someone refuses to obey these rules, they are also executed. Lots of people are executed because they were wearing a cap* [the fez]*, just a cap."* (Int.Kadir.11042010)

Republican reforms signaled the transformation of local Muslim culture into something else for Kadir and Ayla. Among other things, both of them brought up how men had to give up the *fez* in the early republic, how the radio would only broadcast Western classical music (Ayla), and how the Ottoman Arabic alphabet was replaced with Latin letters "overnight" (Kadir). For

Kadir, the modernization process was not only understood as weakening Turkey's Islamic culture, but it also signaled a step towards (European) Christianity. At the same time it could be interpreted as a step away from the rest of the Islamic world that was no longer connected to Turkey through important symbols like scripture, religious law, or the lunar calendar. From Kadir's point of view, the turn towards Christianity was demonstrated by the laic regulations that prevented people from praying during working hours and introduced Saturday and Sunday as the weekend thus replacing Friday that had been inscribed as the day of worship for Muslims (Int.Kadir.11042010). Laicism was therefore understood as the main mechanism of modernization in the republic.

Although some key symbols of religion were altered in the early republic as Kadir argued, this did not however signal Turkey's transformation into a "Christian" country. Despite the laic reforms, religion remained as an important condition of the Turkish national subject (Davison 2003; Cagaptay 2006; White 2012). Islam became heavily controlled by the state, since state officials did not want it to turn into a competing national identity. That is why the state-controlled religious institutions like the Directorate of Religious Affairs were set up to produce a new interpretation of "Turkish Islam" that fitted into the 'progressive' and 'scientific' world view of the early republicans (Özdalga 2006). The practice of religion was homogenized, when the influential Sufi-brotherhoods were forced underground. Sunni Islam became "official" Turkish Islam, and other interpretations like the Alevi were not recognized as separate communities, but were expected to diffuse themselves into the state-sponsored religion. Also the continuing suspicion of the non-Muslim minorities suggested that membership in the Turkish nation was reserved to Muslims alone (Cagaptay 2006, 15). Other conditions of Turkish national subjectivity included speaking Turkish, adopting a Turkish last name and otherwise assimilating to the nation (Ibid.). Although Muslim identity was to a certain extent replaced with an emphasis of Turkish race and blood later on (see White 2012, 29), it remained as an important characteristic of the national subject.

Other interviewees did not perceive early republican reforms as "imitation" or loss of culture or national identity; on the contrary, they saw that during the republican period Turkey had wanted to integrate into a European civilization. For example Ece explained that due to their European-style education, early republican elites considered themselves as belonging to the West. They had distinguished themselves from the Islamic heritage of the Ottoman period and sought to modernize the country after the example of Western Europe, most notably France

(Int.Ece.30042010). Ece did not determine this process as an "imitation" of a foreign culture as Kadir and Ayla had done, but what I would call as a form of *association*. According to this interpretation, Turkey had turned away from the Middle East and wanted to become acknowledged as a European country. However, Ece noted that modernity constituted a question of power, and it had been Europeans who had invented it and who could decide who were (and who were not) eligible to participate in it (Ibid.). Therefore Turkey's association with Europe could not be described as a straight-forward process.

It could be argued that the "European choice" of the republican elites is also reflected in the everyday life of today's elite in Turkey. Perceptions of Turkey's "European" character still influence the lifestyle and academic choices of upper-class university students in Bilkent.

> 12: "[F]*or instance most of the locations... I look at my friends and even myself... we prefer to choose... we prefer to spend our holidays in France, Germany, European states... Prague... all those fancy... European places but never to Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq... So, we also in our... that there is an east as well, that there is a non-West realm as well... We are learning Western languages, not ... none of us knows Arabic language or Persian, even Ottoman and it is sad I think... For instance after 1923 after the Republic was established... maybe after the second generation of the republic you can find no one able to read Ottoman..."* (Int.Ece.30042010)

There is also a sense of loss that can be detected from Ece's narrative, especially regarding Ottoman culture and language. Although she perceived Turkish national identity as a man-made construction (Int.Ece.20042010), she did not seek to challenge the contents of this identity unlike interviewees with articulated religious subject positions. For her, it was important to sustain the narrative provided by the founding fathers of the nation that signified "a turn towards Europe", and away from the Middle East. This historical discourse was connected with choices and preferences in the present context; to learn European languages and to visit European countries were considered as important signs of Westernization that seemed to exclude cultural interest towards the Middle East ("*never to Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq"*). Swedish sociologist Elisabeth Özdalga (2006, 565) has argued that (until recently) there has also been a great lack of academic interest towards the Middle East in Turkey as a consequence of a historical understanding of Turkey's civilizational superiority over the Arabs. Nevertheless, Turks have not 'orientalized' Arab culture to the same extent as Europeans for example, but remained peculiarly silent of it (Ibid.). This lack of interest and the consequential silence seem to present also in Ece's account; the possibility to learn Arabic or Persian or to travel to Syria, Iran, Iraq or Lebanon seem like unthought-of options for her.

It has to be pointed out that although interviewees with modern Muslim subject positions criticized the cultural transformation in the early republic, they did not associate Turkey with the wider setting of the Middle East or articulate any connections with other Muslim peoples in the region. Rather the question of where does Turkey belong has most often been discursively resolved by emphasizing Turkey's unique character between the East and the West (Navaro-Yashin 2002a). Hence, Turkey is understood as neither entirely European, nor Arab, but simply as Turkish.

Discourses of Turkey's national history require also an analysis of one of the most influential figures in Turkish history, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. His role as the father of the nation has also been reflected in his honorary last name which means "Father of the Turk(s)." Although most of the interviewees saw him as an important initiator of modernist reforms in Turkey, narratives describing Atatürk also included certain ambivalence towards him. Few would deny Mustafa Kemal's important role during the independence struggle and the establishment of the republic, but his position was also been successfully turned into a personality cult after his death in 1938 (Zürcher 2004, 182). For the multi-ethnic population, Atatürk was to symbolize a 'father' who would unify the nation. That is why his statues and busts occupy almost all public spaces in Turkey starting from city squares to class rooms, and his famous quotations are inscribed in walls and schoolbooks. During the high political tensions of the 1990s, he also became the personalized symbol of secularism and was transported from the public to the private realm of people's homes in the form of Atatürk paraphernalia (Özyürek 2006). However, critical discussion of his significance in Turkish history has been difficult, mainly because of special legislation which has been established to protect his legacy[1].

Nevertheless, I would suggest that some of the interviewees' discussions of the national hero captured the discursive restrictions concerning Atatürk in Turkish society:

> 4:*"[I] don't want to say anything about Atatürk because it's not because you can't say anything against him, don't misunderstand me but I also love Atatürk, but I don't support this idea of Westernization for example..."* (Int.Ayla.27042010).

Ayla's declaration that includes both devotion to Atatürk and at the same time an

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1   For example Law 5618 has been established to rule against crimes committed against Atatürk.

acknowledgement of the discursive rules of Turkish society (*you can't say anything against him*) is a good example of the ambivalence towards Atatürk's historical position in Turkish society. Another form of subtle critique could be detected from Kadir's narrative that brought up the lack of democracy in the early republic. Although it could be argued that democracy as popular form of governance and normative discourse did not achieve its success until the end of the Second World War even in Western Europe and North America, and is therefore entirely misplaced in the critique of the Kemalist state (see Alaranta 2011, 255), the everyday narratives of the interviewees nevertheless easily transcended historical contexts. Appeals to "democracy" (or the lack of) were important discursive tools to challenge the prevailing perceptions of early republican history. By pointing out to the lack of democracy in the early Kemalist republic, interviewees like Kadir could undermine and question the legitimacy of republican policies without having to openly criticize Atatürk as a historical figure. In comparison, for others Mustafa Kemal acted as an initiator of the 'democratic' system in Turkey:

> 11: "[I]*n the Ottoman Empire there is a sultan, the ruler, he is the best and nobody can say that I don't agree with you [sultan], you would be executed, be killed. In the Turkish republic when it was created even people in war... for example Atatürk tried to make the people choose their way, I mean the TBMM, the Turkish big council* [Turkish National Assembly]*, they were choosing their destiny in this council. One of the biggest differences in the first was someone ruling the country but then people started to rule themselves.*
>
> TK: *So you are talking about democracy or...*
>
> 11: *Yes yes. Even in the times of the independence war there was a council and people deciding their fate. In this council by choosing...*
>
> TK: *Their leader?*
>
> 11: *Not leader but their way how to live.*
>
> TK: *This is one of the qualities that make or made Turkey modern?*
>
> 11: *Yes, it is like the beginning of this state."* (Int.Emre.07052010)

Presented against the despotic rule of the Ottoman sultan, the republican state and its national assembly appear as forms of self-governance by the people in Emre's narrative. However, the task of the assembly was not to select a leader or to establish democratic government, but a much greater task of choosing a lifestyle or "destiny." An understanding of Atatürk's position as a national leader has thus already been inscribed here; it did not need to be challenged through elections. In reality, it has been asserted that especially during the turbulent times prior to the establishment of the republic Mustafa Kemal faced significant political opposition from other influential leaders of the resistance (see Zürcher 2004). Later on, these competitors

were discredited in the official history of the republic (Alaranta 2007).

It is certain that Mustafa Kemal continues to be celebrated as a national hero by many Turks, and a loyal Turkish citizen is expected to honour his memory. To criticize Atatürk directly or to challenge his importance as the "father" of the nation would mean that one could not be considered as a 'proper' Turk. However, narratives of national history are slowly unfolding, and different interpretations have been introduced to the fore. Here also, narratives of national history do not comprise a concise entity, rather history remains as an important field of discursive contestation in Turkey. The Kemalist celebration of Turkish history as a saga of modernization has been replaced with more critical voices, which nevertheless continue to share some basic assumptions of republican history. Neither those with secular nor with religious identities have questioned the sanctity of the nation (Navaro-Yashin 2002a). For some, the early republican history appears as an era of repression while others claim it as a period of democracy and self-governance. The conditions for the Turkish national subject have been depicted through "Muslimness" or the perceived "Europeanness" of the Turks, and it has to be added, these categories are not mutually exclusive. Certainly those claiming for Turkey's association with Europe would not deny their Muslim identities. Understandings of national history are thus a field of discursive struggles and overlaps where Turkish subjects attempt to establish what constitutes their national identity and their past as a people.

7. Gendered modernity in Turkey

Gender has been one of the most important discursive fields to constitute "modern" subjects in Turkey. Here, gender is not understood as "natural" differences between men and women, but rather as a social set of norms that guide men and women to act and present their masculinity and femininity in different ways. Gender is interpreted as a social construction and thus subject to change and multiple forms of expression (e.g. Butler 1990). Gender relations should also be understood as political, not just in the conventional feminist sense that concentrate on unfolding gender inequalities, but also as a question of power between different groups of women (and men) across intersecting differences of class, sexuality, ethnicity, minority/majority status, age, and ablebodiedness among others.

It has been particularly women and female sexuality that have been discussed in the context of Turkish modernization. Westernized, uncovered women have been presented as symbols of Turkish modernity. The appearance of women has been an important way to demonstrate

Turkey's "progress" to the outside world. On the other hand, the reappearance of the veil has been interpreted as a sign of a "backlash" towards a conservative Islamist society. Although Turkish women received their political rights in 1934, long before many other countries in Europe, the emphasis given to women's appearance in public and their political participation did not displace prevailing norms of women's modesty and chastity (Parla 2001, 75). Modern republican women were expected to become respectable subjects who would hide their sexuality (Göle 1996, 79) and focus on their duties as mothers and nurturers of new generations of Turkish citizens. Similarly, George Mosse (1985) has argued that in the early twentieth century nationalist imaginary in Germany, France and Great Britain women also occupied positions as guardians of morality, and as protective ideal mothers. According to Mosse, women acted as the key symbols of bourgeois respectability. It is quite telling that the opposite of this ideal of a "national mother" in the Turkish republican thought was the entirely westernized, immoral and loose woman (Parla 2001, 75). The Turkish woman was thus considered as a modern, yet modest subject, publicly visible but not drawing unwanted attention to herself (Ibid.).

Today, the repression of women's sexual identities has been increasingly questioned by younger generations of Turkish feminists. For example, the dominant norm of virginity before marriage has been challenged especially by young, educated and upwardly mobile women. They have sought to establish independent sexual identities and to differentiate themselves from what they have deemed as conservative attitudes of the previous generation. Furthermore, global consumer culture and images from the international media have influenced Turkish youth's attitudes towards love, romance and sex, and made them more desirable. Nevertheless, young Turkish women still negotiate their subject positions in a social environment that reflects the norm of virginity; in everyday Turkish language women are referred to as "girls" (*kız*) until they get married and become "women" (*kadın*). A virgin status has separated girls from women and sought to desexualize them. Women who are sexually active before marriage have been considered transgressing an important social norm. (Ozyegin 2009.)

In the present context, norms concerning sexuality are being renegotiated. It has been argued that rather than being 'objects' of modernist politics and indoctrinating education, Turkish youth (including young women) have increasingly become 'subjects' of their own lives and do not automatically share the norms and expectations of previous generations (Neyzi 2001).

University students for example occupy a social space that gives them multiple opportunities to interact with the opposite sex, and form romantic relationships. Because many of the Bilkent students live on the university campus during the semesters they seem to escape parental control, and even though they stay in segregated dormitories and are under the formal supervision of dormitory staff, they still exercise a different amount of 'freedom' than students living at home. Furthermore, the extremely popular uses of internet and mobile phones have increased young adults' means of communicating with each other. Young people thus constitute their gendered subject positions between normative expectations of proper gender relations on the one hand, and their own claims for (sexual) autonomy on the other. This chapter first studies a discourse of 'sexual modernity' (Ozyegin 2009) by one of the interviewees, and then moves on to a more general level of gendered narratives concerning the family. The point here is to provide an analysis of how the interviewees perceive "modern" femininities and masculinities in the Turkish context.

7.1. Sexual modernity?

3: "[T]*here is a little line there and we have to keep it."* Int.İpek.24042010.

Turkey has traditionally been considered as a Mediterranean culture of "honor and shame," where the sexual conduct of women has defined the 'honor' of a family, group, kin, and even the nation (Ozyegin 2009, 111). So called honor killings have been framed as the crudest examples of this "culture." In Turkey, 'honor' killings have often been portrayed as a sign of remaining traditionality in the primarily Kurdish south-east, thus disassociating them from "Turkish" culture (Kogacioglu 2004, 130). Feminists have questioned this 'tradition effect' and pointed how state institutions have also engaged in the reproduction of discourses concerning 'honor' and 'virginity' (see Kocacioglu 2004). For example until 1999 Turkish authorities could force young women suspected of 'immodest' behaviour or illegal prostitution to go through virginity examinations (Parla 2001, 65–66). These examinations were often targeted against girls living in state-run dormitories, orphanages, prisons, and even high schools (Ibid.). Ayşe Parla argues that virginity tests were used as a modern tool to control female sexuality at a time when an independent women's movement was surfacing in Turkey (Ibid., 76). Although forcing women to go through 'virginity tests' has become illegal, women can still be expected to consent to them voluntarily; not to do so would automatically mark the woman a non-virgin, and thus immoral (Ibid.). Despite the disciplining of women's bodies, it could be argued that young urban and educated Turkish women especially are seeking

distance from what they see as 'traditional' understandings of honor and shame. They do not see virginity as a perquisite of unmarried women and articulate for a new level of sexual autonomy (Ozyegin 2009, 109).

Virginity is but one norm concerning women's sexuality and gender identities in Turkey, but it appears as one of the most relevant in the context of university students of who most are still unmarried. Sociologist Gul Ozyegin (2009) conducted a study on the meanings students attached to virginity in Boğazıcı University in Istanbul, a social environment easily comparable with Bilkent. She coined the term *virginal facades* to describe the ambivalences female students presented when negotiating their sexual identities. None of the young women interviewed by Ozyegin supported the norm of virginity until marriage (Ibid., 109). However, they felt the need to hold a virginal facade towards their parents while on the other hand they wanted to demonstrate a certain level of sexual experiences towards their peers (Ibid., 113). A "modern" woman in this context was someone who could attract the opposite sex, form long-term relationships and be "in control" of her own sexuality. Intimate relationships were to take place within the framework of romantic love and commitedness, 'casual' sexual relations were frowned upon (Ibid., 115).

Similar emphasis of romance and commitment could be detected from İpek's narrative of a 'proper' course in a relationship. During the interview, İpek had described herself as "really free and loose in many aspects" but when it came to courtship and dating, she considered herself as "traditional" and emphasized how she wanted her relationships to proceed in the "right order" (Int.İpek.24042010).

> 3*: "[W]hen you meet a guy and you are dating him for like two years for example. Of course you have to do something with him and my order is not like I'm going to it in the first day or in the first month or in the first two months. I have to feel that this guy really cares about me, he really loves me and he's not just looking for that thing specially. That he's really serious about me, not like marriage or something like that but really serious. "I'm not going to date this girl just for two months, just for six months. I'm really serious and I want to get to know you, everything."* (Int.İpek.24042010)

As often in everyday language, sex is not spoken of directly, but masked under more casual terms like "*it*" and "*that thing,*" but it nevertheless seems clear that İpek considers intimate activities as a necessary part of a heterosexual relationship (*Of course you have to do something with him*). Although she expects commitment and genuine affection from her

partner, she also adds that a "serious" relationship does not have to lead to a marriage. Frequent mentions of time (two years, first day, first month) seem to act as ways to measure and emphasize the stability and length of the relationship on the one hand, and her ability to create a sense of respectability on the other by not engaging in sexual activities before the partner has proven reliable. As explained by Ozyegin (2009, 114), a sexually liberated, "modern" woman has to be able to demonstrate that she is control of her own sexuality and to act as an agent instead of an object because the dominant discourse describes her as an emblem of unrestrained sexual behaviour. In her narrative however İpek adopts a subject position of a sexually active, yet respectable woman.

Despite the claims of sexual autonomy, virginity continues to prevail as a norm marking unmarried women's sex lives in Turkey. This is also noted by İpek who describes the male expectations concerning the virgin status of a future spouse. She differentiates between an idea of a "modern guy", who accepts his partners sexual history, and "most of Turkish guys" who consider non-virgins as "used tools," not pure enough to be married.

> 3: "[A]*nd when it comes to marriage in a Turkish guy's mind, they are looking for "Are you a virgin? Ok then I can marry you but if you are not, ok, you are a used tool. I'm not going to do anything with you..." But for example, a modern guy in Turkey... they are not thinking about that. They are like... "You should, if you lived something in the past, it's ok. I don't care about your past. I care about your future and we'll live together right now." This is a modern guy because they value everything that we value, our body, our mind and everything. But most of the Turkish guys, they are not... They are just... And, they are doing everything that they want because they are guys, but when it comes to girls, they are "No, no, no, no you shouldn't do that. You have to keep it* [virginity]*." And that's just really bad. Of course we have to respect our body, I'm not saying that, of course we have to respect it, I'm not saying that we have to do it with all those... Of course it's bad. But I mean, if you have something good, if you live something good you have to, you know... live it."* Int.İpek.24042010.

İpek's narrative describes the important double standard concerning male and female sexualities in Turkey. While men can have sexual encounters without the fear of serious moral punishment, they also exercise the right to condemn women for their sexual activity. Naturally, also women have moral control over other women (and men), but what is interesting here is how the acceptance of women's pre-marital sexual experiences seems to act as *a condition of a "modern" man*. This approval has served as a way for the upper middle-class secular men to differentiate themselves from the 'traditional' Turkish masculinity, which considers virginity and female modesty as perquisites of marriage (Goksel 2006, 58). Debates

on virginity and women's sexuality in general have thus led to a construction of new kind of masculinities in the Turkish context. Nevertheless, a man who engages in a pre-marital sexual relationship might not consider his girlfriend respectable enough to be married, even if the woman lost her virginity to the man in question (Ibid., 57). Double standards concerning virginity therefore also remain among some of these so called modern men.

Again, the debate concerning virginity and sexual identities in general seems to be determined as a question of tradition and modernity in the Turkish setting (see also Ozyegin 2009, 110). "Modern" masculinities and femininities are constructed against "traditional" ones, yet also the former are bound by new kind of moral conditions of which the most important one is the framework of love and romance as explained above. On the other hand, having "too many" sexual relationships, falling in and out of love "too easily", or behaving "irresponsibly" are all accusations that might lead to the judgment of a young woman as a 'motor girl'; a woman who engages in sexual activities outside a "serious" relationship (Ozyegin 2009, 113–114). In the social surroundings of the university, young women arguing for sexual modernity are thus trying to balance between expectations of the sexual experiencedness of the one hand, and avoidance of moral judgment of being "too loose" or "immoral" on the other. Although İpek condemned male expectations of female virginity until marriage, in the last part of her narrative she also points out how women should not behave irresponsibly and have sex with all potential partners (*I'm not saying we have to do it with all those…*). This moral constraint is also visible in the sentence cited in the beginning of this chapter.

Compared with the historical understanding of the "modern, yet modest" republican woman, in the discourse of sexual modernity a woman is no longer required to conceal her own sexuality; she can take initiative and engage in romantic relationships before marriage. At the same time, women's sexual subjectivities are still restricted by the moral expectations of the surrounding society. Therefore even the modern woman is not to be "overtly" sexual and adventurous, and has to demonstrate control and restraint to her immediate social surroundings. Furthermore, young and supposedly sexually active women can be referred as "used tools" whereas men cannot. This reveals the importance of female virginity and the remaining inequality of sexual norms in the Turkish context.

7.2. Constituting a "modern" family

It has to be pointed out that although sexual diversity and acceptance of pre-marital

heterosexual relationships have increased among the youth in Turkey, this does not mean that all young adults would seek to challenge prevailing sexual norms (Ozyegin 2009, 108). Even in the upper middle-class realm of Bilkent University, students displayed different understandings of "modern" gender relations. Although İpek's narrative constituted an interesting exception in my material and revealed attempts to challenge existing sexual norms, it has to be nevertheless acknowledged that most narratives of "modern" masculinities and femininities moved on a more general level. In addition to the often silenced realm of sexuality, "family" constituted another, more public setting for the organization of gender relations in the Turkish society, where marriage remains a strong social expectation and having children is seen as its natural consequence (see Hart 2006). Turkey has been considered as a familistic rather than individualistic society (Duben & Behar 1991, 247) and although none of my interviewees were married at the time of the interviews, especially female interviewees discussed "modern" gender relations within the realm of the family. "Family" (whether the one they originated from, or the one they imagined themselves having in the future) was an important arena for the constitution of modern and gendered subject positions. Furthermore, the family has been an important locus of modernity in Turkey through the transformation of extended Ottoman households to "modern" and "westernized" nuclear families and back (see Kandiyoti 1997; Yazıcı 2012).

In Turkey, modernity has included redefinitions of respectable and "proper" gender relations. Some of these redefinitions have taken place within the realm of the family that has been constituted as one of the most important social units within the society. Yet, 'family' should also be understood as a historical and political construct that is constantly being redefined (Yazıcı 2012, 110). For example, the transformation of the "family" has included the instillation of the European bourgeois nuclear family as a form of 'normal' familial relations instead of the multi-generational extended families of the Ottoman period, or the unprivileged working classes (Duben and Behar 1991; Kandiyoti 1997). More recently however, the AKP-government has introduced a challenge to the official discourse of nuclear family with the reintroduction of the three-generational extended family as the national ideal (Yazıcı 2012). In his public speeches Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has frequently encouraged young Turkish couples to have at least three children. He has also emphasized the strength of the ideal Turkish family against the presumably weaker familial relations in 'the West', and argued that Turks do not recognize a (Western) modernity that leads to the social abandonment of the elderly (Yazıcı 2012, 114). Anthropologist Berna Yazıcı (2012) points out that these

discourses marking a 'return to the family' have been introduced at the same time as the state has implemented neoliberal welfare policies, where responsibilities of social care have been increasingly placed on the shoulders of non-governmental organizations and familial networks. With its minimal input on care services, the state has directly influenced women's everyday lives since women have been often implicitly understood as the primary caregivers within Turkish families.

In the following I would like to discover how the interviewees described the "modern" family. How are men and women supposed to present their masculinities and femininities within the familial context? Despite the political emphasis on the family and women's implicit roles within the familial sphere, it has to be kept in mind that even these discourses are not as stable as they seem. I would argue that although the conservative political atmosphere constantly emphasizes the sanctity of the family, discursive changes and re-articulations are nevertheless constantly taking place. The ideal family relations might not be as simple and straight-forward as they have been imagined before, and especially young women are renegotiating gender roles within families. At the same time it has to be noted that male interviewees did not express a similar need to challenge or to renegotiate existing gender norms. Male interviewees often discussed modernity in relation to the public realm and rarely mentioned aspects of the so called private real while female interviewees often discussed both or gave an additional emphasis to the latter.

It has been argued that in many nationalist projects of modernization women have been constituted as symbols of modernization while the masculine character of the entire project had remained invisible (Mayer 2001). While women have occupied symbolic roles, men have been the agents behind the scenes, elevating women to their positions of 'pure' and modest virgins, or dedicated mothers (Ibid.; Mosse 1985). Men have been associated with the public realm, while women have been attached to the private, domestic sphere that has also included the family. Despite the strong discourses of modernization and progress in the Turkish society, power hierarchies have remained largely untouched in the private realm (White 2003). Both men and women have participated in the reproduction of essentialist of gender roles within Turkish society.

However, certain contradictions existed in my material between the essentialized forms of femininity and masculinity reproduced by the interviewees, and articulations of new kinds of

ways of 'performing' gender in the context of the family. To a certain extent, interviewees who discussed gender matters seemed to reproduce essential differences between men and women. They perceived men and women as fundamentally different; women were considered as weak and emotional whereas men represented strength and (implicit) rationality (Int.Ayla.27042010; Int.Yağmur.24042010). These presumably natural qualities of men and women were followed by distinctions that required them to "perform" their gender identities in certain ways. Ayla, for example, considered that due to their different characteristics, men and women had different tasks within the household:

> 4*: "[I] believe in the equality between genders but at the same time I believe that women and men are not equal. It's difficult to explain, but I'll try. Men and women have different features so they cannot be equal even if they want. I believe that women and men must have different things to do, for example, woman in the house should... I don't say men shouldn't do any housework, but women are supposed to do that. If I'll marry I'll deal with these house issues, I will not let my husband....*
>
> TK*: Are you talking about cooking, taking care of children and so on?*
>
> 4*: Yes, but not all of them, most of them, I will want his help. Men are not created for cooking or cleaning. Even if he cooks, men cannot cook well, so... But I believe that in the business have the same rights, both men and women have the same job. It's not open to questions."* Int.Ayla.27042010.

On the basis of this narrative, men's and women's tasks remained carefully separated within the familial sphere. Elsewhere in the interview, Ayla described how men were to take care of tasks outside the home, like shopping and car repair while women are in charge of duties inside the house (Int. Ayla.27042010). Transgressions of these gendered practices were not considered appropriate. For example, witnessing a man cleaning the house was not considered acceptable in Ayla's narrative. Another interviewee also described how tasks like childrearing, cooking and cleaning have been constituted as women's duties (Int.Yağmur.24042010). On the other hand, the equal treatment of men and women in the public sphere was strongly emphasized. There seemed to be an evident contradiction between the emphasis of the gender neutrality of the public sphere, and the gendered duties within the domestic realm.

Explanations of differences between gendered boundaries in the public and the private can be located from historical as well as more recent political discourses and practices. Although early republican policies accentuated women's public roles as equal citizens to men, state feminism was not interested in what happened in the private realm of people's homes (White 2003). The state did not want to interfere with power hierarchies inside families and to

demonstrate this the new civil code was written in a way that confirmed the husband's position as the "head of the family" (Ibid., 153). The state continued to support the traditional division of labor within families and motherhood was emphasized 'the highest duty of a woman' (Duben & Behar 1991, 221). The much heralded Turkish 'state feminism' thus sustained conservative gender roles within the private realm and added a new patriotic responsibility on women as reproducers of the nation (White 2003; Yuval-Davis 1997). Furthermore, it has been argued that the more recent conservatism of the AKP has not approached the problems within the familial sphere, on the contrary. AKP's discourse of the 'family' has accentuated the protection of the family against perceived 'outside threats' (Yazıcı 2012, 116). Independent feminist groups have sought to draw attention to domestic violence and gendered hierarchies within families since the 1980s (White 2003, 154). But it has often been that precisely these kinds of openings have been portrayed as "outside threats" towards the "strong and healthy Turkish family," described by AKP's familistic discourse.

Although the Kemalist state and political parties like the AKP have wanted to sustain conservative gender roles and the domestic division of labor, discourses of gender practices have also been prone to a certain amount of change and renegotiation. It could be argued that although women have been expected to participate in the public realm, demands that men would contribute to the private sphere have been much more recent (for a different point of view see Duben & Behar 1991, 235). These new expectations surfaced also in the interviews. Despite her support of traditional gender roles within a household, Ayla argued that men should demonstrate positive masculinity by providing assistance to women in the domestic realm. Consequently, she depicted men unwilling to engage in domestic tasks in a negative light. However, conducting domestic labor independently was considered as a transgression of gendered practices as mentioned before. A "modern" man was depicted as sensitive enough to share the burden of domestic work. It could be argued that renegotiations of gender roles within the familial sphere included both the sustaining of essentialist understandings of gendered practices and new ways of "performing" masculinity and femininity. While holding on to a discourse of gendered duties within a household, young educated women like Ayla nevertheless expected their future husbands to contribute to domestic work. However, in the light of the working conditions in Turkey that often include long working hours and a six- or seven-day working week, hiring domestic help has been much more common option for the upper middle classes than actual sharing of domestic work between the spouses (see for example Özyegin 2002).

Next to their domestic duties, the ideal woman depicted in the interviews was also expected to establish a career and to provide for the well-being of the family. In her narrative, Yağmur described how "modern" men preferred working women as partners in marriage because they could help to support a family economically (Int.Yağmur.24042010). She saw that mutual financial contribution would bring more equality to the family (Ibid.). The ideal of the "career woman" clearly reflected the desires and possibilities of the educated elite in the context of the university, where women are expected to complete their education and to establish positions in working life, at least until they have children. In a country where women's employment rate has been remarkably low (only 1 in 4 women are officially employed), women with university degrees have had a privileged position in the job market in comparison to less educated women (Buğra & Yakut-Cakar 2010, 525; Gündüz-Hoşgör & Smits 2008, 114).

From another point of view, having a job and an income were seen as ways to empower women in a patriarchal society. Ayla argued that without economic independence Turkish women remained subordinate to their fathers and husbands. She considered economic independence as an important although not exclusive condition of a "modern" woman.

4: *"[I]n Turkey we don't have a class system, but those who have economical freedom are more modern. I mean women who are working can be called modern,* [but] *not all of them. Economical freedom can be associated with being modern, because* [a]*woman who doesn't work can't have a chance to change something because they are bound to their husband, to their father so even if they want they can't be modern. They are the slaves of their husbands or fathers. But those who have economical freedom can help to change the system."* Int.Ayla.27042010.

There nevertheless continue to be a number of obstacles on the way of women's equal opportunities on the job market. First of all, it has been suggested that the current political regime has not been interested in the emancipation of women through labor force participation (Buğra & Yakut-Cakar 2010, 519). Instead, the AKP has upheld a conservative discourse of the family that interprets women as primary caregivers for children, the elderly and the disabled (Ibid.). These essential and "natural" understandings of gender roles have been conveniently combined with the neoliberal welfare policies of the state. The AKP-government has been keen to implement neoliberal policies promoted by the World Bank that have aimed to shift the responsibilities of social care operations to non-governmental

organizations and other actors of the private sector, and relieving the state from its "social burden" (Yazıcı 2012). Bearing these political choices in mind, there exists a strong discrepancy between the ideal of the working woman and the domestic responsibilities women are expected to carry in a political context where investments to public care services have been remarkably low. This emphasis of women as primary caregivers within families has severely limited the possibilities of women to acquire and to keep their jobs.

Furthermore, the qualifications of "good" and "dedicated" motherhood have also pushed further. Already in the late Ottoman period, families of the elite and women especially were expected to invest a lot of time into the 'scientific' up-bringing of their children (Duben & Behar 1991, 226–238). Also one of my interviewees, who studied to become a teacher, argued that it was most important that teachers and parents had a "modern" worldview that they could pass on to children (Int.Yağmur.240402010). Education has been considered as the most important part of 'scientific' child rearing and it remains as one of the top priorities for Turkish families. The increasing privatization of education has introduced new demands for the performance of motherhood especially for middle-class women. Today, good and dedicated mothers are expected to carefully monitor the educational success of their children and compete with other families in offering the best after-school activities, preparatory courses and private tutors for their children. (Özyegin 2002, 56) Hence, women are not only considered responsible for providing care but as important contributors to the educational success of their offspring.

Beyond the 'scientific' and competitive realm of child rearing, family-centered discourses have suggested that a child can *only* receive the emotional care and love it requires from its mother, thus presenting mothers of young children who work outside the home as "selfish" or "irresponsible." The emphasis on maternal care has also contributed to the perception that public childcare would negatively influence the healthy development of a child. In order to become "good" mothers and through that respectable citizens, Turkish women have been required to dedicate themselves to the up-bringing of their children (cf. Göle 1996, 115–117). There seems to be an inherent contradiction between the desire of economic independence and conservative political discourses of dedicated motherhood of "at least three children" in a society that expects children to be cared for at home until they reach school age. Nevertheless, the educated young women interviewed here have more opportunities to negotiate ways to combine their professional and parental futures than other women would necessarily have in

the Turkish context.

It has been important to discuss masculine and feminine gender roles within the context of the "family" in order to provide a more varied set of narratives from the interviews. An analysis of the discourse of sexual modernity alone would have produced a distorted image of gendered discourses within the interview context. To answer the question how the interviewees constituted "modern" masculinities and femininities, it can be argued that they both reproduced essentialist understandings of gender roles as well as challenged or renegotiated them. In narratives of "modern" masculinity, men were expected to increasingly participate in the private realm of the family, and to share the burden of domestic work with their spouses. Women, on the other hand, were considered as equal partners of men in the public realm and possible providers for their families, while at the same time they were still connected to essentialist definitions of womanhood as weak and emotional. Perceptions of these "natural" gender differences have contributed to understandings of women as primary caregivers within Turkish families and in the society as a whole. Conservative articulations of nationalist duties of women as dedicated mothers and care providers have been included in both Kemalist secularist and religious conservative discourses. "Family" has been sacralized in both of these political projects, and neither of them has been willing to open and discuss the power hierarchies within the family. While "modern" femininity and the family have been fiercely discussed in Turkish society, masculinity has remained hidden as the silent norm of the modernist nationalist experience[2].

8. Conclusions

In this thesis I set out to discover the contested meanings of the modern in Turkey and more specifically the ways in which the interviewed Bilkent University students constituted their own subject positions as modern national subjects. I was particularly interested in the discursive mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion constituted in the interviews. My initial assumption was that meanings of the modern become political through the exclusion of certain ideas, practices and people while asserting the modern status of others.

In the analysis it became clear that the most of the interviewees constituted their understandings of the modern in relation to an Other or Others who were depicted as

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2   For an analysis of connections of masculinity and nationalism in Turkey, see Altınay 2004 and Biricik 2012.

traditional, backward or simply not modern. It can been argued that the modern remains an empty category without its constitutive outside. As suggested by Ronkainen (1999, 40) subject positions are narrated inter-subjectively, therefore the "modern" subject position also comes to life only with the projections of its non-modern counterpart. In the students' narratives, the "East" often represented the internal Other in Turkey. I argued that this is by no means a novel mechanism since already the early republican elites and their Ottoman predecessors considered the eastern part of the country as radically different form the rest, mainly due to its remoteness and resistance towards the central government by its people. In my material, difference between the "East" and the "West" was often narrated in gendered rather than ethnic terms, especially by referring to the social status of women in the East and the possibilities of girls in acquiring an education. Inequality in gender relations was assigned as a characteristic of the "East" alone, thus implicitly rewarding the "West" of the country with a modern and egalitarian status (cf. Kogacioglu 2004, 130). However, there were multiple ways of 'othering' that could be detected from the material. The Other was not only represented through stereotypes and as incapable of change, but some interviewees also introduced elements of transformation. These more subtle forms of differentiation noted the process where the Other was 'becoming more like the Self' (Hansen 2006, 40), thus "modernizing." However, the responsibility of this 'modernization' was left to the state and to the 'eastern' people themselves.

My argument was that the interviewees constituted their own subject positions as "modern" through the representations of the "traditional, conservative, backward and rural" Other and that the spatial identity of this Other was often connected with the "East." However, narratives of the Other are not all alike, and especially those interviewees with personal connections with eastern Turkey provided more subtle forms of differentiation and potential for change. Despite these different forms of 'othering', the "East" was nevertheless constituted as a common Other to the "modern" western Turkey in a majority of the interviews. Therefore, I would argue that there exists other kinds of political boundaries beyond the secularist-Islamist divide that has been reproduced frequently in Turkish studies. Turkey is not divided only between secularists and Islamists but there also exists deeper political and social divisions, like the one between western and eastern Turkey which also feeds into the central binary (see also Demiralp 2012). However, these mental maps of Turkey have not acquired as much attention as other political divisions and need further unfolding.

In the second part of the analysis, I focused on the ways the interviewees constituted their own subject positions as "modern." Although the East constituted a common Other in many of the narratives, it was in the representations of the modern national subjectivity where the discursive struggles began to appear. Secular and Muslim subject positions were articulated in relation to each other in a number of debates involving the headscarf, Turkey's "authentic" cultural identity and understandings of national history. First, I discussed the new ways of narrating a secular subject position through "tolerance" and "respect" of others. I argued that this narrative was radically different from the previous rejection of religious identities from the public sphere in the laicist imaginary in Turkey, because a modern subject was expected to demonstrate tolerance towards religious expression in the students' narratives. Despite the perceptions of growing 'Islamization' of Turkish society, the secular modern subjectivity was presented as stable and resistant of change. On the other hand, I also pointed how this articulated tolerance was often followed by descriptions of 'intolerance' and 'dogmatism' of Others, thereby associating tolerance only with certain people and a particular secular worldview. Although no one spoke of "Islamists" directly, discursive signs characterizing the Other as having only "a single truth" and not being capable of rational debate drew a picture of religious conservatism.

The modern Muslim subject position on the other hand questioned the secular narrative of tolerance and instead discussed discrimination and political exclusion. This position was constituted first and foremost in relation to the headscarf debate and the question of Turkey's "authentic" identity. I argued that these students disputed the previous Kemalist discourse where a veiled woman could not be considered as a modern national subject. Also perceptions of the headscarved women as security threats were made visible and challenged. Through these discursive moves, a strong counter-identity could be constituted. Furthermore, I interpreted that interviewees with modern Muslim subject positions problematized the previously hegemonic interpretations of the modern in Turkey by projecting them as "imitations" of western culture and therefore inauthentic and illegitimate. However, instead of rejecting modernity entirely, I suggested that conservative interviewees established selectively modern identities by claiming a form of critical agency which allowed them to choose the beneficial aspects of modernity while rejecting others. With the emphasis of their connections with "local" culture, conservative youth claimed to be in possession of 'authentic' Turkish culture. The modern Muslim subjectivity was therefore constituted to a great extent as a renegotiation of the previous laicist Kemalist discourse of modernity.

I argue that these two subject positions constituted in the material reflect the wider political contestation between different elites in Turkey. The two positions are constituted as two sides of the same coin. The secular subject can be presented as "modern" through its newly articulated tolerance of religious expression, while the religious subject acquires the same title through the rejection of secular modernity as the only possible interpretation. Both of these positions claim ownership of Turkey's 'authentic' culture, and both of them desire to become recognized as modern national subjects (Navaro-Yashin 2002a; Çınar 2005). This situation can be considered as an example of alternative modernities suggested by Gaonkar (1999) where people engage and contribute to competing discourses of modernity. Politics of the modern are revealed when the interpretations of the opposing side are considered illegitimate and when there can only be a single form of modern national subjectivity. These discourses of modern national subjectivity can be considered as competing over hegemony (see Laclau & Mouffe 1985).

In the last part of the analysis, I wanted to discover how the modern had been connected to understandings of gender identities in Turkey. The importance of gender in the articulations of modernity appeared in several places of the analysis, not just in relation to "modern" femininities and masculinities, but also in the narratives describing the Other and in the structuring of the modern Muslim position through the headscarf debate in particular. Gender thus appeared as a meaningful category in the constitution of the modern subject. It was clear from the analysis that modernity was described first and foremost through femininity and "modern" womanhood, whereas "modern" masculinity was not as carefully elaborated. Therefore women continued to symbolize the modern in the Turkish context. I presented two very different discussions of gender; one concerning women's sexual autonomy which has long been a social taboo in Turkey and the other dealing with the family as a social and political construction. I discussed how one of my interviewees challenged the norm of virginity until marriage and constituted her subject position as sexually active, yet respectable young woman. As suggested by Ozyegin (2009), this discourse of sexual modernity was produced within the framework of romance and long-term relationship and opposed to the prevalent discourse of women's pre-marital sexuality as unrestrained and indecent.

In comparison to the discourse of sexual modernity that can be considered as challenging the sexual norm of virginity before marriage, the narratives of the 'family' reproduced already

existing understandings of gender. Essentialist descriptions of masculinity and femininity served to uphold the gendered division of labor within the family. A similar discourse has been sustained by both Kemalist as well as Islamist conservatism that have emphasized women's roles as primary caregivers within Turkish families (cf. White 2003; Göle 1996). Despite these descriptions of the 'natural' and 'fundamental' differences between men and women in the private sphere, gender equality in the public realm was considered as a necessity. Especially professional opportunities for women were seen as empowering women and creating more gender equality. I contrasted these visions with the strong emphasis of the "family" in the public discourses of Turkey's political leaders at the moment and the lack of care services provided by the state. The demand for the "modern" woman to be a professional and a mother of "at least" three children who also takes care of the elderly seems like an impossible conundrum.

How have these three different ways of interpreting the modern contributed to each other? What can be said in general of the discourses constituting modern subject positions in the context of Bilkent University? First, it seems clear that there is not a single way to constitute a modern subject position, but many. Second, these competing understandings surface inter-subjectively, meaning that they have been constituted in relation to each other, therefore one cannot be analyzed alone without providing some kind of understanding of competing discourses. Consequently, third, modern subject positions have been constituted in relation to certain Others, which were described here in spatial, temporal, stereotypical and ethical ways. The "East" constituted one of the most significant Others among the interviewees although it was narrated as an Other in multiple ways. Fourth, gender turned out to be an important category in the constitution of the modern subject position. Narratives of the modern were elaborated in relation to "womanhood" in particular, while masculinity remained to a great extent untouched. These discourses of the 'modern' subject can be considered as examples of the discursive contestation within Turkish society, where different political elites compete with one another over hegemony to determine what constitutes a properly modern Turkish subject. Unlike it has been suggested, religious conservatives represented by the AKP have not rejected the discourse of modernity, but have tried to reformulate it anew to fit better for their political purposes. Similarly, the secular discourses of modernity have also been transformed and reinterpreted by the secularists themselves, as well as by their political opponents.

Finally, it remains to be discussed what kind of new questions this thesis introduced for the discipline of IR, and for Turkish studies in particular, and to assess the research process in general. Since discourses concerning the modern turned out to be so diverse, it would have perhaps been more fruitful to focus on a single cultural and political phenomenon and to open the different interpretations of the modern in relation to it. For example, food could be interpreted from a political point of view in Turkey. Many of my interviewees also discussed the emergence of international restaurant and coffee shop chains in Turkey as a sign of modernity and globalization, and interpreted the rejection of "foreign" dishes and food items as a form of cultural resistance. There has also been a recent resurrection in the interest of Ottoman cuisine, and several restaurants offering Ottoman dishes have been opened in Istanbul. A concrete topic would have made it easier for the interviewees to respond and describe their understandings. In my study, the abstract nature of the concept at the heart of the research process made the interview questions difficult to answer for the interviewees, and the inherent element of comparison in an inter-cultural interview setting sometimes made them cautious when trying to formulate their answers.

Other research agendas rising from the analysis would have definitely included an analysis of the "East" as socially and politically constructed space within Turkey. This could have revealed how political boundaries and certain mental maps have been connected with ethnic divisions in the country. Another line of inquiry could have involved the silence around "modern" masculinity. Although the modernist discourse has become most visible in the formulations of the "modern" republican woman, men and masculinities have not gone entirely unnoticed (see for example Çınar 2005, 68–70; Hecker 2012, 174, 181–188). It also needs to be pointed out that conducting the study in another environment than a prestigious private university would have certainly provided different kind of results. University students have often been the targets of social studies in Turkey, and can be considered as an over-represented group among other social groups in social scientific research. Therefore further studies in the political setting of Turkey would require widening and deepening of the research perspective.

Despite these difficulties in the research process, I consider that it has been important to study discourses connected with the modern. As a vague but often applied concept, we need more awareness of the discursive roots of the modern also within the realm of international relations. This is required especially when the modern is used in discussions concerning other

countries and others cultures. After all, the modern is very closely connected to how we perceive and describe ourselves and our societies in Europe, for example, and therewith it is also connected to how we perceive others. On the other hand, it is also important to analyze how these Others perceive themselves (and how they see us). Interpreting the modern not only from a European point of view but as 'creative adaptations' of local people (Gaonkar 1999) can provide us an understanding of how the modern is used for political purposes elsewhere.

9. Bibliography

9.1. Research Interviews

All interviews conducted by TK in Ankara, Turkey.

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Interview 2: "Yeşim" 07.05.2010. Biology student from Ankara.

Interview 3: "İpek" 24.04.2010. English translation student from Antalya.

Interview 4: "Ayla" 27.04.2010. English language and literature student from Kars.

Interview 5: "Bariş" 29.04.2010. Biology student from Artvin.

Interview 6: "Ülkü" 6.5.2010. English language and literature student from Mardin.

Interview 7: "Metin" 26.04.2010. Computer science student from Ankara.

Interview 8: "Yağmur" 24.04.2010. Computer science and instructional education student from Milas.

Interview 9: "Taner" 15.05.2010. Political science student from Kırklareli.

Interview 10: "Orhan" 15.05.2010. Political science student from Istanbul.

Interview 11: "Emre" 7.5.2010. Computer science student from Ankara.

Interview 12: "Ece" 30.04.2010. International Relations student from Istanbul.

Interview 13: "Zehra" 14.05.2010. Interior architecture student from Ankara.

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Appendix

Interview questions:

What comes to your mind from the word modern? What kind of images, ideas, and thoughts do you associate with the modern?

What kind of values do you associate with the modern?

Would you describe Turkey as a modern country? Why/why not? What makes Turkey modern?

Who do you think are modern in Turkey? What makes them modern?

Would you define yourself as modern? Why/why not?

How does it show in your life? What makes you (not) modern?

How do people with different understandings get along? In campus for example?