

FASHIONING THE BODY THROUGH WOMEN’S MAGAZINES: REMAKING THE “MODERN TURKISH WOMAN” IN THE EARLY REPUBLICAN PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the newly constructed female identities and subjectivities of the early republican era in Turkey. Through a thematic analysis of four contemporary women’s magazines (Aile Dostu Ev-İş, Kadın-Ev and Asrın Kadını) it aims to examine how female bodies were refashioned in the magazines to fit the image of the newly constructed “woman of the republic”. It argues that the subjectivities offered by the magazines point to a dialogically constructed narrative identity which is not stable but fluid.

Keywords: *Early republican period; narrative identity, Turkish women; Women’s Magazines.*

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Erken Cumhuriyet dönemi Türkiye’inde yeni kurgulanan kadın kimlikleri ve özne pozisyonları hakkındadır. Söz konusu dönemde basılan dört kadın dergisinin (Aile Dostu Ev-İş, Kadın-Ev ve Asrın Kadını) tematik analiziyle dergilerde kadın bedeninin yeni kurgulanan “Cumhuriyet Kadını” imgesine uyumlu olarak nasıl tekrar üretildiğini araştırır. Buna göre dergiler tarafından kadınlara sunulan yeni özne pozisyonları diyalojik olarak kurgulanan, durağan olmayan, akışkan bir anlatısal kimliğe işaret eder.

¹ We would like to thank Özlem Erkmen for helping us while we were collecting the primary sources of this study.

Introduction

This article presents the preliminary phase of a much more extensive work which analyses the newly constructed female subjectivities of the early republican era in Turkey. The aim of the present study is to explore how female bodies were refashioned in the contemporary women's magazines to fit the image of the newly constructed "woman of the republic" (*Cumhuriyet Kadını*). It should be noted that women's magazines of the era were engaged in a kind of social engineering which openly stated that the ideas and ideology of the republic should be transferred to people through popular cultural forms. Thus, they set a goal of "transforming the nation" into a "modern", "Westernised" one.

The reason that we begin our analysis with the body is that it was seen as the primary signifier of the "woman of the republic". Transforming and refashioning the body seemed to be the basis of becoming the new modern woman, although there was more than one style and sometimes they were in conflict. It will be seen that the clashing styles were positioned on a moral continuum prescribing ideal ways of being and performing.

Women's magazines were not a centre of academic attention in Turkey until the 1980s. The history of Turkish women from their own perspectives began to be written in parallel with the second wave of feminism in the West (see Tekeli, 1990; Çakır, 2002). The aim of feminist historiography, as stated by Çakır (2007: 72), is "to ensure the visibility of women's experiences as well as their practices in struggling for their rights and freedom ... to discuss the reasons for the invisibility of women in history, and to uncover the ways that the power and agency of women have been obstructed". Clearing the blurred photograph which is the history of women in Turkey, researchers made the invisible visible, most of the time contradicting the structural and nationalist approach of official history writing (Zihnioğlu, 2003). Thus, magazines, one of the primary sites of women's voices, gained importance at this stage in academic research.

The late Ottoman era drew more academic attention than did the early republican era when it comes to women's magazines.¹ For the constitutional periods, there are many works concerning women's issues and their identity constructions and these studies often drew on magazines as their primary data (see, Demirdirek, 1993; Çakır, 1994;

¹ There are a few Master's theses on women's magazines of the early republican era. See, Çon, 2007; Gürboğa, 1996; Karabacak, 2009; Koçer, 1999.

Kurnaz 1996; Denman, 2009). However, although there are numerous works focusing on the identity of Early Republican women (Z. Arat, 1994, 1998; Y. Arat, 1997; Durakbaşa, 1998a and b; Kadioğlu, 1998; Kandıyoti, 1998; Tekeli, 1998; Toska, 1998; Berktaş, 2002; Zihnioğlu, 2003; Acun, 2007; Coşar, 2007; Kucukalioglu, 2007), none of these studies has used women's magazines as its primary data.

Nevertheless, women's magazines of the era have from time to time attracted the neo-feminists' attention. Durakbaşa (1998: 144), for instance, refers to women's magazines as supplementary to the patriarchal understanding which narrowed women's power even in the domestic sphere by promoting the rationalization of house-work and the science of home economics, with other womanly subjects. In another work, Zafer Toprak (1996a) utilizes magazines to search for the typologies of the ideal woman.

This study will, it is hoped, contribute to the existing literature by using the women's magazines as its primary source in analysing the construction of women's identities in the early republican period. Drawing on the theories of narrative identity, the data will be analysed through thematic analysis.

Theoretical Framework

This study follows the line of poststructural argument which conceptualises culture and society as narrative constructions. Against this backdrop, personal and national identities are also conceived as being constructed through narratives. Here, national identity is thought of as a kind of group-defining story which has a certain pattern; which is highly influential on the formation of the individual autobiographies (narrative identities); and which serves as mental cognitive equipment when individuals interpret events (Feldman 2001:129-144). Narrative identity is about the interpretation and articulation of the experiences of a person in a story format. The interpretation and the emplotment are social deeds (never done individually, even if the agent is alone at the time) and they are intertextual, making use of all other available texts and social narratives in a given culture. Raggatt asserts that "Identity is an open-ended, dialogical, and narrative engagement with the world, having multiple origins and trajectories" (Raggatt, 2006: 32).

The poststructural approaches to nation building suggest that while there is no core or essence to national identity, nations are constructed within ideology and discourses. Following a similar kind of argument, we

assume that the nation has a narrative identity with a group-defining story. The use of narrative in the construction of nations is two-fold. First, nations are always constructed within and through a historical narrative; and, like all other historical narratives, they usually serve the political agenda of the time of their construction. This is why they are always negotiated and reproduced temporally, although presented as stable, coherent and consistent. Second, they are transmitted to the next generations in the format of narratives and stories. The protagonists and other actors of these narratives are usually anonymous or embodied as national heroes, who represent the “imagined community” (see Anderson 1991).

At the outset of the new Republican life, the New Turkish national identity had to be constructed as something “modern” but separable and differentiated from the West (see also Chatterjee 1986; and Gökalp 1917a and b). Apart from being distinct from the West, Turkish national identity had to be constructed as separate from (or in a kind of opposition to) the former Ottoman identity, in order to safeguard the existence of the young republic. Feldman (2001: 133) suggests that all national narratives are romances in genre where a hero is opposed by “a much stronger but morally inferior antagonist with whom he has a climactic battle in the end after a series of lesser adventures”. Feldman also suggests that a national romance can be emplotted as a ‘quest’ story. Two antagonists emerge in the Republican Turkish national narrative. First, the Western states who sought to colonialize Turkish territories had to be defeated in order to establish a free land and a nation state which was modern but culturally authentic. The second antagonist was the Ottoman state, which had to be undermined and abolished before in a modern republic could exist which would serve “Turkish” people better (see also Morin and Lee, 2010). This was also presented as a quest in finding or “remembering” the national Turkish essence, which was assumed to have always been there but “forgotten” during the Ottoman centuries (see Atatürk [1927] 1981).

Bruner (2001) suggests that in autobiography or in the creation of narrative identities which are formed in an autobiographical manner, “turning points” need special mention. Here, “the narrator attributes a crucial change or stance in the protagonist’s story to a belief, a conviction, a thought” (p. 31). Turning points are significant because “they represent a way in which people free themselves in their self-consciousness from their history...” (p. 32). In the republican narrative representations, the republic and its revolutions were considered as a turning point in Turkish history (also see Y. Arat, 1998: 14). Since the individual identities are constructed

on the basis of the national one, this turning point also urged individuals to reconsider and reconstruct their identities. (In)formed by this social narrative, women's stories were marked in a new way and this was how the "new woman" (*yeni kadın*) and "the contemporary woman" (*asrın kadını*) of the Meşrutiyet Era were turned into the "the woman of the republic" (*cumhuriyet kadını*).

It should be noted that this new woman has always been articulated as "singular," both in the representations in the magazines and also in many later scholarly works. However, the narrative conceptualisation of identities will be useful in articulating the conflicting subject positions that "the new woman" contained. A narrative approach will illuminate the ways taken by each woman to deal with contradictory ideas, concepts, themes, values and morals which were offered them through the social narratives and various media.

The turning point was not a practical one for many women who were "modernized" at the closing years of the Empire. For the middle-aged woman, this turning point was manifested in a re-negotiation of the values, morals and the "normal" in their narratives. A re-construction of the personal narratives would be in a dialogical manner since the values, "normals" and morals were also in conflict with each other. Thus, the turning point was a narrative one for all. The national turning point urged women to re-think and re-negotiate the themes of femininity that they took for granted. For the younger generation, it was taken for granted that the changes were also practical¹. This is the representation which we pursue in the data analysis section.

In line with Stuart Hall (1996), we argue that identities are constructed through 'discursive work'. There is no single identity for any person, but a constellation of the identities which are available in their culture. The identities or subject positions which are historically present in the cultural repertoire often entail conflicting positions. But the conflicts can be resolved and negotiated through narrative identities, which make the events of a life appear coherent and stable, thus giving a sense of a consistent self. In the analysis part, we see the themes which were offered to Turkish women to construct their own individual narratives at a "turning point". The republic and the nationalistic group identity offered new subject positions or conferred new meanings to the existing ones. The

¹ See, Y. Arat 1998: 23. Various chapters in the book suggest that the practical changes began in the Ottoman Era, although it was presented as a complete break from the Ottoman past.

“mothers” or “working career women” in the republic were thus (re)formed. These are the narratives which built the cognitive foundation in interpreting the events and in constructing all kinds of meaning in social and individual narratives.

In short, the Kemalist revolution worked by creating new subject positions and by transforming subjectivities. These can also be seen as representing a new kind of cultural hegemony, the intention of which was to disengage people from their existing points of identification and to situate them in new discourses and narratives which hailed them in certain ways.

Method and Data

The publishing of women’s magazines in Turkey is almost 150 years old. Throughout these transition and transformation periods from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic, these magazines have been an indispensable social, cultural and political space for upper- and middle-class women to manifest their claims (İlyasoğlu and İnel, 1984). In the turmoil of the late Ottoman era, in particular, women’s magazines were the most significant space for the visibility of women enabling them – to a degree– to resist the traditional norms of morality and the restrictive models of femininity in the traditionalist Ottoman society. Hence, these journals, which illustrate the changing place and definitions as well as the desires and struggles of the women in a society, are accepted as valuable primary sources in women’s history writing (Çakır, 1994; Davaz-Mardin, 1998).

Although the extensive study aims to explore these magazines starting from 1923, the data for this study consist of the magazines which date from the language reform (1928)¹:

Aile Dostu: 12 issues (No 1- 12) published bimonthly from February 1931 to December 1932.

Ev-İş: 6 issues (No. 1-6), published between April 1937 and September 1937.

Kadın-Ev: 2 issues (no 1-2), published in 1943.

Asrın Kadını: 5 issues (No. 1-5), published between June 1944 and October 1944.

¹ See Ataman and Z. Arat 1998, who conceptualise the periodization of the early republican era.

The textual data arising from these various magazines are analysed by means of thematic analysis. Such an analysis is in line with our theoretical framework, which is a narrative approach to society and culture. Because we consider the discourses and ideologies of the era as social narratives, we assume that the main themes of these social narratives will also be recurrent in magazines, since they assert the need to play the role of a builder of “modern, civilized” society.¹ Thus, a thematic analysis can be expected to give us the main themes by which the women of the period lived.

In thematic analysis, after the process of data familiarisation, we identified a limited number of themes which adequately reflected our textual data. We started coding the articles in the magazines on the basis of the categories derived through our readings of the historical narratives of the era and secondary sources. We also searched for new categories brought up by the magazines themselves.

Thematic analysis may also be considered an analysis of ideology since we seek to point to the ideologies of femininity which hailed, women of the time with new subjectivities, such as “contemporary woman (*asrın kadını*)”, “flamboyant woman (*süs kadını*)” and “Woman of the Republic (*Cumhuriyet kadını*)”.

Remaking of the Turkish Woman

Although nationalistic sentiments in the Ottoman-Turks can be traced back to the 19th century reform period and the patriotism of the Young Ottomans (Akçura, [1928]2008; Tunaya, [1960]2004), the turning point for Turkish nationalism came after the Young Turk Revolution in 1908. Influential theorists, such as Ziya Gökalp, Yusuf Akçura, Ahmed Ağaoğlu, Tekin Alp and Halide Edip, can be seen as the prominent narrators of Turkish nationalism throughout the Second Constitutional Era (Georgeon, 2006). Their main concern was “saving the Empire”. Based on the ideas of enlightenment, science and rationality, they believed that the salvation of the Ottoman power could be accomplished only by rapid and top-down Westernization in politics, education, banking and the financial system, commercial relations, industry, agriculture, communication, as well as domestic and civil life. Meanwhile, there were discrepancies in their

¹ See the first issue of *Ev-İş* (1937). Tahsin Demiray, the publisher, begins his article “Why Ev-İş?”, “We have formed a republican, nationalistic, reformist, populist, statist and secular regime” and goes on to observe that there is a need to reform the household now.

suggestions for adopting Western ways of doing things, since there were other ideological tenets which from time to time could even coexist in one single mind such as Gökalp's. This elusiveness is explicit in both the theoretical writings and popular articles of the above nationalist ideologues as they try to offer the "ideal" degree of Westernization (Hanioglu, 1986).

In short, by the turn of the century the challenging problem guiding the debates of the Young Ottomans about saving the Empire was shifted from the compatibility of modernization with Islam (Mardin, 2001) or Ottoman's cohesive and robust moral traditions (Tunaya, 2004) to the compatibility of progressivism (*terakkicilik*) with competing ideologies such as Westernism, Islamism and Turkism (e.g. Gökalp). However, this confusion was gradually diminished during the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1922) and the subsequent reform period (1923-1938) led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, which formed a new identity of the republic. With Atatürk's reforms, over two centuries of Westernization and modernization took a new turn. Mustafa Kemal and the other leading figures constructed a distinct narrative of secular Turkish nationalism different from Pan-Turkist and Islamist ideals, which they based on the idea of 'national sovereignty' demarcated by national boundaries (Georgeon, 2006: 62; Tunaya, 2004: 129-146).

The woman issue had been one of the most debated subjects throughout this Westernization and modernization period. Tanzimat reforms and revolutionary changes in the constitutional periods had already improved women's position in society –educated and upper-middle class urban women in particular – in terms of legal, social and educational affairs.

The doors of secondary and high school education were opened to women in 1859 and 1880, respectively. In the 1870s, women's teachers' colleges (*Darülmualimat*) had begun to educate the first officially certified women teachers in the Ottoman Empire. It should be noted that the graduates of these institutions also became the first women executives in the various women's schools of the Empire. Female teachers numbered over a thousand, as opposed to their nearly ten thousand male counterparts employed in 1923 (Afet İnan, 1975: 145-158). Yet they were not allowed to attend *Istanbul Darülfünunu* (higher education) until 1914. However, the faculties of law and medicine were to accept female students in the very first years of the 1920s. With regard to law, a governmental decree on Family in 1917 recognized the right of divorce for

women (in certain conditions) as well as empowering women to some extent by giving wives the right to prevent their husbands from taking another wife (Caporal 1999; Berkes, 2002).

The Empire's war-torn context and the absence of enlisted men reinforced women's involvement in economic and social life (see, Zihnioğlu, 2003). War conditions were, as elsewhere, a determining factor in the ideological changes in the women's movement. Nationalistic feelings were heightened throughout the Great War and the War of Independence, during which time the ideal of the Muslim 'Ottoman Woman' was gradually replaced by the secularized patriotic 'Turkish Woman'. Like their counterparts elsewhere, many women in Turkey also actively participated in both wars. For instance, hundreds of women joined the women's battalion and served in the area of logistics during the Great War (Z. Toprak, 1988; Tekeli, 1981). Halide Edip (Adivar), a prominent nationalist and feminist, joined the national army as a corporal during the War of Independence.

In the Kemalist view, women's emancipation and liberation were considered as a prerequisite for a broader social revolution (Berktaş, 1998). This is also the foundation of the narratives of "state feminism" which permeated the ideology from top to bottom (see Abadan-Unat 1998: 328). The conditions of women were significantly improved as a result of a series of reforms, such as the adoption of the Educational Bill of 1924, which secularized the educational system and provided equal opportunities for both sexes; the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code in 1926, which outlawed polygamy and ensured equal rights in marriage, divorce, inheritance, and property ownership; the adoption of Western styles in clothing in 1925, which legally allowed women to unveil; and finally the granting of political rights to women in local elections (1930) and in general elections in 1934 (B. Toprak, 1990). It should be noted, however, that a patriarchal mentality still prevailed, dominating the ways in which the new subjectivities were constructed (Tekeli, 1986 ; Kandiyoti, 1998; Altınay, 2004; Coşar, 2007). In short, the ruling elites of the republic asserted the power "to name" woman (See, Arat 1994 and Zihnioğlu, 2003).

In fact, many women had joined the discussions - continued mainly in the press - regarding the proper character of a modern woman or 'the ideal Turkish woman'. However, it was the masculine voice of men that mostly designated the contradictory characteristics of such an idealized prototype. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, amongst the leading female

figures such as Halide Edip and Nezihe Muhiddin, were those who complied with some of those features, which stem from an essentialist view of femininity. Based on both biological and mental attributes, these features were indeed not new. Despite a common tendency in the modernizing elite to impose uniformity in their discourse (Y. Arat, 1998: 2), the portrait of the “New Woman” which they drew was not singular in any sense nor was it the invention of the republican period (see Yakalı-Çamoğlu, 2004). But nevertheless the Kemalists imagined the ideal Turkish women as a symbol of national identity and the republic’s progressiveness; its portrait is drawn almost as a selfless super-heroine who knows her duties to the family, society and the nation. An ideal republican woman, according to many, was an enlightened mother and wife in the private sphere and a dutiful citizen in public. In both spheres women’s bodies became the representation of the vices and virtues of the new republican ideals, as we see through the magazines (see also Coşar 2007; Bilal et.al 2001; Öztamur, 2002)

Refashioning the Turkish Women

When we talk of the human body we talk of a body which is dressed up, even if only by cosmetics, tattooing or other forms of body painting. Bodies are made social, given meaning and identity through dress and adornment. In the magazines, the fashioning of the body with either dress or beauty products was the most frequent topic (the most recurrent category). It should be noted that fashion is here understood as a “situated bodily practice”, thought of as articulating the body, “producing discourses on the body which are translated into dress through the bodily practices of dressing on the part of individuals” (see Entwistle 2006: 4). Analysing fashion and dress with the positioning of the body at the centre of the analysis makes us pay attention not only to the micro-level practices and strategies of the individual but also to the macro-level of discourses, social narratives and ideologies which are (in)formed by and through fashion and dress.

Bodies, above all when dressed, are often perceived, considered and spoken of in moral terms such as “good”, “correct”, and “appropriate”. One is rarely immune from the social pressure involved in dressing and the appearance of bodies. Just as the general morals were questioned and renegotiated during the turning point from traditional religious Ottoman social life to a secular modern republican life, the bodies and the ways in which they appeared were refashioned. Women’s bodies in the traditional

patriarchal understanding have always been a site of honour and morality. Women's bodies have had symbolic significations and connotations, exceeding the personal and the individual. The honour of the family was inscribed on them. However, in the patriotic and nationalistic conceptualisation of the republican era, women's bodies were refashioned as a site of the national honour and attained the duty of transforming the society from a traditional religious one to a secular "modern" one. This was the Kemalist conceptualisation and the rationale behind the reformation in dress code (see Çınar, 2005: 53-98).

This Kemalist conceptualisation can be traced in the magazines. The reconceptualisation and refashioning of the body was two-fold. On the one hand, all the dresses were literally changed; the veil and *çarşaf* were removed from women's clothing and a nationalized version of European fashion began to be followed. For example in *Kadın-Ev* (1944, no 1: 70-71) Refik Ahmet Sevengil in his article "National Taste in Women's Clothing and Girls' Institutes" writes: "Obviously as in other matters Turkish woman cannot be different than her Western counterparts in clothing.... In sewing, Westernisation should stick to the technique only and the general appearance of woman's clothing should reflect the innovations of Turkish national spirit and taste."¹ On the other hand cosmetics and make-up were modernized and more European products entered the lives of Turkish women. Every magazine that we have analysed devoted several pages to prescriptions for home-made beauty products, tips for beauty and also advertisements for local and Western cosmetics. Hair, too, was refashioned, following European counterparts and "modern" Turkish women started to wear their hair short. Atatürk's adopted daughters and his wife Latife Hanım were among the followers.

Although the European cosmetics and beauty tips seem to have been influential in the magazines, there was also a sceptical approach to them. We have argued that Turkish nationalism was constructed as discrete, with an emphasis on an ancient pre-Islamic Turkish culture. This manifested itself in the reconceptualisation of Turkish bodies. In *Aile Dostu* (No. 11:1-2) it is argued that "Turkish well-being and beauty have been ignored up until the *Meşrutiyet* and the Republican period in particular". It is said that the Turkish women "would either die of pneumonia or present an ugly sight as a bodily mass [obese in form] as a result of a life spent indoors without a breath of fresh air or any exercise". This problem was to be

¹ All the translations belong to the present authors.

overcome in the new generation as a result of the importance attached to sports and gymnastics and their addition to the school curriculum. When Keriman Halis became the Beauty Queen of the World among 28 women in a pageant, it was seen as “a victory of a combination of the ancient aesthetic qualities of our race with the awakening of our well-being through physical training”. However, the most important point that separated “us” from the “other” was the emphasis on the “naturalness” of Turkish beauty as opposed to the “artificiality” of the Western. Thus, the beauty story of the nation was constructed on the grounds of an essential beauty and well-being which had been forgotten during Ottoman times. It is argued that Keriman Halis not only won the contest out of 28 women but she “challenged and won over all the artificial cosmetic products of the ‘Instituts de Beauté’ of Europe and the USA.” As a result, the pages of the magazines represent a clash of discourses and opinions about the “national” beauty of the Turkish woman. On the one hand, Hollywood actresses are presented as the ultimate beauty of the times, with figures to look up to, just after Turkish women’s beauty is cited as essential and surpassing all that the West can present. On the other, European cosmetic products and recipes are recommended as the newest and the best, just before women are warned about modesty as we see in Şükufe Nihal’s article in *Asrın Kadını* (No 1: 3): “the kind of useless (to her nation), heartless woman who is like a baby doll through make-up and who spends all her time in entertainment will not be forgiven by this nation.”

A similar kind of modesty is advised in clothing too and women who are overdressed are either made fun of or warned, as seen in *Asrın Kadını* (no. 4: 3, 29, 32). It is asserted that women who “show-offs who wear expensive, glamorous clothes with a lot of make-up” are punished and lose their husbands’ care and attention. Many authors go on to argue that the Turkish women had been degenerated with the republican era and markers of femininity or sexuality had been removed from their bodies. From the evidence of the magazines, such an argument falls short, although modesty is emphasized time and time again. For example, in an article by Nevin Keyn, she argues that having make-up and appropriate dress is an accepted and expected feature of modern life; however, she regrets that, “there is a proliferation of women who wears stretchy, short clothes to show off the form of their bodies and the charm of their every gesture” (ibid: 3). This is also connected to the understanding of a traditional morality. An indecisive approach to Western representations and

presentations of the body can be felt in each article and the presence of a fear of “losing” identity, self and culture as a result of Westernization.

Every women’s magazine contains pages giving tips about fashion and presenting the latest Western models. These include afternoon dresses for the so called “salon woman” but they also present models for the newly formed professional women who were appearing in the predominantly male public domain. As they did so, their bodily presentation assumed a more male look which was associated with uniforms, suits and short hair.¹ However, it should be noted that this was not a Turkish invention, as Nihal’s article suggests. She says that, in the Western world, “we see women everywhere with a cap, pants, plain shirts and men’s boots, working in every job that belonged to men before” (*Asrın Kadını*, no 4: 3). Turkish women were now expected to join the work force and also appear in the public space with men. The Western women who joined the army and the work force during the Great War drew such a “sexually modest and respectable picture that [it] would not threaten the patriarchal morality” and this continued during the Second World War. During the reform period, Turkish women readily found such a dress code for professional occupations in the Western fashion magazines.

Another distinct construction of Turkish fashion and its manifestation in the nationalist conceptualisation was the tendency to aim for a synthesis of East and West. The newly established institutes for girls and evening schools were the centres of creation and production of models which blended authentic Turkish figures, patterns and designs with Western fashion. The magazine *Kadın-Ev* which was a publication by such an institution was full of such representations. It showed particular designs for ball dresses, evening and afternoon dresses in Western style but made out of Turkish fabrics and ornamented with Turkish patterns and handiwork. The same theme appears in other magazines such as *Asrın kadını* (no. 4: 7-3). The author says that “the ball dresses and *cepken* [a traditional kind of short jacket which comes from Western Anatolia] in particular bear the glory and magnificence of an İzmir *zeybek* [traditional folk dancer]. The nobility of this new fashion is not less than any Western fashion. On the contrary, it has many superior features.” This was presented as the fashion of the “new Turkish” woman and its practical uses can be observed in photographs of the era in the same magazine.

¹ See also, Soland 2000, for discussions of the connections between the body and modernity in the European context.

Concluding Remarks

Foundation of the Republic is considered a turning point in the Turkish narrative of Westernization. The main themes of this narrative were built on “change” in the political, cultural and social spheres. We have argued that women’s identities and subjectivities were seen as building blocks of the modern society. The women’s magazines of the era represent different subject positions, such as suited enlightened career women; salon women attending balls with fashionably designed traditional gowns; the dutiful, selfless, soberly dressed housewives with modest make-up; the beauty queens who carry the characteristics of ancient beauty, who are fit and healthy; and the working women who took up men’s jobs as well as their costumes. All these point to a body of representations and a constellation of identities which were presented to the “new women” of the republican period to build their own narrative identities on. Thus, this narrative identity could only be dialogical and fluid, not fixed and stable, since it would also be about making moral choices on a new continuum, with the fallen, corrupt, “too-Western” women and the backward, *karacıraşafı* (the ones in a black *çarşaf*) at one extreme and the “ideal” Turkish woman who is traditional in morals and virtues, enlightened by Western education and modestly “modern” in looks at the other.

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