

MODERNISATION AND THE REPRODUCTION OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN KONYA

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Yahya Kemal, (1884-1958) one of the leading figures of Contemporary Turkish Literature, could not help asking a paradoxical question while taking a critical look at the social structures transformed in haste by modernity: “*Is it possible to wake up for Morning Prayer (namaz) after a night of Infidel life?*” (Beyatlı, 1964). Yahya Kemal personally witnessed the interventions made in early republican era by modernist practices towards the integrity of daily life and the excitement that aimed at completely upsetting existing ways of thinking and expressed his observations that deepened his worries.

Namaz, or the prayers made by Muslims 5 times a day, is at the top of the principles that have to be preserved and continued. As a matter of fact, when common religious references among Muslims are taken as a starting point, it is an undeniable fact that *namaz* is seen as the central pillar of the faith. In fact, within the predominant Islamic tradition, Islamic faith of a group who does not practice *namaz* is often questioned. Moreover, what is expressed in Yahya Kemal’s question is not any *namaz* but the morning *namaz*. What makes the question more relevant is the fact that morning *namaz*, or prayer, is especially difficult to practice.¹ This difficulty increases with the modern way of life.

It is possible for Yahya Kemal’s question to be discussed on several levels. What Yahya Kemal meant with foreign (French) life was a world now conceptualized as the whole of the West. As a matter of fact, traditional ways of life now had to adapt in an increasingly radical manner to the values of the Western (French) world. The dynamism inherent in the process of westernization was rendering what is traditional disputable and in fact eroding and obliterating the value and status of all that belonged to the past. For a typically “modern” man, this approach made coming to grips with the most fundamental components of the

¹ 1-For, Morning Prayer, *namaz*, is considered an important dividing line to distinguish the true believer from the impostor and thus gains a special status owing to its difficulty. The *namaz* in question is performed in the early hours of the day before the sun rises. The flow of daily routines in the traditional way of living was designed taking into consideration the time of the 5 daily prayers, or *namaz*. In order to perform the daily prayers comfortably, the activities of daily life had to be planned according to them. Therefore, one who wishes to perform the Morning Prayer is expected to go to bed early. On the other hand, the only way for a Muslim to perform daily prayers in a modern and secular way of life is to search for suitable breaks for each one.

traditional the only goal (Reed, 1995). Thus, the borders between the Western way of thinking and the long established world of the traditional were now being codified as a constant source of tension for the Republican generations. Every day life had to change.

The question Yahya Kemal asked actually reflects the paradoxes created by oscillations and dilemmas between modern and traditional views of life. In fact, this question points to an impasse experienced not only by Turks but by all the “other” societies involved in the process of modernization. How could it be possible to wake up for the Morning Prayer, or *namaz*, which is one of the most sensitive presentations of the religious obligations, in a universe where daily life is built on the basis of *laic* practices and secular demands? What is left of the differentiation of time and space in every day life? Actually, when these differentiations are pondered and focused on, the basic question that crystallizes appears to be an impasse that summarizes the de facto realities of Muslim communities for about 200 years. The problem revolves around the question of “Could we be both Western and Muslim?” (Kara, 2001).

With modernization,² critical problems arose at certain points in Turkey as a result of the reproduction of every day life as did in many other traditional communities. The desire for secularization, which is inherent in the founding discourse of modernism, reveals the flexibility of the boundaries of the Islamic modernization. The style of modernization in every day life, particularly in cities with traditional leanings such as Konya and Kayseri, which does not resist so hard but incorporates its own preferences, somehow reflects this flexibility. In this context, some life styles which do not fear resorting to modernity as well as tradition can be considered serious exceptions to the usual debates and generalizing assumptions of sociologists (Subaşı, 2004).³

² Usually, under the title of modernization three often confused developments are mentioned: The first is a process of confusion and transformation that encompasses the whole society, which is self-originating and self-growing process that arises as a result of fostering independent actions of actors belonging to different social groups. The second is a purposeful re-building process aimed at connecting this process of growth, expansion and transformation

with new behavioral and institutional norms. These two dimensions which involve economic and social dynamics and the political and legal framework that try to guide them are together called modernization. The third are efforts to express the gaps and weaknesses under this social structure, which in the narrowest sense of the word come to mean modernism (Bilgin, 2002).

³ In fact, a study conducted by ESI last year (2005) defined the dynamic entrepreneurial spirit and the efforts to join in with the modern in Kayseri, an Anatolian city known for its conservatism, as a Calvinist development of its own kind. In that study, the activity in Kayseri was reflected as a perfect identification of Islam with modernity. According to the study, economic success and social development took the form of a harmony between Islam and modernity. Discussions of Protestantism generated by sociological analyses made to understand the relationship between religion and capitalism since Weber was brought to the agenda as a model that had explanatory power on this issue. It was obvious that when themes of change, progress and differentiation in the Islamic world came to the agenda, the controversy would get deeper and go in different directions. The world view of Islam requires new concepts because the means at hand are usually insufficient and useless. Thanks to undeniable examples of the fact that Islamic tradition did not fear from getting in touch

On Every Day Life

Daily life reflects the ordinary world of values, attitudes and activities that take shape in various forms in social life. Therefore, it would not be an exaggeration to consider studies of daily life among the most favorable means that can be used to trace changes in social structure because by this way daily life patterns, living designs, mental structures, perceptions of the world, conceptions of life and the confusions and differentiations from the ordinary can be observed clearly.⁴

As a matter of fact, the significance of daily life arises from the fact that it has the simplest demonstration of reality. Although it is seen as a recently discovered new area of study in social sciences, it indicates the original course of social reality. In the same vein, sociology studies on which procedures people build themselves in daily life. In this framework, particularly ethno-methodology has an explanatory power with high sociological value in daily life studies. According to this, daily life reflects an experience in which everyone gets involved in some way and lives through. As pointed out by Henri Lefebvre (1998),

“daily life in all its ordinariness is composed of repetitions: attitudes at work and outside work, mechanical movements (...), hours, days, weeks, months, years; linear and cyclical repetitions, natural time and rational time, etc. (...) Daily life is a low degree of “experience” and thinking, a degree in which experience and thinking have not separated from one another yet; all that is perceived is a part of a larger universe, and the world is a total of all things.”

Because, daily life is a shared and flowing world of experience from which objects and abstract concepts are generated.

Daily life is not independent of a discourse that determines itself no matter in which context it is. Even in daily life which is usually bound by ordinariness, there is a specific form(ality) that requires a really substantial hermeneutic effort. For, what comes to surface with this are the hidden, deep and strong undercurrents of the social. The system that regulates the flow of daily life is fed by a root paradigm involving the components of sociality and a reference system. This connection moves daily life to a status of a specific road map that

with new realities, the new forms generated by these contacts increase and rapidly assume an Islamic character. Even so, this reciprocity may always be a source of surprise for Western researches.

⁴ In this context, the contributions of Erving Goffman, Harold Garfinkel, Alfred Schutz, Thomas Luckman and Henri Lefebvre must be particularly remembered (See Subaşı, 2004).

renders it a constant determinant at a cognitive level. Thus, each form, action or information that has an equivalent in life, that is experienced and that exposes itself reflects the inner world of the social. Therefore, by pursuing the traces of changes existing in daily life, it becomes possible to demystify and understand the social and economic assets of a world of differentiations and orientations that occur in a specific spatial and social context or a world that has become ordinary through repetitions and habits. In this framework, daily life demonstrates how values, meanings and actions that proliferate in a series of variety ranging from the harmony in the relationships between the world and the religion to the overlapping of the relationships between the state and society can lead to unity in practice. There, some fanciful ideas, and odd and ambiguous preferences, in other words, anything that has not turned into a daily form or a style carries an alienation that leaves itself outside. In that case, the essential thing is to discover the fundamental fragments of daily life that are interesting but always involved in social life by permeating through its effective filters. As a matter of fact, experimentalism and genuineness that are inherent in the nature of daily life exist always together with a grandiosity, style and system. In short, when departed from daily life practices, the society's world of meaning, mental structures, pattern of living and objects of orientation are revealed. This study deals with the reproduction of every day life as a way of understanding the specifics that Konya has displayed through its process of modernization.

Konya: “Encoded” and “Protected” Memory

Konya can be taken as an exceptional example in observing how modernization is faring in Turkey. For, Konya is a model city where modernity and desires for tradition converge paradoxically like nowhere else, and the existing reconciliation enables the emergence of new styles in daily life. With respect to the course of Turkish modernization, Konya is worthy of attention by virtue of the interestingly simultaneous and unbiased references it makes to both the tradition and modernity. Konya's historical memory as a city and its usual calmness in the face of all kinds of novelties distinguishes its modernization from others. First of all, being one of the few cities that have transcended the borders of Turkey, Konya sets an unequalled example in pursuing this course. On the one hand, Konya can be defined with its classic and traditional urban identity; on the other hand, it demonstrates a desire on the part of the periphery to come to the centre and activates a new potential of concentration. When the history of Konya is considered in terms of diversification of daily life, it is always possible to

observe in it new strategies for existence. Accompanied by centrifugal tensions, Konya crystallizes the psychological state of the Provincial in the process of Westernization and its story in this context.

In Konya, which is among the leading classic Anatolian cities, the past is updated anew without being limited only to the remembrance and conservation of the traditional and at the same time efforts of creating a new common ground for meeting with the modern are often observed in the historical process. Konya is one of the traditional Anatolian cities where all stages of the evolution from the traditional to the modern are experienced deeply, and where the constantly controversial, tense and unsettling effects of change can never be ignored. However, the real characteristic that separates Konya from similar cities is that there still exists a piece of world knowledge, or a guidebook of every day life, in it that keeps a balanced distance between the traditional and the modern, and even encourages this correlation between the two. So much so that observing how every day life goes on in the case of Konya appears to prove that demands for change can also be realized without leading to a social confusion and “a fit of uneasiness”⁵ as is observed in the rest of Turkish modernity. Thus, it can be possible to understand by what concepts a typical Anatolian city can have a life style that is open to both the traditional and the modern world but that does not lead to a dilemma.

Even when a quick tour is taken through history, it is likely to come face to face with the reality that Konya bears the characteristics of an ancient city. A common point that emerges out of all archaeological findings since Neolithic times is that Konya has enjoyed a central status since the very beginning⁶ (Ter, Özbek, 2005; Doğru, 1995; Farouki, 2000). In fact, this status of Konya which can be explained with reference to its possession of a historically favorable ground throughout all ages has made it possible for her to maintain a central position. Therefore, the geography of Konya, which has continuously been made to change hands since the Hittite times up to the present, bears qualities that are worth investigating for their own sake. The Romans and Crusaders almost competed in their campaigns from the west to the east with the Moguls in their incursions from the east to the west in inflicting similar destructions in the course of history.

⁵ In his study in which he dealt with the fate of a modernization project in a society unprepared for it, Gregory Jusdanis (1998) uses the concept of “delayed modernity” and makes remarks about a “fit of uneasiness” experienced by communities in which there is a discordance between projects of modernization and local conditions. In his assessment of tensions between the center and the periphery, and the dominant and the minority, Jusdanis states that this “fit of uneasiness” actually stems from the differences between the West and the local conditions of the countries in the periphery.

⁶ In this framework, Çatalhöyük, one of the oldest human settlements in Anatolia and actually in the whole world is situated quite close to today’s Konya (For Çatalhöyük, please see Bahar, Koçak, 1996/2004).

The strategic location that it has enjoyed since the Romans, Byzantines, Muslim Arabs and lastly the Seljuks, in whose time it began to be defined as a Turkish city, has managed to keep Konya, together with other peripheral qualities, in a status worthy of attention. For example, Konya always enjoyed a critical status for the Romans. Likewise, this was always an area to pay attention to for the Byzantines. Its cosmopolitan nature and its location as an important station on the way of migrations and the Silk Road were among the elements that reinforced Konya's significance.

However, today Konya derives its much-appreciated merit from its past that shaped up mostly in a spiritual traditional. Konya's past, which can always be associated with a kind of sanctity, provides it with a privilege that can not be ignored. Konya's hidden history, in other words what kind of an image this city has in the mind of a typical Konya resident, also exposes an emphasis on the roots of the city associated with a mythical world. It is necessary to remember the sanctity of this city in the minds of people and a series of myths in this context be it connected with its pre-Islamic name Iconium or its name in the Islamic era Konya. In this framework, Konya is referred to as "the city of prophets" or "the city of saints" (comp. Konyalı, 1964; Özönder, 1990; Uz, 1993). Although often times all these reflect states where myths and reality intermingle, a rather significant image derives its power from these references. For example, when a glance is taken at the map of holy places in the New Testament, the significance of Konya for the Christian memory becomes clearer. This significance primarily results from the fact that Saint Paul visited this city twice. Again another point that must not be ignored regarding the emergence of the city image of Konya is the special significance attached to this city by the Christians during their holy wars, or the Crusades.

Without a doubt, Konya has been a Turkish city for quite a long time. Conquered by the Selcuk Commander of Süleyman of Kutalmış, Konya has been in the hands of Muslim Turks since its conquest in 1074. It must not be forgotten that the real image of Konya, which has been shaped up by various effects of the Selcuks, Ottomans and modern Turkey, can be revealed by associating it with its Selcuk inheritance (Baykara, 1985). Actually, Konya served as the capital city during the reign of Anatolian Selcuks. Although Konya appears as a city that has continuously changed hands among Muslim communities from that time on, this resulted mostly from its status as a charismatic city.⁷

⁷ This is so much so that Konya was always in the position of a city over which bargains were made in the conflicts and strife between the Karamanoglus and the Selcuks. However, the problems caused by this appeal of

Doubtlessly, the real quality of Konya that earned it worldwide fame is its association with the famous Islamic mystique Mawlana Jalal-el-Din Rumi. Rumi is not a mystique whose influence is known and felt only in Konya. As a matter of fact, many a people who pay a respectful attention to his message travel to Konya in thousands on the anniversary of his death (Şeb-I Arus) and remember him with ceremonies. When departed from common perceptions, Rumi assumed the responsibility of the city in a historical sense and this affinity with him gave the city “an honour”, “a privilege” and “a source of pride”. Therefore, for an ordinary resident of the city, Konya is a holy city. This undoubtedly led to this: If a city is

blessed, this will have a deep impact on daily life there. In a blessed city, the things that contravene the “spirituality of the city” are shunned. For, such things lead to social conflicts that are difficult to settle.

While a reference can be made to the established and positive history of a city, mention can also be made of its fantastic and mythical history based on mental creations. The meeting point of these two has turned Konya into a very mystical and pious city. Sociologically, the city bases itself on such myths. Therefore, pursuing daily life practices in the case of Konya is of great significance. Rumi’s discourse and a rich spirituality incorporated in life after being created in such a tradition gradually became the basic norms that form the true reality of Konya. In short, the total image created by a combination of these components has given perceptions about Konya a spiritual and mystical direction.

New Components: “Today, new things must be said”

Since the early times up to the present, its routes that are constantly reproduced in daily life, and above all its past which enables Konya to be described as a respectable and magnificent city make it necessary to pay attention to it. Always renowned as a prestigious city in a historical process from the Romans to the Byzantines and from the Selcuks to the Ottomans and lastly to present day Turkey, Konya today attracts attention with the renewed facet of its every day life. However, what is at issue is what kind of a relationship Konya will establish with global demands in a world consisting of new life styles equipped with new technologies.

Konya are quite a few. For example, during Tamerlane’s famous campaign in Anatolia and the *Celali (Jalali)* uprisings, Konya was in serious trouble.

For, it is highly probable that the new relationships of dependence that emerge at this level and the cultural contrast based on this will bear social risks.⁸

At the time when the Republic was founded, Konya had visual qualities that could be considered typical Selcuk heritage. Besides, the Ottoman element was complementary to its appearance. Therefore, this nature of Konya, which has always allowed it to be defined in terms of a traditional and religious perspective, needs to be viewed from these fundamental characteristics of it. As a Selcuk-Ottoman city, Konya implemented its urban development in a combination of family, neighborhood and religious community as did other traditional cities: The family as the smallest unit, then the neighborhood-protective as well as encompassing-and formations of religious communities that go beyond local boundaries (Çadircı, 1991; Ergenç, 1995; Farouki, 1997). The religious community, or *jama'ah* was a part of the social imagination created by the world of daily relationships. An ordinary individual in an Anatolian city internalized the Ottoman identity by roaming through a web of bonds generated by the neighborhood and the religious community. Communal bonds developed around *masjids*, or small mosques, which existed in almost all streets, and mosques and lodges of religious sects that were bigger than *masjids* and that justified the existing variety through larger participants. It is true that teachings of the *ulema*, or the doctors of Muslim theology, were influential in the practical demonstration of religiosity. However, another element as important as that was religious communities and sects. They were structures that tolerated areas of tension between the state and the society. Especially when urban life is considered, the answer to the question in what way the gap between the state and the society will be filled and what social institutions will undertake this responsibility is, when Muslim communities are concerned, is through the religious sects. As emphasized by Işın (1995), this role must be understood properly:

“The question of cultural roaming among groups of different status brought along with social stratification draws attention to another manner of activity assumed by sects in urban life. This manner of activity addresses the feeling of belonging to a religious community existing in the collective subconscious of urban residents and help people of different status meet in a common ground by way of mystic metaphors it uses. We may regard the ground where such a union of understanding and feeling materializes

⁸ In his descriptions of Turkey's leading cities in his book *Five Cities* published in the mid-20th century, famous Turkish novelist Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1901-1972) aptly describes the frustration created by rapid and radical change in the cities, among which Konya was included (2004). What Tanpınar mentions is “*the regret felt for those that disappeared from our lives and the enthusiasm felt for the new*”. Even so, the dilemma felt by Tanpınar gives way to balance and peace as far as Konya is concerned. Konya clearly retains its exceptional status in this conflict. According to him, Konya possesses a unique correlation of nostalgic feelings towards the past, reality of today and expectations from the future.

as the strongest social structure which enables cultural circulation among the groups in question. The classic assumption that each sect generates the culture of a group of a different status has no validity at all. In fact, we must state here that this joint union of understanding and feeling, termed “neş’e, or joy, in the mystical language both substitutes for the dynamics of cultural circulation among status groups and at the same time allows for a form of individual perception best fitting for human nature. The sects’ keeping open such a channel of cultural circulation, both ends of which open to the humans and the society, played the primary role in the emergence of urban life. Moreover, this role has a historical dimension: thanks to such a channel of communication that was granted functionality by the sects on a common cultural ground, knowledge and experience are passed on from one generation to another and thus the collective memory of the society is established.”

It must not be forgotten that in Konya, the ulema, or doctors of Muslim theology from madrasahs (religious schools) and members of religious sects who managed to establish more insightful and lasting relationships with people of all professions and walks of life had an effective role that transformed the natural-secular nature of daily life (comp. Arabacı, 1998). This is so much so that the historical cost of these roles of the ulema and the sects almost justifies mostly ideological references that have codified Konya as “the source of religious backwardness/bigotry” since the foundation of the Republic.

Turkish modernization upset the established daily life patterns. When tradition is defined, a larger framework that also includes religion is emphasized. Turkish politicians who were nurtured by the founding values of modernization dared to engage in an open conflict with the tradition. Although the speed of the revolutionary orientation of Turkish modernization has considerably slowed down today, its effect has gained increasing continuity. The leaders of the new regime were, from the very beginning, agreed on disdaining, excluding and, when deemed necessary, suppressing religion as a reference value. In this chaotic atmosphere, only a world of reference approved by the state could exist. It was out of the question that Konya could have privileged treatment in its inclusion in modern Turkey’s direction. However, even a simple comparison of what kind of an appearance modernization allowed could suffice to expose the difference in various regions of Turkey. Indeed, even Konya’s neighbors could not synchronize with Konya in maintaining the delicate balance between modernity and adherence to tradition. As Aktay pointed out, what makes Konya unique in this regard is that although it has always maintained a lukewarm attitude towards basic tenets of Turkish modernism, it has employed a policy of real-politics concerning the nature of modernism. This is so much so that Konya’s experience of modernization does not conflict ideologically with the discourse of the Kemalist elite; nevertheless, universal knowledge and the reality of every day life contributes significantly in

the development of this imagination and determination of its direction (Çelik, 2002; Ayata, 1993; Bayramoğlu, 2006; Veritr, 2005; Siar, 1985).

What lies within the content of this contribution is a combination of religion, tradition and modernity in the case of Konya. Both religion and tradition are still the major creators of the mental world of a typical Konya native. The existence and weight of a tradition of common sense and respectable ulema that did not allow bigotry or heretic sects are factors that should not be disregarded concerning this effect. The weight of ulema was always visible in the rational characteristic of religious orientations. This emerging weight regarded marginal movements and changes of axis as negative indicators and such efforts of organization were taken as malformations. Although this weight of ulema was substantially eroded during the republican era, its respectability still holds.

Throughout the republican era, as security and controlling devices of the state, Imam Hatip Okulları,⁹ or imam education schools, and also imams affiliated to Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, or Directorate of Religious Affairs, who are in charge of conveying the official understanding of religion to the society, have displayed an attitude that extinguished tensions and conflicts in the face of every instance of manipulation from the superiors regarding the regulation of daily life. Sermons, lectures and assemblies of enlightenment, and even religious ceremonies have contributed to the justification of such attitudes. Thus, a kind of continuity has been achieved in Konya that has separated spirituality from verbal and formal essentialism in a more radical manner than that has happened in many other regions of Turkey. The major principle that Imam Hatip Okulu (Imam Training School), Yüksek İslam Enstitüsü (Higher Institute of Islam)¹⁰ (İlahiyat Fakültesi (Faculty of Divinity) after the 1980's) and the personnel at Diyanet (Directorate of Religious Affairs) have crystallized for daily life is “to progress”; however, the original goal is not to get away from the main paradigm while implementing this goal. The notion of progress here was different from the notion of progressivism in the western discourse of Enlightenment. What happened was

⁹ Initially, Imam-Hatip schools were established to graduate enlightened religious men. It is possible to categorize these schools as a unique formation in which two different lines of knowledge, namely “worldly” and “otherworldly”, meet in a modern framework. Nonetheless, the Kemalist elite often have misgivings about the knowledge and the human element generated in Imam-Hatip schools. The rapid increase in their number and their appeal to the public soon made Imam-Hatip schools one of the issues of tension between laicism and religion. Now, Imam-Hatip schools have been codified by the modernist Kemalist elite as the breeding ground for Islamic movements. Ultimately, many restrictions have been imposed on graduates of these schools. For example, students of these schools can no longer attend the university that they choose.

¹⁰ Initially, these institutes and faculties were opened to graduate teachers of religion for various secondary education schools, especially Imam-Hatip schools, or to educate personnel for the religious bureaucracy to be employed as muftis and preachers in the central and provincial branches of Directorate of Religious Affairs. The controversy about the justification and functions of these schools has assumed a permanent status as consequence of the fact that the secular orientations of the state do not have a truly genuine route.

associating words with Western words in appearance but filling their content with Islamic terminology. The images and the ideas that emerged and proliferated in a new form were entirely modern. Even if they were entangled in the nets of the past, unconditional rejection of the modern did not receive mass approval. Actually, this situation was a testament to Konya's uniqueness. Within this combination, Konya has begun to generate concrete examples of its own specific modernization with its facets that it has displayed with more emphasis especially since the 1990's. It is possible to detect a re-reading of the tradition behind all these. It would be fitting to cite here the sayings of Prophet Muhammad and Mawlana Jalal-el-Din which translate as follows respectively: "The one who spent two days with equal performance does not belong to us" and "yesterday went along with yesterday; it is necessary to say new things today".

There is a constant search for harmony in urban life. The necessity for co-habitation renders efforts in this regard valuable. In this framework, different criteria are reproduced. Agreeing with the shared principles of the city may create the danger of eliminating new approaches on an individual or social level. The fear of getting lost in the same pot and course encourages the emergence of ghettos. Weber, on the other hand, proposes just the opposite (2000): "The city removes all ties". This removal of ties allows for new formations and organizations that will introduce an urban life style. The values, traditions and value judgments are subjected to a new test. But, what continues to exist in Konya is an expression of a different co-existence.

Aşure as a Metaphor for a Model of Cultural Plurality

The real source of controversy about Konya is whether the newcomers to Konya mix up with the natives or not. Every proposal of life style that comes from outside will either succeed or adapt to the social atmosphere of the society they join, become creolized through transformation, and will perhaps maintain its specific identity. But in fact, those who come to the city add their characteristics to the city and do not express themselves with a different identity. The fact that those who come from outside are also Muslims facilitate integration. Without explicit suggestion, "The Dome" in Konya attracts and incorporates the stranger to a specific culture, and ultimately makes him either religious or secular. However, individual dissensions can not get away from Konya's encompassing power. How is it possible that the style that operates in Konya fosters piety? It can not be denied that the effects of

modernization and westernization that we experience in our lives are felt here like everywhere else in Turkey. The practice of building daily life on secular values works in Konya just as anywhere else. Even so, mention has to be made of a “specific style” in Konya, because the unity that forms here does not eliminate cultural, religious and ethnic differences. In fact, it is possible to talk about a common ground of all these structures.

This common ground of meeting in Konya can only be expressed through the metaphor of aşure. Aşure is a dessert that is made from a variety of ingredients. There is a common belief about the origin of aşure, which is made by boiling wheat, chickpeas and other grains with dried fruit. The day of aşure is on the tenth of Muharrem, which is the first of the lunar months in Islamic calendar. Historical and religious stories have it that important events took place on this day in the lives of many prophets. On this day, many prophets were saved from various big problems, oppressions and persecutions. According to these stories, certain incidents occurred on the day of aşure.¹¹ The most frequently-made connection with aşure in the Islamic world is the murder of Prophet Muhammad’s grandson, Huseyin, at Karbala. Today, aşure has an important ritualistic value as a constantly updated story among all Muslims, in particular the Shi’ite and the Alevi (And, 2002).

Each ingredient used in aşure manages to retain its specific taste. Besides, all these ingredients create a totally new taste, too. This is more functional for Konya than the “example of salad” given for the American and Canadian cases because of both the cultural uniqueness of the concept of aşure and the unreality of the suggestion that the ingredients that come together in a salad do not undergo transformation. We know that no cultural encounter can be possible without a certain amount of interaction. In the case of aşure, although all the ingredients mix and mingle with one another in the same pot, the ingredients do not change their characteristics in the end. As is emphasized by Boysan, aşure is a mixture of elements that generate a new taste when they come together despite their dissimilarity. In fact, for example,

“The truth behind how the chickpea and the dry fig come together can not be grasped. All the same, just like aşure, there are blends of humans from whose gathering a sweet atmosphere arises and there are cities as their location. (...) However, what gives taste to aşure and heats it is the fire. The name of the fire that enables mixing well in human

¹¹ Among them are God’s acceptance of the repentance Prophet Adam for the sin he committed, the salvation of Noah’s ark from the great flood, Prophet Abraham’s not getting burned in the fire, the ascension of Prophet Driss to the heavens, Prophet Jacob’s meeting his son Prophet Joseph, Prophet Job’s recovery from his illness, Prophet Moses’ crossing the Red Sea and saving the Jews from the persecution of the Pharaoh and lastly Christ’s birth, his salvation from death and ascension to the heavens.

gatherings is culture. The destiny of human communities not heated by the fire of culture is to remain permanently at the stage of salad “(Boysan, 2004).

Thus, a new taste emerges as a combination of each taste felt individually. Konya must be handled in the context of this specific combination.¹²

Sociological literature did not delay in analyzing mental structures and orientations activated by the urban context. In fact, the profoundest problems of modern life arises from the individual's desire to retain their existential autonomy and individuality in the face of effective social forces, historical legacy, external culture and living style (Simmel, 1996).

In this framework, urbanization epitomizes the formation of the “people” in a new formula. And that which is daily reflects meeting points where this variety emerges in search of harmony not within sharp boundaries. According to a common assumption regarding the nature of sociological relationships, while urbanization generates its own tradition, daily life takes form as a harvest ground where materials and accessories in the cultural-intellectual depot are re-processed. Life styles and life patterns always emerge by differentiating from urban experiences, but still it is not always possible to talk about the uniqueness of urban practices. The process of urbanization can also be defined as a new aspect of life that introduces changes of social structure such as division of workload and specialization. Ultimately, this process paves the way for secularism, individualization, establishing anonymous and rational relationships. Thus, the values, manners and attitudes that life brings begin to be adopted. Tradition is not appreciated and therefore tradition gets in contact with new forms.

In this context, Konya displays a distinct characteristic that sometimes confuses sociological theory. On the other hand, the interest in what is modern is selective. Here, it is difficult to define the traditional characteristic of the city as a monotonous embodiment of the past. It is actually the continuous mobilization of the materials at hand in building bridges between the past, present and the future. In this framework, the appeal of religion, mysticism and modernity constitutes the fundamental elements of daily life. This is so much so that even new strategies of urbanization usually tend to transform old structural characteristics rather than remove them. Business centers, new neighborhoods, increasing centers of concentration

¹² Here there is something different from the one achieved with the melting pot. What is expected of each element in the melting pot is creolization. For, the goal here is to create new social and cultural forms or identities out of those who belong to different cultural, religious and ethnic groups. This melting pot is now an amalgam. As transpired from many practices ranging from assimilation to integration, the elimination of the original root in a melting pot has been considered among the requirements of the social order (compare, Irem, 2005). On the other hand, the essence of aşure is to preserve differences with their root qualities and ensure constant maintenance of a balance

and diverging orientations in urban atmosphere turn Konya into a mould where differentiations in it are tolerated.

Undoubtedly, one of the factors that foster this perception is the fact that what is religious has taken a genuine form. When patterns of social life are considered, especially mosques reflect identity to a large extent and are popular with the *jama'ah*, or the congregation. Nonetheless, some ancient historical sites which may be cited among the primary indicators of Selcuk and Ottoman existence in the city receive their share of the tensions that arise from daily life practices.¹³

It is appropriate say that daily life in Konya is now reproduced by blending the traditional and the modern. As was revealed by researches conducted in recent years, Konya displays a cautious attitude towards both zealous Islamic radicalism and equally zealous movements of modernization (Akgün, 2002; Gül, Bayram, Hakkoymaz, 2003), GENAR, 2004; KTO, 2005; SIAR, 1985). Although Konya is often cited as a favorable ground for harboring fundamentalist interpretations of Islam, the number of examples that disprove such expectations both in theory and practice are quite a few. Despite the fact that Konya has preferred political tendencies with high Islamic emphasis since the 1970's, it has always demonstrated a measured and discreet attitude in order not to turn this tendency into an urban conflict.¹⁴ In this framework, Konya has set up its inner balance and limited the aspirations of extremists. Despite the visible weight of religious and conservative tendencies, Konya has

¹³ An ultra modern shopping center where representatives of all capitalist brands exist was built by the so-called religious capital in the center of Konya. The prominent architectural feature of this center is its revolutionary height and style for Konya. Besides the traditional Islamists who usually disapprove of high-rising construction (since tall buildings are usually seen as ominous signs of the Doomsday), this building also received much criticism from the conservatives. Controversy is still going on about the representative quality for Konya of the construction of a new business center with its unusual height even for the whole of Anatolia (42-storey to match Konya's traffic plate number). Konya's public opinion has not yet agreed on the name to be given to this skyscraper. Should the skyscraper be referred to with a western name like Kule City (Tower City) or one like Selcuklu Kulesi (Selcuk Tower) which revives historical memories? Now, the building began to be called *kule site* by the public in daily life thanks to a certain understanding of reconciliation. However, the conservative democrat municipal administration insists on calling this structure Selcuklu Kulesi (Selcuk Tower). The important thing here is not the placement of a rather assertive and imposing building in the center of the city in contrast to the religious objection to the construction of high buildings. The fact that this building is generating a new style of behavior and every day life culture by bringing along a new kind of consumer prototype is a much more important aspect of this building in contrast to the luxury shops in various parts of the city. The really interesting thing, on the other hand, is the enthusiasm to name a very modern building with Selcuk heritage. The building bears no elements of traditional architecture, yet the phrase Selcuk is enough to activate a search for defined roots. The semantic world created around kule site (Tower Site) goes beyond outward modernization and verbal traditionalism and provokes important questions in the context of Konya about how a new life style can be created.

¹⁴ The place which Necmeddin Erbakan, who represents the religious wing in Turkish politics, chose for his project and discourse (Milli Gorus, or The National View) has always been Konya. Nevertheless, this affinity between the city and Erbakan did not prevent the emergence of social democrat or democratic formations in their own way. There is no favorable atmosphere in Konya now to represent Erbakan's discourse in the political arena. In contrast, conservative democrat Tayyip Erdogan has managed to be influential in Turkish politics with a grassroots political platform that also includes remnants of the Milli Gorus movement.

given support to all of the political parties that have emerged in political arena (KTO, 2005; Tuş, 2001). However, Konya comes to the foreground as a city where religious tendencies are associated with political demands in daily life.

The remembrance of Konya with a perception of modernity is linked to the economic boom there (Dinçer et al., 2003). The developmental statistics which used to seem to justify the popular perception that Konya is ignored by the administrators of the modern Republic have begun to change rapidly in recent years (DOR, 2000, 2003; DIE, 1998, 2002). Industrial businesses that concentrate in Konya, economic revival and the development of similar factors that do not exclude traditional and religious points of reference indicate the continuity and prevalence of a remarkable living pattern in Konya. In fact, the industrial sector in Konya leads the entrepreneurs that are called *Anatolian Tigers*¹⁵ and are expanding rapidly. The holding companies that are established there and developments in the industrial sector operate independently of the religious and traditional reference points.

Thus, urban life is becoming increasingly modern. Modern life can only be based on a system. But, what is unusual is an Islamic modernization and, as has been frequently stated, this brings to mind a totally peculiar concept of modernization. What happens here is the inclusion of both modernity and the reproduced religious and traditional past in daily life rather than the conquest of the center by modernity.

In conclusion, Konya bears the quality of being an interesting city in that it has confronted and gradually reconciled the rules of modern life with its religious orientations which have constantly been given fresh impetus since Rumi and which have given priority to expertise and genuine knowledge over heretic views. The question to which Yahya Kemal sought an answer requires the implementation of more insightful research regarding how this conflict has been removed in the case of Konya. The question is this: What kinds of a balance do those who manage to wake up to perform Morning Prayer, or *namaz*, establish between their daily life and modernity?

¹⁵ See. Anatolian Tigers have represented since the 1980's the new entrepreneurialism of the religious and conservative businessmen in Anatolia unlike the mostly Ankara and Istanbul-based and state-favored Turkish businessmen. Sennur Ozdemir's article in this volume contains a comprehensive analysis of this entrepreneurialism.