

**THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION OVER WORK ETHIC
VALUES: The Case of Islam and Turkish SME Owner-
Managers**

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by

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to explore the influence of religion on the work ethic values of small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owner-managers in Turkey. The emergence of religious/pious business people in Turkey has been regarded as a phenomenon. This research pays special attention to the religious transformation and secularism in Turkey. It is based on semi-structured qualitative interviews with 32 Turkish SME owner-managers. The sample of the study has been divided into two groups: The practicing Muslim Turkish managers (the religious group), and non/less practicing Muslim Turkish managers (the secular group).

Discourse analysis of the qualitative data, first, clarifies where to seek the religious influence on business activities. It indicates that the influence of religion should be sought within individuals' conduct/manner of living leading the moral values and the mentalities of the business people, rather than seeking cause and affect relationship. The contemporary Islamic interpretation in Turkey, as it is called Turkish/Anatolian interpretation of Islam, is found to re-shape the existing teachings of the religion and reproduce the religious structure through the practices. In this respect, five distinguishing characteristics emerged as signs of the religious influence behind the pious business people's actions: *Hard work as an Islamic duty, good will (intention), responsibility, bounty/benevolence* and the *balance/equilibrium* in one's life. It is also observed that the new Islamic discourse in Turkey provides moral energy exclusively for the religious business people in terms of influencing and encouraging entrepreneurial activities.

Meanwhile, the study demonstrates that the work ethic values of the religious Turkish SME owner-managers have been evolving to be more rational and professional, especially after the 1980s liberal economy. This transformation has been evaluated within the concept of secularisation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADD – (*Ataturkcu Dusunce Dernegi* - Association for Kemalist Thought)

AKP – (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi* – Party for Justice and Development)

CHP – (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* – Republican People’s Party)

CYDD – (*Cagdas Yasami Destekleme Dernegi* – Association for Supporting Modern Life)

DP – (*Demokrat Parti* – Democrat Party)

ESI – (European Stability Initiative)

IWE – (The Islamic Work Ethic)

MSP – (*Milli Selamet Partisi* – National Salvation Party)

MUSIAD – (*Mustakil Isadamlari Dernegi* – Association of Independent Businessmen)

PESC – (The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism)

PWE – (The Protestant Work Ethic)

RP – (*Refah Partisi* – Welfare Party)

TUSIAD – (*Turk Sanayici ve Isadamlari Dernegi* - the Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association)

TUSKON – (*Turkiye Sanayicileri ve Isadamlari Konfederasyonu* - Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to explore the influence of religious beliefs over the work ethic values of Turkish SME owner-managers. In this research, the emergence of pious/religious business people is considered as a phenomenon, and special emphasis is given to religious transformation and secularism in Turkey. Both concepts, religion and secularism, are considered within the Turkish context.

1.1 Emergence of the Research Question

Turkey has been facing a significant transformation in its social structure for two decades. This transformation process might be classified under several subheadings; however, this research intends to focus on the newly emerging business class and its economic activities and dynamics. While examining relevant literature to identify a meaningful research question, one point always captured the attention: a newly emerging business class, in particular, small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owner-managers, and their new entrepreneurship culture, were usually mentioned along with their being religious or connected to some religious movements in Turkey. It has been considered as a new attitude regarding worldly activities, especially modern business practices for religious people, because religious people, for a long time, were not interested in doing economic activities in a rational and modern way. Formerly, Turkish business elites, who are mostly Istanbul-oriented, have been the prominent representative of the Turkish private business sector from the very beginning of the Republic.

In this study I formulated my research question as follows: **How does the Turkish interpretation of Islam influence the Turkish SME owner-managers' work ethic values and entrepreneurship?** More than 95 percent of the population is Muslim in Turkey, and it is the only Muslim country that has inscribed the principle of secularism (*laiklik*) into its constitution. The state shows strict reflexes to guard the

country's secular construct. Secular ideas are shared and embraced by the majority of the Turkish citizens. However, the meaning and the understanding of secularism within the Turkish context is still a controversial issue. In the early years of the Republic, it starts with Turkey's borrowing of the French model *laïcité* (French secularism) which suggests the separation of religion from state affairs. But the meaning of Turkish secularism has gone beyond this separation promoting a secular way of life on the individual level as well. Similar to French Republicanism (which is the root of *laïcité*), secularism was also used as a means to teach society how to be civilised and modern. This situation inevitably created a polarised society of the religious and the seculars in the Turkish context.

Therefore, in this study I apply in-depth interviews to both groups; secular and religious business people in Turkey. In this way, I intend to investigate to what extent religious beliefs affect business practices and the other possible sources behind business practices of Turkish business people. However, the secular part of the sample in my study is not only a control group, but in terms of a secular way of life it is also a theoretical issue in this study. In any religious way of life, the set of rules and their sources are clear and understandable (in terms of what is forbidden or prohibited). But, as for the secular way of life, it is more complex and unclear. The sources of secular rules might be related to several elements; such as traditions, politics, culture and even religion. Therefore, in this study, I assume that religion and secularism are not completely separate entities. For instance, most of the secular people in Turkey still consider themselves to be Muslim. It can be said that a particular interpretation of secularism exists in Turkey. In terms of the separation between state and religious affairs a great majority of Turkish citizens agree on this principle of the state (Carkoglu and Toprak, 2006). However, in Turkey there is a well known polarisation between the people who want to live piously and the people who strictly defend a secular form of life (*see section 3.2.1 for further discussion on the Turkish experience of secularism*). In this respect, I separated my sample on the basis of these criteria: People who have daily religious practices and have connection to certain religious movements are considered as pious/religious; and people who have no daily religious practices and have no religious group connection are considered as secularist in this study. I acknowledge that in the eyes of Western

readers this is not a crystal clear separation between religious and secular. However, in the Turkish context religious practices, (such as attendance to daily prayers, fasting, wearing Islamic headscarf, avoiding alcohol consumption, almsgiving, and participating the meetings of some religious orders/movements) are regarded as signs of being pious in the public eye. As mentioned at the beginning both concepts are considered within the Turkish context and focusing on the religious practices seems the most practical tool for separating the sample of this study.

As in every major religion, Islam as well prescribes some ethical/moral values which shape the way of life at both levels, individual and societal. Inevitably, it is possible to see Islamic moral principles regulating the business life. However, it is a fact that Muslim countries, including Turkey, could not create a capitalist entrepreneurial spirit for a long time. The recent developments in Turkey, especially within the last two decades, have a potential to lead us re-visiting the relation between religion and economic activities. It is observable that the number of private businesses, particularly the SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) increased substantially after the 1980s and the country has witnessed the emergence of a new business people which are known by their religious leanings. This study intends to understand how their religious beliefs influence their business practices, in particular the work ethic values and entrepreneurship. In this respect, this study attempts to understand to what extent and in which direction the Islamic ethic is influential. Additionally, this study also needs to explain how some Turkish cities which are known as religious or conservative created a strong enterprise culture without the support of the state. Moreover, one might argue that the daily business practices or values of religious people could also be important values for the secular business people. Therefore, the secular Turkish business people's account should also be taken into consideration.

These newly emerging Anatolia-oriented groups of religious business people are regarded as a phenomenon by Turkish intellectual circles. The number of academic studies concerning Islam and business are also increased substantially in the last decade. While interpreting religious business people in Turkey, mainly, we face two different approaches. The first one, as in Weber's Protestant ethic thesis, basically

stresses the relationship between the religion (Islam) and business activities, in particular the *Islamic ethic* concerning business activities (i.e. Arslan, 2001; Turkdogan, 2005; Yousef, 2001; Ozdemir, 2006). On the other hand, the second approach, which is closer to the Marxist perspective, claims that this phenomenon has nothing to do with Islam. The rise of religious business people is the result of shifting from a state-oriented economy to a free market after the 1980s and of the liberal politics of Turgut Ozal, the 8th President of Turkey. Based on the idea that Islam was abused by religious business people to accumulate more capital, the second approach also argues that the rise of religious capital would be a threat to the secular structure of the state (i.e. Bulut, 1997; Dogan, 2006). This study attempts to understand the religious business people phenomenon beyond the well known debate of infrastructure (material relations) and superstructure (ideology or religion). I consider my own situation between these two approaches and presume that Giddens' *Theory of Structuration* will support my positioning. In a way, his theory might be regarded as a mixture of Weber and Marx. Giddens pays special attention to the duality of "actors/agents" and "structure", and he argues that in the constitution of society they are not independently given set of phenomena (Giddens, 1984). Giddens' theory will be discussed further in the methodology chapter.

1.2 Using the Concept of Religion

The definition of religion is one of the most controversial subjects in social science. It seems that there is no consensus on the definition of religion (Droogers, 2008). While Max Weber refuses to define religion (Morris, 1987), –that might indeed be the wisest idea– Durkheim, in his well known definition, defines religion as “a unified set of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden, beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community, all those who adhere to them” (1964:37). This definition can be regarded as a functional one that explains what religion does in social life. It is worth noting that Durkheim takes religion as being both belief and practice; and he considers all religions true in their own fashion.

However, along with Durkheim, most of the nineteenth century's social scientists, such as Marx, Weber, Comte and Freud, thought that religion will gradually lose its importance with the advent of industrial society. In 19th century evolutionary thought, religion was considered as an early human condition before modern science, law and politics emerged. However, contemporary anthropologists, at least most of them, have abandoned this positivist approach and many have challenged the rationalist notion that regards religion as a primitive and therefore an old-fashioned form of institution which we now encounter in truer forms (law, politics, science) in modern life (Asad, 1993). More recently traditional theories of secularization have been criticised (i.e. Asad, 1993; Gole, 1991). Even one of the foremost advocates of secularization during the 1960s, Peter L. Berger, appears to have changed his view: "The world today, with some exceptions... is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever. This means that a whole body of literature by historians and social scientists loosely labelled 'secularization theory' is essentially mistaken" (Berger, 1999:2). A recent study, Norris and Inglehart's (2004:5) insightful book, demonstrates that during the past fifty years, all advanced industrial societies, at the public level, have been moving toward more secular orientations; "nevertheless, the world as a whole now has more people with traditional religious views than ever before – and they constitute a growing proportion of the world population".

However, it is not easy to claim that the religion and secularization debate has been settled. I think disregarding secularization theory is still premature. The point I am trying to make is that religion and secularism might not be completely different entities. For example, secularization has been firstly a Christian phenomenon, according to Martin (1978). He claims that, some theologians have indeed capitalized on certain integrations between religion/Christianity and secularism to welcome secularization as an unfolding of the essence of religion. Therefore, my point in this study is that religion is not a stable concept but a dynamic one which is always re-produced within the local cultural understandings, and it has always strongly interacted with tradition. Thus, this study follows the argument that all religions should be considered within the historical context and the traditions, in which they emerged. For this reason it is hard to claim a universal definition of a

given religion. In other words, it would make more sense if we talked about a particular sect or interpretation of a religion with its traditional and historical background, rather than the whole religion itself. For example, Weber, while examining the possible links between Protestantism and capitalism, takes Calvinist Puritans as an example within a particular context and shows how this specific way of life facilitated the emergence of rational capitalism (Weber, 2004). As Weber did, this study also focuses on religion as its reflections on the social and practical life including business and economy, rather than the essence of the religion. Therefore, this study will stress the “living” religion mostly, rather than the scriptural texts. In this respect, I will consider the people who practice the religious duties as representative of their religion. In particular, practicing or devout Turkish Muslims, who are mostly connected to certain religious movements¹, and their distinct way of life will be the focal point of this study.

In this way, this study, in a Giddensian perspective, considers religion as a “structural feature” that is available in the individual’s social setting and that contains rules and resources which might inform the individual’s values and practices. In this regard, Giddens’ *Theory of Structuration* seems an appropriate tool to explore the influence of religion on economic activity at the level of the individuals in Turkey. Besides the concept of religion, the other key concepts which will be uttered through out the thesis also need to be explained.

1.3 Using the Concept of Work Ethic in a Weberian Perspective

First of all, it needs to be clarified that the concept of work ethic should not be confused with business ethics. Although they are not entirely different entities, the concept of “work ethic” refers to the values, beliefs, intentions and objectives that people apply to their work (Clarke, 1983). In this respect, it concerns people’s attitudes towards working.

¹ The evolution of the Islamic movements in Turkey will be explained in detail in chapter III.

When it comes to the relationship between religion and economic activities, Max Weber is the first scholar occurs in minds. Weber's "Protestant work ethic" thesis has been a widely studied subject to understand the relationship in question. Most of the researchers agree about his claim: that ascetic Protestantism played a vital role in the formation of modern, rational capitalism (Weber, 2004). However, this claim might seem vague in itself, and may need to be elucidated by the question *how?* For this reason, we face many different interpretations explaining how the Protestant ethic shaped modern capitalism, and under what circumstances it happened. In the psychology-related literature, the Protestant work ethic (PWE) values, such as hard working, honesty, thriftiness are regarded as work-related attitudes and mostly measured by *likert* type scales. This aspect of the PWE has been explained in the following literature review chapter.

Islamic ethic also gives importance to these so-called "puritan" values mentioned above. This study presumes that PWE values such as thriftiness, hardworking and honesty could also be important values for secular business people in Turkey. Therefore, it is hard to claim that religion, in particular 'the Islamic work ethic', is the only reason for the emergence of successful religious business people in Turkey. However, the changing attitude of the religious business people in Turkey is what we really need to explain. In this regard, the study intends to focus on Hennis's interpretation of Weber on the influence of religion on individuals' way of life in terms of economic activities.

Hennis (2000) provides a different angle to understand Weber's Protestant ethic thesis. According to this reading, every social order requires certain kinds of individuals. Hennis claims that Weber's investigation centres around a '*habitus*' which refers to non-discursive facets of culture, particularly the manner of leading one's life within the social orders of life, such as family, community and economic activities. This study argues that in order to understand the influence of religion on economic activities one needs to understand the *habitus* shaped by the religion.

Therefore, following in Weber's footsteps, this research focuses on the newly emerging Islamic *habitus* which became a new conduct of the religious way of life

shaping all the aspects of a Muslim individual's life. In particular, this study tries to understand the role of this new *habitus* in the context of business activities. It should also be noted that this study is not seeking any mechanic or causal relationship between religious beliefs and business activities, in particular the ethical perceptions. As Weber did in his study, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, this research also aims to demonstrate the recipe which answers the *how* question rather than the ingredients focusing on *what*. In this respect, we will try to understand the emergence of the pious business people and the dynamics behind the transformed work ethic values through the post-1980s liberal policies and the liberal discourse which seems quite influential among the pious people in Turkey. In this respect, transformation and the re-production of the social structure will be the focal point of this research. Thus, Giddens' *Theory of Structuration* appears as a handy tool in explaining this transition process.

1.4 Using the Concepts of Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Culture

In a Weberian perspective, the Protestant ethic, since it is considered as the spirit of Western capitalism, can be regarded as a driving force to create an enterprise culture and rationally thinking entrepreneurs in the West. The definition of entrepreneur varies. Schumpeter (1950) defines an entrepreneur as a person who is willing and able to convert a new idea or invention into a successful innovation. However, some other definitions do not insist on innovation, and place more emphasis on risk-taking. According to Knight (1967) and Drucker (1970) entrepreneurship is about risk-taking in relation to a business idea. Today, broader definitions are more popular than the Schumpeterian one. Dodd and Seaman (1998:77) suggest that at the broadest level, "entrepreneurship can be understood to include all those who engage in independent economic activity". This study, as well, intends to use the concept of entrepreneurship in a broad sense as: someone who is willing to take risk and spend his/her time and money in the name of a business idea. In this thesis the term 'entrepreneur' is used to refer to an SME owner-manager. This is not possible in all contexts, but it is done here because in the Turkish context, SME owner-managers are by definition entrepreneurial in that they have established a business.

Since the 1980s, Turkey has been trying to adapt itself to a free market economy encouraging private business sector, especially SMEs. It can be regarded as an attempt to create an enterprise culture in the country. In general, the concept of enterprise culture refers to the market responsive initiatives of business in the private sector (Morris, 1991). Besides structural changes, creating an enterprise culture requires a moral foundation which shapes people's way of thinking and acting towards business activities (Keat, 1991; Carr, 1998). In this respect, religious beliefs can be one of the sources to fill this moral basis. The relationship between religion and enterprise culture will be discussed further in the next chapter. Then in particular this research will be focusing on how the Turkish interpretation of Islamic ethic influences creating an enterprise culture in the country.

1.5 Some Methodological Considerations

Turkey's social structure has been changing and transforming very rapidly within the last two decades. This transformation has been accelerated especially after Turkey gained a candidacy status for the full membership of the EU, in 1999. This intense transformation process makes understanding of a social phenomenon even more difficult. For instance, the biggest support for the EU reforms comes from the people and the circles which are known as religious in Turkey. The pious people in Turkey show a radical transition on their perception of religion (Carkoglu and Toprak, 2006). Therefore, in order to understand the influence of religion on the work ethic values and entrepreneurship requires approaching this question from inside. In this respect, rather than quantifiable survey analysis this study applies an interpretive approach using qualitative tools. In the light of interpretive sociology, in-depth interviewing seems to be the most suitable tool to grasp business people's own point of view and to understand how they construct their own understanding of Islam and how does this construct influence their business practices.

In total, 32 interviews have been conducted in five different Turkish cities (Konya, Kayseri, Gaziantep, Ankara, Eskisehir). Discourse analysis technique has been used to analyse the data obtained from the interviews. During the analysis, this study

adhered to the interpretive sociology of Weber and benefited from Giddens's Theory of Structuration.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis consists of five main chapters along with the introduction and the conclusion. The second chapter demonstrates the theoretical framework of the study which is shaped around understanding Weber's Protestant ethic thesis in different perspectives. In this respects, it focuses on the relationship between religion, economic activities (entrepreneurship and enterprise culture) and work ethic. Then it pays special attention to the work ethic literature conducted on Turkish samples. The third chapter can be regarded as an integrative section of the previous chapter. It provides some insights regarding the historical background of Turkish modernism, secularism, Islamic thought and private business. I presume that this complementary literature review chapter will be helpful for understanding the findings of the research. In a way it maps out the possible routes of religious influences on business in Turkey from a historical perspective. As for the method of this study, chapter 4 clarifies the methodological considerations, including the epistemology, ontology and the methodological tools and techniques used in this study.

Findings of this research consist of two chapters. Chapter 5 demonstrates where to seek the religious influence on business in the Turkish context with the help of the qualitative data obtained from the secular and the religious sample in Turkey. It classifies the most commonly stressed Islamic ethical principles, namely *hard work as an Islamic duty*, *intentions (good will)*, *responsibility*, *bounty/benevolence* (refers to one's good actions for the sake of other people, though one did not have to do it) and *balancing one's life*. The chapter argues that the Islamic ethical principles have a certain influence among the religious business people; however they cannot be regarded as the main reason for the emergence of the Islamic business class. To some degree, these values also exist in the secular business people's lives. However, the dynamics and the sources of these attitudes among the two groups are different.

It appears that the transformation of the religion, in other words the newly emerging interpretation of the Islamic teachings provides some sort of moral energy for pious business people in Turkey through synthesizing the traditional Islamic values with the modern aspects of today's world. Chapter 6 goes a step further and attempts to understand the recent developments in question through the concept of "rationalization" and "secularization". According to the findings, the new interpretation of the religion facilitates rational thinking in business and plays a catalyst role. This particular experience of Turkey is regarded as Islam's own secularisation which is different from the Western experience. It even appears different from the early years' Republican understanding of secularism in Turkey. Therefore, the findings support the idea of Asad (1993) who argues that every religion should have its own secularisation process.

As for the originality and the contribution, this study contributes to the management literature from the sociological point of view focusing particularly on the work ethic and enterprise culture. In terms of work ethic and entrepreneurial mentality, this research will be the first one focusing on accounts of both the religious and the secular business people in the Turkish context. In terms of the religious group, this study pays special attention to the members of a particular religious movement in Turkey. *The Gulen movement* and its business people association, TUSKON (*Confederation of Industrialists and Businessmen of Turkey*) have been evaluated in the context of this research.

2. CONTEXTUALISING THE RESEARCH AND THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to understand how a particular Islamic understanding has affected a newly emerging Turkish business class. In this respect this chapter will be contextualising the research around the relevant literature providing more insights related to the key concepts. First, it demonstrates the different aspects of enterprise culture particularly focusing on the characteristics of the concepts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneur. Then it links the concept of enterprise culture with moral values and ethical dimensions. Secondly, this chapter focuses on Weber's Protestant ethic thesis. Its psychological aspects will be examined through the relevant literature considering the different dimensions of the PWE. Then the chapter pays special attention to the Weber's thesis in a sociological perspective and focuses on a particular reading of Weber's work concerned with his central question. Finally, the chapter examines the work ethic literature within the Turkish context.

2.2 Enterprise Culture and Religion

In a Weberian perspective, changes in the socio-cultural framework of religion might be influential on entrepreneurial activities by facilitating and encouraging them. Weber (2004) argues that the Protestant ethic facilitated a distinct form of capitalism, namely reproductive entrepreneurship with the rational outcome of developed business. As the religious business class in Turkey has been considered within a Weberian framework in this study, the Turkish interpretation of Islam in this regard might be playing a similar role too. In this respect, the following sections will map out the different aspects of creating an enterprise culture and its links with religion. Presumably, it will provide a better understanding of the phenomenon in question.

2.2.1 Creating an Enterprise Culture

The concepts of entrepreneur, entrepreneurship and enterprise seem inseparable. In other words, they are interlinked, and even sometimes they are used interchangeably. The literature shows that there is no consensus on the definition of an enterprise culture. Morris (1991) argues that enterprise culture has been a dynamic concept having a series of meanings and generating a series of different policies. The concept first appeared in the 1980s in the UK. Enterprise culture has been used to refer to the market-responsive initiatives of business in the private sector, and by some commentators, it is still understood in this way (Morris, 1991).

However, the concept of culture itself has a broad meaning too. As Wallerstein (1990) said culture is probably the broadest concept of all those used in the historical and social sciences. Geert Hofstede, an influential Dutch writer who made a cross-cultural comparison of work-related values in forty different nations, defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (2001:9). However, Carr (1998) argues that the concept of enterprise culture is given a privileged position because it is considered as shaping the way people think, feel and act within a business area. According to the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) “enterprise culture is defined as the full set of conditions that promote high and rising levels of achievement in a country’s economic activity, politics and government, arts and sciences, and also the distinctively private lives of the inhabitants” (cited in Morris, 1991). As such, enterprise culture is strictly linked with local cultural setting. In other words, it might be argued that every society creates its own unique enterprise culture. Turkey’s struggle towards liberalisation, especially after the 1980s, can be regarded in this respect as well.

According to Carr (2000), the creation and evaluation of enterprise culture has led to the emergence of an entrepreneurial management discourse, which has an important role in the day-to-day management practices of small business in particular, but also other large businesses and public sector organizations. From the beginning of the 20th century, many writers have presented different management theories aiming to find a better way to manage, such as Taylor’s scientific management theory, Fayol’s

classic analysis of management and Mayo's human relation model. After the 1980s, classical management theories have been more actively critiqued. With the impact of globalisation, especially with the high technology, the 1990s saw a strong need for new types of organization. This post-modern management discourse emphasised flexible, dynamic managers and organizations which can respond quickly, innovatively, and decisively to change (Carr, 2000). Therefore, it might be argued that Weber's bureaucratic structure, in some senses, seemed insufficient for future managers, both in large and small-sized organizations. However, the new enterprise culture and the entrepreneurs within it must have been adapted to this new management discourse. According to Kanter (1989) the entrepreneur has become the new cultural hero of the Western world since the early -1980s, where managers too were expected to behave entrepreneurially- in effect to be entrepreneurs.

As mentioned, the concept of enterprise culture first appeared in Britain. While Turkey does not emulate Britain, it would be beneficial to look at the previous experiences of a country which has gone through a similar process. After World War II, the UK focused on the development of large organizations. The idea was that the country cannot compete with the other developed countries militarily. Thus, the focus would be on economic competition and large organizations were needed at that time to achieve this. Small business was not the priority of the UK government. Then, in 1979, it was reprioritized by the government, and considered a rebirth of the small business sector (Carr, 2000). In Britain during the 1980s the idea of an enterprise culture emerged as a central motif in political thought and the practice of the Conservative government (Keat, 1991). The most important figure in the UK experience in creating an enterprise culture was Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister at the time in the UK (1979-1990). Almost all the sources which examine British experiences on creating enterprise culture, quote the same gripping part from her speech:

I used to have a nightmare for the first six years in office that, when I had got the finances right, when I had got the law right, the deregulation etc., that the British sense of enterprise and initiative would have been killed by socialism. I was really afraid that when I had got it all ready to spring back.

...But then it came. The face began to smile, the spirits began to lift, the pride returned (Margaret Thatcher, *Sunday Times*, 8 May 1988).

The aim of Thatcher's endeavour in creating an enterprise culture was to enhance the competitive performance of the British economy, so that Britain could challenge the other well developed countries, such as America, Japan and Germany (Carr, 2000). Briefly, Thatcher emphasised a retreat from government intervention, and the reinstatement of the market mechanism as the fundamental determinant of the economy (Morris, 1991). In order to achieve that goal the government made structural changes to facilitate the development of an enterprise culture. Some of these changes are: deregulation, privatization, tax reduction, reducing the state's role and enlarging that of the individual, promoting self-employment. However, creating a unique enterprise culture by only these structural changes was almost impossible. Thatcher also attached great importance to the moral side of enterprise culture. As Morris (1991:25) states 'she speaks as a politician and a Christian, and although she holds that politics and religion are separate spheres, she maintains that there is no tension between them'. According to Morris, Thatcher has always seen her mission as a moral crusade that goes back to the economic regeneration of Britain to a revival of the spiritual and national values that she connects to Christianity. Thatcher frequently stressed the importance of the UK's historical moral values, principally the Protestant ethic values, such as being hard working, being frugal, re-investing one's money. In doing this, the Thatcher government was trying to create particular types of entrepreneur who behave in the same way to promote the country's development. It can be seen as the transformation of the 'souls' of individuals as Roberts (1992) rightly mentions. Heelas and Morris (1992) also consider this process as government's 'moral crusade' which is designed to change how people think and what they value. It can be said that Turkey, in the 1980s, experienced similar developments by the efforts of a reformist state bureaucrat, then the Prime Minister, finally the president of Turkey, Turgut Özal. The 1980s liberal atmosphere and the structural changes provided an opportunity for flourishing of new entrepreneurial class in Turkey. (The post-1980 era will be discussed further in the next chapter.)

Education appears as another important factor in creating an enterprise culture. Again, in the UK experience, the whole British nation was conceived as locked in a global economic war in which there were no ‘non-combatants’, and the education of the population as ‘economic warriors’ was the important part of this struggle (Roberts, 1992). In a sense, competing with the world through enterprise was considered as the most efficient weapon of the post-war era by the developed countries. It can be said that training and educating the new generations within this perspective was seen to be as vital as having a strong ‘army’. According to Keat (1991), it is not enough to make individuals more active and less dependent, they must also be trained through the necessities of enterprise, so that they can become fully equipped with the characteristics of the enterprising individual, and therefore, contribute to the success of a properly enterprising form of free market economy. The author explains the main characteristics of the individuals which emerge from this endeavour, which is also considered as ‘cultural engineering’ as follows: First, enterprising individuals are self-reliant and not dependent. In other words, they take responsibility for their own actions. It is also called a high level of *internal locus of control*. Secondly, enterprising individuals oriented their activities towards particular goals or objectives; they monitor and evaluate their progress in achieving these. Additionally, such individuals show high levels of energy, optimism, and initiative. According to this view the world is full of opportunities for making new things happen. Finally, these sorts of entrepreneur are committed to pursue the rewards that come from success in a competitive world. Therefore they are highly responsive to the incentives provided by the prospect of such rewards.

In short, enterprising traits and activities could be summarised as:

- initiative;
- risk-taking;
- flexibility;
- creativity;

- independence;
- leadership;
- strong work ethic;
- daring spirit;
- responsibility. Carr (2000:11).

As frequently mentioned, this study seeks to find out the possible influences of religion over business behaviours. Therefore, this particular section will try to demonstrate the distinct behavioural patterns of entrepreneurs, so the possible links between religion and business activity can be demonstrated in the following chapters. McClelland (1961), in his well known book, *The Achieving Society*, presents handy behavioural patterns by using the *thematic appreciation test*. He discovered that entrepreneurs scored high on need for achievement (n Ach). According to him, entrepreneurs have high desire to do well in the competitive business environments where the results of one's performance can be measured objectively. In addition to high need for achievement, (1) entrepreneurs, by taking a moderate level of risk, desire to take personal responsibility in decision making; (2) are interested in solid knowledge of the results of their decision; (3) dislike routine work (McClelland, 1961).

Thematic Appreciation Tests were also used by other researchers without emphasising McClelland's concepts (n Ach or n Power). In the research titled *The Enterprising Man*, Collins et al. (1964) reached this conclusion: Entrepreneurs (1) are distressed by a from lack of problem resolution; (2) are in great need for autonomy and therefore uncomfortable with authority figures; (3) prefer patriarchal relationships with their subordinates; (4) exhibit a high level of anxiety and self-destructiveness.

After this abstract demonstration of possible behavioural patterns of entrepreneurship, I will continue with some social and economic factors which might

influence entrepreneurship. Many researchers who have studied demographic factors of entrepreneurship have indicated that entrepreneurs frequently belong to religious and ethnic minority groups (Hagen, 1962; Kasdan, 1965; Roberts and Wainer, 1966). This hypothesis is based on the idea that possession of, and belief in, different value system from that of the mainstream of society will contribute to the development of entrepreneurship as one of unconventional patterns of behaviour (Kets de Vries, 1977). Additionally, parental occupation seems another social factor in entrepreneurship. According to Newcomer (1961) and Kets de Vries (1977), the majority of entrepreneurs come from families where the father has been self-employed in one way or another. In a sense, this hypothesis has been supported by this study's sample as well. Within the sample of my research, except one, all pious/devout Turkish Muslim entrepreneurs come from such families where the father has been self-employed. Lastly, it can be said that institutional patterns, such as legal and economic systems, law and politics, might play a crucial role for developing entrepreneurial characteristics (Kets de Vries, 1977). In fact, this factor has been frequently mentioned by some Turkish scholars in the emergence of a new Turkish entrepreneur class (i.e. Arslan, 2001; Dogan, 2006; Ozdemir, 2006). However, it should be noted that all these patterns do not describe a causal relationship. They might be considered as only some aspects of a more complex phenomenon which contributes to the emergence of entrepreneurship.

The abovementioned characteristics of enterprise culture and entrepreneurship provide some insights about the structural features of the enterprise culture. However, I want to put more emphasis on the moral values aspect of creating enterprise culture, which illuminates the possible influences of religion more clearly.

2.2.2 Moral Values and Enterprise Culture:

As briefly mentioned, creating an enterprise culture has two dimensions: First, a wide range of institutions and activities need to be remodelled along the line of the commercial enterprise, including its alignment to the demands of the consumer; and second, the gaining and practice of enterprising qualities must be encouraged, so that

the rapidly commercialized world will itself take on a proper ‘enterprising’ form (Keat, 1991). In other words, one is institutional and structural changes, such as regulations and the other one is a moral foundation for enterprise culture.

I have argued that religion itself is not the determinant of economic and business activities. However, in this study I intend to emphasize the transformative potential of religion which emerges in a particular social setting influenced by the local tradition. For instance, Weber stresses the crucial role that Calvinist Protestantism played in the formation of “rational capitalism”. The history of capitalism is older than that of Protestantism. However, Weber (2004) argues that the puritan ethic; which encourages a disciplined and frugal life style, and being hard-working as religious obligations; facilitated a distinct form of capitalism that is called “rational capitalism”, namely reproductive entrepreneurship with the rational outcome of developed business. His main argument was that social formations of business development were, by chance, in harmony with the practices of Calvinism. Instead of a cause and effect relationship, Weber stresses this accidental meeting of capitalist development and the Protestant reformation, and he explains this situation with the concept of “elective affinity”. This affinity, between capitalism and the Protestantism, can be sought in the uniqueness of its Western form which distinguishes itself from the other forms of capitalism through rationality. In other words, it can be observed “between certain forms of religious beliefs and vocational ethics” (Schluchter, 1985:142). In a way, it materialises in the attitudes of the Puritan working hard and thinking rationally in business to receive God’s mercy. By this time, this attitude gradually shaped Western business people’s mentality regardless of their religious affiliation. As Schluchter (1985) notes, Weber’s study does not analyse the economic conditions but the economic consequences of ascetic Protestantism. Therefore, it can be said that religion here plays a catalyst role rather than a causal one.

It is apparent that Weber’s study has influenced many writers who are interested in the links between religion, business and the economy. For example, Anderson et al. (2000) take Weber’s Protestant ethic thesis as an example of creation of a culturally “munificent” environment for the emergence of British enterprise culture. They

argue that “metaphysics has been some importance in shaping the ideas of wealth creation and individualism held, and propagandised, by the political elite –the governing leaders— of the decade” (Anderson et al., 2000:17). According to Griffiths (1982), markets not only require a moral foundation, but they also give strength to the ethical dimensions of society by respecting individual freedom of choice and individual economic responsibility. He states several absolutes derived from Christianity which provided the basis for reconstruction:

...the positive mandate to create wealth; the requirement of private property rather than state or collective ownership; that each family retain a permanent stake in the economy; that the community strive to relieve poverty rather than pursue equality; that government should remedy economic injustice; that materialism be guarded against; and, that accountability and judgement are an integral part of economic life (Griffiths, 1982: 91-99).

These ideas are almost a verbatim quotation of Thatcher’s speeches on moral foundations of her politics. In a sense, this could be considered as a Christian framework to establish the legitimacy of business enterprise and the market economy.

2.3 Work Ethic and Religion

The above-mentioned examples give some indications as to how this study will approach the newly emergent “pious business people” phenomenon in Turkey. The theoretical frame of this study is also shaped by Weber’s Protestant ethic thesis. However, his thesis has been used by a variety of researchers from different disciplines. Broadly speaking, this literature can be divided into two parts: Studies on the psychological perspective and the sociological one. The following sections will be illuminating the different aspects of the Protestant ethic thesis and indicating a particular Weber interpretation that this study is going to use by critiquing the existing literature.

2.3.1 A Brief Look at the Protestant Work Ethic

Max Weber's Protestant ethic thesis has been a widely studied subject for many years by a considerable number of researchers from a variety of fields (i.e. Tawney, 1948; Turner, 1974; Schluchter, 1985; Furnham, 1990). Naturally, we encounter many different interpretations of Weber's study with different perspectives. Most of the researchers agree with his claim: that ascetic Protestantism played a vital role in the formation of modern, rational capitalism (Weber, 2001). However, this claim might seem vague in itself, and may need to be elucidated by the question *how?* For this reason, we face many different interpretations explaining how the Protestant ethic shaped modern capitalism, and under what circumstances it happened. In this respect, it is extremely important that we use a proper interpretation to explore similar developments or changes in different cultural settings, such as pious business people and their economic activities in Turkey.

It is a gripping point that Weber stresses: all of the economically developed countries have already done a series of requisite reformations in relation to the Catholic Church (Weber, 2001). In his own words:

A glance at the occupational statistics of any country of mixed religious composition brings to light with remarkable frequency a situation which has several times provoked discussion in the Catholic press and literature and in Catholic congresses in Germany, namely, the fact that business leaders and owners of capital, as well as the higher grades of skilled labour, and even more the higher technically and commercially trained personnel of modern enterprises, are overwhelmingly Protestant (Weber, 2004:7).

When we examine ascetic Protestantism, one can easily see that ascetic Protestantism shaped a frugal life style, strongly encouraging people towards hard-work. Studying Weber on the Protestant work ethic (PWE), we encounter two main aspects: one psychological, and another sociological. In management and

psychology literature there are plenty of studies regarding the psychological aspect of the PWE (i.e. Furnham, 1982, 1984, 1990; Buchholz, 1976, 1977). This body of literature is mainly about work related values, attitudes, job satisfaction etc. In this respect, the PWE seems to have been converted to a personality dimension separated from its socio-political and religious background that Weber proposed (Niles, 1999). In other words, we can assume that the PWE has become secularized, and it can be considered as “work ethic” itself without its religious aspects. Furnham (1990:32) explains this situation as follows: “...so it could be claimed that the PWE is not exclusively Protestant, about only work, nor exclusively concerned with ethics. It may therefore be more accurate to talk about work values and beliefs rather than the PWE itself”. Before moving on to examples of PWE studies, I think, it would be appropriate to demonstrate how the concept of hard-work is related to Protestant teachings as it is the best known characteristic of the puritan attitude.

The Idea of “Calling”

The term ‘calling’ is originally derived from a German word; *beruf*. It first occurred in Luther’s Bible translation in today’s modern meaning, and ‘calling’ is the word used in English. According to Lutheran perspective, people are saved through God’s grace, not through their own merits. The Calvinist branch of Protestantism stresses this thought as well. This assumption is also called ‘predestination’. It is the doctrine that ‘God has foreordained all things; especially that God has elected certain souls to eternal salvation’ (The American Heritage Dictionary, 2001). According to Weber’s (2004:40) definition of calling, “the only way of living acceptably to God was not to surpass worldly morality in monastic asceticism, but solely through the fulfilment of the obligations imposed upon the individual by his position in the world. That was his calling”. At the time of reformation, most of the Protestants believed that hard working is the obligation given to us by God, and it is the “calling”.

Original ideas of ascetic Protestantism teach that God has influence in every event in the world and the universe. This viewpoint applies religious beliefs to all aspects of life, such as church, family, politics, economics and business. By knowing the tenets of Protestantism within the historical perspective, we can clarify the manner of life

that it created and how religious movements influenced the development of material culture. Weber stresses its importance by saying, “only when this (clarification) has been determined with reasonable accuracy can the attempt be made to estimate to what extent the historical development of modern culture can be attributed to those religious forces and to what extent to others” (Weber, 2004:50).

According to Weber, in his renowned book, *the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, working people must be thrifty, not spend their money in vain and, they must save it for future investments; since this is the best way to put the money to good use (Weber, 2004). In addition to money, time is also considered as a valuable asset. Specifically, according to the Calvinist branch of Protestantism, working people spend the majority of their time working. In this respect, most leisure activities, such as going to a bar or a nightclub, gambling, are accepted as futility or a kind of sin, and people may have leisure activities only for gaining energy for tomorrow’s work (Furnham, 1990). This point of view is strongly related with an ascetic life style. It is because of the fact that in Protestantism, especially its Calvinist branch, newborn people are regarded as sinful. It is considered that the only way of being forgiven and receiving God’s mercy is working hard through a frugal life style. Therefore, working is accepted as an obligation given by God (Weber, 2004).

As mentioned earlier, the Protestant work ethic has two dimensions. Psychological and sociological aspects of the Protestant ethic thesis will be explained further in the next sections. Then, the possible links between religious beliefs and business activities will be highlighted.

2.3.2 Psychological Components of the Protestant Work Ethic:

Most of the social psychology studies in this area focus on the relationship between values, attitudes and behaviour. As Furnham (1984) states it has been suggested that a person’s beliefs, attitudes and values should be considered as a whole system that is concerned with such issues as competence and morality and that are acquired in

large part from societal demands. Social psychologists have not been very interested in the socio-political and religious background of PWE; they devoted a great deal of research to its measurement and correlations with different variables. In this literature, PWE is nearly always referred to as a set of beliefs regarding work. However, it is much more than that, being multi-dimensional and related to various aspects of social, political, and economic life (Furnham, 1990). Those studies can be classified into several parts. The following four sections are the most common psychological components of PWE acquired from the relevant literature.

Work-Related Attitudes and the PWE:

Work-related attitudes are the subjects of organizational behaviour and/or psychology, and are with concerned human behaviour in an organization or in a workplace. Therefore, many researchers from different fields, mostly from management and psychology, are interested in it. As it is figured from the terms of “work ethic”, it makes sense to seek some links between work attitudes and a specific set of ethics. Most of the psychology related studies sought correlations between attitudes towards work such as motivational needs, work and job commitment, job satisfaction, and the Protestant work ethic.

In Weber’s Protestant Ethic thesis, adherents of the Protestant ethic placed an emphasis on the importance of hard work. According to Calvinist beliefs, working is the only way of receiving God’s grace and mercy (Weber, 2004). Therefore, work should be seen as though it has a meaning itself and must be considered as the most important dimension of PWE. Today, PWE is still considered as hard working. Banks (1998) also stresses that PWE is mostly related to hard work, and he mentions the following behaviours in his PWE definition: “(1) The belief that work gives meaning to life; (2) a strong sense of duty to one’s work; (3) the necessity of hard work, giving work even before family the best of one’s time; (4) believing that work contributes to the moral worth of the individual and to the health of the social order” (Banks, 1998:5).

The importance of working hard is also the subject of a sizeable number of studies. Even, the concept of 'Protestant work ethic' has been converted to 'work ethic' by some researchers (Buccholz, 1977; Jones, 1997; Niles, 1997; Furnham and Rose, 1987). Niles (1997) argues that in recent times, PWE seems to have been translated into a personality variable separated from its socio-political and religious background. Therefore, the concept 'work ethic' directly refers to the Protestant work ethic in the social-psychology literature.

The relevant literature shows us some research conducted to find whether there is a link between some motivational needs and religious affiliation. However, what we are mentioning here is not about basic human needs such as Maslow's first level of hierarchy needs, but upper levels of needs such as need for achievement, success or affiliation. Weber (2004) tied religion and personality through a connection between Protestantism and capitalism, claiming that Protestants appeared to work harder, save more and do better economically than others. As he stated, certain Protestant beliefs encouraged hard working, self discipline, self denial and concern with achievement. According to McClelland (1961), there is a link between Protestantism and achievement. He theorized that the Protestant ethic led people to bring their children up in a certain way, and then these children become entrepreneurs who run growing business enterprises. Weber (2004) himself and Simon and Primavera, (1972 -cited in Chusmir and Koberg, 1988) also linked religious beliefs and motivational needs. However, Chusmir and Koberg (1988) argue that the characteristics of the Protestant ethic (rather than Protestantism itself), such as early training for independence, high need for achievement, positive attitudes toward work and occupational success are responsible for the trend toward entrepreneurial careers. But, moving from this assumption, they tested their hypothesis and found no or limited connection between religious affiliation and various work-related values. As seen, the relations are varying and there is no definite consensus on it. Chusmir and Koberg (1988:259) suggest that "it is possible that changing social values and federal and state civil rights legislation may have encouraged a belief that religion and work should not mix". Actually, not finding a clear correlation between religious affiliation and various work-related attitudes should not be regarded surprising. In a sociological perspective, Weber's central interest concerns with the conduct of life and the

habitus which is shaped by the Protestant teachings. It is argued that this new *habitus* led gradual rationalisation and secularisation of the Western societies (see section 2.3.3 for further discussion). Therefore, it can arguably be claimed that the quasi-puritan attitudes may still exist on a society but its sources are not necessarily to be religious.

Another commonly researched work-related attitude is *commitment* towards job, organization and work. Weber (2004) claimed that Protestants were more work-oriented than non-Protestants. According to PWE belief, working is meaningful as itself, and it is not the means of acquiring money or other materials. Therefore, it seems it is worth looking at a connection between PWE and work commitment. Vecchio (1980), in his comparative study over different religious groups, claims that religious affiliation significantly moderated the job satisfaction and job quality relationship for a sample of the U.S. labour force. Herzberg (1984) evaluates Eastern and Western organizational commitment by considering religious differences. He states that Western workers focus on importance of individuals, and it may make management more difficult, but it can generate growth more easily than can group-based cultures.

Aldag and Brief (1975) also looked at relationship between the Protestant work ethic and work-related values by using Blood's (1969) PWE scale. The results confirmed the findings of Blood that PWE values are positively correlated with internal work motivation, growth satisfaction as well as higher order need strength. However, the exact connection between specific religions and attitudes vary from one decade to another, according to Chusmir and Koberg (1988). It does not seem that it is possible to claim a concrete relation between them. Therefore, it can be suggested that more study needs to be applied on this subject.

Locus of Control:

The locus of control is a concept in psychology, developed by Rotter (1966), assessing individuals' perceived control over his or her behaviour. It assumes that

individuals develop a general expectancy about their ability to control their lives (Furnham, 1990). Locus of control has two dimensions: internal and external. People who believe that the events that occur in their lives are the consequences of their own behaviour, personality and effort are said to have the expectancy of internal control, while people who believe events in their lives are the result of luck, fate, chance or powers beyond their control are said to have an expectancy of external control (Furnham, 1990).

For a few decades the locus of control concept has been applied to organizational behaviour. Spector (1982) noted that the concept is related to motivation, effort, performance, satisfaction, perception of the job, compliance with authority. Furnham (1986) also related the concept to PWE, and noted that people who have high PWE score tend to have high score on internal locus of control too. As cited in Furnham (1990), Mirels and Garrett (1971), MacDonald (1972), *Waters et al. (1975)* and *Lied and Pritchard (1976)* also sought for correlation between PWE and locus of control. According to all those studies, there is a significant relationship between PWE and locus of control; and they all note that those with PWE beliefs tend to have an internal locus control. In particular, relating to our subject, Arslan (2000) found that pious Turkish managers have higher internal locus of control than their British and Irish counterparts. Arslan's comparative study, in terms of its results, is very illuminating for this research. In the section called PWE Studies in the World, I will mention more about the results of his study.

Vocational Preference and the PWE:

As Protestant work ethic beliefs correlated with certain work-related values; some researchers also looked for whether there is a connection between PWE and vocational preferences. Holland (1973) suggested that one can characterize people by their resemblance to each of the six personality types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional, which are the products of characteristic interaction over many different cultural and personal influences.

Naturally, it is expected that each personality requires a different environment. Therefore it can be assumed that people tend to search for environments that will let them exercise their skills and abilities and express their personality, for example social types look for social environments that work for them.

The most beneficial source regarding how PWE related to Holland's personality variables is Mirels and Garrett's (1971) study. It shows high PWE value holders prefer conventional and realistic occupations; such as banker, farmer, policeman or office-worker; and dislike social and artistic occupations; such as author, artist or architect. Furnham and Koritsas (1990) also used Holland's personality types to find a correlation between PWE and vocational preferences. He found that PWE beliefs are associated with certain of Holland's vocational types. There were significant correlations between PWE scales and realistic, enterprising and conventional types. All these results show that PWE beliefs are one of the major determinants of vocational preferences.

Other Attitudinal Correlates and the PWE

Attitudes to Money:

An important part of PWE refers to money and wealth. In a broad sense, money is defined as "anything that is generally accepted as payment for goods and services and repayment of debts" (Mishkin, 2007:8). We may agree about the definition but psychologists argue that people have different attitudes to money. The psychological side of money might become clearer if we look at the following quote by Wiseman (1974:13):

One thinks of kleptomaniacs, or of the women who drain men of their resources, to whom money, which they are always striving to take away, symbolizes a whole series of introjected objects that have been withheld from them; or of depressive characters who from fear of starvation regard money as potential food. There are too those men to whom money signifies their potency, who experiences any loss of money as a castration, or who are inclined, when in danger, to sacrifice money in a sort of 'prophylactic self-

castration'. There are, in addition, people who – according to their attitude of the moment towards taking, giving, or withholding- accumulate or spend money, or alternate between accumulation and spending, quite impulsively, without regard for the real significance of money, and often to their own detriment everyman has, and the pricelessness of objects, and the price on the outlaw's head; there are forty pieces of silver and also double indemnity on one's own life.

In psychology related studies, money is frequently used with love, self-worth, freedom, power and security [Goldberg and Lewis, 1978; Forman, 1987 cited in Furnham (1990)]. However, I intend to be more specific on PWE related studies. Furnham (1984) developed a money belief and behaviour scale; and connected them to the PWE beliefs and many other variables. According to his study, workers with high PWE scores were more obsessed by money, more money retentive, more security minded, and believed wealth to be obtained by effort and ability than workers with low PWE scores. Furnham (1990) argues that for PWE believers, obsession with money is a sign of success (and grace) and thus a powerful psychological indicator of PWE beliefs.

Attitudes to Leisure:

While hard working is strongly encouraged by Puritans, leisure activities are seen as mischief and devil's work (Weber, 2004). Therefore, the Calvinist view considers activities such as dancing, gambling or card games as sins. Leisure activities are tolerated if only they are necessary for gaining physical or mental energy to work. Furnham (1990) defines leisure as the primary site of all desirable experiences; it suggests freedom from bosses and supervisors, choice in spending one's time, satisfaction of needs for rest and recreation, and the potential for self-articulation and self-expression. It is also claimed by some researchers that today, especially in developed countries, work ethic values have been replaced by a leisure ethic, and people in these societies are getting more hedonistic (Buchholz, 1976; Bozkurt, 2000).

Demographic Correlates and the PWE:

In this section I will try to demonstrate how PWE beliefs relate to mental and physical health, age, education, etc. First of all we need to mention that there is a paucity of reliable representative data on many of these issues. However, we have some evidence regarding some of the demographic variables.

First, we will take the age factor. There are good theoretical grounds and empirical evidence for the fact that PWE beliefs tend to be more endorsed as people get older (Furnham, 1990). This can also be explained by when people get older they tend to become more conservative in their social, economic and political life. While Aldag and Brief (1975) and Furnham (1989) found a significant positive relation between PWE and age. Buchholz (1978), on the other hand, found that younger people are more work-oriented than the other age groups. However, the literature does not appear to suggest concrete evidence regarding this relationship. For example, the above-mentioned author in another research found no significant relation between PWE and age (Furnham, 1982). The author applies his finding to the restricted age range in his sample.

As for education, there is no empirical evidence regarding the relationship between education and PWE. However, it has been assumed that more educated societies are becoming more secular; and secular societies become more hedonistic and now-oriented (Gilbert, 1973). This may also explain how the work ethic has been replaced by a leisure ethic in developed Western societies.

Lastly, the relevant literature shows us endorsement of Protestant beliefs affects people's political preferences. Johnson (1962) investigated the effects of ascetic Protestantism on political preferences in the USA. He found that religious involvement co-varies with right-wing Republican Party and left-wing liberals and democrats. Liberal Protestants preferred left-wing while ascetic Protestants preferred right-wing parties. But, it seems hard to claim any generalised opinion regarding the relationship between political preferences and PWE.

The PWE Studies in the Different Cultures:

Another group of studies can be gathered as cross-cultural comparison of PWE. These are usually based on an assumption that Protestant work ethic has been transformed to personality dimensions and over time it is separated from its religious background (Niles, 1997). Because of this assumption researchers developed several scales applicable to non-Protestant societies.

Mirels and Garrett's (1971) scale is the most common questionnaire which has been used in Africa (Heaven, 1980; Philbrick, 1976); in the United States (Beit-Hallahmi, 1979; Ganster, 1980, 1981; Kidron, 1978; Iso-Ahola & Buttimer, 1982; Greenberg, 1977, 1978, 1979; Stoke, 1983); in Australia (Feather, 1982; 1983, 1984, 1985); Belgium (Rosseel, 1985); in Britain (Breakwell & Fife-Shaw, 1987; Furnham, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1987); in Israel (Shamir, 1985, 1986); in Malaysia (Furnham & Muhideen, 1984); and in Taiwan (Ma, 1986) [cited in Furnham, 1990]. Less well known measures, such as Blood's (1969) measure have also been used in different countries, such as United States, Britain and Israel (Furnham, 1990). Although there are many studies conducted cross-culturally, it is hard to compare these studies applied to the same country and to reach a general opinion regarding the country because of two reasons. First they all used different samples and secondly they applied in different times (in some cases there are 10-15 years difference between studies).

On the other hand, afore-cited scales have also been used for cross-cultural comparisons. For instance, Furnham et al. (1993) compared thirteen different nations in terms of PWE beliefs, including United States, Australia, UK, Ciskei, Germany, Greece, Honk Kong, Israel, India, New Zealand, South Africa, West Indies, Zimbabwe. The researchers observed that those with a high gross national product (GNP), such as United States, UK and Germany have low PWE scores, whereas those with relatively low GNP, such as India and Zimbabwe have high PWE. The study also argues that conservative nations have higher PWE scores. Another study applied by Ali and Al-Shakhis (1989) compared work ethic values of two Arab states, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The study indicates that Iraq has higher PWE scores

than its counterpart Saudi Arabia; and there is no difference between these two states in terms of a leisure ethic. As compared to the Western countries (the same measurement applied) the authors argue that Muslim (Eastern) countries have higher PWE values. Niles's (1999) study also supports this argument by showing that an Eastern country, Sri Lanka, has higher scores than the Western country Australia.

However, it is hard to reach an accurate conclusion from these questionnaire-based studies because of unavoidable effects, such as social desirability, experimental artefacts or other factors that might influence work related values beside PWE, such as national differences, socio-cultural factors etc. For these reasons, those studies must be supported with qualitative research and be examined more in-depth. In the following section, we will particularly mention PWE related studies conducted on Turkish samples, and they will be critically evaluated.

PWE scales have been applied to Turkish samples as well. Previously, I mentioned that Weber's thesis has been converted to personality variables and separated from its religious background. According to Arslan's (2001) study, comparing Protestant British, Catholic Irish and Muslim Turkish managers in terms of PWE, Turkish managers had higher scores than their British and Irish counterparts. The author explains his findings with the minimisation of Ottoman despotism through democratic reforms and transformation of traditional Sufism into a kind of entrepreneurial ideology. At first sight, it seems inconsistent with Weber's theory. Weber claimed that Islamic societies were not able to produce 'the spirit of capitalism' because of its warrior ethic and oriental despotism (Weber, 2004). However, it has been said that Weber did not complete his studies regarding Islam. Some Turkish Weberian scholars (Ulgener, 1991; Turkdogan, 2005) also suggest that Islam, especially its Turkish interpretation which has strongly been influenced by Anatolian Sufism, encourages entrepreneurship and trading². On the other hand, Rodinson (1973) also claims that Islam has similar ethical values, which are suitable for modern capitalism, as in Protestantism. However, it does not necessarily mean that Turkey is going to have same experience in terms of development. It is more

² It will be explained further in the next chapter.

likely that Turkey would create its own modernity by combining rational capitalism with its traditional values.

Additionally, there is another study, examining changing work ethic, applied to 500 university students in Turkey. The study shows that theology students (they are mostly pious/devout people) have very high PWE scores (Bozkurt, 2000). The study also claims that whereas religious people are becoming more work oriented, their secular counterparts are becoming more hedonistic. Another work ethic-related evidence can be obtained from the *European Stability Initiative*, a non-profit research and policy institute. Recently, they have published a report entitled “Islamic Calvinists”. The report has focused on central Anatolia, Kayseri a city known for its conservative and religious leanings. The report has attributed the business boom in Kayseri to the “protestant work ethic” values of its people (esiweb.org).

These sorts of studies are important indicators of the Turkish sample’s perceptions on working. However, I need to mention the weaknesses and missing parts of these studies. I argue that measuring work related values with scales that are mostly developed in the West cannot draw the whole picture. Therefore, it could be said that these sorts of studies are ignoring the social context of the reality. Some empirical studies show similar results, but, of course its historical background, motives and the origin are completely different. Therefore, in this study, our concern is not measuring how hard workers or how frugal Turkish entrepreneurs and SME owners are. Instead, this study is mainly about how their religious beliefs affect their way of lives in terms of economic activities and practices. Instead of defining them with the terms of Western scales, I will let those people define themselves with their own dynamics. In this respect our study differs from the other studies mentioned here. Focusing on the Weberian sociology is held to be more beneficial than the psychological aspects of the Protestant ethic thesis, namely the PWE.

2.3.3 The Protestant Ethic in Sociological Perspective

As I mentioned, on the other hand, the Protestant ethic has a sociological aspect as well, which is more related to Weber's main concern. In this section I will try to demonstrate the Weberian approach to the social phenomenon. According to him, the actions of people have to be situated within the social and cultural context of meaning which shapes the motives and reasons for action (Whimster, 2004). This is also an indispensable way of understanding social phenomena as different cultural settings, including religious beliefs, affect the forming of social constructions. Therefore, it can be said that Weber is not claiming that religion (Protestantism) was entirely responsible for the rise of capitalism. He mentions other factors as well such as industrial and technological developments or political power. But he is claiming that religion was a critical and key element in that complex (Weber, 2004). Therefore, he took the affinity of Puritanism as a sample, not the main concern. The scholars, who examined Weber's study, indicate that the key factor is the *rational act* of modern capitalism and its origins (Schluchter, 1985, 1989; Turner, 1994; Hennis, 2000). He built his ideas upon a historical fact that "business leaders and owners of capital, as well as the higher grades of skilled labour, and even more the higher technically and commercially trained personnel of modern enterprises, are overwhelmingly Protestant" (Weber, 2004:7). Additionally, he mentions a few firsts regarding rational living in the West. For example, modern political parties consisting of public representatives, modern science and art, professional workers and state officers, briefly, rationalized way of life have first emerged in the West. The most complex investigative aim of Weber's essays is represented as the establishment of "the rational conduct of life on the basis of the *idea of calling*" as one of the "constitutive elements of the modern capitalist spirit, and not this alone, but of the spirit of modern culture" (Hennis, 2000). In this respect, Weber tries to explain how a new type of bourgeois capitalism based on rational action emerged (Carr, 2003).

It appears that Weber first offers a temporary description of the phenomenon in his book *the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (PESC) which regards the Protestantism as the spirit of capitalism, and it, at first sight sounds there is a

mechanical relation between the two. In this connection, Weber specifically mentions 'economic traditionalism' and its transformation (Weber, 2004). Marshall (1982) argues that 'economic traditionalism', like modern capitalism itself, does not suggest any specific type of economic organisation, but rather it refers to an ethos with which economic activities can be imbued. Weber illustrates such traditionalism as follows:

At the beginning of all ethics and the economic relations which result, is traditionalism, the sanctity of tradition, the exclusive reliance upon such trade and industry as have come down from the fathers. The traditionalism survives far down into the present; only a human lifetime in the past it was futile to double the wages of an agricultural labourer in Silesia who mowed a tract of land on a contract, in the hope of including him to increase his exertions. He would simply have reduced by half the work expended because with this half he would have been able to earn...as much as before. This general incapacity and indisposition to depart from the beaten paths is the motive for the maintenance of tradition (Weber, 1923:354).

Schluchter's *Rise of Western Rationalism (1979-1985)* and Jurgen Habermas's *Theory of Communicative Action (1984)* opened Weber's work to wide academic researchers, because they characterised Weber not simply as an historical sociologist, a methodologist or legal theorist, but as a theorist and a critic of modernity. This increasing interest in Weber's study has several reasons. After the collapse of socialism, Weber's account of the modern world has been considered as an alternative to that proposed by Marxist theory. According to Marxist theory, social formation consists of two structures: Infrastructures such as forces of production, relationships of production; and superstructure such as politics and ideology. The theory suggests that infrastructure is the one that shapes or affects superstructure (Friedman, 1974). However, Weber argues that there is no such effect. Sometimes superstructure affects infrastructure and *vice versa*. His work emphasises the importance of ideas, beliefs or 'ideal interest' alongside material interest for understanding historical change and suits within the current cultural change in

sociological theory (Gane, 2000). Gane also stresses that Weber's progressive rationalisation theory and 'disenchantment' of the modern world informs us regarding the main futures of contemporary social and cultural critique, including the Frankfurt school, critical theory, and certain characteristics of post-modern theory. While reading Weber's Protestant ethic it appears that he uses the term 'disenchantment' as almost equal to the concept of 'rationalisation' (Weber, 2004). It can be said that Turkey as a late modernising country has been now experiencing similar developments in its social structure and economy (see chapter 3 for further discussion on Turkey's economic development and the transformation of the religious thought). For this reason, this study also intends to use Weber as a key element to explore the influence of religion on economic activities in modern Turkey.

In his book, *Max Weber and the Idea of Economic Sociology*, Richard Swedberg (1998) stresses the methodological foundations and addresses Weber's writings on the relationship between the economy and politics, the economy and law, the economy and religion. In spite of Weber being well known as a sociologist, his central interests were mostly economy-related. Swedberg (1998) argues that while economists specifically have tended to focus on the responsibility of interest to explain economic behaviour, sociologists mostly focused on the role of social interaction or social structure. Swedberg states that Weber's work is "attempting to integrate the idea of interest-driven behaviour with the idea of social behaviour in one and the same analysis" (1998:3). In other words Weber launches the social dimension into the analysis of economic behaviour by examining economic activities both in terms of the meanings related to the individual to economic phenomena or behaviour of others.

While examining Weber-related studies, the most common misunderstanding is that Weber's thesis is accepted as a causal hypothesis on the origin of modern capitalism. However, this assumption could be misleading. If we look at PESC, the most complicated investigative aim of the study is represented as the establishment of the *rational conduct of life (Lebensführung)* on the basis of the idea of calling that is one of the "constitutive elements of the modern capitalist spirit, and not this alone, but of

the spirit of modern culture” (Hennis, 2000:10). Therefore, the aim of our study is not showing causal relationships or applying another PWE questionnaire to measure work related values of different sample. To clarify the purpose of this study, more emphasis needs to be put on Weber’s main concern. In this respect, this study will be an application of Weber’s thesis (with its main concern which is the conduct of life) to explore pious/devout SME owner-managers’ activities in Turkey. In this respect, I intend to use a particular interpretation of Weber’s thesis which is focusing on his central question.

Understanding Weber’s Main Concern (Hennis’s Interpretation):

As a starting point, we should be able to distinguish between personal change, social change and social development, due to the fact that Weber’s study is concerned with the changes on the social order by individuals’ particular way of lives. In this respect, personnel changes should be considered within the social context. Therefore, we intend to take individuals within the social order, because every social order requires a particular kind of individual (Hennis, 2000). However, there is a nuance between social change and social development. According to Schluchter (1985), social changes occur when a social order transformed into another but still manages with the same basic social configuration, such as from *patrimonialism* to *sultanism*. On the other hand, social development occurs when a basic configuration of social order changes, for instance transition from tradition to modernity (Schluchter, 1985). In this respect, the term ‘social development’ would be more appropriate for our studies.

When examining PWE, Weber’s historical problem should be underlined by pointing out the distinctiveness of Western capitalism and Western rationalism. From the very beginning, Weber takes capitalism in historical perspective. He copes with the origin and organizational structure of legal institutions that shaped the development of a specific form of capitalism, modern production-oriented capitalism (Schluchter, 1985). According to Weber, the main characteristic of the capitalism of the modern business firm is based on a separation of business and personal asset and on an arrangement of risk and responsibility (Weber, 2004). These peculiarities of modern

capitalist firms differ from the traditional medieval trading companies. Weber claims that only this differentiation between types of assets made possible the organizational separation of household and enterprise. Weber thinks that, rationalism is not limited to the West, like capitalism. According to Weber, rationalisation has existed in all civilizations from varying viewpoints and in very different directions. Therefore, Weber takes Western rationalism with its historical context to explore its distinctiveness. In this respect he tries to explain the historical origin of Western rationalism by indicating “who rationalizes which spheres of life in what directions and which historical kinds of social order result there from” (Schluchter, 1985:10). In other words, Weber tries to explain the emergence of a new business class based on Western rationality by specifically emphasising individuals and their particular ways of life.

As seen, the concept of rationalism and its dynamics seem a crucial point in Weber’s study. In order to understand the development of Capitalism and its ‘spirit’ one should consider it as part of the development of rationalism as a whole, and it could be deducted from the fundamental position of rationalism on the basic problems of life, according to Weber (2004). In this respect, I intend to put an emphasis on ‘individualism’ which is a distinguishing characteristic of Western rationalism. Weber believed that Catholicism was obstructing the emergence of religious individualism. Religious individualism refers to no mediator in the relationship between the believer and God. According to Turner (1994), religious individualism was one of the important sources of secular individualism. This idea would be an appropriate explanation for how a certain kind of religious belief shapes individuals’ attitudes within a particular society.

Apparently, *Western capitalism* and *rationalism* are key terms. But we should go further to understand the spirit of modern capitalism, and how it is related to religion in particular the Calvinist puritan sect of Protestantism in 17th century Europe. Probably, the first things one could see, when we look at Western capitalism are the legal and commercial transformations such as new types of organization structure, development of double entry bookkeeping or newly emerging mechanical techniques. However, Weber does not accept that capitalism is the only reason. He

was trying to show how the way of life shaped by Calvinist puritans “based on rational, legal acquisition through individual endeavour and self-discipline revolutionized the European economy” (Lewis, 2008). According to Giddens (2004) the emergence of modern (rational) capitalism was an outcome of a historically specific conjunction of events, such as political reforms, industrial revolution, etc.

Therefore, it might be argued that his intention is explaining historical genesis of “the manner of leading one’s life” as Hennis (2000) states, rather than developing a causal relationship between religion and modern capitalism. With his own words, Weber explains his real concern as follows:

In order that a manner of life so well adapted to the peculiarities of capitalism could be selected at all, i.e. should come to dominate others, it had to originate somewhere, and not in isolated individuals alone, but as a way of life common to whole groups of men. This origin is what really needs explanation (Weber, 2004:20).

Hennis (2000) appears to offer a distinct interpretation of Weber in this regard. According to this reading, every social order requires a certain kind of individual. Consequently, Hennis claims that Weber’s investigation centres around, not a ‘*spirit*’ at all, but a ‘*habitus*’. Mauss (1979) observes that the term ‘*habitus*’ is a Latin translation of the Greek term “*hexis*” as it appears in Aristotle’s *Ethics*. Both terms, ‘*habitus*’ and ‘*hexis*’, translate into English as ‘acquired disposition’ or ‘habit’ (Crossley, 2006). *Habitus* is a complex concept referring mainly to the non-discursive facets of culture that bind individuals to larger groups, particularly manner of leading one’s life (*Lebensführung*)³ within the social orders of life, such as family, community and economic activities in life. Weber considered all these as ‘*sphere*’ which means a particular aspect of life or activity. Hennis explains the ideas behind this term as follows:

³ The German term ‘*Lebensführung*’, which is critical in Weber’s theory of social stratification, inspires various ideas among English speaking sociologists, as Abel and Cockerham (1993) argue. According to the authors, *Lebensführung* means life conduct or managing one’s life; applied to the individual; it refers to the self-direction of one’s behaviour, not life style.

The ‘*sphere*’ which Weber stressed was that of the ‘*vocation*’ of acquisitive activity (*Erwerbsleben*). The puritans had brought the great ‘internal tensions’ between vocation, life and ethics into a ‘characteristic equilibrium’; for them there was no ‘on the one hand and on the other’, ‘theory and practice’, they rather conducted lives ‘totally’, harnessed, consciously, ‘methodically’, at one with their God and themselves – presupposing the corresponding *Lebensführung* (Hennis, 2000:17).

Weber also argues that his study (PESC) concerns only the evaluation of the development of an ethical life-style adequate to emergent of modern capitalism (Weber, 2004). Therefore, it could be concluded that his central interest is the development of modern rational capitalism and how it was most deeply influenced by a particular combination of circumstances (Hennis, 2000). As it is clearly seen, there is no such a claim referring to a direct and causal relation between modern rational capitalism and Protestantism. The primary issue here is how a certain kind of belief system determines the lives of individuals who are born into a particular society. With this point in mind, we can talk about the assistance of Protestant asceticism in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order (Hennis, 2000).

Unlike many others, Hennis (2000) suggests that we must see Weber’s starting point first, which is the ‘economic ethics of world religions’. In his short life time, Weber tried to look at the world’s different religions and their influences on economic activities. He examined, for instance, the religion of China and its effects on economic activities, beside his studies on Protestant ethic in Western Europe. For him, therefore, Protestantism, especially its Calvinist branch, was just a sample of his argument, rather than his central question or focal point. As a common opinion, Weber’s fundamental problem was the question of ‘what is the meaning of rationality?’ However, according to Hennis (2000), it was just an introduction and does not cover everything; and he argues that Weber’s thesis has been misunderstood for a long time as a causal hypothesis on the origin of capitalism. To see the process of rationalization as Weber’s fundamental theme is certainly not incorrect, he

suggests; but, he also adds that it is misleading to read everything in its terms and see it everywhere (Hennis, 2000:7).

Today's prevailing opinion is to focus on the term Weber frequently used: "elective affinity" between 'Protestant ethic' and the 'spirit of capitalism'. Turner (1974) also argues that Weber was not saying that Calvinism created modern capitalism in his study, *the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. By contrast, he claims that one can find many evidences supporting the idea that Calvinism did not create capitalism (Turner, 1974). In this respect, some scholars think that it is also possible to interpret Weber's study in an economically determinist way. Aktay (2004) proposes that it is all about the coexistence of 'Protestant ethic' and 'spirit of capitalism'. This simultaneous meeting of the protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism together helped the development of modern capitalism. For this reason, Weber might have used the term 'elective affinity' to explain the relationship between Protestant ethic and capitalism. Weber offers a clarification by stating:

I therefore take no responsibility for the misconceptions upon which in my opinion the foregoing 'criticism' is based. I will, however, try again on occasion of a separate edition of the essays, which for technical publishing reasons cannot be long postponed, to remove each expression which could be misunderstood in terms of derivation (falsely attributed me) of economic *forms* from religious motives, and to make it if possible even clearer that it is the spirit of a 'methodical' *Lebensführung* which should be 'derived' from 'asceticism' in its Protestant transformation and which then stands in a cultural-historical relation of 'adequacy-equivalence' which is in my opinion very important. I am grateful to my critic for this stimulus [(PE II, p.31) cited in Hennis (2000)].

In a sense, Weber's study might seem similar to Sombart's important book *The Genesis of Capitalism*, which first appeared in 1902⁴. In this study, Sombart explains material developments as the result of an ethos, for instance, the role of Judaism in

⁴ It was before Weber published his study, *the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

the development of capitalism (Sombart, 1902-2001). Hennis argues that “if Weber wished to present something new then it could not be in terms of the significance of Protestantism for the rise of capitalism” (Hennis, 2000:14). Considering the fact that, at that time Sombart had already characterised that Protestantism, especially in its Calvinist version had played an important role in the development of capitalism; Weber’s problematic must be something quite different (Hennis, 2000). As Weber states, his whole investigation involved, not a ‘spirit’ at all, but rather a *Habitus*, in other words, the unfolding of a particular kind of *Lebensführung* within the orders of the world: family, economic life, social community (Weber, 2001). Therefore, his only concern is the analysis of the development of an ethical life-style adequate to an emergent modern capitalism, according to Hennis (2000). In other words, he is interested in the emergence and development of a *Lebensführung* (conduct of life) which made modern capitalism achievable, stressing the relationship between a specific type of individual and a specific form of social order (Lewis, 2008). Therefore, it can be said that the Calvinist sect was only a sample of Weber’s study. In Weber’s reading, it provides the moral power and drive of the capitalist entrepreneur, according to Giddens (2004).

More particularly, Weber’s central interest is the ‘development of *Menschenheit*’ (mankind/humanity) and how it was most deeply influenced by a particular ‘combination of circumstances’: the elective conjunction of ‘ascetic Protestantism’ (expressed in the idea of vocation) with early bourgeois capitalism to form a new mode of a rational way of life (*Lebensführung*) (Hennis, 2000). Obviously, it is all about the development of occidental rationalism and its process; but what kind of processes of rationalisation? Hennis asks. He gives the answer too: In fact only to those which related to ‘all forms of practical ethics’ and to the ‘rationalisation of *Lebensführung*’. We can clearly see it in his book PESC that all the examples are related to how a particular kind of belief system shaped the rationalisation process, how they discipline their everyday life according to their beliefs, especially in economic activities.

In this respect, Weber’s central question in Hennis’s interpretation seems a very appropriate tool for this study. In my research, following Weber’s framework, I tried

to focus on Muslim Turks and a particular interpretation of Islam in Turkey. It is also known as Turkish Islam that is strongly influenced by Anatolian Sufism. In the third chapter I will try to demonstrate the Islamic understanding in Turkey with its historical background, alongside Turkish secularism, modernity, state and private business in Turkey. In this way I intend to map out possible routes of religious influence among Turkish business people.

2.4 The Work Ethic Literature within a Turkish Context

Work ethic is an ambiguous concept. Its dictionary definition defines the concept as “a belief in the moral value of work” (*Collins Essential English Dictionary*, 2006). According to Clarke (1983:122) work ethic is regarded as “the bundle of values, beliefs, intentions, and objectives that people bring to their work and the conditions in which they do it”. However, it has been used interchangeably with the concept of the *Protestant work ethic* (PWE) by some studies, as it refers to some certain attitudes towards working, such as hard-work, honesty, frugality, productivity, and so on. In this respect we are also facing different belief systems’ work ethic values, such as *Islamic work ethic*, with comparable characteristics. Additionally, it should be noted that work ethic should not be confused with *business ethics*, although they are not entirely different entities. It is true that some aspects of work ethic characteristics contribute to business ethics. However, work ethic mostly refers to people’s approaches and attitudes toward working itself. Therefore, it is related to people’s real perception of what they understand from *working* and how they approach it; rather than idealised business ethics values.

Work ethic has become an appealing subject for Turkish academics. For the researchers, who are studying Turkish work ethic values, the Protestant work ethic seems a useful concept as well. Weber’s Protestant ethic thesis and his sociological approach on one hand, Western-based scales measuring PWE and similar surveys on the other become compelling tools for understanding Turkish work attitudes. Here, I intend to demonstrate this particular literature. In doing so, I will be able to identify

what are the recent approaches to the phenomenon in question, and show the gap which this study attempts to contribute.

The first study I will mention is a cross-cultural comparison of the work ethic values of three different nations. Arslan (1999, 2001) compares Protestant British, Catholic Irish and Muslim Turkish managers' work ethic values using Mirels and Garrett's (1971) PWE scale. Since he particularly focused on the managers who are actively practicing their religious beliefs, his study can be regarded as one of the most considerable researches regarding the work ethic values of new emerging religious business class in Turkey. The statistical results of the surveys, which were applied to 277 people, show that practicing Muslim managers demonstrate higher levels of PWE in several items (*work as an end in itself, internal locus of control*) than its Protestant and Catholic counterparts. The author explains his findings with the minimisation of the Ottoman despotism through democratic reforms and transformation of traditional Sufism into a kind of entrepreneurial ideology (Arslan, 2001:335). However, it should be noted that PWE values might be crucial for non-practicing Muslim people in Turkey. Additionally, as Arslan argues too, post-1980 period might have strong influence on religious interpretation in Turkey, since the 1980s liberal policies promoted relatively free atmosphere in aspects of social life. Therefore, I suggest that in-depth interviews with open ended questions might provide further understanding of how practicing Turkish Muslims conceptualise their work-related attitudes or work ethic.

Another survey-based study was conducted by Veysel Bozkurt. Bozkurt (2000) chose his sample from university students rather than business people to investigate the changing work ethic values in Turkey. The researcher applied surveys consisting of 49 questions identifying Puritan and Hedonic⁵ work ethic among 500 students. The study shows that students from theology departments (they are mostly practicing religious people) have very high Puritan ethic scores (Bozkurt, 2000). The study also claims that while religious people are becoming more work oriented, their secular counterparts (non-theology students) are becoming more hedonistic. Although, this

⁵ The term Hedonic is used as the opposite of Puritan which considers work as meaningful itself. Therefore Hedonic ethic regards work only as a means of making money and living more comfortably.

study provides some insight regarding the changing work ethics, it is inevitably ignoring the fact that there may be non-practicing theology students and practicing religious students from other departments.

Thirdly, Aldemir and his colleagues conducted a comprehensive survey study among 439 Turkish business people. The research defines a new concept called “Turkish work mentality” and aims to understand this mentality with a distinct profile of 58 values divided into two parts, local and universal values. According to the findings, factor analysis of those values have been categorised into five dimensions. *Professional* and *rational* work mentality appear as universal values, while *status-oriented*, *mystical* and *hypocrisy-based* work mentality as local values (Aldemir, et. al. 2003). The study suggests that religious, as the authors call *mystical*, values are also playing crucial roles in the formation of the “Turkish work mentality”. In the questionnaire, there are five concepts placing under the name of mystical values: *religion*, *traditionalism*, *emotionality*, *fatalism* and *family relations*. However, this study is not particularly focusing on religious business people; but it encourages researchers to consider religious influences over the work-related attitudes of Turkish business people.

As mentioned, religious and conservative Anatolian people’s increasing involvement with business activities has become a phenomenon in Turkey. Besides above mentioned survey-based studies, researchers have also applied interpretive methods to understand the different aspects of this phenomenon. A sociologist, Sennur Ozdemir conducted 55 in-depth interviews with religious business people only. She chose her sample from a particular businessmen’s association (MUSIAD) long known for its religious leanings and support for the Islamic political parties in Turkey. The aim of the study was to understand the *transformation of the Anatolian capital* and the *deepening of Turkish modernisation*. Particularly, she focused on the transformation of the *Muslim work ethic* from a sociological perspective. She interprets this cultural transformation as an attempt towards creating an *indigenous Muslim ethic* compatible with the necessities of the modern world (Ozdemir, 2006). However, her emphasis was not on the so-called “Islamic work ethic (IWE)” or any work-related values, rather she regards *indigenous Muslim ethic* as new prototype or

transformed Muslims. Therefore, the contribution of this study was on the discipline of sociology mostly. In my study, on the other hand, I intend to focus on understanding of this “new/transformed” work ethic values within a management perspective considering the secularist Turkish business people as well.

On the other hand, it is possible to mention some theoretical studies concerning Islamic business ethic with strong emphasis on the work ethic. The starting point of these studies is that Islam is a religion which prescribes an extensive set of principles and regulations shaping all the aspects of life, including business ethics (Arslan, 2005). Islam regards working as praying, encourages trading and productivity, and puts strong emphasis on the equal distribution of wealth in a society (Ocal, 2007:32). Torlak, et al. (2008:23) mentions five basic Islamic Principles of morality: *Tevhid* (unity), *muvazene* (equilibrium), *ozgur irade* (free will), *sorumluluk* (responsibility) and *ihsan* (bounty/benevolence). The authors suggest that these moral principles should also be applied to economic and business life. For example, the principle of *tevhid* refers not to discrimination among costumers, employees and share-holders; but suggests regarding the goods and properties as entrusted by God; while the concept of *muvazene* requires being poised/balanced in trading, namely measuring accurately, avoiding greed and ostentation. Especially within the last decade, the number of studies concerning business ethics in Islamic perspective has increased substantially. These studies, as in the above example, mention the implementation of the Islamic moral values into the business world (Turkdogan, 1998, 2005; Aksit, 2005; Ozcan, 2003; Bikun, 2004). However, these studies are not based on empirical data and their focal points are conceptualising idealised business ethic values in Islamic perspective. Therefore, the question they tackle is “how should it be?” rather than “what is it?”.

In this respect, the question stands still: why Islamic countries, including secular Turkey, failed to create a productive/entrepreneurial capitalist spirit based on rational thinking? This study argues that the answer to this question does not lie in the idealised business ethic values of Islam, but the actual work ethic values or the mentality of Muslim (Turkish) business people. For understanding the religious influences over the work ethic values of Turkish business people, it seems more

reasonable to approach it as an insider with an interpretive methodology. The above-mentioned studies (both quantitative and qualitative) provide us with some insight as a starting point. In this respect, my research, which is based on discourse analysis of 32 in-depth interviews, will be the first one that takes the concept of “Turkish/Anatolian Islam” into consideration particularly focusing on its most prominent representatives, the *Gulen movement* in Turkey. Meanwhile, this study also considers secularist business people’s account beside religious one as a control group. Obviously, the aim of this study is not to reach quantifiable generalisations. Rather, at the end of the analysis, it will be possible to demonstrate what meanings the business people apply to the so-called Islamic moral values. In other words, it will allow us to understand the contemporary interpretations of Islamic work ethic through Turkish business people’s account. Additionally and most likely, this research will be able to draw some other influential factors (such as the post-1980s liberal influence) besides religion that affects the work-related attitudes in Turkey. In this respect, this study for the first time attempts to use Giddens’s *Theory of Structuration* to explain this multi-faceted Islamic entrepreneurial class phenomenon in the Turkish context.

3. A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TURKISH MODERNISM, PRIVATE BUSINESS AND ISLAMIC THOUGHT

3.1 Introduction

Turkey is the only Muslim country that has inscribed secularism in its constitution. The aim of this chapter is to present a historical background for the newly emergent business class known by its religious leanings. In doing so, this chapter intends to map out possible routes of religious influence over economic activities in Turkey at the level of the individual. The researcher argues that the understanding of religious perception of Turkish society requires examining the country's modernisation project in a historical perspective first. In this respect, this chapter will briefly demonstrate the country's socio-cultural structure, and the discussions regarding the modernisation and religion in the late Ottoman time and in the Republican era respectively. Then it will demonstrate the historical evolution of the Turkish private business sector from the late Ottoman era to recent years. At the end of this chapter, the transformation of the religious thoughts in Turkey will be discussed in terms of mapping out the influence of religion on work ethic values and entrepreneurship. It is recommended that the finding chapters of this thesis (chapter 5 and 6) should be read in the light of this transformation process.

3.2 A Brief Look at Turkish Modernization

It is a common opinion that the despotic nature of the Ottoman state prevented possible capitalistic developments in the country for a long time (Arslan, 1999). This argument shows some parallels with Weber's ideas. Weber criticised Islamic societies in terms of oriental-despotism, other-worldly Sufism, and the warrior ethic, and claimed that these peculiarities of Islam were the main reasons for the backwardness of Islamic societies (Weber, 1982). In the 19th century, it can be said that fatalism and other-worldly ideas were very extensive among Muslim societies. This heritage, for a long time (according to Ulgener [1991] it is since the 16th – 17th

centuries), played an important role in varying aspects of social life including business and entrepreneurship. Therefore, this study proposes that one should scrutinise the late Ottoman period in order to understand Turkish entrepreneurship culture and the other managerial attitudes properly.

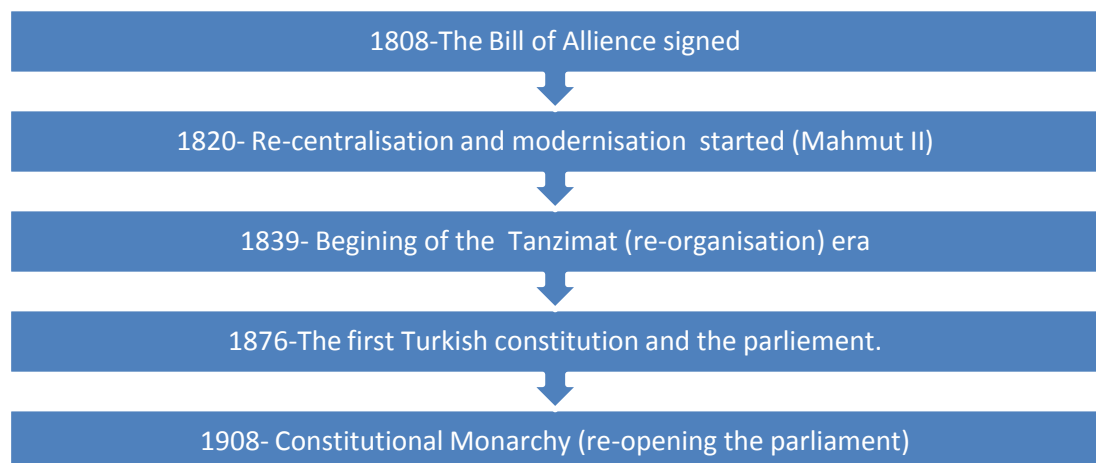
Turkey's modernisation project goes back to the late Ottoman period. Unlike the West, in the Ottoman Empire there was no feudal system. The only class separation was between the state (the Sultan's close circle in Istanbul) and the public; mostly consisting of peasants (*reaya*). In the Ottoman Empire the form of private property rights was different from the West. The Sultan was the owner of all land on behalf of God. However, with the *timar* system (the Ottoman land legislation) and *vakifs* (charities and trusts), a limited private ownership was allowed in practice. However, it has been observed that the diminishing of the restrictions on property rights made production level increase. As Pamuk (1987) noted, in the late 16th century, after the cessation of the *timar* system, the control of the central authority over the local power holders decreased. It seems clear that the Ottoman Empire was not based on productivity, but its main goal was collecting as much tax as possible. According to Arslan (1999) conquests were seen as necessary for surviving and the Islamic concept of *jihad* was used as an ideological weapon to encourage Muslim subjects to new conquests. It is commonly expressed that the Ottoman state ideology was based on the circle of justice. Arslan states that, "according to this principle [circulation of justice], the state cannot survive without military; the military cannot survive without peasantry; and peasantry cannot survive without justice" (1999:142). Without emphasising the issue of justice, historian David Landes describes the weaknesses of the Ottoman Empire in its last two centuries as follow:

The Ottoman state was a plunder machine which needed booty or land to fuel itself, to pay its way, to reward its officer class. The Ottomans had originally filled a power vacuum —had taken over a region once strong, now enfeebled— looting as they went. Now they could no longer take from outside. They had to generate wealth from within, to promote productive investment. Instead, they resorted to habit and tried to pillage the interior, to squeeze their own subjects. Nothing, not even the wealth of high officials was secure. ...In these circumstances, the continued advance of European

technology, in particular the Industrial Revolution, nailed shut the coffin of Ottoman industry (Landes, 1998:402).

It can be said that in the early years of the 19th century the Ottoman administration acknowledged its backwardness and the superiority of the West (Berkes, 2006). Then, the state took a series of reformist actions and the country's modernisation and westernisation process started. The first constitutional document, the *sened-i ittifak* (the Bill of Alliance) was signed in 1808, but did not live long. Under the reign of Mahmut II, a re-centralisation and modernisation process started in 1820. He reorganised the army and established new troops with western style uniforms. Mahmut II is the first Ottoman sultan who wore western clothes. He also forced government officers to dress according to the western dress code. In 1839, another reformist sultan, Abdülmecit I, proclaimed a declaration called *Gulhane hattı humayunu* (the Rescript of the Rose House). The main aim of the declaration was to bring equality among citizens. This period is also known as the *Tanzimat* (re-organisation), and considered as the beginning of the secularist era (Berkes, 2006).

Figure 3.1 The milestones of the Ottoman modernisation process in the 19th century



In 1876, the Prime Minister Mithat Pasha proclaimed the first Turkish constitution, and first Turkish Parliament was established. Sultan Abdulhamid II reluctantly accepted the constitution; but, then, he closed the Parliament showing the Russian-Turkish war as an excuse. The term of Abdulhamid II is mostly known as a totalitarian era, and it was strongly criticised by *the Young Turks*, a coalition of various groups favouring reforming the administration of the state, and founders of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). The Young Turks' struggle for constitutional monarchy (*mesrutiyet*) was brought to a successful conclusion in 1908. On 24th July 1908, revolutionist army officers and their civil allies dethroned Abdulhamid II and re-opened the Ottoman Parliament by declaring new constitution. After Abdulhamid II, the last two Ottoman sultans had almost no political power. The final political power was the Turkish army which is still a major political authority in modern Turkey.

Rather than giving these historical events chronologically, I intend to focus on the period's discussions among different intellectual circles. In the late Ottoman period, a political party, the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) emerged as opposing the Sultan's authority and traditional elements of religion. The CUP has been called "the vanguard of the nascent Turkish bourgeoisie" and they were in the forefront of business life by not only supporting businessmen but also actively doing business⁶ (Bugra, 1994). The committee's economic policies were reflected in the "national economy" workshops conducted by the CUP leadership in 1913 and 1915. Ziya Gokalp, the renowned Turkish sociologist influenced by German and French sociology schools, especially by Durkheim's thought, was the main figure in that work. He strongly suggested that the quasi-puritan work ethic values, which are also consistent with Islamic values, should be promoted all over the country for the development of the country (Gokalp, 1973). Due to the fact that Gokalp was an influential ideologue of the new republic, it is possible to trace this endeavour in the early years of the republic. The young republic was trying to create an indigenous ethic by eliminating superstition that had been blocking the country's development

⁶ "After the foundation of the new republic (Republic of Turkey), the state continued to occupy a central place in the business life of the country. ... Ataturk and his close associates in the governmental circle were among the founders of the "Is Bank" with other politicians and private businessmen. Political connections were undoubtedly an important asset used in accumulation of private capital." (Bugra, 1994:43)

process and strengthening the secular structure of the state on one hand; and promoting hard work and productivity on the other. Closing down the *tekkes* (dervish lodges⁷) by Ataturk, the founder of the new Turkish Republic, might also be considered in this context. Basically, this was the struggle for creating a bourgeoisie class for modernising Turkey⁸. In that period, according to Bugra (1994), the majority of the wealthy people were state officers and generals (*pashas*); and the people who were interested in doing business were non-Muslims mostly. Military-related jobs were the most favourite professions for Muslim Turks, and doing business was not an attractive profession for them at that time. However, this paradox does not seem to be related to religion as Bugra (1994:36) explains:

...the reason why Muslims were to be excluded from the realm of commerce is quite difficult to understand. One can hardly explain it with reference to Islam which, unlike Christianity, does not pass any moral judgement against money-making activity. The fact that Mohammed himself was involved in commerce seems to be sufficient to render a religion-based explanation difficult to sustain. While it would be possible to conjecture that Ottoman rulers may have been unfavourable to commercial dealings between Muslims and non-Muslims, that, too, does not seem to be the case.

It is almost unanimously agreed that the nature of the Ottoman administration system was not suitable for a productive economy. It is true that the system protected merchants and money changers. Braudel shows us a fifteenth century Ottoman document as evidence of this attitude: “be kind to merchants, protect them and do not allow anybody to disturb them because the wealth of your country is based on their trade activities” (1991:155). However, this protection should be understood as a requirement of the justice circle. According to the Ottoman administration system and its ideology, merchants and money changers were considered as *reaya*

⁷ Dervish lodges are the places where a particular Sufi order conducts its praying and religious teaching activities.

⁸ However, after the death of Ataturk (1938) the idea of creating hardworking and productive generations had been discontinued due to the long lasting political crisis and military interventions. It can be said that the heated debates over secularism and religion have made the society massively polarized and cost too much time and money for modern Turkey.

(peasantry and other taxable, dependent people), and they were never regarded as part of an administrative class. In fact, according to Timur (1994), merchants and money changers were the continuation of the Byzantine aristocracy who had struggled for power in the Byzantine era. In this respect, it would be useful to mention the *millet* (community) system in the Ottoman Empire.

The *Millet* system is the most crucial element of the Ottoman administration in terms of Turkish work-related attitudes. According to the *millet* system, all the Ottoman subjects were divided by their religious beliefs. For instance, all the Orthodox Christians were considered as one *millet* regardless of their nationality. Each *millet* had their own autonomy in their internal affairs, including religious beliefs and civil law. For this reason, the Ottoman Empire is well known for its tolerance to other religions. However, it is observable that the millet system also triggered the division of labour on religious community. For example, non-Muslims especially Greeks, Jews and Armenians were responsible for trading and money changing. This might be regarded as blocking any capitalist development among Turks. In the meantime, as mentioned earlier, for Turks, being close to the State and the administration was a more attractive occupation than trading. Therefore, it can be said that there were two options for Muslim Turks: either an administrative position in the state or doing agriculture.

As a result of the millet system, the Greek, Jew and Armenian population of the country were more prosperous compared with poor peasant Turks who sought prosperity mostly in owning land rather than doing productive economic activities. In the early 20th century, Turkish nationalists realised that there was a lack of capitalist spirit in the country and they blamed the Ottoman system and Islam for the backwardness of the country. Arslan (1999:146) illustrates this nationalist attitude as follows:

When Greek and Armenian Ottomans gave military support to the enemies of the Ottoman Empire in the World War I, Turkish nationalists took it as a great betrayal. Economic differences between Turks and non-Muslims in the empire fostered anti-Greek and anti-Armenian feelings among the Turks. By the end of the World War I Greeks and Armenian minorities in Asia Minor

had been deported. War conditions, mutual massacres and immigration agreements reduced the Muslim population in the Balkans and the Christian population in Asia Minor. As a result of Muslim immigration to Turkey from the Balkans, Crimea and the Caucasus, and Christian immigration to Greece and other western countries from Asia Minor, Turkey became 99 percent Muslim country after World War I.

Under this circumstance, the country faced heated debates regarding development and modernisation. CUP was supporting the *mesrutiyet* (the constitutional monarchy) and freedom while criticising Islam as causing backwardness. In fact, the demand for change and reform was a widespread opinion among different circles. For example, Said Nursi, the most renowned Islamic scholar and the founder of the *Nur*⁹ movement in Turkey, was also supporting the CUP's struggle for liberty. When he was asked about CUP he replies: "While appreciating their value [in terms of freedom], I criticise their despotic politics" (Nursi, 1978: 135). Therefore, it can be said that the idea of need for change was widespread among all segments of society, but there was no consensus about the way that the country should follow. Thus, this debate went on endlessly. Although, the *Young Turks* who later became CUP, were known for their nationalistic and, for some, anti-Islamist character, there was a variety of opinions among them. While some were stressing the importance of nationalism and secularism (which are the popular ideas of the 19th century's Europe), some other intellectuals appeared with their liberal ideas and different interpretations of nationalism. For example, Namik Kemal (1840-1888), a nationalist Turkish poet appears with his liberal thoughts. Kemal strongly criticises the idea of *hikmet-i hukumet* (the *National Interest*). It is often referred to the French term *raison d'État*. According to this idea, the state's survival and security are the most important elements. State is regarded as the father of the nation, and its actions cannot be questioned. Kemal strongly criticises unquestionable state authority, and notes that the actual duty of the state should be the application of law (Kemal, 2005). He also supports a free market economy and suggests that the state authority should not interfere with trading/business.

⁹ The Nur (Light) movement is an influential Islamic movement guided by Said Nursi (1878-1960) in Turkey and all over the world, from which the Gulen movement sprang. "It differs from other Islamic movements in terms of understanding of Islam and its strategy of transforming society by raising individual consciousness" (Yavuz, 2003).

Prens Sabahaddin (1877-1948) is another important figure of the late Ottoman period. He was also influenced by the *Young Turks* movement when he was living in France. Unlike Ziya Gokalp's centralist thoughts, he supported the decentralisation of the state (*adem-i merkeziyetcilik*). Sabahaddin (1999) gives individual rights and freedom priority, and argues that an individual's interest is more important than society's. According to Sabahaddin, the reason for the woeful backwardness of the eastern societies is mostly related to their communitarian (*cemmatci*) organisation models. On the other hand, the shining development level of the western societies is because of the individualist (*bireyci*) organisation models they have chosen. Sabahaddin thinks that communitarian/collectivist formation creates weak societies in terms of economy and politics. The solution Sabahaddin offers is quite liberal: letting individuals have their own autonomy from society and the state authority; encouraging an economic model based on individual entrepreneurship; and downsizing the state bureaucracy as much as possible. In 1906, he also established the Private Enterprise and Decentralization Association (*Teşebbüsü Şahsî ve Ademi Merkeziyet Cemiyeti*). As for religion, he does not appear to be hostile against Islam. Rather, his criticism concerns the patriarchal, communitarian and centralized structure of the Ottoman state. However, it is hard to claim that his ideas were so influential among the CUP members, especially the *Pashas* (generals). Even in today's modern Turkey, Sabahaddin's ideas might seem unrealistic to some circles. The aforementioned contributions to Turkish thought and development show that Turkey has been discussing similar subjects for more than a century: the modernization of the country; but, how?

In a sense, the late Ottoman case supports Weber's criticism of oriental-despotism. For instance, many Muslim clerics and Sufis were not criticizing the devastating impact of the *millet* system and the centralist structure of the state. Even some modernist attempts were seen as blasphemy by the religious circles. Although some modernist and reformist Muslim thinkers appeared in the Muslim societies, it is hard to claim that they were influential in the mainstream Muslim way of life. In other

words, the idea of Islamic reform/modernism¹⁰ was a new concept and it faced strong resistance by the society for a long time.

Having mentioned the communitarian and centralist leanings in Turkish society, some basic characteristics of the society start to emerge. In this respect, I will briefly mention about Turkey's position in a cross-cultural comparison study made by Geert Hofstede, an influential Dutch writer. Hofstede (1984) defines culture as the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group or category of people from another. He evaluated more than forty countries in terms of 'Power Distance', 'Uncertainty Avoidance', 'Individualism and Collectivism', and 'Masculinity and Femininity'. Later on, a fifth dimension was added to his study which focuses on "Long-termism". However, it should be noted that Hofstede's study received some criticism as well. McSweeney (2002) stresses the failure of Hofstede's analysis based on the fact that his entire sample was selected from the employees of a single company, IBM and its subsidiaries.

The scope of Hofstede's study (more than 100,000 surveys in 40 countries) can be regarded as the largest cross-cultural values survey in history. His work has been cited frequently in the management and organisations literature. In short, Hofstede's four different aspects are defined as follows:

- Power distance: a measure of the degree to which cultures feel that inequality between people is normal and functional. Subordinates from high power distance cultures tend to be more obedient because they believe in the functionality of inequality.
- Individualism: a measure of the degree to which cultures prefer autonomy or group affiliation. Low-individualism (or collectivist) cultures prefer group affiliation.
- Uncertainty avoidance: a measure of the degree to which cultures feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.

¹⁰ The evolution of Islamic thought will be discussed with more detail in the next section.

- **Masculinity:** a measure of the degree to which cultures stress achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material success.

Turkey was placed among high power distance countries in Hofstede’s cross-cultural research. Power distance refers to the level of inequality between superiors and their subordinates in an organisation. Turkey was the tenth country among forty (see table 3.1) (Hofstede, 1984).

Table 3.1 Power Distance Index (PDI) by countries

Country	Actual PDI	Country	Actual PDI	Country	Actual PDI
1. Philippines	[94]	16. Greece	[60]	31. Switzerland	[34]
2. Mexico	[81]	17. Iran	[58]	32. Finland	[33]
3. Venezuela	[81]	18. Taiwan	[58]	33. Norway	[31]
4. India	[77]	19. Spain	[57]	34. Sweden	[31]
5. Singapore	[74]	20. Pakistan	[55]	35. Ireland	[28]
6. Brazil	[69]	21. Japan	[54]	36. N. Zealand	[22]

7. Hong Kong	[68]	22. Italy	[50]	37. Denmark	[18]
8. France	[68]	23. S. Africa	[49]	38. Israel	[13]
9. Colombia	[67]	24. Argentina	[49]	39. Austria	[11]
10. Turkey	[66]	25. USA	[40]		
11. Belgium	[65]	26. Canada	[39]		
12. Peru	[64]	27. Netherlands	[38]		
13. Thailand	[64]	28. Australia	[36]		
14. Chile	[63]	29. Germany	[35]		
15. Portugal	[63]	30. G. Britain	[35]		

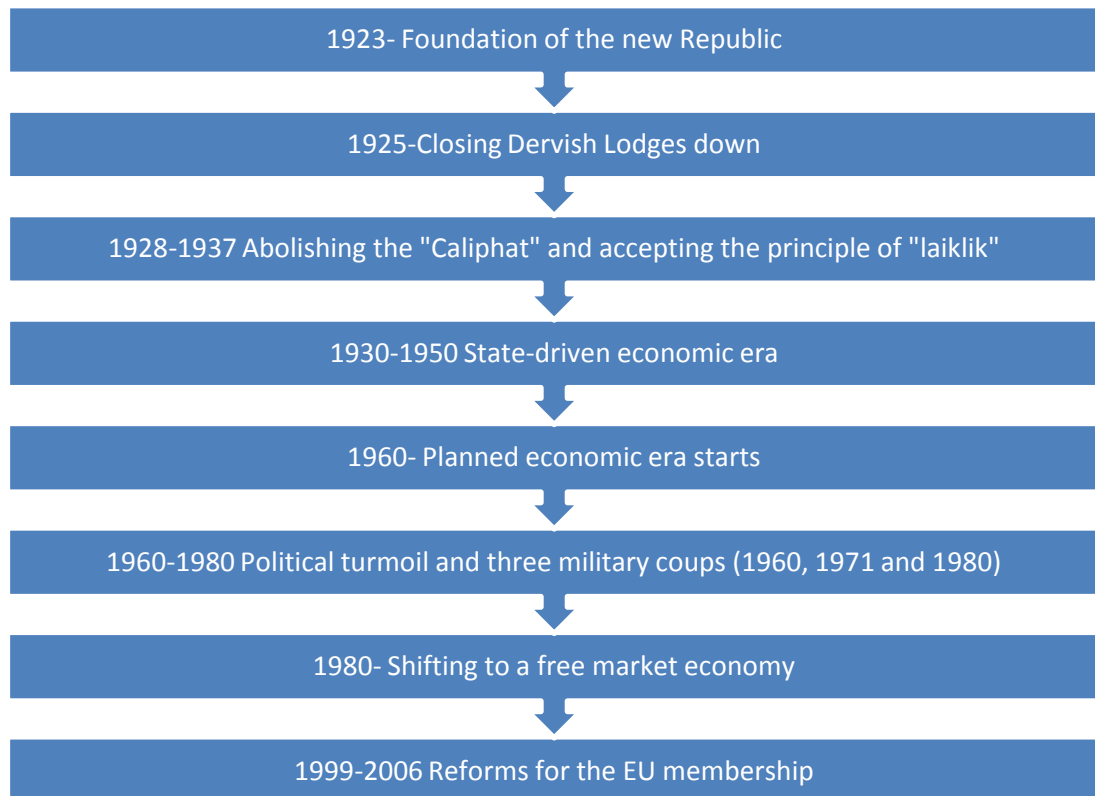
Source: Adapted from Geert Hofstede, Culture's Consequences, 1984, Sage: London.

In the next chapters, these characteristics will be mentioned more specifically as appropriate. Now, this chapter continues with the historical background of private business and enterprise in the Republican era.

3.3 The Republican Era

On 29th October 1923 the Turkish Republic was founded under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, later Ataturk, one of the most successful Ottoman generals in World War I (Berkes, 2006). The new state was shaped as a nation-state based on Turkish nationality. Although it was a new state, it can be said that it was the re-organisation of the Ottoman state in a relatively small territory, Anatolia (Asia Minor) and Eastern Thrace. The Ottoman army and bureaucracy kept their existence in the institutions of the new Republic.

Figure 3.2 The milestones of the Republican Era in Turkey



As mentioned earlier, the country's modernisation project started with the Tanzimat reforms in 1839. This process had been accelerated by Mustafa Kemal after the foundation of the Republic. Atatürk was selected as the first president of the Republic. He applied a series of reforms rapidly. Those reforms can be summarized as follow (Berkes, 2006):

- Abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate
- Adoption of the Turkish constitution
- Moving the capital from Istanbul to Ankara
- Replacing Islamic Shari'a law by western codes, such as the Swiss Civil Code and the Italian Penal Code
- Replacing Arabic alphabet by Roman alphabet
- Changing dress codes to western style, and outlawing the Islamic headgear
- Closure of religious convents and dervish lodges
- Unification of education
- Replacing Islamic calendar by the Christian calendar
- Changing the system of measurement to the metric system
- Women were included in adult suffrage and given the right to take part in elections as candidates.
- Inclusion of the principle of *laiklik* (*Laïcité* - French Secularism) in the constitution

In the history of Islam it was the first time an Islamic state was transformed into a secular organisation. It can be observed that the habitual interpretation of the Turkish modernity frequently mentions the dichotomy of religion and modernity. To some extent it sounds reasonable considering the fact that the idea of fatalism and other-worldly Sufism were widespread among the 19th century's Muslim societies. However, it is a gripping point that most of the reforms applied by Atatürk were also being discussed by religious Muslim circles in the late Ottoman era. For example, it is known that the issue of changing the alphabet was also discussed by religious

Muslim circles; and the western dress code (wearing jacket and trousers) was generally accepted in the urban city life regardless of the world view. Therefore it is hard to put a clear line between the religion and modernity. Perhaps, this subject should be discussed under the light of the Ottoman administrative characteristics which were directly inherited by the new Republic. Presumably, the application of the secular rules might help to illuminate this long lasting debate between the secularist and Islamists (see section 3.2.2 for the Turkish experience of secularism).

3.3.1 Private Business in the Republican Era and the Emergence of the Islamic Entrepreneurial Class

In the foundation of the new Republic, the French revolution had great influence among its founders, Mustafa Kemal and his followers. The main goal of the Turkish revolution was fighting with backwardness and the ignorance of the Muslim society (Berkes, 2006). Thus, *Kemalist* reforms aimed to create a modern Turkish nation based on science and secular education encouraging hard work and entrepreneurial activities. After the war of independence (1919-1922), the young Republic was underdeveloped and its economy was weak. The economy policies of the early years shaped by the state interventions and protectionist policies. There was almost no private business initiative. The period between 1930 and 1950 is best known as state-led economic era. Therefore the dream of creating an entrepreneurial class in Turkey had to wait.

Until 1946 the Turkish state had been governed by a single party, the CHP (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*- the Republican People's Party). After 1950 multi-party period started and DP (*Demokrat Parti*- the Democrat Party) appeared with some quasi-liberal economy policies. However, after multi-party period started, Turkey faced a long term political turmoil. Between 1960 and 1980 the country experienced three military coups: 1960, 1971 and 1980 (see Appendix-1 for further discussion around business and economy in the early years of Turkish Republic).

1980 was the biggest turning point for the country's economic and social life. On 24th January 1980, a new economic policy was introduced by a centre-right party. Turgut Özal, the chief economic bureaucrat, then Prime Minister, and finally President of Turkey was the main figure in this neo-liberal, market-oriented policies. In 1983, Özal established a new political party, the Motherland Party (ANAP), unifying different political leanings together; and won the elections with a great majority of the votes. His radical decisions started the change and transformation process in Turkey. Özal's liberal economic policies provided bases for transforming the economic structure from a state-oriented economy to the free market. His famous idea of three freedoms (freedom of conscience, speech and entrepreneurship) were considered a milestone in Turkey's socio-economic history.

In the 1980s, Turkey became a market-oriented economy, and the society experienced a fast urbanisation and industrialisation process. The economic transformation—which started in the 1950s from traditional agrarian society to an urban industrialised society—accelerated dramatically in the 1980s. The change was quite visible. For example, before the 1980s, carrying a pack of foreign cigarettes or currency was a criminal offence. Many of the ordinary goods, such as instant coffee, blue jeans, basic home appliances were unknown or regarded as luxury items, until the 1980s. It was the first time big Turkish industrial companies started to produce cars and white goods (refrigerator, oven, washing machine, etc.). Some Turkish brands, such as BEKO and Vestel, became well known and worldwide competing companies in the 1990s. Again in the 1980s, Turkey embraced with coloured TV and multiple TV channels. Until this period there was only one state channel broadcasting five hours everyday. By the early 90s there were five state channels and more than ten private TV channels broadcasting in Turkey.

Özal was basically trying to encourage people to set up their own business, and to create an enterprise culture through opening the country's doors to the world. His approach also shows similarities with that of Margaret Thatcher. Like Thatcher, Özal was also trying to create the country's new entrepreneurs by changing regulations and adopting the system to the free market economy. Beside institutional changes, moral transformation has also played a vital role in his struggle. It is allegedly told

that he wished for a new generation holding a computer on one hand, and a Qur'an on the other. Özal himself was a practicing/ pious Muslim and greatly influenced by M. Zahit Kotku, the leader of the *Nakshibandi* Sufi order. He wanted Turkish business people to seek business opportunities in foreign countries. In this respect, he abolished the restriction on travel abroad. Business people, either from big or small companies, were encouraged to visit foreign countries to look for business opportunities. Apparently, religious groups were also influenced by this transformation. The pious started to develop business relations in Turkey and abroad. It can be said that it was the beginning of Islamic capital and the new middle class known by its religious leanings.

As mentioned, Özal was in favour of freedom in all aspects of the public sphere. It is a widely known fact that the religious movements benefited from this period's liberal politics and gained more power. The main goal of the military regime in 1980 was protecting the country against communism. In this respect, some religious movements and their activities were tolerated by the regime. Even compulsory religious education was introduced in schools. Therefore, religious movements found a proper atmosphere to spread their ideas. It has been claimed that the increasing number of pious or devout business people and their business associations are the by-products of the liberal policies of Turgut Özal (Dogan, 2006). However, it should be noted that the social and economic transformation also triggered the transition within the Islamic understanding in Turkey.

The 1990s are regarded as the years in which Islamic politics regained its power. The Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*-RP) appeared as the continuation of the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi*-MSP) which was closed by the military regime in 1980. An Islamic discourse was very apparent in its propaganda. RP's leader Necmettin Erbakan was frequently referring to religious teachings in his speeches, and was offering a 'Just Order' (*Adil Duzen*) while criticising 1980s liberal politics (Hale, 2006). The party's overwhelmingly Islamic ideology was also against Turkey's European Union (EU) accession, regarding the EU as a Christian Club. Instead, Erbakan was in favour of unifying Muslim countries.

However, it can be said that a one-year coalition government (1996-97) under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan made Islamic groups more apparent in the Turkish economy. MUSIAD, the Independent Association of Industrialists and Businessmen, appeared as the biggest supporter of Erbakan's Islamic ideology (Milli Gorus). According to Onis (1997), the Welfare Party was representing the Islamic bourgeoisie along with the victims of 1980s market-oriented economic policies:

During the 1970s small businessmen and shop keepers in the small or medium-sized inner Anatolian towns had been an important constituency of the National Salvation Party, the predecessor of the Welfare Party. Hence a certain link between Islamic business interests and political party campaigning on explicitly Islamic grounds has been evident from the beginning in the late 1960s. It was during the 1980s, however, that we observe a profound take-off in the volume and depth of Islamic business activity, a process that clearly received a significant boost from the major inflows of Saudi capital arriving in the country to take advantage of the new opportunities provided by the liberal economic environment (Onis, 1997:758).

In 1997, the Prime Minister Erbakan was forced to resign by the military. The date 28th February 1997 is another turning point in Turkey's socio-economic life. This particular date and the following two-years are known as 'the Duration of 28th February' (*28 Subat sureci*). It is also regarded as a 'soft' or 'post-modern coup'. Erbakan's Welfare Party (RP) was closed by the Turkish Constitutional Court. A military unit started to investigate Islamic or 'regressive' (*gerici*) activities, including academics, state bureaucrats, and business owners from all over the country. Hundreds of companies were labelled as 'regressive' or 'religionist' (*dinci*). 'The Green Capital' term emerged as representing Islamic business groups. In this period, the Islamic headscarf became another big issue; and women wearing it were not allowed to enter universities. In general, this time period was described as despotic secularism by the religious and conservative circles. Arslan (1999:165) interprets this as a trade-off between the level of democracy and secularism in Turkey: "The

more democracy the more Islamism, the more Islamism the less democracy; and the dilemma goes on”. This argument might seem reasonable to some extent. However, there is another fact that the religious interpretation in Turkey has been changing, especially within the last two decades. Emergence of the new middle class business people, and Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi*-AKP), the ruling government of today’s Turkey, might be an example of this transition.

In 2001, AKP was established by Recep Tayyip Erdogan; the former mayor of Istanbul and a close pupil of Necmettin Erbakan; and his reformist friends who separated themselves from the Islamist Welfare Party. The party declared itself as ‘conservative democrat’, and frequently claimed that its policies were not based on Islam. After the electoral victory in 2002, Tayyip Erdogan’s first action was hanging on the efforts towards the EU membership of Turkey. In 2004, the EU officially started the negotiation process between the union and Turkey. This was considered a big success on behalf of Erdogan’s AKP. His liberal economy policies attracted a lot of foreign investments to Turkey (22 billion US\$ in year 2007 according to UNCTAD). In a short time period, the high inflation rates reduced to single digit numbers, the economy reached a sustainable level of growth, and the number of SMEs started to increase. Additionally, the party aimed to downsize the state bureaucracy to create more efficient state administration. In this respect, the privatisation process has been accelerated. Economic strategist of Merrill Lynch, Mehmet Simsek (2006:1), summarizes Turkey’s economic situation as “a real convergence story”:

The past five years have been a period of superb Turkish economic performance, including an average annual real GDP growth rate of 7.5 %, nearly four times as fast as EU25. While the near-term outlook is clouded by rising political uncertainty and a large current account deficit, we think the country’s future is assuredly positive. A rising working age population and low levels of employment and productivity indicate that Turkey has a high potential for catching-up.

It has been frequently mentioned that liberal policies of Erdogan show strong similarities with that of Turgut Özal in 1980s (Yavuz, 2006; Turam, 2007). As Özal successfully achieved, Erdogan has also managed to receive the support of liberal and social democrat circles, alongside the major religious movements. A religious business people's association MUSIAD, which used to be known as the supporter of Erbakan's Welfare Party, is now the biggest supporter of AKP. Beside MUSIAD, Turkey's largest religious initiative, *the Gulen movement* and its business people confederation TUSKON also supported the AKP government and its economic policies. TUSKON, with its thousands of members, emerged as the biggest private business people's network focusing on SMEs, rather than big industries. In the past, the Gulen movement used to be known for its close support to Özal's Motherland Party, and the movement always kept itself distant from political Islam. In short, AKP managed to receive substantial public support from different circles. Finally, radical economic changes and reforms on the manner of EU accession made a pro-Islamic party win another electoral victory in the 2007 general elections by raising its votes from 33% to 47%.

However, I argue that applying AKP's success and its transformation to the EU criteria only would mislead us. The newly emerging Turkish bourgeoisie; or as some call 'the Islamic middle class'; seems a crucial factor in AKP's success. As opposed to mainstream understanding, I argue that the AKP is not a cause of this business class, but a result of it. As Yavuz (2006) successfully noted, the prime carriers of this transformation are the newly emerging business class evolved as a result of Prime Minister Turgut Özal's neo-liberal economic revolution, and the new intellectuals. Another important factor can be seen in its politics with minimised religious discourse. In this respect, the reforms through EU accession have become a common ground for the different segments of society, including liberals and pious Muslims who are in favour of reforms. According to Yavuz (2006), Islamic groups in Turkey, more than the republican secularists, unenthusiastically support this new democratic bargain, because they intrinsically know that this was the only way for them to come to power. However, for some AKP's policies are regarded as nothing more than hypocrisy. For this reason, the secularists groups in Turkey named this with a special phrase: "*takiyye*" (hiding one's true intention). Thus, the party has been accused of

having a hidden Islamic agenda. This idea is shared by some scholars as well. G. Fuller, the author of the well known book entitled *The Future of Political Islam*, sees the current experiment of Turkey as a successful political integration of an Islamic movement despite the strict secular structure of the state (Fuller, 2004). Pipes (2003) rigidly claims that the Justice and Development Party (AKP) is very different from the Taliban in its means, but not so different in its ends: “If the party gained full control over Turkey, it could be as dangerous as the Taliban were in Afghanistan” (Pipes, 2003). However, these arguments are ignoring the fact that the Islamic understanding in Turkey has been evolving as well. The idea of establishing a shari’a state by wasting the democratic gains of Turkey which was obtained through the EU reforms does not sound reasonable. Other than that, the main carrier of the AKP is the newly emerging business class, and they all set up their business within this secular democratic free market economic system. Day by day, they become more involved with global business. Therefore, a radical regime change towards Shari’a would affect this segment first. It is a fact that the visibility of the Islamic figures in Turkey is increasing, while political Islam decreases. Women wearing Islamic headscarves, Islamic publications and Islamic media can be regarded in this respect. However, as Yavuz (1997) noted, it might be regarded as ‘Islamisation of the society’ rather than ‘Islamisation of the state’.

In this respect, I propose that the pious Muslim business people or so-called new Turkish bourgeoisie should be interpreted within the context of religious transition in Turkey. This study argues that the new religious perception in Turkey, besides the liberal economic policies, might have some influences over business, in particular creating an enterprise culture. In the next section, focusing on the religious transition in Turkey, I will try to map out possible routes of this religious influence.

3.3.2 The Turkish Experience of Secularism

Secularism has existed in different forms throughout history. However, the term ‘secularism’ was first used by the British writer George J. Holyoake in 1846. He used the term to describe his ideas of promoting a social order separate from

religion, without dismissing or criticising religious beliefs. In a very broad sense secularism can be defined as any movement away from traditional religious values. Its general assertion might be regarded as the separation of governmental practices or institutions from religious beliefs. However, over time, many other dimensions have been added to this definition. For example, alternatively, secularism can be seen as a set of principles that promote secular ideas or values as a way of life over religious ways of thought.

In the positivist paradigm of the nineteenth century, secularisation was seen as an essential strand of modernity. In the relevant literature, the relationship between secularisation and industrial society is frequently mentioned. Many social thinkers, such as Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Marx, believed that religion would gradually lose its importance and come to an end with the advent of industrial society (Norris and Inglehart, 2004). In *A General Theory of Secularization*, David Martin summarizes these broad tendencies as follow:

...religious institutions are adversely affected to the extent that an area is dominated by heavy industry; ...they are the more adversely affected if the area concerned is homogenously proletarian; ...religious practice declines proportionately with the size of an urban concentration; ...geographical and social mobility erodes stable religious communities organized on a territorial basis; that it also contributes to a relativization of perspectives through extended culture contact; ...the church becomes institutionally differentiated in response to the differentiation of society, notably into pluriform denominations and sects; ...the church becomes partially differentiated from other institutional spheres: such as justice, ideological legitimation, the state apparatus, education, welfare... (Martin, 1978: 3)

As can be seen, the author considers secularism as a tendency, rather than an iron law. Therefore, it seems possible to claim that every society has different experiences and consequences of secularization. For instance, secularization in Britain or in the United States (also called *Anglo-Saxon secularism*) has different

characteristics from the secularism in France. French model secularism (*laïcité*) is strongly related to French republicanism and it has had a great influence on the Turkish experience of secularization. The Turkish term ‘laiklik’ also derived from this French origin. Basically, French model *laïcité* requires the absence of a state religion. Besides respecting freedom of thought and freedom of religion, this model compels an absolute separation of the state and Church (religion).

Broadly speaking, it might be argued that the Turkish state has been in search of modernism and reforms for more than a hundred years, from the late Ottoman era to recent years (Mardin, 1991; Berkes, 2006). Since the very beginning, the western way of life and its modern values have appeared as the prominent alternatives.

In Turkey, 99 percent of the population is Muslim, and, according to Eurobarometer (2005), 95 percent of the population believes in God. In Muslim countries, Turkey is the only one that has inscribed secularism (*laiklik*) in its constitution. The state shows strict reflexes to guard the country’s self-styled secular structure. Broad secular ideas are shared and embraced by the majority of the Turkish citizens (Carkoglu and Toprak, 2006). However, it should be noted that secularism in Turkey is understood in a variety of ways.

As has been argued, secularism was imported from the French model *laïcité* as separation of state and religion. But, for some, it is also regarded as a way of life. In any religious way of life, the set of rules and their sources are clear and understandable (in terms of what is forbidden or prohibited). But, as for a secular form of life, it is more complex and unclear. The sources of secular rules might be related to several elements; such as traditions, politics, culture and even religion. Therefore, it is not easy to claim that religion and secularism are completely separate entities. For instance, most of the secularist people (who feel strongly about secular state tradition in modern Turkey) consider themselves Muslim, and religion is not completely excluded from their lives. Arguably, it can be claimed that a particular interpretation of secularism exists in Turkey. Maybe the distinctiveness of Turkish secularism should be sought in the unique application of the French model. The Turkish state did not separate the state and religion. Instead, the state established an

official department; the Presidency of Religious Affairs (*Diyanet Isleri Baskanligi*); and wanted to control the religion by imposing its own understanding as the ultimate truth. According to Turner (1974), the Turkish experience of secularization differed from its European counterpart in ways: Firstly, “secularization was forced through as a political measure under the control of an autocratic and statist government”, and secondly, “Turkish secularization was consciously mimetic in that it took Europe as its specific model of adaptation” (Turner, 1974:168). Therefore it can be argued that it did not arise totally from economic development and modernization in the Turkish context.

Furthermore, it should be noted that there was no huge diversity in the religious beliefs in Turkey. According to Martin (1978) individualism, pluralism and Calvinist salience are the criteria for secularization process. Like Catholic monopoly in France, Turkey also shows a lesser degree of pluralism¹¹. Martin claims that in such societies with lesser degrees of pluralism, secularization might result in a polarization and a radicalization of both the religious and secular sides. This also explains Turkey’s secularization process and the conflicts between secularists and Islamists. In Turkey, it is still a controversial issue and has been discussed for a long time. Aydin (2003) argues that Turkey, too, has its particular way of secularization that has specific idiosyncratic characteristics:

In the Turkish context, it is more accurate to talk about secularism than secularization. It is a common idea that secularization is not the same as secularism. Secularization relates essentially to a process of decline in religious activities, beliefs, ways of thinking, and institutions that occurs primarily in association with, or as an unconscious or unintended consequence of, other process of social structural change. On the other hand, secularism is an ideology that “aims to denounce all forms of supernaturalism and agencies devoted to it, advocate nonreligious, antireligious, or anti-clerical principles as the basis of personal morality and social organization”. Secularism, in short, aims to establish a secular society. (Aydin, 2003:219)

¹¹ The most common belief setting in Turkey is *Sunni Islam*.

In the early years of the Turkish Republic, we observed the endeavour of the state to create secular morality. Aydin (2003:212) highlights two important premises of that endeavour: The first one is to create a moral consensus based on secular notions of duty and debt with which social order was said to be possible. The second premise is to establish a classless and undifferentiated social entity (based on Turkish nationality) unified around ‘common’ goals that was expected to prevent social conflicts and disorder in the way to democracy. However, the Turkish experience did not appear to support that assumption. Three military coups, inadequate democracy and a weak parliamentary system might be considered as the level of the modernization project’s success.

The early years of the Republic are known as the years of Turkish revolution. Basically, the reforms were attempting to diminish the influences of religious institutions and traditional values from the public sphere. The secular (*laik*)¹² reforms were considered as measures of the revolutionary regime against tradition that seemed to be identified with the enemies of the republic (Aydin, 2003). Berkes (1960) explains the aims of Turkish revolutionary leaders as follow:

They were concerned primarily with the highest problems of moral transformation. They were moralists who had noted the failure of the traditional values, religious and ethical, to exercise effective control over the behaviour of the Faithful under the new social, economic, and political conditions. For them, new and secular conceptions of the good, the True, and the Beautiful would be the guides to action; the only valid criterion of those would be individual reason. (Berkes, 1960:41)

As a result, it can be said that the idea of authoritarian secularism (*laicism*) had gained ground in those years. Afterwards, secularism had become a way of life for republican elitists. Religion was regarded as private/conscious matter with no public reflections. Although the deliberate effort to ignore and diminish the Islamic

¹² The Turkish state uses the term “laik” instead of secular. The term comes from French word *Laïcité*. It is also known as *laicism*.

tradition was never fully realized; “conscious rejection of traditional symbols and values became pervasive among the most influential figures of the Turkish ruling strata after 1930” (Aydin, 2003:245). However, social dynamics did not develop as the republican elitists expected. In the following years of the Republic, the “danger” of Islam has still been the central point of all heated debates. As Gole (1997) rightly argues, Turkish secularism, from the very beginning, has been interpreted by the state elites and the bureaucrats as didactic teaching Turkish people how to be civilised or modern. In a way, it can be defined as a kind of secularism without the notion of democracy. Since secularism (*laiklik*) is still a heated debate in Turkey, it might be argued that the *Kemalist*¹³ interpretation of secularism did not fit with the structure of Turkish society and failed.

3.4 Transformation of Islamic Thought in Turkey: Mapping out the Religious Influence

Religions are represented by their institutions, and these institutions interpret the understanding of religions. In Christianity, churches are the main institutions. Each sect has its own church and each church, as an institution, has its own understanding of the holy text. However, in an Islamic context, mosques do not refer to an institution. The term mosque does not have a meaning beyond being a place for praying. The interpretation of the Qur’an is represented by different schools of thinking in Islam. The mainstream understanding of Islam in the Ottoman time was an orthodox Islam (*Sunni* Islam). Within Sunni Islam, many different Sufi orders appeared as the carriers of this thought in the Ottoman era.

The history of Sufism goes back to ancient times. In Islamic context, the spiritual teaching of Sufism can be described as “to help to refine the individual’s consciousness so that it may reach the Radiances of Truth, from which one is cut off by ordinary activities of the world” (Shah, 1990:1). Sufism has an important influence over the Turkish understanding of Islam. These are the common key terms

¹³ Kemalism is the set of principles that defines the founding ideology of the Turkish Republic. It is also known as the “six arrows”: Republicanism, Populism, Secularism, Revolutionism, Nationalism and Statism.

in Turkish Sufi teachings: “*tevekkul*” (reliance; putting oneself in God’s hands), “*dunya*” (worldliness) and “*zikr*” (remembrance of God). However, the perception and the interpretation of these terms have changed over time. According to Ulgener (1991) the mentioned concepts had separated from their original meaning as being otherworldliness. In the early years of the Turkish republic, many Sufi institutions had been closed by Ataturk on the grounds that those institutions (*Tekkes*: Dervish lodges) were encouraging laziness, indolence and were open to abuse. At the same period, Turkey chose a strict form of secularism for its development and modernization project. Ulgener finds understandable the reasons for closing *tekkes* down. The misinterpretation of Sufism which defined the late Ottoman *tekkes*, according to him, was one of the reasons for the economic disintegration of the Ottoman Empire (Ulgener, 1991).

In this respect, recalling the ideas of the famous Turkish economic historian Sabri Ulgener would be helpful. Ulgener, sometimes referred to as the “Turkish Weber”, stresses the necessity of investigating the main concern of the Sufi ideas. He claims that Sufism is not necessarily against worldly activities. The concept of “*dunya* (worldliness)” is a key notion in Sufi literature. In many Sufi sayings and poems one can see that a negative meaning applied to the concept, in terms of leaving everything in the world. In general meaning, Sufis define the concept of “world” as everything in the world except the love of God. According to Ulgener this is what people misunderstood for a long time. He proposes that the meaning of “*dunya*” should be sought within individuals’ intention, rather than within the material dimensions of the world (Ulgener, 2006). As Ulgener explains, Sufis consider the “*dunya*” as nothing else than forgetting devotion to God. In this regard, Sufis claim that none of the usual suspects such as money, business career or women are the “*dunya*”. Interestingly, two of Ulgener’s common examples from the prophet’s sayings are frequently mentioned by the pious group of my research: “The *world* is something that keeps you busy from remembrance of God” and “Work for this world as if you will never die; and work for the other world as if you will die tomorrow” (Ulgener, 2006: 64). Therefore, it can be said that the crucial point of Sufism is not the worldly activity itself, but the intention of the individual. It can be claimed that this interpretation is shaping the new understanding of Islam in Turkey. Ulgener sees

the prosperity based on land owning (the *ağalık* system) as a barrier to the productive economy, and he strongly criticises the traditional way of doing business which is not involved with rational book keeping and accounting. Engaged in work overall, Ulgener's studies show his optimism regarding a regaining of the power of Sufi ideas in an economic sense.

Turkish businessmen, seeking to have a place in an evolving world and maintain that place, need to realise before it is late that it is time to bid farewell to that patrimonially peaceful world of the past, a world ill at ease with numbers and calculation (My translation S.U.) (Ulgener, cited in Sayar, 2006).

However, Ulgener's studies are solely academic and philosophic. Therefore, the source of religious transition should be sought within the religious movements themselves. As mentioned earlier, Religious understanding in Turkey has been in search of reform or renewal from the late Ottoman era. Such names as Cemaleddin Afgani (1838-1897) and Mohammad Abduh (1849-1905) are known as the reformist Muslim scholars of 19th century. However, Said Nursi (1878-1960) appeared as the most influential Islamic thinker in the late Ottoman era and the early years of the Republic.

Nursi wrote a substantial amount of books on the interpretation of the Qur'an, and they were translated into more than twenty languages. As an Ottomanist, he regarded the Empire as the last and most powerful Islamic state that is capable of unifying all Muslims under one nation regardless of cultural/linguistic origin. After the disintegration period of the Empire he fought in World War I and supported CUP's freedom activities. He was also invited to the Turkish Parliament upon M. Kemal's (Ataturk) request to deliver a speech. However, he disagreed with the secularisation process initiated by M. Kemal. According to him, the abolition of Islamic principles would create social disaster among the society.

In the early years of the Republic the *Nur* (light) movement substantially spread over the country. The main aim of his writing was to demonstrate that the knowledge generated by the natural science was present in the Qur'an. He frequently stressed the compatibility of faith and science, and unity of the heart/conscious and reason for the future of humanity:

The light of the heart/conscious (*vicdan*) are the religious sciences whereas the light of the reason are modern sciences. The truth emerges out of the blend of the two. When they are separated, the former causes dogmatism and the latter deception and suspicion (Nursi, 1978:81).

His followers regarded his books as the interpretation of the Qur'an for the modern world. According to Arslan (1999), Nursi and his view can be classified as a progressive Sufi with some traditional ideas. However, Nursi and his movement emerged in the atmosphere when the 19th century's rigid positivism was made of the official ideology of the newly emerged Turkish Republic. Despite the fact that his books and his followers did not involve any fundamentalist action, Nursi was accused of attempting to change the regime and he was jailed many times.

Another important influential figure was M. Zahit Kotku (1897-1980), the leader of *Nakshibandi* Sufi order in Turkey. In terms of the economic dimension of modernity, Kotku put great emphasis on the development of a heavy industry encouraging the leader of the pro-Islamic party in Turkey (Mardin, 1991). According to him building an Islamic society was impossible without an Islamic capital (Arslan, 1999). The *Nakshibandi* order's leader, Kotku and his close links with the pro-Islamic parties (Welfare party, and later the Virtue, and last the Felicity¹⁴) is well known in Turkey.

Besides political Islam, this Sufi movement was very influential in the establishment of a religious business association, MUSIAD. It was established by a group of young and well educated business people with strong Islamic orientation. They were seen

¹⁴ The Welfare Party was banned from politics three times for violating the principle of secularism by the Constitutional Court in Turkey. Each time the party was re-established by the same members but with different party names.

as a reaction to Turkey's most influential business association, TUSIAD (the Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association) known for its closeness to the state's official ideology and secularism. Like political Islamists, MUSIAD also advocated close relations with the Muslim world and strongly rejected the custom union with the EU in the 1990s. In the 90s, MUSIAD was seen as another Islamic political figure in Turkey along with the pro-Islamic Welfare Party.

The chairman of MUSIAD, Erol Yarar (1996) demonstrates his opinion on the decline of Turkey in the last century. Interestingly, his critique shows strong similarities with Weber's criticism of Islam:

The reasons behind the decline of Turkey and the Muslim world (in the nineteenth century) can be summarised as follows:

- Trade and industry was not taken seriously. Priority was given to the military.
- The other-worldliness fostered laziness.
- This-worldly motivation of Islam was lost.
- Education, especially education for girls was ignored.
- Islamic universities and academics lost their independence before the state.
- The industrialisation of the West was not noticed and necessary industrialisation policies were not developed.
- Intellectual productivity declined.
- Economic privileges given to foreigners in the Ottoman Empire and the Free Trade Agreement with Britain in 1838 destroyed the developing industrial capacity of the Empire.

- Younger generations were encouraged to seek posts in the military and civil bureaucracy.
- Absolute obedience to the political authority encouraged despotism.
- The Islamic principle of responsive government disappeared.

Suggestions for future development in Turkey:

- Economic development must not be understood as an end in itself but it must be understood as means of gaining grace from almighty God.
- Family values must be protected.
- We must improve the national education system.
- We must save and invest as much as we can. Money and economic sources must not be wasted. We must also give money to charity.
- NGOs must have an important role in the state mechanism.
- We must stop seeing the state as our father, otherwise the state will continue to see people as its children. The state must not be understood as a father figure, instead it must be seen as a servant of the people.
- High technology must be accompanied by high morality.
- Restrictions on 'freedom of thought' must be withdrawn as soon as possible. Turkey must be a country of freedom.
- The state must withdraw all its economic activities (Yarar, 1996:32).

The *Nakshibandi* Sufi order has a periodical journal, *Ilim ve Sanat* (Science and Art). In this journal they published a special issue concerned with business, entrepreneurship and Islam, in May 1997. The summary of the editorial is as follows:

The last two centuries was a period of decline for the Islamic world and a period of progress for the West. We did not notice the decline at first. Then, some of us believed that our attachment to Islam caused that decline while others believed that our indifference to Islam was the real source of the decline. Therefore, we experienced the westernisation process. However, this only created the dependency on the West.

In the Republican era we tried to develop a national bourgeoisie through imitating the West. The result was a class, which was an agent of the West in the country. This economic class was protected from world-wide competition by protectionist policies. As a result, they exploited their own people and became a parasitical entity.

If 'the control of Islamic capital' is in the Turkish political agenda it will destroy a basic human right, the freedom of enterprise. This attempt also shows that some people understood very well that Islam was not an obstacle to economic progress. History shows that Muslims encouraged non-Muslim businessmen in Muslim lands. Therefore, Muslims were better defenders of freedom than modern secularists. On the other hand, those Muslims who want to spread a Buddhist-type other-worldly Sufism for the sake of opposition to modernism in this country, must be aware of whom they are working for. It may be an intellectual entertainment to question economic progress but it should be remembered that a powerful Muslim is better than a weak one (*Ilim ve Sanat*, March 1997:3; cited in Arslan, 1999).

The final and the most influential contemporary figure is Fethullah Gulen and his followers. The Gulen movement appeared as the continuation of Nursi's *Nur* movement. He is known as the most successful applicant of Nursi's ideas. For a long time, in Turkey among the other Muslim countries, Western civilisation and rational

values were seen as non-compatible for Muslim societies. Gulen and his close circle “go a step further accepting Western civilisation as a suitable foundation for material life while considering Islamic civilisation suitable for spiritual life” (Aras and Caha, 2000:39). In this piece, we will focus on the Gulen movement in Turkey that emerged with its flexible ideas to stimulate a patriotic, “global and free market orientation” with an emphasis on the “spiritual and intellectual consciousness of the individuals” (Yavuz, 2003: 19, 29). Fethullah Gulen is a well known Islamic scholar in Turkey. His ideas have inspired many people in Turkey to establish educational institutions that integrate modern science, ethics and spirituality. Berberoglu (2000), a Turkish journalist, describes him as an opinion leader, and Aras (1998) sees him as “a most likely candidate for religious leader of the new Turkey”. Besides educational institutions, he gives special importance to inter-faith dialogue activities in Turkey and all over the world by stressing the significance of the cultural and legal plurality of societies (Unal and Williams, 2000). It is claimed that “Gulen’s discourse has had and will have major influences on the future shape of Turkey and the region” (Yilmaz, 2005:394). Probably, the biggest difference between other Islamic movements and the Gulen movement is that his movement is a civil one, rather than political. As previously mentioned, his main concern could be summarised as ethics and individuals rather than acquisition of the state administration. Considering the institutions and activities of his sympathisers; such as hundreds of schools along with seven universities all over the world, media institutions, inter-faith dialogue centres, college preparation courses; it can be claimed that it is a successful civil initiative. In a sense, this successful movement might be a proper example of how a civil society acquires its autonomy from the state. In other words, the movement plays a crucial role in the empowerment of civil society, which is very important for Turkey’s democratization process.

In a very short time (from the 1980s to the recent date) the movement has become an international phenomenon. His ideas were discussed in several international conferences¹⁵ at the academic level. Yilmaz (2003) argues that the movement provides an example of renewal with a potential for influencing the Muslim world.

¹⁵ 12th – 13th November 2005, Rice University, Huston, USA; 25th – 27th October 2007, London School of Economics, London, U.K; 3rd November 2007, University of Texas, USA.

In this regard, it can be said that Gulen has also been reinterpreting Sufi teachings within the contemporary framework¹⁶. The ideas of Ulgener show high compatibility with those of Gulen. When explaining such Sufi terms as isolation (*tecrid*) or asceticism (*zuhd*), Gulen stresses that these terms do not mean that one should leave worldly activities; and he puts great emphasis on rearing Muslim individuals not isolated from the world (Gulen, 2004). Unlike political Islamic movements in Turkey, the priority of the Gulen movement is education towards a reconstruction of the daily lives of people in Turkey (Piricky, 1999). Thus, it can be claimed that his tenets influence many aspects of daily life, including economy and business. In an interview, Gulen gives us some evidence regarding how this new interpretation of Islam contributes to a more rational way of life in terms of economic activities:

Today, our troubles are ignorance, dissension and poverty. The solution for these problems is organizing rich people and learning how to conduct work. ...Even today, I definitely wish them (Turkish entrepreneurs) who come to see me, to do something (in business sense) here. And, I ask them: Have you done a proper market analysis? Do you know about your competitors?
(Akman, 2004:52)

Rather than direct relations between religion and economic activities, such as Islamic business principles; his contribution very much values the secular premises of business. In this respect, just as Protestantism is shaping a capitalist entrepreneurial mentality within the Christian world, Gulen is thought to play a comparable role within the modern Turkish society (Piricky, 1999). Therefore, the phenomenon of religious business people in Turkey should be explained within the social context which that particular way of life shapes.

However, I acknowledge that the emergence of pious businesspeople in Turkey should not only be applied to the new interpretation of Islam. After the 1980s, Turkey's economy politics changed radically and it was shifted from a state-oriented economy to a free-market liberal economy. It can be said that this transformation in economy politics has encouraged the private business sector and it has facilitated the

¹⁶For further information about Gulen's reading of Sufi terms, see: Gulen, F. (2004), *Key Concepts in the Practice of Sufism*, The Light Inc: NJ.

emergence of enterprise culture. Historically, the transition both in economics and religion has occurred at the same time period. Rather than who or what led the other, it would be more accurate to talk about the compatibility of these two shifts; the economic liberalisation and the religious transition. Aras and Caha (2000:40) summarizes it as follows:

In the 1990s, however, policies oriented towards greater liberalisation and a shift to export-oriented industrialisation have led to the emergence of new, dynamic, export-oriented, small and medium-sized business, many based in traditionally conservative Anatolian cities. This segment of society has been mobilized by Gulen's movement. The newly emerging export-oriented economic class is likely to challenge the existing economic structure and pressure the state bureaucracy to end the unequal treatment. It might also be said that the economic activities linked to Gulen's movement as well as the educational activities of Gulen's community have become part of an alternative economy.

In almost every Anatolian city, Gulen's sympathisers have established local business associations. Among these local institutions, they have also established two national business associations: TUSKON (Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey) with more than ten thousands SME members and ISHAD (Business Life Cooperation Association) for large scale industrialists. These associations work as NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) and aim to provide a suitable atmosphere for gathering Turkish private business sector together and stress the importance of cooperation and ethics. They arrange business trips all over the world to seek new opportunities for Turkish entrepreneurs. The businesspeople of these associations are also financing the educational institutions of the *Gulen Movement*, considering it as a social (or, in a sense a religious) responsibility of their own. However, TUSKON and ISHAD differ from MUSIAD in terms of not involving with the politics. I assume that the success of the Gulen movement lies here. His movement is well known by its constructive relations with many different political parties, including left-wing; but they always kept themselves distant from Erbakan's Islamist Welfare

Party. However it is clear that Gulen is always in favour of liberal policies. While he was supporting Özal's Motherland Party in the 80s; now he is supporting Erdogan's Justice and Development Party, and he is in favour of Turkey's EU accession.

However, it might be misleading to claim that Gulen is offering a totally new intellectual base which can be regarded as a reform. Therefore what this study attempts to do is not to investigate Gulen's ideas on work ethic, but to demonstrate how this movements' activities facilitates Islamic transformation through work ethic. Therefore, it could be more accurate to see Gulen as an activist rather than a philosopher or intellectual who theorize a full reinterpretation of Islamic sources. Akyol (2008) clarifies this issue as providing a constructive criticism:

One criticism that can be brought to the movement, though, that the change Gülen himself has been speaking about has been mostly on a *de facto* level, but not a *de jure* basis. In other words, the movement has not theorized the legitimacy of its modernization by introducing a reinterpretation of the classical Islamic sources that it values. Or, at the very least, it has not yet made such a reinterpretation public. This might be one of the reasons that Turkish secularists fear from a "hidden agenda," besides their own paranoid attitude toward anything religious. Perhaps this problem is understandable because the movement is basically a movement of activists, not intellectuals. But its solution is still a needed step. (Akyol, 2008:71).

According to Ozdemir (2006), the growing number of pious business people in Turkey is a sign of the rebirth of an indigenous Muslim ethic which was suppressed for a long time after the establishment of the Turkish republic. It can also be described as struggle for creating an internal code of ethics for all aspects of the local life. As in Calvinism, it is not only related to religious individuals, it also affects many different aspects of the public sphere. In this context, the emergence of religious business people could be considered as carriers of a new indigenous ethic. Gole (1997) considers these business people as a newly emerging secondary elite

group. Whether they are named a secondary elite or a new bourgeoisie, we propose that they could play a vital role in Turkey's development process.

4. METHODOLOGY

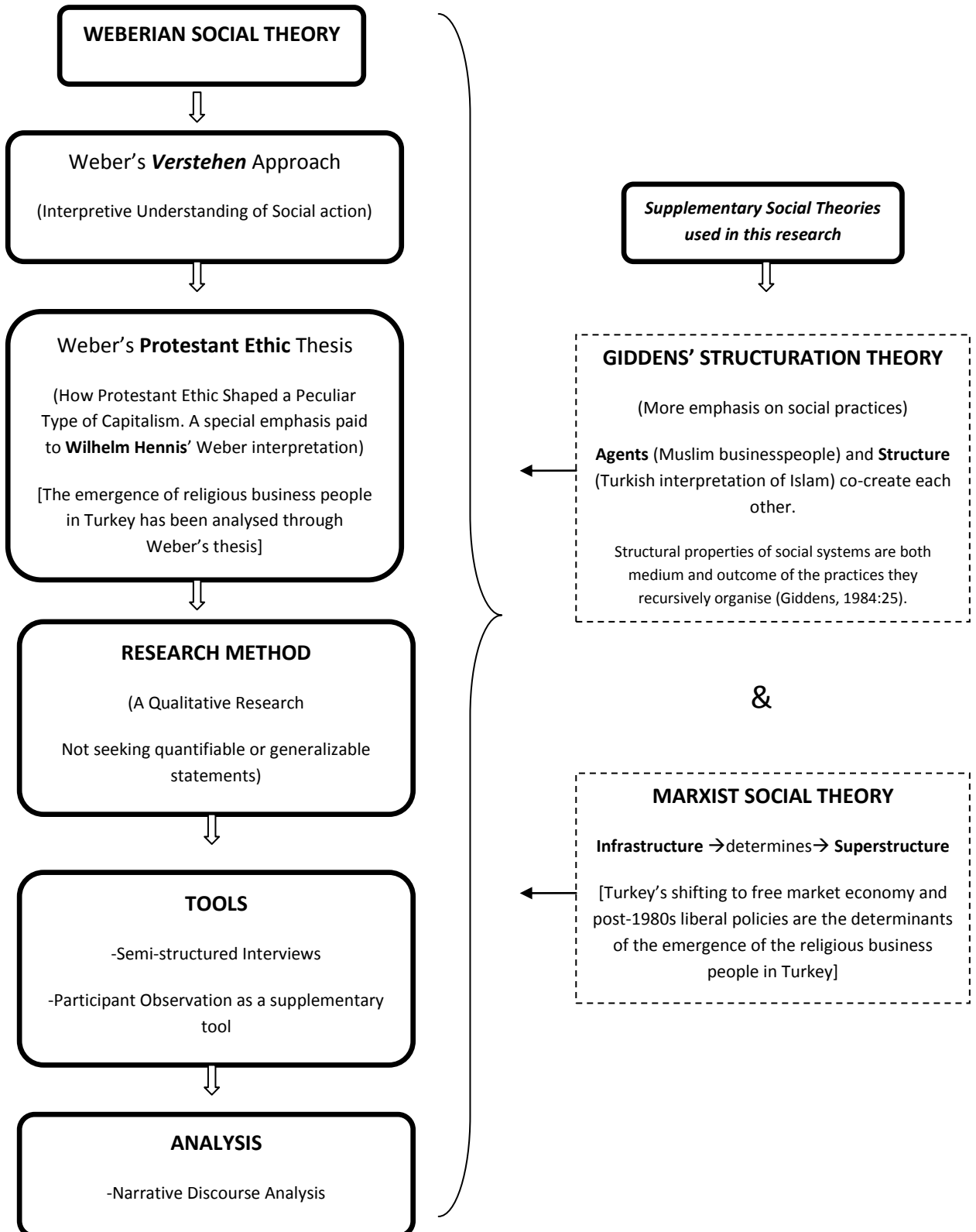
4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the methodological approach of the research will be outlined. The chapter first describes the epistemological framework of this study and explains why the researcher chose an interpretive approach to deal with the research question. Then, it demonstrates the relevant research methods and explains why qualitative method fits the nature of this study. In the following sections, it shows different methods of analysing qualitative data, and puts a special emphasis on discourse analysis. At the end, it outlines the carrying out of the research in detail, i.e. sample selection, data gathering, transcription and analysis processes.

Figure 4.1 presents a brief summary of the methodological road map demonstrating how different social theories fit into the methodology of this research, drawing from the works of Max Weber, Karl Marx and Anthony Giddens. As the figure demonstrates, this research adheres to Weberian social theory as its backbone since it focuses on the influence of religious beliefs on the formation of economic mentality in the west. The emergence of religious/pious business people in Turkey has been examined and evaluated through Weber's Protestant ethic thesis and his *verstehen* approach. However, Turkey's shift to a free market economy and post-1980s liberal atmosphere make it profitable to take a Marxist approach into consideration, since it chimes with the work here such that the production and material relations are the determinant of superstructure (ideology, religion, etc.). Additionally, Giddens' *Structuration theory* helps to bring together the macro Marxist and micro Weberian approaches and focuses on the duality of agency and structure. Since the theory focuses on co-creation of agency (Muslim business people in our case) and structure (religion in our case), *structuration theory* has been regarded as a practical complementary theory in this research.

Figure 4.1 A Brief Look at the Relevant Social Theories and the Methodology of this Study

[Understanding the influence of religion over work ethic values]



4.2 The Epistemological Framework

The aim of this research is to present new angles for understanding what shapes the Turkish work ethic. As mentioned, this study pays special attention to religious influence over the conceptualisation of work ethic values of Turkish business people. Moreover, it does not only take the religious/pious business people's account, but also the secularist (with none or less religious practicing) business people's views into consideration. It should be noted that Max Weber's Protestant ethic thesis is only indirectly related to this specific study. What this study intends to do is use his sociological approach as a useful conceptual/theoretical frame. In his important essay titled "Economy and Society" he suggests that "real empirical sociological investigation begins with the question: what motives determine and lead the individual members ... to behave such a way ...?" (Weber, 1968: v.1: 18). This study's main concern is also people's way of life, specifically their attitudes towards working. Therefore, this research will be based on Weber's suggestions that religion has certain effects on people's way of life, rather than setting up some causal relationships between religion and economic activity. The study's main concern is how religion affects people's way of life in general and how does this way of life or the conduct of life shape their attitudes towards economic and business activities, particularly their work ethic values. In this respect, the Anatolian interpretation of Islam is considered only as a sample, like Calvinism in Weber's Protestant ethic thesis. Therefore, this study particularly focuses on the Turkish understanding of Islam. Its findings are only relevant within Turkey, not the whole Muslim world.

The Islamic warrior ethic (*jihad* or holy war) is the central point of Weber's criticism of Islam. Literally, *jihad* means struggle. Although it refers to all kinds of struggle; such as armed, intellectual or financial; for the sake of faith, it is mostly linked with armed military war. In Islamic teaching, based on the Prophet's sayings, military *jihad* is regarded as a lesser one compared to the *great jihad*, spiritual growth (Cetinoglu, 1997). It might be thought that this warrior ethic could have been transformed into an entrepreneurial ideology. However, the Ottoman experience never succeeded in this. The Ottoman economy was based on agriculture and the economic aim of *jihad* was to collect more tax from peasantry and trade (Arslan,

1999). According to Arslan, the ideology of *jihad* was to introduce Islam to non-Muslims, and to spread justice and order to the whole world. Thus, it can be said that jihad or the warrior ethic was an inevitable part of the Ottoman State.

In the relevant literature, this characteristic of the Ottoman Empire was frequently mentioned by western and Turkish historians. While western historians used the term ‘oriental despotism’ (Landes, 1998), Turkish historians preferred the term ‘centralised despotism’ (Timur, 1994). Most of the Turkish historians argued that the despotic character of the Ottoman Empire was exaggerated by western historians because of their prejudice. Edward Said (1978), in his renowned book, *Orientalism: Western Conception of the Orient*, criticises this western approach. He argues that the Orientalist thesis is a set of generalisation, structure and texts which together create a discourse defining the Orient from a western point of view. According to this view, the Orient fails to meet western rationality, development and civilization; and Islamic societies are mostly seen as opposed to modernisation. To some extent, Weber’s ideas regarding Islam also show similarities with the Orientalist thesis. In this respect, Weber’s interpretation of Islam has become another controversial issue among scholars.

Epistemological approaches in social science are traditionally divided into two parts: positivistic and phenomenological (interpretivism). As an epistemological approach, positivism advocates the application of methods of the natural sciences to the study of social science in an objective and value-free way (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Auguste Comte is regarded as the leading social theorist advocating the empiricist philosophy that emerged in 19th century Europe. This school of thought suggests the separation of fact (data) and theory (interpretation), so that the explanation of the reality can be objective and empirical as in the natural sciences. The nineteenth century’s positivist paradigm has been, for a long time, regarded as the only way of acquiring scientific knowledge. However, since the early years of the twentieth century, this paradigm has been criticised, and alternative approaches for social sciences emerged. While explaining the paradigm shifts in science, Thomas Kuhn (1996), shows that relevant scientific community’s theories and beliefs are always intertwined with scientific facts. Therefore, he argues the idea that even natural

science researchers cannot investigate phenomena in an objective and value-neutral way. Yet, Paul Feyerabend goes a step further, and defends the idea of an *anarchistic* view of science rejecting the existence of universal methodological rules. In his renowned book, *Against Method*, he constantly invites scientists to be sceptical about the rationality of science, and the methodology they use (Feyerabend, 1978).

On the other hand, the phenomenological approach or interpretivism appears as an alternative position to positivism. This approach focuses on beliefs, motives, and reasons of social actors in order to understand social reality. As Bryman and Bell summarise:

Interpretivism is taken to denote an alternative to the positivist orthodoxy that has held sway for decades. It is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action (Bryman and Bell, 2003:16).

Fundamentally, this study is seeking to understand the respondents' points of view. 'Understanding' is a key concept in the methodology of this study. I use this word in the meaning of Weber's *Verstehen* approach. It seems that Weber's definition covers both explanation and understanding here, however the important point is that the task of 'causal explanation' is undertaken with reference to the 'interpretive understanding of social action' rather than to external forces which have no meaning for those involved in that social action (Bryman and Bell, 2003).

Weber's *verstehen* (interpretive understanding of social action) approach requires taking actors' own imagination/conception into consideration while examining a social phenomenon. In this respect, it can be said that Weber provides a stimulating framework for raising some theoretical issues regarding Islamic development. However, Turner (1974:3) notes that, as for Islam, "Weber inconsistently applied in practice those methodological and philosophical principles which he declared were crucial to an adequate sociological approach". Therefore Turner criticises Weber for

not taking orthodox Islam into consideration objectively, and for considering Islam as a hedonistic religion which was incapable of producing the spirit of capitalism. However, I acknowledge that Weber could not complete his studies regarding Islam. Actually, I tend to accept his interpretation of Islam, at least to some extent, given the fact that 18th and 19th century's living Islam was greatly influenced by the warrior ethic, and the 'other-worldly', fatalist Sufism which promotes isolation from most of the worldly activities as they are a potential threat to one's piousness. Arslan (1999), on the other hand, clarifies Weber's ideas about Islam as follows:

Despite his negative attitudes towards Islam, Weber did not think that it was impossible for Muslims to develop a work ethic. For instance, he argued that Islam was not an obstacle to capitalism as a belief for individuals but that the Islamic state and its inefficiency, and Islamic Law had hindered the development of capitalism in Islamic societies (Arslan, 1999:154)

In social science, relying on the traditional/positivist approaches might be proper and sufficient in normal circumstances. Thus, hypothesis testing or other statistical-based methods are still in use extensively, in the social sciences. However, some extraordinary situations require being inter-disciplinary and inter-subjective. As mentioned, Turkey has been experiencing a significant transformation in its social structure for two decades. Particularly, after the Helsinki Summit in 1999, Turkey faced the Copenhagen and Maastricht criterion of the EU and started a series of reforms. What most surprises the relevant researchers and academics is that these reformist policies have been implemented by a pro-Islamist party. This transformation period and the changes in the structure of the society inevitably force researchers to use interpretive approaches to go beyond the sentences and the expressions obtained from the interviews.

Max Weber's interpretative sociology takes individuals as active and constructive elements rather than passive, and considers them within the social context. He describes Sociology as a 'science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects'

(Weber, 1947:88). As Weber did in his book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, the researcher of this study also focuses on the question *how* rather than *what*. In other words, Weber is not giving us the *ingredients* of modern capitalism (the reformation, politics, industrial revolution, etc.) but the *recipe* that answer *how* (for more discussion on Weber's central question, see chapter 2).

As cited in the previous chapters, some studies indicate that in Turkey, the number of religious/pious business people is increasing in the last two decades. In the eyes of Turkish intellectuals and academics, it has been regarded as a phenomenon. However, as it comes to the dynamics behind this phenomenon there are different interpretations attempting to explain this phenomenon (see introduction chapter). Naturally, one can wonder whether it is the religion that makes the emergent of pious business people possible. If so, one needs to answer the question of 'why it could not create such an entrepreneurial spirit long time ago' and 'why now'. Or, shall we simply explain it with the Marxist approach emphasising how the infrastructure shaped the superstructure after the 1980s liberal atmosphere. In a broad sense, there is no consensus whether Islam requires a certain type of economic order or business practices. It appears that Muslims are also running their business within the free market capitalist economic system which was seen as an enemy for a long time (see the writings of Mawdudi, 1947 and Qutb, 1948).

At this point it is imperative to note how to approach the concept of religion. As it is discussed in the introduction, this study does not intend to separate the concept of religion as 'scriptural one' and 'living one'. Eventually, religious beliefs appear as a set of interpretations. Therefore, this study argues that only the living Islam can tell us about the possible transition and transformation in the understanding of Islam. As in the example of the Protestant reformation, it is quite possible to observe the transformative potential of a religion. For instance, if Weber had lived in a despotic mediaeval Christian society a long time ago, most probably he would never claim such a rational capitalist spirit that would be influenced by a particular Christian sect. Thus, it seems quite possible to talk about the 'transformed Islam' within the Turkish context.

In this respect, work ethic values of the religious people might gain special importance. However, Turkey is a special case. It is a secular state and there are practicing Muslims (religious/pious) and none or less practicing Muslims (*laik*/secular). It is possible that the daily business practices or values of pious people might also be crucial values for secular business people. Additionally, we also need to explain how some Turkish cities such as Kayseri and Konya, which are known by their conservative and religious leanings, created a strong enterprise culture without the support of the state. For this reason, in five Turkish Anatolian cities (Ankara, Konya, Eskisehir, Kayseri, and Gaziantep) I conducted thirty-two semi-structured in-depth interviews with both groups, namely devoted Muslims and secular business people, respectively, to get individual points of view on this subject. In this respect, Giddens' *Theory of Structuration* gains special importance.

Using Giddens' Theory of Structuration

This study regards the *Theory of Structuration* as a suitable epistemological framework along with the *verstehen* (understanding) approach of Weber. It takes religion as a 'structural feature' in a Giddensian way. Therefore, that structure (religion) is available in the individuals' social settings and contains rules and resources which might inform the individuals' values and practices. For this reason, Giddens (1984) regards human beings as *knowledgeable actors*. He focuses on the role of human agency in the production and reproduction of societal structure. Especially when studying a rapidly changing social structure, like Turkey's, both the structure and its agents should be taken into consideration simultaneously. This is what makes Giddens' theory a handy supplementary tool in this particular research context.

This study's focal point is not the religion (Islam) itself; rather I am trying to focus on the interpretation of it. In other words, the focus of the study is the Turkish or the Anatolian perception of Islam. In a *structuration theory* perspective, it can be argued that a particular interpretation of Islam has been created by its believers via producing and reproducing it through social practices across space and time. However, it does not suggest that the structure (religion) is created by actors

(believers) only. The theory identifies the relationship between agents and structure stressing the process of “duality”. It means one cannot consider an agent by excluding it from a structure. Giddens’ theory makes it easier to understand why new generation pious people think different than their religious ancestors in terms of religion, while they still consider themselves as pious or devout Muslims in Turkey.

Giddens’ *theory of structuration* starts with criticising structuralism in social science research. Basically, structuralism regards human behaviour “as a result of forces that actors neither control nor comprehend” (Giddens, 1984:xvi). His theory focuses on the role of human agency in the production and reproduction of societal structures through social practices. Giddens mentions the duality of “actors/agents” and “structure” proposing that “the constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represents a duality” (Giddens, 1984:25).

Likewise, this study suggests to consider religion as such a “structural feature” that is available in the individual’s social setting and that contains rules and resources which might inform the individual’s values and practices. In this regard, the theory seems appropriate for us to explore the influence of religion on economic activity at the level of the individual in Turkey. In the context of this study, for example, the attachment of the pious Muslim people from periphery to the centre, and their internal transition might be a proper case for structuration.

In my research, I am also trying to grasp individuals’ own understanding of the social reality. As an ontological position, I, as a knower (researcher), tried to cocreate the understanding with the respondents. Therefore, this study intends to explore this phenomenon in its natural setting, and it attempts to interpret the phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Thus, ontologically this study is not after an “objective truth”, rather I am trying to construct the subjective meaning that pious and secularist business people bring into the social reality.

As a result, this study follows an interpretive approach using Weber's *understanding* sociology and Giddens' *theory of structuration* as epistemological framework, since they fit the research question properly.

4.3 The Research Methodology and Method

As a second step of the methodology, it would be appropriate to identify a suitable method for investigating the research question. Mainly, quantitative and qualitative research methods are the most common techniques among researchers. Quantitative methods are usually espoused when the researcher wants to reach quantifiable and generalizable statements and comparisons. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, are usually preferred by the researchers concerned with words and statements rather than numbers. Bryman and Bell (2003) note three further features of qualitative research:

- An inductive way of analysing the relationship between theory and research, whereby the former is generated out of the latter;
- an epistemological position described as interpretivist, meaning that, in contrast to the adaptation of a natural scientific model in quantitative research, the stress is on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants; and
- an ontological position described as constructionist, which implies that social properties are outcomes of the interactions between individuals, rather than phenomena 'out there' and separate from those involved in its construction (Bryman and Bell, 2003: 280).

Epistemologically, qualitative researches have several periods. In *the traditional period*, qualitative researchers were reflecting the positivist paradigm and "concerned with offering valid, reliable, and objective interpretations" in their studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003:20). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003) *the modernist and blurred phase* witnessed the appearance of post-positivist arguments, and new interpretive theories occurred at that time, such as phenomenology, social

criticism and feminism. The next period is called as *crisis of representation*. In this period, new models of truth, method, and representation were sought. Issues such as validity, reliability, and objectivity, which were previously believed as settled, were once more problematic; and pattern and interpretive theories, as opposed to positivism, linear theories, were now more common, “as writers continued to challenge older models of truth and meaning” (2003:23). More recently we see a *triple crisis period*. Basically, it is “a triple crisis of representation, legitimation, and praxis confronts qualitative researchers in the human disciplines” (2003:28). All these periods and their approaches are still in use. Therefore, it can be said that there is no best paradigm in qualitative researches because of its complex nature. Moreover, Gubrium and Holstein (1997) mention about different traditions of qualitative research: *naturalism, ethnomethodology, emotionalism and postmodernism*. However, *Naturalism*, as the most common tradition, appears to be an appropriate way to approach the research question of this study as it aims to understand social reality in its own terms. According to Bryman and Bell (2003:36) “naturalism is taken to recognize that people attribute meaning to behaviour and are authors of their social world rather than passive objects”. This view seems suitable with Weberian social theory and Giddens’ notion of human beings as *knowledgeable actors*, as well.

Why Interviews?

There are several ways of acquiring qualitative data, such as structured/semi-structured interviews, focus groups or observations. In this study, open-ended and semi-structured interviews were used as primary data gathering method. Yet the researcher was more interested in obtaining detailed in-depth insight into the research problem; in-depth interviews were seen as the most suitable form of data gathering in this respect. According to Smith et al. (2006), semi-structured interviews are appropriate methods when:

...it is necessary to understand the constructs that the interviewee uses as a basis for her opinions and beliefs about a particular matter or situation; and one aim of the interview is to develop an understanding

of the respondent's 'world' so that the researcher might influence it, either independently, or collaboratively as in the case with action research. (Smith et al. 2006:87)

Sometimes different sorts of methods are seen as opposing techniques, while one is true the other one is false. However, this approach might mislead us. It can be said that each research has its own methodological requirements. In other words, every methodological tool has its own advantages as long as it is consistent with the research question and the structure of the study. Especially in the research studies based on discourse analysis, interviews are seen the most appropriate methodological tools. As Hepburn and Potter (2004:182) notes "interviews allow the researcher access to stuff that is too sensitive to obtain permission to study". In this study as well, the author attempts to acquire in-depth data regarding beliefs and their influence among work-related attitudes of Turkish business people. Considering the fact that Turkey has a strict secular structure, asking questions about religious beliefs is a quite sensitive topic. Therefore, semi-structured interviews are here regarded as the most suitable tool to let people develop their own narratives related to religious convictions.

Participant Observation as Complementary Method

Additionally, the participant observation method was used as a supplementary technique for triangulation reason. Triangulation refers to using more than one method or source of data in studying social phenomena. The researcher used this technique to gain a detailed understanding of informants' views on the subject. These observations allowed him to share their daily activities and concerns.

Participant observation has its roots in anthropological research, where a key element of the research training involves living within a certain society or tribe and attempting to understand the customs and practices of that particular culture (Smith et al. 2006). Since organisations can be seen as 'tribes' with their own cultures, this method became popular in management and organisation studies as well.

There are many different ways of handling participant observation. Junkers (1960) offers four main roles: *complete participation*, *participation as observer*, *observer as participant*, and *complete observer*. Broadly, during the data collection, my observations have been actualised in two forms. First, most of the interviews took place in the work offices of the business people and I had the incidental opportunity to observe the work place where the respondents conducted their business. Secondly, and more substantially, I managed to attend religious business people's special weekly meetings. In the data gathering process, I was invited to the weekly meetings of some religious groups several times; and had the chance to observe those meetings and took some notes afterward¹⁷. By the third party friends of mine, I was introduced as someone who already knew about the nature of the meetings and familiar with these activities. In these particular meetings, my own position can be regarded as the third one Junkers suggests: the *observer as participant*.

It should be noted that these meetings are not called as business meetings. Therefore the contents of these meetings have nothing to do with business people's particular business activities. However, I was curious about the content of these meetings which were conducted by religious motives. During the meetings I attended, I had a chance to observe how wealthy Muslim business people regard the concept of responsibility which has been considered as one of the core components of the Muslim ethic.

Among the religious people in Turkey, weekly meetings or reading circles are common traditions. However, it appears that some of these meetings are exceeding their traditional scope without losing the religious notion. They have become meetings where people also discuss their social responsibilities and charitable activities while satisfying their spiritual needs. Observing the nature and content of these meetings provided me with a better understanding of how the religious business people actualise civil society activities which they mention during the interviews.

¹⁷ These meetings have not been recorded for the purpose of not creating discomfort among the participants. Therefore, there will be no direct quotation from these meetings.

4.4 Method of Analysis

In the analysis of qualitative material, one could face different types of analysis techniques, such as phenomenology, fieldwork, content analysis, and discourse or conversation analysis. If text and transcripts of tape recordings are in question there are two main social science traditions for data analysis: conversation analysis (CA) and discourse analysis (DA). In general, CA aims to describe the orderliness, structure and sequential patterns of the text or transcriptions. CA studies demonstrate “how people take turns at talk in ordinary conversation and negotiate overlaps and interruptions; how basic action sequences are organised and different options are activated inside those sequences”; and so on (Heritage, 2004:222).

Discourse analysis, on the other hand, enables the researcher to reveal the hidden motivations behind the text or transcriptions. In an interview-based research, especially in open-ended in-depth interviews, informants reveal their personal accounts, certain daily practices and experiences that have been taking places in their lives. This sort of data might not provide the actual practices and the real subjective experiences of the respondents. However they produce *discursive* resources that the respondents use and draw on when talking about those practices, experiences and events (Werner, 2006). Therefore, it rejects the idea that there is an external reality awaiting a definitive portrayal by the researcher (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Thus, DA is usually regarded as *constructionist* and *anti-realist* in ontological perspective (ibid.). The aim of DA is neither to classify the frequency of particular expressions, nor to describe the orderliness, structure and sequential patterns of the text. DA is less concerned with the detailed analysis of transcriptions or texts. Therefore, it does not provide definite answers, but expands readers’ horizons and helps them to understand unacknowledged motivations behind the phenomenon in question. Potter (2004) puts the distinguishing characteristics of discourse analysis as follow:

Discourse analysis of this latter kind (henceforth DA) is characterized by a meta-theoretical emphasis on anti-realism and constructionism. That is, DA emphasizes the way versions of the world, of society, events and inner psychological worlds, are produced in discourse. On the one hand, this leads to a concern with participants’ constructions and how they are accomplished

and undermined; and, on the other, it leads to a recognition of the constructed and contingent nature of researchers' own versions of the world (Potter, 2004:202).

It could be said that DA has a systematic commitment to studying discourse as texts and talk in social practices. However, in this close relation, the focus is not on the linguistic characteristic of the text. Instead, DA regards language as the medium of interaction; and then, analysis of discourse becomes analysis of what people do (Potter, 2004). In a sense, the researcher and the interviewee co-create the social reality. Therefore, it allows researcher to obtain more insight or unacknowledged meaning behind the text or transcriptions. Additionally, it provides sophisticated appreciation of language, symbolism and historical/social context. In the context of this research, DA can reveal crucial influences of religious beliefs among the social practices and the ways of thinking which support them. In doing so, the findings of the study can suggest new modes of understanding.

In this study, discourse analysis is regarded as an umbrella tool. There are numerous approaches to discourse analysis and each of them focuses on different aspects of the discourse, such as syntax, semantics, meaning, interaction and so on. However, the researcher, in this particular research, tries to combine discourse analysis with a critical perspective. The starting point for critical discourse analysis (CDA) is social issues and problems (Fairclough, 2008). CDA aims to reveal the hidden motives behind the text or conversation. In this process, the main goal is understanding (as in Weber's *verstehen* approach) and interpretation. As with all types of discourse analysis, it provides different angles or horizons to understand the phenomenon in question, rather than introducing definite answers. CDA does not deny its own socio-political position as being subjective or biased¹⁸. In fact, according to van Dijk

¹⁸ I, as a Turkish Muslim researcher, also need to mention my own biases in this particular context. I should note that I am familiar with the activities of religious groups in Turkey. Although I consider myself as secular (or non-practicing Muslim) but I do not see the activities of the religious groups in Turkey as a threat to the secular regime. Rather I am in favour of the idea that suggests more freedom in all aspects of social life, including religious rights, minority groups' rights, recognising the different ethnic identities and so on. Therefore this analysis might be regarded as a liberal reading of the phenomenon in question.

(2007), it is biased and proud of it. CDA is not only concerned with analysis, but it is also critical. Fairclough distinguishes its critical aspects in two ways:

... first, in the sense that it seeks to discern connections between language and other elements in social life which are often opaque. These include: how language figures within social relations of power and domination; how language works ideologically; the negotiation of personal and social identities ... Second, it is critical in the sense that it is committed to progressive social change; it has an emancipatory 'knowledge interest' (Fairclough, 2008:230).

On the other hand, DA has some weaknesses as well. The analysis may appear idiosyncratic, and it is often highly selective. Therefore, it may not seem suitable to make generalizable statements or strong authority for analysis. However, this study uses DA with a hermeneutic approach. The hermeneutic approach, according to Ozdemir (2006), aims either to approve of the already existing generalizations or at reaching new ones on the basis of the findings of the empirical research. As Mason notes:

I do not think qualitative researchers should be satisfied with producing explanations which are idiosyncratic or particular to the limited empirical parameters of their study ... Qualitative research should produce explanations which are generalizable in some way, or which have a wider resonance. (Mason, 1996:6)

Therefore, in this case, DA can still serve to reach some generalization while dealing with the particulars. In fact, this might be considered as an advantage of using DA in hermeneutic perspective. It should also be noted that DA seems to be the most appropriate method with Giddensian framework of this study. It allows us the 'reflexivity' of contemporary social life. As Giddens (1991) suggests, contemporary social life is transformed into more reflexive in a sense that people rapidly produce and reproduce the ways in which they live their lives through their social practices based on knowledge and information. This study regards Islam (particularly the

Turkish Interpretation of Islam) and secularism (in a Turkish sense too) as discursive resources that contain concepts and categories which are meaningful to the respondents. This approach can also reveal some other influential discourses available in their lives. In this way, it is possible to demonstrate differences and overlaps within different groups, namely secularist and pious business people.

4.5 Sampling and Data Gathering

In this research, semi structured interviews were conducted among thirty-two small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owner-managers. In general, as in most countries, SMEs are regarded as the main carriers of the economy. SME owner-managers are thought to be in a better position than large business owners to bring their ideas, norms and values to bear in their business activities as SMEs are legally independent and ownership and control usually coincide in SMEs (Spence 1999: 164). As for the size of SMEs, there is no consensus. According to European Commission, companies with fewer than 250 employees are considered as small and medium-sized enterprise (ec.europa.eu, viewed at 10.09.2009). This number, however, might differ in other countries. For example it goes up to 500 employees in the U.S. In Turkey, it had been a controversial issue for a long time, and the size of the SMEs mostly regarded as the companies with fewer than 500 employees. However, in 2002, Turkey accepted the European criteria for the definition of SME as companies with fewer than 250 employees.

Large and multi-activity firms or groups, in general, form the typical unit of big business with the industrial environment characterised by a high degree of concentration (Bugra, 1994); and these types of organisations show similar characteristics, even in different countries. It is also argued that the size and set-up of SMEs entails that owner-managers often have close individual contact with employees, customers and suppliers (Spence, 1999). In this regard, large business owners are excluded from the sample of this study. The following table is list of interviewees, their main line of the business and the number of employees. In terms of the number of employees, SE8 in the sample of this study with 280 employees is

regarded acceptable since it is very close to the limit. RKY12 a furniture producer on the other hand with 400 employees is regarded as an exception in this study. It might be regarded as a medium-sized enterprise according to the former criteria of Turkey. Although I did not include any quotations from the interview conducted with this company's owner I still find the insights he provided useful and informative in terms of the research question of this study.

Table-4.1 List of participants and the number of employees

	Name	Sector	Employees
1	RKY1	Steel and Metals	9
2	RKY8	Construction and Petrol	11
3	RKY9	Accounting and Insurance	5
4	RKY10	Construction	56
5	RKY11	Textile	7
6	RKY12	Furniture	400
7	RKY13	Cooling Products	150
8	RG2	Leather and Shoes	60
9	RG3	Chemicals	35
10	RG4	Hardware Supplies for Construction	30
11	RG5	Printing	11
12	RG6	Construction Materials Trading	20
13	RG7	Plastic and PVC	10

14	RKN14	Meat Products	100
15	RKN15	Metal Products and Oven	175
16	RKN16	Steel and Metals	45
17	RKY17	Steel and Metals	12
18	RKY18	Machine Replacement Parts	8
19	SA1	Glass and Framing	15
20	SA2	Industrial Engineering & Consulting	17
21	SA3	Mechanical Engineering	11
22	SG4	Automotive	15
23	SG5	Constructional Engineering	25
24	SA6	Restaurant Chain	33
25	SA7	Fast-food Consulting	5
26	SE8	Education	280
27	SE9	Construction Hardware Trading	10
28	SE10	Automotive	55
29	SA11	Office Supplies Import & Export	30
30	SA12	Recording	10
31	SA13	Public Relation and Consulting	3
32	SA14	Finance	12

In this study, all 32 participants are from small and medium-sized enterprises. The main line of businesses they run and the numbers of employees are shown in Table 1. The first eighteen are the religious/pious businesspeople who define themselves as practicing Muslims. They mostly have certain religious group affiliations. The last fourteen are the secular businesspeople who have no or limited religious influences in their lives. Obviously, they have no connections with religious groups or movements.

I should admit that reaching the pious business people was the hardest stage of this research. It is because of the sensitivity of the subject regarding religion and business. As I anticipated no one accepted my interviewing offer at first, but fortunately I could manage to reach them through trusted third parties. As a Turkish researcher I contacted with specific religious and secular groups by using my personal relations. One of my friends from the university helped me to reach some key people within certain religious movements. My business experience also helped me to find a particular type of business person from both groups. After meeting a few businessmen they also referred me to some other business people; then I could manage to reach more than thirty business people in total. This technique is called 'snowball sampling'. With this method, first the researcher contacts a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to reach the others (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Additionally, I should note that the sample of this study was selected purposively. In other words, I tried to reach the people who fit into the nature of this research best. Therefore, as it is asked in the interviews, practicing religious beliefs was the most crucial point.

Religion and religious beliefs at the level of practice are crucial in this research. Although Turkey is a secular state, there are many religious movements within a large spectrum, from traditional Sufi orders to modernist movements. As it is discussed in the second chapter, political Islam and religious fundamentalism did not find a proper niche among the Turkish society. Broadly speaking, the Gulen movement has appeared as the most popular and the largest religious movement with its flexible and modernist ideas in Turkey. *Confederation of Industrialists and Businessmen of Turkey* (TUSKON) is the largest SME-sized business network with

more than ten-thousand members. It is also known by its close links with *the Gulen movement*. Most of the pious businesspeople in this study were selected from this particular organisation. Additionally, I could also manage to reach some members of MUSIAD (*Association for Independent Industrialists and Businessmen*), which is regarded as Muslim businesspeople, and known by its links with the ruling pro-Islamist party government (AKP) (see appendix 4 for the detailed profiles of these two business associations). Since these two organisations are the most representative segment of the mainstream Islamic understanding in Turkey, I did not attempt to reach extreme religious sects or unfamiliar small groups. For practical reasons as well, the religious sample of this study is limited to members of *the Gulen movement* and the MUSIAD. The common experience of the religious/pious sample is the practice of religious beliefs, such as daily prayer attendance, avoiding alcohol consumption, fasting in Ramadan, wearing Islamic headscarf (for females), almsgiving and so on.

As for the secularist group, it is not very easy to distinguish them on the basis of religious affiliation. As is known, the majority of Turkish people (more than 90%) regard themselves as Muslim. However, in this study, the secularist group is considered as the less/non-practicing Muslims. Only one of them, SA3, defined himself as an atheist. As in the religious group, certain organisations helped me to reach the right secularist people. For example, the Association for Kemalist Thought (ADD) and Association for Supporting Modern Life (CYDD) are known by their strict reflexes to guard the secular structure of the state. Most of the secularist businesspeople are either the members or the supporters of these organisations. However, some of the businesspeople from the secularist group appeared with liberal ideas criticising strict secularism as much as religiosity. The common characteristic of this group is that religion plays limited or no role in the conduct of their lives.

In short, the whole sample was separated on the basis of these criteria: People who have daily religious practices and have connection to certain religious movements are considered as pious; and people who have no daily religious practices and have no religious group connection are considered as secular in this study. I, as the researcher, am aware that this sort of separation might raise some controversy.

Although separating a Muslim society as pious/religious (*dindar/dinci* in Turkish.) and secular (*laik* in Turkish.) makes some people uncomfortable, including the author of this research; in the Turkish context these concepts are used very frequently by journalists, academics and even the public. In a sense, this separation can also be understood as systematically practicing Muslims and non-practicing or less-practicing Muslims. Therefore I believe it is a valid basis for the research.

In this research, the name of the businesspeople and companies were kept strictly confidential. In the findings section of this study, the names are at the end of quotes represented by some numbers and letters. The first letter in the brackets represents religious/pious Muslims or secularists (“S” for secularist and “R” for pious). Although I did not pursue it, in the interviewing process the entire sample, except SA13, was formed by men. The gender issue might appear as a limitation of this study. Roughly, the ratio of female employees in Turkey is 25 percent according to the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB). However, this ratio is predicted much lower as it comes to being an SME owner-manager. Therefore it was difficult to find female entrepreneurs matching with the sampling criteria of this study. Because of practical reasons, and the nature of the interview questions which are not particularly focusing on any gender issue, the gender differences in this study have been ignored.

Sectoral differences have also been regarded in the same way. Since this study does not aim to focus on particular business sector, the main lines of the businesses vary. Therefore it does not represent the opinions of any particular business line or sector.

In the interview process a variety of open-ended questions were asked. They could be categorised into four groups:

1. Introduction and demographic questions.
2. Questions related to business practices and organisational behaviour.
3. Questions related to world view and opinions.

4. Before finishing (private questions concerning the conduct of life).

In the first and the last section, most of the questions are introductory and demographic ‘yes/no’ type questions. However, some of these questions are touching very sensitive and private issues, such as drinking alcohol, wearing Islamic headscarf, prayer attendance, and so on. For this reason, ordinary introduction questions (age, education, sector, etc.) were asked in the first part, and private/sensitive questions were asked at the end of each interview as ‘before finishing’ part. This technique allowed the researcher more time to establish a trustworthy confidential conversation atmosphere. Additionally, in each interview, I signed a research declaration form for the confidentiality of interviews. An example of this form can be seen in the appendix 2 at the end. The following is the list of semi-structured interview questions. However, it should be noted that some additional naturally occurring questions were also asked since the interviews were conducted in an informal conversation form.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (English translation)

I- Demographic and Introductory Questions

1.1 Gender?

1.2 Where were you born and grown up?

1.3 What is your education level?

1.4 If you don’t mind me asking, which of these age ranges do you fall into (between 20-30; 30-40; 40-50; 50-60; 60+)

1.5 Are you married?

1.5.1 What is the education level of your wife/husband?

1.6 How many children have you got?

Introducing the business

1.7 In what year did the business start trading?

1.8 What sector is your business in?

1.8.1 Why this sector? What motivated you?

1.8.2 What are the main products or services provided by the business?

1.9 Is the business a limited company, a partnership or are you a sole trader?

1.9.1 If partnership/company: How many owners does the business have?

1.10 Excluding owners, partners or directors, how many people currently work in the business, including part-time, full-time, self-employed and temporary staff? Could you distinguish between men and women please?

1.11 What motivates you to run your own business?

1.12 What are you planning for short and long term in your business?

II- Behaviours towards Business

2.1 What is the turnover of staff like in your organisation?

2.1.1 How often do you hire?

2.1.2 The longest and the shortest stayed employee in the workplace?

2.1.3 What are your expectations from employees?

2.1.4 What kind of difficulties do you encounter when you hire?

2.1.5 What are the criteria when you hire personnel? (*Merit, qualifications profession, recommendation, religiousness, etc*).

2.1.6 How would you describe your relationship with your employees? (*Professional, formal/informal, brotherhood/sisterhood...*)Is it as you would like it to be?

2.2 How do you manage the relationship with employees?

2.3 How do you motivate them to do a certain task better?

2.4 Before make an investment what factors do you consider?

2.5 How is your relation with neighbours, and other competitors?

2.6 Are you a member of local or national business association or networks besides necessary trade chamber membership?

2.6.1 What are the motivator factors that made you a member of this association?

2.6.2 What kind of activities does this association do?

2.6.3 What form does your involvement take? (*normal member, active participant, leader etc*)

2.6.4 What are the advantages and disadvantages of it?

2.7 What sort of organizational model do you have here? Why this model?

III- Attitudes, Views, Opinions Regarding Business and Religion

The following questions are quite personal and detailed, let me know if you are uncomfortable answering them or want clarification.

3.1 Do you spend your time and money on discretionary/philanthropic activities? (Helping poor, providing bursaries, etc.)

3.1.1 What are the motivators for doing it?

3.2 What affect does religion have on *your* business life?

3.3 What affect does religion have on business life generally?

3.4 Do you think the attitude to business among religious people has changed in the last two decades?

3.5 What do you think about ESI's report entitled "Islamic Calvinists"?

(A brief summary of the report should be given in advance)

3.6 What do you think about 'Islamic Conglomerates'?¹⁹ *(It was a big scandal in Turkey three years ago).*

3.7 What do you think about "Islamic economic model"?

3.8 How do you understand "laicite" (secularism)? How do you interpret the conflict between seculars and religious people in Turkey? Would you give me an example?

3.9 What do you think is the best way for Turkey's development? *(with traditional/religious values, or modern secular values, or both/mixed).*

3.9.1 In the development process of Turkey, would it be beneficial relying on the traditional values such as "Turkishness" or "Muslimness"?

3.10 What are the barriers for creating enterprise culture in Turkey?

¹⁹ Although The Islamic Holding Companies are part of the Islamic capital in Turkey they are usually confused with the new religious business class SME owners. The companies are all large scale business, not SMEs. However, it has been thought that the religious business people's opinion on these Islamic company experiences might provide some insight for the research.

3.11 What would be the best atmosphere or environment for creating ethical, hardworking, smart entrepreneurs?

3.12 What would you do if you win a few million from lottery?

3.12.1 What would you recommend to someone who has money but no power to work?

3.13 What are the responsibilities of wealthy people?

IV- Before finishing:

May I ask you a few more personal questions before we finish?

4.1 How do you consider yourself, secular or religious?

4.2 If he/she is a religious; what is the background (details) of his/her religiousness?

4.2.1 Are you close to any religious movements? What do you think about them?

4.2.2 Why and how does it affect your life, especially in business?

4.2.3 What keeps you on this path?

4.3 Prayer attendance (never, rarely, once a week, daily)

4.4 Drinking alcohol?

4.5 Is she; or his wife wearing headscarf?

4.6 What school they send their children? (*Is it one of the private schools operated by religious groups?*).

These questions have been developed on the basis of my own interest on the subject and two pilot interviews. Additionally, previous researches on this subject were also influential for choosing the questions. As seen, the first and the last part of the questions are quite structured and straightforward. These types of questions can be found in many qualitative researches. However, the second and the third parts of the questionnaire can be regarded as main body of the interviews. These parts mostly generated after the preliminary interviews. In the pilot interviews I only asked few main questions and requested the interviewees extend their responses as much as they can. During the pilots, I tried to capture some key concepts and took some notes for developing new questions, and eliminating some of them. After developing the latest version of the question form, it was double checked in terms of having biased and leading questions and some adjustments made accordingly. I should also note that the flexible nature of the interpretive methodology and qualitative tools allowed me to ask additional questions in each case.

The interviews were carried out in Turkish. Each interview was conducted in business people's offices by making an appointment in advance. Open-ended questions helped the researcher to listen to their stories with their own words and definitions. In other words, they were free to construct their own reality without strict limitations. Interviews lasted between 30 minutes (the shortest) to 108 minutes (the longest). All interviews have been audio-recorded, except three. During those three interviews, I tried to take notes as much as possible.

After completing the interviews, they were transcribed fully. Nearly two-hundred-pages of transcription forms the main body of the data in this research. In addition to the transcripts, notes taken from the participant observations are regarded as supplementary data. For practical reasons, I did not translate the entire transcriptions from Turkish to English. During the analysis process, crucial phrases and sentences, and important expression were translated into English. To strengthen the validity of translations I used the 'back translation technique'. Another Turkish PhD student translated the English translation of the transcripts without seeing the original Turkish version. Although the results were satisfactory, I did some modifications based on the back translations.

Before finishing this chapter, I should also mention delicate nature of the topic and some problems of the qualitative research. First of all, studying a religion-related topic in Turkey itself is a challenging one. It can be said that the religious people usually hesitate to participate in this sort of researches. It can be said that I overcame this problem via third party's references. Even so, the long lasting secularism (*laiklik*) debates in Turkey might have led them provide socially desirable responses. I personally observed this attitude several times during the interviews and tried to ask my questions in a different way. Actually, even this hesitation itself is meaningful too. Inevitably, this research provides its insight within the confines of its limitations. This study will not be providing generalisable and quantifiable statements. Even the concept of religion (Islam) refers to a particular (Turkish) interpretation in this study. The limitations of this research have been discussed further in the conclusion chapter (see section 7.3).

5. TRANSFORMATION OF THE MUSLIM WORK ETHIC WITHIN THE TURKISH CONTEXT

5.1 Introduction

Broadly speaking, it can be argued that modern capitalism, in other words a free market economy, dominates the mainstream business mentality in today's world. Inevitably, it concerns work ethic and work-related values too. In this chapter, the author tries to deal with the question whether the so-called religious business people in Turkey offer a distinctive business or economic model which has some influence over the work-related attitudes of these people. It is allegedly claimed that the Islamic capital or the emergence of religious business people in Turkey is the sign of a possible threat to the self-styled secular structure of the state (Dogan, 2006; Bulut, 1997). This sort of opinions flourishes on the grounds that this newly emerging business class always has a hidden agenda and, sooner or later, is going to bring a *Sharia* government to the country.

The narrative discourse analysis of the data suggests that the pious business people in Turkey refer to quasi-puritan values, such as hard-work, thriftiness, honesty, fairness, and call these values "Islamic ethic". However, it can be said that none of these values are exclusively Islamic. They are, in a sense, inter-religious or universally shared values mostly. The mentioned characteristics might be crucial values for secular business people as well. Surprisingly, apart from the "Islamic ethic", most of the pious business people are not in favour of any economic or business model suggested by the religion. The concept of "Islamic economy/business" was regarded by them as either unrealistic or fantasy. However, it should be noted that the religious/ pious business people seem to have very limited information about the Islamic economic system. As a matter of fact, the objectives of this study are not the Islamic economics, banking or financial tools. Rather, this study is focusing on the ethical transformation among religious people in modern Turkey. This chapter is going to demonstrate the Islamic transformation and its dynamics within the context of work-related attitudes and ethics.

5.2 Where to Seek the Religious Influence on Business?

From the very beginning of this research, I frequently mentioned that this study is not seeking any causal relationship between religious beliefs and business activities. As it is discussed in the literature chapter, Weber's central question in *the Protestant Ethic* thesis, in other words the Weberian sociology, is the main theoretical frame of this study. Therefore, the findings of the research will be shaped around the "new" type of individuals whose attitudes and behaviours are somehow influenced by the Anatolian understanding of Islam. This section, in this respect, tries to demonstrate where to seek this religious influence in terms of business activities. In particular, it will clarify whether Islam requires a unique model or set of rules, which are radically different from the secular premises of modern business, to deal with business activities. Then it will pay a special attention to the work-related attitudes and Islamic ethic.

In this piece, the findings of this study contribute and clarify two issues regarding religion (Islam) and business. First, this study discusses whether the concept of "work ethic" can be named as "Islamic". With discourse analysis technique I tried to understand interviewees' own opinions concerning their business practices and the religion, Islam. Secondly, based on the qualitative data gathered from the interviews with the religious group, this research tries to understand whether Islam requires a specific economic system or business model.

One may question whether it is appropriate to place a name of religion in front of the concept of "work ethic". Dictionary definition of work ethic itself refers to "a belief in the moral value of work" (*Collins Essential English Dictionary*, 2006). According to Miller and Coady (1984:5), it refers to "the beliefs, values, and principles that guide the way individuals interpret and act upon their rights and responsibilities within the work context at any given time". This definition might sound as if each belief system has a different work ethic, but work ethic-related studies usually mention similar characteristics, especially in a business context. In terms of the Protestant work ethic (PWE), it refers to one or more of the following beliefs and attitudes according to Arslan (1999:13):

- taking hard work and industriousness as religious duties
- a negative attitude to leisure activities
- frugality and productivity
- punctuality and time-saving
- pride in work
- commitment and loyalty to occupation and organisation
- need for achievement
- honesty
- taking idleness, wasting time and money as vices
- internal locus of control (One first must blame himself or herself instead of others)
- taking ambition and success as the signs of God's favour .
- taking poverty as a universal indicator of sin while taking wealth as a sign of God's favour (Furnham, 1990).

The Islamic work ethic (IWE), on the other hand, refers to quite similar principles regarding work ethic. Based on the holy book, the Quran, and sayings of Prophet Muhammad, Yousef (2001:153) summarizes some principles of the "Islamic work ethic" as:

- hard work

- honesty and justice in trade
- an equitable and fair distribution of wealth in society
- encouraging humans to acquire skills and technology
- dedication to work as virtue
- stresses creative work as a source of happiness and accomplishment
- life without work has no meaning and engagement in economic activities is an obligation

However, he also mentions a difference between PWE and IWE: “Unlike the PWE, the IWE places more emphasis on intention than on results. For example, Prophet Mohammed stated ‘actions are recorded according to intention, and man will be rewarded or punished accordingly’” (Yousef, 2001:154).

As seen, both religions refer to almost comparable principles concerning work ethic. Not only these two religions but many other belief systems also emphasise the importance of similar values. The relevant literature shows that there are many cross-cultural studies comparing different nations in terms of Protestant work ethic values; and interestingly some non-protestant countries have higher scores than their counterparts (see section 2.3.2). Therefore, if it is all about hard work, honesty, fairness and frugality, in this case, it might be more accurate to talk about work ethic itself rather than Islamic or Protestant work ethic. However, the both ethical system, the Protestant and the Islamic, could also refer to different philosophical understandings of reality and represent different mentality especially in work and business.

Broadly speaking, religion is considered as one of the sources of morality and ethics. However, some local values could turn into universally shared values by time. In the

context of this research, it is observed that some characteristics such as hard-work, honesty and justice have become universally accepted work ethic values which are the necessities of doing business successfully. Thus, it is claimed that the protestant work ethic values have been converted to the “work ethic” values and separated from its religious background in today’s world (Niles, 1999; Furnham, 1990).

In the interview process, I also observed that the many businesspeople mentioned quasi-puritan ethic values. This would be more illuminating if we look at the pious business people’s responses when they were asked how their religious beliefs influence their business practices. In this regard, the followings are two examples of the pious businessmen’s²⁰ responses:

Of course, it [his faith] affects. I have a reputation ... I can’t cheat in trading as a person who does daily praying. In business, we stress honesty (RG7)²¹.

Muslims need to strike a balance [between this world and the hereafter]. Need to work hard. Maybe harder than others. Not stopping at 8 hours, but [as much as] 18 hours, perhaps, with the hereafter constantly in mind. The main rule is clear: no lethargy (RKY1)²².

However, some of the pious businessmen interestingly mentioned the universality of the above-mentioned work ethic values. RG3, a chemical producer, stressed that religion has no influence on his business. However he sees the religion as a control mechanism over the business, as he expresses:

Of course, religion has no [direct] place in business. But, religion controls the trade and the industrialist. I mean, for example, the sample you show to

²⁰ Although I did not pursue it, but in the interviewing process the entire religious group was formed by men.

²¹ Mutlaka var. Bizim belli bir konumumuz var, bir görüntümüz var. ... Hem namaz kılıyoruz hem ticarete hile yapıyoruz; bunu yapmamamız lazım diyoruz ve yapmıyoruz. İşte dürüst olmayı en ön plana çıkarıyoruz (RG7).

²² Müslüman dengeli yaklaşacak. Çok çalışacak. Belki diğerlerinden de çok. 8 saat değil belki 18 saat çalışacak, ama ahretini unutmadan. Yani temel kriter belli; tembellik yok (RKY1).

your customer and the actual goods must be the same. Both humanity and religion dictate it. I mean, it is the same in Judaism, in Islam and in Christianity. ... Our prophet tells us to let people know about the flaw of a good. He also says “the one who cheats the customer is not one of us” (RG3)²³.

Since Islam regarded as a religion controlling all the aspects of life, it seems in a sense, religious beliefs provide some sorts of ethical principles concerning business life. However, one might argue that these kinds of ethical principles exist in almost every belief systems, even in the secular societies. It is a common tendency among the Muslim group that the sources of all good deeds or actions must be the religion. This inclination might be related to the idea that all the divine religions are from the same source and Islam is the latest version of these religions.

It might be argued that the new understanding of Islam, stressing inter-faith dialogue, could have played a role in considering all divine religions together. In Turkish Islamic movements, especially the *Gülen movement*, there is a strong emphasis on the inter-faith dialogue stressing that all three major religions -Judaism, Christianity and Islam- are being fed from the same sources and they are called *Abrahamic religions*. It is commonly expressed by the pious group that they regard all the Prophets, such as Jesus, Moses, as their own prophets as well. Additionally, applying every good behaviours and attitudes to Islam is a common disposition in the pious sample. “*Muslim must be honest anyway*” is a frequently occurred response in that group. The businessmen who have visited developed European countries name work ethic values of these countries as “Islamic” without hesitation as in the following quote:

²³ Tabi ki ticarete din olmaz. Fakat din ticaret ve sanayiciyi düzenler. Yani, gösterdiği numune ne ise onu yapmasını, hem insanlık, hem din bunu emreder. Yani Yahudi dininde de öyledir, Müslüman da öyle Hristiyan da. Dinler de ne vardır. Ayıplı malın söylenmesi gerektiğini bize peygamber efendimiz örnekleriyle anlatmıştır. Peygamber efendimizin yine müşteriye aldatan bizden değildir ifadesi vardır (RG3).

When we look at the way the [Europeans] handle business, it's not so much different from what our religion [Islam] dictates. (RG2)²⁴.

This point of view hosts a paradoxical situation as well. According to the pious group, Muslims are supposed to be honest, hardworking since Islam is the truest religion. However, when it comes to honesty, disciplined lifestyle and hard work they do not hesitate to show Western (non-Muslim) countries as an example:

I lived in Germany until I was six; those people, whom we call "gavur" [infidel], are honest. We call them "gavur" because of their religion, but [truth be told] they live more honestly than us (RG5)²⁵.

This approach also strengthens this study's ontological positioning regarding the concept of religion. In this research, the author does not seek the divine religious truth about the work ethic. Rather the study takes the religion in sociological terms and regards it as a structure which to some extent is shaped by the practices of its believers. Especially, in a Giddensian point of view, it has been representing the duality of agent and structure. Throughout time, both religion and its actors are being created and re-created each other continuously. This continuity, therefore, allow us to investigate a particular religion through the practices in different cultural settings. For this reason, this study's focal point is not Islam itself, but the Turkish interpretation of it.

After the 1980s, it can be said that such values as hard-work, disciplined business life, honesty in trade have gained special importance. It is because these are the crucial assets and the competitive advantages of this newly emerging Anatolian bourgeoisie against large business industrialists and the elites supported by the state

²⁴ Adamların islerine bakarsan bizim dinimiz gibi (RG2).

²⁵ Bizim elin gavuru dediğimiz insanlar, ben 6 yaşına kadar Almanya'daydım, dürüstler adamlar. Biz şu an dinlerinden dolayı gavur diyoruz, yoksa adamlar bizden daha dürüst yaşıyorlar (RG5).

for a long time. Certainly, stressing these values and internalising them increases business people's reputation and makes their credibility high. In a sense, it might be argued that these so called "Islamic" values are returning to the business people as profit and more credibility in their business. In other words, it could be regarded as an *enlightened self-interest*. Therefore, it can be said that internalising work ethic values would be profitable for non-devout or secularist businesspeople as well. In the interviewing process, I observed that the pious business people surprisingly do not apply their prosperity to their religious way of life. The following quote could be a proper example of this attitude:

No, I never mix up my religious beliefs with my business practices. For example I do not make a show of my daily prayers. Personally, I feel uncomfortable with the people who are too forward with their beliefs in business. Therefore, I'm against doing business with religious factors at the forefront in one's business life. We all saw what happened to the [religious] holding companies²⁶ in Konya. ... For us, as a principle, the message should be in the behaviour [as opposed to being conveyed through direct religious communication]. This [honest behaviour] is one of the most sought after traits in trade. That is, to be honest, produce good quality products, and deliver on time, with fair price (RKN16)²⁷.

On the other hand, as predicted, I observed that the businesspeople who define themselves as secular (*laik*) also stress the importance of work ethic in their business. Sometimes they even apply some ethical values to the religion as well. As we mentioned earlier, secularism in Turkey should be understood within its own context. The well known "Turkish definition" of secularism is the separation of the state and the religious affairs. However, it is beyond that. Secularism in Turkey also

²⁶ See chapter 6 for the discussion around the big scale religious Islamic companies.

²⁷ Yok, ben dini inançlarımı iş hayatına hiçbir zaman birbirine bağlamıyorum. Hiçbir zaman ben ibadetimi yapacağım, göstereceğim mantığında hareket etmiyorum. Bunu hatta öne koyan insandan da rahatsız olan biriyim. ... Dolayısıyla, iş hayatında din faktörünü öne alarak ticaret yapılmasına karşı olan bir insanım. Zaten Konya gerçeğinde holdinglerde bu yaşandı. Bizim için ilke, davranış biçiminde karşıya vereceğiniz mesaj çok önemli. Zaten ticarete en çok aranan özelliklerden biri de budur. Yani dürüst olmak, iyi ürün yapmak, bu ürünün temininde zamanında eşit fiyatla şartlarla kalitede karşı firmaya ulaştırmak (RKN16).

refers to the way of life that religion has very limited influence on it, but not completely excluded. For example, in the secular sample of this study there is no one practicing daily Muslim praying. Except one, all of them consume alcohol. None of them or their wives wears Islamic headscarf. However, when asked they identify themselves as Muslims and some of the religious practices also exist in their lives. For instance some attend Friday praying held in mosques once a week, some of them fast in the Muslim holy month Ramadan, and they all celebrate religious feast days. In this respect, I chose the religious sample of this study from certain religious movements or groups that practicing tenants of the religion more systematically; such as daily praying, avoiding alcohol, wearing Islamic headscarf etc. Here, I want to mention some parallel attitudes regarding the relation between religious beliefs and business that both groups demonstrate. For example, honesty is also frequently mentioned by the seculars:

I mean, I consider religion as something that weighs on my conscience [when I do wrong]. If I sold 1 Lira worth of good for 10, this would make me morally uncomfortable (SE8)²⁸.

Another typical reply to the question of religious influences over business is making/earning *halal* money. In Islamic context making *halal* money is a very common expression. It refers to earning money in a way that Islam does not prohibit. The concept of making *halal* money is also shared by some secularist businessmen. However, the understanding of *halal* and *haram* (the opposite of *halal*) might differ from one group to another, or even among the people within the same group. For example bank interest is regarded as innocent by the secularists and even some of the devout Muslims. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the majority of our sample (pious and secularist) gives special emphasis to this concept in terms of earning money through working only. One of the secularist businessmen's response is a good example of how these two groups feel similar in some senses:

²⁸ Yani ben dini biraz vicdan sorunu olarak algıladığımdan söylüyorum. Yani ben 1 liralık malı sana 10 liraya satarsam bu benim vicdanımı rahatsız eder (SE8).

... *Everyday I open my shop by saying “bismillahirrahmanirrahim” (in the name of Allah), and I pray to Allah; O Lord, grant me halal earning. ... For me, halal earning is the money you earned without cheating people. (SA12)*²⁹.

However, secularist people when drawing on the notion of *halal*, do not necessarily signify a religious sentiment on their part. *Halal*, meaning in secularist parlance, is being honest without any religious connotations. On the other hand, *halal* in the discourse of Islamists may even prohibit ordinary banking practices.

Although the secular people in Turkey do not signify a monotone pattern, it is a common tendency that they take religion as a matter of self-conscience/heart. In a sense, universally shared humanistic values have become the sources of their ethical values:

*Let me put it this way. I have no interest in religion as such. I’m a person who values righteousness and honesty. It (religion) sounds to me like taking shelter in a certain power. I take three main religions as the same in this regard. For me, righteousness and honesty themselves are a religion. That’s it. Beyond this, I don’t have any spiritual beliefs (SA6)*³⁰.

Similarly, another secular businessman defines the motivation behind his providing bursaries for poor students as:

²⁹ Her gün dükkanımı ‘bismillahirrahmanirrahim’ diyerek açarım ben, ve Allah’a dua ederim bana helal kazanç nasip etsin diye. ... Benim için helal kazanç insanları aldatmadan kazanılandır yani (SA12).

³⁰ Şöyle söyleyeyim. Ben dinle alakalı bir insan değilim kendim. Doğruluğu dürüstlüğü savunan bir insanım. Dinsiz de diyebilirsiniz. Yani belli bir güç bana sığınma gibi geliyor. Ben üç temel dine bir gözle bakıyorum. Doğruluk dürüstlük dindir benim için. Bitmiştir. Başka öyle uzun boylu manevi dini inançlarım yoktur benim (SA6).

*I just want to contribute to the public education... This, to me, is a moral responsibility (SA11)*³¹.

However, the same person also adds that he has been attending the weekly Friday prayer, and trying to follow some religious rules as much as he can. As discussed in the earlier chapters, secularism is being understood in variety of ways in Turkey, and secular people's opinions are also varying. Even some secular people show strong religious reflexes, but they always tend to take 'Muslimness' as a cultural matter only and seem not comfortable with being called religious or pious.

It is a gripping point that all the pious/devout business people I interviewed stress the importance of widespread moral values as influence of their religious beliefs on their business, and, not surprisingly, they were referring to Islam as a source of those values. In the pious group, besides moral teachings of Islam, two exceptions occur as different attitude from the secularist group: They all reject trading goods which are prohibited by the religion. For example they have no interest in selling alcohol or pork. Gambling industry (including lottery games) might also be regarded in the same perspective. Secondly, they all have some reservation about bank interest. The bank interest is the best known economic prohibition in Islam since it is mentioned in the Quran as *riba*. However it is now a controversial issue among the pious business people in Turkey. Some of them interpret the concept of *riba* as usury, and claim that interest, which is an unavoidable financial tool of modern business, should not be regarded within the context of *riba*. The Islamic solution for avoiding interest is "Islamic (interest-free) banking". As in the rest of the Muslim world, interest-free banks also operate in Turkey along with other banks. At first, one might think that using interest-free banking is the preference of all pious people in Turkey, but the findings of this study contradict this assumption. Their responses about this issue also give some insight concerning the notion of an "Islamic economy". For example;

³¹ Eğitime katkı olsun diye sadece. Yani bu benim kendi vicdani sorumluluğum (SA11).

Interest-free banks don't give you cash money. You either buy something from them or do bartering. If you are in need of cash money you go to a bank and get a loan. This, however, is not practiced in Islamic banking. Interest [that is part and parcel of a bank loan] is regarded as haram [prohibited] in our religion. Now... You have to do this. I mean, according to our belief, in some unavoidable situations "haram" turns into "halal", you know. Even if you are not happy with this, you have to do it. Ok, interest is prohibited. I couldn't pay my electricity bill on time. It is interest (charged). Now, look; it is the rule of trading. Which one is right: Closing the factory down; or getting some bank loan and surviving? I don't know. According to my small brain, I would say rescuing the factory is more important (RG2)³².

As discussed in chapter three, this study takes religion as a dynamic entity. Although main principles of Islam seem to remain constant, their interpretations might differ over time. For example, among the pious people in Turkey, interest-related operations, for long a time, were the reasons for not being involved with business activities. However, in recent years, this issue has become debatable. Even the pious business people I interviewed mentioned the distinction between interest (*faiz*) and usury (*riba*). There are also some Islamic theologians who suggest that taking a bank loan would be innocent as long as the interest rate is below the inflation (i.e. a theology professor Hayrettin Karaman's writings). As seen in the above quotation, for the hard working "puritan Muslim" businessperson rescuing the factory and surviving in the competitive business environment are indispensable. In a Giddensian perspective, it might be regarded as re-producing the structure through social practices, and creating new actors according to the new structure. Namely,

³² Finans kurumlarının size nakdi yardım verme imkanı yok. Bir ürün alacak, ya da bir ticaret olacak yani. Fakat siz işte ne yapıyorsunuz... Sıkıntı halinde gidip oradan nakdi kullanmak zorundasınız. Finans kurumunda bu yok. Dinimize göre haram ya da faiz deniyor. Şimdi bunu yapmak zorundasınız. Hani zaruretler halinde haram helal olur diyor ya, yani şimdi bakın içinize sinmese bile yapmak zorundasınız. Şimdi faiz almak vermek haram,... elektrik faturamı ödeyemedim, faiz ... nasıl oldu. Şimdi bakın bu ticaretin kralları. Şimdi bir fabrikanın kapanması mı doğru? Ya da bir miktar faizli bir para alarak kurtulmak mı doğru? Bilmiyorum, ben kendi küçük kafamla bana göre fabrikanın kurtulması daha doğru diyorum (RG2).

new understanding of Islam produces its own believers who are accommodating the necessities of the modern world and combining them with tradition.

However, the pious businessperson also distinguishes paying interest from receiving interest. In the modern way of doing business paying interest is seen as an unavoidable tool by the pious businessperson. As for receiving interest from bank savings, on the other hand, devout Muslims do not seem very indulgent:

In my belief, whether or not the money I make is “halal” has a direct bearing on whether or not my children are morally wholesome. ... We do get a bank loan if we need it to pay our debts, but we never accept interest from [the savings in] a bank. If we get interest from a bank it’s like smudge from a dirty source (RKY11)³³.

Regarding the issue of “Islamic banking” and “Islamic economy”, it might be helpful to look at Timur Kuran’s insightful study, *The Economic Impacts of Islamic Fundamentalism*. In his study he successfully demonstrates the working mechanism of Islamic banking, and he claims that there is no significant difference between interest-free banks and ordinary banks (Kuran, 1993). He also criticises the idea of “Islamic economics³⁴” by arguing that they are either unworkable or inherently inefficient; and interprets it “as much a response to contemporary grievances as it is a nostalgic escape into the imagined simplicity, harmony, and prosperity of an ancient social order” (Kuran, 1993:305). However, whether it is a source of Islamic

³³ Evlatlarımın yarın ahlaken düşük olup olmaması, benim kazandığım paranın helal olup olmaması ile doğru orantılıdır diye inanırım. Bankadan kredi aldığımız olur ama faiz aldığımız olmaz. (Ticari namusunu kurtarmak için kredi alır çekini senedini ödersin,) ama bankadan faiz aldığında pis kaynaktan gelen bir şey bulaşmış olur (RKY11).

³⁴ It can be said that the idea of “Islamic economics” has emerged as a reaction to western capitalism. The ideas first systematized by some Islamic scholars such as Seyyid Qutb (1948) and Mawdudi (1947), and they were shared by some Turks for a short time in Turkey as well. However, its application and practices have never been clear.

fundamentalism³⁵ is still a controversial issue. Even the pious business people in Turkey find “Islamic economics” unclear and inappropriate to modern life. Although some of them supported the idea of “social justice” as Islamic, but they mostly found the “Islamic economics” as fantasy:

It [the Islamic economic system] doesn't seem to me very convincing. I deposit my money into my bank account and I know what I will get at the end of, say, a three- month period. But they [interest-free banks] don't determine in advance [what the money will accrue], and call this profit sharing. But, [normal] banks tell you. They both give you the same more or less. I don't find it honest actually... (RG5)³⁶.

Although he finds it unrealistic, the same person shifts after a while and puts some reservations on receiving bank interest. This is also a common tendency among the religious group. However, this person's justification supports the puritan characteristics of the pious people:

Yes, if I am in need of something I use leasing and stuff like that. But, I don't think that the money that comes without effort [referring saving accounts of banks] would be halal, regardless of whether it is an Islamic bank or ordinary bank. The money earned without effort wouldn't be halal. (RG5)³⁷.

³⁵ The author claims that Islamic banking and zekat (Islamic charity) provide sources of funding for Islamic fundamentalism by opening Islamic schools, providing career opportunities within Islamic banks and other Islamic institutions for religious youths (Kuran, 1993).

³⁶ Bana çok inandırıcı gelmiyor. Ben paramı koyuyorum bankaya, 3 ay sonra ne alacağım belli. O belli değil diyor, kar payı olacak. Bankacı söylüyor, onların da verdiği küçük farklarla 3 aşağı 5 yukarı aynı. Bana pek dürüst gelmiyor açıkçası (RG5).

³⁷ Çok mecbur kalınca leasingle falan alıyorum. Bana emek vermeden gelen paranın çok helal olacağına inanmıyorum. İster İslam bankası olsun isterse Arap bankası hiç fark etmez. Emek verilmeden kazanılan para helal olmaz (RG5).

Therefore, it seems they pay special attention to making money with trading actual goods, rather than with financial tools. This aspect of the work mentality will be discussed further in the next section.

The above mentioned attitudes of pious Muslims might seem paradoxical as well. However, this confusing attitude, to some extent, could be explained by the Islamic notion of *maslaha* (practical necessity or expediency). According to Islamic teaching, in unavoidable situations *haram* turns into *halal* temporarily. However, which situation is considered as unavoidable and what is the scope of this permission have always been a controversial issue among Islamic scholars.

I argue that above-mentioned quotes, also, provide an appropriate example of the transformative potential of the religion. In the theory of structuration perspective “the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize”, according to Giddens (1984:25). In a sense, it can be argued that through these business practices of pious/devout people, understanding of religion is reproduced or reinterpreted according to the necessities of the modern world. Some contemporary Islamic writers or thinkers, such as Fethullah Gulen, seem influential in this. The importance of the understanding “true Islam” was frequently mentioned by the pious group. However it does not necessarily mean that anything goes, but it seems clear that pious business people’s attitudes towards business activities have been changed dramatically from traditional way to a more rational way in modern Turkey:

... “A Muslim should not be rich”, “be content with what you have”. No. Now all this has changed to the exact opposite. The idea of “Muslims must be rich” has emerged. And, I think it is not wrong. ... I don’t say that those former ideas were therefore wrong. Maybe they were told so as to protect people in the face of moral degradation. Maybe it was in order to keep people closer to Allah. (RKN16)³⁸.

³⁸ “Bir hırka bir lokma”, “Müslüman zengin olmaz”, vs... Yok, şimdi onlar tam tersine döndü. Müslüman’ın zengin olması lazım imajları doğdu. Hakikaten de öyle. ... Ona yanlış anlaşılma demeyelim de yaşam tarzında toplumun dejenerasyonundan kaynaklanan koruma faktörü olarak

Up to this point, this interviewee is accepting the transformation of the traditional work-related values, but still trying to justify the old habits of tradition. In a way it shows us tradition always have strong resistance and it is hard to be changed. However, right after the last expression in the above quote, he shifts and starts to criticise the old tradition:

... A Muslim should be rich but the important thing is to be able to digest/assimilate wealth [and not to go stray]. In the past, some [pious] people used to give up doing business after they do 'hac' [pilgrimage]. There was such an obsession. I always find it strange. Say suppose I am 25 year-old and just back from 'hac'. Do I have to quit trading? Why? If one internalises Islam, does honest business, measures accurately [in trading]... you know. You can't get rid of your inner suspicions by quitting business. There is no such thing. To me, it is possible to be a Muslim and do business; a Muslim should remain a Muslim and this should at once reflect on his business. (RKN16)³⁹.

This section of the study tries to illustrate that the concept of Islamic economy or Islamic business seems insignificant within the Turkish context, at least for the time being. It is clear that work ethic values have significant importance in their business life. However, it is quite difficult to apply these values to a single belief system, such as Islam. This fact is also expressed by some pious Muslim business people themselves. Especially, in today's competitive business world, it seems almost

görmekte fayda var. Dolayısıyla ondan korunma adına, kendini Allah'tan uzaklaştırma unsuru gibi görmek adına söylenmiş olan sözlerdir (RKN16).

³⁹ Müslüman insanın zengin olması gerekir ama önemli olan bunu hazmetmesi gerekir. Bunu iyi özümsememiz iyi kabul etmemiz gerekir. Hacdən gelenler bir ara ticareti bırakırlardı. Böyle bir saplantı vardı. Ben de hep böyle yadırgardım, yani adam hasbel kader 25 yaşında hacca gitti, gelince bu ticareti yapmayacak mı. Niye? İnsan kendine Müslümanlığı özümsememişe eğer ben doğru ticaret yapacağım, doğru tartacağım dememişe, kendinde doğan şüpheyi ticareti terk etmekle kurtulamazsın. Öyle şey yok, Müslümanlığı da yapacaksın ve bunu ticarete de yansıtacaksın (RKN16).

impossible to be a successful businessman or woman without being a hard-working, honest and thrifty person or reinvesting the money earned. Therefore, if we talk about the influence of religion it should be sought somewhere else. The findings of this study also provide a rich insight regarding that influence of the religious beliefs. Basically, this influence seems re-shaping the business mentality of the religious business people in Turkey, by re-interpreting the existing concepts related to work ethic.

5.3 Transformation of the Muslim Work Ethic within Turkish Context

Basically, the influence of religious beliefs seems re-shaping the business mentality of the religious business people in Turkey, by re-interpreting the existing concepts related to work ethic. In this respect, I tried to understand what meaning religious people attribute to the existing Islamic work ethic values, or perhaps how they enhance the meaning of those concepts. Namely, five distinguishing characteristics emerge among the religious group: *Hard work* as Islamic duty, *Good will* (intention), *responsibility*, *bounty* and the *balance/equilibrium* in one's life. However, based on the qualitative data, it seems that some concepts are always mentioned together. In this respect, hard work and good will (intention) on one hand, and responsibility and bounty on the other seem integral. For this reason, those concepts strongly related to each other and mentioned in the same context will be discussed together under the same section. This study acknowledges that the Islamic ethic is not limited with these concepts. However, the following section intends to focus on the most influential factors which have been re-interpreted according to contemporary meanings.

5.3.1 Good Will/Intention and Hard Work (Working as an Islamic duty)

In Islamic teaching, working is regarded as religious duty. In the past, a typical pious Muslim prototype was regarded as a man/woman dedicating him/herself to praying and isolated from most of the worldly activities. Some traditional sayings, such as

“be content with what you have” or “Muslim should not be rich” can be considered as the reflection of this mentality. Today, this mentality seems converted into hard work as virtue. As Yousef (2001) rightly suggests, people’s intention, in Islamic moral system, is more crucial than the outcome of their actions. In the Quran, a variety of verbs is used in the context of working, such as *amel*, *faal*, *cehd* (act/deed, making/doing, struggling). However, Akpınar (2006) argues that all these deeds turn into good deeds (*salih amel*) if they have been done with faith and good will. In this respect, even ordinary worldly activities including making money and doing business are considered as praying, as long as they are done in religiously allowed ways (*halal*) (Bikun, 2004). In the interviews, the religious group frequently stressed this point:

A Muslim shall work hard, but without forgetting the hereafter. This is what “not forgetting the hereafter” means: If I’m being fair in the workplace, if I’m doing my daily prayers, if I’m giving my “zekat” (alms)... This is what not forgetting the hereafter is. With a good will, even the ordinary activities of a Muslim between two prayers sessions will turn into righteous deeds anyway (RKY1)⁴⁰.

This point has been also consistent with the writings of contemporary Islamic scholars, such as Said Nursi. Nursi and his followers have great influence over the contemporary Turkish interpretation of Islam. According to Islamic teaching, with a sincere intention, believers’ ordinary activities between two praying sessions would turn into good deeds (Nursi, 1978). In a sense, it can be said that doing business in a rational way, which requires strong commitment and hard work, has been legitimised by the new understanding of the religion.

⁴⁰ Müslüman çok çalışacak ama ahiretini de unutmadan. Nedir yani ahireti unutmamak. Eğer işyerimde adil oluyorsam , namazımı kılıyor ve zekatımı da veriyorsam... Budur yani ahireti unutmadan. Zaten iki namaz arasında iyi halis niyetle yapılan sıradan işler de sevaba dönüşür (RKY1).

For the pious group, working is not limited to business activities at all. During the interviews, I asked each person to take me through one of their typical business days. Namely, what time do you wake up and go to work, what are the routines during a business day, and so on. Naturally, most of them started the story with early morning praying and do some religious reading in the morning. This attitude is quite exclusive to the pious group. For both groups, religious and secular, daily business activities within the workplace are almost comparable, such as meeting with the employees, visiting the operation ground, calling/visiting customers, and some paper work. However, the interesting point is pious business people do not finish the story by the time they close their office in the evening. They spend a considerable amount of time for the discretionary activities and they consider it as part of work as well. The following is how one pious businessman describes the work after they close the factory at 6:30 p.m.:

... Then, the evening part comes. With my friends, we think about what we can do for humanity, who can do what...etc. We plan all these. ... [The reason why I do this is to do with] the feeling of responsibility. If one feels responsible, especially while complaining about something for not being right, one develops the urge to find a solution. Here, we need to see what favour or goodness can be done for humanity; and we need to take initiative. ... We all, with my friends, work devotedly towards raising and educating youths in a good atmosphere; and also towards what we can do for supporting this educational activities within the country and abroad (RKN16)⁴¹.

These sorts of evening meetings are very common rituals among the pious group. They call it with different terms, such as “*akşam oturması* (evening sitting)” or “*çay*

⁴¹ Ve daha sonra gece programı başlıyor. Arkadaşlarımızla insanlık adına ne yapabiliriz, insanlığa faydalı olacak ne işler yapabiliriz, o açılımlarda neler yapabiliriz, elimizden ne gelir, kimler ne yapabilir. Bunların planlamasını yapıyoruz.

SU- Onu yapmaya sevk eden şey nedir sizi?

-O da bir mesuliyet duygusu. İnsan bir mesuliyet duyuyorsa, özellikle bir şeyden şikayet duyuyorsa bir çözüm üretme duygusu insanda gelişiyor. Burada da insana yapılacak faydayı görmeniz ve elinizi taşın altına koymanız gerekiyor. ... Bunun için de hepimiz diğer arkadaşlarımızla bir özveri içerisinde gençlerin yerleştirilmesi, iyi bir ortamda eğitim almaları, yurt içinde ve dışında bu eğitimi destekleyici faaliyetlerin neler olabileceği konusunda çalışıyoruz (RKN16).

(drinking tea)” or *istisare* (consulting meeting). In a sense, these meetings are providing some sort of moral energy to the pious people. This moral energy aspect and the nature of these meetings will be discussed in the later sections further.

5.3.2 Responsibility and Bounty

The concept of responsibility appears at two levels. One is individual and the other is institutional, which is more close to the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR). At the individual level, the pious Muslims in Turkey find themselves responsible to demonstrate Islamic moral values and virtues as much as possible in their lives including business. Therefore, being a reliable, honest businessperson has been regarded as an Islamic obligation. From the pious Muslim perspective, all the good actions, virtues are somehow related to the religion. Therefore, this group applies all their virtuous actions to their religious beliefs:

It's entirely related to our belief system. If those around us cannot sleep comfortably for some reason, we shouldn't sleep comfortably either. It's a ethical feeling which conceives the trouble of others as also ours; I mean it's the faith (RKY11)⁴².

Some regard this responsibility as being observed by God. It might sound similar to the Christian concept of “witnessing” as Werner (2006) suggests. According to this aspect of responsibility, one should be responsible not to behave in a way that would loose Islam’s credibility or bring it into disrepute. As a cooling system producer, RKY13 states:

⁴² (O sevk etme işi) tamamen bizim inanç yapımızla alakalı. Bu cemiyet içinde insanlar yatağa başını koyup da rahat yatamaz eğer başka insanlar yatamıyorsa o kadar rahat. [Bu] onların sıkıntıları bizim de sıkıntımız diye bir vicdani duygu, inanç yani (RKY11).

A pious [Muslim] person should be careful especially with “kul hakkı [not wronging others]”. The following should be avoided in the [behaviour] of a Muslim: breaking promises, measuring inaccurately, delaying [due] payments. If someone (Muslim) doing daily praying is also committing any of those, there is something fundamentally wrong with him (RKY13)⁴³.

For some, the source of ethical behaviour is the fear of god. It can be questioned how ethical is one’s action, if it has been done just because of the fear. However, this concept in Islamic teaching is not used as being afraid of something dangerous. Rather it has been interpreted as sort of appreciation or respect for God. From the religious people’s point of view, this “fear” would lead them to behave more ethically:

I try to implement what my religion orders me to do. And, I’m very happy to do that. [You can’t show me] anyone (customer) worried about whether the good they bought from [my] firm is the same with the sample; or that whether he/she was cheated. Because, first, I fear Allah. Then our prophet orders us to measure accurately. This is the instruction I have also for those working for me. (RG3)⁴⁴.

However, it should not be forgotten that the concept of “*vicdan* (conscience)” plays almost comparable role in the secular business people’s lives. Conscience seems to

⁴³ Dindar olan insanın kul hakkına özellikle dikkat etmesi lazımdır. Ticarete de eksik tartma, uzun çek verme, sözünü tutmama... Bunların bir Müslüman’da olmaması lazım. Baktığınızda adam hem namaz kılıyor hem bunları yapıyorsa bir eksiklik var demektir (RKY13).

⁴⁴ Ama dinimin bana verdiği emirleri işyerimde uygulamaya çalışıyorum. Bundan da büyük mutluluk duyuyorum. Hiç kimse Martut Kimya’dan aldığı mal acaba örneği ile aynı mıdır, bana kazık atmış mıdır... aklına gelmez. Çünkü ilk önce Allah’tan korkarım. Sonra peygamberimizin öğrettiği eksik tartmayın, tartınızda doğru olun... ve şey, talimat vermişimdir (çalışanlarıma, tartıda hassas olmaları konusunda) (RG3).

be a replacement of the religion from the secular point of view. A secular businessman, trading construction hardware, explains it as follow:

I'm not an atheist, but not a radical either. Everybody has a belief, even non-believers. ... However, my actual belief is being honest and, fair so as to have a clear conscience. From a religious perspective, I'd try and see if this here (pointing to his heart which refers to conscience in the Turkish context) is comfortable... I don't do daily praying, God would tolerate it, I think (SE9)⁴⁵.

As it can be understood from the above quote, interestingly, being a religious person has been regarded as being radical by the majority of secularist people. This attitude carries a special importance for the pious business people in Turkey, since the image of Islam or religiousness in the secular people's eyes is not very respectable. Early years of Republican politics on Islam, excluding the religion from the urban and confining it to the rural for many years, might have some negative affect on the image of being religious (see chapter 2 for further discussion). Arguably, it can be said that the religious people in Turkey are showing strong enthusiasm to shine the image of Islam through their personal lives. Although, it is debatable to what extent they have succeeded in this goal, it seems quite certain that they take this issue as a responsibility. This might be the reason why the religious group frequently mention the concept of "true/real Islam" distinguishing it from the traditional one which has been degenerated by some superstitious beliefs.

Mine is not a slavish religiousness. It (religiousness) is the understanding of life and the creation. Therefore, I realise that it is necessary to be a conscious believer in all aspects of life, business, social and etc.

⁴⁵ Hayır öyle bir inancım yok. İnançsız bir insan değilim ama radikal bir insan değilim. Her insanın inancı vardır. ... Yani benim asıl inancım insanın samimi dürüst vicdanen rahat olması. Dinsel açıdan da bakıyorsanız şunu söylerim. Şuran (kalbi göstererek) rahatsa, anlatılan hadislerden falan anladığımız kadarıyla tanrının merhameti o kadar genişse, ben namaz kılmıyorsam, herhalde onu da hoş görür (SE9).

...Therefore, it makes us to behave in this way in business. I mean, piousness should be understood as having this intention; otherwise it shouldn't be understood in a way as being narrow-minded or fanatic (RKN14)⁴⁶.

Ontologically, this study takes religion as a set of interpretation through practices. Therefore, in an academic piece of work, it would not be appropriate to decide whether one of them is true or not. However, this distinction between the “real Islam or religious consciousness” and the “narrow-minded or fanatic Islam” clearly demonstrates the transformation of Islam from one interpretation to another. This is what this study is trying to understand from business people’s perspective.

On the other hand, it is clearly observable that many aspects of the religion have transformed and adapted according to the necessities of today’s modern world in Turkey. Some common traditional sayings, such as, “Muslim should not be rich and think about the other world”; or “being content with what one has”, are being strongly criticised by religious people in Turkey. In this respect, it seems that the meaning of *zekat* (alms giving or charity as a religious obligation) has been broadened as well. Regarding this issue, I frequently encountered the response proposing that a Muslim must be rich so s/he can do more charity. In fact, it seems it is more than *zekat*. I observed that most of the religious business people show great enthusiasm when they talk about the educational activities and charity organizations which they support financially. It could be claimed that the religious perception of the past has been changed dramatically in Turkey. Traditionally it used to be regarded as supplying food for poor people only. Now it seems it has extended as providing bursaries, establishing charity organizations, building schools and other

⁴⁶ K r  k r ne bir dindarlık deęil. Hayatı ve yaratılışı anlayabilmek. Dolayısıyla insanın hayatın her ařamasında ticari, sosyal, çerçevesinde bilinçli bir M sl man olmanın gereklilięini anladım. ... Dolayısıyla bu d řunce bize iřletmecilikte bu niyetle hareket etmemizi saęlıyor. Yani dindarlık denince bu niyete sahip olmak řeklinde anlařılmalı; deęilse dindarlık baęnazlık olarak anlařılmamalı. İnsanlara karřı sert davranmak, kırıncı olmak deęildir. Dolayısıyla bu d řunce bize iřletmecilikte bu niyetle hareket etmemizi saęlıyor. Yani dindarlık denince bu niyete sahip olmak řeklinde anlařılmalı; deęilse dindarlık baęnazlık olarak anlařılmamalı (RKN14).

educational institutions, including universities. It is an interesting point that even though the religious obligation for *zekat* is 1 out of 40 of one's money earned in a year, they all imply that they do much more than that ratio. Considering the size of religious movements, their educational facilities and charity organizations, this claim seems reasonable. They believe that God will give them back even more if they spend money for the sake of God. However, it should be noted that people who spend time and money for charity and philanthropy usually receive a good reputation from the society, and it raises their credibility and fame in business as well. It might even be regarded as promotion or enlightened self-interest. The following quote is a typical response for why they spend a considerable amount of money for charity:

Of course, I have a motivation to do that. It's for the sake of Allah. 1 out of 40 is really nothing (talking about zekat or almsgiving ratio in Islam). It's the zekat of stingy people. This verse in the Quran (or, it might be a saying of the prophet), which is about Ebubekir (Mohammad's closest companion), has great influence on me: "We (the God) are content with him; is he content with us?" It's [said to be] because of his (Ebubekir) great financial help for the poor (He is a well known Islamic figure who is known to have spent all his money for the poor to please God). It's very shocking; I mean it's the best thing Allah could ever tell His servant. This is the basis of (main motivation behind) our actions. (RG5)⁴⁷.

Among the religious group, it is also believed that spending money for charity would make one's capital even more over time. It is the Islamic notion of "*bereket*", meaning being/getting plenty or increasing by the blessing of God.

⁴⁷ Ona motive eden sebep mutlaka var. Allah rızası tabi. ... Yok yok 40ta bir ne ki. 40'ta 1 hakikaten cimri zekatı. Ben mesela Kuran'daki Ebubekir ile ilgili ayet beni çok etkiler: "biz o kulumuzdan memnunuz o bizden memnun mu?" diye bir ayet infaktan dolayı. Şok edici bir şey yani, Allahın bir kulu için söyleyeceği en üst şey yani. Bizim tüm bunları yapmamızın temelinde bu var (RG5).

Yes, I do as much as I can. I give bursary and food support for poor. I helped to open a college preparation course in my village so that the folks in the villagers could go to universities. ...

Interviewer: *Do you always stick with the ratio (1/40) suggested by the religion?*

No, I try to do more than that ratio. I say if God gave me this much he would give me again. I believe that if we give for him, He gives us back. How does He give us? From where? I don't know, but He does. (RKY10)⁴⁸.

This charity giving attitude occurs among the secular business people as well. Since these sorts of behaviours, such as helping poor people, providing bursaries, are considered as virtue within the context of humanitarian ethic or universal values, secular business people are also involved in these charity activities. However, as expected the source of their attitudes is not religious. The following is the response of an auto dealer to the question of “do you spend time and money for discretionary or charity activities?”

This is a university town. ... We help them (students), providing monthly bursary. Beside this, you can't exclude yourself from social solidarity (mutual support). For example, the municipality asks for support (food support for the poor) every Ramadan (Muslim's holy month), and we try to help as much as we can.

Interviewer: What motivates you to do this?

⁴⁸ Evet elimizden geldiği kadar. Burs veriyoruz fakirlere yediriyoruz, iaşe yapıyoruz. Dershane açıyoruz kendi köyümüzden belli üniversite talebeleri yetişsin diye.

SU- 40da bir oranda mı veriyorsunuz hep?

-Hayır ona bağlı kalmıyoruz fazla oluyor genelde. Bunu veren Mevla yine verir diyoruz. Nerden veriyor nasıl veriyor, ona da aklım ermiyor. Biz verince o da veriyor, ona inanıyoruz (RKY10).

You can't exclude yourself [from this solidarity]. Of course, it's spiritual satisfaction. I want everyone to get a good education. Eskisehir is a good place for opportunities for education. We help those (students) who are close to us (in terms of relatives or friends) (SE10)⁴⁹.

It seems that both groups give importance to help people and be involved with charity activities. As mentioned, the source or the motives behind their activities are different. Beside that, another crucial difference is the amount of time and money for these activities. Additionally, the secular group makes their donations in a more traditionalist way as exists in all divine religions, namely helping the poor. On the other hand, it is very evident that the pious business people are very well organised in these sorts of activities and they spend much more money than the secular people do. Inferably, only a small portion of the money is spent for charity and direct help to the poor. A considerable part of the money is allocated for other discretionary activities, such as establishing private schools, universities, and funding civil society activities. This systematised way of alms giving reminds us of Calvinist influence on "helping the poor". Weber (1993) notes that Calvinism puts some limitations on "helping the poor"; and he argues that it is one of the most important influences of Calvinism on the economy. Since richness and poorness are regarded as God's will in Protestantism, charity activities are made in a more systematised way. In other words, the aim of helping the poor should be helping poor people to make them part of the labour. In Weber's own words, "charity itself became a rationalized enterprise" (Weber, 1993: 220).

⁴⁹ Şöyle diyeyim burası üniversite şehri. Yakınlardan eş dost tanıdık çocukları buraya okumaya geliyor. Onlara aylık yardım burs şeklinde birtakım yardımlarımız oluyor. Onun haricinde tabi şeyin dışında kalmıyorsunuz. Sosyal bir dayanışmanın dışında olmanız mümkün değil. Mesela belediyelerden falan ramazan ayında yardım talepleri oluyor, ona da elden geldiğince destek olmaya çalışıyoruz.

S.U.- Nedir buna sizi motive eden?

-Siz de onun dışında kalmıyorsunuz. Tabi ki bu manevi bir hazdır. Manevi tatmindir. Onun dışında eğitime önem veriyoruz. Herkesin en iyi şekilde bir eğitim almasını istiyorum. Eskişehir bunun için iyi bir fırsat. Gelen eş dost yakınlarla bu şekilde yardım etmeye çalışıyoruz (SE10).

In every Anatolian city, the *Gulen movement* (the largest faith based civil religious movement in Turkey) has business people and their civil society organisations, such as charities, educational and business foundations etc. In a way, the success of this movement attracts more business people getting involved in the civil society activities⁵⁰. It seems it provides them with a sort of moral energy (which I will discuss it in the following sections). With these motivational factors, the concept of “bounty/benevolence” (*ihsan*) makes more sense. Basically, in Islamic context, it can be defined as one’s good actions for the sake of other people, though one did not have to do it (Torlak, et al., 2008). Within the pious business people’s context, this attitude appears as spending more time, effort and money for the discretionary activities:

It’s entirely for the sake of Allah. As Mr. Gulen says “it’s the man of Anatolia”. I mean, really, it’s not a job which can be done with zekat. I know many friends; they don’t do any zekat calculation. They do it 10 times, 20 times more than that strictly demanded for zekat. I really know these people. What can I say; it’s magnificent, it’s beyond words. Especially, those teachers who serve in foreign countries with very little salary have great influence on me. For a businessman it’s easy to give the money; but I saw those friends (referring to the young pious teachers of the Gulen movement) who have dedicated their lives without expecting anything other than Allah’s blessing. This really deserves appreciation (RKY13)⁵¹.

⁵⁰ Pious business people always state that their business associations are getting more pluralistic every day. Most of them strongly stresses that they have members from different backgrounds, consuming alcohol, and not very religious as well (i.e. RKY11, RKN14, RKN16, RG4). In a sense, this kind of civil organisations are regarded as a mean to attract more people. According to Ilhan (2009), the pluralism among the religious business associations might help to consolidate the Turkish democracy via being more efficient actors in the state’s policy making process.

⁵¹ Tamamen Allah rızası. Yani Hoca Efendi (F. Gulen) diyor ya “Anadolu insanı”. Yani gerçekten zekatlarla olacak iş değil bu. Çoğu arkadaş da biliyorum öyle zekat falan hesabı yapılmıyor. Belki zekat 10a 20 ye katlanıyor. O arkadaşları biliyorum gerçekten. Yani ne diyeyim olağanüstü, tariflere sığacak bir şey değil bu. Özellikle o yurt dışındaki hizmetteki o arkadaşlar, öğretmenler beni çok etkiliyor. Çok cüzi bir parayla hayatlarını ortaya koyarak bırakıp gidiyorlar ve orada katlanılmayacak şeylere katlanıyorlar. Biz işadamları açısından bakarsak biraz daha kolay parayı vermek ama, orada hayatını ortaya koymuş, gelecek adına hiçbir şey düşünmeden sadece Allah rızası için koşturan arkadaşlara rastladım ben. Bunlar gerçekten takdir edilecek şeyler (RKY13).

In a sense, this bounty has become one of the main characteristics of the pious business people in Turkey. Even some of them state that the main reason for working is being able to give more for ‘the sake of Allah’ (i.e. RKY9, an insurance agency owner promptly responses that it is the real reason for him working). It appears that they also like to spread this attitude among the society they live in. A hardware supplier for construction business, RG4 tells us an interesting question he encountered in a foreign country:

The man asks; “do you really give your money, which you earned with so much sweat and toil to the others”. He is not used to it. He doesn’t know about our generosity. Where does it come from; of course it’s from the personal ethics that Islam teaches us (RG4)⁵².

According to Robinson (2008), in the context of *the Gulen movement*, the concept of responsibility is seen as the primary accountability to God. In this respect, the author argues that the concept provides some basis for a rich conception of responsibility associating:

Responsibility as accountability to God, and liability for His creation. Humankind as vicegerent is given this responsibility by God. This sets up an ethic of endless service, set in the relationship with God, but genuinely for others. (Robinson, 2008:689).

In a way, for the pious group the Islamic notions of *jihad* and *servicing religion* have been transformed to the struggle and hard work in all aspects of life, including business. As Ozdemir (2006) argues, it can be regarded as a struggle to create an indigenous Muslim ethic compatible with the modern aspects of the world. Although

⁵² (Yani zengin insanların mesela çeşitli yurtdışı seyahatlerimde bahis oluyor); adam soruyor, siz diyor hakikaten alın teriyle kazandığın parayı cebinden çıkarıp başkalarına veriyor musun diyor. Adım alışmamış ki. Bizim o cömertliğe alışmamış. Bu da nerden geliyor tabi, İslamiyet’in vermiş olduğu ahlaktan emirlerinden geliyor (RG4).

it is difficult to find proper examples for each aspect of business ethics and corporate social responsibility, this study argues that these civil society activities, such as supporting charity and educational activities, providing bursaries can still be considered under the concept of business ethics. As Hui (2008) argues, faith and business ethics can be combined in terms of responsibility. The author calls it “faith-based CSR”. In the Turkish context, the faith-based responsibilities are also regarded as a source of moral energy for the pious business people, as it will be explained in the later sections.

5.3.3 Balance in One’s Life

During the interviews, Islamic ethic frequently appeared in the shape of “balanced life”. It is mostly stated as “*muvazene/denge*” (balance or equilibrium). The Islamic notion of balance refers to the universe that was created in balance; and it recommends Muslims to live a balanced life, namely it is avoiding lavishness and capitalist greed, in Islamic business ethic perspective (Torlak et al., 2008). Although the pious group appreciates the importance of hard work, they also insist on not being workaholic or worshipping to the work. A chemical producer, RG3 regards above mentioned religious meetings as a means of balancing the life between the worldly activities and spirituality:

Because we are inclined to the worldly activities a bit too much, from time to time we feel the need for a spiritual rest. When we rest, one of our friends reads something out of a book and offers his interpretation. ... It’s not simply an unwinding; but I actively get rid of the daily stress there. Life is full of stress (RG3)⁵³.

⁵³ Dünyaya bira fazla meylettığımız için manevi yönden dinlenme ihtiyacı duyarız. O esnada bir arkadaşımız kitap okur bildiğini anlatır.
S.U.- Bir nevi deşarj mı?
Deşarj demeyelim de ben burada stres atıyorum. Çünkü neticede hayatın her tarafı stres dolu (RG3).

Similarly, the notion of balance also shapes the pious people's way of life. How would being rich affect or change the lifestyle of pious business people? In the pious people's account it is a challenging matter. In a traditional perspective, it is known that Muslim should be modest, refrain from ostentation, luxury or show off. But, the real question is how to keep the life balanced in this respect. During the interviews, this attitude also appeared as an answer to the question of "how does your religious belief influence your business life?" The increase in the religious people's life standard is not escaped from the eyes. However, it is frequently mentioned that "Muslim should find the balance between the necessities and the luxury". RKY13 confesses the difficulties of this as follow:

I mean, one should not fall in to the splendour of this world too much. Maybe we do... May Allah forgive us! I mean, the houses we live in, the cars we drive, and the clothes we wear... But we should not develop too strong an attachment to these things which belong to this world. Maybe these are the things that we have to do; something necessary. But you cannot leave these totally. You can't go to a business meeting by a worn out car. I mean everyone should try to stick a balance for themselves (RKY13)⁵⁴.

But, it seems that there is no consensus on this balance, in other words it is a quite subjective matter. It is generally left as a matter of conscience, and defined as living on the midway. However, it is clear that the traditional pious Muslim prototype, who is content with what he has, has shifted to a typical capitalist consumer, but with some red lines.

⁵⁴ Yani çok da bu dünyanın debdebesine kapılmaması lazım. Belki Allah affetsin, bizler biraz kapılıyoruzdur biraz. Bindiğimiz arabalar, giydiğimiz elbiseler, yaşadığımız evler, ama çok fazla takılmamak lazım bu dünyanın şeylerine. Belki yapılması gereken şeyler olarak. İhtiyaç olan noktalar var. Tümden de yani şey yapamazsınız. Yani bir iş görüşmesine giderken de Murat 124 ile gidemezsiniz. Yani herkesin o dengeyi kendi içinde tutturması lazım (RKY13).

We live like a middle class, no matter how wealthy we are. ...Free of ostentation. One should be afraid of being like a Pharaoh in rebellion to Allah. But it doesn't mean an extreme state of being content bordering on paupery either. Doesn't Islam mean the "middle way"? (RKY11)⁵⁵.

It should be appreciated that, during the interviewing, it would be quite difficult to ask people about their personal expenses and judging whether they are luxury or not. For this reason the scope of these answers are limited to what they stated. However, it is also a well known fact that the appearance of pious people consuming luxury products has been increased. For example, in recent years, luxury consumptions of the pious business people, especially their young generations, are not escaping from people's attention according to Sabrina Tavernise (2008) a New York Times journalist. Although it upsets the secular segment of the Turkish society, it seems understandable that Islamic middle class is also producing its own elites. Among some pious people it is a debatable issue as well. It can be inferred from the interviews that excessive consumption of luxury products is mostly regarded as a potential threat for the Muslims since it might cause degeneration of Islamic ethics. However, it seems that the religious people's homogenous lifestyle of the past gets its share from the dynamic process Turkey has been experiencing (Ozdemir, 2006:133), especially after the emergence of this new business class.

This transformation sometimes creates some tension within the religious people in Turkey as well. In a sense, according to the necessities of the modern world, the rules of an Islamic way of life are being re-written through the practices. It seems that this re-shaped structure will not be late producing its own generation, and some contradictions between the new and the old might be inevitable in this sense. RKY11, from the textile sector, tells about this Islamic transition in general, and its benefits. However, he also has some worries and concerns:

⁵⁵ Bir orta sınıf gibi yaşıyoruz ne kadar varlıklı olursak olalım. O orta sınıf gibi yaşayan, iddialı şeylerden uzak o işte öyle kalıyor. İddialı, böyle bir firavun gibi isyan eder gibi olmaktan korkar insan. Bir lokma bir hırka değil ama. Orta yol demek değil mi zaten İslam (RKY11).

It's a secularisation quite and unobtrusively. It's kind of a weakening of idealism. Not only in trade, but also in family life. We have acquaintances who start life dancing at wedding ceremonies. (Referring to Islamic teaching:) do we have dancing [as a legitimate form of entertainment]? (RKY11)⁵⁶.

Another gripping point is that the appearance of a newly emerging pious business class seems annoying to some secular people, in more accurate words to the strict secularists. Especially, pious people's involvement with worldly activities, and their way of life have been criticised by the secularists. In the eyes of secular people, religious man should be living a very modest life and away from luxury. The imagined religiosity in their mind reminds the traditionalist Muslim prototype who has been criticised by the religious people. A restaurant owner SA6 seemed annoyed with the recently emerged religious business class as they became an important part of social structure:

Now, these people... Why don't they apply their Islamic ideas to their lives? Why does this man drive a Mercedes?. This man should be successful within his own economy producing his own car. Why do they go to Italy to buy a scarf, why do they drive Porsche? (SA6)⁵⁷.

⁵⁶ ...Sessiz sedasız dünyevileşme diye bir şey oldu. Yalnız ticarete değil. İdealizmin zayıflaması dediğimiz şey, aile yaşantımızda da; çocuklar evlenirken dans ederek başlayanlarımız var. Dans bizde nerede yazıyor (RKY11).

⁵⁷ Şimdi bu insanlar, İslami ekonomiden yana olanlar düşüncelerini yaşam tarzlarına niye yansıtmıyorlar. Niye gidip Mercedes'e biniyor bu adam. Kendi ekonomisi içinde muvaffak olsun kendi arabasını yapsın bu adam. Neden gidip İtalya'dan eşarp alıyorlar Porche'lere biniyorlar. Madem İslami bir ekonomi patlama söz konusu, öyle bir yönetim söz konusu (SA6).

In the strict understanding of Turkish secularism, the image of religious person represents ignorance, poverty and isolated from the worldly activities which were seen as the by-product of Islam for a long time in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries (see section 3.3.2 for discussions around Turkish experiences of secularism). It appears that the strict seculars (or the *secularists*) are having hard time to bear with the reality of social transformation. It seems that the new Muslim prototype does not match with the image which the strict secularist people have in their minds. A typical response regarding the life style of the pious people appears as follow:

They both call themselves Muslim (or religious) and wear the kind of expensive shoes worn by Madonna (the woman he refers to is the first lady of Turkey, President Gul's wife) I think this is the primary sin (SE9)⁵⁸.

At the time these interviews took place, Turkey's biggest debate was the presidential elections. The ruling government nominated the minister of foreign affairs, Abdullah Gul whose wife was wearing Islamic headscarf, as a presidential candidate. Therefore, during the interviews, secular business people usually gave examples related to the ruling government and the politicians. It sounds paradoxical as well since the main motivations of the Turkish secularism were fighting with ignorance and helping the country's development. On one hand, secular people are complaining about the traditional perception of the religion which has been regarded as a barrier to development. But on the other hand, this religious transformation, which was mentioned in the earlier sections, also seems discomforting to them. This tension and the perception of secularism among both groups will be discussed further in the next chapter.

⁵⁸ Hem Müslüman'ım diyorlar... (Abdullah Gül'ün hanımı...) ayağında Madonna'nın ayakkabısından 450 dolarlık ayakkabı. Günahsa bence asıl günah o (SE9).

5.4 Belief as a Source of Moral Energy

The aim of this study is not seeking a causal relationship between the religious beliefs and the work ethic; it is more concerned with the transformed perception of the pious people towards Islam. Therefore, it does not necessarily mean that an Islamic ethic produces more ethical people. It would be totally misleading. In a philosophical view, ethic does not necessarily signify the “good” as well. Thus, it is not about the good people and the bad people. However, from what I perceived from the interviews and my own observations, the ethical transformation in question seems to provide some sort of moral energy exclusively for the pious business people in Turkey. This is the primary difference between the two research samples.

In the previous sections, it has been mentioned that religious perception in Turkey is in transition. Whether it is called “Turkish/Anatolian Islam” or “Muslim Calvinists”, it is very obvious that the interpretation of Islam in Turkey shows some distinctive characteristics. Arguably, it can be claimed that today’s Turkey is experiencing a resembling development as the Protestant Western world had after the Protestant reformation. In this respect, Weber’s Protestant ethic thesis gains special importance. This study especially argues that Hennis’ Weber interpretation will help us to understand this similar development. This section will stress the “conduct” of religious business people’s life, which is the central question of Weber’s thesis according to Hennis⁵⁹. This new conduct also seems to provide moral energy for the pious business people in Turkey. It is observed that in the religious circles of Turkey, entrepreneurship and business activities are strongly encouraged. In a way, the traditionalist Sufism has turned into an entrepreneurial ideology, as Arslan (2000) argued; and this transformation might be a crucial reason for the emergence of this new business class.

Since Islam provides rules governing all the aspects of life, it also introduces principles which regulate business life (Arslan, 2005). In fact, none of these earlier mentioned concepts are new. Among the religious people in Turkey, the recent developments within the last two decades should be the focal point of this

⁵⁹ Hennis (2000), while interpreting Weber, gives a special emphasis to the concept of *Lebensführung* as a conduct of life.

transformation. As it was discussed in chapter 3, Turkey experienced a significant liberalisation process after 1980s. It can be said that a fast urbanisation process moved traditional religious teachings from rural areas to the cities and the religious concepts have been re-interpreted and gradually transformed within the contemporary framework. Mardin (2000) interprets this development as the periphery's new positioning into the centre. In a sense, it can be argued that the traditional or rural religion is attaching itself to the centre, and becoming urbanised. It might be regarded as sign of producing an urbanised religion.

One can see that even traditional Sufi terms are being re-interpreted within contemporary meanings. For instance, an important Sufi concept “*zikr*” (remembrance of God) is interpreted by RKN15, a religious businessman as:

If saving an unemployed person in society is a form of worship according to my belief, and if you are satisfied with this, and put every step for the sake of Allah, this is the remembrance of Allah in my opinion. (RKN15)⁶⁰.

As Yousef (2001) indicated, Islamic work ethic puts more emphasis on the intentions (good will) of the people, compared to the PWE. This exegesis seems quite suitable to open new horizons for the religious business people through the secularised business world. In a sense, it could be said that for the pious group, this way of thinking creates more flexibility and room for manoeuvre in their business mentality. For example, religious business people regard their ordinary business activities as a way of acquiring merit in God's sight. A kitchen appliance producer, RKN15 tells us about how his ordinary business activities make him happy and satisfied:

If you think about this [remembrance of God] in every single task of yours, and if you do everything for the sake of Allah; for example, say suppose I'm

⁶⁰ Yani toplumdaki işsiz adamın bir tanesini kurtarmak ibadetse, benim inancıma göre, sen bundan mutmain oluyorsan tatmin oluyorsan her attığın adımı Allah için atıyorsan, zaten zikir işte bu. Allah'ı anmak da bu (RKN15).

going to produce a new product and I will need five new workers for this particular product. If I take this as how can I be more helpful to another five [unemployed] people, how can I be more beneficial to my country... it's something beyond money... Troubles turn into pleasure, since I believe that the reward would be great in the sight of Allah, if I do this. (RKN15)⁶¹.

It should be noted that religion plays a crucial part in their daily lives. In the interview process, I always tried to ask the questions in an open-ended way with no simple yes-no answer. This helped me to listen to their stories with their own words and definitions. In other words, the researcher let them construct their own reality without strict limitations. For instance, the question, “would you take me through a typical business day of yours”, provided a variety of interesting responds. Some of the religious people started to talk about their typical business day from the very early morning by mentioning the “morning prayer” first, which is a quite early time. Among the all pious group, waking up in the early morning for the praying is a common attitude. However, it does not seem like a praying only. Some of them also mentioned that they have some religious reading habits in the morning as well. This attitude is regarded as “spiritual gratification” before starting to work, as RG2 states:

Work starts at 8 here. Before I start work, I read a few pages out of the Quran like a kind of praying,. I do it everyday, try not to skip. It is a habit. After that phase, it gives me a kind of spiritual gratification. Doing it as a dictate of my beliefs makes me feel happy. (RG2)⁶².

⁶¹ Şimdi sen her işinde bunu düşünüyorsan, her yaptığın işi Allah için yapıyorsan; mesela diyelim buraya bir mamul çıkaracağım. Bunun için 5 tane insan gerekiyorsa bunu paradan ziyade benim o 5 tane insana nasıl bir katkımlı olabilir, ülkeye nasıl bir faydam olabilir... Bunu tuttuğum zaman onun mükâfatının Allah indinde çok büyük olduğuna inandığım için o senin sıkıntılarının zevke dönüşebiliyor (RKN15).

⁶² Mesaimiz 8 de başlıyor. Mesaiden önce işte hasbelkader günlük ihmal etmemeye çalıştığımız bir ibadet tarzında okuduğumuz bir şeyler var onu okuyoruz. Bilfiil işe başlamadan önce onu okuyorum mutlaka. Hem alışkanlık oldu hem de onu okuduğumuz zaman...o fasıl bitince insana manevi bir haz geliyor, işte onu yapmanın inanç gereği belki de bir mutluluğu oluyor üstünüzde ya da bir hazzı oluyor (RG2).

Additionally, the religious business people seem very active in civil society activities too. Especially within the last two decades, it can be said that political Islam gradually shifted to civil society organisations in Turkey. The number of civil initiatives financed by pious business people has increased dramatically during that period. Thousands of private education institutions, hospitals, college student accommodations, charity organizations, even some media institutions could be regarded as the outcomes of these civil initiatives. As explained in the previous section, these activities are regarded as a responsibility, which is related to the Islamic notion of *zekat*. Since Turkey is a secular state, this Islamic tax is paid voluntarily by the pious people. The gripping point is that all of the religious people I interviewed declared that they pay a considerable amount of money to these civil society activities, even more than the ratio required by the religion. As a researcher I was amazed by their enthusiasm in these volunteer projects. They regard these sorts of activities, such as building schools or providing bursaries, as social responsibilities influenced by their beliefs.

These kinds of activities might be a proper example of how a civil society acquires its autonomy from the state. It appears that the religious movements in Turkey have found the best possible way of doing religious activities which are away from radicalism. In other words, it can be said that the religious movements play a crucial role in the empowerment of civil society, which is crucial for the consolidation of Turkish democracy and pluralism among the society.

Weekly Meetings of Religious Business People

During the daily activities, pious people always mention some religious practices and activities. These are not only prayer five times for Muslim's; but they also mention the reading circles and weekly meetings concerning philanthropy and charity activities mostly. A typical summary of these meetings can be found in RKN16's response quoted in section 5.3.1. It is observed that religious business people have several weekly events in their evening time schedule. Evening time family visits are

quite a common tradition in the Turkish culture. Among the religious groups in Turkey, these sorts of visits have become systematised reading circles. Over time, it appears that these reading meetings have extended their original content from reading religious texts to discussing discretionary philanthropic activities. They are mostly organised and conducted by the followers of the *Gülen movement*. It can be said that these evening programmes have become a kind of tradition among religious people in Turkey. They call these informal meetings with different terms such as “*akşam oturması* (evening sitting)”, “*çay* (drinking tea)” or *istisare* (consulting meeting). The business people who are the members of the *Gülen movement* state that these sorts of activities have been organised all over the country independently from each other. I personally observed that these weekly meetings are locally organised by several groups in every city I visited. In small business people circles (10-15 people each approximately) they meet every week in each person’s house in turn, and discuss about charity and philanthropic activities, read some religious books and drink tea.

Becoming involved with these meetings gave me a chance to observe the nature of these frequently mentioned meetings by the pious group. First, the moderator of the meeting, who is usually a young college graduate, reads some religious passages from a book (Nursi’s and Gülen’s writings mostly). Then the group starts to discuss about the items on the agenda. These items are mostly concerning the philanthropic and charity activities, such as providing bursaries for students, building new schools and student accommodations and so on. They also discuss about circulating the ideas of the movement through social activities. During the interviews, when they talk about these activities they rarely use the terms “religion/religious”. These activities are always mentioned within the context of “civil society”. In a sense, there is a new discourse stressing the importance of the civil society activities. This might also support the idea that argues religion in Turkey is separating itself from politics and fundamentalist activities, and acting as a civil entity.

First of all, establishing civil society organizations has been ignored for years in Turkey. The civil society must have a word in the country. Recently, I needed to go to Egypt (for business). I called the society (TUSKON) and

said I'm going to Egypt. They arranged an interpreter for me. When I got there, he (the interpreter) hanged out with me during two days. I was happy. Not because of having an interpreter arranged, but I experienced that civil society means solidarity (RG3)⁶³.

Another interesting point is that the members of both business associations, MUSIAD and TUSKON, frequently mention about the plural structure of these societies. Surprisingly, they declared that the members of these organisations are not composed of religious people only. However, the founders and the main organisers of the societies are mostly business people with religious concerns. In a way, they are struggling to introduce themselves to as many business people as they can. It seems that they have one red line only, for the new members: not having a bad reputation in business. The president of GUNSIAF, a sub federation of TUSKON, RG4 explains it as follow:

We have one criterion when we sign up a new member; we don't look at the political view, nor ethnicity. What we are looking for is straight/honest business history of the man/woman. This is the only criterion. We have members from different political views (left or right wing political parties). We have "Alevi" (A Turkish Shia sect). We have Kurds as well.

Interviewer: Isn't religiosity a criterion?

No. As I told you, we have members consuming alcohol, or smoking. But I personally don't drink and smoke. (RG4)⁶⁴.

⁶³ Birincisi Türkiye'de yıllarca ihmal edilen dernekleşme. Sivil toplumun ülkede söz sahibi olması. Böyle bir dernek aynı zamanda bize; geçenlerde bir Mısır'a çıkmam icap ediyordu. Oradan, derneğimizden dedim ben Mısıra gidiyorum. Bana yardımcı olun Hemen orda bana bir tercüman ayarladılar. Gittiğimde hemen önüme düşüp iki gün dolaştılar. Tabi mutlu olduk. Dernek bana böyle bir eleman ayarladı diye değil, sivil toplum dediğiniz şeyin bir yardımlaşma anlamında bir şey olduğunu gördük (RG3).

⁶⁴ Üye alırken sadece kıstasımız, etnik yapıya hiç bakmıyoruz, siyasi görüşe de bakmıyoruz. Bizim aradığımız ticari hayatının düzgün olması, çekinde senesinde bir probleminin olmaması, tek kıstas bu.

It seems that the religious people in Turkey have found a proper atmosphere to express themselves through these civil society activities more efficiently. In a way, the new Muslim identity is being represented through these business associations. Compared with the religious activities in the past, it puts more emphasis on the people's actions as setting a good example, rather than didactic teaching of Islamic principles. Arguably, it can be said that the Islamic notion of "serving the religion/God" (*dine hizmet*) has been transformed and re-interpreted within the contemporary framework. Gulen's influence is quite obvious in the emergence of this new business class. In an interview, published in Gulen's web site, he suggests his sympathisers go to foreign countries all over the world and seek business opportunities (herkul.org, 2009). He regards this struggle as praying. The following is Gulen's suggestions from the same interview, to the business people in Turkey:

Attitudes and behaviours are [good] enough. These are the best guides. They will test you for one year, two years; [and say] these people (Turkish business people) are making *halal* money and refraining from the *haram*⁶⁵, they are fair and following the law, they are acting in a good manner, and opening their hearts to everyone... In my opinion, this would be more efficient, rather than reading/preaching thousands of books (referring to didactic teaching of the religion). By doing so, you will escape from the perception that sees you as religious missionaries; and you will be more convincing. [My translation from Turkish S.U.] (herkul.org, 2009).

This new attitude should be understood within the context of Bourdieu's (1990) *Habitus*. As the concept refers to the system of dispositions, Bourdieu regards *habitus* as the key element of social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1990). In a sense,

Mesela bizim tüm partilerden hatta yönetim kurulunda bile her partiden üyemiz var AKP, CHP, Kürdü de var hepsi var.

S.U.- Dindarlık bir ölçü mü?

Hayır bakın dedim ya bizim aramızda her siyasi görüşten etnik gruptan insan var. Alkol kullanan var sigara içen var. Ben kullanmıyorum ama kullananlar var (RG4).

⁶⁵ In the context of economic activities, the Islamic notion of *helal-haram* appears to be used for the replacement of "business ethics". In the above mentioned quotations, the concept of "making halal money" can be considered in this respect as well.

Turkey has started to experience the emergence of a new Muslim *habitus* which is a central element in regulating the practices that make up social life. However, the concept of *habitus* should also be considered within the theoretical framework of this study which regards the constitution of society from the *structuration theory* perspective. This study argues that religious actors have always been re-interpreting the religion and this new structure creates new Muslim individuals. It can be said that some broadminded religious scholars, academics and opinion leaders might have played a crucial role in this transformation. Therefore, as Giddens (1984) suggests, the relation between agent and structure is not a single-way causal relation. It seems more like a circular relationship co-creating each other. In particular, while religious sources and rules are shaping individuals, the religious actors produce and re-produce the social structure through their social practices. Thus, this study reads the religious transformation in Turkey within *the theory of structuration*. The pious group seems very pleased with the 1980s liberal policies and the new Islamic discourse. The following is a proper summary of how these people feel about the changes taking place within the last two decades:

Yes, it has changed. And this is a positive change. They (the pious people) realised that life, wealth, and big business do not exist in Istanbul only. They saw that if they work hard they can acquire them here as well. It was triggered by Özal (referring 1980s liberal politics) and it keeps going. After the 80s this nation has woken up. No one can make them go back to sleep anymore (RKY10)⁶⁶.

Especially, using the metaphor of “waking up” seems quite challenging. It appears that the recent developments in Turkey have been regarded as renaissance of the country. “Turkey is changing; nothing will be the same as it was” is a common expression among the pious business people. It is observed that being part of this

⁶⁶ Oldu. Hem de müspet bir şekilde oldu. Hayatın, zenginliğin işadamlığının sadece İstanbul içinde olmadığını, çalışırsan gayret edersen muvaffak olacağını gördü. ... Rahmetli Turgut Özal’ın iktidar olmasıyla bu harekete geçti ve devam ediyor. Artarak devam ediyor. Bu millet uyandı artık, 80li yıllardan sonra, kimse uyutamaz artık (RKY10).

renewal and contributing to these developments motivates the pious business people and gives them a unique satisfaction. In fact, it sounds misleading calling these activities a purely religious movement. At the most, it might be called a different form of religious movement which never existed before. Through the variety of educational institutions, business associations and other civil society organisations; all segments of the society are becoming active actors in policy making. In other words, Turkey is becoming a real society in terms of being more democratic and pluralist. Maybe it is because Gulen's ideas are also appreciated by some secular circles, especially the liberal democrats. This tendency was also apparent in some secular business people in the sample of this study. For example, SA2, SG4 and SG5 declared they have sympathy for the movement.

As discussed in chapter three, the place of religion in the public sphere has been a controversial issue for almost a century in Turkey. Lately this debate, which was swinging between strict secularism and strict religiosity in the past, has now been shaped around *the Gulen movement*. It has been argued that this movement has come into prominence with its moderate ideas and non-politic discourse (i.e. Unal and Williams, 2000; Yavuz, 2003; Yilmaz, 2005). However, it is also known that the movement, from the very beginning, puts strong emphasis on creating a “golden generation (*altin nesil*)” which is believed will help Turkey in taking its deserved place among the other developed countries⁶⁷. This utopia seems to be the basic motive behind the activities of this movement. Based on the qualitative data obtained from the interviews and the observations, the concepts of “golden generation” and “developed Turkey” become prominent in the discourse of the religious group in this study. The pious business people frequently mentioned the educational activities of this movement in Turkey and abroad, and they proclaimed to be happy being part of such a community through financing those activities. Although these educational institutions and the other civil society activities of the movement do not promote any religious ideas, it appears that they regard such secular tools as means to please God. In a sense, serving the country's interest has been considered as sort of serving the religion by the pious business people. In this piece, the notion of *hizmet* (service)

⁶⁷ Arguably, this objective, in a sense, could be regarded as political aim of the movement at macro level.

gains special importance. This concept has been frequently used by the religious group in two senses; one is referring to the actual meaning as “serving” community and country, and the other refers to the name of the movement as *the hizmet*. Especially in the meetings, I observed that the notion of *hizmet* attributes broad sense of responsibility to the religious business people. Besides providing spiritual gratification, these meetings seem to play a crucial role in reminding business people of their social responsibilities as all the activities of the movement, which requires financing, are planned in these meetings. Additionally, the scope of the concept of responsibility also seems extended by including transparency and honesty. It appears that honest business history and transparency are the prerequisite conditions to be part of this community and these virtues are also regarded as part of responsibility to God.

To sum up, contemporary Islamic understanding within the Turkish context appears as a source of moral energy in terms of creating a new type of business person. Based on the qualitative interview data and my observation, newly emerging pious business people give a strong sense of independence of business thinking from Islamic practices, if we set aside their minor reservations (such as not trading religiously forbidden products or receiving bank interest). It is hard to claim that these business people take Islamic principles as reference in their daily business practices and decision making process. Meantime, it can be said that they regard Islamic moral principles as a source of understanding what it is to be a good business person.

5.5 Turkey’s New Entrepreneurs

In the second chapter I tried to demonstrate the possible links between economic activities and religion. One aspect was the relationship between religious beliefs and enterprise culture and entrepreneurship. As it was discussed in chapter three, the concepts of enterprise and entrepreneurship are relatively new in the Turkish context. By the early years of the Republic, the state wished to create an entrepreneurial class. However, considering the fact that there had been no bourgeoisie in the time of the

Ottoman Empire, inevitably, the new Republic attempted to create its own business class by supporting the people who were close to the founding ideology of the state. This ideology was strictly secular leaving almost no place for the religious rituals in the public sphere. Although, the state managed to create rich business elites; it was difficult to call them “middle class” entrepreneurs. They became rich, but not because of inventing something new or taking the risk of the investment or producing better quality products; it was because of the well established relationships with the state (see Bugra, 1994). Consequently, the state, with help of state controlled economic system, had become the “boss”, and the business people acted like the state officers, not entrepreneurs.

By the 1980s the state changed its policy from state-oriented economy to the free market. No one claims that it was a smooth transition or liberal ideas settled down perfectly at once (the Turkish state seems still to be suffering from its paternalist⁶⁸ relations with the state). However, it was the first time the Turkish state put serious efforts on the structural changes towards the liberal economic system. However, as Keat (1991) argued, structural changes (politics, law, legislation, etc) are not enough for creating an enterprise culture. It also requires moral renewal or change in the mentalities. For this reason, Carr (1998) argues that the concept of enterprise culture is given a privileged position because it is considered as shaping the way people think, feel and act within a business area.

Within the last two decades, it appears that a new type of ‘rich’ who has been transformed from being trades people to business people, from having small size workshops to big factories emerged. While keeping their religious values, they opened to the world by producing high quality products that can compete globally. Among the religious group, it is frequently mentioned that they do a few business trips abroad every year. It can be said that the religious businessmen associations, TUSKON and MUSIAD played a vital role in this expansion. Both organisations

⁶⁸ “Paternalism is the interference of a state or an individual with another person, against their will, and justified by a claim that the person interfered with will be better off or protected from harm. The issue of paternalism arises with respect to restrictions by the law such as anti-drug legislation, the compulsory wearing of seatbelts, and in medical contexts by the withholding of relevant information concerning a patient's condition by physicians. At the theoretical level it raises questions of how persons should be treated when they are less than fully rational” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/paternalism/>, viewed at 10.09.2009).

arrange business trips outside the country and help business people to meet foreign business people. Especially, the schools abroad which were established by the business people sympathising with the *Gulen movement* are the important advantages of these business people. A shoe producer, RG2 tells us how he started to do exporting to more than ten countries in Africa and the Middle East:

In TUSKON's Africa programme in Istanbul, we met some customers. And there are Turkish schools in Africa. The manager of one of these schools is a friend of mine. It happened through TUSKON.

Interviewer: Isn't it difficult to receive the payments from the less developed countries?

In fact, what we really trust are the [Turkish] schools. They know students and their families as well... their financial situation, whether they are trustworthy or not... Therefore, it gives us some lights, some directions. It is also contributes to the business (RG2)⁶⁹.

Beside big scale companies, SMEs too, follow up the international business fairs and expos, and they demonstrate immense enthusiasm in it. In this respect, the seminars and workshops organised by the religious business associations seem quite beneficial. A MUSIAD member, RKN15 mentions about how these sorts of organisations expanded their horizons:

Before being a MUSIAD member, how would I have known about flying abroad? Before the membership, I didn't know anything about exporting.

⁶⁹ Onun [TUSKON] İstanbul'da Afrika programında tanıştığımız müşteriler oldu. Bir de orda Türk okulları var, okulun başındaki arkadaş birebir tanıdığımız bir arkadaştı. Böyle düşünürseniz Tuskon'un neticesinde gerçekleşti.

SU- O zaman biraz güven esasına mı dayalı? Zor olmuyor mu o tarz az gelişmiş ülkelere ödemeleri almak?

-Esas bizim güvendiğimiz hadise okullar. Türk okulları orda bir eğitim müessesesi açmışlar insanı eğitiyorlar, dolayısıyla eğittikleri insanın ailesini de tanıyorlar, iyi kötü ekonomik durumlarını da tanımış oluyorlar, iyi kötü insanların fitratını da tanımış oluyorlar. Yani bu bize biraz şey veriyor ışık veriyor yön veriyor. Aynı zamanda isimize de yarıyor yani (RG2).

Now they organise educational seminars and meetings [for the business people]. It's beyond my horizon. I mean it contributes to the country (RKN15)⁷⁰.

As the role “puritan ethic” played in the consolidation of creating an enterprise culture in the UK (see chapter 2 for further discussion), it appears that the Anatolian understanding of Islamic ethic also plays a comparable role in the Turkish experiences. It seems that the “Islamic ethical” principles in business, such as hardworking, responsibility, flexibility and solidarity are facilitating the emergence of an enterprise culture in Turkey.

Additionally if the relevant entrepreneurship literature is examined, one can realise some parallels regarding the futures of entrepreneurial behaviours of pious people in Turkey. In the research titled *The Enterprising Man*, Collins et al. (1964) reached this conclusion: Entrepreneurs (1) are in distress from lack of problem resolution; (2) are in great need for autonomy and therefore uncomfortable with authority figures; (3) prefer patriarchal relationships with their subordinates; (4) have a high level of anxiety and self-destructiveness. Especially, desiring to be independent, preferring patriarchal relationships are quite common characteristics among the both groups, religious and the secular. Moreover, the majority of the pious group is coming from self-employed families and they are mostly less educated. It supports Newcomer’s (1961) and Kets de Vries’s (1977) arguments which claim that entrepreneurs mostly come from, one way or another, self-employed families. During the interviews, I witnessed many similar stories: There is a small family business conducted relatively primitively. Then the son takes the business over and improves it by running it more professionally. There are some other studies as well suggesting that entrepreneurs frequently belong to religious and minority groups (Hagen, 1962; Kasdan, 1965; Robert and Wainer, 1966). However, some secular business people also have similar

⁷⁰ Şimdi ben Müsiad’a üye olmadan uçmayı (yurt dışına) ne bilirdim ben. Üye olmadan ihracatın i sini bilmiyordum ki nerden bileceğim. Eh, şimdi toplantılar yapılıyor, eğitim seminerleri yapılıyor. Ben üye olmadan önce nereden bilebilirdim ki. Benim ufkumu aşmış işte. Yani ülkeye bir fayda sağlamış. Kuranlardan Allah razı olsun (RKN15).

stories. I should note that, one more time, this study is not seeking causal relationships. In other words, being religious especially in the Turkish context, does not signify any superiority in terms of entrepreneurship. What strikes our attention from the qualitative data is how the new understanding of Islam in Turkey facilitates the entrepreneurial activities. For this reason, the case of Turkey properly matches with Weber's thesis.

Weber stresses the crucial role that Calvinist Protestantism played in the formation of "rational capitalism". The history of capitalism is older than that of Protestantism. However, Weber (2004) argues that the puritan ethic; which encourages a disciplined and frugal life style, and being hard-working as religious obligations; facilitated a distinct form of capitalism that is called "rational capitalism", namely reproductive entrepreneurship with the rational outcome of developed business. His main argument was that social formations of business development were, by chance, in harmony with the practices of Calvinism. Similarly, it seems that the Anatolian interpretation of Islam also was in harmony with the post-1980s liberal policies. Therefore, it can be said that religion here plays a catalyst role rather than a causal one. The Turkish case might be an example of how the pious Turkish business people evolved their religious ideas through the liberal reforms and made them in harmony with the capitalist system; but it would be misleading if it is taken as religiosity creates successful entrepreneurs. It can be said that, beside the rich elites, the whole nation has gone through the same way, no matter how religious they are. One of the pious businessmen, RKY13 explains this in a different point of view:

Interviewer: Do you think the attitude to business among religious people has changed in the last two decades? How do the pious people regard business activities now?

-This kind of separation is not logical. If you say how the religious people views business; then the question of how non-religious people perceive business emerges. I don't look at in this way. In truth, with the era of [Turgut] Özal, Turkey broke the chains surrounding it. Frankly speaking, after the 2001 economic crisis, with the big help of this current government

(referring to the pro-Islamic AKP government), *Turkish businessmen have realised that they have to expand abroad. Through this the export has reached \$100 billion [US] Dollars from 33 billion. ... Therefore, it's not about religious or non-religious. The whole barriers blocking Turkey have been removed (RKY13)*⁷¹.

It can be said that the whole of Turkish society benefited from this period. It is true that the appearance of the pious people has been increased within the last two decades. However, it should not be interpreted as the “triumph” of Islam. Rather it might be read as the emergence of the first Turkish “bourgeoisie” facilitated by the religion. Naturally, the recent developments seem to have similar influences on the secular people too. As SA1 notes peasant Anatolians regardless of religious affiliation gradually became business people:

*We were all peasants once. My father learnt this profession from an Armenian. I mean trading/business is a new thing for all Turks. We all just started to know about doing business (SA1)*⁷².

5.6 Observations and Discussion

In this chapter, I tried to offer a different angle for assessing the phenomenon of the pious business people in Turkey. In doing so, this chapter attempted to understand

⁷¹ S.U. : Son 20 yılda muhafazakâr kesimin ticarete, para kazanmaya bakışında bir değişiklik görüyor musunuz siz?

-Böyle bir ayırım yapmak bence pek mantıklı değil. Dindar insan nasıl bakıyor diyince dindar olmayan insan nasıl bakıyor gibi bir soru da doğuyor. Ben olaya öyle bakmıyorum. Aslında Türkiye'nin önündeki zincirlerin kırıldığını gördük biz, Özal dönemiyle birlikte. Ondan sonra, belli bir yatay seyirden sonra, açık söylemek gerekirse 2001 krizinden sonra, bu hükümetin de büyük katkılarıyla, Türk sanayicisi artık yurt dışına açılması gerektiğini gördü. İhracat 33 milyar dolarlardan 100 milyar dolara böyle geldi. ... Dolayısıyla, dindar, dindar olmayan kesim değil, Türkiye'nin önündeki komple engeller kaldırıldı (RKY13).

⁷² Biz koylu rençber insanlardık hep. Babam bu işi bir Ermeni'den öğrenmiş. Yani ticaret Türkler'de yeni bir şey. Hepimiz ticareti yeni öğreniyoruz (SA1).

where to seek the Islamic influence on economic activities. According to the qualitative data, the concept of “the Islamic work ethic” which is interpreted with the contemporary meaning seems influential on the daily lives of the pious business people in Turkey. However, this Islamic work ethic or any other Islam-related ideas, concerning the economic system, do not appear as significant factors in the emergence of the new Islamic business class. The Islamic moral teachings have been regarded as the source of ethical behaviour in the sight of the religious business people. In a sense, the concept of “making *halal* money” has been used on behalf of “business ethics”. The meaning of “halal” seems broadened in this respect and become an umbrella concept. For example, the attitudes and behaviours such as not cheating in trading, measuring accurately, being an honest person, doing charity, are regarded under the concept of *halal*.

Although the analysis of the qualitative data spreads comprehensively, but in particular, this chapter examined the concept of the “Islamic work ethic” and the link between Islam and economy/business in a critical perspective. As the findings indicate, the so-called “Islamic” work ethic values are mostly shaped around five principles: Hardworking as an Islamic duty, good will (intentions), responsibility, bounty and balancing the life. Although these values themselves cannot explain the emergence and the success of these pious business people they appear as providing some sort of moral energy for the business. Additionally, the analysis of qualitative data demonstrates that the pious businesspeople keep themselves distant from the notion of an “Islamic economics” or any sort of business model that Islam suggests. With the exception of some issues such as refraining from interest and not investing on religiously prohibited goods/services; they seem quite comfortable with the rational business environment secured by capitalism and the free market economy. However, some questions, such as social justice, environment and ethics, are raised by them as the defects of modern capitalism. But, these are internationally discussed matters as well. Therefore, it can be argued that rational capitalism with morals seems quite suitable for their business mentality and, in a sense, with Islam.

It would be misleading if it is claimed that the religious affiliation is the only reason for their increasing appearance and success. Without a doubt, 1980s liberal economy

politics played a vital role in this. Again, following the footsteps of Weber, it is a properly matching example of the *elective affinity*. Accidental developments in the society and their compatibility with each other are important factors in the Weberian sociology. In the Turkish context, we also observe that the religious transformation and economic liberalisation are occurring at the same time. More accurately, it might be argued that religious transition in Turkey finds an appropriate ground in the post-80s' liberal atmosphere. This is also mentioned by many religious business people as one of the reason for changing attitudes towards business in a positive way. I argue that the simultaneous meeting of both transformations, religious and economic, might play a role together in the emergence of this new business class. First of all, I should note that those so called 'Calvinist' or 'Puritan' values such as hard-work, honesty, credibility, play a crucial role in the pious business people's prosperity. Arslan's (2001) study, as mentioned earlier, is a proper indicator of this. Arslan applies his findings to the transformation of traditional Islam into a kind of entrepreneurial ideology.

It would be beneficial to analyse this transformation process a little more. In this respect, recalling chapter three (section 3.4) might be useful. That specific section talks about the transition of Islamic thought in Turkey and puts special emphasis on the ideas of famous Turkish economic historian Sabri Ulgener. Ulgener, sometimes referred to as the "Turkish Weber", stresses the necessity of investigating the main concern of the Sufi ideas⁷³. Ulgener emphasises that the basic concepts of Sufism do not necessarily mean leaving everything in the world. Rather he encourages the reader to understand the authentic meanings behind those concepts (see section 3.4). As it is observed, for the contemporary religious business people profile the Sufi terms do not facilitate laziness or other worldly fatalism any more; rather they have

⁷³ Sufism has an important influence over the Turkish understanding of Islam. Sufism could be summarized by the following terms: "*tevekkul*" (reliance; putting oneself in God's hands), "*dunya*" (worldliness) and "*zikr*" (remembrance of God). However, the perception and the interpretation of these terms have changed over time. According to Ulgener (1991) the concepts mentioned had separated from their original meaning as being otherworldliness. In the early years of Turkish republic, many Sufi institutions had been closed by Ataturk on the ground that those institutions (*Tekkes*: Dervish schools) were encouraging laziness, indolence and were open to abuse. At the same period, Turkey chose a strict form of secularism for its development and modernization project. Ulgener finds understandable the reasons for closing *tekkes* down. The misinterpretation of Sufism which defined the late Ottoman *tekkes*, according to him, was one of the reasons for the economic disintegration of the Ottoman Empire (Ulgener, 1991).

become a source of moral energy exclusively for the pious business people. It can be said that post-1980s liberal policies and the transformation of Islamic thought, which has become more apparent in the last two decades, together facilitate and encourage pious people being involved with economic activities more than ever. Based on the qualitative data of this research, I frequently observed that producing and manufacturing goods, creating new job opportunities, and more importantly, while doing all these, being involved with social responsibility projects have been regarded as a form of praying in the eyes of religious business people. It has mostly been justified by the Islamic notion of *niyet* (intentions or goodwill), namely arguing that ordinary activities turn into good deeds through goodwill. In terms of business ethics, this could be regarded as enlightened self-interest too. Since the Islamic moral principles in this case; such as working hard, honesty, fairness, producing/manufacturing goods, providing job opportunities, and so on; appear as humanitarian or universally accepted values within the modern capitalist order. It is a fact that most of these values have been shared by secular business people as well. In this piece, it is worth mentioning the similarities and the difference between the religious and the secular business people.

Some Comparisons between the Religious and the Secular Groups

The findings of this research also imply that the Turkish entrepreneurship culture has its own characteristics. Broadly speaking, it can be said that it is influenced by some traditional/religious values up to a point. However, it might be more accurate to talk about the “Anatolian/Turkish” culture which is a mixture of many different ethnic origins inherited from the Ottoman Empire, rather than the religion itself. In other words, it can be argued that these different ethnic backgrounds have created a collective cultural mosaic, known as ‘Anatolian culture’. In terms of business and management practices, some similarities become very apparent among the both groups. For example, it is quite common to prefer patriarchal personnel management among Turkish businesspeople regardless of religious convictions. This attitude seems more related to the Turkish tradition rather than religious conviction⁷⁴.

⁷⁴ Hofstede’s (2001) study also supports this argument to a degree suggesting that the Turkish culture shows collectivist structure and a high level of power distance. See Sargut (2001) for more discussion

Another similarity appears as strong enthusiasm for the liberal economic atmosphere. For instance, they all regard the state bureaucracy as a barrier for entrepreneurship, and they desire for less government intervention in business life. Additionally, they all show strong enthusiasm to do business in a more rational and professional way, which will be discussed further in the next chapter. These aspects could be regarded as the similarities between the two groups. As for the differences, the distinctions between the two groups do appear as clear cut unique characteristics. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, all of the secular business people, except one, declare themselves as Muslim too. Perhaps it can be argued that the traditionally inherited cultural values, including religion, have been shaping the business mentality and ethical values of Turkish people. Sometimes, people from both groups even refer to the same religious concepts when they are asked. However, the narrative discourse analysis helped us to distinguish some differences even when they are referring to the same concepts.

For example, ‘Making *halal* money’, giving importance to the work ethic in business and involving charity/discretionary activities are also commonly shared values in the Anatolian business culture. However, for the secular group these notions do not signify religious meanings. For instance, making *halal* money for a secular business person mostly refers to not cheating in business only. The same notion for a religious business person deals with variety of aspects in business, such as not receiving bank interest or usury, not trading religiously forbidden goods/services (selling alcohol, gambling, etc), for some, even not investing in stock market are regarded in the scope of making *halal* money. It appears that, for the pious people religion is the main source regulating different aspects of life including business. As for the seculars, it has been mostly regarded as matter of conscience and part of the culture, therefore religion is not regarded as the determinant of business life, and it plays no or a very limited role in business decision making of secular people. Another important difference appears as an identity issue. It is no surprise that the religious people define their identity as Muslim first, while seculars put strong emphasis on the principles of *laiklik* (Turkish secularism) in terms of separating their religious

around Hofstede’s thesis on the Turkish sample, particularly focusing on the cultural differences and management perspective.

beliefs from their worldly activities. For the pious group finding their identities in the Quranic verses or in the Islamic principles seems crucial. This attitude shows some parallels with the PWE and the concept of “vocation” or idea of “calling”. Especially with the notion of *hizmet*, they find themselves responsible to represent Islamic moral principles in their business life, and consider it as a kind of duty. On the other hand, for the secular business people religion and religious beliefs have totally place not interfering business life. Surprisingly, this attitude of secular people appears more traditionalistic in some senses. For instance, among the secular group, the charity methods for helping poor people usually appears in a traditional way as finding someone poor and helping him/her by hand. For the pious group on the other hand, as mentioned earlier, these sorts of activities have been regarded as part of their social responsibilities and done in a more systematised and institutionalised way. It would not be exaggeration if it is argued that the religious business people are far ahead of the secular group in terms of social responsibility. The above mentioned Islamic moral principles as moral energy seem to be the most influential factor on this behaviour.

I, as a secular researcher, find this distinction normal because of several reasons. For the secular groups in Turkey, it is usually argued that religious beliefs should remain within the confine of people’s conscience as a sort of tradition. Perhaps, this has been regarded as the most appropriate argument with the self-styled secular structure of Turkey against traditional Islam, which has been considered as a regressive ideology. On the other hand, this approach seems quite problematic to the pious groups in Turkey. While agreeing the constraints of traditional understanding of religion, they seem putting great effort to change this perception. Previously mentioned discretionary activities of the pious group could be regarded in this respect. However, it should be noted that this changing perception, at the same time, creates a transformed new Muslim generations. Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that this transformation has been accelerated within the last two decades, in other words, in the post-1980s liberal atmosphere.

The role of liberal politics in the 1980s has frequently been stressed by the researchers interested in the pious businesspeople phenomenon in Turkey. The 80s

liberal policies have also been mentioned by the pious business people as a crucial factor in the emergence of Anatolian capital. It is widely believed that after the 1980s the religious movements expanded substantially and had more power than ever before. To some extent this might be applied to the religious leanings of the 80s Prime Minister, Turgut Özal. However, more importantly it can be claimed that transforming religious ideas or so called “Turkish/Anatolian Islam” find the free market economy as a suitable atmosphere to express itself. A number of private schools and the media institutions which were conducted by religious groups increased dramatically. Presumably, the new Muslim prototype regards the liberal system as the best way to express his/her transformed identity, *the modern Muslim*. In a Weberian perspective, this can be regarded as a sort of ‘elective affinity’. For this reason, I argue that interpreting the pious Anatolian business people phenomenon as the result of ‘Islamic’ work ethic would be misleading. Weber himself never claims that the Protestant ethic created the rational capitalism, and he finds such a causal relation as meaningless (Weber, 2004). As for the example of Calvinism in Weber’s study, it can be claimed that the new form of Islam in Turkey facilitated the emerging of this new business class providing a sort of moral and entrepreneurial energy to them.

6. RATIONALIZATION, SECULARISATION AND THE WORK ETHIC WITHIN THE TURKISH CONTEXT

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will investigate the concepts of rationalisation and secularisation through the context of the work ethic and the Turkish business people. Gradual rationalisation of the work ethic in Turkey, and the pious business people's adaptation of it will be the focal point of this chapter. It will pay special attention to the post-1980s liberal policies and the critical liberal discourse which is influential among the pious people in Turkey. Although, it might sound as a Marxist analysis⁷⁵, this chapter too will adhere to the theoretical framework of the study, which is shaped around Weber's Protestant ethic thesis and Giddens' *theory of Structuration*. In this respect, the chapter demonstrates how the new Muslim work ethic is being rationalised through giving importance to the several business-related concepts such as institutionalization, free market orientation and education. The qualitative data shows that there is huge overlap between the secular and religious business people in terms of how to deal with business activities. Lastly, the chapter regards the rationalisation of the work ethic as a part of the secularisation of Islam through involvement with worldly activities.

6.2 Rationalisation of the Muslim Work Ethic

The concept of rationalisation is the key notion in Weber's Protestant ethic thesis. If Weber's Protestant ethic thesis is examined, the most complicated investigative aim of the study is represented as the establishment of the *rational conduct of life (Lebensführung)* on the basis of the idea of *calling* that is one of the "constitutive elements of the modern capitalist spirit, and not this alone, but of the spirit of modern culture" (Hennis, 2000:10). It is widely argued that the puritan ethic

⁷⁵ The general perception of Marxist analysis argues that the material relations (the infrastructure) determine the superstructure (religion, culture, ideology, etc.).

gradually led to rationalisation and finally secularisation in the West (i.e. Turner, 1974; Giddens, 1977; Render, 2001). Render (2001) regards the secular form of modern capitalism as the unintended result of the Protestant reformation. Following in Weber's footsteps, this section is going to focus on the gradual rationalisation of the Muslim work ethic; since recent developments could be regarded as the reform or renewal in Islamic thought in Turkey (see chapter two for the discussion around the reforms in Islam). However, it should be noted that Weber does not suggest any linear development process for all nations. Rather he focuses on how a particular way of life shaped a particular sort of capitalism in the West. Therefore, some similarities between the rationalisation of Christian thought and that of Islam do not necessarily mean that the Islam will experience the same in the Turkish context. It only supports the appropriateness of applying Weber's theory in this particular context.

Although using the terms "religion" and "rationality" in the same sentence might sound paradoxical⁷⁶, it appears that the transformed religious beliefs, in the words of the pious business people, the "true/real Islam" leads them to act in a more rational way in dealing with business activities. In the new Islamic discourse, the concept of the "true/real Islam" is frequently used by the pious business people. The concept has been used in the sense of what Weber calls "disenchantment", namely, separating the religion from superstitious beliefs and misunderstandings that were traditionally inherited from the past. Albeit this newly emerging interpretation claims to return to the origins of the religion, it still has to be new. Since it is difficult to know about authentic Islam precisely within its historical context, even if known it is impossible to repeat it in the same circumstances. Therefore, it would be more accurate if we talk about an "interpretation" of Islam, rather than the "true/real Islam" (see introduction chapter for more discussion around using the concept of religion). Since this study takes religion as a structure in a Giddensian perspective, I argue that considering this newly emerging religious structure as "an interpretation" would make more sense in this case. In this respect, I will try to point out some

⁷⁶ The alleged dichotomy between religion and rationality or between tradition and modernity is a controversial issue. Many scholars argue that this dichotomy is not real (see Asad, 1993).

indicators of this gradual rationalisation and the new type of Muslim business people it produces.

6.2.1 Some Aspects of the ‘Rational’ Way of Thinking in Business

Rational way of thinking is a frequently used concept in organization studies and it can be defined as being logical or reasoning while making decisions. In general, it signifies providing rational or reasons behind thoughts or ideas, rather than emotions. However, in this research I use the concept of rationalisation in a broad sense as Weber does. According to Weber, the main characteristic of the capitalism of the modern business firm is based on a separation of business and personal assets and on an arrangement of risk and responsibility (Weber, 2004). In a sense he focuses on the transition from “economic traditionalism” to “economic system” which focuses on profit making in a more systematised way. This is how this study regards the concept of rationalisation. Naturally, contemporary free market economy promotes many different aspects of doing successful business in a more systematised way and inevitably they all require some rationales. In a Western context, this rationalisation process might be regarded as a historical event which is internalised by the Western business mentality. However, in the Turkish context, this study considers it as a new phenomenon, especially among the religious business people. This research does not intend to investigate all the aspects of this Islamic rationalisation in business. However, analysing the qualitative data, what captures the attention is the religious business people’s tendency towards being more rational and acting more professionally in business. In this respect, this attitude will be explained through some aspects of contemporary business mentality. Institutionalization, free market adaptation, and the importance of education are frequently mentioned by both groups in the sample.

In organization studies, the concept of institutionalization usually linked with certain act and behaviours within the organization (Sims, 1991). The term institutionalized act is defined where “a behaviour performed by two or more individuals, persists over time”, and “exists as a part of the daily functioning of the organization” (Sims,

1991:494). Therefore, it is concerned with the specific behaviour of the employees to create an organizational culture. This research does not intend to analyse how institutionalized the Turkish SMEs are. Rather, it regards the concept in a broader sense, namely conducting a business in a more professional way. In a sense, it represents the transition from being a traditional merchant/tradesman to a businessman or woman. What seizes the attention is the strong desire to have an institutionalized company or business. Obviously, we have insufficient data to understand how institutionalized their firms are, but during the conversations, the importance of this subject is frequently mentioned as a desirable goal. A kitchen appliance producer, RKN15 is a relatively less educated person holding a primary school degree only. However, his understanding of institutionalization is quite sophisticated:

I see the institutionalization of the company in this way: My mobile number is known; the personnel manager, the product manager... they all know my number. When I'm abroad, if my mobile doesn't ring for ten days, there is no problem. But, if they constantly ring and ask how to do this and that, there is a problem then. But, this (institutionalization) doesn't happen overnight. If you share it... and delegate the power and the authority and trust them, it happens (RKN15).⁷⁷

A secular businessman also stresses the importance of the institutionalization almost with the same expressions:

⁷⁷ Bir işyerinin kurumsallaşmasını şöyle telakki ediyorum. Benim cebim burada kayıtlıysa, personel müdürü satın almacı kimler varsa biliyorsa bunu. Ben yurt dışındayken 10 gün telefonum çalmıyorsa iyi diyorum yani problem yok. Ama işte aman Salim bey şu malı nereden alacağız şu ürün gelmedi ne yapacağız vs diyorsa burada bir sakatlık var yani. Ama bu bir anda olan bir şey değil. ... Eğer, paylaşırsanız oluyor yani. Güvenirsen yetki verirsen, bir de zarar etmelerine izin verirsen oluyor yani (RKN15).

I'm working towards setting up a more professional structure. What I've been trying to do for the last two years is institutionalization. I mean these processes would become up and running without me [presented] (SA3)⁷⁸.

In general, this attitude appears as being more professional in business activities. Building an institutional image and identity for companies, empowerment and reasoning have become a frequently used discourse especially among the religious business people. Meritocracy, specialism and professionalism are becoming strongly desired or sought criteria when hiring new personnel. In a way, it can be said that the traditional hiring criteria such as proximity, religiosity is shifting to a more rational way, and becoming a secondary level of importance. It is generally assumed that these pious business people usually prefer religious people when they hire and do business with only the people that they have the same religious affinity (I was also thinking the same way before the interviews). However, their responses do not support this presupposition at all.

Conversely, it is a captivating point that there is a strong emphasis on the secular premises of the business among the religious group. This attitude appears as one of the basic characteristics of new type Muslims, who are broadly pious in their personal lives, and broadly secular in business and other worldly activities. According to the interviews, when it is asked about the recruiting criteria that business people apply, without any exception, all secular business people regard religion as a personal matter and do not consider it as a hiring criterion. This attitude seems quite normal among the secular group. Surprisingly, the religious group also demonstrate similar attitudes when they hire new personnel. However, they express themselves with different arguments. The following quotation is a typical rationale of the religious group.

Let me make it clear. I like seeing religious people/employees in the trading and business world. It provides greater security. But, we don't take it as a

⁷⁸ Daha profesyonel bir yapı kurmaya yönelik çalışıyorum. Son iki yılda yapmaya çalıştığım şeyde kurumsallaşmak. ... Yani ben olmadan bu işler yürüyecek hale gelmeli (SA3).

hiring criterion. We try to apply business rules. You know, when it comes to money, people might change. (RKY13)⁷⁹

Similar to the above expression, many pious business people, like the secular group, seek professionalism, qualification and meritocracy as recruiting criteria. However, it seems that religiosity is still regarded as virtue. Albeit it has secondary importance it is yet a desirable characteristic that religious people ask for. More importantly, the definition of religiosity seems transformed as well. In the eyes of pious business people, it is not about praying five times a day and not consuming alcohol. Although I needed to use these characteristics as indicators of religiosity when describing the sample of this study, it seems that the meaning of being religious/pious is beyond that. Being an honest person, doing one's job well, commitment to the firm and even meritocracy have been regarded in the scope of being pious.

Therefore, again, we are witnessing the re-production of the religious perception (the structure) in a Giddensian way. It is a very common understanding that, in the eyes of the religious group, the source of all good manners, ethical behaviours and attitudes is the religion, Islam. Especially Prophet Muhammad's life and his teachings are frequently referred to as guidance. For instance, the above mentioned person applies his behaviour to the sayings of the Prophet, and he continues:

There is a hadith (Prophet's saying) that says 'do not operate your business with people according to people's piousness in religion, but tie it (your business) on written agreements'. This is what we are trying to do. (RKY13)⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Ben açıkça söyleyeyim, gerek ticaret, gerek iş hayatında bir insanın dindar olması hoşuma gidiyor, daha güven sağlıyor; ama sırf bir kriter olarak almıyoruz. Ama araştırıyoruz, ticari kuralları uygulamaya çalışıyoruz. Olabiliyor, yani insan çiğ süt emmiştir derler ya. Para işin içine girince insan değişebiliyor.

⁸⁰ Hadis-i şerif de var: İnsan namazına bakarak, ibadetine bakarak ticaretinizi yapmayın, yazılı kurallara bağlayın diyor. Ona dikkat etmeye çalışıyoruz.

In a sense, it can be argued that secular, in other words the worldly aspects of the religion are becoming more apparent in the Turkish understanding of Islam; especially in terms of business activities. I received similar answers when I asked about the people they do business with most. Opposing the common assumption, the religious group frequently claims that they do business with everyone who meets their business rules. The above mentioned prophet's saying was frequently stressed in this respect. Additionally, they show no hesitation doing business with non-Muslims, and foreign countries. Attending the relevant business expositions in different countries, following the recent developments in their sector and applying all the necessary means to do successful business, are the common characteristics of these pious people. As Ulgener (2006) predicted, yesterday's Muslim traders who did not like rational thinking and book keeping are shifting to the new type of Muslim trader who acts in a more systematised way in business.

Additionally, this increased interest in doing business has been legitimised by showing the Prophet Mohammad as a guiding example. When it is asked, they promptly give an example of the prophet: "well, Prophet Mohammad was a merchant too"⁸¹. In a way, this can be regarded as shifting attitude, seeing Prophet Mohammad as a merchant rather than a warrior. It gives us a new picture of Islam which is more business oriented, rather than seeking political power for Islamic revolution or any other state administration roles. This can also be considered as the reflexion of changing attitudes from the political, in a way from radical Islam towards a moderate Islam in Turkey.

As discussed in the literature review chapter, Western capitalism, for a long time, was seen as hostile by the religious circles in Turkey. Political Islam might be the main reason for this. However, after the 1990s, this view started to evolve gradually by Turkish business people's expanding into the wider world and the emergence of Anatolian entrepreneurs. In a sense, the idea of "wild capitalism" gradually evolved to the free market economic system which was thought compatible with Islam.

⁸¹ It is a historical fact that Mohammad spent considerable amount of his life as a merchant in Mecca.

Arguably, it can be said that this transformation comprises almost all the segments of the Turkish society, including the seculars. Therefore, the idea claims that the 1980s Özal era created a religious business class (Bulut, 1997) would be misleading. It might be more accurate if it is said that the private businesses and initiatives, as a whole, blossomed in Turkey after the 1980s. Just as many secular business people I interviewed declared themselves coming from a leftist (*solcu*)⁸² background, which is sometimes used as a synonym with being a secular person in the Turkish context. These secular business people also emerged in the same period. However, it is a fact that the majority of Turkish society is somewhat religious and conservative, especially the Anatolian cities. Therefore, it is quite normal that the appearance of religious business people has increased in Turkey. Naturally, the religious business people's exposure to a free market economy and blending it with their traditional/religious values has also occurred simultaneously. This sudden emergence might be one of the reasons why some secular groups feel uncomfortable with the religious people. This will be addressed in the following sections around the discussion regarding the understanding of secularism principle in Turkey.

Arguably, it can be claimed that the mainstream religious people in Turkey have made their own peace with modernity (namely with the Western values⁸³), and its economic aspects. In this respect, the perception towards the free market economy gains special attention. Interestingly, the pious group defines the free market economy as quite compatible with the Islamic value system:

I still don't understand the difference of free market economy from Islam. Maybe our economic system is the free market economy. Our economic system is based on competition and quality, [it's an economic system] thinking about the environment and not harming human health (RKY11)⁸⁴.

⁸² In the Turkish context, the meaning of leftism has unique context differing from its Western understanding. It is mostly regarded as defending the founding ideology of the Turkish Republic, namely an authoritarian *Kemalism* and the idea of nation-state, rather than the universalist aspects of leftism (see Karpas, 1966; Gole, 1997).

⁸³ The concept of "Western values" has been used as globally shared universal values of democracy and the free market which are accepted as the main characteristics of developed countries.

⁸⁴ Serbest piyasa ekonomisinin İslam'dan ne farkı olduğunu da hala anlamış değilim. Belki de bizim ekonomik sistemimiz serbest piyasa ekonomisi. Rekabete dayalı, kaliteye dayalı, çevreyi düşünen, insan sağlığına zararı olmayan bir ekonomik yapı bizimki. (RKY11).

However, it should be noted that this adaptation is not entirely a copy-and-paste of Western values. It is more like creating an internal ethic which is also compatible with modernity. As Giddens (1991) notes, modernity requires constant examination and reformulation of social practices. In this sense, the concept of reflexivity gains special importance. From the perspective of structuration theory, actors are both outcomes and vehicles of the structure. In this respect, while the religious people were evolving with the influence of post-1980s liberal discourse, they also produced a new understanding of Islam which shows almost no resemblance with the political one which was the popular ideology of Islamic trends in the 70s and 80s of Turkey . To a degree, as in the “reflexive modernisation” thesis (Kuhn, 2006), these newly emerging religious people become both the outcome of large-scale changes, like post-1980 effect, and the vehicles by which actors navigate individuating modern Islamic structure.

At this point, for example, education becomes an important aspect of the newly emerging religious business class. In the context of the secularist group, there is no need to mention about the importance of education since it is one of the core concepts of the *Kemalist* modernisation project in Turkey. All of the secular business people regard education as the most important aspect in creating ethical, hardworking entrepreneurs in Turkey. Education is an important factor in the eyes of religious people too. It is generally used in a broad sense covering all kinds of education including formal school education and acquiring business-related skills and abilities from courses or seminars. It is a captivating point that none of the religious people I interviewed send their children to the religious schools (Imam Hatip)⁸⁵ run by the government to raise educated imams for mosques. They rather prefer ordinary high schools or private colleges which provide secular education. They do not confine their children’s education with a college degree only, they also send them abroad, mostly the European countries and the USA, to get a master’s

⁸⁵ These “Imam Hatip” schools have for a long time been regarded as the background of political Islam in Turkey. After 1997 post-modern military coup, the graduates of these schools have not been allowed to go and study any university subjects other than theology.

degree and learn a foreign language. While stressing the importance of education, RKY13 also refers to Western style modern education as a necessary means:

The new generation must receive very good education. Especially the industrialists must raise their own children very well through these sorts of movements (referring to the Gulen movement and its educational activities). I'm telling you clearly, I'm not refraining from any sacrifice regarding the education of my own children. [Sending them to] America, private school... [I do] whatever is necessary. At the end, the industry will be developed with the educated people. Everything depends on education (RKY13)⁸⁶.

Said Nursi and his largest follower, the *Gulen movement* seem quite influential on the importance of education. Gulen himself frequently stresses the three troubles of Turkey as “ignorance”, “poverty” and “dissension” referring to Nursi (Akman, 2004). Nursi’s whole collection of writings (*Risale-i Nur Kulliyati*) as well attempts to prove the existence of God and accurateness of Islamic teachings (faith, prophecy, the hereafter and so on) in a scientific point of view. Therefore, his school of thought sees scientific knowledge as an essential component of raising *true* believers emphasising the concept of “actualised faith (*tahkiki iman*)” (Nursi, 1992). During the interviews, it was possible to catch this influence among the pious group:

Interviewer: What would be the best atmosphere or environment for creating ethical, hardworking, smart entrepreneurs?

Does a bird fly with one wing only? If it has two wings, it does very well. Now, our people have been raised with one wing only (referring to the secular education system); then a materialist generation emerged, and it didn't work. It was the reason we started to lay a foundation for schools in

⁸⁶ Yeni neslin çok iyi eğitim alması gerekli. Özellikle sanayiciler kendi çocuklarını ve özellikle bu tür hareketlerle Türkiye'nin gençliğinin çok iyi yetiştirilmesi lazım. Ben açıkça söylüyorum, kendi çocuklarım içinde eğitimleri konusunda hiçbir fedakârlıktan kaçınmama taraftarıyım. Amerika, özel okul... ne gerekliyse. Sanayi bilgili ve eğitilmiş insanların sırtında kalkınacak sonuçta. Yani tamamen ben her şeyi eğitime bağlıyorum. (RKY13).

1980s to raise a generation with both sides (referring to being well educated in religion and science). It is to raise a generation which is respecting the country and the nation, not selfish, and also successful with physics and chemistry (referring to modern science). This is the only way [to create ethical, hardworking entrepreneurs]. (RG4)⁸⁷.

It is obvious that they give importance to education, but, as it can be inferred from the quotation, religion is seen as the only possible way of raising good generations or ethical entrepreneurs, in the eyes of the pious group. However, it should be noted that the pious people's new generation who are more open to the world, especially to the West, will be the carrier of a new interpretation of Islam. In a sense, the more they are involved with the West the more open-minded they become, gradually overcoming the old prepossession regarding the West by producing a new Islamic discourse. Internalising the modern western values has been the main characteristic of the secular groups in Turkey for a long time. Recently, the pious people have also met with the Western values through Turkey's rising interaction with the world after the 80s. However, there is a captivating difference between the two groups. Especially for the strict secularist people in Turkey, Western values are usually regarded only as a way of life, such as the Western education system, Western dress codes, music and so on. But, as for the religious people's adaptation to Western values, it shows some differences. Therefore, the understanding of secularism principle in Turkey differs among these two groups. This is what the following sections will be discussing. Before moving to the different perception of secularism in Turkey, I will finish this section mentioning a well known "Islamic holding companies" experience and the lesson religious people learned from this experience.

⁸⁷ Tek kanatlı bir kuş uçar mı? Ama iki kanadı olsa çok rahat uçar. Şimdi bizim ülke insanı da eğitimde maalesef tek taraflı yetiştirildiler. Maddiyatçı bir nesil yetişti, o da yürümedi. 80li yıllarda okul temeli atmamızın nedenlerinden bir tanesi de bu, her yönlü bir nesil yetiştirmek. Vatanına milletine saygılı, sırf kendini düşünmeyen, hem de aynı zamanda fizikte kimya da kendini yetiştirmiş söz sahibi bir nesil yetiştirmek için. Ancak bu şekilde olur (RG4).

First of all, the issue of “Anatolian/Islamic companies” needs to be clarified. During the mid-90s, mostly Konya-based religious holding companies emerged. They were big scandals in Turkey. Their method of capital accumulation was strictly criticised since they abused the beliefs of Turkish immigrants who live in Europe by assembling them in mosques and promising them good turnover in the business they intend to do. Most of them have not kept their promises and have since been bankrupted. Besides the problems with the illegal way of capital accumulation, they mostly suffered from the lack of professional management and a less regulated economic system. According to Ozcan and Cokgezen (2003), Anatolian holding companies became victims of poor institutional and regulatory regimes, and it is the result of the lack of institutions to promote impersonal trust in the economy in turn, which permitted widespread abuses. They suddenly appeared and suddenly vanished, mostly. However, despite some misunderstandings, these sorts of companies do not represent the sample of this study. In this research, I did not include the “Islamic Holding Companies” into the sample since their special status mentioned above.

It should be noted that sometimes the rise of newly emerging religious business class phenomenon might be confused with these Islamic holding companies and their negative public image at the public level. In fact, the number of these companies never exceeded one hundred and most of them are not operating today. Therefore, the emergence of religious business people phenomenon would be understood better if we focus on the SME owner-managers which are the main carriers of the economy. In this respect, the emergence of pious business people is a different phenomenon. They are mostly small and medium-sized enterprises, not big scale holding companies. However, it seems that the “Islamic holding companies” scandals provide an insightful lesson for the pious groups since they were always linked with their religious affiliations.

I should admit that before the interviews, I was assuming that the religious group will stand up for those companies and defend them when I asked what they think about these companies. Without any exception, all the religious businessmen I interviewed criticised these so called “Islamic holding companies” with being dishonest, and more importantly not doing business with its own rules.

It is exploitation, of course. But, we should distinguish it. Those people did this for their own interest. They used religion. The religion (Islam) doesn't promote such a thing. There is verse and hadith (prophet's sayings) [says]: Muslim should do his business with written agreements. You can't give [your money] to them just because they are religious (RKY18)⁸⁸.

The general opposition of the pious group towards the Islamic companies can be a sign of this transformation mentioned above. While criticizing these sorts of companies, some religious business people went a step forward and regard them as betraying the religion. This attitude can also be regarded another sign of acting rationally in business rather than making decisions based on religious emotions. In fact, regardless of the religious affiliation, business partnerships/relations based on words and trust only seems a general problem among Turkish business people, especially the SME owners. In the Turkish context, this attitude can be considered as a result of traditional work ethic which is defined as “mystic-rooted work mentality” (*mistik kokenli isgorme anlayisi*) by Aldemir et al. (2003). It can be said that the traditional work ethic played a significant role in 12th and 13th centuries of the Ottoman society. Because of the political turmoil of 13th century's Anatolia, a tradesmen organization, *Ahi-Futuuvet*⁸⁹ community was trying to rebuild the social order organizing the tradesmen and promoting strong business ethic values. However, this tradition gradually became mediaevalised through being otherworldly and strong fatalist by time (Aldemir et al., 2003). Arguably, it can be said that, this corrosion gradually led to a type of tradesman mentality which has been strongly criticized by Ulgener (1991): A tradesman who is content with what he has, relying on otherworldly fatalism, living in a strong collectivist/communitarian society which does not promote individualism and competition, therefore not open to renewal or

⁸⁸ Sömürü oldu tabii. Ama bunu ayırt etmek lazım. Bu insanlar bunu kendi menfaatleri için yaptılar. Dini kullandılar. Din böyle bir şeyi teşvik etmiyor. Ayet var, hadis var: Müslüman isini sağlam yapmalı yazılı hale getirmeli. Onlar sadece dindar diye veremezsiniz (RKY18).

⁸⁹ Ulgener defines *fütüvvet* as the principles of these small communities in very similar manner with that of *Sufi* organizations. *Ahi* is the name of the members of *fütüvvet*. This community was functioned according to the principles called *fütüvvetname*, and they promoted strong business ethic values over its members, such as honest trading, not producing flawed products and being fair to all customers and not cheating them (Ulgener, 1991).

updating according to the necessities of the modern world. Although today, these negative characteristics do not exist entirely, it still has some influence among the Turkish business mentality⁹⁰. It seems that Turkish business people has started to realize the importance of doing business in its own rules as it is done in the developed countries, namely in the West.

It appears that religious renewal and the economic reformations, and their simultaneous meeting gradually evolves into the work ethic values of Turkish business people towards a more rational way. In the Turkish context, it is difficult to talk about the unique differences of the work ethic values of the religious and the secular business people. It appears that both groups are strongly influenced by the 1980s economic reforms. However, as for the religious business people, the new interpretation of Islam, so-called the Anatolian Islam, and its compatibleness of western values, especially in terms of business, provides them some sort of moral energy which was discussed in the previous chapter. In a way, it provides the possibility of living the authentic Islamic values, such as traditional *futuvvet* principles, within a contemporary framework. Within this framework, they find better atmosphere to represent their religious identity and achieved to reach a large mass of people.

These (laiklik and secularism) look like hollow notions. Yes, the state should not interfere with religion, but, in practice, the state appears to control and interfere with religion. It's been applied this way in Turkey. [In fact] religion has uniting and facilitating roles: Like Ahi-Futuvvet which trains good tradesmen. If a tradesman doesn't produce good quality product, they (the Ahi community) used to throw that tradesman's shoe over the roof⁹¹. Our situation was different. Religion had a facilitating role in producing

⁹⁰ Hofstede's (2001) study also supports this argument to a degree suggesting that the Turkish culture shows collectivist structure and a high level of power distance. See Sargut (2001) for more discussion around Hofstede's thesis on the Turkish sample, particularly focusing on the cultural differences and management perspective.

⁹¹ This ritual of the Ahi community (throwing tradesman's shoe over a roof) represents proclaiming that the tradesman in question is no longer a member of the community since he produces faulty products or cheats customers.

good quality product in our culture, while it caused despotism in their culture (referring to the French model of secularism) (RKY11)⁹².

Besides the problematic application of the *laiklik*, the religious business people all agree about the separation of the state and religious affairs. In a sense they feel themselves closer to the Anglo-Saxon model of secularism which can broadly be interpreted as state's neutral position against all kinds of religious beliefs. Giving the example of the *Ahi community*'s seven hundred year old tradition does not signify any practical implication for today's world. It seems that they just tell this story to justify that religion can be a driving source for economic development. However, the religious business people have developed a "secular" discourse for the business. The TUSKON, a business people association linked with the *Gulen movement* can be a proper example of this new discourse. This association has reached a large segment of SME owner-managers through not making Islamic values evident, rather putting great emphasis on the secular premises of business life. In a way, rather than imposing or preaching the Islamic principles literally, they attempt to demonstrate those principles through the business practices they involve. The following statement obtained from its website represents the aims and perspectives of the association, and it has been written using no religious jargon:

Besides being an organization which will represent our businessmen who want to develop, enlarge their business and expand to foreign markets, our confederation was also founded in order to put our country's problems into agenda, to produce proposals to the solution and to provide wide contribution to reach the place our country deserves. For this purpose, TUSKON aims to;

- Constitute targets oriented to self-improvement of enterprises by evaluating potentials in our business world,

⁹² Bunlar içi doldurulmamış kavramlar gibi geliyor. Dinin devlet yönetimine karışmaması ama devletin pratikte uygulamada dine karışması, kontrol altına alması. Türkiye'de böyle uygulanmış. ... Türkiye de dinin insanların önünü açıcı fonksiyonu, birleştirici bir fonksiyonu varken, Ahilik gibi mesela iyi sanatkâr yetiştirici, sanatkâr iyi iş yapmazsa papucunu dama atacağı bir anlayış. Bizdeki farklıydı. Din bizde kaliteyi artırıcı bir fonksiyonken, onlarda zulüm olarak işlemiş (RKY11).

- Contribute to constituting economic policies as being the voice of the business world,
- Produce alternative solutions to our country's problems with constructive understanding,
- Keep the global communication network open and provide our businessmen's integration with the world following the economic developments of the whole world,
- Explain the methods with regards to the institutionalization of family companies,
- Share the knowledge, experience and relations which our businessmen may need while doing business either in national or international arena,
- Analyze the potential countries and sectors which may contribute to the development of Turkish economy by examining the developing markets in addition to main markets,
- Meet the member's need for service and knowledge as rapidly and directly as possible and without trouble by evaluating with the experts of the issue,

Confederation's point of view is to make the Turkish economy and businessmen an effective part of global economy by considering the local conditions and sensitivities while serving to these aims. Furthermore, TUSKON undertook a task to share its notes, opinions and suggestions with the public and to develop participant suggestions. TUSKON which made a principle of carrying out its work with the understanding of transparency adopted to accept hardworking, honest, reliable businessmen with social responsibility awareness and their institutions as members as well. (tuskon.org, 01.07.2009).

Besides TUSKON, MUSIAD also gives an impression that they are separating themselves from overwhelmingly Islamic discourse to a solely business one (see appendix 4 for the detailed profiles, aims and objectives of these two business associations). It appears that the business people associations like TUSKON and MUSIAD known by their religious leanings are attempting to develop an alternative discourse for the pious business people who want to be part of the modern business world and also want to keep their religiousness. Many of the good virtues such as honesty, transparency, hardworking, and social responsibility have been embedded in this discourse and they have been regarded as religious duties when asked

privately. As it was discussed in the previous chapter, according to the religious group, the Islamic ethic should be sought in the attitudes of the individuals.

In this transformation, the role of civil societies should not be forgotten. As known, civil society organizations play a crucial role in western democracies. In a sense, these sorts of associations and other civil society organizations promoted by a religious movement can be proper examples of how a civil society acquires its autonomy from the state. This can also be regarded as the transformation of Islamic movements through civil society activities. While legitimising the religious activities in the eyes of the secular state, this transition also produces its own Islamic discourse which sounds more liberal. Moreover, parallel to the *Gulen movement's* worldwide activities, TUSKON also aims to make Turkish entrepreneurs integrated to the world stating that “our pitch is the entire world” (tuskon.org).

6.3 Influence of the Critical Liberal Discourse and Democratic Secularism

In the 1980s, Turkey shifted its economy from state-led/controlled economy to the free market. After the 80s, the import-substitute state-oriented economy gradually turned into export-oriented market-led economy reinforcing private business, entrepreneurship, and competition. This transformation led a fast urbanisation and industrialisation process in Turkey. It can be said that the era called the “firsts” for Turkey has started (see chapter 2 for further discussion). In a sense, it is the era that religious/pious people started to renew themselves questioning the existing Islamic ideology. The rise of political Islam in the early 90s and its dramatic end with 1997 post-modern military coup (also called as the process of February 28) led Islamic circles search of new initiatives. It can be said that this gap has been filled by the *Gulen movement* mostly. Gulen’s flexible ideas mainly focusing on individual piouness rather than the state administration had great influence on the mainstream religious people in Turkey. Then, they gradually produced a new Islamic discourse which can be summarised as contemporary understanding of Islamic teachings. The main characteristics of this new discourse are being more open-minded and

moderate, pro-democratic and pro-EU. I argue that in the shaping of this new Islamic discourse, the liberal circles of Turkey played an influential role.

The critical liberal discourse starts in the late 80s and beginning of 90s. It is produced by individuals and intellectuals who once belonged to ultra right or ultra left movements, but had developed a discourse which was critical of the official policies. It might be best described by Mehmet Altan, an academic and journalist, who emphasised the need to establish the “second republic” (*ikinci Cumhuriyet*) instead of the first one which has ignored democracy (Altan, 2000). These intellectuals⁹³ have a great influence over the society. They have produced a critical discourse which questioned the basic principles and policies that Turkish state applied until 90s, such as lack of human rights, Kurdish issue, religious rights, and democracy.

Cyclically (especially since the early 90s), there is an alliance between religious groups and the liberal circles in Turkey, since they both oppose the authoritarian structure of the Turkish state. In a sense, the religious groups find the liberal discourse as suitable atmosphere to claim their religious rights from the state⁹⁴ (such as the Islamic headscarf issue and the other restrictions on their religious beliefs). Over time, it can be said that this periodical alliance seems to be turned into a structural one. Obviously this critical liberal discourse has also influence on the transformation of the religious/Islamist movements. Islamist movements gradually moderated and assumed increasingly liberal position. The emergence of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) in 2001 can be a proper example of this transformation on the political level. The founders of the AKP separated themselves from the “national view” line which is a political party promoting Islamic politics; and they declared themselves as conservative democrats advocating the platform of democracy, secularism, the free market and the EU reforms (Yavuz, 2006). The

⁹³ It is worth pointing out that the majority of the liberal thinkers in Turkey write columns for the dailies which are somehow related to pious and conservative groups. (i.e. Sahin Alpay, Etyen Mahcupyan, Ali Bayramoglu, Mehmet Altan...)

⁹⁴ An authoritarian type of state secularism, which believed that the religious beliefs should be restricted and controlled, imposed by the government. Therefore it was not basically the separation of religious affairs and the state. (See Chapter 2 for further discussion around the Turkish experience secularism).

AKP, a post-Islamist party chose integration with the EU instead of opposing to the West. This segment of the society which is known by its religious leanings realised that the religious freedom they were seeking for a long time can well be achieved within the Western democratic system. It is true that they have cultural affinity with Arabic or Muslim countries to some extent, but it appears that they do not want to be like them. All of the religious business people I interviewed were the strong supporter of this ruling government Party, and they are all in favour of the EU reforms.

It appears that the Islamic circles' previous perceptions towards capitalism and western values are being evolved gradually. Without any exception, all of the pious business people mentioned the importance of the Özal era and its liberal policies in creating an enterprise culture in Turkey. It is worth pointing out that Turgut Özal and the current Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdogan have been regarded in the same context as the latter is the continuation of the first in a sense. It is a gripping point that liberalism as an original Western concept with its own foreign language does not go to the Turkish society⁹⁵. However, it becomes apparent in a way that when it is paraphrased with some traditional touches by a conservative politician or a religious leader/movement it shows great impact on the pious segments of the society. (Özal and Erdogan can be regarded as such politicians in this respect, and the *Gulen movement* with its flexible and moderate Islamic ideas can also be considered in this regard.)

In the eyes of the religious group, the 80s has been regarded as a turning point for Turkish entrepreneurs. One faces the conversion of introvert and non-competitive business people into world-travelling, competitive individuals after the 80s. While mentioning about the 80s importance on the private business, the pious business people also regards this era as shifting to democracy. A pious businessman's response is quite radical in this respect:

In my opinion, after the foundation of the Republic, Turkey started to move backward. After the 80s it shifted to democracy. [Then] Turkey started to

⁹⁵ There is a liberal party (LDP) in Turkey and it receives less than 1 percent of the votes from general elections.

develop. If I'm not free, the Republic doesn't mean anything to me (RKN10)⁹⁶.

This expression might be regarded as the typical opposition to the *Kemalist* modernisation project of the Republic which promotes a strict form of secularism. If this statement is evaluated in a critical perspective, I believe, it would tell the reader more than its literal meaning. It might be interpreted as the desire for democracy rather than being hostile to the secular republic. It would be underestimating the gaining of the young Republic if this quotation is taken literally correct. It is a fact that Ataturk's Republic has done substantial reforms and changes to create a modern Turkey and to turn the face of the country to the West. According to Turner (1974), one of the main themes of Turkish secularization was not to eliminate Islam, but to give it a social function to help creating national culture and social integration. Therefore, increasing the role of secular educational institutions and controlling the religious educational institutions under state supervision were regarded as crucial in modernization of the country. However, the *Kemalist* modernisation project mostly refers to the era that Ataturk's thoughts had been regarded as "dogma" by the state elites and bureaucrats, especially after his death. Inevitably, this top-down modernisation project did not fit with the majority of the Turkish society, and it gradually led to the well known tension between the religious and the secular groups in Turkey (Yavuz and Esposito, 2003; Ozdemir, 2006). An alleged fear which assumes that the religious people will turn the country into a *Sharia* State and will intervene in the secular life style spread around the country. It can be said that this fear still exists among some secular people. For example, according to a secular businessman, religious people are potential threats to the Republic:

Since they (the religious people) have never acknowledged the Turkish Republic as we (seculars) did, they will use it and leave nothing to us. Their

⁹⁶ Türkiye bana göre cumhuriyetten sonra gerilemeye başlamış. 80'den sonra demokrasiye geçti diyorum ben. Türkiye ilerlemeye başladı. Ben özgür değilsem cumhuriyet bana bir şey ifade etmiyor (RKY10).

ultimate goal is the Sharia State. Definitely! If you don't like this country, help yourself; go to Iran or Saudi Arabia (SE9)⁹⁷.

It is meaningful that this opinion sees the threat against the Republic rather than democracy. It can be said that French model secularism which puts great emphasis on republicanism is still an influential factor in the understanding of secularism in Turkey (Gole, 1997). In this point of view 19th century's positivism which considers religion as an early human condition also seems influential. Similarly another secular businessman SA7 regards religion as a barrier against the development of the country:

It (religion) is a barrier against development. How; because you can't do scientific research in such countries that religion dominates. You refer everything to somewhere (referring to the God/ religion). You can't put the exact science forward. This is one of the biggest problems of Turkey. Religion is one of the biggest barriers against the science (SA7)⁹⁸.

In a sense the strict secularist point of view sees religion as equal to ignorance, then therefore to poverty. In other words, science and education, in a sense, replaces religious beliefs in this view. However, it would be unfair to generalise this attitude among the whole secular groups. In fact, only some part of the secular business people shared this strict secularist approach in our sample. Some secular business people declared that they see no harm in the emergence of the religious business people, and they even find it beneficial for the development of the country. It is

⁹⁷ Türkiye Cumhuriyetini kesinlikle bizim bildiğimiz anlamda kabul etmedikleri için bu şekilde kullanıp yararlanıp hiçbir şey bırakmama düşüncesindedir. Nihai hedefleri bu mantıkla şeriat, kesin. Arkadaş buyurun Türkiye'yi beğenmiyorsanız İran'a gidin Arabistan'a gidin (SE9).

⁹⁸ Gelişmeye engel. Nasıl, çünkü dini düşüncenin hâkim olduğu ülkelerde bilimsel çalışma yapamazsınız. Her şeyi bir yere havale edersiniz. Pozitif bilimleri ön plana çıkaramazsınız. Türkiye'nin en büyük sorunlarından biridir. Çünkü bilimin önündeki en büyük engellerden bir tanesi dindir (SA7).

observable that the critical liberal discourse is also influential among the secular business people in Turkey since it promotes democracy and pluralist society with individual rights. Even though they declare themselves as secular with no/less religious practices, the moderate seculars (or they can be called democratic seculars) stress the importance of individual rights, democracy and liberalism rather than the republic. But, naturally the reflexion of the liberal influence is different from the religious group. According to SE8, an owner of a private education institution, creating ethical, hardworking entrepreneurs requires free individuals:

In order to do this, we need to spend too much effort. First, one should be honest with himself. We need to liberalise individuals. Without this, it is not possible to do radical changes. Right after individuals are born, we tie them strongly with home, with the national anthem, with Ataturk, with religion... Then we ask why these children turned into this. So, you didn't let him/her do something different. It doesn't happen this way (SE8)⁹⁹.

It can be inferred from the above quote that the secular business people who share a liberal point of view also complain about the monotype individuals the Republic has been trying to promote for a long time. At this point, it appears that the separation of Turkish society roughly as the religious and secular does not make sense as much as it sounds. At the beginning of this research, I as a researcher assumed to find unique and different patterns regarding the work ethic and the business mentality between these two groups. Besides the different dynamics behind their actions, there is a huge overlap between the religious and the secular groups, in terms of how to deal with the business and how to approach economic activities. Obviously, the driving source to do business for the religious group has different dynamics as discussed in the previous chapter. Therefore, this study is not aiming to claim that one is better than

⁹⁹ Böyle bir şey yaratmak için çok emek sarf etmemiz gerekiyor. Bir defa kişi kendisine karşı dürüst olmalı. Bireyi özgürleştirmeliyiz. Bunu yapmadan köklü bir değişim yapmak mümkün değil. Biz bireyi doğar doğmaz annesine bağlıyoruz evine bayrağa istiklal marşına Atatürk'e kalın halatlarla bağlıyoruz, dinine. Sonra diyoruz ki bu çocuk niye böyle oldu. E sen onun farklı bir şey yapmasına izin vermedin ki. Öyle olmaz yani (SE8).

the other. It would be always possible to encounter unethical or dishonest religious business people as well as secular ones. In other words being a pious or secular does not signify any good manner or virtue.

However, the point this study focuses on is the transformation of the Islamic thought within the contemporary framework. Opposing the mainstream understanding, the religious people's adaptation to the free market and increasing worldly activities can be regarded as the secularisation of Islamic thought in the Turkish context. The findings of this study also support the idea argued that modernity and tradition do not have to be in contradiction (Asad, 1993). In other words, it can be said that the alleged dichotomy between tradition and modernity seem debatable as well. For example, liberalism in the Western context can be considered as a tradition which provides a possibility of different arguments discussed. As Asad (1993) argues tradition and modernity are not two mutually exclusive states of a culture but different aspects of historicity. In this sense, this study interprets its findings as an attempt to create Islam's own secularisation. In the Turkish context, I acknowledge that this argument might cause some misunderstandings, even make some religious circles uncomfortable. However, what I intend to explain by saying "secularisation" has nothing to do with the secularism principle (*laiklik*) that Turkish state inscribed into its constitution. It is the different reflexion of Islamic ethics on worldly activities. In other words, it can be called as being worldliness through Islamic ethics.

However, it does not necessarily mean that they have internalised these values fully. But it does not prevent us to argue that it is an attempt to be part of the modern world through harbouring, in a sense reinterpreting the Islamic values at the same time. For example, Gulen's interpretation of Sufism under the light of Nursi's teaching, which puts great emphasis on the importance of modern sciences, can be regarded as an ideological base of this renewal. As discussed in the previous chapter, for example, the meaning of religiousness and ascetic life has been shifted from being isolated from the worldly activities into the "good" intentions of Muslim individuals. Although, the traditional/mystic understanding is no longer seen in today's Turkey; but it is still too early to evaluate the contributions of Muslim ethic to the modern

business, in particular business ethics. As Gulen noted in his speech broadcasted on his website, “Muslims do not seem passed the course on this subject (how to deal with business)” (Herkul.org). He sees the main problem of Turkish entrepreneurs as not acting rationally in business. As he puts:

We do these things (*referring to business activities in general*) amateurishly/unprofessionally. Yes, we are content with what Allah gave us; but we are living within the circle of reasons [in this world]. We have important obligations. I mean, money doesn't fall from the sky. Behind our failures (*in business/economic sense*) there are serious miscalculations, lack of comprehensive business agreements and not considering the feasibilities. The Westerners have done this successfully. [My translation S.U.] (herkul.org, accessed on 13.10.2008).

However, as Akyol (2008) rightly noted, Gulen's speaking is mostly on a *de facto* (in practice) level, not on a *de jure* (in principle) basis. Therefore, it is yet difficult to claim that he is introducing a reinterpretation of the classical Islamic teaching publicly by theorizing the legitimacy of *the movement's* modernization. What captures the attentions is the newly emergent Islamic discourse which shows a great tendency towards to be rational. This tendency among the pious people might tell us what direction modern Turkey headed. In a way it is a crucial step towards Turkey's soul searching for a long time. The qualitative data provides strong indicators of this transition. This newly emerging religious business class sees its future in integration with the European Union not with the Muslim countries. European democratic norms are the desirable goals in the eyes of this segment. In this respect, the EU reforms appear to have substantial importance for the SME owners in Turkey. It is a fact that the Turkish economy grew up significantly during the last eight years in which Turkey spent a great deal of effort on the EU reforms, and middle class SME owners greatly benefited from this long-term stable economic atmosphere which used to be very unlikely ten years ago. Paradoxically, in the secular group, some strict seculars who regard themselves as the vanguard of *laiklik* (the principle of secularism) seem uncomfortable with the EU standard of democracy and liberalism.

During the interviews, some secular business people regarded the EU as “a tricky plan of the West to divide Turkey” (SA12). This secularist, in a sense nationalist view cannot be generalised among the whole secular segments of the society. The variety of responses from the secular group show that there is no single opinion regarding this issue. Additionally, a similar nationalist view might also exist among some religious circles to some degree. However, the important point is that it is the first time Turkey with the great majority of different societal segments (including religious, liberals and secular democrats) are in favour of doing some radical structural changes and questioning past experiences of the country which was promoting a monotype “ideal citizen”.

Lastly, it appears that there is no consensus on the definition of the *laiklik* at the public level. This has been discussed further in the literature review (see chapter 2 and 3). However, the qualitative data of this study also provides some insight regarding the understanding of the principle of *laiklik* in Turkey. It has been mentioned that it is a French model state principle adapted to Turkey. The qualitative data obtained from the religious group demonstrates that the great majority of the business people regard it as a principle that the state should, and for some must, stick with. Sometimes, it is even considered as the guarantor of the religious freedoms. This, in a sense “liberal religious” view is gradually becoming popular among the religious circles in Turkey. This view is also promoted by Ahmed An-Naim in his influential book titled *Islam and the Secular State*. While evaluating the contradictions of authoritarian secularism in the Turkish context, he also suggests the necessity of a secular state for Muslim countries. According to the author, in order to be a Muslim by conviction and free choice, which is the only way one can be a Muslim, one needs a secular state that facilitates the possibility of religious piety out of honest conviction, and stays neutral regarding religious doctrine (An-Naim, 2008). However, “secularisation” of the pious business people as one of the conclusions I reached from the interviews signifies a slightly different angle. As I mentioned above, it refers to the religious business people’s being worldliness towards Islamic ethic. This aspect of secularism is more related to the philosophical background of the theory of secularisation. Perhaps it should be understood within the Anglo-Saxon secularism context, rather than the French model *laicite*.

As briefly discussed in chapter two, this study is concerned more with the genealogies of the concept of “secular” which can be regarded as an unfolding of the essence of religion (Martin, 1978). Marcel Gauchet, a well known French philosopher, argues that Western secularism can only be understood through the historicity of Christianity (Gauchet, 1997). Talal Asad goes even a step further and claims that every religion produces its own secularism (Asad, 1993). In his book, *Formations of the Secular*, Asad focuses on the roots of the concept, “the secular”:

For at one time “the secular” was part of a theological discourse (*saeculum*). “Secularisation” (*saecularisatio*) at first denoted a legal transition from monastic life (*regularis*) to the life of canons (*saecularis*)--and then after the Reformation, it signified the transfer of ecclesiastical real property to laypersons, that is, to the “freeing” of property from church hands into the hands of private owners, thence into market circulation. (Asad, 2003:192).

This historical root of secularism also clarifies the understanding of “the secular” in the context that I am referring as one of the conclusion I made about the emergence of the religious business people in Turkey. Naturally, the Christian roots of the secular have to be different than Muslim ones since Islam has different historical background and dynamics. In the context of the religious business people, this conclusion refers to the Muslim business people’s transition towards a more rational and systematised way of doing business. The new Islamic discourse and the new work ethic they have been producing can be regarded as signs of this secularisation. Perhaps, it is time for Turkey to start discussing about the concept of secularism in a philosophical sense rather than as “a regime problem”.

6.4 Observations and Discussions

As Ozdemir (2006) noted we have been facing an attempt towards creating an indigenous Muslim ethic which will fit the necessities of the modern world with its own tradition. In a business ethics context, it seems that the Islamic ethic carries a

potential to make some contributions to the modern capitalist system and business activities in the future. During the interviews and the several weekly meetings of the religious business people I attended as a participant observer, I witnessed a strong enthusiasm to be a part of the business world at a universal level. Some ideas, especially regarding the freedoms and democracy, they produce sound more sophisticated than that of Turkish politicians one can hear or read on the media. This enthusiasm sometimes emerges as a desire to reach the European standard of living in terms of democracy and human rights, and sometimes as a desire of having an institutionalized firm which acts more professionally in business. In a sense, the state is not seen as a father taking all the initiatives in economic activities any more. Rather, it seems the entrepreneurial class is becoming the driving force of the economy and shapes the state's policies to a degree. After the 1980s liberal atmosphere (in terms of freedom of speech, entrepreneurship and of conscience), the Islamic movements produced their own Islamic educated, technical, intellectual and finally business elites, in Nilufer Gole's term "the counter-elites" (Gole, 1997). The root of these new business elites can be found at the SME level business-owners which are the sample of this study. The main characteristics of them appear as being pro-market, pro-EU and pro-democracy. It is different from the state elites who gained prominence through state substitute during the import substitute economy era between 1950 and 1980.

This study defines this development as a transition of the traditional merchant/tradesman through being business people. It seems evident that while this transition takes place, the pious business circles have also developed a new discourse which sounds more secular. Islamic moral values and ethical principles have been regarded as crucial for creating an enterprise culture and ethical entrepreneurs. However, they have been embedded within this new "secular Islamic" discourse. It is known that religious practices and rituals play an important part in the religious people's lives, and naturally they live their lives according to the religion. In this respect, they are different from the secular business people in Turkey. However, it attracts the attentions that this new discourse is gradually producing an urbanised religion which is becoming more apparent everyday in Turkey. Encountering a religious businessman whose daughter has been taking piano lessons, and who sends

flowers to his wife on the wedding anniversaries surprised me as a Turkish researcher who knew that these were not common attitudes among the religious people in Turkey. It seems that while religion plays a crucial role in their ethical life it is also separating itself from the political, in a way radical Islam. In this piece, the crucial source of the motivational role played by the religion helps us to distinguish another important difference between the pious and secular groups. This distinction has shaped around the concepts of tradition and modernity. Based on the qualitative data, for the secular people in Turkey development and modernisation of the country could only be achieved through positive science and beliefs and tradition should remain as cultural entities. On the other hand, the religious people argue that the same objectives could be achieved through tradition and religion. Their strong enthusiasm in justifying the compatibility of religious beliefs with the modern aspects of business life could be an example of this (their reservation on some controversial issues in business, such as interest or trading religiously forbidden products should be excluded from this argument). In other words, while the secular (*laik*) group has been getting secularised through positive science, the pious group is getting secularised through the tradition or in a sense through the religion. However, it should be noted again that the concept of secularisation has been used referring to being worldliness, not in a sense that used in the Turkish context. It can also be regarded as a development which is strengthening the idea argued that the dichotomy between tradition and modernity is not real. Some recent studies (i.e. Asad, 1993; Gole, 1997; Norris & Inglehart, 2004; Toprak & Carkoglu, 2006; Ozdemir, 2006), including the findings of this study, might lead Turkish intellectuals to rethink about the concepts of religion and secularism.

It is also observable that separating the Turkish society strictly as religious and secular does not make sense any more. It is a large spectrum and there are many grey tones and transitional areas which need to be explained. Existence of some traditional values among the secular business people, and the religious business people's transition towards a more liberalised world can be regarded in this respect. In my opinion, this reciprocal transition might lead to spreading out this new Islamic discourse among the Turkish society. TUSKON's harbouring business people from a variety of backgrounds, including secular people, might be an example of this.

Naturally, this particular analysis might be regarded as speculative. I acknowledge that as a developing country, Turkey's social structure has been changing dramatically fast, and it makes it even more difficult to make an accurate analysis of this transitive period of Turkey. Perhaps, after a certain period of time passes, the contribution of the Islamic ethic to the business world can be revisited and re-examined further.

7. CONCLUSION

This chapter will draw out the whole findings of the study and identify what can be inferred from a wider reflection of the findings. In this regard, first it focuses on the main findings and the contributions of the study. Then it will point out the possible implications of these findings. Thirdly, this chapter will discuss the limitations of the study. And finally, it will conclude with some suggestions for further research and concluding remarks.

7.1 Main Findings and the Contribution

The research question of this study has been formulated as: How does the Turkish interpretation of Islam influence the Turkish SME owner-managers' work ethic values? In this respect, the study particularly focused on Turkish people's perceived work ethic values and the enterprise culture in Turkey. To reach more accurate responses, pious business people were particularly selected from those who practice Islamic teachings and rituals and consider themselves to be religious or pious. On the other hand the secular Turkish business people (who are Muslims too) have been taken into consideration as a control group since there are few or no religious practices in their lives. The findings of the study have been divided into two categories. The first part focuses on the transformation of the Muslim work ethic, and the second attempts to understand the Turkish work ethic values within the contexts of rationalization and secularization.

7.1.1 Transformation of the Muslim Work Ethic

The beginning of chapter 5 attempted to clarify where to seek the religious influence on business. Based on the qualitative data, it argues that the religious influence should not be sought as causal relationship between religious beliefs and business

activities. The quasi-puritan values (such as hardworking, honesty productivity and so on) which can be called as Islamic moral values too, seem crucial for both groups. Even the Islamic notion of “making *halal* money” is shared by secular business people too. However, this notion does not signify any religious connotation for the secular business people in Turkey. In this respect, the study argued that the influence of religion should be sought within the driving forces and the moral dynamics behind the religious business people’s daily business activities. In other words, it has been observed that a virtuous attitude or behaviour known as secular can also be a religious virtue in the eyes of the pious group.

Moreover, the contemporary religious interpretation in Turkey, as it is called Turkish/Anatolian interpretation of Islam, is found re-shaping the existed teachings of the religion and reproducing the religious structure through the practices. In this respect, five distinguishing characteristics emerged as signs of the religious influence behind their actions: *Hard work* as an *Islamic duty*, *good will (intention)*, *responsibility*, *bounty* and the *balance/equilibrium* in one’s life.

Hard work and *intention* were usually mentioned together by the religious group. Working itself has been regarded as a religious obligation. Additionally, pious Muslims put more emphasis on intentions (*good will*) rather than the action itself. It is believed that one’s ordinary daily activities (making money or spending time in a workplace) can turn into good deeds if they have been done with faith and good will. Secondly, the concepts of *responsibility* and *bounty* have been frequently used by the pious business people in similar contexts. At the individual level, the pious business people find themselves responsible to demonstrate Islamic moral values and virtues. This responsibility occurs, at the organisation level, as spending money for discretionary or philanthropic activities, such as helping poor or founding educational institutions. Thirdly, Islamic ethic has been regarded as a mean balancing one’s life which recommends Muslims to live a life avoiding lavishness and capitalist greed. In a sense, the Muslim ethic is balancing business people’s lives between the worldly activities and spirituality.

During the analysis of the findings, it appeared that the above mentioned Islamic values have been re-interpreted according to the contemporary framework. The findings of this research argue that the traditional, otherworldly readings of Islamic principles have been filled with the contemporary understandings which provide a larger manoeuvre space for the pious business people. It can be regarded as an ethical transformation of the religious business people.

It has been observed that the new Islamic discourse provides some sort of moral energy exclusively for the pious business people in Turkey. This is the primary difference between the research samples. The new understanding of Islam in Turkey strongly encourages entrepreneurship and business activities. Islam in this regard has been seen as a driving force to create an enterprise culture in Turkey. Therefore, this research argues that religious beliefs influences business practices of the people by facilitating and encouraging it. In this way, the study argues that religion is playing a catalyst role rather than a causal one. In this transitional process certain religious movements and their business associations, such as TUSKON and MUSIAD play crucial role. This research regards them as Turkey's new entrepreneurs, in this regard.

In Turkey's complex social structure, 1980s economic reforms and liberalisation of the country is taken into consideration as well. It is discussed in chapter seven focusing on the post-1980 influence.

7.1.2 Rationalisation, Secularisation and the Work Ethic within the Turkish Context

Chapter seven attempted to clarify in what direction the ethical transformation discussed in chapter 6 is headed. First, it demonstrates some aspects of a rational way of thinking in business in Turkey. It appears that the religious group along with the secular one shows a strong desire to have an institutionalized firm/company. Education in this respect gains special importance among both groups again. And the free market economy is regarded as the best possible way of doing successful

business by the both groups. Opposing the traditional assumption, religious people find free market capitalism mostly compatible with Islam.

The chapter argues that the post-1980 liberal discourse played a crucial role in the ethical transformation in Turkey. Religious business people's involvement with the worldly activities is regarded as secularisation of the Muslim ethic in the Turkish context. However, the chapter also analysed the perception of secularism in Turkey among both groups. According to the findings of the study, the author considers this 'secularization' process to be completely different from the notion of the secularism principle (*laiklik*) which the Turkish state has inscribed into the constitution. It argues that it is Islam's own secularisation through its own dynamics in the context of work ethic. In this transition, the *Gulen movement* appears to have an influential role with its flexible ideas and moderate interpretations.

7.1.3 Similarities and Differences between the Islamic and the Protestant Ethic

This study, while adhering to the Weberian social theory as its backbone, greatly benefited from the Protestant Work Ethic literature which is based on Weber's Protestant ethic thesis. This literature allowed me to do some comparisons between the Protestant work ethic and the Islamic work ethic throughout the 'Findings' chapters. In this piece, the similarities and the differences between the two ethical systems will be summarised together.

First of all, it can be argued that there are strong similarities between the two settings. The most prominent similarities appear as virtues in the work place and in business. Such as, in both ethical systems, being hardworking has been regarded as an important virtue and, considered as a sort of prayer. Similar to the Protestant work ethic, Muslim business people also show high levels of internal locus of control and commitment towards their job. Being a representative of God and acting responsibly on His behalf (idea of "vocation") also appears as similar attitudes among Islamic and Protestant ethic. Doing the job given by God well seems equally important in both systems. Being productive and having negative attitudes to leisure activities and

support for frugality and honesty/fairness could also be considered as the common characteristics among the two belief systems. Additionally, it can be said that both ethical settings are encouraging and promoting a type of business person who thinks and acts rationally in business. Another interesting similarity that strikes the attentions is where the puritan spirit has flourished first. Weber states that the puritan spirit has not emerged within the aristocrat families of big cities, but in the middle-class bourgeoisie families of developing cities. Similarly, Islamic work ethic in the Turkish context first flourished in the middle-class families of developing Anatolian towns. Furthermore, both systems find free-market capitalism as the most appropriate economic order.

Besides similarities, it is also possible to address some differences between the Islamic and Protestant work ethic. First of all, Protestantism puts great emphasis on the idea of “predestination”, and the concept of “calling” seems strongly related to that idea. Weber (2004:40) defines calling as “the only way of living acceptably to God was not to surpass worldly morality in monastic asceticism, but solely through the fulfilment of the obligations imposed upon the individual by his position in the world”. On the other hand, Islam rejects the idea of predestination and puts great emphasis on the concept of “freewill”. Although, both belief systems have affinity in terms of the Christian concepts of “vocation” and “witnessing”, but they differentiate on the idea of “calling”. Secondly, as Yousef (2001) argued rightly, Islamic work ethic puts more emphasis on people’s intention rather than results. Another difference of Islamic ethic appears as “balancing one’s life”. Although Islam also gives importance to working hard, but as it is not so apparent in the Protestant ethic, Islamic teachings frequently mention the concept of balance/equilibrium in one’s life. In other words the idea of “midway” (as keeping oneself away from the extremes) seems more apparent in Islamic ethic.

7.1.4 Contributions of the Study

First of all, this study provides a different angle for the evaluation of the work ethic concept in a Turkish context emphasising the societal transformation. In this

research, while adhering to Weberian sociology, the quantitative tools, such as PWE scales were not used to understand this Muslim Turkish phenomenon. Rather this study approached the question in a more interpretive way using qualitative tools. In this respect, it can be regarded as the first study using Giddens' *theory of Structuration* to understand this double sided transition and the continuous reproduction of social structure (the Islamic ethic in our case). It also contributes some insights for the long lasting question: Why Islamic countries, including secular Turkey, failed to create a productive/entrepreneurial capitalist spirit based on rational thinking? In this respect, the study provides an insider account and the subjective meaning people apply to the terms (the new Islamic discourse), rather than providing quantifiable data. Therefore, it helps to clarify the structure of the relationship between religious faith and business/economic activities.

As for the data, the study mainly focuses on the religious business people, but at the same time it also brings the secular business people's account into consideration as a control group. The *Gulen movement* has been considered as a global phenomenon by many social scientists (see chapter 3). Using qualitative empirical data, this study, for the first time, takes the influence of this movement on business activities in Turkey. It is significant to conduct interviews with the members of Turkey's largest business people association (TUSKON) which focuses on SMEs and is known by its close links with the *Gulen movement*.

Additionally, this study also contributes to the literature and the discussions shaped around the concept of secularism by providing a different angle. It provides an example of Islamic understanding of secularism and in a sense supports Asad's (1993) argument which suggests that every religion should have its own secularization process. The findings of this study can be considered as an example of the secularization of Islam in business related activities in a Turkish context.

The insight gained from the findings of this study might be useful for researchers who are interested in the relationships between religious beliefs and economic activities and business, especially in the context of business ethics. In particular, this study contributes to the Islamic work ethic literature which is a quite new topic

compared to the Protestant work ethic. Focusing on a particular aspect of Islamic transformation, this study, in a sense, supporting to the idea claims that the Islamic world is in transition. Based on the findings of this study, it can be worthy of studying particular sides of Islamic teachings and their possible influence on the different aspects of business ethics besides the work ethic. (See section 7.4 for suggestions for further researches)

7.2 Implications of the Findings

Turkey has a distinctive status within the Muslim world. On one hand it is a Muslim country with more than 95 per cent Muslim population, and on the other hand it is the only Muslim country that has inscribed the principle of secularism (*laiklik*) into its constitution. From the very beginning of the Republic the Turkish society has been experiencing a huge polarization between the ‘Islamist’ and the ‘secularists’. The Turkish state and bureaucracy are the most powerful guardians of secularism. However, a research conducted by TESEV (one of the leading social research institutions in Turkey) also indicate that this polarisation is receding compared to the situation in the past (Carkoglu and Toprak, 2006). In this research most of the pious people also declared that they have no problem with the secular structure of the state in terms of separation of the state and the religious affairs. However, as for a way of life there are still considerable differences between the two parts. For this reason, in this study, I needed to divide my sample into two groups on the basis of a way of life, as practicing and non-practicing Muslims. Moreover, there is a newly emerged business class, the Anatolian SME owner-managers, and this study endeavours to understand to what extent their religious beliefs influence their work ethic values and the enterprise culture in general.

As the findings section indicates, the so-called “Islamic” work ethic values (hard-work, disciplined life, honesty, etc.) may not be as significant factors as anticipated in the emergence of pious businesspeople. Additionally, the analysis of qualitative data demonstrates that the pious businesspeople keep themselves distant from the notion of an “Islamic economics” or any sort of business model that Islam suggests.

However, it does not necessarily deny the existence of the Islamic work ethic. The conclusion this study has reached is that the Islamic moral principles play a different role in the pious people's business practices. The role of this transformed ethic can be best summarised as changing the pious Muslim's attitudes towards worldly activities in a positive way. In this respect, the material dimensions of the "world" (*dunya*) are not seen as a threat against one's piousness any more. Weber (2004) regards the consequences of the concept of "calling" in ascetic Protestantism as rationalisation of conduct within this world but for the sake of the other world. In a theoretical sense, Weber's explanation for the ascetic Protestantism fits into the new understanding of Islam in Turkey. It is meaningful to see Gulen's statement arguing that "wealth/prosperity is not against to ascetic life (*zuhd*)" which is a desirable characteristic of Muslim ethic (Zaman, Turkish daily, 27.06.2008). In this respect, the religious business people seem quite comfortable with the rational business environment secured by capitalism and the free market economy. However, some issues, such as social justice, environment and ethics, are raised by them as the defects of modern capitalism. But, these are internationally discussed issues as well. Therefore, it can be argued that rational capitalism with moral values seems quite suitable with their economic mentality and, in a sense, with Islam.

Beside the changed perception on the work ethic, the post-1980's liberal discourse should not be forgotten as well. The 80s liberal policies have also been mentioned by the pious business people as a crucial factor in the emergence of Anatolian capital. It is widely believed that after the 1980s the religious movements expanded substantially and had more power than ever before. To some extent this might be applied to the religious leanings of the 80s Prime Minister, Turgut Özal. However, more importantly it can be claimed that transforming religious ideas or so called "Turkish/Anatolian Islam" find the free market economy as a suitable atmosphere to express itself. Number of private schools and the media institutions which were conducted by religious groups increased dramatically. Presumably, the new Muslim prototype regards the liberal democratic system as the best way to express his/her transformed identity, *the modern Muslim*. In a Weberian perspective, this can be regarded as a sort of 'elective affinity' between the above-mentioned religious transformation and the economic one. For this reason, this study argues that

interpreting the pious Turkish business people phenomenon as a result of Islamic work ethic only might be misleading. In the Protestant ethic thesis too, Weber himself never claims that the Protestant ethic created the Western capitalism, and he finds such a causal relation as meaningless (Weber, 2004). As the example of Calvinism in Weber's study, it can be claimed that the new form of Islam in Turkey facilitated the emergence of this new business class providing a sort of moral energy encouraging entrepreneurial activities.

Therefore, the findings of this study imply that rather than seeking a causal relationship, researchers should focus on what sort of individuals the new form of religious interpretation creates in modern Turkey, and how this new Muslim prototype acts in business. It is observable that this new *habitus* which represents a peaceful coexistence of the tradition and modernity can be a driving force for creating a strong enterprise culture in Turkey.

It can be argued that this is the first time Turkey's modernisation project through secularism and the 'new tradition' (new understanding of Islam) are proceeding in the same direction. I acknowledge that this claim at first sight might sound a little paradoxical, since this study, in a sense, provided a critical approach to the *Kemalist* modernisation project of the Republic. However, Ataturk's main goal was turning the country's face to the West and modernise it as soon as possible (Berkes, 2006). The criticism of this study applies to the methodology of this project which took a very strict form after Ataturk's death. It seems that while defending modern secular values the system itself became a threat against pluralism and freedoms which are the prerequisites of modern democracies. Nowadays, Turkey seems to have changed its old paradigm towards being a more democratic country, especially after the negotiations started with the EU. It is true that the pious Muslims are becoming more apparent in the different aspects of the public sphere and sharing the pie with secularists. This process inevitably starts mutual interactions among the different segments of the society. Therefore, it can be said that the religious people in Turkey have become active players of the country's modernisation. At least, it appears this way in terms of business activities. This can be interpreted as a healthier modernisation process based on its own dynamics.

In the work ethic and secularisation context, I suppose the findings of this study support my opinion. The religious transformation in question is regarded as a kind of secularisation of the Muslim work ethic in the Turkish context. At the end of chapter six (see section 6.3) the essence of this secularisation has been discussed. As noted, this secularisation has nothing to do with the principle of *laiklik* in Turkey. This can be regarded as part of religious renewal or unfolding the essence of religion and its reading with contemporary eyes. At theoretical level, considering secularism in this respect is also compatible with the ideas see secularism as a Christian concept (see Martin, 1978; Asad, 1993; Gauchet, 1997). In this respect, this study implies that the allegedly claimed conflicts between religious and secular, or the dichotomy between tradition and modernity do not seem so real. Seeing tradition in this perspective might lead to evaluate possible contribution of Islamic teachings to business ethics and to the modern capitalism. This study at least opens a discussion about this potential contribution in the future.

Considering the underdevelopment of the Muslim countries it can be claimed that the new Islamic discourse might provide different angles to understand the relationships between Islam, capitalism and business activities among the Muslim countries. Arguably, it can be said that the Turkish experience might provide different points of view for the rest of the Muslim world. Moreover, this religious transformation promoting the moderate side of the religion rather than fundamentalism might have a crucial role in the Turkey's European Union accession process.

7.3 Limitations of the Study

Like in every academic research, this study also provides its insight within the confine of its limitations. The main limitations of the study can be categorised into two parts: The limitations of the sample and the methodology.

First of all, it should be noted that this study did not seek to reach quantifiable and generalisable statements. The sample in a qualitative study does not need to be representative in order to collect in-depth insight on a particular subject (Bryman and

Bell, 2003). However, it brings its own limitations. Because of the nature of in-depth interviews, arranging and conducting each interview took considerable amount of time. For this reason, after started to hear more or less similar stories from each interview I stopped searching new samples. In each group, I reached this level after conducting 10-12 interviews. Although representation of the sample is not as important as it is in quantitative studies, it is still a controversial matter in this study. Turkey as an overwhelmingly Muslim country has many different religious sects, movements and orders. In this research I did not include the members of small religious orders (*tarikatar*). The majority of the religious sample is the members of the *Gulen movement* which is the largest faith-based movement in Turkey. The other religious business people who are not the members of this movement also declared their sympathy on the activities of that movement. In terms of representation, the sample of this study represents the mainstream understanding of Islam in Turkey, especially the newly emerging religious business class. As for the secular business people, they are not well organised as the religious people are. Besides, reaching some strict secular people from certain organisations such as ADD (Association for the *Kemalist Thought*) I also tried to reach ordinary secular people with no religious movement connections. This helped me to reach diversity of different interpretations on a particular subject. It is hard to claim that the data obtained from interviews cover every aspects of the subject. But I assume that it does the majority of it in terms of the influence of religious beliefs on the work ethic values. More importantly, it provides different angles to the existing Islamic concepts which demonstrate the transformative potential of the Islam in this particular case.

Additionally, this study provides very limited insight for the gender issue. In the whole sample there is only one female interviewee. It is most likely the result of the fact that the number of female private business owners in Turkey is very limited. This issue itself can be a subject of another academic research not least because of the sensitivity around the role and status of women in Islam. On the other hand, it should be noted that the research question of this study does not concern any gender issue in specific. The number of female employees has been noted by most of the interviewees and they have shown in the detailed profiles of the sample at the end (see appendix-2).

Secondly, the limitation of the methodology should be taken into consideration. Because of the nature of interpretive methodology, this study does not provide generalisable statements which can be applied to the whole sample. In a sense, this study can be considered as the first step of understanding Islamic work ethic in the contemporary Turkish context. Islam and its teachings regarding work ethic and the contemporary business activities is a relatively new subject, since it has been considered in its own traditional sense for a long time without updating. What this study sought for is the understanding of the work ethic values within this transformative period in Turkey. In other words, it attempted to understand what does the new understanding of Islam offer to business in general, and work ethic and entrepreneurial activities in particular. Therefore providing different angles to this subject does not require generalisable statements or quantifiable findings. However, content analysis method could have been applied in this research, but I rather wanted to focus on the new discourse they produce. The open-ended semi-structured interviews prevented me to reach the similar content every time. Each interview shaped around the people's own business experiences and subjective opinions in particular subjects. It was even difficult to ask questions in the same order to each interviewee. In some cases, some interview questions were not applied to certain business people (for example, the question of "how does your religious belief influence your business" does not mean anything to some secular business people call themselves atheist or agnostic). The main reason for this difficulty can be summarised as: the variety of the stories, different business experiences of the people and different religious backgrounds. Comparing to content analysis discourse analysis method helped me more to gain subjective insights that business people provided.

It should also be mentioned that the weaknesses of the qualitative studies in general could be valid in our case. For example, the social desirability effect, influence of the interviewer's own opinions, unintended or deliberate inaccuracies and so on. In order to avoid these shortcomings, I tried not to ask such direct questions concerning ethical behaviours since it might increase the social desirability effect. However, it is difficult to claim that this study achieved it one hundred percent.

Lastly, I should also note that the findings of this study cannot be applied to the whole Muslim world. Rather than Islam itself this study focused on a particular interpretation of Islam which is called “Turkish or Anatolian Islam”. Since this study considers religion as an interpretation, focusing on a particular interpretation in this respect was quite helpful in terms of the nature of this study.

7.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The findings of this research seem encouraging for further investigation. In this particular research, I focused on the work ethic and entrepreneurship in particular. In a way it specifically concerned with the influence of religion on the business mentality of Turkish people. Many other aspects of business ethics still remain untouched. Further research on other business ethics-related attitudes and behaviours of Muslim Turkish business people can contribute for the understanding of Islamic influence on this subject. Besides SME owner-managers, one faces large scale holding companies run by pious managers or CEOs in Turkey. Their perception on ethical issues might provide different insights for further researches. Additionally, Islam’s view on some other business ethics-related issues such as environment, corporate social responsibility could also be of interest to researchers.

Moreover, business ethics is a relatively new area in business studies, and its popularity is increasing every day. Religion can be regarded as one of the biggest sources of ethics. Regardless of practicing religious beliefs, it shapes societies’ perceptions and understandings towards ethical issues, at least to a certain degree. In this respect, further work on the relationships between religious beliefs and business activities can contribute to this body of knowledge concerning business ethics. An alternative research can be conducted for creating a unique scale or questionnaire based on the previous qualitative studies on this subject. In this way, it would be possible to apply it to larger samples and to produce some generalisable statements regarding the Islamic work ethic.

As far as Islam and Muslim countries are concerned, they are usually uttered with violence and underdevelopment. Even some social scientists, like Samuel Huntington in his article titled “The Clash of Civilizations?” predicted strong tensions between Islam and the West (Huntington, 1993). The Turkish experiences of the religious business people phenomenon might be a proper example of a healthy economic integration of a Muslim society into the modern world through business activities. In this respect, other Muslim countries, especially those without strict Sharia state, can be samples of further investigations on this subject. Such countries like Malaysia, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and the middle Asian Turkic states can be regarded in this respect.

The insights gained from this study might also lead researchers to rethink their perceptions of Islam and secularism. The concept of secularism usually mentioned within the Western context. Considering secularism as a Christian phenomenon (as Gauchet, [1997] and Asad [1993] suggested) Islam’s own secularisation through its own dynamics can be worthy of study. It might especially be important for sociologists and anthropologists who want to understand the different aspects of this secularisation besides its economic aspects.

On the other hand, gender issues in Islam can be an interesting subject for further studies. In this research gender is not taken as the focal point since the number of female entrepreneurs is usually limited in Muslim countries. It is a general assumption that Islam confines women’s rights and they are mostly regarded as housewives in Muslim societies. Although it is possible to see female employees in almost every profession in Turkey, but women are still a significant minority as owners of private business enterprises. Its reasons and probable changes in the future can be investigated as well.

7.5 Concluding Remarks

It could be concluded that Turkey has entered a healthier modernization process which seems as a road of no return by making the peace between Islam and

modernity. It seems that after more than a century of ‘soul-searching’ has settled upon the idea of re-producing traditional values within the contemporary framework. In the context of this research, the newly emergent business class appears as the carrier of this transformation process. In particular, it has been observed that Turkey’s new entrepreneurs have been re-shaping their mentalities towards business activities and re-producing the existing work-related values and ethics. Max Weber regards this ethical transformation (*Protestantization*) as the fundamental prerequisite of an extensive development process, and calls it the ‘spirit’ of Western capitalism. In this respect, Turkey has been experiencing a similar process in the context of Islam. In terms of being worldly, the secularization of Islam is attempting to provide its own view on several aspects of modern life, including business ethics.

The findings of this research give the impression that Islam, in a Turkish context, has considerable potential to contribute new angles to the modern capitalist system. This moderate view of Islam, which does not contradict with free market or liberal economy, seems to have promising views on business ethics beyond the Western perspective. In a way, it can potentially create new views of capitalism.

Overall, the assimilation of liberal values and being articulated to the modern world makes us optimistic about the future of Turkey. Regardless of the level of religiousness, this tendency seems to be shared by the majority of the society. This study regards secularization of Islam as the catalyst of this broad tendency. In this respect, the ‘new’ work ethic, which is re-producing the tradition based on a rational way of thinking, could play a vital role in creating a strong enterprise culture in Turkey. Additionally, it can be claimed that this development will make Turkey’s hand stronger in the EU accession process.

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9. APPENDIXES

APPENDIX-1

An Overview of the Business and Economics in the Early Years of the Republic

In the foundation of the new Republic, the French revolution had great influence among its founders, Mustafa Kemal and his followers. The main goal of the Turkish revolution was fighting with backwardness and the ignorance of the Muslim society (Berkes, 2006). Thus, *Kemalist* reforms aimed to create a modern Turkish nation based on science and secular education. For this reason, religious practices were discouraged and Islam was excluded from public life. Islam as a part of national culture was tolerated and reduced to a private matter. Since most of the Islamic clergies and Sufi orders usually resisted the modernisation programme from the very beginning, the Kemalist regime believed that Islam had played a crucial role in the economic and social backwardness of the country. Beside the religious factor, the country was ruined because of long wars and lost many educated men in the wars. Therefore the young Republic was underdeveloped and its economy was weak (Hale, 1981; Berkes, 2006). The economic situation of Turkey in 1923 was illustrated by Hale (1981:36) as follows:

In spite of early efforts by nineteenth-century sultans to establish state-supported industries, such attempts had little impact on the overall economic structure of the Ottoman Empire. Very approximate national income estimates for the whole of the empire in 1913 suggest that industry, including handicrafts, only accounted for about 10 per cent of GNP, with about 55 per cent deriving from agriculture. Unlike their co-religionists in Iran or the Arab countries, educated Muslim Turks had tended to regard commerce and industry as beneath them, preferring a more prestigious career in the civil service or armed forces. The result was that little modern industry was controlled by non-Muslim minorities, nearly all of whom left Turkey during or immediately after the war (Hale, 1981:36).

For Ataturk, economic development was the most important problem of the Republic. In this respect, the first economic congress was held in Izmir on 14th

February 1923. In the opening speech, M. Kemal put great emphasis on the importance of the country's economic development. According to him, the 20th century was the century of economics, and the country's survival was dependant on its economic success.

In the early years of the Republic, Ataturk put great effort into promoting a secular work ethic based on rationality. It is very apparent in his famous motivational sayings; for example, "Turks are industrious", "be proud, work hard and be confident". In a sense, the Kemalist regime was trying to create an indigenous secular ethic based on Turkish nationalism, and Islam was not part of it. The young generation was raised with this consciousness. Every morning primary school children take an oath emphasising strong commitment to work and the Turkish nation: "I am a Turk. I am honest. I am industrious. My first duty is to protect the young and to respect those older. My ideal is to strive for progress. I am ready to sacrifice myself for my nation. Happy are those who say they are Turks." Although it sounds similar to Puritan ethics values to some extent, it might also be argued that it was an attempt for creating uniform generations. Yet it was the individualist rational thinking that shaped the spirit of capitalism in the west, according to Weber.

Until the global economic depression in 1929 liberal economic policies were adopted for a short time. In between 1930 and 1950 the Republic was forced to apply statist (state-driven) economic policies without private initiative because of pressure of limited capital accumulation and the impact of the global economic crisis. The state-centred economy could manage to create its own bourgeoisie within that period. Kemalist elites and state bureaucracy were not only the vanguard of the secular Republic, but they were also actively involved with business. The Republic's first and the only party (until 1946), the Republican People's Party, (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP*) was the owner of one of the biggest bank in Turkey (*Is Bank*). This period is known as the State Capitalism Era. In 1938, Ataturk died, but his party, CHP, remained as the only political party until 1946. The despotic character of the Ottoman heritage could be seen in the totalitarian secularism of this single party period.

In short, in the early years of the republic, the economy was shaped by the state interventions and protectionist policies. According to Bugra (1994), the management of state-business relations becomes more important and more difficult in late-industrializing countries than industrialized countries. The Turkish private business context, therefore, should be considered in this regard. The difficulties of creating a business class also related to Turkey's industrialization process. The main characteristics and difficulties of the Turkish industrialization process could be summarised as follow:

1. Muslim-Turkish business people have received the property rights of the business abandoned by non-Muslims who, mostly, had left the country after the foundation of the Republic.
2. There was no business class until the first years of the republic.
3. Foreign direct investment (FDI) played a limited role only.
4. The autonomy of the new Turkish state in the area of foreign trade policy was restricted until 1929 by the conditions of the Lausanne Treaty (Bugra, 1994:21).

It can be argued that, in the early republican era, creating a business class and an internal work ethic was the main goal for the state. However, the early business class did not emerge with its own dynamics. It was a struggle to create a bourgeoisie with the support of the state and the bureaucracy, because it had no socio-cultural background regarding entrepreneurship. The Turkish experience was quite different from Western enterprise culture. According to Ozdemir (2006) in Western Europe, the key concepts for the 'ideal type' of modern capitalism were *individuals* and *market*, while in Turkey the key concepts were *society* and *bureaucracy*. Therefore, the main characteristic of the Turkish economy was that the economy was planned by the state and the bureaucrats with almost no civil or private initiative. This might be considered as the reason why the number of SMEs stayed at lower levels for a long time in Turkey. Therefore, Istanbul-based Turkish business elites were the prominent representative of the private business sector in Turkey until the 1980s.

The single party system was ended in 1946, and the Democrat Party (DP) was established by some ex-members of CHP. DP appeared as a centre-right party, and won the elections in 1950. Its economic policy was mainly liberal. However, state-owned business properties were not privatised. The Democrat Party period (1950-1960) is still considered as the first step of shifting to a liberal economy in Turkey.

Beside economy policies, the DP period was the turning point for Kemalist secularism in Turkey. The centre-right DP government lifted some limitations on religious institutions and practices. For example, reciting *ezan* (Islamic call to prayer) in Arabic in mosques was forbidden by CHP, and DP lifted this ban. Some Sufi orders, especially *Nurcus* and *Nakshibandis*, started to articulate themselves more openly. After the 1950s, Islamic movements in Turkey became important political powers by supporting centre-right parties mostly. In a sense, they regarded the political arena as a suitable means to revitalize their oppressed Islamic identity. This period can also be considered as the first emergence of the Islamic entrepreneurial class. In the context of the period, this class was considered as suspect by the secular elites of Ankara and Istanbul and they were left apart from the centre. As Maigre (2006) noted, this system, where the privileges are distributed to a minority bourgeoisie, supports *clientelism*¹⁰⁰. This might be regarded as one of the main reasons for the conflict between the Islamists and the secularists.

In Turkish political history, the first Islamist party, the National Order Party, was established in 1970 and banned in 1971. Under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan, the party re-emerged under a new name, the National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi, MSP), in 1972. The party obtained a surprising electoral success in the 1973 general elections with 12% of the votes from the most influential religious orders, namely the *Nakshibandis* and *Nur* movements; and took part in several coalition governments until 1980.

¹⁰⁰ It refers to a form of social organization common in many developing regions characterized by "patron-client" relationships. In such places, relatively powerful and rich "patrons" promise to provide relatively powerless and poor "clients" with jobs, protection, infrastructure, and other benefits in exchange for votes and other forms of loyalty including labor (Nylen, 2003).

The period of 1960-1980 is regarded as the Planned Economic Era. Recommendatory five-year economic plans were prepared by the State Planning Organisation (DPT). In this period, private and public manufacturing were mixed. The main characteristic of this period was protectionist policies. National private sector and big private industrial groups developed in this period. However, small and medium-sized enterprises were still weak. It is argued that big industrial groups took advantage of the government support in their growth (Bugra, 1994). Broadly speaking, it can be said that creating an enterprise culture was the victim of protectionist policies; and SMEs, known as the carrier of the economy, were totally ignored. Additionally, this period (1960-1980) experienced three military coups (27th May 1960, 12th March 1971, and 12th September 1980). The dangers of communism and Islamism were the main drivers of these coups. Apparently, encouraging SMEs and applying institutional changes for the free market were no one's priority at that time, when heated internal conflicts were everywhere. The official statistics show that credit given by the state institutions and banks to the small firms as a percentage of total credits had run at around three to four percent during the 1970s (Gulap 1999). In general, this period was considered as the lost years of the country.

APPENDIX-2

Detailed Profiles of the Sample

The Religious Group

Name: RKY1	Sector: Steel and Metals
Number of Employees: 7	
Age: 41	
Education: High School degree	
Affiliation: Member of the Gulen movement	
Duration of the Interview: 67 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RKY8	Sector: Construction and Petrol
Number of Employees: 11(full time), 20 (temporarily hired)	
Age: 22	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: Member of the Gulen movement	
Duration of the Interview: 35 min. (approximately)	
Remarks: No recording	

Name: RKY9	Sector: Accounting and Insurance
Number of Employees: 5	
Age: 42	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: Member of Gulen movement and TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 65 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RKY10	Sector: Construction
Number of Employees: 56 (6 females)	
Age: 45	
Education: Junior High School	
Affiliation: Member of the Gulen movement and TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 82 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RKY11	Sector: Textile
Number of Employees: 7 (4 females)	
Age: 53	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: Member of MUSIAD	
Duration of the Interview: 108 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RKY12	Sector: Furniture
Number of Employees: 400 (roughly 25% female)	
Age: 42	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i>	
Duration of the Interview: 69 min.	
Remarks: His company can be regarded as a big scale in the EU context.	

Name: RKY13	Sector: Cooling Products
Number of Employees: 150 (30 females)	
Age: 45	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i> and TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 68 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RKY17	Sector: Steel and Metals
Number of Employees: 12	
Age: 45	
Education: High School degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i>	
Duration of the Interview: 36 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RKY18	Sector: Machine Replacement Parts
Number of Employees: 8	
Age: 32	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i> and TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 55 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RG2	Sector: Leather and Shoes
Number of Employees: 60 (3 females)	
Age: 42	
Education: High School degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i> and the TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 106 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RG3	Sector: Chemicals
Number of Employees: 35 (7 females)	
Age: 41	
Education: Junior High School	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i> and the TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 69 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RG4	Sector: Hardware Supplies for Construction
Number of Employees: 30 (3 females)	
Age: 59	
Education: High School degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i> and the TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 83 min.	
Remarks: He is a member of the TUSKON's executive board	

Name: RG5	Sector: Printing
Number of Employees: 11	
Age: 37	
Education: High School degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i>	
Duration of the Interview: 78 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RG6	Sector: Construction Materials Trading
Number of Employees: 20 (5 females)	
Age: 47	
Education: Junior High School degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i> and the TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 27 min.	
Remarks: This is the shortest interview since the businessman had very limited time	

Name: RG7	Sector: Plastic and PVC
Number of Employees: 10	
Age: 39	
Education: Elementary School degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i> and the TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 104 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RKN14	Sector: Meat Products
Number of Employees: 100	
Age: 52	
Education: High School degree	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i>	
Duration of the Interview: 78 min.	
Remarks: Had to stop studying at university because of political reasons	

Name: RKN15	Sector: Metal Products and Oven
Number of Employees: 175 (32 females)	
Age: 53	
Education: Elementary School degree	
Affiliation: Member of the MUSIAD	
Duration of the Interview: 95 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: RKN16	Sector: Steel and Metals
Number of Employees: 45 (3 females)	
Age: 47	
Education: University degree (Master)	
Affiliation: Member of <i>the Gulen movement</i> and the TUSKON	
Duration of the Interview: 88 min.	
Remarks: A former president of TUSKON's Konya branch.	

The Secular Group

Name: SA1	Sector: Glass and Framing
Number of Employees: 15	
Age: 50	
Education: High School degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 64 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SA2	Sector: Industrial Engineering & Consulting
Number of Employees: 17 (4 females)	
Age: 55	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: min.	
Remarks: Notes Friday prayer attendance	

Name: SA3	Sector: Mechanical Engineering
Number of Employees: 11 (5 females)	
Age: 35	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 104 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SG4	Sector: Automotive
Number of Employees: 15 (2 females)	
Age: 36	
Education: High school degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 30 min. (approximately)	
Remarks: Prayer attendance (sometime), No record	

Name: SG5	Sector: Constructional Engineering
Number of Employees: 25 (10 females)	
Age: 33	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 104 min.	
Remarks: Prayer attendance (Fridays and some other times)	

Name: SA6	Sector: Restaurant Chain
Number of Employees: 33	
Age: 32	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 75 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SA7	Sector: Fast-food Consulting
Number of Employees: 5 (4 females)	
Age: 46	
Education: High school degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 73 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SE8	Sector: Education
Number of Employees: 280 (roughly 30% females)	
Age: 45	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation. Member of ADD	
Duration of the Interview: 75 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SE9	Sector: Construction Hardware Trading
Number of Employees: 10 (2 females)	
Age: 45	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation. Member of CYDD	
Duration of the Interview: 83 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SE10	Sector: Automotive
Number of Employees: 55 (22 females)	
Age: 35	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 76 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SA11	Sector: Office Supplies Import & Export
Number of Employees: 30 (2 females)	
Age: 50	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: Member of CYDD	
Duration of the Interview: 64 min.	
Remarks: Notes Friday prayer attendance	

Name: SA12	Sector: Recording
Number of Employees: 10	
Age: 47	
Education: High School degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 52 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SA13	Sector: Public Relation and Consulting
Number of Employees: 3 (all females)	
Age: 31	
Education: University degree	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation	
Duration of the Interview: 38 min.	
Remarks:	

Name: SA14	Sector: Finance
Number of Employees: 12 (6 females)	
Age: 33	
Education: University degree (master)	
Affiliation: No religious affiliation. Member of Lions	
Duration of the Interview: 45 min (approximately)	
Remarks: No recording	

APPENDIX-3

The Research Declaration

This document has been signed by myself and given to each interviewee to assure that the content of the interviews will be kept confidential. It declares that the content of the interviews will be used for academic purposes only, and names will not be revealed third parties.

NİTELİKSEL ARAŞTIRMA DEKLERASYONU

----- tarihinde Sayın ----- ile yüz yüze görüşme şeklinde yaptığım ve kaydettiğim mülakatın akademik araştırma haricinde hiçbir şekilde kullanılmayacağını; akademik araştırma kapsamında dahi olsa, şahıs ve firma ismine asla yer verilmeyeceğini beyan ve taahhüt ederim.

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APPENDIX-4

TUSKON



Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey (TUSKON) is operating as the top organization of associations of businessmen that are serving to make contributions for economic and social development of our country.

TUSKON, formed by 7 different regional business federations throughout the country, was established in 2005 in Istanbul.

There are 150 associations of businessmen within TUSKON, which are operating in 80 different provinces of Turkey.

TODAY TUSKON IS REPRESENTING 12 THOUSAND ENTREPRENEURS

TUSKON, supporting the infrastructural efforts for development of economic organization, which forms the foundation of development of the country, is aiming to make our enterprises and entrepreneurs a part of the global world of business. For this purpose, TUSKON is offering services as a leading organization in sharing the experiences of our businessmen in international markets, spreading such experiences, and creating new business opportunities.

Foundation Story

TUSKON's story started in the early 1990s by businessmen with social responsibility awareness and who are sensitive to country problems, forming associations in several cities. These associations were founded in order that little and middle-sized enterprises which form the mainstay of Turkish economy and also big and growing companies can develop themselves and expand to foreign markets in variable and dynamic economy. These associations which have the mission of

constituting an expansion at economic policies and making the business environment attain international and modern standards, shared their knowledge and experience with many entrepreneurs and enterprises both in Istanbul and in Anatolia. Civil society understanding which develops with the influence of adaptation process to European Union, required that these associations come together at top structures which can represent them stronger. This development drifted the associations to federation process. Thus, businessmen, who came together in Marmara, Aegean, Black Sea, Mediterranean, Central Anatolia, Eastern Anatolia and Southeast Anatolia regions in accordance with Turkey's geographical distribution, formed federations by integrating. (MARİFED, ESİDEF, KASİF, ANFİFED, BİRSİAD, DASİDEF, GÜNSİAF).

These federations, which target their members to be global players by following the developments in global world, founded Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Türkiye.

The Sectors in which the TUSKON Members Operate in

- Packaging Industry
- Shoemaking Industry
- Leather and Leather Products Industry
- Electrical and Electronics Industry
- Pharmaceuticals
- Telecommunications and Automation Industry
- Chemistry Industry
- Apparel, Ready Made Garments
- Gem Stone Industry
- Mining Industry
- Machinery and Manufacturing Industry
- Marble Industry
- Furniture and Forest Products Industry
- Contracting Services
- Automotive and Spare Parts Industry

- Hospital and Medical Devices Industry
- Banking, Finance, Insurance
- Agriculture, Processed Food Products Industry
- Transporting
- Textile Industry
- Soil, Glass, Ceramics Industry
- Tourism
- Other Industries

Aim and Perspective

Besides being an organization which will represent our businessmen who want to develop, enlarge their business and expand to foreign markets, our confederation was also founded in order to put our country's problems into agenda, to produce proposals to the solution and to provide wide contribution to reach the place our country deserves. For this purpose, TUSKON aims to;

- Constitute targets oriented to self-improvement of enterprises by evaluating potentials in our business world,
- Contribute to constituting economic policies as being the voice of the business world,
- Produce alternative solutions to our country's problems with constructive understanding,
- Keep the global communication network open and provide our businessmen's integration with the world following the economic developments of the whole world,
- Explain the methods with regards to the institutionalization of family companies,
- Share the knowledge, experience and relations which our businessmen may need while doing business either in national or international arena,
- Analyze the potential countries and sectors which may contribute to the development of Turkish economy by examining the developing markets in addition to main markets,
- Meet the member's need for service and knowledge as rapidly and directly as possible and without trouble by evaluating with the experts of the issue,

Confederation's point of view is to make the Turkish economy and businessmen an effective part of global economy by considering the local conditions and sensitivities while serving to these aims. Furthermore, TUSKON undertook a task to share its notes, opinions and suggestions with the public and to develop participant suggestions. TUSKON which made a principle of carrying out its work with the understanding of transparency adopted to accept hardworking, honest, reliable businessmen with social responsibility awareness and their institutions as members as well.

Source: tuskon.org, viewed at 01.07.2009

<http://www.tuskon.org/hakkimizda/?id=tuskon>

MUSIAD



IDENTITY:

MUSIAD is a “BUSINESSMEN’S ASSOCIATION” founded on May 5, 1990, in Istanbul, Turkey, by concerned businessmen dedicated to the realization of a Turkey where human rights and supremacy of the law, justice and equality, peace and security and the welfare and happiness of the people are guaranteed; where community and universal values that are adopted historically by the people are protected; and where the country is effective in the region and respected in the world.

MUSIAD is a “PLATFORM FOR DEVELOPMENT-DIALOGUE-COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY” created for the purpose of contributing to the social, cultural, political, economic, scientific and technological development of individuals and institutions, our country and society, our region and the world.

MUSIAD is an active and strong “NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION” that has grown to 26 branches and 2000 members since 1990; that, remaining committed to its mission, has shown concern and courage in acting in accordance with its original purposes; that has become a model not only for the business world, but for the society’s other segments as well as a training, guidance and consulting center which has established its operations and work on a professional level and completed its foundation and identity, which has been recognized by means of the ISO 9001:2000 Certificate of Quality.

VISION:

As an N.G.O., in general, and an “Industrialists and Businessmen’s Association” in particular, we hope to contribute in the effort to develop Turkey into a country that is internally united, regionally effective and respected world-wide and where human rights and the supremacy of the law, peace and security, justice and equal opportunity, public welfare and happiness, and an economic system based on free competition are established and where community and universal values adopted historically by the society will be protected.

MISSION:

First on condition of global value and with respect to the history of our nation and respectful to her culture and identity with the aim to protect our national and international independent structure

To fulfil the economic development of Turkey and to bring the effort to (take) our country in the rang of developed countries; for this aim to make necessary preparations to constitute a free economic market,

To increase the business volume of our members; for this goal to make the necessary support with information material to improve and sustain their competition capacity in national and international market.

With an understanding based on high technology and productivity, to have an organization essence for international standards and to be sensitive against environment.

To support the righteous as if it is weak and to be against injustice as if it is much strong.

Obtaining to activate and widespread the entrepreneur soul in all phases of economic activities, based on free initiative

To consider the needs of humanity and the sources of the country, to produce continuous, permanent and useful projects and to make all the necessities to bring these projects in to live.

To pioneer for an effective production in the global market, to bring together the investor, producer and project holder.

GOALS:

1) PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (Development of the Human Factor)

- To increase the personal qualifications of businessmen and their employees.
- To contribute to their development in becoming more positive and productive human beings in regard to all their industrial and business functions.
- To contribute to the emergence of a society of people who have inner depth, are professionally well-trained and have a notion of solidarity.

2) INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Development of Work and Operations Systems)

- To develop work and operations systems for small, medium and large-size enterprises and, by better allocating and managing the human-information-money factors in a balanced and harmonious way,
- To contribute to the society's achieving quality standards. By enabling the development of group spirit, to contribute to the emergence of more deeply-rooted institutions, beyond the individual, by giving priority to institutional structures.

3) SECTORAL DEVELOPMENT (Development of Markets)

- To contribute to the research and development of internal and external markets in all sectors, to the opening of roads leading from the producer to the consumer and from the seller to the buyer, and to the creation and development of surroundings and environments in which our members can work in suitable conditions.
- By establishing communication among the sectors, to work towards the development of healthy macro balances on a sectoral basis in the country's economy.
- By making studies related to world-wide expanding and contracting sectors, to

inform our members and other citizens of this information and the results of this research.

4) CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT / (Development of Value Measurements)

- Within a broad spectrum that embraces all sectors of the business world's horizontal and vertical dimensions, to contribute to the formation and development of a business model, common business ethics model fed by cultural and spiritual values brought along from past to present and businessman model with a perception that takes into consideration on the same axis all gains and losses on the personal, institutional, social and universal levels.

5) SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT / (National and Social Progress)

- To contribute to our country and society's social and cultural, political and economic and scientific and technological gains and progress, together with personal and institutional gains and progress and to the achievement of a happier, more comfortable, stronger and more respected country on the social level.
- To contribute to the economic and social development of our members and to increase communication and cooperation among our members.
- To participate in activities that increase our members' satisfaction and to develop new services in this direction.
- To be sensitive to consumer rights.
- To increase the quality of personnel and allow them opportunities for development and to employ them with sustainable opportunities.
- To make quality a part of institutional culture in all work areas.
- To utilize the highest level of technology and modern management techniques.
- To enable our members to make environmental sensitivity as a part of institutional culture.
- To produce goods and services and deliver them to the consumer on time under the most suitable conditions with the best quality.
- To train people to render these services who are educated and knowledgeable about the world, who are not overwhelmed by competition but to the contrary who like competition and who take it as their duty to struggle against unfair competition.

QUALITY POLICY:

- To contribute to the economic and social development of our members and to increase communication and cooperation among our members.
- To participate in activities that increase our members' satisfaction and to develop new services in this direction.
- To be sensitive to consumer rights.
- To increase the quality of personnel and allow them opportunities for development and to employ them with sustainable opportunities.
- To make quality a part of institutional culture in all work areas.
- To utilize the highest level of technology and modern management techniques.
- To enable our members to make environmental sensitivity as a part of institutional culture.
- To produce goods and services and deliver them to the consumer on time under the most suitable conditions with the best quality.
- To train people to render these services who are educated and knowledgeable about the world, who are not overwhelmed by competition but to the contrary who like competition and who take it as their duty to struggle against unfair competition.

Source: musiad.org.tr, <http://www.musiad.org.tr/english/about/identity.asp>, viewed at 27.09.2009