

**ISLAMIC BUSINESS ETHICS AND ITS IMPACT ON STRATEGIC BUSINESS
DECISION MAKING PROCESS OF MUSLIMS**

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this essay is to explore the impact of Islamic ethical values on cognitive thinking of a devout Muslim in the strategic business decision-making process and practical implications of those values in a business context. The topic is built on my personal experience with an emerged conflict between a Secular world of contemporary business principles that I have been taught and Islamic ethical values to which I have surrendered. I identified three main axioms – unity, equilibrium and responsibility – based on their emphasis on the Qur'an and Hadith which are the primary sources of Islamic ethical philosophy, and their relevant implications for business. In order to explore the impact of Islamic ethical values on cognitive thinking of devout Muslims, I utilized the cognitive theory of strategy, the sense making theory of strategy and Kierkegaard's moral reasoning model. These models are discussed within Crossan et. al.'s (2005) Diamond-E Framework . Having built on a personal case, the essay is aimed to provide valuable insights into Islamic business practices that may be of a critical importance in an international business context.

Keywords: Cognitive Theory of Strategy; Moral Reasoning; Unity; Equilibrium; Responsibility; interest

Dedication

In the Name of Allah- Most Gracious and Merciful



"My Lord! Increase me in knowledge"

(Qur'an 20:114)

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Glossary

Halal	Lawful and permitted
Haram	Unlawful and prohibited

1: The impact of Religious Values in Strategic Decision Making

In this section, I initially will present the problem as a personal case that makes up the main frame of this project. It may be questioned if using a personal conflict to build a strategic case can be reliable and valid, and could prove useful for business, but I believe that my strategy will provide useful insight. At first, I will discuss the Cognitive Theory of Strategy and the Sensemaking Theory of Strategy. These strategies will help to understand how religious values can create a distinctive perception influencing the interpretation of information, which in turn will lead to making distinctive decisions and taking appropriate actions. Kierkegaard's Moral Reasoning Model demonstrates that people develop different value orientations depending on their moral reasoning levels. Introduction of Islamic ethics and their implications for business will present useful insights into Islamic values that Muslim business people may hold depending on their devoutness to Islam. Comparing and contrasting Islamic Business Principles with the Secular world of Contemporary Business Practices will disclose reasons for potential conflicts.

1.1 The Problem as a Personal Case

This paper is built on my personal case of experiencing cognitive dissonance emerging from the conflict between some of the Contemporary business practices that I have been taught at business schools and the Islamic values that I have surrendered to in present-day life as a result of my upbringing in Islamic eastern Turkey. Literally, Islam means

‘surrendering to God’s will’. Building on my Islamic knowledge, I believe that surrendering to God implies an unquestioning faith, and a complete trust in God and His wisdom. In this sense, faith in God entails being in compliance with His principles.

As a devout Muslim, I came to realize that as I pushed myself to Secular business practices, an uncomfortable feeling arose from the contradiction between the Islamic ethical values that I have committed to adhere to, and some of the Secular business practices that I have been taught in BBA and MBA courses. According to cognitive dissonance theory, ‘cognitive dissonance’ arises when individuals act inconsistently with how they feel’. The theory argues that cognitive dissonance is reduced either by changing attitudes and behaviors, or by rationalizing them (McKenna, 2000). Thus, I tried to reduce the inconsistency by rationalizing the Secular style of business through an MBA degree, but I was not able to reduce my anxiety because I could not ignore my religious values and keep it away from the economic aspect of my life. I noticed that I had been filtering out any information I had been taught from Islamic guidelines that are derived from the primary source of the Islamic belief system, the Qur’an and Hadith. That realization changed my attitude, and brought about my decision to approach the Secular world of Contemporary business concepts from an Islamic point of view. I realized that the only way I could reduce the inconsistency between what I believe, and what I am supposed to follow, is to act in accordance with my religious beliefs regardless of the consequences that I may encounter throughout my life. However, this does not necessarily mean that I will keep myself away from Secular business practices, but rather explore commonalities and conflicts between the two in order to find the extent to which

I can function as an Islamic businessperson in a Secular world of contemporary business environment.

Thus, in this paper I aim to bring out issues that help me to compare and contrast the Secular way of doing business and the Islamic way of doing business. In that way, it will be possible to gain a deeper understanding of the conflict, so to solve it in a way that may help me to act in accordance with my religious values while functioning in a Secular business environment as an Islamic business person.

In the following sections, I aim to identify the relevant impact of religious values on the strategic decision making process by employing the cognitive theory of strategy (Mintzberg et al, 1998) and the sense making theory of strategy (Weick, 1995).

Kierkegaard's Moral Reasoning Model contributes to our understanding of the moral reasoning of individuals at different levels with an attempt to draw a distinction between people at a religious moral reasoning level and the other three moral reasoning levels - public, aesthetic and ethical (Abramson, 2009).

1.2 Cognitive Theory of Strategy

In this section, I shall be discussing 'The Cognitive Theory of Strategy' which regards strategy formulation as "a cognitive process that takes place in the mind of the strategist" (Mintzberg et al, 1998). The reason why I utilized this theory is to further discuss the importance of understanding the cognitive process in the mind of the strategist who plays a significant role in determining the strategic direction of organizations. My personal case (as shared above) clearly indicates that the same information is subject to being processed

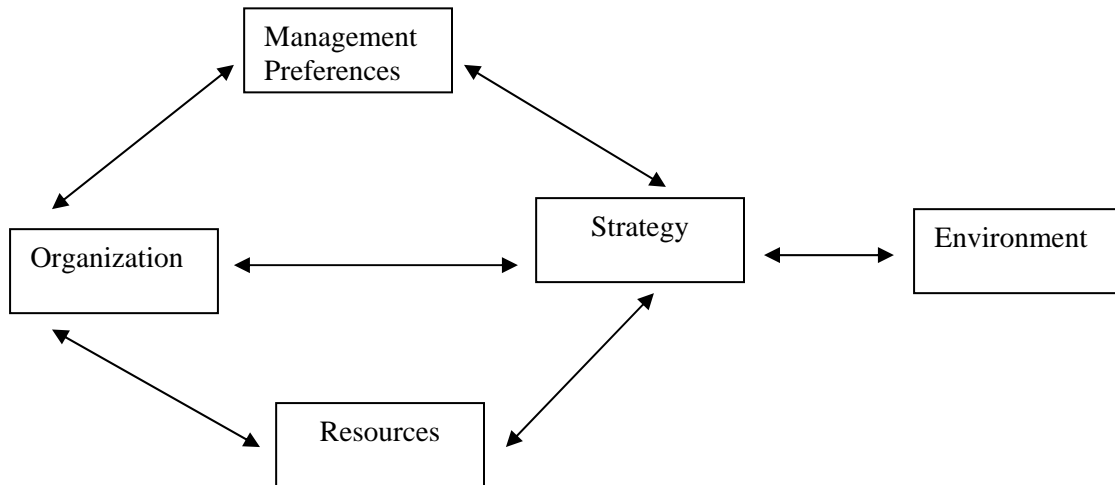
differently by different individuals depending on their perception and interpretation of the information.

“Much of the iceberg is, indeed, below the surface and inaccessible to verbalization, but its concealed bulk is made of the ice as the part we can see...” (Simon, 1977). A vast amount of research shows the linkage between cognition and action, which could indeed be a determinant of the outcome. In this sense, it has become essential to plumb the depths of the cognitive processes running through the mind of the strategist.

The cognitive theory of strategy demonstrates that it is essential to “probe into the mind of the strategist” in order to gain better understanding of the strategic vision of organizations (Mintzberg et al, 1998). Understanding the cognitive infrastructure of strategies will also contribute to the development of a more meaningful strategic analysis of organizations. Crossan et al (2005) argues that management preferences must be taken into consideration in strategy analysis as the strategic preferences of managers determine the strategic direction of organizations. The management preferences element in the Diamond-E Framework (see exhibit 1) gains significance because of its direct and indirect impact on the other elements in the framework. Depending on management preferences, the usage of resources and the establishment of a unique organizational structure will vary from one strategist, and his or her organization, to another.

Accordingly, two different organizations that are subject to the same environmental factors may show discrepancies in their strategic orientations. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze the management preferences element and its impact on other elements in the framework, as drawn below.

Table 1: The Diamond-E Framework



As strategic issues are framed depending on the perception and interpretation of the strategist, the strategic decision-making processes in organizations are considered subjective (Schneider, 1997). Considering the elements in the information-processing model (Corner & Prahalad, 1996) – attention, encoding, storage/retrieval, and choice – one may infer that strategic choices made in an organization may involve several cognitive biases of the strategist. If a strategy is framed by the cognition of the strategist, the personal values and beliefs embedded in his cognition adds a new dimension that needs exploration in the process of the strategic analysis.

According to Lenski (1963), "every major religious group develops its distinctive orientation toward all aspects of life in that these orientations profoundly influence the

daily actions of its adherents" (Lenski, 1963). It would not, therefore, be surprising to find influences of religious beliefs and values on the economic activity of these adherents. Depending on the extent of the individual's adherence to his religion, his religious values and beliefs are also likely to influence his decision-making process. In this sense, the impact of religious beliefs and values on the cognitive process of a strategist during his decision-making process should not be disregarded.

Based on his qualitative study about the impact of the Christian faith of its adherents on their conceptualization of business practices, Werner discovered a strong relationship between certain Christian concepts as distinct frames for, and actions of, devout Christians (Werner, 2008). In his study, Werner conducted interviews with twenty-one SME (Small to Medium Enterprise) owner-managers who consider themselves to be practicing Christianity. The aim of the study was to explore the impact of those owner-managers' Christian identity on their economic activities. The study revealed a strong link between the faith and business practices of the respondents who referred to their business practices within specific Christian conceptual frames. *Stewardship* was one of the Christian concepts identified in a number of respondent's actions. The concept of stewardship created a sense of accountability to God for their actions. Werner (2008) argues that secular business people might also have a sense of accountability, which also supports Allport's argument that "the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others" (1985, p.3 cited in Weick, 1995; p.39 cited in Werner 2008). For Christian businesspeople, this presence affecting their stewardship is God or Jesus Christ. A respondent with an engineering background from the UK states in an interview, "If you are a good steward of your

business, then you will be looking at the well-being of the environment, the well-being of the people in the business, as well as looking after amounts of money on profit and loss statement or your balance sheet". The respondent considers himself responsible for taking care of the environment and people, as well as the profits of the business entity. Even though a secular businessperson might also have a similar attitude toward environmental and human sustainability, he is most likely to consider his responsibility as an ethical issue; whereas, the Christian respondent framed his sense of responsibility within his religious beliefs. The main finding of the study was that Christianity provides conceptual resources that lead its adherents to frame their business practices.

As with Christianity, Islamic values have considerable impact on its adherents. Since Islam has more regulated principles, such as halal and haram categorization of things, it is more likely that one will see the influence of religious codes on the economic practices and strategic decisions of Islam adherents. Yet, Marta et al (1998) report that "there is a degree of divergence between the Islamic teachings (ideal) and business practices (reality) in the economic life of some Islamic countries" (Mullin, 2004). Additionally, Rice (1999) found that there are some differences between business practices and the Islamic values of Egyptian businesspeople who consider themselves to be practicing Islam (Rice, 1999). Naqvi (1981) argues that the "artificial symbiosis of Islamic ethical beliefs and 'alien' socio-economic philosophies and systems has led to the emergence of bifurcated societies promoting schizophrenic behaviour both at the individual and collective level (Naqvi, 1981). Rice (1998) quoting Rawwas et al., (1994) and Al-Khatib et al (1994) reports that the "social and political instability or economic hardship may

cause tense, pessimistic and struggling individuals to sacrifice ethicality for basic survival needs”.

Considering the above-mentioned studies, economic reasons appear to be a significant factor in keeping Muslims away from practicing Islam in a complete way; my goal would be to practice in a “complete way”. Even though there is an apparent divergence between the Islamic ideal and the business practices of reality, it must be taken into consideration that Islam constitutes a significant part of the culture in Islamic countries because of the prevalent Islamic traditions of, and ritualistic practices by, the majority of people. For example, during the holy month of Ramadan, the majority of people in Islamic countries fast, even those who consider themselves secular. In this respect, it is fair to say that some of the people seek conformity with public values even though they might not be devout Muslims. According to a survey carried out by the Gulf Marketing Review, after health, religion is the most important issue for Egyptian people. Rice and Al-Mossawi (2002) state “[that] the increasing impact of Islam on business operations is evidenced by the recent rapid growth of Islamic banking and finance worldwide” (Al-Mossawi & Rice, 2002). Thus, one can infer that Islamic business values will play a more significant role in the business activities of Islamic countries as Islamic operations are set into practice in the finance and banking sectors.

My personal experience of cognitive dissonance arising from the divide between Islamic values and Secular business practices reflects on a more general issue within the Islamic world. Therefore, it is essential to explore how information is processed and interpreted through the cognitive process in the mind of a religious devotee. Narrowing down the

scope of research, how Islamic ethical values influence the cognitive processes of its followers while implementing their decisions is of critical importance in this paper. The following section addresses the question of how a devout Muslim makes sense of a situation through interpretation and ascribing a meaning to the information based on his religious values and beliefs.

1.3 Sense Making Theory of Strategy

Choo identifies that the objective of organization information processing is “to make sense of its environment, to create knowledge and to make decisions” (Choo, 1998).

Sense=making is identified as making sense of a situation in the presence of uncertainty and ambiguity (Weick, 1995). The dynamic structure of the environment makes the strategy formulation process difficult because the environment of an organization may be subject to change in an unpredictable manner. Thus, decision-makers tend to make sense of the situation that they face to reduce the uncertainty involved in the decision-making process, and to create a meaningful strategy for the organization.

Cecez assumes knowledge as being both “an input to and a product of sense-making”.

There are four types of knowledge at four different sense-making levels (Kecmanovic, 2005): the individual knowledge at an intra-subjective sense-making level; the collective knowledge at an inter-subjective level; the organizational knowledge at a generic-subjective level; and the collective knowledge at an extra-subjective level.

Individual knowledge involves the values, experiences, beliefs, and assumptions acquired through personal experiences and ‘intra-subjective sense-making’. Individual knowledge is updated and recreated as the individual gains new experiences. Cecez argues that individual sense-making is influenced by other sense-making processes (by implication this refers to individual knowledge). Individuals draw upon their individual knowledge to create an intra-subjective sense of a situation. In this respect, intra-subjective sense-making is concerned with an individual’s own cognitive process of information. In my opinion, business education teaches its graduates to individually interpret and take advantage of individual circumstances through contingency thinking.

Unlike individual knowledge, “collective knowledge does not reside within individuals but between and among individuals” (Kecmanovic, 2005). Collective knowledge is created and shared by members of organizations as they interact with each other.

Weick(1995) argues that individual selves are transformed from ‘I’ into ‘we’ through inter-subjective meaning-making. In a collective sense-making process, individuals interact with each other to share their knowledge and assumptions (Kecmanovic, 2005).

The key components of the collective sense-making process are identified as “knowledge sharing, achieving mutual understanding, inter-subjective meaning making and knowledge co-creation as well as taking action”. In this sense, business education instills group-based assumptions about how environments should be assessed and what kinds of actions are appropriate.

“Organizational knowledge involves generic meanings and social structures and shared by and transmitted to organizational members irrespective of the individual participation

in its creation” (Kecmanovic, 2005). It includes organizational norms, policies, rules, and patterns of activities and actions. Therefore, organizational knowledge can be easily identified because it has visible forms of shared knowledge. At the generic subjective sense-making level, generic meanings can be created through either a bottom-up process or a top-down process. In either process, organizational knowledge ensures organizational stability as opposed to collective knowledge that is subject to change with new social interactions.

Cultural knowledge, which is extra-subjective, is embedded in the culture, and it is transmitted through language, symbols, and rituals. Individuals draw upon values, beliefs, traditions, norms, and assumptions to make sense of a situation. Cecez (2002) argues that extra-subjective sense-making underpins all other sense-making levels. In addition, referring to Wiley (1988), Weick (1995) notes that an extra-subjective level of sense-making provides “a reservoir of background knowledge allowing and constraining meanings at other levels” (Weick, 1995). Therefore, it is fair to say that religious values and beliefs are the ones to which individuals refer to while creating an extra-subjective sense of a situation. In this respect, I would argue that religious values and beliefs may reduce uncertainty in the mind of an individual while making sense of a situation because the religion to which he surrenders provides him a frame from which he can make sense of the situation.

The focus of this paper and this section is the cultural knowledge because religious beliefs and values are part of the cultural knowledge at extra-subjective level of sense-making. The question that I must resolve to reduce my cognitive dissonance, is how

should I proceed when the individual and collective knowledge ratified by my business education is in conflict with the religious-based cultural knowledge of my upbringing?

The interpretation and understanding of a situation is the outcome of the sense-making process. There are three aspects of sense-making: scanning, interpreting, and action. (Thomas et al, 1993).

Scanning: Scanning is the process of collecting information from external and internal sources in order to make sense of a situation. If the strategist is selective in attending to particular information, the information is likely to bear the cognitive bias of the strategist. If a particular religion limits its adherents' involvement in particular business professions, then the adherents are likely to behave in a cognitively-biased way against those professions. Islam identifies two important concepts that are of critical importance in Islamic philosophy. '*Halal*' and '*Haram*' are the concepts that draw a distinction between lawful and unlawful. Halal means lawful and describes any object or any action permitted in Islam. Haram means unlawful and defines any object and action prohibited in Islam. More details of these concepts will be discussed in the second chapter. Considering that Islam prohibits its adherents to engage in 'haram' business professions and trade 'haram' goods, but rather enjoins them to earn their living through 'halal', means that from a secular' point of view, it can be argued that Muslims are cognitively biased against these professions and goods. Yet, from a religious' perspective, the secular is more limited in terms of his scanning information because he tends to disregard the validity of religious norms and disregards the ethicality of his or her actions. In this sense, I would argue that even though Muslims are likely to be regarded as a disadvantaged rival in a competitive

business environment, Islamic principles may play a significant role in encouraging them to explore any information that may help them to find or create ethical strategies that are both profitable and are in adherence to Islamic principles.

Interpretation: “Interpretation involves the development and application of ways of comprehending the meaning of information; it entails the fitting of the information into some structure for understanding and action” (Thomas et al, 1993). Based on their experience, beliefs and values, people interpret the information they collected from several sources and then ascribe a meaning to it with an attempt to make sense of the information. Meanings attached to a strategic issue are often results of the categories the decision maker uses. Since people are bombarded with so much information in their daily lives, they need to organize the information by forming categorizations that make it easy to retrieve the information if needed. When a decision-maker uses a particular label to describe a given situation, the labels initiate categorization process. This affects the subsequent cognitions and motivations of the decision-maker (Thomas et al, 1993). Since religious doctrines identify several principles to which followers are assumed to adhere, the adherents are likely to interpret any information that they came across within the framework of their religions. In this respect, the interpretation of information based on religious values is also of critical importance to the strategic decisions implemented in an organization. For instance, the Haram - Halal categorization of things in the minds of Muslim businessmen plays a significant role in their decision-making process because when they encounter new information or a new business practice, they tend to place them in particular categories identified according to Islamic philosophy before taking action. In this sense, a devout Muslim will be inclined to make sense of any information by

referring to Islamic values. Thus, religious principles may act as a filter through which information flows in, and it is subject to interpretation in the mind of the Muslim strategist.

It is worth noting that the extent to which religious beliefs and values play a role in the decision making-process, and in the actions resulting from this process, rely on the degree to which the follower adheres to his religion. In this sense, it would be helpful to discuss Kierkegaard's moral reasoning model, which identifies four moral reasoning spheres (Schacht, 1975) and discusses the extent to which moral reasoning is central to his or her decision-making process. Therefore, the moral reasoning level of an individual could be considered one of the cognitive structures in which information is framed and interpreted. To make sense of information, a strategist will attempt to fit the information into his moral reasoning structure, categorize information based on his moral reasoning level, and interpret it accordingly. However, in order to find out if one takes an action in accordance with his values, it is essential to know the moral reasoning level that determines his commitment to applying his values to his life.

1.4 Kierkegaard's Moral Reasoning Model

In this section, I aim to discuss Kierkegaard's moral reasoning model within a strategic decision-making context by illustrating my personal perspective, which will help me compare and contrast business people at different moral reasoning levels: (1) public; (2) aesthetic; (3) ethical; and (4) religious. There are implications for strategic decisions that are likely to be implemented depending on the moral reasoning level of an individual. Building on moral reasoning will complement 'action' aspect of the sense-making

process because depending on one's moral reasoning level the degree of his commitment to stick to his values and to put them into practice may vary. For this reason, it may be helpful to introduce some descriptions about these four moral reasoning levels before discussing them in a business context.

Public: Individuals at the public level of moral reasoning, the lowest level according to Kierkegaard, seek to achieve conformity with public but without any passion or personal commitment. Thus, social acceptance is of critical importance for the people at this level. They avoid making choices and decisions by themselves; instead, they tend to submit to will of majority of people. In this sense, one can infer that they do not realize their own free will. I observe that there are many individuals, both in the Secular business and in Islam, who represent this level of moral reasoning

Aesthetics: For aesthetics, at the second lowest level of moral reasoning, individual preferences and pleasure are of significant importance. They tend to maximize their individual pleasure and gain, and minimize pain and uncertainty. They are not interested in public ethics or solidarity unless they draw upon a benefit from them, although they are willing to pretend to adhere to popular values to take advantage of others' acceptance of them. Thus, they do not hesitate to take an action at the expense of others for the sake of fulfilling their desires. Kierkegaard identifies sub-levels in the aesthetic category: immoral and amoral, as identified with the characters of Don Juan and Johannes the Seducer in his book *Either/Or*. The main difference between immoral and amoral aesthetics is that amoral aesthetics involves the deliberate manipulation of people, and risks those people's interests for the sake of implementing a private morality. The amoral

Johannes deliberately manipulates women to maximize his pleasure. The immoral Don Juan takes advantage of the women who are already attracted to his genuine charisma. Kant regarded those deliberately pursuing a private morality contradictory to the public morality as evil (Sullivan, 1995). In the same way, individuals at higher levels of moral reasoning would regard those at the aesthetic level as “evil” in their inclinations.

Ethics: Ethical people place significant importance on ethical standards and they consider themselves responsible for complying with the ethical standards of the society. In this respect, conforming to society is superior to fulfilling individual pleasures. Ethical people apply Kant’s categorical imperative in evaluating their actions based on whether society would work if all behaved as they wish (Sullivan, 1995). Yet, according to Kierkegaard, ethical people may still pursue self-interest and fulfill individual pleasures by conforming to society and its values which may be based on the self-interest of a particular time and place. Therefore, ethical people may not be completely isolated from aesthetic life. To ethical people, the violation of ethical standards is unacceptable, so they commit their lives to follow these standards.

Religious: Religious people draw a completely different picture from that of people with the other three moral reasoning levels. For them, surrendering to God’s will is superior to fulfilling particular individual pleasures, seeking public conformity, or complying with ethical standards. According to Kierkegaard, ethics may be suspended in the presence of God’s commands as was in the story of the Prophet Abraham. In his book *‘Fear and Trembling’*, Kierkegaard wrote that Abraham did not hesitate to sacrifice his son, Isaac, to surrender to God’s commands even though it went against ethical standards to

slaughter his own son (Hong, 1983). Thus, religious people strive to maintain harmony between their values and deeds, and God's will, despite social norms and values.

Kierkegaard argues that the religious stage is the only stage where a man can obtain peace through surrendering to the will of God, who is believed to be the source of infinite serenity. Thereby man can free himself from being a slave to his sensual pleasures (Hong, 1983). However, because he tends to ignore his personal pleasures, he is likely to be considered 'irrational' by aesthetic people who seek to maximize their pleasures.

Similarly, religious people regard the aesthetics as irrational' (and 'evil') since they are enslaved by their pleasures and blind to the absolute truth of faith. Thus, religious people consider aesthetic moral reasoning to be a lower moral reasoning level. The main difference between aesthetics and the religious moral reasoning level is that for religious people, God's commands are non-negotiable when they sincerely surrender to God's will; whereas, for aesthetics everything is contingent and could be negotiable for the sake of maximization of benefits. I observe that in many ways the contents of my Secular business education has reflected the contingency thinking and emphasis on personal gain represented by aesthetic moral reasoning.

In this respect, there is a discrepancy in the interpretation at a secular and religious moral reasoning level because of the tendency to ascribe different meanings to certain situations depending on the moral reasoning level. To exemplify, on the one hand, a secular businessman may regard an increase in alcohol consumption in the market as 'an opportunity to exploit' and enter into the alcoholic beverage industry. On the other hand, a devout Muslim businessman would not consider it as a strategy option because he

perceives the situation within the Islamic frame. Thus, he would not likely to enter into alcoholic beverage industry even though there emerges a profitable opportunity in the market. Therefore, the moral-reasoning levels which individuals pursue may make a difference in the decision-making processes of individuals.

According to the existentialist philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, my attitude falls at the 'religious' moral reasoning level because I am compelled to surrender to God's will and adhere to Islamic principles rather than seek to conform to the society or to maximize my utility. As a devout Muslim, I would be likely to attach a priority to the Islamic principles, and I cannot accept aesthetic principles that do not conform to my moral reasoning even though I know that I will likely face some challenges in business life. In a business context, a company may be confronted with environmental risk arising from the inconsistency between what the market demands, and what the management is willing to offer the market. Thus, there possibly may be a surface gap between the 'need' in the environment and the 'want' of the management of the company (Crossan et al., 2005). When the market which an Islamic company serves demands a particular good which is prohibited to trade according to Islamic principles, the Islamic company will not be able to fulfill the demand of the market if it is dedicated to the adherence of Islamic principles. Thus, the Islamic company will fall behind its Secular competitors, as the Aesthetic Seculars do not have any prohibitions that could preclude them from becoming involved in any aspect of business activity. Whenever a demand arises in the market, a Secular business would be ready to offer the goods demanded in the market for the sake of making profit and maximizing utility. From the point of view of contemporary economics, it is the 'rational behavior' that an 'Economic Man' is presumed to pursue

(Baye, 2009). In this respect, an Islamic company would appear 'irrational' from the point of view of the management of a secular company that committed to act in accordance with the Secular way of Contemporary business practices. Yet, it is mostly likely that religious people also consider Secular business people irrational as they underestimate divine reality.

In the presence of 'haram' goods demanded in the market, an Islamic company will avoid meeting the demand for the sake of being in line with Islamic principles; therefore, external factors may not be balanced with management preferences in an Islamic company. Serious conflict will break out in this situation because management preferences are not in favour of responding to the demand that has risen in the market. In the case of a serious conflict, there are two ways to reduce the conflict between the 'demand' of the market and the 'want' of management preference. Considering McKenna's argument regarding the reduction of cognitive dissonance (McKenna, 2000), the management of the Islamic organization can reduce conflict either by changing attitudes and behaviors, for instance choosing to fulfill the demand as Secular business people do, by rationalizing them, or by adhering to Islamic principles for the sake of submitting to God's will.

Alternatively, I would adapt 'public' moral reasoning if I were to seek conformity with the society even if it were without passion and personal commitment. In my view, public moral reasoning would preclude me from realizing my own Free Will, as I would be interested in social acceptance through solidarity with the majority of people in the society. I believe that people prefer to conform to the society because it is less risky to be

a part of a group than standing alone against many people. I would argue that in Turkey, the majority of people use 'public' moral reasoning since the social pressures which lead them to willingly or unwillingly follow social standards affects one's life due to the country's prevalent customs and traditions. Interestingly, I have observed that some Secular people would also be considered at the 'public' level of moral reasoning even though there is not as much social pressure exerted on people. The social system is already well designed and citizens are expected to comply with particular standards created for every member of the society. Therefore, people may not even think of challenging the system, but would societal conformity. In a business context, 'public' management will seek to serve what the market demands, but since the priority is to achieve solidarity without any passion, meaning to avoid risk taking, they are not likely to be the first mover in the market. Therefore, a public company will not end up with a serious cognitive dissonance conflict, unlike religious people, because the management would not allow any incompatibility to emerge. However, strategies developed by public morality people would be more likely to bear a conformity evidence bias because public management will tend to regard a commonly held path as the absolute objective.

Ethical moral reasoning is a relatively closer level to religious moral reasoning because ethical people disapprove of selfishly satisfying individual desires and fulfilling individual pleasure. They rather choose ethics over individual preferences if these two come in a conflict. However, in general ethical people do not defer to religious values and beliefs. Considering the sustainability initiatives put into practice in secular countries, none of those countries pay any consideration to the religious aspect of sustainability. Yet, since the concept of stewardship in Christianity, which is also similar

to the trusteeship concept in Islam, reminds believers of being accountable to God for their deeds, it is fair to say that sustainability initiatives are encouraged by religious philosophies as well. Therefore, the unique feature of religious moral reasoning is to refer to the divine will. It can be argued that ethical business people and religious business people can be expected to collaborate well as they can find similar objectives that lead them to meet on the same ground, and that they tend to prefer ethical solutions based on more universal principles over particularistic and more self-interested ones. I will discuss this in more detail in the third and fourth chapters.

1.5 Conclusion

The preceding chapter aimed to emphasize the significant impact of religious values and beliefs on cognitive thinking within a business strategic decision process by employing the cognitive theory of strategy and sense-making theory of strategy. Kierkegaard's moral reasoning model draws a distinction between people at different moral reasoning level that makes a difference in their cognitive thinking incorporating my personal experience through which I sought to present detailed insights on the issue.

The next chapter takes up the task of elaborating a far-reaching framework of Islamic ethics, where a set of axioms will be introduced to build much of the previous discussion on the issue of Islamic business ethics influencing cognitive process of a devout Muslim.

2: Islamic Business Ethics

In this section, I will present Islamic business ethics, which I derived from three ethical axioms based on their emphasis on the primary sources of Islamic philosophy: the Qur'an and Hadith. These axioms are unity, equilibrium and responsibility. The chapter will commence with discussion on Islamic ethics and then Islamic business ethics. Then, I will introduce three ethical axioms with a general meaning identified in Qur'an and Hadith and implications for business life of a devout Muslim. In addition, I aim to compare Islamic values related to Islamic business principles with comparable secular business principles. Comparison between these two approaches to business practices will illustrate difference in conceptualization of business principles resulted in different kind of decisions in a business context.

2.1 The Islamic Ethical System

Ethics is defined as a set of principles of right conduct or theory or system of moral values. From Islamic point of view, 'Khuluq' is the most closely related term to ethics. The Qur'an uses several term to describe the term of 'Khuluq': Khayr (Goodness); Birr (Righteousness); Qist (Equity); Adl (Equilibrium and justice); haqq (truth and right); ma'ruf (known and approved); and taqwa (piety) (Beekun, 1997).

The unique feature of the Islamic ethical system is that it places its emphasis on the Creator of the Universe, Allah, and adherence to ethical behaviour is regarded as a part of faith (imaan). Moreover, the Islamic ethical system permeates all spheres of human life.

Islamic Ethical Philosophy considers man as occupying the centre of the Universe as he is created as the vicegerent of God on Earth (Rice, 1999). Because of its 'holistic approach' to the human being (Wienen, 1999), Islam gives man two sets of responsibilities. As a servant of God, he is accountable to Him, and as the vicegerent of God on earth, he is responsible for taking care of the environment and society to which he has been entrusted. He acts as God's agent; however, his relationship with the environment and society is embedded in his relationship with God. Therefore, he will be implementing his responsibility to the environment and society in order to please God.

As the worldly life provides an opportunity to man to show his sincerity in submission to the will of God, which in turn enables him to be rewarded with Heaven in the afterlife, Islam constantly emphasizes the importance of ethical values while conducting one's life on Earth. In this way, the worldly life of man is considered inseparable from his spiritual life. Additionally, Islam views different aspects of the worldly life as interrelated parts that should be integrated into man's spiritual life. For this reason, general ethical principles must be applied to all aspects of life, while there are also specific tenets for particular aspects of life.

There are two primary sources for Islam's ethical system: Qur'an and Hadith. The first and foremost resource is the Qur'an, which is believed to be the verbatim word of God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in the year 610. The revelation of Qur'an did not occur all at once; rather, it was revealed step-by-step following the events that happened in the society in which Muhammad lived.

The second primary source of Islamic ethics is the Hadith, which is the record of the words, approvals, and practices of the Prophet Muhammad. As stated in the verse below, Muhammad is painted as an example for Muslims while pursuing their worldly and spiritual lives. Since it is impossible to provide prescriptions for every single detail of spiritual and material life in a book, which is limited in number, as the messenger of God, prophet Muhammad is believed, in the sight of devout Muslims, to be responsible for presenting explanations for details concerning the worldly and spiritual life based on the revelation by God.

"...verily in He Messenger of Allah (God) ye have a good example for him who looketh unto Allah and the last day and remembereth Allah much" (Qur'an 33: 21).

The verse stated above indicates that the messenger, which refers to the Prophet Muhammad in a broad context, is the one whom God encourages Muslims to model themselves after while pursuing their lives. In this respect, Muhammad's recorded words, approvals and practices are of critical importance to Islamic ethical philosophy and have a considerable impact on Muslims' lives.

The Consensus of Scholars (Ijma) and Analogy (Qiyas) are two other widely accepted sources. Analogy is the derivation of guidance concerning a new situation or problem that is similar to the situation dealt with in the Qur'an and/or Hadith. Consensus and analogy are derived from the primary sources, the Qur'an and Hadith, but these secondary sources are needed to come up with solutions for the challenges Muslims may face while conducting their lives (Beekun & Badawi, 2005). Thus, Islam is regarded as a religion

that is able to provide practical experiences to its adherents at anytime and anywhere on Earth because of its dynamic structure.

2.2 Islamic Business Ethics

Milton Friedman (1962) stated, “In a free economy, there is one and only one social responsibility of business – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition, without deception and fraud”. Friedman’s approach to social responsibility summarizes the contemporary economics system’s approach to business ethics. Likewise, the Secular Economics considers the maximization of benefit to be the ultimate goal of an organization. Thus, ethics is not the first and foremost consideration of organizations unless it helps them to make more profit.

In contrast to the Secular Economic system, the Islamic economic system does not hold a primarily materialist perspective to business (Rice, 1999). According to Islam, business activities can be part of worship and obedience to Allah if they are performed in accordance with the Islamic code of conduct.

“The truthful merchant is rewarded (by being ranked) on the Day of Resurrection with prophets, veracious souls, martyrs and pious people” (Hadith- Tirmidhi, no. 1130).

Islam acknowledges the importance of business or trade. In fact, the Prophet Muhammad was a merchant involved in international trade prior to his divine duty. When the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, he made trips to major trade centres around Mecca in order to spread the message of Islam (Khan, Islam: Its Meaning for Modern

Man, 1962). Therefore, trade was perceived as a necessity for introducing Islamic belief to people. Being a communication tool between Muslims and non-Muslims, trade played a significant role in spreading Islam. In this respect, there are specific principles and guidelines concerned with the economic aspect of Muslims' lives in the primary sources of Islam; the Qur'an and Hadith.

The Islamic ethical system has its own distinctive guidelines which are derived from two fundamental notions: halal (lawful and permitted), and haram (unlawful and prohibited). In order to understand fully the Islamic philosophy, it is necessary to be familiar with this categorization. Halal designates any object or action that is permissible to use or engage in; haram designates any object or action that is prohibited to use or engage in. Since the Islamic ethical system permeates every aspect of a Muslim's life, including business and commerce, classifications of things as halal and haram also apply to the economic aspect of a Muslim's life.

Table 2: Islamic Tenets of Business Transactions

<i>Halal Business Transactions</i>	<i>Haram Business Transactions</i>
Earning Legitimate (<i>Halal</i>) Earnings	Interest (Riba)
Fulfilling Obligations	Dealing in Prohibited (<i>Haram</i>) Items (Alcohol, Pork, Drug, Gambling, Prostitution)
Profit-Loss Sharing Partnerships	Cheating and Fraud
Fair Treatment of Workers	Hoarding of Foodstuff

"Allah and His Messenger made it illegal the trade of alcoholic liquors, dead animals, pigs and idols" (Hadith-Sahih Al Bukhari, no. 2028).

"If Allah makes something unlawful, he makes its price also unlawful" (Hadith-Ahmad, no. 2546).

Thus, Muslims are enjoined to avoid trading prohibited items and getting involved in haram professions. Income from the sale of prohibited items and being involved in haram professions are considered unlawful. In this respect, Haram and Halal categorizations draw a framework in the mind of a Muslim businessperson, and act as a filter through which the Muslim interprets things and makes strategic decisions in his business life.

In the following section, I will present a set of axioms that systemize and summarize Islamic Business Ethics. These axioms are unity, equilibrium and responsibility. I identified these three axioms because of the emphasis that the Qur'an and Hadith give to them, and their relevant implications for business. It is of critical importance to identify proper axioms, which must be internally consistent within the entire ethical system of Islam, as well as have relevant implications for business.

2.3 Axioms of Islamic Ethical Philosophy

I aim to discuss three ethical axioms in this section. Since these axioms are interrelated to each other, it is hard to rank them in order of importance in the Islamic ethical system. However, I would say that the concept of unity is of critical importance in Islamic faith since it is the focal point of Islamic thinking, and other three axioms can be derived from the unity axiom.

My purpose in this section is twofold: (1) to explain each of the axioms based on Qur'an and/or Hadith and present implications for business; and (2) to compare and contrast Secular Economic practices and Islamic Economics System in order to clarify the meanings and implications of the axioms. This section is organized as follows: first, I will explain the meanings of each of the axioms based on the Qur'an and/or the Hadith; second, I will present its implications in a man's business life; and third, I aim to discuss the difference in certain practices between the Islamic and the Secular world of Contemporary business principles based on a given axiom.

2.3.1 The Axiom of Unity

Naqvi (1981) explains that the concept of unity is derived from the belief in one God. In this sense, unity represents the most significant concept of Islamic philosophy, and in an absolute sense, it relates only to God. The fundamental belief that "there is no God but Allah and none is worth worship except Him" is the foundation of Islamic belief. Thus, the concept of unity calls believers for faith in God to submit to His will. On the plane of human existence, the concept suggests integration amongst believers in their submission to God. The concept of unity also implies the unity of words, thoughts and deeds for believers.

2.3.1.1 Implications of the Unity Axiom

The integrative function of the unity concept implies that all human beings are considered equal in the eyes of God. The following hadith clearly states that Islam is against discrimination on any basis:

“No Arab has superiority over any non-Arab and no non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; no dark person has superiority over a white person and no white person has superiority over a dark person. The criterion of honour in the sight of God is righteousness and honest living” (Hadith-Sallam and Hanafy, 1988).

In addition, Islam integrates the political, social, economic, and religious aspects of man’s life into a homogenous whole, which suggests a harmony between the material and spiritual lives of all believers. Therefore, man is encouraged to maintain a balance between his material and worldly life. The concept of unity in Islam also suggests a complete harmony between the words, thoughts, and actions of man (Asad, 1993). Since man is accountable to God, and his treatment in the afterlife depends on his performance in this life on earth, this adds a new dimension to the valuation of deeds in this life (Siddiqi, 1981).

2.3.1.2 Implications of the axiom of unity for business

Considering the preceding implications, the concept of unity raises certain expectations and applications for business practices: the involvement in honest means when pursuing economic activities; the equal treatment of employees; truthfulness; and the avoidance of non-discriminatory behaviour in hiring and promotion. Adherence to these principles of business practice is considered a part of Islamic faith. These universal principles cannot be set aside for an individual contingent advantage.

The unity concept emphasizes maintaining a sincere relationship between the creator-God and the created; humanity. As part of his divine duty, man is obligated to conduct his life in accordance with God’s will so that he can maintain his relationship with God.

Since Islam prescribes a unified code of conduct, this code is equally applicable to the business aspect of life. Unlike the Islamic approach to the economic aspect of man's life, Secular Economic Theory isolates religious precepts from the business sphere of man's life and dictates that he adapts a secular perspective to economic issues. A serious conflict between two different perspectives emerges in the description of 'Economic Man' in Secular Economic Theory. To elaborate the implications for business of the concept of unity, I aim to compare these two different perspectives on the theory.

2.3.1.3 Utility-Maximization Behaviour

According to the Secular Economic System, 'Economic Man' is described as a rational individual who tends to aim for maximizing his utility. Based on the 'self interest' principle of Economics, if every individual acts in his own best interest, then total welfare will persist in the society. Thus, the utility maximizing behavior of Secular Economic theory promotes a selfish way for pursuing business and focuses on the desires and wants of 'individuals'. In this respect, considering Kierkegaard's Moral Reasoning Model, people adapting utility maximizing behavior may be categorized as 'aesthetics'.

Utility maximizing behaviour is constrained in two ways in Islam: Muslims are prohibited from being involved in 'haram' business professions and from trading 'haram' goods. Since Islam draws a distinctive line between haram and halal engagements, devout Muslims are encouraged to avoid involvement in haram professions, and to earn a living through halal professions. Secondly, a Muslim businessman is enjoined to not only avoid getting involved in 'haram' business professions, but also to earn his living through 'halal' means. Namely, even if he trades 'halal' goods, but cheats in measure and

weights, his earnings are considered ‘haram’. Hence, both means and results must be in accordance with the principles prescribed in Islam.

A Muslim is not approved to support himself at the expense of others because Islam views social welfare as beyond the individual satisfaction. If one seeks to fulfill one’s own desires without any consideration of others, then injustice is most likely to emerge in regards to the allocation of resources on Earth. Yet, it is necessary to note that Islam has neither a socialist nor a capitalist perspective because "the divine synthesis of ethics and economics" sets Islam apart from every other system (Naqvi, 1981).

Therefore, considering the concept of unity, the utility maximization behaviour of man is constrained and disapproved by Islam since it underestimates God’s precepts on the business aspect of man’s life.

2.3.2 The Axiom of Equilibrium

Equilibrium denotes a balance of forces. Frithjof (1977) notes “it is the aim of Islam to combine the sense of absolute with the quality of equilibrium”. According to Naqvi (1981), equilibrium, at the absolute level, is “the supreme attribute of God”. Various verses in the Qur’an suggest that Allah has created the universe with a balance to maintain equilibrium in nature.

“...He hath created everything, and hath meted out for it a measure” (Qur’an 25:2).

At the relative level, as a vicegerent of God on earth, man must strive to maintain equilibrium in the universe. Furthermore, man is held responsible for achieving balance

and equilibrium in every aspect of his life; whereby he can maintain equilibrium in the universe.

2.3.2.1 Implications of the concept of equilibrium

The Prophet Muhammad recommended that Muslims maintain balance between their material and spiritual lives because Islam aims to integrate all aspects of man's life into a homogenous whole. Contrary to common misconception, Islam, in fact, does not require its adherents to conduct an ascetic life.

At the broader level, Muslims in a society are enjoined to avoid destroying balance in the Universe. Therefore, not only individual responsibility, but also collective responsibility, is considered essential to maintain equilibrium in the Universe.

In Islam, because wealth is considered to be in trust from God, man is expected to acquire and use wealth in accordance with the principles of Islam. Inequalities in economic conditions are permitted in Islam as long as they are the result of differences in skill, initiative, and effort (Chapra, 1992)

As part of its equilibrium objective in society, Islam "aims to establish a social order where all individuals are united by bounds of brotherhood" (Chapra, 1999). For this reason, Islam has the 'zakat' institution that fosters brotherhood between the rich and poor, and reminds people that wealth belongs only to God. Zakat is a proportionally fixed contribution collected from the wealth and earnings of the well-to-do (Qur'an 2:3, 43, 48). Therefore, wealth can be redistributed through the Zakat institution in accordance

with His commands. Thus, redistribution of wealth is considered to be part of the spiritual improvement of man.

“...God loves not arrogant, the vainglorious – (nor) those who are niggardly, enjoin niggardliness on others...” (Qur’an 4:36-37).

In parallel to the discussion above, the verse advises believers to avoid becoming niggardly, which may lead people to hoard their wealth resulting in an imbalance of supply and demand in a society. This principle calls into question the Secular business strategic principle of identifying a competitor’s (or a co-operator’s) weaknesses and taking advantage of them.

2.3.2.2 Implications of the axiom of equilibrium for business

In the economic sphere, equilibrium implies balance in the production, consumption, and distribution functions of a society. Maintaining balance in the universe requires a fair usage of any resources in the environment at an individual and collective level because the Islamic sense of balance, amongst the various aspects of man’s life, aims to produce the best social order in a society. The production and consumption function in a society must stand in certain equilibrium; otherwise, any imbalance amongst these forces may cause injustice and economic troubles in the society. Additionally, since the production and consumption patterns of people in a society are linked to each other’s, people are not supposed to utilize resources inconsiderate of others.

“...So that wealth does not concentrate in the hands of those who are rich among you...” (Qur’an 59:7).

As emphasized in the verse above, Islam does not approve of wealth circulating amongst rich people. This causes inequalities in living standards of people in a society.

Consistently, drawing upon Bigsten's argument (1987), "The banking system, thus, tends to reinforce unequal distribution of capital". Chapra argues, "while deposits come from a broader cross-section of population, their benefits mainly go to the rich" (Chapra, 2006). Thus, Islam aims to provide a fair standard of living for everyone in a society.

Chapra (1999) notes that "in the Islamic system, even though property is allowed to be privately owned, it is to be considered as a trust from God, because everything in the heavens and earth really belongs to God and man, being the vicegerent of God, enjoy the right of ownership only as a trust". Thus, since a devout Muslim views resources as trusts from God, he will not utilize them extravagantly. In fact, the verses below remind Muslims that absolute ownership of wealth belongs to God, so they must act in accordance with conditions of the trust if they seek God's approval for their deeds.

"And give them of the wealth of God which he has given you" (Qur'an 24:33).

"...eat and drink and be not extravagant; surely He does not love the extravagant."
(Qur'an 7:31).

Unlike the Islamic approach to consumption and production functions, Secular Economics does not pay any concern to the divine aspect of wealth. Instead, they are likely to assume that they have unlimited claims on their wealth. Therefore, secular economics promotes self-interest in utilizing resources. There is a divergence of

production and consumption functions between Secular Economics and Islamic Economics.

2.3.2.3 Production and Consumption Functions in terms of Equilibrium Concept

The Islamic notion of need fulfilment differs from the Secular perspective on production and consumption functions in terms of a divine approach. As discussed in the implications of unity of concept sections, the Secular perspective on production and consumption promote selfish need fulfilment without giving any concern to other's needs in a society. However, in Islam the sense of divine duty assigned to believers alters their relationship with others in regards to society and the property that they possess. Islam enjoins its adherents to regard wealth as a trust from God, so they do not have an unlimited claim on resources. Thus, as the vicegerent of God, man must not fulfil his needs selfishly.

"...wealth and children are allurements of the life of this world" (Qur'an 18:46).

Consistently, Yousri (2005) notes that "the consumption behavior of Muslims as determined in accordance with their faith and ethics will lead by way of the mechanism of a purely competitive market to optimum allocation of resources and optimum level of production" (Yousri, 2005). Thus, the conventional thought promoting utility maximization and, in turn, extravagant consumption, does not parallel the Islamic perspective on production and consumption.

2.3.3 The Axiom of Responsibility

According to Islamic belief, unlike other creatures in the Universe, only man is endowed with Free Will, which enables him to make choices amongst alternatives while pursuing his life. However, no one may use his or her Free Will at the expense of others. Because of his Free Will, man is accountable to God for his deeds. In addition, being the vicegerent of God on earth, he should realize his position in the eyes of God. In Islam, man's accountability to God is not restricted to one aspect of his life, but he is responsible for his deeds in every aspect of his life.

"...each individual is in pledge for his deeds" (Qur'an 52:20-21).

The Qur'an authenticates the responsibility of individuals for their deeds by this verse. The phrase, "in pledge", emphasizes that every individual is fully responsible for his or her acts, and the consequences of the individual's acts cannot be transferred to someone else.

2.3.3.1 Implications of the concept of Responsibility

Man's responsibility to God regulates his relationships with society in Islam. Syed Amir Ali (1922), in his book "The Spirit of Islam", contends that unbridled individualism is not allowed in Islam. Thus, he is given responsibility to take care of society in the way he pursues his life (Ali, 1922). To not act in accordance with the conditions of his responsibility is considered a betrayal of God and his Messenger.

"Muslims are bound by their stipulations" (Hadith, Abu Da'ud, No. 3120).

This verse means that Muslims are responsible for implementing their obligations because Islam promotes acting in a responsible manner as emphasized in the verse below. Responsible behavior is closely related to ‘trustfulness’ according to Islam.

“O you believers! Do not betray the trust of Allah and the Messenger, nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you” (Qur’an 8:27).

2.3.3.2 Implications of the Axiom of Responsibility for Business

Islam holds its adherents responsible for conducting business within the limits prescribed by God. Various verses and hadith guide Muslims in how they pursue their business dealings. The adherence to Islamic principles in business is considered part of their faith in God.

Islam considers that an organization is accountable to various stakeholders such as stockholders, employees, customers, government bodies, and the environment. Therefore, Islam does not view individual profit as the only compelling force for involvement in business. An organization is responsible to its customers to provide them with goods in good quality and at a fair price. It is condemned to mislead customers about the qualifications of products. Muslim merchants are encouraged to disclose their product’s defects, as trust is an essential component in a business transaction.

2.3.3.3 Interest Based Transactions

Mews and Abraham (2006) note that “ethical arguments grounded in religious traditions make a significant contribution to the discussion of predatory lending and just compensation” (Mews & Abraham, 2006). Saeed (1999) highlights that the “prohibition

of interest is part of a wider ethical framework concerned with justice and equity in financial relationships, very similar to contemporary concern with predatory lending” (Saeed, 1996). In this sense, interest is not only a financial instrument in a contemporary financing system, but also an increasing ethical concern that should be discussed in the economics. Consistently, Islamic philosophy discusses the notion of interest in terms of ethics.

Receiving interest on borrowed money is considered one of the ‘haram’ means of earning money in business in Islam. In contrast, considering the opportunity cost of money principle, from a Conventional Economics point of view, interest is necessary because the money-lender is considered to claim a predetermined loan-rate. Unlike the Conventional Economics system, the Islamic economics system does not recognize the opportunity cost of lending money, thus there is no place for interest in Islam (Beekun & Badawi, 2005).

Islam enjoins business people to enhance their capital through trade, not through lending on interest. Interest is prohibited since it involves exploitation, which violates the norms of justice. In banning interest, Islam seeks to establish a society based upon justice.

Interest impedes the notion of brotherhood amongst people in a society because the lender may exploit the hard conditions that the borrower experiences. Chapra (1999) contends that gross inequalities in wealth will lead to the destruction of brotherhood.

Thus, Islam prohibits interest because it destroys the notion of brotherhood in a society.

“Allah has permitted trading and forbidden riba (interest)” (Qur’an 2:275).

“O you believe! When you deal with each other in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time, reduce them to writing. ...Let him who incurs the liability dictate, but let him fear Lord Allah, and not diminish aught of what he owes”.
(Qur'an 2:282)

However, Islam also seeks to protect the lenders' rights to avoid any misunderstanding and abuse of the good intentions of lenders. Thus, God has enjoined to put contractual obligations in writing, as seen by the former verse. Thus, neither lender nor borrower would be subject to any unfair treatment.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I intended to present Islamic ethics and Islamic business ethics by discussing three axioms: unity, equilibrium, and responsibility. The Qur'an and Hadith complement these axioms by specifying their emphasis on Islamic philosophy. In the Qur'an and Hadith, there are prescriptions that man must draw upon while steering his own life. Islam sets a unique categorization of things as 'haram' and 'halal'. In the eyes of a devout Muslim, things may have different meanings and implications.

The distinctive feature of Islamic ethics is its definition of man in relation to God, his own self, the Universe, and the society. Man considers himself the vicegerent of God on earth, so he is assumed to act in accordance with the requirements of his divine duty. The axiom of unity suggests the Oneness of God and human beings are united in submission to God's will, so there will be no discrimination amongst people, and wealth must be obtained thorough halal means without selfishness. The axiom of equilibrium entails a complete social harmony and social order in the economic system. The axiom of

responsibility reminds believers of their accountability to God, and this responsibility regulates his relationships with other people.

Thus, this chapter sought to establish evidences demonstrating that Islamic values affect the cognitive process of Muslims and, more importantly, lead them to act in accordance with Islamic values, which represents the unique feature of Islam.

The following chapter will present personal implications derived from the discussions in this chapter by integrating the models introduced in the introductory chapter (see Table 3 for a summary comparison).

Table 3: Summary of Fundamental Ethical Axioms in Islamic Philosophy

Axioms	Propositions	Implications	Contrasting Secular Business Principles
Unity “...to Allah belongs the heritage of heavens and earth. And Allah with what you do, is fully acquainted...”(Quran: 3:80).	There is only one God-Allah and everything in the heavens and on earth belongs to Him. Man is only the trustee of those as the vicegerent of Allah on Earth.	Avoiding discriminatory behaviour. Harmony between words, thoughts and deed. Earning through halal means and halal items.	Utility maximization.
Equilibrium “...He hath created everything, and hath meted out for it a measure” (Qur’an 25:2).	As the vicegerent of God on earth, man is held responsible for maintaining a delicate balance in the universe.	Avoiding extravagant consumption of resources. Fair treatment of employees.	Extravagant consumption Disregarding the divine aspect of man’s life.
Responsibility “...each individual is in pledge for his deeds” (Qur’an 52:20-21)	Every individual is ultimately responsible. for his actions.	Fulfilling obligations. Contributing to the well being of the environment and society.	Interest based transactions

Implications Sections

Beginning with this chapter, I shall present the implications of the aforementioned issues.

I shall discuss this from a personal standpoint in this chapter, and in the fourth chapter, from the perspective of Secular business people in their dealings with devout Muslims.

Based on Islamic ethical values and the contrasting Secular style business practices identified in the previous chapter, I aim to see what options are available to me, and the extent to which I can function as an Islamic businessperson in Secular business environment. In the fourth chapter, I intend to discuss the implications for Secular business people in their collaborative and competitive business dealings with Islamic business people.

3: Implications as a Personal Case

Having discussed the issue as a personal case in the introductory chapter, I now aim to discuss the implications of the similarities and dissimilarities between Islamic and Secular Economic practices in my career. Being a personal case analysis, it may be questioned if it is a valid and generalizable issue (Weick, 1995). I would argue that since it brings up a strongly relevant concern for international business programs and dealings, since a personal case is mostly likely to involve vast amount of details, this study might contribute to the understanding of people with different ethical concerns based on sincere religious belief. As discussed on the basis of Kierkegaard's Moral Reasoning Model in the first chapter, people may be placed at different moral reasoning levels that affect their value orientations toward any aspect of life. Furthermore, the moral reasoning levels of individuals affect their process of scanning and interpreting the information, which leads individuals to expose different sets of cognitive biases in the strategic decision-making process. Kierkegaard argues that it is not necessary for an individual to stand at the same moral reasoning level; rather, individuals may move to other moral reasoning levels throughout their lives (Hong, 1983). It is evident to me that my business education has encouraged me in many ways to move from religious moral reasoning to aesthetic or even public moral reasoning.

When taking into account the above discussion, in order to present implications to a devout Muslim who attempts to function as a Secular businessperson, the four questions that are likely to emerge are identified accordingly.

The following are questions that I will be responding to based on the abovementioned Islamic ethical values to which I am committed to adhere: what I can definitely do, and what do I need to replace and how will I replace it?

3.1 What I can definitely do?

Since the aim of this chapter is to find an answer to my personal question of how I can function as a Muslim businessperson in a Secular business environment, I shall discuss a business practice example from the Secular business world in an attempt to explore how I would interpret it based on my religious values, and to what extent I can adapt it considering those values.

3.1.1 Sustainability Initiatives

Sustainability initiatives have become the most important issues that take a significant place in the national agendas of developed countries and receive strong support and commitment from the citizens and international institutions. However, being a citizen of a developing country, Turkey, I was not familiar with sustainability initiatives even though I was aware of the environmental concerns mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith. Having delved into the concept with the 'Sustainability' course in the program, sustainability initiatives which are implemented by the government and non-government organizations helped me to reflect on such Secular business practices that appeared to be in line with two out of three of the Islamic ethical values identified in the previous chapter. From my perspective, sustainability is concerned with responsibility, justice, and equilibrium axioms. Thus, I thought I might capitalize on Secular business practices that parallel Islamic values while working with Secular business people.

However, considering the meaning of the ‘development’ concept emphasized in the Secular sustainability initiatives, there emerged a distinctive conceptualization of the notion from an Islamic perspective. The secular conception of development attempts to deal with the issue for the sake of material benefits, while Islam relates the ‘development’ notion to the non-material goals of man (Yousri, 2005) because, as the vicegerent of God on Earth, man is believed to be responsible for taking care of his fellows and surroundings. Therefore, sustainable development implies more than a material benefit to man, but a duty assigned by God that enjoins believers to act in accordance with the requirements of the duty.

“Allah is He who has appointed you (mankind) His vicegerents on earth. Know then, that he who fails to recognize this dignity and to act in accordance there with shall be answerable for his neglect and will himself suffer loss and also incur the displeasure of His Lord” (Qur’an 35:40).

This verse reminds man that as the vicegerent of earth, he is entrusted to the resources of the Earth, and thus enjoined to take care of his trust as part of his divine duty. Moreover, the verse emphasizes that if man disregards his responsibility, he will be answerable in the afterlife and will suffer from God’s displeasure.

I aim to evaluate the sustainability issue under two subtitles, Environmental Development and Human Development, while considering the Islamic teachings related to the issues.

3.1.1.1 Environmental Sustainability Development

As discussed in the preceding chapter, Islam holds man responsible for maintaining the equilibrium in the Universe. Environmental resources have been granted to mankind who are entitled to utilize resources in a responsible manner. In the Qur'an and Hadith, Muslims are enjoined to take care of their environment, not only as a matter of ensuring positive future usage of resources, but also as a matter of faith (Yousri, 2005). Therefore, environmental issues must be of critical importance to devout Muslims.

Williams and Zinkin (2009) notes that the Prophet created special zones, which were inviolable, known as hima and haram, where the natural resources were to be left untouched. In order to protect land, forests, and wildlife, Haram areas often were around wells and springs to protect the water table from depletion. Hima areas were reserves for forests and wildlife where grazing and woodcutting were restricted and species were protected (Williams & Zinkin, 2009). Thus, the Prophet Muhammad has become a perfect model with his sincere care of the environment for Muslims who are enjoined to emulate him while conducting their lives.

“...verily in He Messenger of Allah (God) ye have a good example for him who looketh unto Allah and the last day and remembereth Allah much” (Qur'an 33: 21).

3.1.1.2 Human Development

As discussed in the previous chapter, Islam places a great importance on the concept of 'justice'. Man is enjoined to behave justly to his fellows. In a business context, employers are held responsible for providing good conditions for their employees and pay a fair

wage. In addition, employees have to do their best to deserve their earnings and become trustful.

“There are three persons of whom I am an opponent on the Day of Judgement ... and a man who hired a worker where he received (the work) from him in full and did not give him his wage” (Hadith- Sahih Al Bukhari 3:258).

“Your employees are your brothers upon whom Allah has given you authority. So, if one has one brother under his control, one should feed them with the like of what one eats and clothe them with the like of what one wears. You should not overburden them with what they cannot bear, if you do so; help them in their job” (Hadith- Muslim 3:4093).

The preceding sayings of the Prophet stress that it is of critical importance to behave justly to employees in terms of their wages and their workloads; as one may infer, the brotherhood concept is emphasized in both sayings and there is no place for the exploitation of employees. Employers are held responsible for providing good conditions for their employees. Therefore, according to Islam individual profit is not mentioned as the compelling force in running a business.

3.2 What I need to replace and how?

3.2.1 Interest based transactions

In a Secular economic system, financing is kept separate from the normal business activities, which leads to the justification of charging fixed rates of interest on invested capital in interest to opportunity cost of the capital. The separation results in the

formation of a group of passive market participants that makes profit through simple borrowing and lending activities without contributing to the active economic cycle in a society.

‘Interest’ is a predetermined rate of interest on a loan irrespective of the profit or loss.

The borrower pays a fixed rate of interest to the creditor by the due date of the loan.

Therefore, the creditor would earn money until he is paid back the principal. Fixed rate of interest irrespective of the profit or loss makes ‘interest’ unjust instrument of financing from Islamic perspective because either of the parties may suffer from the consequences of the credit relationship. On one hand, if the borrower makes a large profit on his investment, the creditor will be only paid a fixed rate of interest, which might make up a small portion of the whole profit, which is unjust to the creditor who provided the largest portion of the investment. On the other hand, if the borrower suffers from a loss on his investment, the creditor will be paid ‘interest’ payments on a predetermined timely basis and the principal payment at the due date of the payment regardless of the loss. In the two cases, either borrower or creditor is subject to confront economic challenge.

Islam prohibits its adherents to get involved in interest-based transactions that are argued to destroy ‘brotherhood’ in a society. Since interest is directly concerned with the economic aspect of man’s life, Muslims must be familiar with the Islamic view on the issue of interest while conducting their lives. Yet, interest related transactions do not contribute productively to the economy; instead, it makes it easier for capital owners to acquire wealth without actively participating in commerce. Therefore, it impedes both productivity and brotherhood in the society.

Therefore, taking into account the ruling regarding interest in Islam, I am dedicated to avoid any kind of interest-related business transactions. From my observations, the issue of interest is one of the most respected prohibitions amongst Muslims, even if they may not be dedicated to some other Islamic principles that concern economic activities. For this reason, Islamic banking that does not conduct interest-based transactions, but profit-loss sharing business dealings, have become alternatives to a Secular banking system. Knowingly, Islam encourages Muslim business people to seek profit while avoiding interest and offers dividend based business dealings. Profit-Loss Sharing partnerships may foster brotherhood amongst people.

“If the debtor is in difficulty, grant him time till it is easy for him to repay. But if you remit it by way of charity, that is best for you if you only knew” (Qur’an 2:280).

As stated in the verse above, Islam promotes ‘brotherhood’ and ‘benevolence’ amongst people, which is in contrast to the ‘self-interest’ principle of contemporary economics. Thus, a person would avoid behaving at the expense of others for the sake of maximizing his own benefit.

Islam offers profit-loss sharing transactions that are alternatives to interest-based transactions for devout Muslims to make profit on their capital. Through these partnerships, Islam seeks to foster ‘brotherhood’ among people, which is destroyed by interest-based transactions. Musharakah and Mudarabah are the two Profit-Loss Sharing arrangements preferred by Islamic economics.

3.2.1.1 Musharakah

Musharakah literally means ‘sharing’ and is an alternative-financing instrument to interest based financing of conventional economics. In Musharakah contracts, both the entrepreneur and the investor supply capital to the joint venture. Therefore, profits and losses are borne by both partners based on a pre-determined ratio, but the ratio does not necessarily coincide with the relative input in financing (Usmani, 1998). Thus, the proportion of profit and loss is left to the mutual consent of partners. Additionally, all the parties play a role in managerial decisions.

3.2.1.2 Mudarabah

Mudarabah is a partnership agreement where a partner (the investor) allocates money to the other party (the entrepreneur) who is in charge of business activities and management. The investor may determine a particular business for the entrepreneur in which case the entrepreneur is allowed to invest the money only in a particular business. For a Mudarabah partnership, it is necessary to determine a definite proportion of actual profit to which each party is entitled (Usmani, 1998).

Mudarabah is similar to angel investment where the entrepreneur funds his economic initiatives through the investments by the angel investors. In this type of business partnership, the entrepreneur realizes his business opportunity with the contribution of the investor who seeks to utilize his capital through entrepreneurship initiated by the borrower and in turn makes profit. Thus, wealth does not sit in an unproductive manner, but rather it is contributed to the economic system through entrepreneurial activity. Concentrating wealth in a few hands is, in this way, eliminated.

3.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I aimed to provide implications of the Islamic values discussed in the preceding chapter to find out what I can adapt and cannot adapt in a secular economic system considering my religious values. My purpose was to provide examples, rather than to be all-inclusive. Through evaluating secular economic principles from within the framework of Islamic business principles, I came to the conclusion that sustainability makes sense for Muslims. The concept of sustainability emphasizes man's responsibility to the environment and society, which is in accordance with the Islamic conceptualization of responsibility, and interest-based transactions are prohibited because it results in unjust treatment against either of the parties involved in a debt-financing agreement, which in turn destroys brotherhood and causes injustice in the society.

4: Implications for Secular Business People in their dealings with Muslim Business People

4.1 Secular versus Islamic Business Practices

Islam offers a set of principles that govern every aspect of man's life. Islam recognizes man's personal judgment, but Islamic guidelines aim to create a just system that maintains a fair balance in the interests of individuals in a society. Otherwise, if man's personal judgment were the one that governs his life, it would be most likely that there would be people who work only for their own self-interests and ignore others' interests. Thus, 'divine guidance' is the main difference between secular capitalism and the Islamic economic system. Secular capitalism isolates divine principles from economic activity; whereas, Islam establishes a certain set of divine restrictions on the economic activities of its adherents in an attempt to create a control mechanism over individuals, thereby maintaining balance, distributive justice and equality of opportunities. One of the best-known differences between the two emerges in the financing sphere of economics. Like contemporary economics, the Islamic economic system recognizes both debt and equity financing. Unlike contemporary economics, the Islamic economics system forbids a lender to charge a predetermined rate of interest irrespective of the economic circumstances of the borrowers of money. Thus, 'interest' is prohibited. However, Islam provides alternatives to 'interest' based credit relationships for its adherents.

Considering the fact that ‘divine guidance’ is the fundamental component of Islamic economic system, it sets a gap between the Islamic way of business and Secular business. The divinity aspect of economic activity of a Muslim businessperson sets him apart from a Secular businessperson whose main criterion in his involvement in business is to maximize his benefit. As stated in the previous chapters, Islam determines a divine duty for devout Muslims to get involved in business that is beyond mere profit. In this respect, an Islamic businessperson would differ in his or her way of doing business from a Secular businessperson. However, because the main objective of commerce is to make profit regardless of the moral reasoning levels of businesspeople, the secular businessperson and the Islamic businessperson would meet on the same trade ground. This compelling force of trade may get them together to work collaboratively or set them apart to compete with each other while serving in the same market. For this reason, each of the parties needs a deep understanding of the moral reasoning levels that govern the economic sphere of each of their lives in order to realize their own motives while conducting business. In this respect, I aim to discuss collaborative and competitive relationships between Islamic businesspeople and Secular businesspeople in their business dealings.

4.2 Working Competitively with Islamic business people

4.2.1 Competition in Business from Islamic Perspective

Islam does not prohibit competition, but rather encourages it because competition sets a compelling force for market participants to serve customers better than the competitors and, in turn, make a better profit. Yet, unlike Contemporary Economics, Islamic

Economics is not in favour of destructive competition that forces market participants to work at the expense of others in a society.

“...do not outbid another in order to raise the price,...do not enter into a transaction when others have already entered into a transaction and be as brothers one to another”
(Hadith- Hanafy and Sallam, 1998).

The abovementioned hadith implies that market participants must behave justly to the others functioning in the same market for the sake of maintaining brotherhood, trust and justice in the society. Therefore, Islam upholds ‘just competition’ through which private profit is ensured, and this fosters brotherhood ties.

It would be noteworthy to present an example from Prophet Muhammad’s business dealings that may be of critical importance for Muslims who are expected to take Muhammad as their model businessperson in the economic aspect of their lives.

After the Prophet Muhammad moved from Mecca to Medina, he intended to establish a new marketplace in which merchants would have performed mainly based on the principles set by Islam. His choice of location for the marketplace was of strategic importance because Jewish people mainly dominated the economic system of the existing markets in which interest based transactions were prevalent. The new marketplace was built at an intersection of trade routes, but far from non-Muslim markets. In the new marketplace, Islamic economic principles were enjoined to govern economic activities in the market (Kister, 1965). For instance, interest was strictly prohibited. In addition to the Islamic principles set for the new market, Muhammad did not let anyone levy any tax in

the market. Since merchants in the new market were able to reduce their cost of products, they could charge customers less than other sellers in the other marketplaces could. This could be interpreted as Muhammad's action in competition with Jewish merchants operating in the other popular markets. Over time, the Islamic market place attracted even non-Muslim merchants who wished to capture more profit (Kallek, 1997).

In addition to the 'no tax' principle in the new marketplace, Muhammad asked market participants not to set up sections in the market (Kister, 1965). This application encouraged market participants to set their counters early in the morning and to put due effort in their economic activities.

From the example presented above, one could simply imply that Prophet Muhammad sought to fuel internal competition in the market through this implementation and external competition between the Islamic market and other non-Islamic markets based on the Islamic principles.

4.2.2 Competitive Business Environment in which Secular and Islamic Business People Function

As discussed in the preceding section, competition is encouraged as long as Muslim business people function within the limits prescribed by Islamic principles. Since Islamic principles concerning the economic system create a divine filter through which a Muslim businessperson interprets competitive forces in the external environment and takes action accordingly, he is likely to be regarded as a 'disadvantageous' rival in a competition with Secular business people. Secular business people adapting secular economic principles do

not recognize any set of religious principles that would govern their way of conducting their economic activities; whereas, Muslim business people are confined to a set of Islamic principles which frame their cognitive process of information. A devout Muslim businessperson will evaluate a situation in an external environment differently, so his response to an opportunity or threat in the market would not be the same as that of an aesthetic Secular businessperson whose aim is to maximize his benefit and minimize his risk; even at the expense of others.

As an example, since Islam prohibits ‘interest’, a Muslim creditor is either requested to provide credit without charging anything, or requested to become a partner with the borrower in his business activity, and share profit or loss at a predetermined proportion of the actual profit. As with the same case, a Secular creditor will charge a predetermined rate of interest on his loan so that he will end up with more money in his hands than the Muslim creditor. At first glance, it seems that the Muslim creditor is disadvantaged, but from a broader perspective, ‘interest’ will not be the best financing instrument for the borrower. Nor it will provide the best utilization of the capital on hand because both parties are restricted to a predetermined rate irrespective of each one’s particular contribution, and irrespective of the consequences of the business activity. Nor is it the best economic activity for the society as a whole.

Therefore, ‘divine guidance’ will prevent the Muslim creditor from charging a predetermined rate of interest on his loan, which averts his involvement in default risk of debt. There may emerge people attempting to abuse no-interest debt financing, but Islam seeks to develop trust amongst people in a society. However, a devout Muslim creditor

will have to obtain adequate information about the borrower so that transparency, which is of critical importance in Islamic debt financing, prevents the borrower from taking unfair advantage of the good intentions of the creditor.

‘Information’ and ‘Transparency’, which are of significant importance in debt financing, are also important to a secular economic system. If one wishes to obtain a loan from a financing institution, he will be asked to disclose some information that helps a financing institution to decide whether to issue a loan or not. Therefore, there is no difference in the need of information and transparency between a Secular creditor and a Muslim creditor.

4.3 Working Collaboratively with Islamic business people

While Islam encourages its adherents to get involved in commerce, “the Muslim business practice is frequently at odds with established methods of Secular commercial behaviour” (Staninger, 2005). A recent article about the Muslim perspective on e-commerce notes that “In Islam there is no isolation between the spiritual and material (ritual and ordinary actions), for all actions performed in the obedience to the command of God are considered as the acts of virtue and half of the religious duty including e-commerce” (Zainul, 2004). The secularization of economic activities in Secular business practices establishes a divergence from the religious commitment of Islamic business people. In this sense, in the presence of a partnership formed by a secular businessperson and a devout Muslim business person, there emerges a need for understanding the underlying business values of the partners because sharing a common ground is of a critical importance while pursuing the partnership. Yet, since these two

parties have different sets of value propositions, their strategic decisions would be quite different from each other.

The Islamic partner seeks to act in accordance with Islamic principles governing his economic activities instead of only focusing on net profit. For him, individual profit is not the absolute reason for involvement in business; whereas, the Secular partner tends to be interested in maximizing his own profit. Therefore, the Islamic businessperson will employ his moral reasoning in his business dealings even if it is not to his best interest. In this respect, a conflict is likely to emerge between the values of the partners while conducting the partnership. On the one hand, as discussed in the introductory chapter, the dissimilar cognitive processes of the parties holding different orientations toward the business aspect of life may make the partnership richer in terms of the diversity in perceptions and interpretations of opportunities in the external environment. Thus, it may turn out to be a prosperous partnership.

On the other hand, if one of the parties has a lesser stake in the partnership, the other party would likely be more affective in the strategic direction of the partnership. In this case, the party holding fewer stakes may incur intangible costs from getting involved in the partnership, and with fewer claims on the management of the partnership.

If the Muslim businessperson is devoted to Islamic business principles, then a partnership between a Muslim businessperson and a Secular businessperson presents some interesting dynamics. If the Secular businessperson holds fewer claims on the partnership, then he will not be able to get involved in ‘haram’ business areas identified in the Islamic economic system even if it would be profitable because the devout partner who holds a

larger stake will be committed to adhere to the Islamic way of conducting business. From a secular aesthetic perspective, this will appear a disadvantageous partnership, as he will not be able to maximize his utility from this partnership.

In contrast, since religious people have no doubt of God's commands due to their faith and trust in God, as long as a devout person is in line with his religious values, he will not consider himself disadvantaged due to the same restrictions in haram business areas.

Because of differences in the evaluation of opportunities, conflict between the partners may emerge, but these conflicts might not surface.

On the one hand, potential conflict between the moral reasoning levels of parties may not surface depending on their levels of moral reasoning. For instance, if one of the parties has public moral reasoning, he would dislike being in conflict with other parties, so he will opt for conformity with others. If he is an ethical businessperson, as long as other parties function in accordance with ethical standards, he will get along with them. On the other hand, the relative proportion of stakes determines the significance of each party's claim on the management of partnership. Thus, partnership may not be affected by conflict and can be maintained in spite of the conflict.

4.4 Conclusion

Consistent with the discussion in the first chapter, different moral reasoning levels of market participants will determine their way of functioning in the business. First, the moral reasoning level of a businessperson draws a frame within which information is processed and interpreted; therefore, the same information is subject to a dissimilar interpretation depending on the moral reasoning that one holds. This results in different

strategic decisions under the same environmental conditions. The situation gets more complicated if the parties involved in a partnership exist in different moral reasoning levels. However, depending on the moral reasoning levels, or the relative proportion of stakes in the partnership, conflict may not surface.

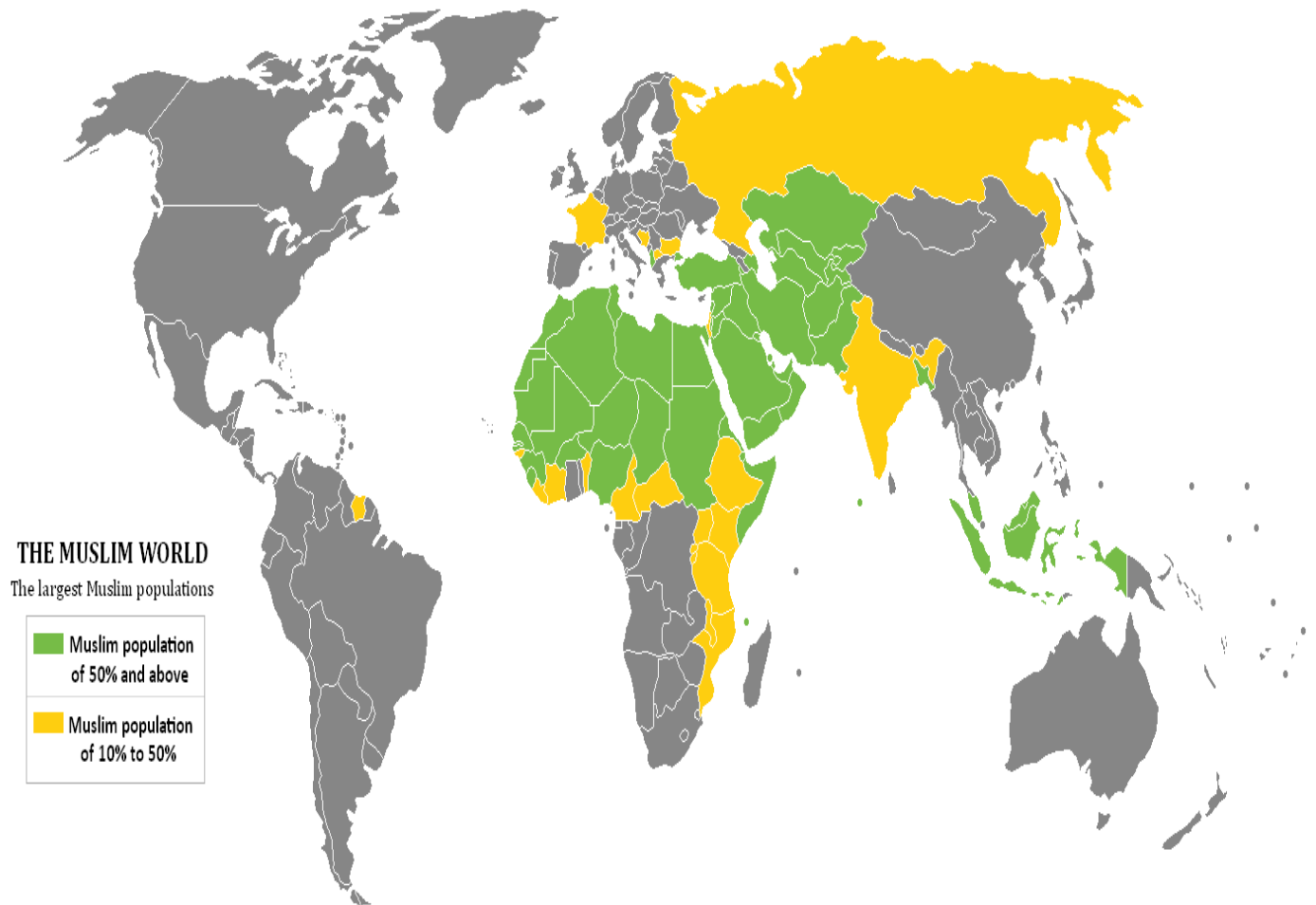
5: Conclusion

The purpose of this essay was to explore the impact of Islamic values on the strategic decision-making processes of Muslims. A set of axioms was introduced to systemize and summarize the ethical philosophy of Islam. The three ethical axioms (unity, equilibrium, and responsibility) represented the Islamic ethical codes of business. Propositions and business implications arising from the fundamental axioms elaborated on the notion of Islamic business ethics. The extent to which the conceptual framework of Islamic business is inconsistent with secular business practices was explored by comparing Islamic values related to Islamic business practice with comparable the Secular world of Contemporary business practices. The Islamic framework serves as a counterpart to some of the Secular business principles and practices.

This study demonstrates that in contrast to Secular principles, Islamic principles accentuate the divine aspect of business. The divine perspective on business affects the cognitive processes of Muslims while creating business strategies and conducting their business activities.

Having built on a personal case, this study aimed to introduce my personal implications in order to provide deep insights into the issue.

Appendix – Map of Muslim World



Source: Wikipedia Commons
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Muslim_world_map.png

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