

MUSLIM ENTREPRENEURS AND ALTERNATIVE MODERNITIES: THE CASE OF MÜSIAD

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines and discusses the relationship between Islam and modernity by reference to the case of *Müstakil Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği*-MÜSİAD (Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association), which is an Islamic oriented business association. After discussing the shortcomings of different juxtapositions of Islam and modernity, I claim that MÜSİAD complicates both the story of modernity and that of Islam. On the contrary to dichotomous and one-dimensional evaluations of both, in the light of the case study, I argue that there is a complex web of convergences and divergences between Islam and modernity. To account for such a complex interplay, the instrumental, regulative and constitutive functions of Islam for MÜSİAD is analyzed and evaluated. Along the dimensions of MÜSİAD's conception of economy, nationalism, Islam and modernity, I apply a discourse and a content analysis on MÜSİAD's documents and publications. As a theoretical evaluation, this study benefits from the alternative modernities approach, which is analyzed and discussed in comparison to theories of globalization and classical modernization theory.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS	IV
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	VI
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: THEORIES OF MODERNIZATION AND ISLAM	5
1.1 THEORIES OF CONVERGENCE: CLASSICAL MODERNIZATION THEORY AND GLOBALIZATION AS CONVERGENCE	5
FIGURE 1: CLASSICAL MODERNIZATION THEORY	8
1.2 THEORIES OF DIVERGENCE: CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS	9
1.3 ISLAM AND MODERNITY: MATERIALISTS, IDEALISTS AND INSTRUMENTALISTS	11
1.4 ALTERNATIVE MODERNITIES.....	17
FIGURE 2: ALTERNATIVE MODERNITIES.....	24
TABLE 1: THEORIES OF MODERNIZATION	27
1.5 SECULARIZATION BIAS OF MODERNIZATION AND THE SEPARATION OF SPHERES VERSUS CULTURAL EMBEDDEDNESS OF ECONOMY	27
1.6 THE NEW AGENTS OF MODERNITY: NEW ISLAMIC AGENTS.....	31
CHAPTER 2: THE CASE OF MÜSİAD.....	36
2.1 THE FORMATION AND MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE OF MÜSİAD.....	36
2.2 THE ACTIVITIES OF MÜSİAD	38
TABLE 2: MÜSİAD’S INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR: AMOUNT OF VISITORS ACCORDING TO YEARS.....	40

TABLE 3: THE DATES AND PLACES OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS FORUM (IBF).....	41
CHAPTER 3: THE FUNCTIONS OF ISLAM FOR MÜSİAD.....	43
3.1 IDENTITY FORMATION OF MÜSİAD: ISLAM AS COMMON BOND AND SOCIAL CAPITAL..	43
3.2 ISLAM AND NATIONALISM AS SYMBOLIC CAPITAL	49
3.3 MÜSİAD AND THE VISION OF ALTERNATIVE MODERNITY	52
CONCLUSION.....	62
APPENDICES	65
TABLE 4: SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF MÜSİAD MEMBERS.....	65
TABLE 5: MÜSİAD MEMBERS ACCORDING TO CITIES	66
TABLE 6: EVALUATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF DIFFERENT THEORIES ABOUT	
MODERNIZATION	67
REFERENCE LIST	68
<i>SECONDARY SOURCES: BOOKS, ARTICLES AND JOURNALS</i>	<i>68</i>
<i>PRIMARY SOURCES: PUBLICATIONS OF MÜSİAD AND MÜSİAD MEMBERS</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>WEBPAGES</i>	<i>83</i>

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURE 1: CLASSICAL MODERNIZATION THEORY	8
FIGURE 2: ALTERNATIVE MODERNITIES	24
TABLE 1: THEORIES OF MODERNIZATION	27
TABLE 2: MÜSİAD’S INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR: AMOUNT OF VISITORS ACCORDING TO YEARS	40
TABLE 3: THE DATES AND PLACES OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS FORUM (IBF)	41
TABLE 4: SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF MÜSİAD MEMBERS	65
TABLE 5: MÜSİAD MEMBERS ACCORDING TO CITIES	66
TABLE 6: EVALUATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF DIFFERENT THEORIES ABOUT MODERNIZATION	67

INTRODUCTION

A false dilemma or either-or fallacy is a way of thinking, in which only two alternatives on the opposite of continuum are considered or/and suggested, when in fact there are other options. It suggests that besides these two extreme positions, there is no alternative. Popular wisdom calls this black-and-white thinking. Islam tends to fall prey to such dichotomizations when mentioned along modernity. Daniel Lerner, a representative name for classical modernization theory, suggests that Middle Eastern societies faced the stark choice of “Mecca or mechanization” (1964:405). You can either choose Mecca (as a synecdoche of Islam) or mechanization (as a synecdoche of modernity). Lerner’s opposition between Islam and modernity is an extension of the dual vocabulary of classical modernization theory, which considers tradition/religion and modern/secular as opposites. Actually, both mutually exclusive frameworks (such as Lerner’s dichotomy) and one-dimensional evaluations have been haunting social sciences thinking. But, such analyses are not able to account for the dynamic interplays between tradition, religion and modernity. In this thesis, in the light of a case study, I discuss the shortcomings of different juxtapositions of Islam and modernity and show the complexities of their relationship.

Turkey is a good case for analyzing the interactions between the dynamics of religion and modernity. Taking the opportunities presented by economic liberalization launched in the 1980s by Prime Minister Turgut Özal, many Islamist businessmen emerged in Turkey. During the rule of the Motherland (ANAVATAN) Party between 1983 and 1991 in Turkey, the dominance of the state-supported private capital began to wear away with the emergence and rise of new entrepreneurs who had small or middle town origin and religious orientation. This development has led to crucial economic and social changes and differentiations within religious segments. Due to that, the Islamic oriented middle class has accomplished a significant capital accumulation and in turn, they started to organize around associations.

One of the associations that was born out of this process is MÜSİAD (Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association), which is an Islamic oriented business association, founded on May 5, 1990 in Turkey. An examination of MÜSİAD is illuminating in terms of understanding the depth and extent of the Islamic business activity as well as understanding the interactions and interpenetrations between Islam and modernity. MÜSİAD appears as a case which goes against the dual vocabulary of modernization theory: modern (mechanization) versus traditional (Mecca). Besides that, I suggest that it is difficult to comprehend the political, social and cultural role of Islam within the framework supplied by both classical modernization theory (convergence theory) and Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilization' (divergence theory). Actually, MÜSİAD complicates both the story of modernity and that of Islam, which requires us to go beyond these theoretical frameworks and this thesis tries to contribute to that complexity by examining the web of convergences and divergences between Islam and modernity in the light of MÜSİAD.

To deal with the complex interplay between Islam and modernity, I rely on the discussion of alternative/multiple modernities to go against the dichotomous and one-dimensional frameworks and to suggest that there are alternatives and multiplicities within the spectrum of modernity. Rather than conceiving modernity "as a closed monolith, incapable of being shaped or changed by modern man" (Berman 1983:24), I claim that new actors, namely new Islamic entrepreneurs, are on the stage of modernity, who are the makers of their own modernity in the prism of and in interaction with their traditions, cultural and religious backgrounds. I also argue that although explaining the role of Islam for MÜSİAD in terms of its functions and instrumental utilities (namely, the role that plays for binding its members and legitimizing its activities) is necessary and explanatory, it is not sufficient to understand the role of Islam for MÜSİAD on the basis of the idea that Islam for MÜSİAD also functions as raw material for a new vision of modernity. Thus, a multi-dimensional approach is adapted to

understand, discuss and evaluate the complex interactions between Islam and modernity in the light of MÜSİAD as a case study.

I analyze documents and publications (such as periodicals, booklets, reports, books, bulletins, and journals) of MÜSİAD that I have collected. I apply a discourse and a content analysis on these documents and publications. Also, some materials from other journals and newspapers are used for the analysis. MÜSİAD's conception of economy, modernity, and the discursive and rhetorical function of Islam and nationalism for MÜSİAD are some of the dimensions along which I analyze these documents and publications. Besides that, some statistical data that I have conducted from the database of MÜSİAD are introduced. But, the thesis is mostly based on a qualitative method rather than a quantitative one.

The thesis consists of three chapters. The opening chapter is the theoretical framework, divided into six parts. In the first part (1.1), the theories of convergence, namely classical modernization theory and globalization theories are critically evaluated. In the second part of the first chapter (1.2), Samuel Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' thesis as a divergence theory is critically delineated as the opposite of convergence theories. And in the later part (1.3), essentialist, materialist and instrumentalist evaluations of Islam in relation with the classical modernization theory are introduced and critically analyzed. Also, the flaws of both convergence and divergence theories are introduced. In the fourth part of the first chapter (1.4), the concept of alternative modernities is discussed, evaluated and analyzed. In the fifth part (1.5), besides secularization thesis, the concept of embedded economy is evaluated with reference to alternative modernities approach. And in the last part of the first chapter (1.6), after briefly introducing some criticisms against the secularization thesis, it is claimed that with modernization, new modern actors, namely new Islamic agents with new interpretations of both modernity and Islam emerged as a result of cognitive mobilization. In the second chapter, the case of MÜSİAD is introduced. In the second chapter, successively,

the description of MÜSİAD's formation and membership structure (in 2.1) and its activities (in 2.2) are given. I argue in the first part of the third chapter (3.1) that for MÜSİAD, Islam functions as social capital by binding its members together and by supplying networks and trust. Later (in 3.2), I point out that for MÜSİAD, with nationalism, Islam functions as symbolic capital that conceals and legitimizes their class interests. Finally, in the last part (3.3), I claim that while Islam is put in use as social and symbolic capital by MÜSİAD, Islam also operates as raw material to envision an alternative model of modernity, which both converges and diverges with Western modernity.

CHAPTER 1: THEORIES OF MODERNIZATION AND ISLAM

1.1 Theories of Convergence: Classical Modernization Theory and Globalization as Convergence

Classical modernization theory can be named as convergence theory since it claims that the “history as a process has a direction and its goal is modernity” (Hunt 2008:107) to which all societies will inevitably arrive at. For instance, Talcott Parsons is one of the representatives of modernization theory, who “viewed modernity as a uniform, unambiguously structured pattern in progress towards harmonious integration” (Kaya 2004:36). Walt Whitman Rostow’s *The Stages of Economic Growth: A non-Communist Manifesto* ([1930] 1990) and Daniel Lerner’s *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (1964) are also famous examples of classical modernization school that exhibit the basic assumptions of the school.

Rostow delineates modernization as a staged and evolutionary process that initiates from traditional society and ends with industrialized one. Accordingly, the path from traditional society to modern society consists of five staged economic stages: 1) the traditional society; 2) the preconditions for take-off; 3) the take-off; 4) the drive to maturity; 5) the age of high mass consumption (Rostow [1930] 1990). As it is indicated in Rostow’s five stages of development, since traditional society is considered as a stage that must be supplanted by the stage of modernity, the classical modernization theory regards the traditions as the opposite, the ‘other’ of modernity. As Louis Dumont ([1986] 1992) elaborates, modernity cannot be explained in isolation since it constructs itself as a distinction from tradition.¹

This evolutionary model of transition, which is from primitive conditions (traditional society) to a complex and developed one (modernity), is principally the one which took place

¹ In a similar fashion, Jürgen Habermas states that “the term ‘modern’ again and again expresses the consciousness of an epoch that relates itself to the past of antiquity, in order to view itself as the result of a transition from the old to the new” (1981:3).

in the Western countries. Rostow regards this historical process as a universal law. Thus, specific European historical experience is turned into a universal pattern. And in this way, Rostow considers the features of Western societies as the ideals to which all societies should arrive at. Thus, Rostow considers “modernization as relayed westernization” (Kit-wai Ma 2001:448). In other words, he equates modernization with westernization, which indicates the Eurocentrism and teleological aspects of classical modernization theory.²

Furthermore, in the opinion of Rostow, modernization is a homogenizing process. Accordingly, modernization produces tendencies toward convergence among societies. Accordingly, “as time goes on, the western societies and the non-Western societies will increasingly resemble one another because the patterns of modernization are such that the more highly modernized societies become, the more they resemble one another” (Levy 1967:207). Thus, Rostow considers modernization as “a uniform progress towards ‘final integration’” (Kaya 2004:39). Accordingly, there is a spillover effect of modernization. With modernization, everything (like economic growth, economic equality, political stability, democracy, and national independence) will go together and cultures will be the same (Packenham 1973). In other words, “The march of modernity will end up making all cultures look the same” (Taylor 2001:181).

Daniel Lerner’s book (1964) is based on an empirical study of the modernization processes in the Middle Eastern countries. Lerner claims that modernization is a universal process that takes place in the same manner all over the world. In a similar fashion with Rostow’s evolutionary framework, Lerner reduces modernization to series of developments like urbanization, industrialization, emergence of mass-media. For Lerner, modernization is

² A teleological concept of history holds that all things in the history are designed and directed towards a final end, which is inherent in the history itself. A teleological view, accompanied by Eurocentricism will suggest that the final end of history for all societies is reaching the stage of West, which is inherently the aim of history. It can be claimed that the classical modernization theory holds a Eurocentric and teleological view of history and development since it holds the view that the “grand directionality” (Hunt 2008) and the goal of the history is modernity, which is equated with the west.

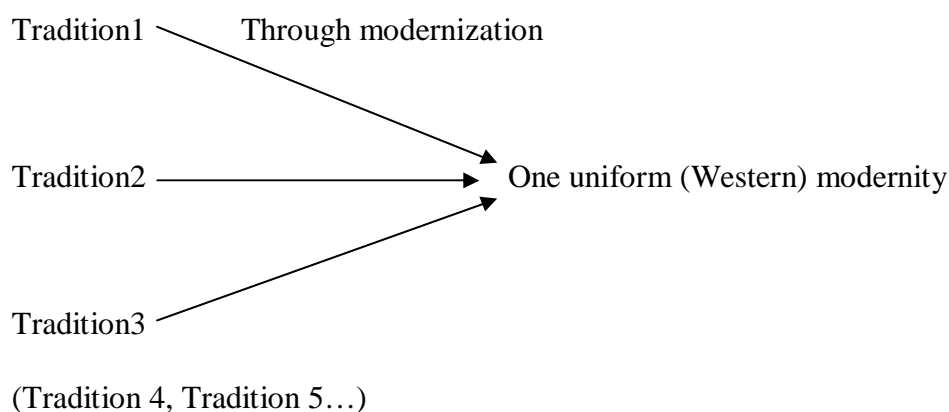
the expansion of rationalist and positivist outlook that transforms both institutions and mentality of individuals. In his book, Lerner categorizes the respondents of his survey as modern, traditional and transitional, and he values certain personality types as the examples of modernization. As David Harrison (1998) states that Lerner's theory of modernization is within the boundaries of classical modernization theory since Lerner's theory is based on the dichotomy between traditional and modern.

The evolutionary "master narrative of modernization theory" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993:xii), exemplified in Rostow and Lerner, is based on the ideas that there is only one path to modernity and there will be the "disappearance of diversities during the last *stage of modernity*" (Corsi 2002). This evolutionary theoretical framework as "a widespread trope of ideology-in-the-making" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993:xii) suggests that once you adopt the "one main pattern of modernity" (Ballantye 2008:54), which is the Western pattern of modernity, the others will come and that will end up with the sameness of the cultures of the world. This inevitability of modernization indicates the teleological aspect of classical modernization theory.

As Charles Taylor (2001) puts it, according to this approach, modernization and modernity are culture-neutral phenomena. Accordingly, through the cultural-neutral and universal operations/processes/inputs and a series of '-izations', which can be named as "pattern variables" (Kapustin 2003:101) (such as individuation, rise of instrumental reason, institutionalization, urbanization, mass literacy, the introduction of markets and bureaucratic state), all will converge in a single, homogeneous and uniform condition: modernity. Thus, this view suggests that "The march of modernity will end up making all cultures look the same. This means, of course, that we expect they will end up looking Western" (Taylor 2001:181). The world would be "reduced to sameness" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993:xi). Furthermore, this outlook suggests that even if there are divergent traditions, through

modernization, these different traditions will end with a homogeneous modern stage. Thus, “the paths of different civilizations [*cultures and traditions, note added*] are bound to converge” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993:xi). Or as Clifford Geertz sees it, modernization is “a freeway with many entrances but only one exist, the one labeled [*Western, note added*] ‘Modernity’” (1995:138). This could be schematized as follows:

Figure 1: Classical Modernization Theory



Some theories of globalization are a return to modernization theories in the sense that they suggest the homogenization of world with a certain model in mind. As Peter Wagner (2001a) claims, the idea that ‘with globalization, there is the convergence of societies’ is a return to the modernization theory, which claims that all societies are embarked on a single historical path. Thus, it can be claimed that “At the moment, neo-modernization theory, in the context of globalization and neo-liberalism, agrees with earlier modernization theory assuming the necessary convergence of social configurations” (Kaya 2004:36). We can evaluate Francis Fukuyama’s thesis of the end of history as one of the recent theories of convergence. Fukuyama’s announcement of the end of history, “the homogenization of the liberal world-view and predominance of market economy” is “a perspective very close to the earlier theories of the convergence of industrial societies” (Eisenstadt 1999:283). Fukuyama argues that liberal democracy as a system of governance has won a victory over other ideas to the point that liberalism is the only legitimate ideology left in the world. All this marks “the

end point of mankind's ideological evolution" and means that liberalism is "the final form of human government" (Fukuyama 1989:271). Then, all that remains to be done is to spread liberal ideology throughout the world as a way of life and as a way of governance, through social, political, and economic institutions.

Some of the perspectives of globalization can be named as new convergence theories since they envision the homogenization of the world under the influence of American dominance and/or global economic, political, and cultural dynamics, which are expressed by popular descriptions such as 'Coca-colarization', 'Disneyfication', 'McDonaldization' and 'the Levis generation'. George Ritzer (2000), for example, anticipates an increasingly homogenized world, emerging around the globally produced and consumed commodities in which the local cultures and traditions disappear under the influence of a consumer culture. We can name these theories, evaluated so far as the totalizing theories of modernization and globalization. By changing Rudyard Kipling's expression, this view suggests that 'East is East, and West is West, but inevitably the twain shall meet'. But, these convergence theories are not useful to account for the complexities involved between modernity, religion and traditions since they are culture-neutral (acultural), one-dimensional (since they only focus on convergences), teleological and Eurocentric.

1.2 Theories of Divergence: Clash of Civilizations

As Ankie Hoogvelt (2001) suggests, Samuel Huntington's article, *The Clash of Civilizations*, can be interpreted as a counter-argument to Fukuyama and convergence theories since in that article, Huntington talks about divergence in the international sphere on the basis of civilizational differences and in turn, the clash of these civilizations rather than peaceful convergence of different cultures through modernization and globalization. Thus, Huntington's "idea of the 'clash of civilizations' is clearly at odds with the thesis of globality and convergence" (Ballantyne 2008:53) theories of modernization. Huntington posited that

“the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will be not primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the domination source of conflict will be cultural [*and civilization, note added*]” (1993:22). Huntington observes that “the world is becoming a smaller place.” (1993:25) But, accordingly, this does not have the effect of turning the world into one big society, which goes against convergence theories. Rather, it has the effect of further dividing people into civilizations. Huntington claims that there is a movement among non-Western societies toward increasing “de-Westernization and indigenization”, like the “Asianization of Japan [...] the ‘Hinduization’ of India, and the ‘re-Islamization’ of the Middle East” (1993:26-27). To sum up, Huntington considers civilizations as cultural entities, which are incompatible with each other. He suggests that these incompatible global entities will come into conflict with each other. And accordingly, Islam will conflict with Western world.

Huntington’s thesis promises the opposite of the modernization theory since accordingly, the world is not marching towards sameness but towards separations. In a similar fashion, Hoogvelt suggests that as a reaction to frustrations that are created through globalization, “Islamic fundamentalist projects have emerged in all Muslim societies, and among Muslim minorities in non-Muslim societies” (2001:214). Hoogvelt states that one of the major paths emerging at the intersection of globalization and the particular experience of different peripheral regions is an anti-developmental, fundamentalist and militant Islam. Both Huntington and Hoogvelt regard Islam as an aspect of traditional Muslim cultures that counteracts global homogenization. And they associate Islam with an oppressive tradition, and with an anti-modern, anti-Western perspective as a reaction to the disturbances and frustrations that emerged through the processes of modernization and globalization. The divergence theory is a one-dimensional perspective since it misses the convergences between different groups and societies and only focuses on divergences. Also, its treatment of societies

as fixed cultural entities, which are closed to interactions with other cultures, and its neglect of differences within cultures, civilizations, and nations constitute its other flaws.

1.3 Islam and Modernity: Materialists, Idealists and Instrumentalists

Scholars working on the rise of Islamic politics and culture offer explanations in line with the binary oppositions offered by the convergence and divergence approaches. This perspective elucidates the rise of Islam as the revival of a traditional culture, which refutes market competition and capital accumulation (Barber 1995). Sayres S. Rudy claims that there are mainly two camps in scholarly writings about Islam: “idealists asserting a permanent Islamic ideological resistance to ‘Western’ modernity and materialists calling religion a mere instrument for protests against political and economic deprivation” (2004:61). In a similar fashion, Hakan Yavuz talks about essentialism position, which fits to what Rudy names as idealist camp. Yavuz defines essentialism as follows: “Essentialism seeks to reduce the diverse spectrum of human relations to a few ‘essential’ causes and to identify traits and texts as keys to understanding a particular religion or cultural community” (2003:16). In other words, as Ahmet Kuru points out, this approach “focuses on the alleged uniqueness, exceptionism, or unity of the Muslim World. Therefore, it examines Islamic movements through so-called religious and cultural peculiarities” (2005:255). On the basis of Islamic textual sources, this essentialist approach fixes Islam and “creates a model of a *homo Islamicus* who is ahistorical and similar to a fundamentalist caricature of ‘true’ Islam” (Yavuz 2003:16). This essentialist tendency is evident in the textualism of Bernard Lewis. On the basis of some Islamic textual sources, Lewis claims that “Islam is a fixed and enduring tradition and cultural system” (Yavuz 2003:16).

In a similar fashion, Bassam Tibi fixes an Islamic essence and claims that political Islam “provides no innovative prospects for the future but is solely a vision of the future as a restoration of the past [...] Political Islam may therefore—with some restrictions—be

interpreted as a backward-oriented utopia” (1989:120). Furthermore, Emmanuel Sivan claims that “Islamic revival—while activist and militant—is thus essentially defensive; a sort of holding operation against modernity.” Sivan regards Islam as anti-modern in its nature and concludes that Islamic groups are “all united by intense hatred of the ‘evils of evils,’ modernity. Modernity is inherently alien to Islam” (1985:138). Modernization theory also dichotomizes Islam and modernity as shown in Daniel Lerner’s famous sentence of “Mecca or mechanization” (1964:405). Lerner’s dichotomy, ‘either-or formula’ suggests that there is a contradiction between Islam and modernity rather than an opposition and it bears “the implication that ‘modernity’ can and should uproot and supplant ‘tradition’” (Kapustin 2003:102).³ In these pairs of oppositions, the Mecca (Islam) is conceptualized negatively with reference to the Mechanization (modernity) on the basis of what Islam lacks, in other words how Islam deviates from the standards set by the attributes of the modernity. Thus, Islam is constructed as a negative inversion or mirror image of modernity.⁴

On the other hand, differing from the idealist/essentialist explanation, the materialist (as Rudy names) or deprivation (as Yavuz names) approach stresses the environmental socio-economic conditions rather than evaluating Islamic movements on the basis of the so-called essence of Islam. This approach evaluates Islamist movements (as other religious movements, signifying and turning away from worldly things) as “reactions against corrupt state elite, overpopulation, and massive unemployment” (Yavuz 2003:18). Furthermore, as Kenan Çayır claims, the materialist/deprivation approach considers

Islamist [...] social movements as a result of an economic and political disorder. It points out that rapid urbanization, economic crisis and political instability in Muslim countries provided the stage for the emergence of contemporary Islamist movements. (1997:2)

³ A contradiction is an absolute opposition, which consists of an incompatibility between the two things in question. Thus, in terms of modality, it suggests that there is a *relation of impossibility* between the two things in question. Lerner’s dichotomy, either-or logic offers that Islam and modernity are antithetical to each other.

⁴ Lerner’s dichotomy is a good example for “the rhetoric of differentiation (difference)” (Yeğenoğlu 1998:82) or in other words, *the language of difference*, which is “the Orientalist act of separation of Orient [*Mecca, note added*] and Occident [*Mechanization, note added*]” (Yeğenoğlu 1998:83). And the rhetoric of difference leads to an essentialist position, which considers the non-West as inherently different from the West and modernity.

As a corollary, this approach focuses on deprivation for explaining the rise of Islamic movements. “Types of deprivation inserted into this explanatory model include food, freedom, rights, equality, and authenticity” (Rudy 2004:62). For instance, Ziya Öniş (1997) argues that Islam is a political protest movement expressing the grievances of the poorest, marginal segments of the population, who are excluded from the benefits of modernization and globalization. Thus, Öniş considers Islamic movement as “a movement of the urban and rural poor and [...] lower middle class [...] suffering economic stagnation” (Laqueur 2001:501-502). And that approach could be named as economic deprivation approach. Just like the other views, this considers the modern and the Islamic movements as cultural opposites and seeks to explain Islamic politics and movements in terms of a traditional opposition of lower classes and marginalized groups against the modernization influences of a capitalist market economy.

Alternatively but in similar lines, Özay Mehmet claims that “Islamic resurgence in both Turkey and Malaysia appears as a response to uneven and badly managed secularist growth” (1990:51). In a similar fashion, according to Çağlar Keyder (1997), the rise of political Islam in Turkey owes its broadening appeal to the failure of Kemalist modernization. Thus, as Kemalism fails to achieve its goal of modernization, Islam tends to rise. In both explanations, the rise of Islam is understood as forming a resistance and a reactionary culture resulting from the failures of economic or cultural modernization. Thus, the nature of Islamic movements is deduced from the nature of the crisis of modernity.⁵ By referring Joel Beinin and Joe Stork as materialists and Bernard Lewis and Bassam Tibi as idealists, Rudy claims that

Materialists [...] and idealists [...] have promoted rather than threatened each other's positions on Islamism [...] Idealists privileging Islamic values

⁵ Bobby S. Sayyid makes a similar point: “These narratives on the causes of ‘Islamic fundamentalism’ assume that it is possible to understand what emerges from a crisis by understanding the nature of the crisis itself” (1997:23).

turn to materialist explanations of Islamist ideological transformation and variation. Materialists stressing political and economic deprivation resort to idealism to explain the translation of nonreligious suffering into Islamist political discourse. This symbiotic endpoint draws not only on opposed and inadequate starting-points but also on a shared-continuum concept of Islamism. (2004:61)

Accordingly, these two positions hold that Islamism “vary strategically but not ideologically—militant, reformist, and private Islamists seek the same ends via different means” (Rudy 2004:61). For all Islamic movements, Islam as an end takes priority over everything else. Thus, Islamist movements are represented as ideologically homogeneous movements, which react to modernity and globalization. Therefore, the aforementioned scholars evaluated the Islamic movement as an expression of a critique of modernity.

But, such an analysis is not able to account for the dynamic interplay between traditional and global/modern factors and variations of Islamic understanding across the world. It seems that an effective analysis of the rise of Islamic movements needs to go beyond the above explanations. Rather than adhering to the traditional/modern and the local/global as binary oppositions, a new perspective is needed.⁶ Roland Robertson (1995) captures the complex relations between the local and the global through the idea of ‘glocalization’. In relation to the rise of religious politics, he argues that people assert local values but they also want to have a share in global values and lifestyles. Newly emerging Muslim entrepreneurs constitutes a good example for such an interplay between Islam and modernity. After 1980s, in the Muslim world, new agents such as Muslim capitalists, business people, and educated professionals, who want a share in the global and modern world, emerged. As Oliver Roy claims,

Taking the opportunity presented by economic liberalisation (launched in Egypt under the name *infitah*, and by Turgut Özal in Turkey), many Muslim businessmen invested in the Islamo-business market (*tesettür* fashion clothing in Turkey, Islamic banking and saving institutions, charities, NGOs, private schooling system). (2004:97)

⁶ At this point, it is important to note that it is questionable whether Islam is a local force rather than a global force. Considering Islam, which is a widespread religion, as a local force can be dealt with in the further studies.

It is for sure that an account, which considers the rise of Islamic movements in terms of reactionary/escapist coping movements of the poor (as Öniş did) cannot account for the rise of Islamic middle-class and entrepreneurs. “Yet, when Islamism is theorized as an escapist coping mechanism of the poor, such examples [...] remain undertheorized” (Yedigün 2003). But, in a similar fashion with the materialist account that is mentioned above, the literature about the rise of Islamic bourgeoisie develops an instrumentalist view of Islam and considers “Islamic religion in the economic sphere as a part of a mere rational reasoning by making religion as simply a ‘tool’ for the economic success” (Özdemir 2005:208). For instance, Timur Kuran (2004) states that for Muslim businessmen, Islam has a functional importance since it is utilized as an economic instrument. Accordingly, it has two functions: 1) psychological function: guilt relief/alleviation; 2) structural function: creating networks. Thus, he offers a structural-cum-psychological approach to the function of Islam for newly emerged Islamic business groups. In a similar fashion with materialist explanation, the Islamic movements of newly emerged Muslim capitalists express the desire of these people to take part in the global economy by turning Islam into a strategic tool for legitimizing and strengthening their business activities.

For such a view, Islam, for Islamic business associations, functions as social capital (networks and trust), which is the “features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam 1993). For instance, Timur Kuran states that for these organizations, Islam functions as an interpersonal trust,

Insofar as individuals do business within networks of people who know and trust each other, they reduce their costs of negotiating, drafting, monitoring, and enforcing agreements; relative to people who must constantly guard against being cheated, they incur lower transaction costs. (2004:51)

In a similar fashion, Menderes Çınar (1997) argues that the Islamic business associations accept the market understanding (which suggests that economy works best when left alone by

government) to re-establish Islamic civilization. As a result, the Islamic business associations offer an alternative legitimizing ideology (namely, Islam) rather than an alternative economic model to market oriented economy or capitalism. Thus, for such a view, Islam also functions as symbolic capital (as a legitimizing tool).

Pierre Bourdieu claims that “even ‘economic’ capital cannot act unless it succeeds in being recognized through a conversation that can render unrecognizable the true principle of its efficacy” (1990:188). Accordingly, economic self-interest must be transformed into symbolic form to legitimize itself. Bourdieu calls this transformation of self-interest into disinterest as symbolic capital or in other words, “denied capital” (1990:118), which “disguises the underlying interested relations as disinterested pursuits” (Swartz 1997:90). Thus, “Symbolic capital is a form of power that is not perceived as power but as legitimate demands for recognition, deference, obedience, or the services of others” (Bourdieu 1990:118).

According to instrumentalist view, the Islamic business groups justify their economic activities not only by reference to efficiency (or as Richard Swedberg puts, “‘the world of the market’” [2003:49]) but also by reference to religion, Islam. Thus, they utilize different “worlds of justification” (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006) for their economic activities and Islam functions as symbolic capital for them. Since the role of Islam is reduced to cultural and symbolic capital, according to such a view, as Kuran (2004) claims, the Islamic models of economy do not offer an alternative to Western models but they are mere replicas of Western economic models in name of Islam. The implication is denial to Islam any authentic power to offer any new economic and social vision. It is for sure that these approaches are analytically useful. But, “the problem lies in the perception of religion as merely an ‘instrument’ for its socio-economic functions” (Özdemir 2005:209).

It will be argued that it is not sufficient to regard a zero-sum relationship between Islam, which is assumed to represent traditional values, and globalization and modernization processes, which supposedly have a transformative impact on traditional and non-Western societies. As Nilüfer Göle claims, “the interactions between religious movements and modernity cannot be undermined. Islamic movements select and reinterpret the religion canon throughout their confrontation with issues of modern society” (2006:80). And out of these reinterpretations, these movements actively re-appropriate, re-shape and re-create new imaginations of modernity by revising and re-adapting the traditions. Thus, we end up with the multiplicity of modernities that are produced by reference to different cultural and religious backgrounds.

1.4 Alternative Modernities

Alternative modernities approach challenges not only the classical modernization and globalization theories (convergence theories) but also the divergence theory of Huntington, and offers an alternative vision for the rise of Islamic movements. As John Gray puts, “The belief that modern societies will everywhere converge on the same values does not result from historical inquiry” (2000:25). Thus, it can be suggested that the idea of alternative modernities seeks to account for the fact that modernization/modernity has proven itself to be much more multifarious and multiple than the way it was conceived before: “everywhere, at every national/cultural site, modernity is not one but many; modernity is not new but old and familiar, modernity is incomplete and necessarily so” (Gaonkar 2001:23). As T.K. Oommen points out, “while so far it was the European monopoly to be modern and to be developed,” the economic rise and success of the Asian tigers such as Malaysia “threw up a new set of actors. So one has to account for what may be called ‘Asian modernity’” (2003: 99). Besides Asian modernity, we can talk about other modes of modernities such as Turkish modernity,

Iranian modernity, and all of these modernities differ from each other.⁷ Thus, we have modernity in terms of various trajectories and divergent patterns. For instance, Chinese modernity is not the same as Japanese one or Turkish one. This is also true of European modernity: Swedish society is not the same as French or Italian society, let alone American society. Besides that, this pluralism in modernity is not only about multiplicity of modernity between different nations and societies, but it is also about the multiplicity within the national boundaries (Eisenstadt 2004).

To put it simply, the essential idea behind the alternative modernities thesis is “that ‘modernity’ and its features and forces can actually be received, developed and expressed in significantly different ways in different parts of the worlds” (Smith 2006) by different societies and groups in different cultural contexts. Thus, as Gray points out, “There are many ways of being modern. Different societies [*and groups, note added*] absorb science and engender new technologies without accepting the same values” (2000:25). Thus, there is the “polymorphousness of modernity” (Ballantyne 2008:53).

The multiple/alternative modernities thesis goes against the convergence theories of modernity and globalization. The idea of multiple/alternative modernities challenges the assumption that modernizing societies are convergent. As such, it breaks not only with an idea, which suggests the singleness of modernity but also with “any reasoning that associates modernization unequivocally with Westernization” (Wagner 2001b:9953). Thus, according to such a view, “Europe is not the global prototype” (Davie 2002:160) of modernity. In other words, it breaks with modernization theory and “denies modernization to be a purely Western phenomenon and sees several ‘modernities’, of which the European manifestation is only one variant” (Blokker 2005). As Meltem Ahıska points out, “The oppressive framework of

⁷ It is important to note that alternative modernities approach does not suggest that the alternative modernities, produced all around the world are normatively valuable. Thus, someone could still say that Iranian society is an example of alternative modernity but not approve it.

‘model’ and ‘copy’ is refuted” (2003:360). The uniqueness and exceptionality of West is renounced. We move from a ‘universal conception of modernity’ to a ‘particularist conceptions of modernity’. It offers that there are different modes of modernity, which are not mere replicas of Western modernity. Accordingly, these alternative modernities are not only alternatives to the Western modernity but also they are alternatives to each other since they also differ from each other. Or in other words, they are not identical to each other and there is no singular alternative modernity.

This condition of multiplicity is interpreted differently by different approaches. “The result [...] was that the project of modernity crystallized in multiple forms. The postmodernist interpretation is that this happened because the modern project failed” (Delanty 2004:394). Actually, as Micheal Watts points out, “There is [...] an obvious tension between those who stand at a critical angle to Western enlightenment and who trumpet *grassroots postmodernism*, and those who in acknowledging the inescapability of the modern invoke a multiplicity of *other modernities*” (2003:449). This tension is explicit since alternative/multiple modernities approach goes against the claim that modernity failed as a project and we are in the age of postmodernity. In fact, to talk about alternative modernities is to suggest that modernity as a project did not fail and did not come to an end. This interpretation is in tune with Jürgen Habermas’s (1983) defense of “modernity as an unfinished project.”

As Menderes Çınar points out, the end of modernization as westernization, namely the alternative modernities approach is not the end of modernization paradigm, but instead it is the rise of a new modernization paradigm, which Çınar (1997) names as “Flexible modernization or neo-modernization”. In a similar fashion, Arif Dirlik claims that alternative/multiple modernities approach is the “reincarnation of modernization discourse” (2002:20). But, it should be noted that although multiple/alternative modernities approach

could be considered as a new form of modernization theory, differing from the classical theories of modernization, alternative modernities approach considers modernity as an open-ended process, “an open, rather than a closed, way of life” (Kaya 2004:39). It goes against the idea that all modernizing societies will converge in one form of modernity as classical modernization approach claims.

According to multiple or alternative modernities approach, modernity as a project did not fail since “Modernity has always been characterized by antinomies” (Eisenstadt 2004:395), which supply the dynamics and openness of modernity. İbrahim Kaya argues that “modernity is an open-ended horizon in which there are spaces for multiple interpretations” (2004:37). Thus, Kaya suggests that modernity could be interpreted in multiple ways. Although Habermas “accepts some failures of modernity”, he stresses that the potentials of improvement are not totally exhausted, “there are still possibilities of improvement with the setting provided by modernity” (Turan 2004:2). Habermas thinks that the dynamics of modernity come from its self-reflexivity. Accordingly, modernity is marked with “the sensitiveness of its self-understanding, the dynamism of the attempt, carried forward incessantly down to our time, to ‘pin itself down’” (Habermas 1990:7). In a similar fashion, Nilüfer Göle (2002) suggests that the essential feature of modernity resides in its potential of “continual self-correction” (Davie 2002:159). This openness or self-reflexive feature of modernity (Giddens 1995) leads to “potentially infinite, variety of interpretations of modernity” (Wagner 2001b:9953). This leads to the idea that “There are [...] many modernities”, which are “plural: diverse and dynamic, multiple and multidirectional” (Jean and John Comaroff 1993:xi). But, what are the concrete sources of this multiplicity? There can be two possible answers: 1) different agents; 2) different cultures/traditions.

To start with the former (1), we could talk about “the *plurality of modernizing agency* and its *creativity*” (Blokke 2005) or in other words, the creative adaptability of different

agents who are embedded in different cultures and societies. As Taylor puts, “By definition, the creative adaptation [*of different agents, note added*] using traditional resources has to be different from culture to culture” (2001:183). To proceed with the later (2), as Nicholas Smith indicates, “the central point about acultural theories [*divergence theories, note added*] is that they explain the transition to modernity in terms of a general function that need not refer to the *content* of the particular cultures involved” (2002:200). According to the acultural model, there is a cohesive package of modernization (a series of –izations), which is discoverable, applicable and reproducible in every environment in an unproblematic way under the right social conditions. On the other hand, the cultural theory of modernity takes the content, the culture of particular societies into consideration. Accordingly, different cultural legacies (the content) as path-dependencies constitute the “multiple axes of differentiation” and diversity, which “give rise to multiple models of modernity” (Ballantyne 2008:54). The encounters of different cultures/traditions lead to alternatives modernities. In other words, the alternative modernities paradigm claims that different cultures with their different moralities, values and conceptions of good, which Taylor names as *background understanding*, produce different modernities.⁸ Thus, out of different cultures, we end up with different permutations and combinations of modernity. Alternative modernities approach denies that there is a singular modernity as a ‘final solution’ to all societies.

As it was indicated previously, while the convergence theory is culturally neutral (acultural), both divergence theory and multiple modernities thesis are culture specific. As Taylor points out, the culturally neutral theory reduces modernity to “some universally applicable operation” that is indifferent to culture, such as reason “science, technology, and industrialization” (Taylor 2001:180). If we regard modernity/modernization as a function ($f(x) = y$), acultural theory suggests that every value that you give to the variable x (any

⁸ Background assumptions are the deep evaluations of a culture about the conception of “social belonging [...], time, [...] God, the good, or the cosmos” (Taylor 2001:186).

traditional culture), you will get a uniform y (uniform and single modernity/Western modernity). On the other hand, the cultural theories of divergence theory and multiple/alternative modernities suggest that the outcome (output) is dependent on the input (culture, civilization or tradition). In other words, the cultural theories suggest that the outcome is dependent on the value that you put. Accordingly, you will not get the uniform y s but different y s: y_1 , y_2 , y_3 ... But, while the cultural specific divergent theory suggests that these different civilizations/cultures will diverge and clash with each other, the cultural specific multiple/alternative modernities thesis does not suggest that these different cultures will clash with each other.⁹ Moreover, the alternative modernities theory offers a much more complex picture than divergence theory since alternative modernities approach does not only talk about divergence but also convergence. Therefore, we have a complex web of convergences and divergences: divergence in convergence (modernization/modernity in its multiplicity) and/or convergence in divergence (multiplicity in modernity).¹⁰

As S.N. Eisenstadt claims, “The notion of ‘alternative’ is meaningful only by reference to something of which you are the *alter*” (2004:397). Then, “What [...] is the authentic core of modernity?” (Davie 2002:157). Or in other words, what is that core that the alternative modernities alter on the basis of it? Taylor concedes that market-industrial economy and bureaucratically organized state are the inescapable features of modern societies.¹¹ He suggests that the core of modernity is having ‘functionally equivalent’

⁹ Alexander Des Forges (2002) claims that a problem with multiple modernity approach is the assumption of fixed and separate civilizational/cultural blocs existing in parallel and simultaneously, and he concludes that from here, the step to the clash of civilizations is potentially small. But, different from Huntington’s clash of civilization, which is a divergence theory, Taylor talks about a web of divergences and convergences. Since there are convergences as well as divergences, Taylor’s approach does not suggest that there are fixed, unstable and separate civilizational/cultural blocs.

¹⁰ These divergences constitutes the *genus* (the family) of modernity to which the defined thing (e.g. Turkish modernity) belongs to, and the convergences constitute the *differentia* of modern societies or groups in question, which are the distinguishing features that mark, say, Turkish modernity off from other members of the family of modernity. For the definitions of *genus* and *differentia* see: Aristotele’s *Metaphysics* (2006).

¹¹ For instance, Taylor claims that “If we understand by modernity, inter alia, the changes discussed here which carry the transition – the emergence of a market-industrial economy, of a bureaucratically organized state, of modes of popular rule – then its progress is, indeed, wavelike. The first two changes, if not the third, are in a sense irresistible” (Taylor 2001:182).

institution of state bureaucracy and market-industrial economy. Thus, we have something common for all or the core or the necessary conditions of modernity: 1) market-industrial economy; 2) bureaucracy. This gives us the thin formulation, description, or definition of modernity. But, it is important to note that in the case of institutions, there is also a divergence: “in fact, the institutional forms will also frequently be different” (Taylor 2001:184). Thus, the convergence is the functions of these institutions: “functionally equivalent ones” (Taylor 2001:184). Taylor’s approach goes against the idea that “modern societies could be identified with [*strictly, note added*] a given and identifiable social form” (Ballantyne 2008:53).¹² Lack of any given broad foundation (or given such a thin core as Taylor does) implies “the possibility to push the ‘project of modernity’ ever further.” In that sense, “it accentuates creativity and openness” (Wagner 2001b:9953), and thus, it gives way to the possibilities of multiple modernities. And lastly, with such an open-ended approach to the core of modernity, “the viable syntheses [...] between modernity and various traditional cultures” (Berger 2006:158) are notably open. Accordingly, as Arjun Appadurai argues,

¹² Taylor’s approach recalls Ludwig Wittgenstein’s (1953) theory of family resemblance. As Peter Hacker puts, by the term, family resemblance,

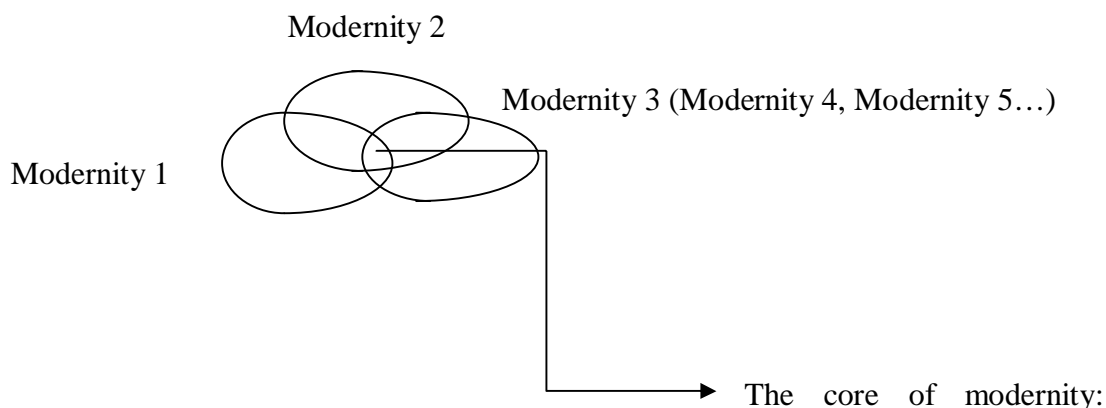
Wittgenstein denies that all definable must be explained by an analytic definition specifying necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of the *definiendum*. The members of the extension of a concept-word may be united not by essential common characteristics, but by family resemblance, i.e. by a network of overlapping but discontinuous similarities, like the fibres in a rope, or the facial features of members of a family. (1995:269)

Since we have an open-ended necessary condition (functional equivalency) for modernity without any sufficient conditions, we can suggest that rather than given an analytical definition of modernity in terms of strictly given necessary and sufficient conditions, the extension of the concept, modernity is united by functional equivalency of the market-industrial economy and bureaucracy, which in turn constitutes an overlapping but discontinuous network (a family resemblance of multiple modernities) like “the facial features of members of family”. Accordingly, there is no “clearly defined common identity [*in terms of strictly given necessary and sufficient conditions, note added*] across different language games [*different and multiple modernities, note added*], but we are still able to recognize certain common features (as among family members)” (Skirbekk and Gilje 2001:437) since there is the open-ended condition of functional equivalency. Thus, Taylor goes against an essentialist definition of modernity but rather gives an open-ended definition of it.

To conclude, according to family resemblance approach, “face A resembles face B, face B resembles C, face C resembles face D; etc., but there is not a central face, the ‘family face,’ of which these are identifiable modifications [...]” (Berlin 2001:12). In a similar fashion, Turkish modernity resembles European modernity, European modernity resembles Japanese modernity, Japanese modernity resembles Indian modernity, etc. but there is no central modernity of which all modernities are identifiable modifications. But rather, there is a family resemblance on the basis of functional equivalency among diverse modernities. In other words, there is a family of modernities rather than a single modernity. Thus, it offers an anti-essentialist definition of modernity.

“different societies appropriate the materials of modernity [*functionally equivalent institutional frameworks, note added*] differently” (1996:17) to produce multiple and alternative modernities.

Figure 2: Alternative Modernities



functionally equivalent institution of state/modern bureaucracy and market-industrial economy (Taylor 20001).

There are two distinct camps about the nature of social concepts: 1) restrictivists; 2) conceptual pluralists (Norman 1991). Restrictivists believe that there is only one concept of, say, modernity, and it is unambiguous and not open to interpretation. Thus, they offer a closed definition of a concept that is in question. On the other hand, conceptual pluralists offer open and interpretable terms for a definition of a concept.¹³ In a similar fashion, alternative modernities approach is conceptually pluralist about the definition of the modernity since Taylor suggests an open and a thin definition of modernity (‘functionally equivalent’ institution of state bureaucracy and market-industrial economy).

¹³ The essence of conceptual pluralism is given as follows: “there is at least one concept C of x [...], which admits of a variety of ‘interpretations’ (namely, conceptions of x), and which is such that no interpretation of C is the *best* conception of x” (Swanton 1985:815). Thus, pluralists hold that “there is one *concept* of x, yet many *conceptions* of x. Different views or interpretations about the concept of x are expressed by way of different conceptions of x” (Norman 1991:25). The idea is that there are many valid conceptions of, say, modernity which are united and validated insofar as they are permitted interpretations of some common core-concept of modernity. Accordingly, the different conceptions/interpretations of the concept derive from the open-endedness and interpretability of the core-concept.

Rudolf Carnap's (1947) distinction between the extension and intension of a concept is at work in here.¹⁴ The extension of modernity consists of set of modern societies in the world. According to the reciprocal relation between extension and intension, if you decrease the intension of the concept, modernity, you enlarge the extension of modernity. This is what the alternative or multiple modernities approach does. Since the alternative modernities approach decreases the intension of the concept, modernity by giving a thin and an open core of modernity, it enlarges the extension of the concept of modernity. Thus, such a conceptual treatment of modernity ends up with a broad extension of the concept, modernity. In that case, we end up with multiple modernities.

When you decrease the intension of a concept and enlarge the extension of it, the concept could become too broad to be used analytically. At its extreme level, it could lead to *si omnia, nulla* (if everything, then nothing). In that case, the concept becomes too broad to make comparisons and distinctions between different cases. Thus, it loses its analytical usefulness and becomes uninformative. Besides that, too-broad definitions could include items (extension), which should not be included.¹⁵ In a similar fashion, Frederick Cooper complains about the tendency of alternative modernities approach to radically extend the concept of modernity. Cooper suggests that "it is not clear why an alternative modernity should be called a modernity at all. If any form of innovation produces a modernity, then the term has little analytic purchase" (2005:114). Thus, he claims that the "proliferation of modernities" and its meaning lead to "the vanishing analytical utility of the term" (Cooper 2005:116) since "the capacity to distinguish modernity from anything else is diminished" (Cooper 2005:129). Then, alternatively, a restrictivist definition of modernity could be offered.

¹⁴ The intension of a concept (core-concept) is any property or quality, often implied or suggested by its definition. On the other hand, the extension of a concept consists of the things, it applies or extends to. In other words, the extension of a concept is the referent of a concept, the actual things that it refers to. For instance, the extension of modernity involves societies or groups (e.g. Turkish society, Japanese society), who might be judged as modern or not to varying degrees.

¹⁵ For instance defining bachelors as unmarried males will lead to include the unmarried animals into the extension.

But, this restrictivist approach has some problems. For instance, it could lead to over-narrow definitions.¹⁶ Those who claim that modernity is a Western property and only Western societies could be named as modern offers a monadic and a restrictivist definition of modernity. Both divergence and convergence theories hold a monadic and restrictivist conception of modernity since they equate modernity with the West while the former denies modernity for non-Western societies and the latter suggests that all societies will inevitably end up with the Western model of modernity. Furthermore, it is important to note that such a restrictivist approach builds a border for the concepts and this is an exercise in the ‘politics of language’. In the context of conceptual debates about modernity, the restrictivist approach can be used for depriving other societies of the concept, modernity and as a corollary, to mark them as non-modern. Actually, this is what Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilizations’ offers. Thus, that in turn serves for constructing a hierarchical world.¹⁷ On the other hand, alternative modernities approach makes a move in the ‘politics of language’ by invalidating the position, which equates modernization with westernization and modernity with the West (the restrictivist conception of modernity). Furthermore, by breaking chains of his monadic conceptualization, it offers a new perspective, which enables us see how non-Western societies reproduce and create their own modernity.

As Göle puts, the alternative modernities approach offers “to revisit our conceptions of modernity from the prism of the non-Western yet modern experiences” rather than the prism of the West and to “ensure a dialogical relation, rather than a hierarchical one between diverse cultures” (2006:80). Thus, rather than defining modernity on the basis of West or on the basis

¹⁶ Over-narrow definitions are definitions which do not include items that should be included. For instance, if you define a piece of furniture as something to sit on, then you will exclude some objects such as tables, cupboards and footstools from the extension of the concept. Since not all pieces of furniture are objects that are used to sit on, such a definition is analytically useless and too narrow. At its extreme, you can decrease the intension of a concept to the point that only a single object applies to it. In such as case, that concept is named as a monadic or one-placed concept.

¹⁷ This hierarchical construction of the world is also true for classical modernization theory (convergence theory). By the terms such as ‘latecomers’ and ‘followers’, a temporal hierarchy and distancing (Fabian 1983) is constructed by reference to a linear and Eurocentric development model and such a hierarchy can be observed in classical modernization theory’s conception of history and development.

of some pre-given conceptual frameworks, it invites us to revisit our conception of modernity in the mirror of non-Western yet modern experiences as well as Western ones.¹⁸ To summarize, we can schematize the three main positions that we introduced as follow:

Table 1: Theories of Modernization

Positions	Representatives	The Main Thesis	Culturally Neutral	Definition of modernity
Convergence Theory	Classical Modernization Theory: T. Parsons, W. W. Rostow, D. Lerner. Some Theories of Globalization: F. Fukuyama & G. Ritzer	Different cultures/traditions will converge in modernity. One-dimensional: only convergence.	Yes	Restrictivist, monadic and Eurocentric definition of modernity: equalization of modernity with the West (Eurocentric)
Divergence Theory	S. Huntington & A. Hoogvelt	Different civilizations/cultures, which will diverge and clash. One-dimensional: only divergence.	No	Restrictivist, monadic and Eurocentric definition of modernity: equalization of modernity with the West
Multiple/Alternative Modernities	C. Taylor, S. N. Eisenstadt, İ. Kaya, N. Göle, Jean and John Comaroff	Multiple modernities, which diverge and converge. Multi-dimensional: both convergence and divergence.	No	Pluralist notion of modernity and de-centers Europe/West

1.5 Secularization Bias of Modernization and the Separation of Spheres versus Cultural Embeddedness of Economy

Marshall Berman (1983) describes the experience of modernity as a process in which, “all that is solid melts into air.” The image of modernity, which is melting down everything, particularly religion and traditions offers that through modernization, de-traditionalization will occur. Recalling E. B. Tylor’s “survivals” (Eriksen and Nielsen 2001), this idea suggests that religion and traditions as the useless and functionless residues of earlier stages of development (but which are still observable in contemporary/modern societies) will

¹⁸ In other words, it offers us to re-define our conception of modernity on the basis of *concrete* Western and non-Western experiences of modernity rather than on the basis of *a priori* and/or Eurocentric frameworks. It goes against the epistemological fallacy or “the rhetoric of identification (or similitude/similarity)” (Yeğenoğlu 1998:82) (*the language of sameness*), which is the application of the western and/or *a priori* social categories to all societies.

disappear/decline or become a private affair sooner or later. From Karl Marx and Max Weber to Daniel Bell, numerous theorists prophesied a downfall in the influence of religion, stemming from the spread of an industrial economy all around the world. This is the secularization thesis. Accordingly, with the development of modernity the role and influence of religion will decline, even eventually disappear (Furseth and Repstad 2006:97). This can be named as the secularization bias of modernization theory.

The secularization theory rests on the idea that with modernization, different spheres of life such as religion, politics, and economy will separate, differentiate and become autonomous from each other. For instance, Alan Macfarlane (2000) claims that one of the main features of modernity is the ‘separation of spheres’. “The separation of spheres, where politics, economics, religion and kinship are artificially held apart, is the central feature of ‘modern’ civilization” (Macfarlane 1992). According to the modernization theory, one of the spheres that become separated is the economic sphere. To be more concrete, modernization theory claims that with modernization, economy had and will become “an [...] separate, differentiated sphere in modern society” (Granovetter 1985:482). For instance, according to Neil J. Smelser, one of the representatives of classical modernization theory, with modernization, “economic activities become distinct from domestic and religious spheres” (Harrison 1993:23).

Although there is a difference between the two, the idea of separation of spheres recalls Karl Polanyi’s claim that while in the pre-capitalist economies, the economy was embedded in noneconomic institutions such as religion, politics and kinship relations, in nineteenth-century with the rise of modern capitalism, the economy was disembedded from noneconomic institutions, and “*embedded* in (meaning ‘submerged in’ or ‘part of’) the institution of the marketplace” (Wilk and Cliggett 2007:7). Differing from Polanyi, Mark Granovetter claims that all economies including capitalist economies are embedded. For

Granovetter, embeddedness “denotes the connectedness of individuals in social networks of interpersonal relations” (Harvey, Randles and Ramlogan 2007:15). Granovetter states that economic actions are “embedded in concrete, system of social relations” (1985:487). In short, according to Granovetter, economic action is embedded in social networks, “finite set or sets of actors and the relation or relations defined on them” (Wasserman and Faust 1994:20). Furthermore, Granovetter goes against the assumption of utilitarianism, classical and neoclassical economy, which claims that “economic actors make decisions in isolation from one another—independent of their social connections: what I [*Granovetter, note added*] will call *the assumption of ‘atomized’ decisionmaking*” (quoted in Swedberg 2003:36). Thus, Granovetter criticizes the notion of asocial, self-interest maximizing *homo economicus*, and names it as “undersocialized conception of human action” and man (1985:483).¹⁹

Sharon Zukin and Paul DiMaggio (1990) extend Granovetter’s conception of embeddedness of economic actions and suggest that there are four forms of embeddedness: 1) structural; 2) cognitive; 3) institutional; 4) political. Thus, they claim that economic actions always include non-/extra-economic elements. But, most importantly, DiMaggio criticizes Granovetter’s notion of embeddedness for only including social relations and for excluding culture. In similar lines with Taylor’s conception of *background understandings*, by culture DiMaggio refers to “social cognition, the content and categories of conscious thought and the taken-for-granted. Culture consists of shared cognitions” (1990:113). According to DiMaggio, culture as shared collective understandings can be constitutive and regulative (1994:28). Culture operates in constitutive manner through the “categories, scripts, and conceptions of agency” (Swedberg 2003:42) from the contents of culture by shaping the way “we conceive, define, and rationalize decisions” (Hass 2007:16). And culture operates “in regulative manner through norms, values, and routines” (Swedberg 2003:42) by governing our decisions and

¹⁹ In a similar fashion, according to Amartya Sen, *homo economicus* as a “purely economic man is indeed close to being a social moron (1977:336). And Bourdieu also argues that “The idea of *homo economicus* represents [...] ‘a kind of anthropological monster’” (Swedberg 2003:48).

action. In short, the categories, values and norms that derive from culture shape the actions and decisions of the agents.

The disembodied model of economy, which suggests that with modernization, the economy will be disembodied from the cultural, social and religious aspects of life can be named as the acultural theory of economy (or culture-neutral theory of economy). In a similar fashion with the acultural model of modernization and globalization (the convergence theories), the acultural model of economy regards a zero-sum relation between culture/religion and economy. Thus, it leads to an economic/market absolutism since it excludes cultural and social factors/influences. This undersocialized view of economic action and man claims that there is one rationality: the rationality of *homo economicus*. Besides that; the corollary of the acultural model of economy will suggest that since economic action and organizations are culture independent, all societies which adopt the market model/capitalist economy, or to put it more generally, modern economic configurations will end up with the same rationality and organizational model: the rationality and organizational model of *homo economicus*. This view suggests that “in promoting the free market they are easing the birth of a universal economic system that history would anyway have made inevitable” (Gray 2000:23). But, as Gray claims, this is empirically false:

In fact, as different societies become more modern, they develop different modes of economic life. In Japan, modernization has meant not the replication of any other mode of economic life, but instead the development of an indigenous variety capitalism which has many unique features. The same is true in India and China. (2000:24)

On the contrary to the culture-neutral theory of economy, cultural model of economy goes against the idea of convergence and it rejects to accept *homo economicus* and its rationality as a global prototype. As DiMaggio and Zukin point out, embeddedness “refers to the *contingent (emphasis added)* nature of economic action with respect to cognition, culture, social structure, and political institutions” (1990:15). Thus, in similar lines with the cultural model of modernization, the cultural model of economy claims that different cultural legacies

and *shared cognitions* (as DiMaggio names) or *background understandings* (as Taylor names) of those cultures as axes of differentiations lead to the emergence of multiple models of economic actions and organizations.

Viviana Zelizer warns that “a full-scale cultural analysis of the economy” might lead to cultural absolutism, which reduces “everything in the economy to culture” (Swedberg 2003:42). And cultural absolutism could lead to a divergence theory, which claims that since every society has different cultural categories and norms, they will all diverge. But, as it is indicated previously, both the cultural theory of modernization and the cultural theory of economy suggest that while societies will diverge since they have different cultural legacies, at the same time, they will converge since they will all have functionally equivalent institution of market-industrial economy. Lastly, this approach also goes against Lerner’s either-or formula of “Mecca or mechanization” since it goes against the dichotomy of ‘*homo economicus* (modern) or *homo Islamicus* (traditional)’. Rather than resting on such a dichotomy, it accentuates the convergences of *homo Islamicus* with *homo economicus* as well as divergences between them.

1.6 The New Agents of Modernity: New Islamic Agents

Callum B. Brown notes that “religion can and has retained its social significance across the change from preindustrial to industrial society” (1992:38). Likewise, Robert W. Hefner claims, “classical secularization theory oversimplified modernity and its nonmodern ‘other’. Rather than recognizing that modernity might be multiple”, it “offered an idealized model of the West as the prototype for modernization in all societies.” And it “failed to do justice to the fate of religion in the West” (1998:86) and in the non-Western societies. The most important weakness of the secularization thesis and the disembedded view of economy is that they fail to capture the dynamic relationship between religion and modernity, and the public role of religion. As argued by José Casanova, “Social movements have appeared which

either are religious in nature or are challenging in the name of religion the legitimacy and autonomy of the primary secular sphere, the state and the market economy” (1994:5). Similar developments can be observed in Turkey too. The development of an Islamic ‘sector’ in Turkey after the 1980s denotes that a deep change whose consequences will be determining the future course of Islamic movements is at work. Nilüfer Göle describes the process of the transformation of religious groups in Turkey as following:

After twenty years, we are witnessing the differentiation of the paths followed by the Islamists in different national settings. A process of change is at work which is transforming these movements from a radical position to a more cultural oriented tendencies [...] It can be said that the Islamic actors, who owe their existence and power to the collective Islamic movement, have entered in interaction and exchange with the environment after they faced with the modern urban spaces, global communication networks, public discussions, consumption patterns and the rules of the market. (quoted in Yılmaz 2002: 17; Göle 2000:34-35)

But, what are the sociological roots of these newly emerging Islamic actors? The creation of a “reading public” as one of the goals of modernizing projects paradoxically creates a public which criticizes questions and alters existing order (Kaya 2004).²⁰ Once a reading society is established, it becomes impossible to master and suppress the varieties in a society. As İbrahim Kaya suggests, “Islamism is possible only under conditions of modernity, especially due to the fact that a ‘reading public’ arose in Islamic societies as a consequence of modernization” (2004:41). By referring to Eickelman and Piscatori, Hefner calls this process as “objectification of religious knowledge.” And “this process of objectification has been abetted by the expansion of mass higher education, the emergence of vast markets for inexpressive ‘Islamic books’ and newspapers” (1998:91). In fact, by receiving a modern education, which brought about a high level of “cognitive mobilization” (Inglehardt 1990), Islamists (such as in Turkey) is able to construct alternative political projects with their own

²⁰ For the term, reading public see: Benedict Anderson (1991).

background understanding.²¹ In addition, as a result of this cognitive mobilization, they acquire professional occupations (as doctors, lawyers etc.), become businessmen and form modern organizations. This hints at the emergence of new agents through the process of modernization.

Kaya states that in the recent globalizing era, there is the “pluralization of modern actors” (2004:47). This means that we can no longer talk about “a center in society that might be capable of shaping the entirety of social relations” (Kaya 2004:47). Since in the global era, modernity lacks a determining center, modernity “is in the streets” (Kaya 2004:47) with its new civil actors rather than modernity in the center (state) with its modernizing elites.²² In a similar fashion, Hakan Yavuz “offers four generic typologies of Islamic movements. At one end is a state-oriented and elite-based vanguard movement that is more ideological and statist, while at the other is a society-centric, gradual, and reformative pragmatic movement” (2003:27-28). Thus, we can talk about a “social modernity”, which “means the emergence ‘modernized’ subjects that comprise society” (Kaya 2004:47). Moreover, this ‘social modernity’ points out that “there is the plurality of modernizing agents, which should be taken to be an important factor in the formation of different modernities” (Kaya 2004:51). Thus, different agents with different identities and subjectivities (such as Islamists) are participating in the modernity, which opens up new possibilities for modernity and new readings of it:

²¹ Cognitive mobilization refers to a process of acquiring a high level of education, political information and political interest.

²² Modernization may have been and in fact, had been a project of the (state) elite in nineteenth century and in the beginnings of twentieth century, for instance at the time of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey. But, it is not any longer the project of elites. For instance, Masoud Kamali suggests that the modernization process in Iran and Turkey is carried by modernizing elites. In that process, the “state became a major agency of modernization and tried forcibly to eliminate any protest and resistance from social groups disadvantaged by its authoritarian modernization programmes” (Kamali 2006:45). Thus, we could name this modernization as ‘modernization-from-above’. It is certain that the authoritarian and totalitarian methods of reaching modernity create a degree of homogenization. But, even these totalizing and authoritarian methods embrace the possibility of variation. The creation of a “reading public” (Anderson 1991) as one of the goals of modernizing projects paradoxically creates a public, which criticizes, questions and alters the existing order. Thus, even totalizing modernization processes such as Kemalism paradoxically generate (a new) multiplicity by creating a ‘reading public’. And once a reading society is established, it becomes impossible to master and suppress the varieties in a society. To conclude, the “societal modernity” (Kaya 2004), or in other words, ‘modernization-from-below’ is at least partly a consequence of ‘modernization-from-above’.

“Different agents, who have different ideas about the ‘good life’, construct different projects of modernity” (Kaya 2004:52). In addition to that, these new agents re-interpret, re-construct and re-create the tradition and religion not only in interaction with their differing *background understandings*, but also in the light of modernity, its institutions, and present concerns and interests.

According to Hans-Georg Gadamer, “all interpretation, even of the past, is necessarily ‘prejudiced’ in the sense that it is always oriented to present concerns and interests, and it is those present concerns and interests that allow us to enter into the dialogue with the matter at issue” (Malpas 2005).²³ In a similar fashion, Eric Hobsbawm talks about the invented traditions and states that the invented traditions “normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable past.” But, the assumed continuity with the past “is largely factitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition.” (Hobsbawm 1983:2). Out of these re-interpretations, inventions and re-creations, not only multiple modernities but re-created multiple traditions and religions such as multiple interpretations of Islam proliferate. Thus, a creative process is at work, in which there are interactions and interpenetrations between modernity, traditions and religion.

Alexander Des Forges criticizes Taylor for slipping “much too easily into essentialist and ahistorical assumptions about the unity, coherence, and discreteness of individual ‘cultures’ and ‘nations,’ while neglecting the fundamentally relational character of any such identifications” (2002:672). Actually, the vision of a society with a coherent, complete and distinct set of conventions (*background understandings*) is problematic. People in the same society may have divergent assumption about what is good.²⁴ Since we can talk about different groups with different background understandings within a society, then as S.N.

²³ Also see: Gadamer’s *Truth and Method* (1979).

²⁴ For a similar criticism, see Fred Feldman’s (1978) criticism of moral conventionalism.

Eisenstadt points out, we should accept that “The crucial problem of pluralism in modernity is not just the acceptance of multiple interpretations of modernities, in different countries, but the acceptance of different plural interpretations of modernity within the same country, within the same local area or broader institutional framework” (2004:396).²⁵

After the 1980s, new agents such as Muslim capitalists, business people, and educated professionals, who want a share in the global and modern world, emerged in Turkey. In the 1990s with their newly acquired occupations, this neo-bourgeoisie expressed their desire to take part in social life. They organize themselves around new associations, enterprising groups and platforms and it could be claimed that this newly emerged bourgeoisie constitutes an example for the emergence of new actors with new interpretations of modernity beyond and within national boundaries. In the following parts, by considering an Islamic business association (MÜSİAD) as a case study, I will investigate whether the newly emerging Islamic entrepreneurs envision an alternative modernity.

²⁵ The pluralism of modernity within the national boundaries as well as the pluralism of modernity between nations reads into the very definition of modernity, which points out to the self-reflexive nature of modernity (Giddens 1995) and/or antinomies within modernity (Eisenstadt 2004).

CHAPTER 2: THE CASE OF MÜSİAD

2.1 The Formation and Membership Structure of MÜSİAD

MÜSİAD is one of the largest voluntary business associations in Turkey with 3359 members,²⁶ 28 branch offices²⁷ and 66 overseas focal points in 31 foreign countries.²⁸ MÜSİAD was founded on May 5, 1990 by twelve young Turkish businessmen, with an average age of 33, in Istanbul (Öniş 1997:758).²⁹ The founding chairman of MÜSİAD, Erol Yarar, held his position for almost a decade, from 1990 to 1999. In 1999, Ali Bayramoğlu replaced him. In 2004, Ali Bayramoğlu was replaced by Dr. Ömer Bolat.³⁰ In the *MÜSİAD Booklet*, the association defines its goal as follows:

[...] creating a developed country with advanced high-tech industry within a highly developed commercial environment, but without sacrificing *national and moral values (emphasis added)*, where labor is not exploited (*emphasis added*) and capital accumulation is not degraded and where the distribution of national income is just and fair, a country with peace at home, influence in the region and respect in the world. (N.d.:3)

Furthermore, MÜSİAD declares that increasing the industrial, commercial, socio-economic, educational level and providing the coordination of technology, capital and intellectual cooperation within the constitutional borders and its laws is the aim of the organization (*MÜSİAD Tüzük [MÜSİAD Charter]* Article No. 3 1997:3).³¹ In addition to these objectives, MÜSİAD is also dedicated to “finding solutions to the problems of Turkey, Islamic countries in the region and mankind in general while committing itself to social and economic development, through combining industrialization with ‘high ethical and moral standards’”

²⁶ This calculation is done by the author of this thesis from MÜSİAD’s member database. Source: MÜSİAD member database. Retrieved May 20, 2008 (<http://www.musiad.org.tr/english/memberDataBase>).

²⁷ The branch offices are as follows: Adana, Ankara, Antalya, Balıkesir, Bandırma, Bursa, Denizli, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Erzurum, Eskişehir, Gaziantep, Gebze, Hatay, İnegöl, İzmir, Kahramanmaraş, Kayseri, Karadeniz Ereğlisi, Kocaeli, Konya, Malatya, Mersin, Rize, Sakarya, Samsun, Şanlıurfa, Trabzon. Source: MÜSİAD member database. Retrieved May 20, 2008 (<http://www.musiad.org.tr/english/memberDataBase>).

²⁸ See: the Webpage of MÜSİAD. Retrieved June 9, 2008 (www.musiad.org.tr).

²⁹ It is important to note that they don’t have any foreign members. This indicates the ethnic and/or national aspect of the organization.

³⁰ Ömer Bolat has a political science Ph.D. from Marmara University.

³¹ “Derneğin Amacı: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası ve Kanunları doğrultusunda Türkiye’nin ve Türk toplumunun demokratik ve planlı bir düzen içinde kalkınıp, sinai, ticari, sosyo-ekonomik, eğitim ve kültür düzeyinin gelişmesini, teknoloji, sermaye, fikir alışverişi ve koordinasyon sağlayarak daha ileri bir düzeye ulaşmasına yardımcı olmaktır” (*MÜSİAD Tüzük* 1997:3).

(Choudhury 1998:87-88). MÜSİAD does not have a strict policy for membership (Alkan 1998) and they claim that the organization does not follow any discriminatory/exclusive policies in terms of sector, size, location, party allegiance and religion (Çemrek 2002).³² The organization argues that commitment to business ethics and honesty constitutes the only criterion for membership. The necessary qualities are put as follows: “respect for the cultural values of society, trustworthiness, quality consciousness, loyalty and respect for employees, customers, and suppliers” (Özler 2001 quoted in Çemrek 2002:171).³³ Thus, the organization’s discourse puts emphasis on morality for membership.

According to my calculations from MÜSİAD’s member database, MÜSİAD members are active in a variety of sectors including construction and building materials, services, textile and leather, machinery and automotive, food, chemistry – metal and mining, durable consumer goods and furniture, impression, publication, packing and advertisement, information technologies, health, and energy (See: Appendices, Table 4).³⁴ MÜSİAD represents the new money (new bourgeois) “since most of the member companies were established following the 1980s” (Çemrek 2002:164; Buğra 1999; Buğra 1998). Besides that, MÜSİAD consists of a wide range of firms, from big multi-share holding companies to small firms employing just a few employees. There are some large companies such as Kombassan and Ülker in MÜSİAD. “MÜSİAD membership consists predominantly of small and medium scale firms but also includes a limited number of large companies” (Öniş and Türem 2002:447). As Ayşe Buğra’s (1999) research indicates, the majority of the member companies of MÜSİAD are indeed small and medium scale firms, employing less than 50 workers.

Another important characteristic of MÜSİAD is about the geographical spread of its members. My calculations from the member database of MÜSİAD indicates that out of 81

³² There is no condition that blocs double membership. The director of İhlas Holding and Ülker group were members in both of MÜSİAD and TÜSİAD.

³³ Özler, Hayrettin. 2001. “State and business in Turkey: Issues of Collective Action with Special reference to MÜSİAD.” Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Government, University of Strathclyde, Strathclyde.

³⁴ MÜSİAD member database. Retrieved May 20, 2008 (<http://www.musiad.org.tr/english/memberDataBase>).

cities in Turkey, they have members in 50 cities, which indicates that MÜSİAD is a widespread organization (See: Appendices, Table 5).³⁵ The examination of MÜSİAD membership suggests that the largest number of members is to be found in some of the major metropolitan centers such as Istanbul, Bursa and Ankara, as well as in the key traditional inner Anatolian cities such as Konya and Kayseri. MÜSİAD members also include firms from smaller Anatolian cities: Sakarya, Denizli, Gaziantep, and Antalya. The distinguishing feature of these firms located in these cities is that a number of relatively small or medium scale firms have succeed in establishing themselves as significant exporters of manufactures to the world market, which “resulted in the label of ‘Anatolina Tigers’” (Çemrek 2002:173) – “a term which clearly reflected the upsurge of interest in the successful economic performance of some East Asian countries known as ‘the Asian tigers’” (Buğra 1998:524). These developments indicate that they are recently becoming global actors of the world market.

2.2 The Activities of MÜSİAD

MÜSİAD performs several activities, composed of periodical publications, organizing international fairs and mass trips to foreign countries, educational seminars and panels. It also organizes social and religious activities such as picnics, pilgrimage and *umrah* travels (religious travel to Mecca in any time of the year), *iftar* (breaking the fast during Ramadan) programs. Furthermore, the organization “welcomes business groups, ambassadors and consulates from other countries to develop business relations” (Çemrek 2002:175). Besides that MÜSİAD organizes international fairs and mass trips to foreign countries and through such organizations, “MÜSİAD encourages its members to be more global and export-oriented” (Çemrek 2002:175). Lastly, they organize panels and educational seminars to develop the qualifications of MÜSİAD members.

³⁵ MÜSİAD member database. Retrieved May 20, 2008 (<http://www.musiad.org.tr/english/memberDataBase>).

Since its establishment, MÜSİAD has prepared 88 reports on Turkey and other countries for the use of its members.³⁶ These reports are about the formation of a new Turkish constitution, industrial and commercial potential of foreign countries, transport and lodging facilities, and laws on foreign trade in Turkey and other countries. Along these reports on specific subjects, MÜSİAD publishes these periodicals: *MÜSİAD Bülten* (*MÜSİAD Bulletin*), *Çerçeve* (*Framework*), *Sektörel Bülten* (*Sectoral Bulletin*),³⁷ and *EKOMÜSİAD* (*ECOMÜSİAD*).³⁸ Consequently, besides informing members on different topics and disseminating the opinions of MÜSİAD members to different groups, these periodicals are effective among MÜSİAD members to develop a ‘MÜSİAD identity’ (Çemrek 2002).

Çerçeve is a monthly magazine, which started in September 1992. It contains articles written by academicians and MÜSİAD staff. When compared to other publications of MÜSİAD, it is more academic. One of the issues of *Çerçeve* is titled “700. Yılında Osmanlı Dünyası” (World of Ottoman in its 700th Anniversary), which is composed of articles on the Ottoman Empire, especially on its economic side. Another issue is about *Ahilik* (Akhism) organization, which is titled as “Ahilik’ten KOBİ’lere Gelişen Anadolu Girişimciliği” (Developing Anatolian Entrepreneurship from Akhism to Small and Medium Size Enterprises).³⁹ This issue is also mostly composed of articles about the economy in the Ottoman Empire. This shows MÜSİAD’s strong emphasis on the Ottoman Empire as an economic model to be followed. Via circulation of *Çerçeve*, MÜSİAD aims to disseminate (distribute) its views to different intellectual and elite groups.

³⁶ It is calculated by the author of this thesis. Source: the Webpage of MÜSİAD. Retrieved June 9, 2008 (www.musiad.org.tr).

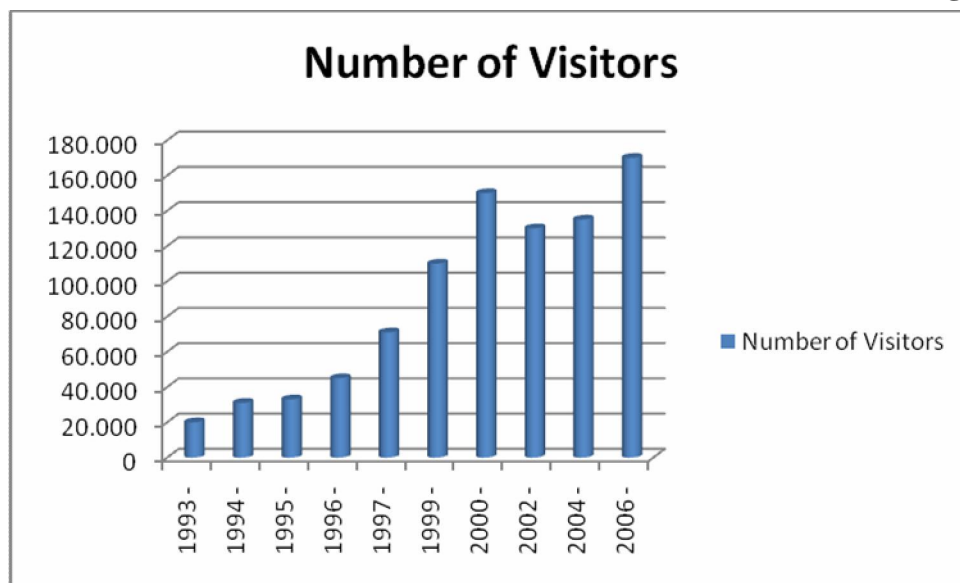
³⁷ MÜSİAD has started publishing the quarterly bulletin, *MÜSİAD Bülten Sektör* (MÜSİAD Bulletin Sector) in April 2000, which contains sector-oriented news.

³⁸ Eco of *ECOMÜSİAD* is an abbreviation of economy.

³⁹ Akhism is an organized brotherhood during Ottoman Empire in Anatolia related to trade guilds.

MÜSİAD organizes international trade fairs (MÜSİAD International Fair) and participates in the International Business Forum (IBF).⁴⁰ This reflects a desire to reposition themselves and to take part in the global world market. These two meetings function as channels for MÜSİAD members to establish relations with businessmen from foreign countries. It is important to note that “Most of the participating countries in MÜSİAD international fairs are Muslim populated countries” (Çemrek 2002:183). From 1993 to 2006, MÜSİAD has organized eleven international fairs. The first three fairs were held in İzmir and after the forth MÜSİAD International Fair, the fairs were held in Istanbul and that became a tradition. As it can be seem in the table 2, the last MÜSİAD International Fair drew to a successful growth in the increase of visitors compared to the first one.

Table 2: MÜSİAD’s International Trade Fair: Amount of Visitors According to Years⁴¹



Furthermore, apart from MÜSİAD International Fair, twelve International Business Forum (IBF) meetings were held. As it can be seen in the table 3, out of twelve IBF meetings, six of them are organized in Istanbul by MÜSİAD. Consequently, it can be suggested that

⁴⁰ International Business Forum (IBF) is a global business platform among Muslim businessmen all around the world. See: the webpage of IBF: Retrieved June 9, 2008 (<http://www.ibfnet.net/>).

⁴¹ Source for table 2: the Webpage of MÜSİAD International Fair, Retrieved May 20, 2000 (<http://www.musiadfair.com/aboutus.asp>).

MÜSİAD aims to reach and secure the markets in the Islamic world by participating to these international fairs and meetings.

Table 3: The Dates and Places of International Business Forum (IBF)⁴²

<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>
1. Lahore, Pakistan	September 1995
2. Istanbul, Turkey	November 1996
3. Istanbul, Turkey	November 1997
4. Istanbul, Turkey	November 1998
5. Cape Town, Republic of South Africa	April 2000
6. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	April 2001
7. Tehran, Iran	April 2003
8. Istanbul, Turkey	September 2004
9. Cidde, Saudi Arabia	October 2005
10. Istanbul, Turkey	November 2006
11. Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates	November 2007
12. Istanbul, Turkey	October 2008

MÜSİAD also organizes several trade visits to foreign countries for its members to promote cooperation and establishment of trade relations with companies in foreign countries (Çemrek 2002). During these visits abroad, the participant members get the chance to meet with government officials, managers and officials of private and state sector organizations in foreign countries to establish trade relations and sign cooperation agreements (Çemrek 2002).⁴³ In short, MÜSİAD arranges foreign visits and participates to international fairs to exceed the limitations of the domestic and national market.

MÜSİAD has organized several panels in different subjects on economic and socio-political issues ranging from privatization to *İmam-Hatip* (Prayer Leader-Preacher) High Schools (*MÜSİAD Bülten [MÜSİAD Bulletin]* 1995a:16). Conferences, given by academics, politicians and bureaucrats, function as a forum for educating its members. MÜSİAD also organizes seminars on professional management techniques, modern business administration, and English courses at the headquarter (Istanbul) and at branch offices (Çemrek 2002). Moreover, the association carries out social activities such as picnics, *umrah* travels (Bolat

⁴² Source for table 3: Webpage of MÜSİAD, Retrieved May 20, 2000 (<http://www.musiadfair.com/aboutus.asp>).

⁴³ These trips have been to: Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Crimea, Palestine, Russia, Algeria, Holland, Hungary, England, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Taiwan, Hong-Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and so forth. See: the Webpage of MÜSİAD. Retrieved June 9, 2008 (www.musiad.org.tr).

MÜSİAD Bülten 1999:37-40), and visits to big factories (*MÜSİAD Bülten* 1996:23). MÜSİAD also organizes *iftars* for the university students, press members, political party leaders, mayors and bureaucrats. Also, during Ramadan, they help the poor people (*MÜSİAD Bülten* 1998:19-20). “All these organizations provide MÜSİAD public visibility and facilitate its public opinion formation” (Çemrek 2002:179). But, most importantly, these activities function to bind its members together.

CHAPTER 3: THE FUNCTIONS OF ISLAM FOR MÜSİAD

In this part, I argue that for MÜSİAD, Islam functions in three ways: 1) as common bond and social capital; 2) as symbolic capital; 3) as raw material for an alternative model of modernity. Evaluating the role of Islam for MÜSİAD in terms of symbolic capital and social capital is a materialist/instrumentalist explanation since it explains the role of Islam for MÜSİAD on the basis of how Islam functions as a legitimization tool and as a social bond. In the next chapter, I will make the point that while considering the role of Islam for MÜSİAD as a resource for symbolic and social capital is explanatory, it is not sufficient as Islam for MÜSİAD also functions as raw material for an alternative societal vision and modernity.

3.1 Identity Formation of MÜSİAD: Islam as Common Bond and Social Capital

As Fuat Keyman and Berrin Koyuncu points out, “MÜSİAD is the most important business organization that claims to carry with itself an ‘Islamic identity’” (2005:117).⁴⁴ Actually, the Islamic identity of the organization can be deduced from its name. The ‘MÜ’ standing for *müstakil* (independent) is read as *Müslüman* (Muslim) by the secular circles to connote religious reactionism. While it can be rejected that MÜSİAD holds a reactionist/fundamentalist understanding of Islam as some secular circles suggest, it is obvious that the choice of *müstakil* has Islamic connotations since it is of Arabic origin and in modern Turkish *bağımsız* is used for independent. As Mark Granovetter (2005) states, “Many business groups have some sense of identity based on common social bonds” (2005:433). For MÜSİAD, Islam is the common social bond that supplies a sense of identity.

⁴⁴ It is important to note that there are other organizations with Islamic connotations: *İş Hayatında Dayanışma-İŞHAD* (Business Life Solidarity Association), *Anadolu Genç İşadamları Derneği-AGİAD* (Anatolian Young Businessmen Association), *Serbest Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği-SESİAD* (The Free Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association), and *Anadolu Aslanları İşadamları Derneği-ASKON* (The Anatolian Lions Businessmen’s Association). İŞHAD brings together the businessmen with Fethullah Gülen community. ASKON “was established in 1998 as a split from MÜSİAD” (Çemrek 2002:144).

As Karin Vorhoff points out, “Their discourse introduces Islam as an essential point of reference in daily and economic life” (2000:163). MÜSİAD’s publications and the statements of association’s representatives are quite illuminating to detect and understand the meaning and the role of ‘moral and Islamic values’ for MÜSİAD. The discourse of moral and Islamic values introduces Islam as the one of the essential reference of MÜSİAD in daily and economic life. MÜSİAD’s periodicals such as *Bülten (Bulletin)*, *Çerçeve (Frame)*, and *EKOMÜSİAD (ECOMÜSİAD)* mainly include essays focusing on the relation between Islam and economy to develop arrangements for trade and production compatible with the Islamic precepts. These articles try to establish, correct and supply practices, rules and norms for Muslim businessmen with recourse to Islamic theological sources.

As one of the periodicals of MÜSİAD indicates, its members are encouraged to ask a *fiqh* (Islamic law) adviser for *halal* (lawful in Islamic terms) way of earning and spending (Eken *MÜSİAD Bülten* 1995:3). In the same way, Erol Yazar, the ex-chairman of MÜSİAD, in the 6th Financial General Meeting of MÜSİAD, points out the importance of acting in accordance with a communitarian conscience and earning in a *halal* way. Furthermore, in a MÜSİAD periodical, traits of Muslim businessman are described as follows:

[...] a Muslim businessman must earn *halal* means (in the way that Allah wants) and spend in a *halal* way, he must avoid tricks, *speculation and monopolizing (emphasis added)*, he should not pursue areas of profit that would not please Allah even though they might be very profitable and rational, i.e. producing, selling or advertising alcoholic products, running gambling halls or usury should all be avoided, just as a Muslim should not pursue everything without limit, a Muslim businessman should not produce or do business without limit, he should earn by means of effort and risk, he should escape from interest earnings where he has put no effort and taken no risks, a Muslim must be very careful of the rights of his employees and those with whom he does business. He must know that any earnings gained by abusing other rights will be harmful over the long run, when spending he should avoid he two extremes of wastefulness and miserliness as well as avoiding ostentation, capital should not be left idle; it should be directed to fields suitable to religion, a Muslim businessman must never forget that his capital is a trust and that he must fulfill all his responsibilities toward it. (Eken *MÜSİAD Bülten* 1997:4)

As this quotation suggests, Islam functions as a business moral code. It is demanded that Islam as a *shared cognition* (as DiMaggio puts it) or as a *background understanding* (as Taylor puts it) should operate “in regulative manner through norms, values, and routines” (Swedberg 2003:42) and govern the decisions and actions of businessmen. In fact, Islam plays such role in their daily activities. As indicated in the previous part, MÜSİAD organizes religious social activities such as pilgrimage and *umrah* travels, *iftar* programs. Besides that, “Members observe Muslim rituals by not serving liquor at their dinners, for example, and by celebrating the Muslim festivals” (Zubaida 1996:14). As Jeff Hass indicates, “Networks can create trust when people learn about each other and can reasonably predict each other’s behavior” (2007:11). Thus, the demand that Islam should be a business moral code, or in other words the demand that Islam should operate in regulative manner to govern the decisions and actions of MÜSİAD members, is put in use to create trust among members. In such a way, Islam functions as social capital for MÜSİAD. In other words, MÜSİAD as a network organization creates trust among its members on the basis of Islamic religious identity. By utilizing Islam as a social capital (trust), MÜSİAD creates “a ‘powerful network based upon trust-relations’ among Islamic economic actors” (Keyman and Koyuncu 2005:117). Another evidence for Islam as a social capital is put by Emin Baki Adas as follows:

[...] due to shared Islamic values and trust stemming from these shared values, the networks and solidarity among Islamic firms are more developed than others. They involve joint-investments, borrowing money from each other and joint-purchase of machinery, industrial inputs and other commodities in order to reduce costs and survive in a highly competitive globalized economy. (2006:123)

Thus, Islam as common bond functions as the key elements “in the intense cooperation among small or medium-sized economic units” (Çemrek 2002:202; Buğra 1999; Öniş 1997). Besides that, as Yıldız Atasoy points out, “Islam is used as an important resource in MUSIAD’s class strategy to create a sense of unity among smaller capital groups. This strategy is intended to

promote the establishment of larger companies capable of competing in external markets” (2005:174). Thus, Islamic values “play a key role in their developing business connections and facilitate their penetration into the economy” (Yavuz 1997:72). Actually, marketing strategies with religious references constitute an important element for MÜSİAD members. MÜSİAD member companies benefit from Islamic references to advertise a large number of goods and services ranging from clothing (i.e. Tekbir Haute Couture Inc.) to luxury hotels (i.e. Caprice Hotel). So, Islam functions “as an important resource to enlarge the market share of MÜSİAD’s member companies” (Çemrek 2002:205).

The use of extra-economic factors is true for business behavior in general. To establish trust, extra-economic ties are utilized by various business associations. For instance, by referring to I. Light and G. Karageorgis, Ayşe Buğra points out that ethnic entrepreneurs also use their common ethnic identity as a resource to bind its members. And more than that, “Light and Karageorgis argue that ethnic entrepreneurs might enjoy advantages that others do not, not in spite of but thanks to their minority status in society” (Buğra 1998:528). But what makes MÜSİAD peculiar is that they are too explicit about their religious background (their identity based structure) and that makes MÜSİAD’s Islamic orientation significant.

As pointed out previously, for MÜSİAD Islam as an extra-economic factor does not only help to establish solidarities and common bonds, but it is used to secure markets. It is important to note that this explicit religious identity could also function in the opposite direction by diminishing their market share. Actually, in 1997, the Turkish military “released a list of companies that were alleged to be in alliance with religious reactionism and declared to exclude them from public auctions in army contracts” (Çemrek 2002:218). And in that list, MÜSİAD members were also cited. This report was also a notice for the public not to shop at these companies. Under these circumstances, for MÜSİAD, the Islamic identity turned out to

be an obstacle for business rather than an asset and this leads us to the rhetoric of being excluded that is employed by MÜSİAD.

As Buğra suggests, Islam is also put forward in a way that “certain elements of a minority psychology, manifested in the expression of a feeling of being excluded from economic life controlled by a big-business community supported by the secularist state, have a significant place in the organizing rhetoric of this association” (1998:529). In a similar fashion, Yasin Aktay claims that MÜSİAD members have a diasporic perception and by referring to Islamist poet Necip Fazıl Kısakürek’s lines in *Sakarya Poem*, he argues that MÜSİAD members have the feeling of being strangers in their own homeland, pariahs in their home country (“özyurdunda garip, özvatanında parya”) (Aktay 1999:139). Furthermore, Haldun Gülalp points out that MÜSİAD members see themselves as the “step-children of the state” (2001:439; 2003:50) since they think that they are put in a disadvantaged position by the state in comparison with secularist and big capitalist class.

For instance, the ex-chairman of MÜSİAD, Erol Yazar, criticizes the bureaucratic elite for trying to prevent the development of MÜSİAD and Anatolian capital via monopolist holdings (“MÜSİAD Genel İdare Kurulu (GİK) İstanbul’da Toplandı” *MÜSİAD Bülten* 1998:4) and he also claims that the state protects some business conglomerates (Çokgezen 2000). In addition to that, in its report on the Turkish economy in 1997, MÜSİAD claims that the *rentier circles* are responsible for the political and economic problems in Turkey (*The Turkish Economy 1997* 1997). Likewise, Mustafa Özel (1997), one of the ideologues of the organization, names the secular business circles as *usurers* and claims that they exploit the people under the protection of Kemalist ideology and the state. The identification of some circles as *rentiers* and *usurers* fits to the claim, expressed in *MÜSİAD Bulletin* that they are against *speculation* and *monopolies* (Eken *MÜSİAD Bülten* 1997:4). Actually, Yazar, Özel and the MÜSİAD’s economic report imply TÜSİAD (Turkish Industrialists’ and

Businessmen's Association) when they talk about monopolist holdings, business conglomerates, usurers and rentiers. "TÜSİAD is an associational interest group that was established on 2 August 1971 by the 14 largest Turkish industrialists" (Demirkol 2006:50). TÜSİAD is composed of big industrialists and it is "deeply inspired by the societal model of Western countries" (Çemrek 2002:72). It has a secularist outlook and is generally considered as "a part of the ruling elite" (Çemrek 2002:84). As the above expressions of MÜSİAD publications and members indicate, MÜSİAD sets itself against TÜSİAD and claims to represent those businessmen, who are put in a disadvantaged position by the big capitalist class, namely TÜSİAD.

The present chairman of MÜSİAD, Ömer Bolat argues that MÜSİAD was established for the benefit of newly emerging Anatolian entrepreneurs, who think that they cannot find a place in TÜSİAD, which looks like an Istanbul-based organization for the class interests of big capital and holdings (Bolat 2007). As Vorhoff points out, *MÜ* of MÜSİAD standing for *müstakil* (independent) can also be "read as a coded protest against the industrial and commercial 'establishment'" (2000:169; Çemrek 2002:250-251), namely TÜSİAD. Thus, it can be claimed that TÜSİAD functions as 'the other' in the identity formation of MÜSİAD. MÜSİAD represents itself as the antithesis of TÜSİAD. While TÜSİAD symbolizes "big industrial and financial tycoons, monopoly and westernization" (Çemrek 2002:237), the former (MÜSİAD) claims to represent KOBİs (small and medium size enterprises), free competition, and Islam.

As Zülküf Aydın claims, "The language of recognition has been used [...] to end the hegemony of the western-oriented big business of the Istanbul bourgeoisie" (2005:199). And in that language of recognition or in "the language of the disadvantaged" (Buğra 1999:24), Islam as a common identity functions to bind its members "against the repressive forces of the secularist state" (Buğra 1999:46) and big capital, namely TÜSİAD. The feeling of resentment,

expressed by the language of being in a disadvantaged position, which is exemplified in the expression of “step-children of the state” (Gülalp 2001:439) functions as social capital by creating its ‘other’ (namely, the secular capitalist class, TÜSİAD) to bind its members and to create a common identity. Thus, this rhetoric of resentment supplies a “reactive solidarity” (Buğra 1998) among its members.

3.2 Islam and Nationalism as Symbolic Capital

MÜSİAD justifies its economic activities not only by reference to efficiency but also by reference to religion (Islam) and nationalism. By utilizing Islam and nationalism as symbolic capital (as a legitimizing tool), MÜSİAD transforms self-interest into a disinterested pursuit (Bourdieu 1990). In fact, in Turkey, businessmen have always faced the problem of legitimacy. For instance, Metin Heper asserts that the bureaucratic elite in Turkey perceived entrepreneurs as “profiteers” and “swindlers” (1985:102). In addition, entrepreneurial activity does not have a strong legitimacy in the eyes of the Turkish public (Demir 2005). This is very much related with DiMaggio’s claim that economic activities are embedded in political, cultural and social environment since the political and social culture in Turkey attribute primacy to public/national interest over particular interest. Ayşe Buğra (2005) points out that individualist values could not become a part of the political and social culture in Turkey because of late industrialization, and she concludes that entrepreneurial activity is considered as legitimate as long as it contributes to the public/national interest, namely national development. In such a political and social culture, the entrepreneurs try to legitimize their activities by accentuating the social and national benefits of their acts (Buğra 2005).

In a similar fashion, MÜSİAD utilizes the rhetoric of the Turkish model of businessmen, who claim that their main intention is not to become rich but to do something for their country and nation. MÜSİAD refers to this legitimization tool by expressing the

saying: “duty to one’s country, the fatherland and home (*vatana, memleket vefa borcu*)”

(Vorhoff 2000:167) For instance, a businessman from MÜSİAD, Mustafa Çalık, claims that

We are not working just for food, but also for contributing positively to the country as well. Our national flag will be red as long as the Turkish economy performs well. Then we will have a better status in the world. To live ten years longer in this world is not so important. But it is important whether Turkey has a better place among world nations, and whether my country is happy and great. (quoted in Demir, Acar and Toprak 2004:187)

The rhetoric of nationalism, exemplified in the above expressions, is in line with the political and social culture in Turkey, which emphasizes national/collective interest as the only legitimate one and considers individual (private) and/or class interests as illegitimate. And this rhetoric serves to legitimize their activities by transforming their self-interested pursuits into a disinterested pursuit (national development).

As well as nationalism, Islam is utilized as a symbolic capital by MÜSİAD. Evidence for use of Islam as a symbolic capital can be deduced from the fact that MÜSİAD opposes both standard welfare state provisions and organized representation of interest by labor unions. The ex-chairman of MÜSİAD, Erol Yazar, states that “the ‘social state’ is among those characteristics of the now outmoded industrial society which are often incompatible with the requirements of the currently ascending information society” (1996:12). Furthermore, an Islamic company manager argues that “the existence of the same culture and the same thoughts make trade unions unnecessary. Bosses, managers and workers pray together” (quoted in Duran and Yıldırım 2005:239). Similarly, in a speech delivered in a Hak-İş assembly, Erol Yazar indicates that “I see myself as one of you and you as one of us” (*Report of the Ninth General Assembly of Hak-İş* 1999:70) and he recalls a saying of the Prophet Mohammed saying that “a good worker is the one who obeys employers” (Duran and Yıldırım 2005:239).⁴⁵ Besides that, they refer to the Prophet Mohammed’s statements to

⁴⁵ The Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions (HAK-İŞ), which is an Islamic oriented trade union, was established on October 22, 1976 in Ankara. Although both Hak-İş and MÜSİAD share a common religious identity, as Buğra (2002) points out, there are some conflicts between the two organizations and the most

define the obligations of workers: “the income that is most highly regarded by Allah is the income of the worker who is respectable to his employer” and “whoever goes to sleep exhausted by hard work for his daily bread sleeps with all his sins forgiven” (Buğra 1997:48-49). Thus, the obligations of workers are also defined with reference to religion. As a corollary of such statements, “In fact, many MÜSİAD members are overtly hostile to any trade union in their workplace” (Duran and Yıldırım 2005:239). For instance, “Öziplik-İş, a Hak-İş affiliate in the textile industry, tried to organize a workplace in Bursa owned by the head of the MÜSİAD Bursa branch but the employer resisted the unionization of its workers and some union leaders were physically attacked” (Duran and Yıldırım 2005:239).

The above statements of MÜSİAD members indicate that labor power is treated as “family member” (Çemrek 2002:202) on the basis of the idea that both employers and laborers are ‘religious brothers’ (*din kardeşi*): “Bosses, managers and workers pray together”. This idea of being family members expressed by the saying, “I see myself as one of you and you as one of us” suggests that Islam demands harmony and peace. This discourse of peace and harmony intersects with the Kemalist populist “discourse on commonality of interests and their harmony opposed to class conflict” (Çemrek 2002:204). Those elements of Kemalism as the political and social culture of Turkey are in fact internalized by TÜSİAD and they tried “to legitimize their wealth on the basis of their contributions to the economic development of the country” (Buğra 1998:533). In a similar fashion with TÜSİAD, MÜSİAD restates the populist dictum of Kemalism, which claims that Turkish society constitutes a homogeneous entity without class or privilege. All of these indicate that MÜSİAD like its counterpart TÜSİAD, uses the rhetoric of peace and harmony as symbolic capital to represent its activities as disinterested pursuits. But, while TÜSİAD uses only the rhetoric of peace and harmony by

important one is about MÜSİAD members’ opposition to the organization of trade unions in their workplaces. Salim Uslu, the president of Hak-İş, indicates that MÜSİAD members do not permit organization of trade unions in their establishments (Buğra 2002).

reference to nationalism as a legitimizing tool, MÜSİAD uses both Islam and nationalism. That rhetoric of harmony and peace is utilized to silence labor power and exclude labor unions and possible strikes.

As indicated in the *MÜSİAD Booklet*, one of the goals of the organization is to create an economic and commercial environment, “where labor is not exploited” (N.d.:3). But, for MÜSİAD what brings the non-exploitation of labor power? The above statements of MÜSİAD members and the expressions in the *MÜSİAD Booklet* indicate that Islamic business ethics and “national and moral values” operating in a regulative manner are treated as sufficient for “just and fair income” (*MÜSİAD Booklet* N.d.:3) distribution and payment (Buğra 1997; Çemrek 2002). As Murat Çemrek argues, “MÜSİAD interprets Islamic business-labor relations through mutual trust between the employer-affectionate and just to his employees and the worker – respectful and hardworking – needless of a formal labor code and especially, labor unions” (2002:213). In other words, formal labor relations, institutionalized mechanisms such as labor unions and the legally guaranteed rights of workers are replaced by “mutual trust, affection and respect” (Çemrek 2002:202). Thus, although they utilize an anti-exploitation rhetoric since they talk about an economic and commercial environment, “where labor is not exploited” (*MÜSİAD Booklet* N.d.:3), Islamic business ethics is put in the service of class interests. To conclude, Islam is used by MÜSİAD not only as a spirit to motivate its members to develop their activities and to bind its members but also as symbolic capital to legitimize their activities and class interests in the name of harmony and peace. For MÜSİAD, Islam and nationalism functions as symbolic capital to transform self-interest economic activity into a disinterested pursuit.

3.3 MÜSİAD and the Vision of Alternative Modernity

As evaluated in the previous chapter, MÜSİAD has developed a functional/instrumental understanding of Islam as a common cultural and religious bond

among its members (social capital) and as a legitimizing tool for its capital accumulation (symbolic capital). Although such an evaluation is necessary and explanatory, it is not sufficient to understand the role of Islam and the Islamic movements. Such an evaluation not only denies Islam any authentic power to offer alternative societal visions, but also fails to account for the dynamic interplay between Islam and modernity. Thus, it does not allow us to see how the Islamic movements, “select and reinterpret the religion canon throughout their confrontation with” (Göle 2006:80) modernity. In this part, I argue that besides functioning as social and symbolic capital, Islam functions as a key element (as raw material) in MÜSİAD’s vision of society and modernity.

At this point, it is useful to recall what alternative modernities means and to classify the approaches to modernity. Clifford Geertz argues that “Modern is what some of us think we are, others of us wish desperately to be, yet others despair of being, or regret, or oppose, or fear, or, now, desire somehow to transcend. It is our universal adjective” (1995:136) and project. But, what are the possible attitudes towards this universal project and *essentially contested concept*?⁴⁶ Frederick Cooper (2005) suggests that there are four perspectives on modernity in the academic literature:

1) While modernity was originally a Western phenomenon, modernity for non-Western societies is both possible/attainable and desirable. It adopts a Eurocentric and a monadic/restrictivist view of modernity as a something that spreads from the Europe to the rest of the world. And it implies *a relation of possibility* between Westernization and non-Western societies.

⁴⁶ As a concept, modernity is an *essentially contested concept* since it is an achievement valued by most (Gallie 1956). William Connolly defines essentially contested concept as follows:

When the concept involved is *appraisive* in that the state of affairs it describes is a valued achievement, when the practice described is internally complex in that its characterization involves reference to several dimensions, and when the agreed and contested rules of application are relatively open, enabling parties to interpret even those shared rules differently as new and unforeseen situations arise, then the concept in question is an ‘essentially contested concept’. (1993:10)

2) While modernity was originally a Western phenomenon, modernity for non-Western societies is perhaps possible/attainable but not desirable since it is an imposition of West, which eradicates the rich diversity of human experience. Since it equates modernization with westernization, it is a monadic/restrictivist definition of modernity. It suggests that even if there is *a relation of possibility* between Westernization and non-Western societies, westernization is not something positive and desirable.

3) Modernity is originally a Western phenomenon, which means that this position also holds a monadic/restrictivist definition of modernity, and it claims that even if it is desirable for non-Western societies to attain modernity, it is not possible. Thus, this view claims that modernity is not an attainable project for the non-Western societies. Thus, it implies *a relation of impossibility* between Westernization and non-Western societies.

4) “Modernity is plural. We have ‘multiple modernities’ and ‘alternative modernities’” (Cooper 2005:114). As Cooper points out, while the “first three usages of modernity are centered on Europe, whether in a positive [*the first one, note added*] or negative sense [*the second one, note added*]”, the “fourth version is more pluralistic” since it implies that “non-Western peoples develop cultural forms that are not mere repetitions of tradition but bring their own perspectives to progress” (2005:114). Thus, it implies *a relation of possibility* in terms of modernization but not in terms of westernization.⁴⁷ And it holds a non-Eurocentric and pluralist conception of modernity.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ For a schematic representation of Cooper’s tetradic classification with theoretical and political representatives see: Appendices, Table 6.

⁴⁸ In a similar fashion, Huntington distinguishes three possible responses by the non-Western world to modernity: “Non-Western societies may reject both modernization and Westernization [*Cooper’s 2, note added*], embrace both [*Cooper’s 1, note added*], or embrace the first and reject the second [*Cooper’s 4, note added*]” (Árnason 2003:12). As Árnason (2003) puts it, the last one (Cooper’s 4) “allows for varying combinations of innovation and preservation” (2003:12), which could be named as alternative modernity. Huntington describes the ‘reformist response’ (Cooper’s 4) or alternative modernity approach as “an attempt to combine modernization with the preservation of the central values, practices and institutions of the society’s indigenous culture” (1996:74).

As a civil society organization, oriented to the society and marketplace, MÜSİAD favors an alternative vision of modernity.⁴⁹ Ziya Öniş and Umut Türem (2002) points out that while TÜSİAD holds a positive and “*fundamentally secular (emphasis added)*” view of globalization and modernity, MÜSİAD also has a positive view of economic globalization and modernity, but they claim that MÜSİAD’s positive view is “qualified by the possibility of multiple paths and a synthesis of tradition and modernity” (2002:107). Thus, by reference to the tetradic classification above, it can be claimed that while TÜSİAD holds a Western conception of modernity (Cooper’s 1), which equates modernization with westernization as convergence theories of modernization and globalization does, MÜSİAD represents a vision of alternative modernities (Cooper’s 4) since they don’t equate modernization with westernization. On the contrary to some fundamentalist movements, which holds that modernization by being equal to westernization is something undesirable whether is attainable or not (Cooper’s 2), MÜSİAD holds that modernization, which is not equal to westernization, is something desirable and possible.

MÜSİAD’s motto of ‘High Morality, High Technology’ indicates that MÜSİAD develops an Islamic understanding/reading of modernization with a vision accepting that science and technology of West could be imported without their values and morality.⁵⁰ In fact, as it was indicated in the previous chapter, the idea of preserving Islam as a moral system appears in the publications of MÜSİAD. Thus, they favor a selective modernization, which does not equate modernization with total westernization. They select from Western practices

⁴⁹ Another ideological pillar of MÜSİAD is the East Asian model of development. As Öniş and Türem point out, “MÜSİAD, in a direct reflection of the Islamist leanings, identified the East Asian model of development with its group oriented and conservative-communitarian values as a possible model for Turkey to emulate as opposed to the individualistic styles of development associated with the West” (2002:448-449). This reference is due to the model’s conformity to the flexible production, which permits MÜSİAD to emphasize communitarian and Islamic moral values (Buğra 1997:50). Thus, MÜSİAD’s reference to East Asian model is highly colored by Islam as an ideological pillar.

⁵⁰ In a similar fashion, Partha Chatterjee points out that there is a distinction between cultural/spiritual domain and material/technological domain in the discourse of anti-colonial nationalism. Chatterjee shows that in the discourse of nationalism, “The greater one’s success in imitating Western skills in the material domain, [...] the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of one’s spiritual culture” (1995:7).

and Islamic practices to create an intrinsically Muslim, non-Western modernity. Actually, this approach to modernization is observable in the Islamic circles in Turkey since the beginning of Turkish modernization, which Ergün Yıldırım names as “Islamist modernization” and evaluates as an alternative modernities approach (Yıldırım 2005).⁵¹ But, what is the role of Islam in the discourse of MÜSİAD? And how do they transform the institutions and conceptions of modernity to suggest a new vision of modernity, constructed in interaction with Islam?

As indicated in the previous chapter, Islam as a business code for MÜSİAD operates “in regulative manner through norms, values, and routines” (Swedberg 2003:42) and governs the decisions and actions of MÜSİAD members. But, does Islam also have a constitutive role for MÜSİAD? In the book named, *A New Perspective of the World at the Threshold of the 21st Century*, which can be considered as the manifesto of MÜSİAD, Erol Yarar, the ex-chairman of MÜSİAD, criticizes the philosophical background of Western model and offers a new model of businessman:

So-called rationalist, Cartesian philosophy [that] has drawn individual and social life into chaos by rejecting the value and existence of what cannot be measured or calculated. This overturning of religious value, and their replacement by a secular ‘morality’, transformed **homo sapiens** into **homo brutalis** [...] It is therefore not possible for us to welcome the so-called **homo economicus**, who, in the capitalist system, has transformed endless accumulation of capital into the sole goal of individual life. (1996:50-51)

The above passages criticizes the devious materialism of Western capitalism in which human being is degraded to an alienated and amoral being (*homo brutalis*). The alternative to *homo economicus* or *homo brutalis* is a new Islamic actor: *homo Islamicus* (Şencan 1994). MÜSİAD sets out *homo Islamicus* as an alternative economic actor, which indicates that religion, for MÜSİAD, operates in constitutive manner through the “categories, scripts, and

⁵¹ For a critique of such an Islamist modernization by Islamist intellectuals see: Nurettin Topçu (1998) and İsmet Özel (1992). Both Özel and Topçu claim that every civilization creates its own technology and they refuse to borrow western technology as well as Western values. Their attitude towards modernization fits to the second position in Cooper’s tetradic classification.

conceptions of agency” (Swedberg 2003:42) as well as in regulative manner. In other words, they aim to create a new economic actor out of Islam, which operates as a shared cognition or as a background understanding.

While *Homo Islamicus* as an alternative conception of economic actor is set against the atomized, asocial, self-interest maximizing *homo economicus*, this new conception of economic actor is also their ticket to challenge the secular Turkish state elite and the secular capitalist class that they name as monopolists, rentiers and usurers (namely, TÜSİAD). Thus, besides being a conception of an alternative economic actor, *homo Islamicus* also functions as social capital to bind its members and as symbolic capital to legitimize themselves as more moral economic actors in contrast to the secular capitalist class. Thus, it is set against the secular elites as an alternative and a more moral economic actor, which MÜSİAD claim to represent. As Özbudun and Keyman points out,

MÜSİAD presents itself as an alternative to nonviable capitalist development and centers its activities on Homo islamicus, which is the proper ethical basis for economic development, rather than homo economicus, which has given rise to a self-centered individualistic morality. (2002:308)

Or in other words, MÜSİAD “sets out to present a ‘homo islamicus’ centered socioeconomic order as an alternative to the ‘homo brutalis’ centered one” (Buğra 1999:26). It can be argued that MÜSİAD criticizes the existing market economy and its actor *homo economicus* as being disembedded from the religion and culture, and as being totally embedded in the institution of the marketplace. They support a new market economy and a new actor, which are embedded in a nonmarket institution, religion (Islam). MÜSİAD supports the view that economic activities must not only take place “within the framework and values of formal rational economic” (Wilk and Cligget 2007:7) that seeks to maximize individual self-interest. Rather, in Polanyi’s terms, economic activities must be embedded in a non-market institution, the religion or to be more concrete, in the framework and values of Islam rather than being fully

embedded in the institution of the marketplace.⁵² In other words, it demands that the agents should “act under the guidance of norms drawn from the traditional sources of Islam.” And “The intended effect of the norms is to transform selfish and acquisitive *homo economicus* into a paragon of virtue, *homo Islamicus*.” Thus, the major objective is “to inculcate Muslims with behavioral norms drawn from the classical sources of Islam” (Kuran 2004:42).

The above passages do not suggest that MÜSİAD condemn capitalism *per se*. Instead, they attempt at reconciling capitalism, modernization and Islam by constructing a new businessman. MÜSİAD repeatedly emphasizes the compatibility of Islam with entrepreneurial activity. After discussing the reasons of the economic backwardness of the Muslim world, Erol Yazar points out that “The mystical motto, ‘bir lokma bir hırka’ (one mouthful food, one short coat) was misconceived and opened the way to sluggishness. As a result, motivation towards the world was lost completely” (1996:10). At this point, it is important to note that besides *homo economicus*, MÜSİAD also opposes “the *esnaf* or ‘traditional businessman’” (Adas 2006:126). Emin Baki Adas names this traditional businessman that MÜSİAD opposes as *homo traditionalus* who “is moral and virtuous, but lacks the entrepreneurial spirit that is inherent in true Islam” (Adas 2006:126). Thus, “Homo-economicus is the polar opposite of *esnaf* or *homo traditionalus*” (Adas 2006:127). But, since *homo traditionalus* lacks entrepreneurial spirit, he cannot “accumulate large amounts of capital” (*MÜSİAD Bulletin* 1995b:3). And MÜSİAD not only opposes to *homo economicus* but also to *homo traditionalus*.

MÜSİAD offers “a new actor who is [...] neither *Homo Economicus* nor *Homo Traditionalus* but *Homo Islamicus*” (Adas 2006:116). *Homo Islamicus* is not a replica of *homo economicus* and *homo traditionalus* but a synthesis of both. Thus, *homo Islamicus* is

⁵² If we accept the idea of Polanyi that one of the most fundamental features of capitalism is the disembedding of the economy, MÜSİAD challenges this process although this does not indicate that they are against capitalist. But, it indicates that the question of alternative modernities is a complex issue since the matter of convergence and divergence on what and which forms/institutions of modernity becomes complicated.

selectively constructed out of *homo economicus* and *homo traditionalus*. There is a web of divergences and convergences. *Homo Islamicus* both diverges and converges with *homo economicus* and *homo traditionalus*. Since *homo Islamicus* borrows some aspects of *homo economicus* (namely, the entrepreneurial spirit), it converges with modernity and since it borrows some elements from *homo traditionalus* (namely, morality) it diverges from Western modernity.

MÜSİAD constitutes a counter-example to Lerner's suggestion that the Muslim had to choose between "Mecca (*homo traditionalus*) or Mechanization (*homo economicus*)". *Homo Islamicus* is neither totally *homo traditionalus* of Mecca nor totally *homo economicus* of Mechanization, but selectively constructed out of the both models. MÜSİAD "attempts to establish and disseminate a communitarian modern self [*a new businessman, homo Islamicus, note added*] who is economically driven and rationally acting [*just as the homo economicus, note added*], but at the same time morally loaded and ethically just [*just as the homo traditionalus, note added*] thereby successfully articulating the global with the traditional" (Keyman and Koyuncu 2005:120).⁵³ This is an attempt to reconcile *homo economicus* of modernity or Mechanization with *homo traditionalus* of Mecca. In other words, this is an attempt at reconciling capitalism, modernization and Islam and that reconciliation has oriented MÜSİAD in the construction of a new businessman. This new businessman is a indigenous entrepreneur keeping his religious values while adapting to modern and global ones.

Erol Yarar also talks about the Prophet Muhammad's Medina market both as a model and as an evidence for the existence of market economy in Islam. Thus, MÜSİAD supports a market model of economy with reference to the rules set by the Prophet Mohammed on the functioning of the Medina market.

⁵³ In a similar fashion, conservative and communitarian Amitai Etzioni in his book, *The Moral Dimension: Toward a New Economics* (1998) argues for a "humanist economics" or "socioeconomics" and for a "kinder, gentler" capitalism.

[The Prophet] established three principles for the Market in Medina: (1) trade among believers should be promoted and commercial activities should not be taxed in advance; (2) the market should be free, no one should have a privileged position; (3) price formation should take place without any intervention. (“Fair-Forum Multi-Vision Script” *MÜSİAD Bülten* 1997:16)

Yarar also points out that “Since the establishment of MÜSİAD, our aim is to establish the Medina market according to the teachings of our Prophet Muhammad via the interrelation of *emir* (leader), *alim* (scholar), and *tacir* (businessman) with the motto of ‘high morality, high technology’” (Ergin 1997:3-4; Özcan 1997a). In a similar fashion, Mustafa Özel, one of the ideologues of MÜSİAD, defines Medina market as “a competitive system with minimum state intervention” (Buğra 1998:531) and he refers it as a model to be followed (Özel 1994; Özcan 1997b).

Hilmi Yavuz (1996) claims that analogy is the dominant reasoning of Turkish intellectual thought for appropriating modernity and Western civilization. Accordingly, to appropriate and transfer Western/modern institutions, Turkish intellectuals resort to the analogical reasoning. For instance, to adopt democracy, they claim that there is a similar model of rule in Islam under the institution of *meşveret* (consultation).⁵⁴ Thus, they try to appropriate and transfer a Western/modern institution on the basis of its resemblances with an Islamic institution, which recalls Hobsbawn’s invention of traditions. Actually, this analogical reasoning leads to the re-interpretation and in turn, the re-creation and re-invention of traditions and religion in interaction with modern institutions and concepts. In a similar fashion, MÜSİAD employs an analogical reasoning by appropriating market model of West/modernity on the basis of its resemblances with the economic model in Medina. And this leads to the re-creation of the Medina society as a model in interaction with the market model (modernity). As Adas points out,

⁵⁴ For instance, two prominent Ottoman intellectuals “Ali Suavi and Namik Kemal, strove to show that constitution and democracy, the election of a government, and the division of powers were originally Islamic concepts” (Seufert 2007) on the basis of *meşveret* (consultation) institution in Islam.

such revisiting of the Islamic past, particularly to Medina society, is not peculiar to Islamic entrepreneurs [...] For instance, in the 1970s, Ali Shari'ati [...], the well-known Iranian radical Islamist intellectual, saw in Medina a socially undifferentiated and classless society [...] In the 1990s, inspired by contemporary debate on multiculturalism, Ali Bulaç [...], a Turkish Islamic sociologist, found in Medina a form of multiculturalism [...] (2006:132-133)

Inspired by market economy of West/modernity, MÜSİAD recovers and reconstructs Islamic free market economy from Medina, which is a functionally equivalent of modern market model. And that constitutes the re-interpretation and re-creation of religion and tradition or to be more concrete Median society in the light of religion, tradition, *present concerns* (as Gadamer puts) and modernity. This act of re-interpretation also indicates that MÜSİAD's conception of *homo Islamicus* is not a fixed and ahistorical one as the essentialist approach offers. It is an outcome of interpenetration and interaction with modernity. It is a reconstruction of the market model (modernity) in the prism of religion and religion in the prism of market model (modernity).

While MÜSİAD converges with the core of modernity in terms of institutional arrangements by offering a *functionally equivalent* model of market economy, namely Islamic market economy, it diverges in terms of its background unformulated understandings – the deep evaluations of a culture about the conception of “social belonging [...], time, [...] God, the good, or the cosmos” (2001:187). MÜSİAD redefines and reconstructs the market model in its own terms, namely in terms of an *Islamic background understanding* rather than a Western understanding of *homo economicus*. Thus, they engage in the creation of a market oriented understanding and market-industrial economy within a different background understanding and within a different cultural context.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I argued that neither convergence theories of modernization and globalization nor divergence theories such as Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' thesis is useful to understand the relationship between Islam and modernity. These approaches are based on a closed definition of modernity, which equates modernity with the West or/and with some *a priori* conceptual frameworks and they are one-dimensional, either too much focused on divergences or convergences. Thus, such closed frameworks are not useful to understand the complex nature of modernity and Islam. The alternative modernities approach goes against closed, fixed and one-dimensional frameworks since it invites us to revisit and perceive the conception of modernity in terms of the concrete experiences of different societies and groups, and draws our attention to both convergences and divergences between different societies and groups.

In this thesis, I revisited our conception of modernity in the case of MÜSİAD. The complex relation between modernity and Islam in the prism of MÜSİAD was discussed and evaluated. I argued that rather than just adopting and copying the market-oriented model of the West, and modernity, MÜSİAD tries to combine market model and modernity with Islam and traditional values. They remodel and remold market-industrial economy in the context and prism of Islam. They try "to base economic and social development on their own cultural roots" (Schrader 1998) since they make references to Islamic precepts (such as *halal* earning) and models (such as Medina market model and *homo Islamicus*) to justify and establish an Islamic market model.

It could be claimed that since the institutions (market-industrial economy) converge, more or less entrepreneurial mentality (or in other words, the conception of economic actor) converges. Accordingly, adopting a market-oriented understanding leads to the adaptation of *homo economicus* view. But, it is important to note that this entrepreneurial mentality will not

only converge but also will diverge: “But it is clear that the entrepreneurial culture of Japan, Chinese societies, and the Indian merchant castes and groups differ from each other and from those of the West” (Taylor 2001:184). Then, it will not be the same entrepreneurial mentality that these different cultures will produce. Following the lines of Taylor, we can claim that since there are the creative adaptations of these modern institutions by different agents with different *background understandings*, in a similar fashion, MÜSIAD with an Islamic background understanding offers an Islamic understanding of *homo economicus* or entrepreneurial mentality (*homo Islamicus*) rather than a Western understanding of *homo economicus*, which they reject as *homo brutalis*. Rather than converge on some sort of duplicate of Western modernity or a Western model of modern businessmen, they aim to produce a new understanding of market model that neither reject modernity nor unquestioningly appropriate the Western model that accompanied it.

But, there are still some points that are in the need of evaluation. Does convergence on some institutions and formal aspects of modernity really constitute a qualitative change to name some converging yet diverging societies or groups as examples of alternative modernities? Which qualitative differences emerging from divergences make them *alternatives*? Or is there a one global modernity, namely the modernity of global capitalism to which all societies and groups are converging to with some superficial differences? To what extent does convergence on the formal aspects of market-industrial economy make a society or a group modern? For instance, as Oliver Roy points out, “The Taliban let the free market work and interfered hardly at all with the economy except by collecting *zakat*” (2004:98).⁵⁵ Can we consider Taliban as modern? Alexander Des Forges claims that Charles Taylor’s alternative modernities approach cannot go beyond “the frame of the ‘international market economy’” although “this ‘international market economy’ itself is radically contingent”

⁵⁵ *Zakat* is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is the distribution of one fortieth of one’s income as alms.

(2002:672). We can name this as the capitalism bias of alternative modernities approach. Further studies can address and discuss these theoretical issues to re-evaluate MÜSIAD by reference to the approach of alternative modernities.

APPENDICES

Table 4: Sectoral Distribution of MÜSİAD Members⁵⁶

<u>Sectors</u>	<u>The Number of Members</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Construction and Building Materials	800	% 19.73
Services	577	% 14.23
Textile and Leather	458	% 11.30
Machinery and Automotive	444	% 10.95
Food	438	% 10.80
Chemistry – Metal and Mining	421	% 10.38
Durable Consumer Goods and Furniture	359	% 8.85
Impression, Publication, Packing and Advertisement	206	% 5.08
Information Technologies	145	% 3.57
Health	112	% 2.76
Energy	102	% 2.51

⁵⁶ Calculated by the author of this thesis from MÜSİAD's member database. Retrieved May 20, 2008. <http://www.musiad.org.tr/english/memberDataBase>

Table 5: MÜSİAD Members According to Cities⁵⁷

Cities	Number of Members	Percentages
Istanbul	1012	% 30.12
Ankara	298	% 8.87
Konya	269	% 8.00
Bursa	208	% 6.19
Kayseri	145	% 4.31
Antalya	114	% 3.39
Kocaeli	111	% 3.30
Sakarya	94	% 2.79
Adana	93	% 2.76
Denizli	90	% 2.67
Gaziantep	79	% 2.35
Trabzon	72	% 2.14
İzmir, Balıkesir	70	% 2.08
Malatya	66	% 1.96
Rize	64	% 1.90
Erzurum	63	% 1.87
Elazığ	54	% 1.60
Kahramanmaraş	53	% 1.57
Samsun	51	% 1.51
Zonguldak	46	% 1.36
Mersin	45	% 1.33
Şanlıurfa	42	% 1.25
Diyarbakır	37	% 1.10
Eskişehir	35	% 1.04
Hatay	26	% 0.77
Çankırı	8	% 0.23
Bolu	6	% 0.17
Aydın	5	% 0.14
Tekirdağ	4	% 0.11
Bartın, Düzce, Manisa, Mardin	3	% 0.08
Batman, Burdur, Erzincan	2	% 0.05
Afyon, Aksaray, Çanakkale, Çorum, Giresun, Karabük, Karaman, Kırıkkale, Kütahya, Muğla, Sinop, Tokat, Tunceli	1	% 0.02

⁵⁷ Calculated by the author of this thesis from MÜSİAD's member database. Retrieved May 20, 2008.
<http://www.musiad.org.tr/english/memberDataBase>

Table 6: Evaluation and Classification of Different Theories about Modernization

Positions	1	2	3	4
Origins of Modernity	West	West	West	It could be many
Culturally Neutral	Yes	No	No	No
The relation between modernity and non-west	A relation of possibility	A relation of impossibility or a relation of possibility	A relation of impossibility	A relation of possibility
Is modernity desirable for non-Western societies?	Yes	No	Not possible	Yes
Is modernity singular or many?	Singular	Singular	Singular	Many
Definition of modernity	Eurocentric, monadic and restrictivist	Eurocentric, monadic and restrictivist	Eurocentric, monadic and restrictivist	Not Eurocentric and pluralist
Theoretical Representatives	Modernization school: T. Parsons, W. W. Rostow (convergence theories)	Extreme cultural-relativists	Samuel Huntington of <i>The Clash of Civilizations</i> (divergence theory)	C. Taylor, S. N. Eisenstadt, N. Göle, İ. Kaya
Possible political representatives	Kemalist modernization, TÜSIAD	Radical Islamic intellectuals such as Sayyid Qutb	Radical and fundamentalist	Islamist modernists such as MÜSIAD, who favor a selective modernization

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