

The work ethic of medieval Muslim Ahi brotherhood and its comparison with Catholic and Puritan work ethics

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ABSTRACT

This paper compares and analyses the Catholic Social Teaching, Puritan work ethic and Islamic ethic of medieval Muslim Ahi Brotherhood of Anatolia in terms of business ethics. A high level of similarity can be found between Catholic social teaching (CST) and a branch of the Islamic work ethic of Ahi movement. Islamic Ahi work ethic has also significant similarities with the historical Protestant work ethic. This similarity reveals the opportunity to cooperate and to foster a more humanitarian workplace, particularly in multi-cultural organizations both for Christians and Muslims. We can argue that many ethical problems arise in organizations as a result of a violation of ethical values and virtues. Corruption, sexual harassment, mobbing, nepotism, are direct results of the lack of such virtues. Therefore, it is possible to merge Catholic, Protestant and Islamic values to create a more humane workplace.

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Introduction

This paper aims to compare and analyze the ideals of Catholic Social Teaching and medieval Ahi Brotherhood of Anatolia in terms of business ethics. We argue that Catholic social teaching and a branch of the Islamic work ethic of Ahi movement share similar values. This similarity reveals the opportunity to cooperate and to foster a more humanitarian workplace, particularly in multi-cultural organizations both for Catholics and Muslims.

Work ethic is a part of business ethics. After Weber's well-known Protestant work ethic thesis Catholicism was seen as an opponent of the work ethic by many social researchers (Kenny, 1997). However, a field study revealed that there is a convergence between contemporary Catholic and Protestant theologians in terms of work ethic (Arslan, 2001).

Although some medieval monastic orders such as the Benedictines emphasized the importance of work in religious life, this work-oriented attitude remained in the monastic life until recent times. It should be remembered that Benedictine contribution to the industrial development in England was a crucial stage. The wool industry was the first developed by the great Benedictine monastic estates in England, especially in Yorkshire. The Benedictines united work and prayer and saw manual labor as a disciplined way of serving God. Idleness was condemned as a way of going astray. St. Benedict saw work as a religious duty.

Pope John Paul II (1991) always stressed the changing temporal dimension of Catholic social thought. He opened Centesimus Annus by discussing the changes in the world since Rerum Novarum (1891); and took account of the period of the 1930s, the world of 1945, the high-water mark of the welfare state 1965, and the fall of communism in 1989. The world of lay women and men is characterized by temporality. The layperson works in a world of uncertainty, and darkness, and the necessity of making decisions today – without the full light of knowing about later consequences (Novak, 2011). Sedgwick (1997) noted that work-oriented monastic life was the celebration of work and the first emergence of the Christian work ethic.

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The Ahi religious order was established and developed by Anatolian Turks in the 13th century. "Ahi" is an Arabic word and means brother. However, in Turkish, the word "Ahi" only refers to a medieval brotherhood and its members. An Ahi is a person who is a member of Ahi brotherhood. The term of "Ahilik" means "Ahi organization or Ahi Movement." The Ahi institution was a kind of guild organization which organized and controlled all commercial, cultural and educational activities in Turkish society (Aydın, 1996). However, the Ahi organization was not only an economic organization but also a religious Sufi order that follows the ancient Futuwwat Order's principles as its moral basis.

In addition to economic and religious aspects, the Ahi organizations also had some military functions, especially during invasion periods. Military branches of Ahi organizations were composed of male and female military units. Male military units of Ahi organizations were called "Gaziyan-i-Rum" which can be translated as Roman Knights. Female military units were called "Bajiyani-Rum" which can be translated as Roman Sisters (Özaydın, 2004). In the Seljuk Empire, Turkish people of Anatolia mostly used the term Roman (Rum), instead of Turk for their ethnic identity (Kitsikis, 1996). Roman means a person who lives in the land of the Roman Empire.

In sum, the Ahi institution was an economic, religious and military organization which shaped Turkish business life and work ethic in the medieval times (Aydın, 1993). The Ahi institution contributed to the Turkish settlement of Anatolia and development of Turkish moral values. During the 13th century, Ahi organizations played an important role in attracting Turkish immigration to Anatolia. The Ahi convents (zaviye) provided accommodation for newly arrived immigrants and also work opportunities for the skilled ones. Ahi order has its own code of conducts. Such ethical principles shaped Turkish commercial culture in the region, and its ethical effects can be traced in modern Turkish small business.

Ahi spirit and principles of the Ahi movement has many common roots with modern business ethics. Ahi spirit strongly encourages the work ethic. Ahi people did not believe in personal salvation in an isolated other-worldly asceticism. Like Protestant Puritans, they believed that work and profession were sacred activities to please God. When Max Weber wrote his famous "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" he argued that only Protestant and particularly Calvinists societies could develop the spirit of capitalism or work ethic (Weber, 1985). He only analyzed other-worldly Islamic Sufism of the 19th century. We believe that if he had the opportunity to analyze the Ahi movement, it is very likely that he would have had different views about Islamic work ethic. It should be noted that Ahi people were Sufis and therefore they cannot be seen as Islamic puritans. They had special religious ceremonies which include music, dance and reciting God's names. They merged pray and work together, so it is the same practice of Benedictine monasteries' motto "Ora et labora."

We can also see a considerable similarity between the altruist nature of Ahi movement and the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) of modern business ethics. According to CSR approach business firms should have an obligation to society that extends beyond its narrow obligations to its owners or shareholders. CSR encourages business companies to avoid negative impacts on society and to improve welfare. The idea of social responsibility supposes that the corporation has not only economic and legal obligations, but also certain responsibilities to society which extend beyond these obligations (Carrol and Shabana, 2010). We can argue that both Ahi tradition and CST share similar values with modern CSR approach.

Basic principles of contemporary Catholic social teaching (CST)

After Weber's well known Protestant ethic thesis, Catholic ethic was seen as an opponent of the work ethic by many social researchers (Kenny, 1997). However, some empirical field research revealed that there is a convergence between contemporary Catholic and Protestant theologians in terms of work ethic (Arslan, 2001). Of course, modern Catholic ethic differs from traditional Protestant work ethic. Modern Catholic social teaching is based on a tradition of papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents. Seven principles of CST are commonly accepted as in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' website: (<http://www.usccb.org/about/>) Catholic social teaching (CST) represents the modern Catholic approach to work.

Seven mostly accepted CST principles are explained as follows:

Life and Dignity of the Human Person:

Catholics believe that human person, made in the image of God, and so having fundamental freedom and dignity, the basis for human rights. The Catholic Church announces that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the basis of an ethical vision for society. Acknowledging this image in our neighbor, CST rejects any policy or system that reduces people to economic units or passive dependence. *Pacem in Terris*, (John XXIII, 1963) and *Laborem Exercens* (John Paul II, 1981) are the main papal resources in this issue. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of CST.

The Catholic Church opposes abortion and euthanasia. According to Catholic ethics, the value of human life is being threatened by cloning, embryonic stem cell research, and the use of the death penalty. The intentional targeting of civilians in war or terrorist attacks is always seen as an evil act. Catholic teaching also calls on nations to work to avoid war. Nations must protect the right to life by finding increasingly effective ways to prevent conflicts and resolve them by peaceful means. Catholics believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

Call to Family, Community, and Participation:

The Catholic Church teaches that human beings are not only sacred, but they are also social. Economic, political and legal organization of society directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. Marriage and the family are the central social institutions that must be protected, not undermined. Catholics believe that people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. Individuals are part of society. Every individual must share in promoting the welfare of the community and a right to benefit from that welfare. This process applies at every level: local, national and international. The public authorities must promote the common good and ensure that no section of the population is excluded. These principles can be seen in the papal document, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987) and *Laudato Si* (2015).

Catholicism does not have individualistic inclinations in its ethic, theology, and practice. There is nothing in the Catholic ethic in favor of the good of the individual versus the good of the group. The Catholic Church is against political individualism and collectivism while she defends communitarian solidarity among her believers. There is no religious individualism in Catholicism because the Catholic Church is the mediator of redemption. Catholicism is usually seen as a communitarian belief in terms of organic unity. In 1986, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in the second of the Instructions stated:

"Linked to human dignity are the principle of solidarity and principle of subsidiarity. By virtue of the first, a man with his brothers is obliged to contribute to the common good of society at all its levels. Hence the Church's doctrine is opposed to all forms of social or political individualism. By the second, neither the State nor any society must ever substitute itself for the initiative and responsibility of individuals and intermediate communities at the level on which they can function, nor must they take away the room necessary for their freedom. Hence the Church's social doctrine is opposed to all forms of collectivism (McOustra, 1990)."

A Catholic moral theologian, C. Henry Peschke (1979), similarly advocates Christian personalism against individualism. He put forward the idea that Christian personalism keeps the center between individualism and collectivism by integrating their justified concerns while at the same time avoiding their pitfalls.

"Christian personalism does not culminate in the cult of one's personality, but rather in the relation between God all-holy and the soul called to salvation. Religion as a community with God places man not only in the right relation to God but also to his fellowmen and the human community. To be in Christ necessarily means to be bound up with all those who have fellowship in Christ, who are called by Christ. Hence, it belongs to the essence of religious living that it places man in the community with his neighbor. The expression 'God and Soul' therefore, must not be construed in an individualistic sense (Peschke, 1979)."

Like Peschke, Michael Novak (2011) prefers "person" to "individual" in his 'The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.' He notes that the Catholic tradition uses the word 'person' rather than 'individual.' He emphasizes the capacity for reflection and choice of human beings and their creativeness. According to Novak (2011), this distinctiveness of humanity requires a kind of individuality that goes all the way to the unique, the inexhaustible self-determination of the free woman and man. Novak (2011) argued that the Catholic ethic could create a capitalistic spirit based on creativity better than Max Weber's "Protestant ethic." However, creativity is a consequence of the independent self which can hardly be produced by an authoritarian and an organization which sees itself as an intermediary between God and humanity.

Like Protestantism, Catholicism recognizes the individual responsibility of believers. However, the Church's recognition of individual responsibility does not mean individualism. The social doctrine of the Catholic Church openly disapproves of individualism.

The encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIII, written in 1891, 'On the Condition of the Working Classes,' also known as 'Rerum Novarum,' is usually accepted as the first document of the Catholic social teaching. The wild capitalism of the nineteenth century was condemned in the letter, but private ownership was recognized. The Pope stressed that private property was not evil in itself, but the selfish use of it was.

In 1931, Pope Pius XI, in his letter; 'The Social Order' or 'Quadragesimo Anno' defined private ownership as both individual and social: a human right for self and family, and a means and obligation for serving society. He condemned both individualism and materialism:

"Free competition, though within limits right and productive of good results, cannot be the guiding principle of economic life. Nor can dictatorship, domination, or excessive, economic or financial power, public or private; nor mere individualism, profit and wealth by all and any means, a lawless market, and survival of the strongest; collectivist brands of atheism or materialism whether communist or socialist (McOustra, 1990)."

Pope John XXIII, warned against individualistic morality, in 1965 in his letter: 'The Church in the Modern World' or 'Gaudium et Spes':

"No one today should be content to lounge in a merely individualistic morality. The best way to fulfill our obligations of justice and love is to contribute to the common good and to promote and help public and private organizations working for better conditions of life. Dishonest avoidance of just taxes; dangerous flouting of speed limits: faults like these are out of tune with the morality needed today. We should all count social obligations significant among present-day duties (McOustra, 1990).

Bishop John Jukes stressed the danger of competition:

"Competition can offer the opportunity for sin or service of others. Thus, competition must be subjected to the spirit of the Gospel and so transformed into an opportunity for service. It seems that there is no escaping the conviction that competition is an essential ingredient for the successful functioning of modern economic systems. At this level, there are many voices which raise doubts on such a principle. These doubts turn for evidence to the ecological problems which are currently confronting some countries and are said to threaten the world environment to the extent that the future of the human species is at risk (Jukes, 1993)."

In the apostolic letter of Pope John VI, 'Eighteenth Anniversary' or 'Octogesima Adveniens', in 1971 the Pope said:

"Without education in solidarity, overemphasized equality can give rise to individualism in which each of us claims our own rights without wishing to be answerable for the common good (McOustra, 1990)."

Pope John Paul II, in his letter of 1987 'Social Concern' or 'Sollicitudo Rei Socialis,' emphasized the importance of individual creativity, giving a good example of Catholic 'personalism':

"The right of economic initiative is important for the individual and the common good. Denial of this right or its limitation in the name of an alleged 'equality' of everyone in society diminishes or destroys creativity. It leads not so much to true equality as to leveling down, and to dependence on the bureaucracy, similar to the old dependence of the worker-proletarian in capitalism (McOustra, 1990)."

It should be noted that Pope John Paul II comes from Poland, an ex-communist country, and his words against communism were very influential among his fellow Polish people during their struggle against communism. Therefore, his backing of personal independence and creativity may show his political stance, rather than an inclination towards individualism.

We can also give another example for the Catholic response to individualism from a modern Catholic movement, 'Focolore.' The movement was set up by an Italian laywoman, Chiara Lubich, during the Second World War. One of the projects of the movement is 'the economy of communion based on sharing profits with the community.' Individuals, shareholders and business people who are sympathetic to the movement have wanted to respond to Chiara's invitation. They care for the economic needs of their brothers and sisters in the movement and have felt the importance of spreading the culture of giving. So, they have wanted freely to share their belongings and their earnings. The Focolare movement has its own business companies based on the 'economy of communion' and creates job training facilities for the unemployed. Although its influence on national economies is restricted by the number of its members and sympathizers, it applies a communitarian ethic to economics and tries to provide an alternative way of life to individualism.

Sheehy (1968) argued that the growth of Marxism in Ireland might be explained by the opposition of the Irish Catholic clergy to any individualism and the Catholic Church's toleration of socialist policies in Ireland. As he noted:

"The difficulty of the Irish Catholic Church is that it cannot condemn socialism effectively unless it advocates individualism. Its dilemma is that it refuses to accept either (Sheehy, 1968)."

Catholic social teaching condemns the ideology of individualism, but it encourages 'personal initiative and responsibility.'

Modern Catholic ethics tries to find a balance between individualism and collectivism, and for this reason, it uses the term 'personalism' instead of individualism (Novak, 2011). It also recognizes private ownership but condemns laissez-faire capitalism. Some social scientists, for instance, Turner (1994) pointed out that religious individualism was not possible in the Catholic faith. When religious individualism is defined as a direct relationship with the sacred without a mediator clergy, Catholicism does not fit that definition because of the role and the power of the Catholic priest. It is argued that the lack of religious individualism in Catholicism fed collectivist attitudes among its followers (Turner, 1994). It appears that modern Catholic theologians emphasize the importance of creativeness to compensate for the lack of religious individualism. The role of the Catholic believer as a co-worker of God is to help God to achieve divine plans through this-worldly activities. It seems that traditional time consciousness in monastic life also is becoming more important for lay people in modern Catholicism.

Rights and Responsibilities

The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to live and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities--to one another, to our families, and the larger society. This concept was highlighted in Mater et Magistra (John XXIII, 1961).

Catholics try to keep the balance between work and leisure time. The Catholic attitude towards time can be summarized in the Sabbath tradition. Catholics are expected not to work on Sundays and other holy days. For this reason, Catholics have sometimes been accused of celebrating too many holy days compared to Protestants (Landes, 1998). On the other hand, Catholic monastic life is seen as the first step in modern time-consciousness. Landes (1998) underlines the importance of time measurement in monastic life, stating that Western Christianity differs from other monotheistic religions in time measurement. In Judaism, the believer prays three times in a day, but at no fixed times: in the morning, afternoon and evening.

"It was in the West, in the rule of Saint Benedict, that the new order of the offices found its first complete and detailed realization: six (later seven) daytime services and one at night. Most of these were designated and set in terms of clock hours. Why was punctuality so important? One reason was that lateness- "God forbid!"- might make it necessary to abridge an office, in particular, matins: "Let great care be taken that this shall not happen." Another I think, was that simultaneity was thought to enhance the potency of prayer. This religious concern for punctuality may seem foolish to rationalists of the twentieth century, but it was no small matter to a monk of the Middle Ages (Landes, 1998)."

Modern Catholic ethic emphasizes the importance of hard work. For example, an influential Catholic movement, Opus Dei, pays particular attention to work ethic. This may be interpreted as a reaction to the work ethic thesis of Max Weber. However, there is nothing against work ethic in Catholicism. Both Catholicism and Protestantism share a common Judeo-Christian heritage which values work and labor (Neff, 1968).

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

In Catholicism, we can see conservative and radical attitudes towards wealth. The Opus Dei movement is known as right-wing and conservative while the Liberation theology was influenced by Marxist ideas. Catholics emphasize the importance of the 'common good.' Economic activity or wealth should be used in such a way that it must serve society. *Rerum Novarum* was the first papal encyclical which considered modern economic problems. It was issued by the Pope Leo XIII in 1891. He wrote:

"It is the right of every human being to have ownership of private property, for self and for the family every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own. Good, generous use of property, for the benefit of others as well as self, is crucial. The amount of it is not. In particular, we who have an abundance of blessings—whether material goods or gifts of the mind— must use them to perfect our nature and also help those who are poor or in need (McOustra, 1990)."

Catholicism acknowledges property rights. However, this right is not unlimited. One should care for his or her neighbor or society. Saving is also praised because it improves the employment level in society. For example, Pope Pius XI, in his 'Quadragesimo Anno' stated:

"Private ownership is both individual and social: a human right for self and family, and a means and obligation for serving society, for example by investing our savings to improve opportunity for productive work by others (McOustra, 1990)."

The limitations on wealth were explained very clearly by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical letter, 'Sollicitudo Rei Socialis' in 1987:

"The goods of this world are meant for all. The right to private property is valid and necessary but does not nullify that principle. Private property is under a social mortgage: it has an intrinsically social function (McOustra, 1990)."

It was stated in the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the USA (Stackhouse et al., 1995) that the Catholicism has acknowledged and defended the private ownership of productive property. The Bishops noted that the common good sometimes requires limitations on private property.

Catholics, like Protestants, condemn usury of an excessive rate of interest. The Catholic Encyclopedia (1996) writes that today the possession of money means a certain value. The Church permits the general practice of lending at interest. However, according to the Encyclopedia, one can still sin against justice by demanding an excessive rate of interest, or usury, as it is called.

In conclusion, although there are different views on wealth within the Catholic theology, Catholic ethic emphasizes the good of society, and acknowledges some limitations in the market system, or capitalism.

The most vulnerable members of society should be under the protection of wealthy believers. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, the Catholic tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. This issue can be seen various papal encyclicals such as *Octogesima Advenien* (Paul VI, 1971), *Populorum Progressio*, (Paul VI, 1967), *Gaudium et Spes* (Paul VI, 1965) and *Rerum Novarum* (Leo XIII, 1891).

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Gaining money should not be an end itself. The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected--the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to

private property, and economic initiative. *Rerum Novarum* (Leo XXIII, 1891) is the first Papal document addressing workers' rights and criticizing capitalism. It says: "In any case, we clearly see, and on this there is general agreement, that some opportune remedy must be found quickly for the misery and wretchedness pressing so unjustly on the majority of the working class: for the ancient workingmen's guilds were abolished in the last century, and no other protective organization took their place."

The Benedictines united work and prayer and saw manual work as a disciplined way of serving God. Idleness was condemned as a way of going astray. St. Benedict saw work as a religious duty. Rule XLVIII of the Benedictine order says:

"Idleness is the enemy of the soul and therefore, at fixed times, the brothers ought to be occupied in manual labor, and again at fixed times, in sacred reading (Neff, 1968)"

Sedgwick (1997) noted that work-oriented monastic life was the celebration of work and the first emergence of the Christian work ethic.

However, unlike Protestantism and Muslim Ahi Movement, until the twentieth-century daily work was not emphasized as a glorification of God in Catholicism. The Catholic social teaching which was developed through papal encyclicals and other theological sources paid attention to the importance of work. Like Muslims and Protestants, Catholics today see work as a service to God and society, accept human work as a co-operation with God, and believe in the necessity of rest. Herr (1991) stated in his 'Catholic Social Teaching' that human work was part of the value of humanity as the image of God.

"The world is not presented as something that is just there ready for everyone. On the contrary, human beings have the duty to collaborate in the world's development. Because of that, they become in a certain sense God's co-workers (Cooperator Dei). And that gives human labor, and everyone who works, extraordinary value (Herr, 1991)"

Modern Catholic attitudes towards work can be seen in Pope John Paul II's (1996) statements. In his 'Agenda for the New Millennium' he underlined the importance of work:

"Faithful to her Divine Founder, the Church has always respected and promoted the dignity of labor. Work is a fundamental dimension of human life on earth. ...Let work never be to the detriment of human beings! According to the Council (Lumen Gentium) work constitutes a road to holiness because it offers an opportunity for (a) Self-improvement: work develops the human personality by exercising its qualities and potentialities. (b) Helping our fellow-citizens: this is the social dimension of labor, which is a service for the good of all. We do not work exclusively for ourselves, but for others too. (c) Improving society at large and creation. Work then gains a historical-eschatological, we might say cosmic, dimension, in that its purpose is to contribute towards improving material conditions of life and the world, by helping humankind, by these means, to reach the higher goals to which God is calling us. (d) Imitating Christ in active charity."

The Protestant concept of 'co-creator' is shared in Catholicism in the concept of 'co-worker.' In the Papal encyclical 'Gaudium et Spes,' (1965) it was explained that human work was a continuation of God. In Muslim ethic and particularly in Ahi Movement, human beings are stewards or representative of God (Khalifetullah). We can see the similarity of Catholic and Ahi traditions in taking work a continuation of God's work.

"In our daily work too, when we provide for ourselves and our families and serve the community, we can look upon our work as a continuation of the work of the Creator, a service to our fellows, and our personal contribution to the fulfilment in history of the divine plan (Mc Oustra, 1990)"

Catholicism stresses that work is a right as well as a duty.

We have the duty and right to work. It is also our duty in society, according to circumstances, to ensure the opportunity to work for our fellow citizens (Mc Oustra, 1990).

It was stated in the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the USA in 1986 that work has a moral significance, and that people could achieve self-expression and self-realization through work; fulfill their needs, and contribute to the well-being of the larger community (Stackhouse and et al.).

Some Catholic intellectuals developed the idea of the Catholic work ethic in response to the Protestant work ethic. For example, Michael Novak (1993) in his 'The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' argued that Catholicism is a work-oriented belief and creativity is essential in Catholic belief. He stressed the human work as a contribution to God's creation and highlighted the importance of 'the acting person as an image of God' in Catholic theology. He also defends the market system despite its disadvantages:

"In a word, market systems combined with democratic political systems (protecting the rights of minorities and individuals) offer better hope to the poor of the world than socialist, or traditionalist systems do. Despite their inevitable ambiguities, that is one of their strongest claims to moral recognition (Novak, 1993)"

It is argued that the Opus Dei (The Work of God) movement, which emphasizes the importance of self-discipline and hard work in religious life, is very influential in the Roman Catholic church and that the Pope himself was influenced by this movement (Hutchison, 1997).

On the other hand, the leisure ethic in Catholicism lies in the Sabbath tradition which originated in Judaism. God's action is seen as a model for human activity. God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. Similarly, human life has a rhythm of work and rest. Therefore, believers should rest as well. As 'Catechism of the Catholic Church' states:

"The Sabbath brings everyday work to a halt and provides a respite. It is a day of protest against the servitude of work and the worship of money (Catechism CH, 1994)"

Catholics are warned here against the harmful effects of materialism. They are also encouraged to join some leisure activities. The importance of leisure activities is underlined in the same source (Catechism CH, 1994).

"On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are to refrain from engaging in work or activities that hinder the worship owed to God, the joy proper to Lord's Day, the performance of the works of mercy, and the appropriate relaxation of mind and body."

Those Christians who have leisure should be mindful of their brethren who have the same needs and equal rights, yet cannot rest from work because of poverty and misery.

Sunday is a time for reflection, silence, cultivation of the mind and meditation which furthers the growth of the Christian interior life.

Traditional activities (sport, restaurants, etc.) and social necessities (public services, etc.), require some people to work on Sundays, but everyone should still take care to set aside sufficient time for leisure (Catechism CH, 1994)

Solidarity

The Catholic Church teaches that we are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers and sisters, keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Solidarity is the fundamental bond of unity with our fellow human beings and the resulting interdependence. Everyone is responsible for all; and in particular, the rich have responsibilities toward the poor. National and international structures must reflect this. Solidarity can be seen in papal documents such as *Populorum Progressio* (Paul VI, 1967), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (J. Paul II, 1987) and *Centesimus Annus* (J. Paul II, 1991). Pope Paul VI taught that if you want peace, work for justice. The Gospel calls believers to be peacemakers. Catholics believe that our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.

Pope John Paul also underlines the necessity of solidarity in society:

"For the sole criterion to be profitable is not good enough, especially if this criterion were to be erected into an absolute: 'making more' to 'own more' and not only tangible objects but financial partnerships, allowing ever more extensive and ever more commanding forms of ownership. Not that the profit motive is in itself unjust. A business could not succeed without it. A reasonable search for profit is, anyhow, consistent with the right to 'economic initiative.' The profit must be subject to moral criteria, particularly to those consistent with the principle of solidarity (Pope John Paul II, Centesimus Annus, 1996)."

Apart from encyclical letters, two recent documents of the Catholic Church should be mentioned. First is a pastoral letter of Roman Catholic Bishops in the USA, published in 1986, called 'Economic justice for all: Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy.' In this letter, the bishops criticized American capitalism during the right-wing Reagan administration. The letter underlined the importance of community and solidarity over the healthy economic competition. Second is a statement by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, called 'The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teachings.' The letter was issued in October 1996, just before the general election in the UK. Like their American counterparts, British Bishops criticized the right-wing economic policies of conservative governments, and it is believed that they supported a future Labour government in the UK. They stated that Catholic social teaching was incompatible with the unlimited free market or laissez-faire capitalism, which insists that the distribution of wealth must occur entirely according to the dictates of market forces. The letter also stressed the social responsibility of business companies and criticized downsizing operations for causing social injustice.

Care for God's Creation

After the 1990s the Catholic Church paid more attention to environmental issues that was not seen in its history. Environmentalism found a place in Catholic theology as caring for the creation of God. Catholics show their respect for the Creator by their stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan; it is a requirement of the Catholic faith. They are called to protect people and the planet, living their faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored. This approach was highlighted in *Centesimus Annus* (J. Paul II, 1991) and *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (J. Paul II, 1987)

Historical Protestant work ethic (PWE)

When Protestant work ethic comes to the point, social scientists mostly use Weberian PWE characteristics. However, mainstream Protestant theology of the 20th century is far from historical PWE values. As Miller (2007) pointed out theologically many clergies and religious professionals have not studied or developed theology of work as part of their overall systematic theology. Many of today's leading senior theologians, ethicists and clergy are deeply influenced by Christian socialism, branches of Barthianism. Liberation theology (emphasizing state-controlled economic structures, rejecting free markets and viewing capitalist business as oppressors) and even some Franciscan and monastic strands that glorify poverty and simplicity. In particular, many of today's religious professionals were trained in liberation theology as a normative way of thinking. Historical Puritan work ethic can only be traced in the so-called prosperity Gospel movement that promises riches to all who are faithful. Therefore, the term of Protestant work ethic is a broad concept including historical Puritan ethic and also Protestant socialist ethic. It is better to use the Puritan work ethic instead of Protestant work ethic when we refer historical PWE values in Max Weber's thesis. It provides us a better explanation than the Protestant work ethic.

Puritan work ethic can simply be defined as taking daily work as worship to please God. Furnham (1990) summarized the main characteristics of the PWE as follows:

- This –worldly asceticism (pleasing God with our works)*
- An unmediated, direct relation of the individual to the sacred (Religious individualism)*
- The doctrine of calling (Luther)*
- The doctrine of predestination (Calvin)*
- Taking hard work and industriousness as religious duties*
- A negative attitude to leisure activities*
- Frugality and productivity*
- Punctuality and time-saving*
- Pride in work*
- Commitment and loyalty to occupation and organization*
- Need for achievement*
- Honesty*
- Taking idleness, wasting time and money as vices*
- Internal locus of control (One first must blame himself or herself instead of others) and self-control*
- Taking ambition and success as the signs of God's favor.*
- Taking poverty as a universal indicator of sin while taking wealth as a sign of God's favor*
- Viewing wealth as a major goal in life*
- Viewing leisure as earned by work*
- Viewing success in work as resulting primarily from the amount of personal effort*
- Viewing wealth that results from work as a sign of God's favor*

Some of these characteristics can also be seen in the Muslim Ahi Brotherhood movement.

Basic principles and philosophy of Muslim Ahi brotherhood

Mongol armies swept away the mass population of Turkish cities in Central Asia like Samarkand, Balkh, and Bukhara in the 11th and 12th century. Most of the skilled inhabitants of those cities immigrated to Anatolia. Like frontiers of the United States, they made the relatively less populated land their home. In this stage, they needed to develop new commercial networks and facilities. They were also commercially vulnerable and weak compared to the highly skilled local Christian population of Anatolia. The Ahi institution was established and developed in this social situation by Anatolian Turks in the 13th century (Pamuk, 1987).

"Ahi" is a Turkish word borrowed from Arabic and means brother. However, in Turkish, the word "Ahi" only refers to a member of a medieval order. An Ahi is a person who is a member of Ahi order. The term of "Ahilik" means "Ahi Movement." The Ahi institution was a kind of guild organization which organized and controlled all trade activities in the Medieval Turkish society. However, the Ahi organization was not only an economic organization but also a religious Sufi order that followed the ancient Futuwwat Order's principles as its moral basis (Köksal, 2006). In addition to economic and religious aspects, the Ahi organizations also had military functions, especially during occupation periods. Military branches of Ahi organizations were composed of male and female military units. Male military units of Ahi organizations were called "Knights of Rum." Female military units were called "Sisters of Rum." In medieval times, Turkish people of Anatolia called themselves simply as Romans because they were living in the former East-Roman Empire (Angold, 1997). Anatolia peninsula was known by the Turks as the country of Romans. The term Roman does not refer to any particular ethnicity but only cultural and geographic identity. Especially during the Roman Seljuk Empire Turks of Anatolia called themselves as Romans (Rum in Turkish) rather than Turks (Kitsikis, 1996).

In sum, the Ahi institution was an economic, religious and military organization which shaped Turkish business and work ethic in the medieval times. During the 13th century, Ahi organizations played an important role in attracting Turkish immigration to

Anatolia. The Ahi convents (zaviye) provided accommodation for newly arrived immigrants and also work opportunities for the skilled ones. However, its cultural effects are still alive among Anatolian craftsmen and small business organizations in modern Turkey.

The Ahi organization which is founded by Ahi Evran in the 13th century in Anatolia was adopted the futuwwatnamas as its code of conducts (Timur, 1994). The Futuwwat order was a Muslim religious, economic and military brotherhood at the time of the Abbasid Caliphate similar to the knightly fraternities and guilds of Medieval Europe.

There is a close connection between the Melami Sufi tradition and Futuwwat morality (Çağatay, 1997). Both approaches stress a strong work ethic and salvation through belief and work. Such a work-oriented belief system is called this-worldly asceticism in Weber's thesis (Weber, 1985). According to this-worldly asceticism, every believer should have a profession and work hard to please God. Like Çağatay (1997) some historians believe that there was no direct connection between the Futuwwat order and Ahi brotherhood. Ahi orders only adopted some futuwwatnamas as their code of conduct. Futuwwat means generosity, chivalry, nobility in Arabic. Feta means young male and also represent the ideal person. The highest level of feta is called Futuwwat. Combining craftwork or service in the military or government with spiritual discipline those orders have played a significant role in Islamic spiritual life and ethos of Islam. The craft orders still survive in some areas of the Islamic world.

It is widely believed that there is a strong connection between the Ahi Brotherhood in Anatolia and the ancient Futuwwat order (Pazarlı, 1980). Some argue that the Ahi Brotherhood is a direct continuation of the Futuwwat order. Some say that there is no direct connection between the two movements, but the Ahi Brotherhood borrowed moral principles of the Futuwwat order. The Futuwwat order was founded between 1182 by the Abbasid Caliph Nasir Lidinillah. The Abbasid Caliph Nasir was initiated to the Futuwwa movement with a ceremony in which he wore the Futuwwa costume and drunk the cup of Futuwwa drink from the hands of Abdel Jabbar who was the leader of Fityan (Youth) of that time (Çağatay, 1997). Nasir wanted to fix the principles of the Futuwwa in a set of rules and regulations and established a brotherhood in which he tried to attract young people, the elite, and the governors, statesmen, inside the country and abroad. Nasir delegated this duty to Al-Suhreverdi (1145-1234).

When moral and political degeneration started in the Islamic state, Nasir Lidinillah wanted to re-establish of the social and political order by the help of the Futuwwat order. The first Grand Master of the order was Shihabeddin Suhreverdi of Baghdad. He wrote a book called "Kitab'ul Futuwwa" (The Book of Futuwwa) by the request of the Caliph. Suhreverdi collected all the principles of the Futuwwa into his writings. Suhreverdi's "Adalat al-iyān al-al-burhan" seems to be the first official Futuwwatnama. Its manuscript can be found in the Library of Molla Murad in Istanbul (Köksal, 2006).

The Caliph also made a call to other Muslim states that skilled people of their subjects should join the Futuwwat order. He sent Suhreverdi to Konya/Anatolia to promote the Futuwwat order in the Roman Seljuk State (Özaydın, 2004). The Futuwwat order in Turkey named itself as Ahi Brotherhood. The founder of Anatolian Futuwwat order was Ahi Evran (Hoja Nasiruddin Mahmut al-Hoyi, 1262). He was appointed by the Sultan Alaattin Kaykubad I, of the Roman Seljuk Empire to establish the Ahi Brotherhood.

From the 13th century onwards, futuwwatnamas were widely used by other societies as a code of conduct, because the futuwwatnamas were formulated as the principles of perfect and moral individual. Later the Ahi organization was divided into 32 branches of trade and craft. In Ahi units, 740 moral principles were in use, and every Ahi had to know 124 of them by heart. Every branch of trade and business which was a part of Ahi brotherhood recognized a patron saint or protector or a chain of protectors.

Ethical Effects of Ahi Tradition into Modern Turkish Culture

Ahi spirit and principles of the Ahi movement have many common roots with modern business ethics. Ahi spirit strongly encourages the work ethic. Ahi people do not believe in personal salvation in an isolated other-worldly asceticism. Like Protestant Puritans, they believe that work and profession are sacred activities to please God. When Max Weber wrote his famous "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" he argued that only Protestant and particularly Calvinists societies could develop the spirit of capitalism or work ethic. He only analyzed other-worldly Islamic Sufism of the 19th century. If he had the opportunity to analyze the Ahi movement, it is very likely that he would have had different views about Islamic work ethic.

We can also find a considerable similarity between the altruist nature of Ahi tradition based on solidarity and the corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices of Turkish business. According to CSR approach business firms have an obligation to their stakeholders that extends beyond its narrow obligations to its owners or shareholders. The idea of social responsibility supposes that the corporation has not only economic and legal requirements, but also certain responsibilities to society which extend beyond these obligations. (Carroll, 1997).

Modern Western business ethics is based on stakeholder theory. A stakeholder is a group of people who can affect or can be affected by the activities or decisions of a business firm. Stakeholder theory suggests that managers of firms have obligations to some group of stakeholders. Stakeholder groups are:

Employees

Customers

Stockholders

Trade unions

Suppliers
 Competitors
 Creditors
 Government
 Political groups (Freeman, 1997).

According to Ahi ethic, one must respect the rights and interests of others. It should be noted that this principle is the basis of modern CSR and stakeholder theory. Primary requirements of Ahi business ethics are solidarity, fair competition, quality control, product standardization, fair wages, and reasonable prices, honesty in advertisement and other promotional activities and customer protection. An integral approach can be seen in Ahi morality. In Ahi tradition, each is a part of the whole body of humanity. The unhappiness of one person will negatively affect the entire society. Solidarity was critical in Ahi tradition (Tabakoğlu, 1996). They shared an integral understanding of work and spirituality.

Every Ahi has to give a fixed amount of his earnings to a common emergency account. This common account used to function like a bank (Özaydın, 2006). Protection of consumers was critical in Ahi movement. The modern customer-oriented way of business existed in Turkish Ahi tradition. An Ahi saying can still be seen on the walls of many Turkish shops in Anatolia: "a customer is our benefactor." (Müşteri velinimetinimizdir.) Ahi ethic also includes the modern concept of total quality management (TQM). Customer friendliness and high-quality requirements in Ahi organizations were very similar to modern TQM principles.

Some authors take Ahi tradition as a non-governmental association model and an assessment of today's Business Ethics. Ülger and Ülger (2006) pointed out that many vital tools of modern management techniques such as face-to-face interactions, informal meetings, apprenticeship, stories, metaphors, commitment, trust, love and respect among employees for effective sharing of tacit knowledge were also main Principles of Ahi movement. Moreover, we believe that Ahi tradition is still relatively unexplored and have many secrets and principles to be found for modern organizations. Sharing without expecting any benefits, accepting other craftsmen as a brother, learning and teaching during all business life are some fundamental principles of Ahi movement.

Similarities between Ahi and CST values

Although Ahi movement was based on a strong work ethic, its spirit is much closer to Catholic Benedictines than 15th century Puritans. Therefore, we argue that similarities between Ahi Brotherhood and modern Catholic Social Teaching are crucial to study. Catholic social ethics is an attempt to reduce economic and social harms resulted in capitalism in the modern world. Ethical origins of CST go to Biblical times and Medieval times.

Similarly, origins of Ahi ethic go to the early days of Islam and even Judaism. Unlike Protestantism and particularly evangelical sects, both Islam and Catholicism are tradition based belief systems. Therefore, it is very natural finding similarities between Catholic social teaching and Muslim-Ahi teaching.

In Table 1, we have categorized some well-known Ahi principles (The Encyclopedia of Akhilik, 2017) that originate from ancient *futuwwatnames* and compared them with seven modern CST dimensions and Puritan work values.

Table 1: Ahi code of conducts, CST and PWE values

Ahi code of conducts	Related CST values	Related PWE Values
Be a member of a recognized profession	Work ethic and professionalism, The dignity of work and the rights of workers	The doctrine of calling (LUTHER) This –worldly asceticism (pleasing God with our works) A negative attitude to leisure activities Pride in work Commitment and loyalty to occupation and organization Taking idleness, wasting time and money as vices
Take hard work as a holy principle of life	Work ethic and professionalism The dignity of work and the rights of workers	Taking hard work and industriousness as religious duties A negative attitude to leisure activities Pride in work taking idleness, wasting time and money as vices
Be fair to others in your actions	Work ethic and professionalism The dignity of work and the rights of workers	This –worldly asceticism (pleasing God with our works)
Do not commit any discrimination	Work ethic and professionalism Option for the Poor and Vulnerable The dignity of work and the rights of workers Rights and responsibilities	

Table 1: Cont'd.

Show hospitality to your guests	Communitarianism versus individualism Rights and responsibilities Attitudes towards wealth, money and time Call to Family, Community, and Participation	
Do not search faults of others	Communitarianism versus individualism Rights and responsibilities	Internal locus of control
Follow the general ethical principles of society	Communitarianism versus individualism Rights and responsibilities	This –worldly asceticism (pleasing God with our works)
Be kind and gentle to others	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities Care for God's Creation	Self-control
Be generous to everyone, especially to the poor	Rights and responsibilities Attitudes towards wealth, money and time Solidarity Care for God's Creation	
Be honest, humble and patient	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities	Honesty
Control your sexuality	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities	Self-control
Avoid gossiping about others	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities Care for God's Creation	Self-control
Show forgiveness to others	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities Care for God's Creation	
Do not tell one's fault directly	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities Care for God's Creation	
React to bad actions of others with your good actions (Turn the other cheek)	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities Care for God's Creation	
Control your temper	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities Care for God's Creation	Self-control
Do not reveal the secrets of others	Life and dignity of the human person Rights and responsibilities	Self-control
Obey and help your parents	Call to Family, Community, and Participation Rights and Responsibilities Care for God's Creation Solidarity	
Show respect to your elders	Call to Family, Community, and Participation Rights and Responsibilities Care for God's Creation	
Show compassion to minors	Call to Family, Community, and Participation Rights and Responsibilities Care for God's Creation	
Be loyal to friendship	Call to Family, Community, and Participation Rights and Responsibilities Solidarity	

Table 1: Cont'd	Solidarity
Show solidarity with others	Rights and Responsibilities Care for God's Creation
Regularly visit friends and family members	Call to Family, Community, and Participation Rights and Responsibilities Care for God's Creation

Source: Author

Conclusion

This study presents that Ahi ethical principles share similar values with the Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and the Puritan work ethic (PWE). The emphasis on solidarity in the Ahi work ethic can be seen in the Catholic Social Teaching. Strong emphasis on individual responsibility and hard work in the Ahi ethic are similar to the Puritan work ethic. From a Weberian point of view, like Calvinist Puritanism, Ahi ethic involves a kind of this-worldly asceticism. Ahi movement does not seek salvation in an isolated monastic life but salvation through belief, work, and profession. They believe that one can serve and please God by his/her work. Ahi movement shares the concept of "calling" with Lutherans and the concept of "this-worldly asceticism" with Calvinists. However, it would not be accurate to call them Islamic Puritans. They had their own monasteries called "Zaviya" where they sang their hymns, played their religious music and performed religious dances. They were Sufis believing the sacredness of professional calling and serving God through trade and industry. They can be described as Muslim Benedictine monks with a Lutheran belief in calling (Beruf).

Can modern business organizations be benefited from Ahi ethic? We can easily answer the question with a big "yes." Although Ahi movement was a medieval Muslim order, a modern business organization can easily adopt and implement its values and principles. People do not have to be a practicing Muslim or even a Muslim to use Ahi principles in business life. Modern business organizations employ people from a different ethnic and religious background. A Catholic, a Protestant or an Orthodox Christian can share Ahi values with a Muslim employee. Similarly, there will be no difficulty to adopt Ahi values for a Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu or a non-religious person (atheist, agnostic, and deist).

All people of the world needs more humanitarian workplace, responsible production, responsible consumption, fair trade, fair wages, less exploitation, less environmental pollution. They all need to have respect for their dignity, and way of life. We can argue that Ahi ethic offers a better solution to modern capitalism than Catholic and Protestant ethic. A well-known Ahi maxim can give us an excellent example of how Ahi ethic can be implemented in modern organizations. It says, "one should control actions of his hands, genitals, and tongue." (Eline, beline diline hakim ol). It means that a person should control his or her hands in order not to steal something or harm somebody with violent means. One should control his or her sexual instincts and should not sexually harass or rape somebody. One should control his or her tongue (use of language) not to hurt somebody's feelings. We can argue that many ethical problems arise in an organization as a result of a violation of this maxim. Corruption, sexual harassment, mobbing, nepotism, are direct results of the lack of such virtues. One does not have to be a Muslim or to be a Medieval Ahi Brother or Sister to implement these noble principles in his or her life.

We can argue that the core of the Muslim-Turkish work ethic is represented by the Ahi ethic. However, the effect of Ahi tradition in business ethics is not strong in modern Turkey (Sirriyeh, 1999). Unfortunately, global capitalist values and practices were stronger than traditional Ahi ethic. It seems Turkish business need to rediscover the Ahi spirit for a more moral and responsible business life. It should be noted that both the Ahi ethic and the CST make some ethical suggestions to minimize harmful practices of modern capitalism. Our analyses also show that Catholics and Muslims can work together for a better workplace and a better business practices using CST and Ahi principles as a common ethical basis.

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