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Niches in the Islamic Religious Market and Fundamentalism: Examples from Turkey and Other Countries*

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Abstract

The article applies the theory of religious niches to the intra-Islamic religious markets, with a special focus on Turkey. In normal conditions, these niches conform to general principles of religious economy. The ultrastrict and strict niches are smaller than the "central" moderate and conservative niches. Distortions in religious economies occur in what the article calls "religious war economies" (i.e., military conflicts perceived as religious) and "economies of war against religion" (i.e., governmental intervention against all organized religious groups). In the first case (e.g., Palestine, Iraq), there is in fact a war-caused modification of religious demand, with an expanded demand for ultrastrict religion. In the second case (e.g., Algeria, Turkey before 2002), the state effectively prevents moderate and conservative religious supply to meet the demand, with the unintended effect that in part this demand is captured by the ultrastrict groups, which are much more accustomed to operating illegally or against state pressure. Data about Turkey after the 2002 and 2004 elections confirm that when conservative and moderate religious supply is free to operate, ultrastrict alternatives enjoy only limited success.

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The purpose of this article is to discuss the relevance of the sociological theory of religious economy for analyzing the competition in the semimonopolistic religious markets of countries with large Islamic majorities. The theory of religious economy applied here was summarized by Rodney Stark and Roger Finke in their seminal book *Acts of Faith* (2000). The antithesis of the Marxist reduction of religion to economy, it uses tools taken from modern economic science and the metaphor of the market to study religion as a largely independent field whose very specific social dynamics are not simply consequences of nonreligious psychological or economic factors. In this section, I briefly mention general methodological issues, building on a previous study of Italy (a semimonopolistic market because of its large Roman Catholic majority), before applying the theory to Islam and focusing in particular on a case study of Turkey. How the religious market in Turkey compares with non-Muslim religious markets in Europe is particularly relevant in light of the controversies, in which religion played a central role, before and after the December 17, 2004, decision by European governments to start talks on October 3, 2005, aimed at granting full membership in the European Union to Turkey (for an overview, see Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy 2004).

One of the main tenets of the religious economy theory is that

> to the degree that religious economies are unregulated and competitive, overall levels of religious commitment will be high. (Conversely, lacking competition, the dominant firm[s] will be too inefficient to sustain vigorous marketing efforts, and the result will be a low overall level of religious commitment, with the average person minimizing and delaying payment of religious costs.) (Stark and Finke 2000: 201)

The theory predicts that, contrary to the secularization thesis, religiousness levels will be higher and religious organizations will be stronger where pluralism is greater.

Italy offers an interesting test case. As Stark and I have discussed elsewhere, religious attendance consistently declined in Italy after World War II as long as religious pluralism was minimal and the state tried to protect a Roman Catholic monopoly (Stark and Introvigne 2003). When the religious economy became somewhat deregulated, with massive immigration of non-Catholics and legislation that effectively protected religious minorities, religious attendance in general began to grow rather than decline, an exceptional phenomenon in Western Europe. This analysis met with several objections from Italian sociologists. They conceded that Italian data are an effective weapon against any theory that regards secularization as a necessary correlate of modernization and democratization. In fact, modernization and the expansion of religious liberty and pluralism in Italy caused church attendance to experience moderate growth rather than decline. But,

these sociologists argued, these Italian data do not really corroborate the religious economy theory either. In fact, Italian religious pluralism is mostly theoretical. According to data I published in 2001, all religions other than the Roman Catholic Church account for only 1.9 percent of Italian citizens and 3.5 percent of those living in Italy, including noncitizen immigrants and guest workers (Introvigne et al. 2001). We thus have in Italy, or so the objection goes, a growth of religious attendance in a situation of de facto religious monopoly, where the religious economy theory would in fact associate monopoly and decline.

This has been called, by a sociologist sympathetic to religious economy, "the Italian puzzle" (Diotallevi 2001, 2002). The puzzle, however, is not without solutions. First of all, Stark and I argued that perceived pluralism is at least as important as real pluralism. In Italy, political events leading to the end of the Christian Democrat hegemony in 1994, new legislation on religion, and, above all, a spectacular increase in immigration during the 1980s and 1990s, mostly from Moslem countries, made religious pluralism a hotly debated cultural and political issue. While the average Italian living outside the largest cities before the 1970s might never have seen a non-Christian, with the exception of a very small Jewish minority (and, of course, atheists), in the 1990s and 2000s even the most remote village was host to Moslem, Hindu, and other non-Christian immigrants. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, of course, greatly increased the perception of a "Muslim invasion," popularized by the controversial best-sellers of Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci (2001, 2004), although the number of Muslims remains much smaller than in other Western European countries. This increased perception of pluralism might perhaps have the same effects as real pluralism.

On the other hand, religious competition, like competition in other fields, may be either interbrand or intrabrand. For example, competition shows its healthy effects in the car market not only when several car manufacturers compete in the same market, but also when a semimonopolistic car company is able to differentiate between very different product lines and models, thus creating intrabrand alternatives where little interbrand competition exists. This might also be true for religion. Outside the religious economy field, sociologist Niklas Luhmann analyzed large churches as conglomerates of several different microchurches (congregations, movements, religious orders), each with a very large degree of internal autonomy and at times pursuing competing agendas (see Luhmann 2000). Italian sociologists have long perceived differentiation as both a key feature of Italian Roman Catholicism and a source of its strength, compared to the situation in neighboring countries such as France or Switzerland, where the Catholic organization is much more centralized and is still mostly focusing on the parish system. (For more on differentiation in Italian Roman Catholicism, see Berzano 1990; Cipriani 1992; Garelli 1996.) In Italy, largely autonomous movements, brotherhoods, and similar institutions account for the large majority

of churchgoers. In short, Roman Catholicism is so large that what appears at first sight to be a Catholic monopoly in fact hides a vibrant intrabrand religious market in which semi-independent Catholic firms compete for the allegiance of the largely Roman Catholic population. This intrabrand competition is, of course, not identical to interbrand competition. It might, however, cause similar effects, particularly when one considers that in the market on which religious economy theory was originally based, that of the United States, the most visible competition is intra-Protestant, with the different Protestant "firms" largely recognizing the other firms as legitimate participants in a common Christian enterprise. Competing Roman Catholic firms in Italy would claim just the same.

Religious economy focuses on supply. It postulates that demand remains comparatively stable, even in the long term. This happens, the theory argues, because consumers, including consumers of religion, tend to distribute themselves in market niches according to their demographics, financial capabilities, and preferences, the latter being perhaps, as Becker (1976) argued, the most important factor in markets of symbolic goods. Niches tend, in turn, to remain stable.

Stark and Finke (2000: 197; 2002) have created several models of religious demand that distinguish between niches according to the concept of strictness and according to costs. Religion is stricter when its symbolic costs are higher and when its members are expected to believe and behave in a more traditional and conservative way than society at large. Religious consumers distribute themselves in niches of different strictness. By simplifying more complex models, we can distinguish among five niches: ultrastrict, strict, moderate-conservative, liberal, and ultraliberal. The liberal niche includes those consumers who are prepared to accept the liberal values that prevail in modern society; the ultraliberal niche includes "modernists" (intended here to mean those who regard modernity as positive and "good for religion"; the term *modernism*, of course, has many different meanings) who enthusiastically embrace these liberal values and are willing to give them a religious sanction. By contrast, consumers in the strict niche see the prevailing liberal values as negative and dangerous, and those in the ultrastrict niche require absolute separation from these values, which are perceived as truly perverse and even demonic. Consumers in the moderate-conservative niche do not utterly reject modern values but feel free to reinterpret them on the basis of religious tradition while in turn reinterpreting religion to make it relevant to the modern world.

Religious consumers may also occupy different niches according to their ideas and aspirations about the relationship between religion, culture, and politics (although this may vary from country to country). Ultrastrict religious consumers identify religion and culture (and religion and politics) and would not admit any distinction. Those in the strict niche regard the identification as desirable but realize that it is not always possible and leave room for some pragmatic

compromise. Liberals accept, and ultraliberals promote, modern separation between religion and culture (above all, between religion and politics). Moderate-conservatives appreciate that there is, and should be, a distinction between religion, culture, and politics but would like religion to remain a relevant factor in the public arena. They accept distinction but reject separation. It is because of this attitude that those in the strict niche may be called "fundamentalist" and those in the ultrastrict niche may be called "ultrafundamentalist." I am, of course, aware of the epistemological ambiguity of the category of "fundamentalism," a subject of great controversy. I use the here without reference to specific historical movements but rather to refers to *an attitude regarding as desirable a nondistinction between religion and culture* (including, again, between religion and politics).

Table 1 shows a very much simplified model of the niche theory as applied in this article.

Table 1: Niches in the Religious Market

Niches	Trends	Relationship Between Religion and Culture
Ultrastrict	Ultrafundamentalism	Total identification
Strict	Fundamentalism or traditionalism	Identification (some compromise accepted)
Moderate-conservative	Conservatism, reformism	Distinction (but not separation)
Liberal	Religious liberalism	Separation (accepted)
Ultraliberal	Modernism	Separation (promoted)

One of the conclusions of the religious economy theory most supported by empirical data is that niches are not equal in dimensions. There are, indeed, more consumers in the central moderate-conservative niche than in the others, and the strict niche alone is larger than its liberal and ultraliberal counterparts combined. Religious economy has confirmed what Dean M. Kelley argued in 1972 in his *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing* and has answered Kelley's many critics. American data have confirmed in a quite spectacular way the growth of conservative and moderately conservative churches and the decline of liberal denominations. The religious economy theory, particularly through the works of Iannaccone, has contributed an explanation based on the free rider theory. A religious group plagued by a high number of free riders would offer to its members boring and unsatisfying religious experiences, and many would simply walk away. Conservative and (moderately) strict groups, with their high costs,

include a smaller number of free riders, thus enjoying more success than their liberal counterparts (see Iannaccone 1992, 1994). It is also the case that the liberal and ultraliberal religious niches are smaller because consumers who are interested in the symbolic goods offered in these niches have a great number of secular alternatives, which is not true for the other niches. A consumer who wishes to express support for modern liberal values may do so in dozens of nonreligious organizations without having to pay the specific costs associated with even the most liberal forms of religion.

Religious consumers thus are willing to pay reasonably high costs for obtaining the benefits associated with intense and satisfying religious experiences offered by groups in which the number of free riders is limited. These costs, however, should remain reasonable. If costs are too high, only a handful of radicals will be prepared to pay them. This explains why the ultrastrict, or ultrafundamentalist, niche remains smaller than the strict one and much smaller than the moderate-conservative niche (see Iannaccone 1997, 2000). It should also be noted that while niches normally remain stable, religious organizations move from niche to niche. Many organizations start in the ultrastrict niche but, as their foundational charisma becomes routinized,[1] gradually move toward the mainstream, first to the strict and then to the moderate-conservative niche. They may also go on to move farther left to the liberal and ultraliberal niches, but in this case, their membership will normally decline. Very few extremist groups remain forever in the ultrastrict or ultrafundamentalist niche, where they end up declining or turning to violence. Most move on. This is, of course, a religious economic way of revisiting the classic "sect to church" model elaborated by H. Richard Niebuhr (see Niebuhr 1929), with the difference that there is nothing unavoidable in the process (see Finke and Stark 1992) and that confronted with the decline experienced when they reach the liberal niche, some organizations may experience conservative revivals and in fact go back "from church to sect" (Stark and Finke 2002: 53).

At least this is what happens in normal conditions. The author has argued elsewhere that several possible circumstances can distort the religious demand and the normal functioning of the niches (Introvigne 2004). Perhaps we can use the term *war religious economy* to describe a situation in which a widespread domestic or transnational conflict is perceived by participants as a religious struggle or crusade (whatever its "real" causes as assessed by outside observers). In this case, the ultrastrict and strict niches may experience an abnormal growth, as consumers are more interested in a religion that is literally prepared for war. On the other hand, an *economy of war against religion* is one in which the

[1] The concept of routinization of charisma is obviously derived from Max Weber. The idea of the evolution of religious "firms," however, is reconstructed here according to Stark and Iannaccone's (2003) theory of religious economy and differs from Weber's.

government persecutes or strictly controls most religious groups, claiming that extremist religion threatens to destroy the existing social order. The unintended result of this policy is, more often than not, a growth of the very ultrastrict or ultrafundamentalist niche the government hoped to control. In fact, if every religious group with the exception of those that support a nonreligious government is persecuted, the normal bridges where religious demand and religious supply meet would be cut. Moderate groups would not be accustomed to operating underground or illegally. Extremist groups would, and they could end up being the only organizations available for supplying religious goods to a wider public that, in other circumstances, might have preferred merely strict or moderately conservative organizations. The latter, however, cannot function in an economy of war against religion, since they have no experience or skills for operating underground.

INTRABRAND RELIGIOUS COMPETITION IN MUSLIM MARKETS

As Anthony Gill noted in 2002, there is no reason that the religious economy theory should not apply to the Islamic world (see also Starke and Finke 2000). Roman Catholicism and Islam are the largest religions in the world in number of members. They have developed various forms of interbrand competition, which continue today in Africa and elsewhere. For the purposes of this article, however, it is crucial to note that intrabrand competition is as prominent in Islam as it is in Roman Catholicism. It was mentioned earlier that a supposed "Catholic monopoly" in Italy is in fact an umbrella category encompassing a vigorous intra-Catholic competition between various very different organizations. The same is true for many allegedly monopolistic religious economies in the Islamic world.

What country would appear to be more religiously monopolistic than Saudi Arabia? Surely there should be no religious competition there, and "Wahhabi" Islam should be in full control of a monopoly. *Wahhabism* is a word coined by Western scholars in the early 19th century to designate the puritanical brand of Sunni Islam adopted by the Saud dynasty (i.e., the present Saudi royal family) that is based on the teachings of traditionalist preacher Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792). Saudis normally reject the word *Wahhabism* as a Western construction and prefer to refer to their brand of Islam as *Salafism* (a reference to *Salaf*, a word indicating the first companions of the Prophet, although this term is also controversial and is used today by some as a synonym for "Islamic extremism"). Terminology aside, it is not the case that there is in Saudi Arabia today a monolithic Wahhabi monopoly, according to scholarly surveys such as the one published by Pascal Ménoret in 2003. Instead, we find a rich religious market in which state ulamas (i.e., professional Islamic scholars) compete with a vast unregulated private sector, offering all shades of Islam from ultrafundamentalist

to moderately liberal, different interpretations of Wahhabism, and even frank opposition to it, not to mention the presence of both non-Wahhabi Sunni minorities and Shiite minorities. Not surprisingly, the growth of intra-Islamic competition has resulted in Saudi Arabia in what many call simply "the Revival."

Religious supply within the Islamic world covers, in fact, all niches. Although Islamic religious supply is obviously very different from its Christian counterparts, the theory of religious economy would suggest that religious *demand* may be conceptualized by using similar categories. As a consequence, the theory of religious niches should also be applicable to Islamic religious markets. As predictably as in the Christian world, the ultraliberal Islamic niche that enthusiastically embraces Western values and is occasionally advertised as "the Islamic Enlightenment" (*l'Islam des Lumières* in France) remains small, more popular among elite circles of intellectuals than among the population at large. A description of the other niches should take into account the holistic character of Islam, the fact that Islamic trends and movements offer solutions to all domains of human life, and the fact that many religious groups have immediate political expressions as well.

An intra-Islamic and, particularly, intra-Sunni religious market seems to have originated in the 19th century, with the growing awareness that the Islamic world was experiencing serious problems and solutions were needed. Weismann (2001) has described 19th century Damascus as a main center of this revival, but there were others as well. Calling themselves Salafis (as was mentioned earlier, a term implying a reference to the glorious Muslim ancestors), reformers such as Jamal al-Din Afghani (1839–1897) and Muhammad 'Abduh (1849–1905) tried both to modernize Islam and to Islamize modernity. Their teachings, however, were read in quite different ways by the following generation of reformers. Through Rashid Rida (1865–1935), the 19th century Salafiya developed toward what would become, with the foundation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, modern Islamic fundamentalism. (The term *Salafi* today designates fundamentalist and even terrorist movements in several countries, but this was by no means the original meaning.) At the opposite extreme, authors such as 'Ali 'Abdel Raziq (1888–1966) developed an Islamic modernism (*Raziqism*) that closely parallels movements in the Western ultraliberal niche and remains both controversial and confined to comparatively small intellectual circles (see Tamimi 2000). In the center, a moderately conservative reformism tried to avoid both fundamentalism and secularism, more often than not by allying itself with Sufi brotherhoods (i.e., movements that focus on the mystical path to Islam, although, unlike their Christian counterparts, such mystical movements may have millions of members).

This schema refers to the Arab Middle East, but the same situation seems to have developed elsewhere. Islamic revivals in the 19th and early 20th centuries called for a return to past glory and eventually developed in the opposite

directions of fundamentalism and modernism. This was the case in Indonesia and Malaysia with several groups; in Yemen with the reformism of Muhammad al-Shawkani (1760–1834), who led the country from Zaydite Shiism to traditionalist Sunnism (see Haykel 2003); and in sub-Saharan Africa with Shaykh al-Amin ibn ’Ali al-Mazru’i (1890–1947) and several others (see Loimeier 2003). Almost everywhere, those who develop the insights of the earlier reformers toward fundamentalism are anti-Sufi and ask for an interpretation of Islamic law, Shari’a, based on *taqlid* (tradition) only, while the moderate-conservatives often have Sufi connections and call for interpreting Shari’a through *ijtihad* (interpretation based on principles of analogy).

The strict niche does not include only fundamentalists in the lineage of the Muslim Brotherhood (or parallel organizations outside the Arab Middle East). In competition, and occasional cooperation, with fundamentalists, we find in the strict niche also “traditionalists.” They are the heirs of a previous wave of reformism that proposed to free Islam from allegedly superstitious elements derived from Sufism and popular religion. These included Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia and Ahl-i Hadith in India, while the Indian Deobandis, although sharing a severe puritanism with Wahhabis, are in fact much more tolerant of Sufi practices. Traditionalist movements such as the Wahhabis or the Deobandis do not belong to the historical lineage of fundamentalism. Unlike fundamentalists, they have a tradition of quietist respect for the powers that be and a much more radical aversion to modernity. Although political alliances have confused the issues, differences between fundamentalists and traditionalists remain significant, as they compete for the allegiance of consumers in the same strict niche. From both fundamentalist and traditionalist lineages, finally, derive groups in the ultrastrict niche that either separate themselves radically from mainstream society or resort to violence and terrorism. Terrorist forms of ultrafundamentalism should not be confused with the more mainstream tradition of fundamentalism, whose main organizations do not promote terrorism (although they often condone it in particular war situations such as those in Palestine or Chechnya). In this sense, the term *fundamentalism*, referring to the tradition of the Muslim Brotherhood and similar organizations, has a quite precise historical meaning in Islam and should not be used as a synonym for terrorism or illegal activities.

As for the liberal niche, it is occupied both by liberal, “modernized” forms of Sufism (such as the Turkish Melamiya, of which more later) and by those secular nationalist movements (such as the less secular wing of the Ba’ath Party, which was once in power in Iraq and still controls Syria) that maintain a role for religion (unlike other nationalist movements that reject religion altogether). Algerian nationalism is a case in point, although the fact that both the government and its fundamentalist opponents now claim for themselves the heritage of the reformism of Malek Bennabi (1905–1973) confirms that even in the Maghreb countries, it is

not impossible to go back from present-day modernism and fundamentalism to common earlier reformist roots. From the same roots may develop a moderate-conservative center. "Centrist" is indeed an expression that is part of Egyptian political lexicon, indicating as it does the members of a political party that was originally established in 1996 as Hizb al-Wasat (the Centre Party) and reformed in 1998 as Hizb al-Wasat al-Mizri (the Egyptian Centre Party). The new name did not prevent a consistent refusal by Egypt's Political Parties Committee (PPC) to legalize the Centrists. Although the Centrists claimed to regard Islam for political purposes as a "civilizational" rather than "religious" element (a formula also used by Bennabi in Algeria) and the party included Christians as well as Moslems, the fact that several prominent members were ex-Muslim Brothers made the government highly suspicious of the Wasat (see Baker 2003). However, although perhaps incomplete and occasionally ambiguous, the Egyptian "centrism" may be an interesting attempt of a part of the Muslim Brotherhood to move from the fundamentalist niche to the moderately conservative niche, where a significant constituency is obviously believed to exist.

Table 2 shows a model of the niche theory as applied to Islamic religious markets in general.

Table 2: A Model of the Islamic Religious Market

Niches	Trends	Movements (Examples)
Ultrastrict	Ultrafundamentalism	Al-Qa'ida, GIA
Strict	(a) Fundamentalism (b) Traditionalism	(a) Muslim Brotherhood (b) "Wahhabism," Deobandism
Moderate-conservative	(a) Conservative political Islam (b) Mainline Sufism (c) Centrist Reformism	(a) AKP, Wasat* (b) Naksibendiya (c) Nahdlatul Ulama, Nur
Liberal	(a) Islamo-Nationalism (b) Liberal Sufism	Ba'ath, Algerian nationalism, Melamiya
Ultraliberal	Modernism	Islamo-Marxism, Raziqism

* Wasat in Egypt remains somewhat ambiguous and maintains ties with forms of fundamentalism.

ISLAMIC EXCEPTIONALISM?

Religious economy should consider Islamic reformism in its various shapes from a supply-side perspective. Reformism and revival, be they in 19th century Plymouth, Boston, or Damascus, do not arise because of an alleged inherent newness of the religious demand. Reformers and revivalists understand that the demand is already there and create a supply adequate to meet it—hence their success. The theory would postulate that in the long term, ultrafundamentalist (and ultraliberal) movements will meet with only a limited degree of success, fundamentalist movements will be more successful than their liberal counterparts, and movements capable of occupying the centrist moderate-conservative niche will enjoy the greatest success of all. Many would object that this is not true in the Islamic world. Either the theory of religious economy is not universally applicable, they would say, or there is an "Islamic exceptionalism." But is there really?

First of all, in our post-9/11 situation, ultrafundamentalism is overreported. Almost nobody in the general public in the West has heard the names of organizations such as the Indonesian Nahdlatul Ulama, a centrist conservative group, or Mohammadiyya, a group that can be classified among the less extremist expressions of fundamentalism. They have an estimated forty million and thirty million members, respectively, and appear to be much larger than the Muslim Brotherhood, not to mention al-Qa'ida. The same is true for the Turkish Fethullah Gülen movement, which is both large and international yet hardly a household name in the West.

On the other hand, there are, as was mentioned earlier, abnormal situations conducive to a distortion of the niches, with an alarming but temporary expansion of the ultrastrict segment. In the *war religious economy* that prevails in Palestine, the largest local branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, is an expression of the Brotherhood's move from the strict niche it occupies in other countries to the ultrastrict one, owing to exceptional local circumstances. War religious economy polarizes the alternatives between an ultrafundamentalist group, Hamas, and secular nationalism, making as difficult as all observers claim it is the emergence of a centrist leadership that would be a more reliable partner in international negotiations. Similar comments may apply to Chechnya, Kashmir, and other war situations.

In other countries, governments have banned a large number of religious organizations. As was mentioned earlier, the most extreme groups in the ultrafundamentalist niche are the ones that are able to resist such persecution and operate underground, where moderate-conservative groups and even the less extremist organizations of the fundamentalist niche may simply disappear. Extremist ultrafundamentalists are thus able to meet a large segment of the

religious demand, with virtually no competition, and are paradoxically reinforced by the same legal measures that are aimed at eliminating them. Saddam Hussein's Iraq was a case in point. Particularly before 1991, the regime sought to eliminate all independent religious organizations, Sunnis as well as Shiites. Those who managed to survive underground were, predictably, the most extreme, including some branches of the Muslim Brotherhood and semiterrorist groups that had international connections. The situation that prevailed during Saddam's religious repression (an economy of war against religion, or at least against *independent* religion) is somewhat repeated in the present religious war economy, in which extremist groups may gain a larger audience than in "normal" times. Polls, however, seem to show that most religious consumers in Iraq, whose ideas are perhaps underreported in the media, do look for alternatives in the centrist, moderately conservative niche represented by Najaf's traditional Shiite authorities and those Sunni political parties that have joined the provisional government.

Islamic ultrafundamentalist terrorism is obviously a complex phenomenon whose causes are not only cultural or religious. However, the Algerian case seems to confirm the dangers of repression. The army coup of January 11, 1992, banned a whole spectrum of Islamic organizations. Some went into exile, but among those who were able to continue an illegal existence in Algeria were, predictably, the most extreme wings of the ultrafundamentalist movement. These, soon divided into a plethora of conflicting organizations (some of them infiltrated by the Algerian intelligence, others by al-Qa'ida), were responsible for a bloody civil war that probably claimed some 100,000 victims. The situation has now evolved. Only small pockets of terrorist and guerrilla activities by the GIA (Armed Islamic Group), the GSPC (Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat), and the HDS (Guardians of the Salafi Call) remain operative. It is certainly true that the main terrorist organizations were defeated through military action, although with a high cost in human lives. It is also the case, however, that actions taken by President Bouteflika (who was reelected in 2004) in granting amnesty to several insurgents, freeing from jail the leaders of the banned FIS (Islamic Salvation Front), legalizing parties with connections to the Muslim Brotherhood (although not the FIS itself), and reclaiming the common heritage of Bennabi's reformism and the contribution of political Islam to Algeria's national anticolonial struggle have opened the religious market and have created a number of alternative options to ultrafundamentalism. Conservative and fundamentalist religious demand may now be legally met by a number of legitimate groups, which offer serious competition for those ultrafundamentalist organizations that remain committed to violence, although Algeria's problems are far from being solved.

A CASE STUDY: RELIGIOUS MARKETS IN TURKEY

Although Turkey does have its share of religious minorities, the analysis will focus here on its intrabrand Muslim market. Turkey offers an ideal test case for a number of reasons. Thierry Zarcone claims that Islam in Turkey has always been highly pluralistic and still maintains the heritage of tensions between large cities and the rural countryside, between Istanbul and Anatolia, between Turkish identity and the Arabic Koran. This French scholar sees what we would call the Turkish religious market as resulting historically from the competition of five trends during the Ottoman period:

1. Islam as the official religion of the Ottoman Empire, whose orthodoxy was guaranteed by the state ulamas. In imperial Turkey, they controlled the administration of justice through the kadis (religious judges) and through religious instruction as a whole, from elementary to secondary, interpreting the Shari'a through the lens of the Hanafi legal school.
2. Sufi Islam of the large brotherhoods, which perpetuated a substantially orthodox Sunni Islam outside the circle of the religiously educated through their large networks of tekkes (halls of shrines used for Sufi meetings). Since many shaykhs (local leaders) of the most important brotherhoods were themselves ulamas, there were no substantial conflicts with the first group. Zarcone, however, suggests a distinction between three groups of Sufi brotherhoods: one claiming to fully respect the shari'a as defined by the Hanafi ulamas (Naksibendiya, Chaziliya); one divided between a respect for orthodoxy and sympathy for the mysticism of Ibn Arabi (1165–1240), which is despised by most state ulamas (Halvetiya, Mevleviya); and one engaged in a difficult attempt to harmonize pre-Islamic and non-Sunni influences with Sunnism (Bektasiya, Melamiya, Hamzeviya).
3. Heterodox Islam of the countryside, grounded in the syncretistic Turcoman heritage with Shiite influences. In fact, the most relevant groups were not technically Shiite (though a Shiite minority did exist in Turkey) but part of what many scholars now call the "hyper-Shiite tradition" (see Olsson, Özdalga, and Raudvere 1998). *Hyper-Shiism* is a style of religious thought that both regards as a divine incarnation Ali (600–661, the son-in-law and fourth successor of the Prophet Muhammad whose claim to the caliphate, when challenged by Muawiyah I [602–680], led his followers to establish Shiism as a branch separate from the "Sunni" Islam originally led by Muawiyah and his successors, the Umayyad caliphs) and considers its subsequent leaders to be Ali's reincarnations. Neither claim is made, or accepted, by mainstream Shiism. An exact typology of different groups within the hyper-Shiite tradition is the subject matter of complicated discussions. Zarcone does not believe that the Bektasis are part of this tradition, while he includes here the Kïzïlbaks, which in part still exist under this name in villages of Thrace and Anatolia and in part merged with, or were influenced by, the Alevis, whose complicated recent evolution, however, calls into question their inclusion in the "hyper-Shiite" fold.

4. What Zarcone calls the heterodox Islam of the “doctor-philosophers,” in the tradition of Bedreddin Simavli (1359–1416) and of a series of independent mystics verging on pantheism.
5. The popular Sunni Islam of “country ulamas,” which took great pride in distinguishing itself from the crypto-Shiite or hyper-Shiite heterodoxy yet incorporated a number of beliefs of non-Sunni origin, focused on the rural shrines of the saints, and were often regarded by both the state ulamas and the larger brotherhoods as superstitious. In fact, the Ottoman establishment regarded the three latter competitors as somewhat illegitimate. However, they managed to survive (Zarcone 2003; see also Ahmad 2003).

Although the personal ideas about religion of the father of the modern Turkish Republic, Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938), are the subject of some debate (see Mango 2000), there is little doubt that he was inspired by the sociological theories of Auguste Comte (1798–1857) and regarded traditional religion as an obstacle to progress. Kemalism involved a complex de-Islamization process whereby the official Islam was separated from the judiciary (which was secularized) and brought under the strict control of the secular state, Sufi brotherhoods were formally dissolved in 1925, and the rural shrines of the saints were closed. Admirer as he was of the French *laïcité*, Atatürk realized that the French model could not simply be imported into a Muslim country. The *laïcité* in France was aimed at reducing religion to an affair of the individual, entirely separated from the state. Unlike French Roman Catholicism, Turkish Islam was not easily amenable to a process of deinstitutionalization. It was just too intrinsically institutional and operated within a framework in which the distinction between public and private and between religious and cultural was much less evident. The Turkish *laiklik* therefore did not ignore religion, as the French *laïcité* proclaimed to do (at least theoretically), but rather put it under the direct control of the Prime Minister’s office via its Directorate of Religious Affairs, instituted in 1924,

The de-Islamization process in fact greatly reduced the number of available options in the Turkish religious market. Although circumscribed by the secular state, official Islam maintained its prominence. The large brotherhoods did not disappear, but the official dissolution forced them to perform what Yavuz (2003) calls an “inward migration” away from the public domain into the sphere of family and household. Rural Islam experienced difficulties and problems due to the official prohibition against the cult of the saints and the general de-Islamization policy but managed to survive. Heterodoxy in general celebrated Kemalism as its ally in revenge against previous discrimination. Kïzïlbaks, Alevis, and even Bektasis presented themselves as staunch supporters of Kemalism, although this support, as Shankland (2003) has demonstrated, converted some of their organizations into secular-cultural associations with

feeble religious references, while, on the other hand, the laws against the brotherhoods did create problems for these groups also.

As the religious economy theory would predict, the official regulation of the religious market caused several extremist reactions: an insurrection in the South-East in 1925 combining Kurdish ethnonationalism and religious reaction, the so-called conspiracy of the Tarikat-ï Salahiya (Brotherhood of the Virtue) between 1920 and 1925, and religiously oriented popular uprisings such as the "Menemen incident" of 1925, in which a Kemalist officer was lynched by the populace. The government reacted with a stricter control on religion, which experienced its worst period between 1925 and 1945. Between 1932 and 1954, the People's Houses and the Village Institutes tried to replace the mosque and the tekke as the (secular) centers of village life (Yavuz 2003: 285–286). Kemalism, whose secularizing experiment took place in Sunni Turkey, has often been compared to similar efforts by the Pahlavi dynasty in Iran, a Shiite country. As Atabaki and Zürcher (2003) have noted, both efforts did achieve some results but were never entirely or permanently successful.

On the other hand, as Yavuz (2003: 57) noted, "the secularization policies of the state did not succeed fully, because they focused on the public sphere and were not able to touch the grassroots level of informal societal networks." According to Yavuz, it was Sufism that in the face of state coercion was most able to resist, thanks to its ability to withdraw into the inner domestic and familial sphere. However, the Sufi orders that relied on conspicuous external rituals, clothing, buildings, and ceremonies such as the Mevleviya experienced more difficulties. The Naksibendis, on the other hand, whose system does not necessarily require a tekke, whose clothing is not peculiar, and who are able to privilege the silent (and inconspicuous) zikr (a Sufi ritual for remembering God through meditation and prayer, also, however, occasionally including songs and dances) were able to survive both the legal ban of 1925 and the persecution of the 1930s. Together with the Naksibendis, a "movement of resistance to the ongoing Kemalist modernization" that was capable, according to Yavuz (2003: 151), of being at the same time "forward-looking and proactive" emerged in the shape of the Nurcu, or Nur, movement of Said Nursi (1876–1960). Nursi's followers, known as Nurcus, who proclaimed the harmonization of Islam and modern science and, as Markham and Odzemir (2005) emphasize, truly opened Islam to modern interreligious dialogue, in fact occupied a space outside the public sphere that Kemalism had denied to religion: the sphere of culture, of successful books, and of their readers. Although Nursi had been a member of the Naksibendis and defended the brotherhoods against the Kemalist ban, he founded a peculiar centrist-conservative (but not fundamentalist) tradition that is not, strictly speaking, part of Sufism and is not affiliated with any Sufi brotherhood (including the Naksibendis). (For different assessments of Nursi, see Abu-Rabi' 2003.)

Naksibendis and Nurcus thus were at the forefront of a new relevance of Islam that emerged when, in the 1950s, the Turkish religious market started to be deregulated. Faced with the new threat of Communism, the Kemalist establishment and the military granted more latitude to religion, which was regarded as both a necessary component of the nation's moral fabric and an element capable of unifying all Turkish citizens, transcending their ethnic diversities, particularly the contrast between Turks and Kurds. Turkish secularism, or *laiklik*, as Davison (2003) has noted, became something still more different from the French *laïcité*. The differences with France were perhaps there, Davidson (1998) argues, from the very beginning. The government of Turgut Özal (1927–1993) in the 1980s epitomized this new approach. Özal was himself part of the circle of the popular shaykh Mehmed Zahid Kotku (1897–1980), head of the Naksibendi branch known as Gümüshanevi headquartered at the Iskenderpasa Camii mosque in Istanbul (Yavuz 2003: 141). The teachings of Kotku, whose circle also included future prime ministers Necmettin Erbakan and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, emphasized the perfect compatibility between Islam and modernity, including economic development.

While the political consequences, developments, and reactions to the deregulation of the Turkish religious market deserve a larger discussion, a general map of this market according to the theory of religious niches may be proposed. The map can, of course, include only some of the many trends and groups active in Turkey and leaves largely aside the Kurdish and Shiite minorities. I will also try to apply to Turkey the general model of the Islamic religious market outlined in the section above on Islamic exceptionalism.

Ultrafundamentalism, defined as the total rejection of the modern political order and the attempt to subvert it through violent means, appears to be very rare in contemporary Turkey, even though Turkey has had its sad share of terrorist attacks claimed by ultrafundamentalist Islamic groups (and a considerably higher number of incidents attributed to Kurdish separatists or Marxist-Leninists). However, a simple statistical table would reveal that ultrafundamentalist terrorism declined with the opening and deregulation of the Turkish religious market (see Chasdi 2003).[2] This is in accordance with the religious economy theory, which predicts that extremist groups find more followers when conservative but nonviolent alternatives are not easily available to religious consumers or are harassed in their public activity by the state. On the other hand, when religious consumers are comparatively free to choose fundamentalist (but nonviolent) and conservative (but not fundamentalist) competing groups, ultrafundamentalism declines. Recent incidents have been attributed to foreign influences (perhaps with al-Qa'ida connections). Even a terrorist organization with such a

[2] This is also true in the Turkish diaspora in Europe, which is particularly strong in Germany (see Argun 2003; Ewing 2003).

quintessentially Turkish name as the Knights of the Great Orient (*Büyük Dogu*, meaning "Great Orient," was both the title of a journal founded in 1943 by influential Islamic intellectual Necip Fazil, 1904–1983, and its term for Islam as "a holistic and totalistic ideology"; Yavuz 2003: 116), which has claimed some recent attacks, remains somewhat ambiguous. Certain scholars of terrorism even think that it might originally have been a creation of factions of the Turkish intelligence establishment that were eager to blame terrorism on Islamic fundamentalism (see Gunter 1997), although of course this opinion remains controversial.

The word *fundamentalism* is as ambiguous in the Turkish context as it is elsewhere. Considering the difference between Turkish and Arab political Islam, one might prefer to use some expression other than *fundamentalism*. Its use here, however, refers strictly to the niche theory outlined above and is not a value judgment. In this sense, Turkish political Islam as represented by Necmettin Erbakan occupies the fundamentalist niche of the religious market. It is perhaps not coincidental that Erbakan's first meeting as newly installed prime minister in 1996 was "with the leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood" (Yavuz 2003: 243), the movement that largely defines international Islamic fundamentalism (which, again, should not be confused with ultrafunda-mentalism or terrorism). The fact that Erbakan had Sufi connections and enjoyed the support of Sufi brotherhoods is not incompatible with a collocation of its supporters in the fundamentalist niche. Fundamentalists are not everywhere anti-Sufi, and the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949), was himself a Sufi.[3]

Fundamentalism, as was mentioned earlier, competes with traditionalism—a different religious style—for the allegiance of consumers in the strict niche. The largest (four million members) traditionalist organization in Turkey is the *cemaat* (community) of the Süleymancis, established by Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan (1888–1959). A cemaat is not technically a brotherhood, and the Turkish system of the cemaat created what Zarcone defines as "Sufism without 'brotherhoodism'" (Zarcone 2004: 281).[4] Tunahan in fact denounced the decadence of the brotherhoods system, although he remained attached to its tradition, rooted in the Indian branch of the Naksibendis, to which, not coincidentally, the founders of the largest international traditionalist movement, Deobandism, also swore allegiance.

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[3] In addition to Turkish fundamentalism, Iranian Shiite fundamentalist texts circulate in Turkish translations among the Shiite minority, although the most prominent Turkish Shiite leaders have distanced themselves from the Iranian model. The influence of Saudi Arabian Wahhabi traditionalism (often simply referred to as *fundamentalism*) on certain independent (and often illegal) religious schools is also occasionally mentioned by both Turkish and foreign media but should not be overestimated.

[4] Mark Sedgwick (2004a) has developed a model to distinguish between "denominations, " "sects," and "cults" within Islam, but the model is based on the Arab world, and it is unclear whether it can be easily applied to non-Arab religious markets such as that of Turkey.

It is worth noting that the term *traditionalism* is used here with reference, once again, to the niche model described above rather than technically in order to identify the school of thought mostly defined by, if not exclusively originating from, René Guénon (1886–1951) and often referred to as "Traditionalism" with a capital T. Guénon's ideas are popular among a handful of Turkish intellectuals and academics, including Mustafa Tahrali, a professor of theology at Marmara University, and Mahmud Kiliç, the heir of a prominent Sufi family who helped to popularize the works of Iranian Traditionalist Seyyed Hossein Nasr in Turkey. A limited number of Turks have also been initiated in Traditionalist orders, including female movie director Ayse Sasa, who joined a Traditionalist branch of the Sufi brotherhood known as Khalwatiya. On the other hand, "there are no Traditionalist organizations in Turkey," nor do Traditionalists have any political influence (Sedgwick 2004b: 256), although they are occasionally attacked as dangerous, for opposite reasons, by both Kemalists and fundamentalists.

What appears unique to the Turkish religious market is the strength of a conservative-moderate center, which has offerings that are both rich and diverse and which has met with a notable degree of success. In this central niche of the religious market, at least three different expressions of Turkish Sunni Islam compete. We have mentioned that although niches are stable, movements often move from one niche to another, and it is not uncommon for a fundamentalist group to evolve toward the central conservative-moderate niche. Several Islamic fundamentalist movements have moved toward the center by rethinking their tradition and their relationship with the original 19th century Salafiya. We have described the itinerary of a part of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood toward the formation of centrist political organizations. Similar evolutions have been described in Tunisia among Islamist intellectuals of the circle of Rachid Gannouchi (see Tamimi 2001). In Turkey, this process, although with characteristics peculiar to that country, emerged with the separation of Erdogan's AKP from Erbakan's Saadet party. The AKP is regarded by many as a typical "conservative" organization (Insel 2003). The results of the 2002 elections, in which the AKP obtained 34.2 percent of the votes compared to 2.46 percent for Saadet (further reinforced by data on the 2004 administrative elections), confirmed in their own way that the conservative-moderate niche is larger than its fundamentalist counterpart even when both are considered in their political projections. It is by no means arbitrary to discuss political parties within the framework of an analysis of the religious market. According to Zarcone (2004: 207), the parties of political Islam up to and including Saadet were based on "the dominant model of the [Sufi] brotherhoods." The AKP, while still an expression of political Islam, should be regarded in this perspective as the first religiously inspired party capable of rejecting the brotherhood model and adopting "the model of Western Christian Democrat parties." Through this change of model,

"political Islam in Turkey has not failed; quite to the contrary, it has successfully moved to a new ideological phase" (Zarcone 2004: 208).

On the other hand, politics, even in the shape of political Islam, does not exhaust the field of the conservative-moderate niche of the religious market in Turkey, which appears to be as large in Turkey as in the non-Islamic countries typically studied by the religious economy theory. The same religious demand is met by the main branches of the Naksibendiya, both in the great Istanbul organizations such as the already mentioned Gümüshanevi, the Erenköy Cemaati (see Yavuz 2003: 144–145), or the group of the Ismail Aga mosque and in the Anatolian brotherhoods such as the Menzil Köy Cemaati of Rachid Erol (1929–1996). To different degrees, all these branches have succeeded in modernizing Sufi Islam while remaining faithful to the ancient Naksibendi roots, thus catering to a large moderate-conservative constituency, which in present-day Turkey appears to be larger than the traditionalist audience served by the Süleymancis.

Finally, the center of the religious market in Turkey is occupied by a very original phenomenon, "the greatest novelty in Turkish religious history" (Yavuz 2003: 284): a dozen Nurcu communities claiming the heritage of Said Nursi's reformism. The most important neo-Nur movement is the Fethullah Gülen movement, the subject of a growing number of scholarly studies also in the West (see Yavuz and Esposito 2003). "Neither 'fundamentalist' nor 'secularist'" (Voll 2003: 245), the movement combines Turkish nationalism, the Sufi heritage of Anatolia, and Nursi's proposals for a dialogue between Islam and modern science to create a typical centrist and post-Sufi organization. Without recapitulating here the existing scholarship on the Gülen movement, an important point is that it typically addresses the needs of the moderate-conservative niche in the intra-Islamic religious market, perhaps as a result of movement from an original position in the strict niche toward the center, somewhat similar to the evolution of Catholic groups such as Opus Dei (see Berger 2001).[5] Other neo-Nur groups appeal to diverse audiences. It is also important to note that groups in the moderate-conservative niche do not automatically support the AKP. Yavuz concludes as much with respect to the Gülen movement (see "The Gülen Movement" 2004). Naksibendi brotherhoods seem to be similarly divided.

There are, of course, also offerings that address the liberal niche of the religious market in Turkey. Several movements have offered a religious interpretation of Kemalism. This appears in the post-brotherhood phase of the branch of the Melamiya, in which Maksud Hulusi (1851–1929) was succeeded by his son Mahmut Sadettin Bilginer (1909–1983) and by his close disciple Hasan Lufti Chuchut (1903–1988). A Sufi brotherhood was transformed into a liberal movement critical of both traditional Sufism and the prevailing conservative-

[5] For a neo-Weberian approach to the same process, which has often been criticized by Catholic sociologists, however, some of them associated with the Opus Dei itself, see Estruch (1995).

moderate groups. Much more complicated is the situation of the Bektasiya as reorganized by Bedri Noyan (1912–1997) and Turgut Koca (1921–1997). According to Zarcone, Noyan's designated successor, Teoman Güre, was excluded from the direction of the Bektasiya in 2000 "because of its membership in Freemasonry" (Zarcone 2004: 279). This might appear to be a confirmation that the fundamentalist propaganda against all forms of Freemasonry exerts an influence wider than expected within Turkish Islam. But in fact the relationship between the Bektasiya and the esoteric wing of Turkish Freemasonry (as opposed to its secularist-Kemalist wing) have a long history (see Zarcone 2002), and Freemasonry has often been used as a vehicle for integrating Sufism and liberalism, with quite mixed results.

Problems within the Bektasiya have resulted in what Zarcone (2004: 280) calls "quite serious confusions," with Alevis taking over several Bektasi tekkes and converting them into Alevi meetinghouses. Some use the expression *Alevi-Bektasis*, which has a questionable historical status. In fact, one is in principle initiated into a Bektasi brotherhood, while one is born an Alevi and the initiation simply confirms a status acquired by birth. The Bektasiya originated as a Sufi and Sunni brotherhood (although with non-Sunni influences and verging on heterodoxy), while Alevism, whatever it may be considered, is not part of Sunnism. Alevism has reinvented itself during the course of the 20th century, however, trying to occupy the ultraliberal niche and claiming for itself the role of an ultra-Kemalist and occasionally openly Marxist community with a vaguely religious origin. In this sense, it has claimed that one may become an Alevi (rather than being born in the tradition), has initiated even Westerners, and has experienced its share of problems with the international crisis of Marxism. What exactly Alevism is today, or will be in the future, is a matter of considerable debate (see Kehl-Bodrogi, Kellner-Heinkele, and Otter-Beaujean 1997; Olsson, Özdalga, and Raudvere 1998; Shankland 2003; White and Jongerden 2003).

It is, at any rate, difficult for the Bektasis and the Alevis to reach an audience with no traditional or family attachment to their respective traditions. Those in the liberal and ultraliberal niches might prefer the works of individual Islamo-Kemalist thinkers such as Hasan Ali Yücel (1897–1961) who never created organized movements. In fact, as the religious economy theory would predict, *religious* liberal and ultraliberal organizations remain small because they have to compete with *nonreligious* secular groups that espouse similar values. Jenny B. White (2002) has confirmed that, particularly in the large world of Turkish women's organizations, the real competition for the organizations of political Islam comes from secular Kemalist groups, which are not religious. (For a different perspective, see Saktanber 2002.) Table 3 applies the proposed model of the Islamic religious market to Turkey, obviously in a somewhat schematic form.

Table 3: A Model of the Turkish Religious Market

Niches	Trends	Movements (Examples)
Ultrastrict	Ultrafundamentalism	Knights of the Great Orient
Strict	(a) Fundamentalism (b) Traditionalism	(a) Saadet Party (b) Süleymancis
Moderate-conservative	(a) Conservative political Islam (b) Mainline Sufism (c) Centrist Reformism	(a) AKP (b) Mainline Naksibendiya (c) Nur and neo-Nur groups
Liberal	(a) Islamo-Nationalism (b) Liberal Sufism	(a) Islamo-Kemalism (b) Melamiya, Bektasiya*
Ultraliberal	Modernism	Islamo-Marxism, Alevism

* The Sufi status of the Bektasiya is disputed.

What makes Turkey highly unusual among Islamic religious markets are its rich, persuasive, and varied offerings in the central moderate-conservative niche. Movements in this niche are both religiously and politically successful, and religion in general appears to be in very good health in a country that before World War II experienced one of the most sustained secularist policies of de-Islamization. In a survey conducted in 1999, 92% of the respondents reported that they kept the fast during the month of Ramadan, 46% said that they performed the five daily canonical prayers, and 62% said that they attended Friday prayers regularly (Çarkoglu and Toprak 2000: Table 6.1.2). In the 1999–2002 wave of the *World Value Survey*, in which questions were phrased somewhat differently, 71% of Turkish males reported religious service attendance "once a month or more" (it is traditional for women to visit mosques much less frequently than men), while 92% of all Turks (male and female) said that they "get comfort and strength from religion," and 82% reported that they "pray every day or more than once a week" (Inglehart et al. 2004: Tables F028, F064, F065). The Turkish case confirms that where the offerings in the moderate-conservative niche abound and the state limits its interference, fundamentalism is contained and ultrafundamentalism is marginalized. This should come as good news for those who are preoccupied with an allegedly unavoidable explosion of fundamentalism—if not ultrafundamentalism—in deregulated religious and political markets within the

Islamic world. The situations in Indonesia and Malaysia, large non-Arab Islamic countries where the religious economy appears to be in the process of being similarly deregulated, would tend to confirm these conclusions. Whether the same effects would follow deregula-tion in the Arab Muslim world is a prediction that the religious economy theory should dare to propose, although it could be tested only when truly deregulated Arab religious markets begin to appear.

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