

A WEBERIAN APPROACH TO TURKISH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract:

This paper discusses Weberian criticism of non-Protestant societies in the light of a recent cross-cultural research comparing Protestant, Catholic, and Muslim managers. The higher level of Protestant work ethic characteristics of Muslim Turkish managers was analysed in terms of Weber's criticism. Weber argued that Islamic societies were not able to develop the spirit of capitalism because of the negative consequences of oriental despotism, warrior ethic, and Sufism.

Özet:

Türk Girişimciliğine Weber'ci Bir Yaklaşım

Bu makalede Weber'in Protestan olmayan toplumlarda kapitalizme geçiş sorunları hakkında yaptığı eleştiriler, son zamanlarda yapılan bir ampirik araştırmanın bulguları ışığında ele alınmıştır. Bu bulgulara göre Müslüman Türk yöneticiler, Protestan İngiliz ve Katolik İrlandalı yöneticilerden daha yüksek seviyede bir çalışma ahlakı göstermişlerdir. Ortaya çıkan bu sonuç, Weber'in ortaya koyduğu Doğu despotizmi, savaçı ahlakı ve Tasavvuf'un etkileri bağlamında tartışılmıştır.

INTRODUCTION

A cross-cultural study revealed that practicing Muslim Turkish Managers had a considerably higher level of Protestant work ethic (PWE) characteristics than their Protestant counterparts (Arslan, 1999). Since the difference between the Turkish and the British-Irish group was considerable in that study, the

Keywords: Weber, work ethic, entrepreneurship, Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism.

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higher level of PWE characteristics of the Turkish group needs further explanation. This paper will discuss the possible social, economic and political reasons as well as the background of the findings in the light of Weber's criticism of Islamic societies. The rising Islamic entrepreneurial class in Turkey was also discussed in terms of Weber's thesis. Max Weber argued that Islamic societies were not able to develop 'the spirit of capitalism' because of the negative results of oriental-despotism, warrior ethic and Sufism. This paper will discuss these factors in the Turkish case.

OTTOMAN DESPOTISM

It is widely believed that the despotic nature of the Ottoman state prevented possible capitalistic developments in the Turkish Empire. Weber criticised Islamic societies in the early twentieth century in terms of oriental-despotism, other-worldly Sufism, and the warrior ethic. He underlined the point that these characteristics were the major reasons for the backwardness of Islamic societies (Weber, 1982). It should be remembered that Weber's criticism was mostly about the living Islam, which was based on tradition. Scriptural Islam, on the other hand, neither advocates despotism nor fatalistic Sufism. Living Islam has always been coloured by local cultures. In the nineteenth century, fatalism and other-worldly ideas were widespread among Muslim societies. A Turkish sociologist, Serif Mardin (1991) pointed out that certain Sufi movements confronted the despotic character of Islamic states. The higher level of PWE characteristics of Turkish managers should be interpreted in the light of the social, economic and political situation in Turkey. Therefore the Ottoman heritage remains important in that analysis. Since modern Turkish society is a continuation of the Ottoman Muslim societies and hence one should look into the Ottoman society in order to examine the background of Turkish managerial attitudes properly.

Western and Turkish historians usually described the Ottoman Empire as despotic while western historians used the term 'oriental-despotism' (Landes, 1998), Turkish historians, on the other hand, generally preferred 'centralised-despotism' (Timur, 1994). The term 'oriental-despotism' was rejected by Turkish historians because it refers to an absolutely arbitrary administration by a monarch, which was not true in the Ottoman case. It also implies an uncivilised inferior state compare to the civilised and superior West. This is similar to the point which Said (1978) argued in his 'Orientalism: western conceptions of the Orient'. He underlined the fact that the Orientalist thesis is a set of generalisations, structures, relationships and texts which together make up a discourse which defines the Orient from the western point of view. It

makes certain assumptions that the Orient fails to meet western standards of rationality, development and civilisation. This leads to generalised abstractions, concerning the inferior ways of the Orient, while the study itself is presented as scientific and objective. Said (1978) traces the development of Orientalism to the rise of European colonialism and notes that it came to justify European colonialism. The Orientalist view of Islamic society represents it as sterile and reactionary. Islam is described as being opposed to modernisation. This is also seen in Weber's writings to some extent.

Simply, Turkish historians argued that the despotic character of the Ottoman Empire was exaggerated by western historians because of their prejudice and even hostility towards the Turks. They also argued that Medieval European states were as despotic as the Turkish Empire but European despotism was decentralised by feudalism and was not visible or intensive as in the Turkish case. Secondly, some Turkish historians stressed the fact that the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman society inherited an important part of Byzantine legislative and administrative tradition and hence should be seen as continuation of the Byzantine Empire (Timur, 1994).

Unlike the Byzantine Empire, the Ottoman Empire was successful in fighting against any feudal development in order to save her centralised power. The Ottomans harmonised Byzantine legislation with Islamic legislation to strengthen their central authority. For instance, the Byzantine agrarian legislation of the tenth century was issued to keep the central government's authority over rural society (Angold, 1997). Turkish historians found considerable similarities between the Byzantine and Ottoman agrarian legislation such as Byzantine peasantry *paroikoi* and the Ottoman peasantry *reaya* (Timur, 1994).

Needless to say, any kind of despotism, whether it is oriental or centralised, would negatively effect property rights and therefore the development of capitalism. In Europe, since the ancient Greeks, the private property rights of free individuals have been acknowledged. Medieval European societies provided support for private property. Autonomous cities and towns were the basic element of the feudal system (Landes, 1998). On the other hand, in the Ottoman Empire, limitations on private property remained an important obstacle to capitalistic development. Land seizure was used along with capital punishment as a legal sanction after seventeenth century however, it became a means of persecution to the political rivals of the central authority. The struggle between the central power and local powers continued until nineteenth century.

In theory there was no private property right in land in the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan was the owner of all land on behalf of God. However, in practise, under the *timar* system (the Ottoman land legislation) and *vakıfs* (trusts and charities), a limited private ownership was allowed. It has been observed that when restrictions on property rights were diminished the production level increased. As Pamuk (1987) noted, after the dissolution of the *timar* system in the late sixteenth century, the control of the central authority over the local powers decreased. As a result, local authorities responded to increasing opportunities for commodity production for European markets by carving out large farms and increasing exploitation of the dependent peasantry (*reaya*).

It seems that the despotic character of the Ottoman state influenced attitudes towards wealth and authority in the Ottoman Empire. For example, people in the Ottoman Empire tended not to show their wealth because of the fear of property seizure by the state. When the empire reached her maximum expansion, namely after the second siege of Vienna, taxes upon subjects became heavier due to the lack of new conquests and tax-payers.

The Ottoman state ideology was based on the circle of justice. According to that principle, the state cannot survive without the military; the military cannot survive without the peasantry; and the peasantry cannot survive without justice. Therefore, the first and the most important duty of a sultan was to provide justice for his subjects (Ulgener, 1981a). However, in times of crisis, which were frequent, there was no security for property and lives, even for the Sultan himself. Although central-despotism does not refer to a continuous arbitrary administration, and sultans were bound the Islamic law, (*shari'a*) and other secular legislation, unlike Britain, the Ottomans did not have the requirements of a capitalistic development. They did not have modern technological knowledge, secure rights of private property and personal liberty with responsive, efficient and abstemious government. The Ottoman Empire and the Spanish Empire showed some similarities in terms of their unproductive character. The Spanish Empire conquered Central and South America and became rich and powerful in the sixteenth century. However, this unearned wealth was spent in luxury and war instead of in productive activity.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century the Ottoman administration acknowledged its backwardness and the superiority of the West. As a result, the modernisation or westernisation period started. The first constitutional document in Turkish history, the *sened-i ittifak* (the Bill of Alliance) was signed. For the first time in the Ottoman history, local powers (*ayans*) forced

the central government to sign a document which restricted the authority of the Sultan in favour of provincial *ayans*. *Sened-i-ittifak* was signed in 1808 but it did not live long. In 1820 a re-centralisation and modernisation programme started under the reign of Mahmut II. Throughout the century, the central government tried to curb the growing power of provincial groups, which very likely encouraged nationalistic tendencies. Mahmut II was the first modernist Sultan who wore western clothes and the fez. He re-organised the army and established new troops in western uniforms and abolished the old fashioned and backward janisaries. He also forced government officers to wear western clothes and his portrait was placed in government buildings. The endless secularism-Islamism dilemma of Turkish political life also started with the modernisation programme of Sultan Mahmut II.

In November 1839, another modernising sultan, Abdulmecid II, proclaimed the *Gulhane hatti humayunu* (the Rescript of the Rose Chamber). The declaration was similar to the Rights of Man in the West, and includes the equality of all before the law and the right of the individual to life, liberty and property. The secularist era had officially started with this declaration, also known as the *Tanzimat* (re-organisation) period. The Islamic empire acknowledged the equality of her non-Muslim subjects which was a violation of the sacred Islamic law, *Shari'a*.

In 1876, the first Turkish constitution was proclaimed by the Prime Minister Mithat Pasha. The first Ottoman Parliament was established. Sultan Abdulhamit II, reluctantly accepted the constitution and closed the Parliament using the Russian-Turkish war as an excuse. Abdulhamit II reigned as a totalitarian modernist sultan until the Young Turk revolution in 1908. On 24th July 1908, revolutionist army officers and their civil allies dethroned Abdulhamit II and proclaimed the new constitution and the Ottoman Parliament was re-established. After 1908, the last two sultans no longer had any political power, the final political authority resting with the Turkish army, which is still the main political power in modern Turkey.

It appears that the despotic character of the Ottoman Empire was a real difficulty for developing a capitalistic spirit because of the restrictions on property rights and the security of wealth. Although the Ottomans recognised the importance of trade, they did not see trade and industry as an honorable vocation. For example, Braudel (1991) stated that a fifteenth century Ottoman document included some advice to sultans and it emphasised the important role of merchants in the empire:

"Be kind to merchants, protect them and do not allow anybody to disturb them because the wealth of your country is based on their trade activities" (Braudel, 1991:155).

However, it should be noted that the Ottomans did not value trade any more than it valued the peasantry. Their protection of merchants should be understood as a requirement of the justice circle. According to the Ottoman ideology merchants and money changers were considered part of *reaya* class (peasantry and other taxable dependent people) because they were not in the administrative class. In fact, these merchants and money changers were the continuation of the Byzantine city aristocracy who had struggled for power in the Byzantine era (Timur, 1994).

Here, it appears that the Ottoman case supports Weber's criticism of oriental-despotism. Traditional Turkish culture supports his assumptions. For instance, poverty was exalted and even taken as a virtue. The state was seen as the father of the nation. Turks called the state 'the father-state' whose duty was to protect, educate and punish his children. Even modernists could not avoid this paternalistic tradition. Mustafa Kemal, the founder of modern Turkey took his surname Ataturk which means father of the Turks. The nick name of the ninth Turkish president, Suleyman Demirel, is *Baba* which also means father. Turkey was placed among high power distance countries in Hofstede's cross-cultural research. Power distance refers the level of inequality between superiors and their subordinates in an organisation. Turkey was the tenth country among forty. (Hofstede, 1980).

There is no doubt that individualistic and capitalistic tendencies could hardly develop under an autocratic tradition. A well-known Turkish humorous saying stresses that thinking is unnecessary for ordinary people: "harmful ideas flocks to thinking heads, our elders think better than us." Another well-known anecdote concerns a meeting between a group of left-wing students and the governor of Ankara in the 1930s. It also shows the influence of the despotic Ottoman heritage on the republican society. When the students were introduced to the governor, he scolded them angrily: "*Why are you making trouble? If communism is necessary to this country we can do it properly. It is none of your business.*"

After showing the despotic character of the Ottoman Empire and its impact on the Republic, the question remains: how did Muslim Turkish managers develop such high PWE values in this circumstances? The answer lies in the struggle between secularism and Islamism in Turkey. In the course of secularisation and modernisation, Islamists lost almost all the political and

administrative power they once had. Secularists took over central power and Islamists represented local power especially through Sufi movements. The state of law has established gradually in Turkey since 1876 which moderated the negative impacts of Ottoman despotism. Islamists needed economic power as well as political power for their struggle against the central power, namely the secular republic. Recent studies showed that despite the negative impacts of a despotic heritage Turkish managers had higher scores in n-achievement and PWE (Arslan, 1999, McClelland, 1961).

SUFISM AND THE WORK ETHIC

Weber's criticism of the Islamic ethic may be seen in three aspects. First, the despotic character of Islamic states prevented private property rights and the state of law. We noted above that the Ottoman Empire shows a despotic character. Secondly, the Muslim warrior ethic kept Muslims away from trade and industry. Thirdly, Sufism encouraged fatalism and other-worldly asceticism (Weber, 1982). From a Weberian point of view, this-worldly or inner-worldly asceticism represents the idea that one must seek spiritual salvation through this-worldly activities. This-worldly asceticism sanctifies economic activities as a service to God. On the other hand, other-worldly asceticism requires a way of life in which the believer must seek salvation in monastic life.

Sufism and Sufi movements were also accused by Muslim intellectuals in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries of encouraging backwardness in Islamic societies. The word 'Sufi' has come to denote an Islamic mystic, although its derivation is a matter of controversy.

The transition from asceticism to mysticism which occurred during the latter part of the ninth and early tenth centuries cannot be attributed solely to an influx of Christian or Buddhist ideology, since the germ was already inherent in Islam itself. As a result of this Sufism developed into a mixture of fundamentalism and pantheism in which God was perceived as being present in every aspect of his creation. Sufis were accused by orthodox Muslims and modernists of promoting magical practises and superstitious beliefs. From a Weberian point of view, Sufism was destroying religious individualism in Islam. According to orthodox Islamic teaching there is no intermediary between God and humankind and magical practises are forbidden. However, Sufism was undermining the rationality of orthodox Islam.

Weber would have had different views on the impact of Sufism if he had looked into the late nineteenth century Sufism in detail. In response to western

ascendancy some Sufi movements had started to pay more attention to this-worldly asceticism in the nineteenth century. Both in Islamic theology and in Sufism, this-world has always been considered as a preparation for the next but since nineteenth century this-worldly struggle by means of military, economy and education was more strongly emphasised in Sufism.

Sufi movements can be categorised into two groups after the nineteenth century, firstly, traditional other-worldly movements and secondly, progressive this-worldly movements. A key point to remember is that progressive movements did not ignore the other-world but they wanted to use this-worldly activities to catch up with the modern world so that they could defeat the evils of modernisation. As a result, they moved from folk Islam into orthodox Islam and its *jihad* consciousness. For instance, Sayyid Ahmed Barelwi (1786-1831) in India, Usman don Fudio (1754-1817), Ahmed al-Tijani (1737-1815) and Sidi al-Mukhtar (1729-1811) in Africa were early representatives of progressive Sufism. An interesting similarity between Calvinistic this-worldly asceticism and progressive Sufism may be seen in Sidi al-Mukhtar's views on wealth:

"He placed great emphasis upon the accumulation of wealth, and insisted that there was a clear link between economic success and religious piety. Wealth, he said, was an indication of one's dignity and status (Sirriyeh, 1999:19)."

Sirriyeh (1999) also notes that the discouragement of other-worldly asceticism and a commitment to a work ethic could already be observed in the Medieval Shadhili movement in North Africa. However, despite this-worldly character of progressive Sufism, a considerable capitalistic development was not observed among North African Muslims during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. This could be explained by the lack of technological knowledge or a convenient legal environment for capital accumulation.

Weber has been criticised by Western and Muslim scholars for misunderstanding Islam (Aydin, 1993). He took the Islamic ethic as an opposite of the Puritan ethic. For Weber, Islamic societies were not able to develop 'the spirit of capitalism' because of the warrior ethic, Sufism and patrimonial sultanism (Weber, 1982). Muslim sociologists argue that Weber inherited nineteenth century prejudices against Islam. He did not even take Islam as a proper religion; rather he understood it as the ideology of the Arab warrior class (Canatan, 1993). However it should be noted that Weber and other western scholars were criticising the nineteenth century Islamic world, in which fatalism and economic backwardness were common.

According to Weber, Islam, as a monotheistic belief, was spread under a warrior class and hence was not developed as a this-worldly ascetic religion. Salvation was based on conquering new lands. The monotheistic message of early Islam was diluted by Sufism. Consequently Islam became a militaristic and mystic religion. From that point Weber argued that Islam did not include an ethic which could produce 'the spirit of capitalism' or rational capitalism. Turner (1974) pointed out that Weber oversimplified Islam; it was in fact a religion of merchants and urban people, not just only of warriors and mystics. On the other hand, Turner (1974) stated that Weber had correctly analysed the anti-capitalistic nature of oriental sultanism. For him, Islamic dynasties tried to keep their political monopoly by preventing autonomous institutions in society. As a result of this, Islamic societies did not develop the kinds of institutions which were characteristic of European societies.

A Turkish economic historian, Mustafa Aydın (1993), stated that although Weber was partly right in his analysis of Islamic societies he did not pay attention to the potential of the Islamic ethic. Despite the fact that religion is a motivating factor in Weber's system he did not apply this approach to Islam. Patrimonial state did not exist in early Islam and there was in fact a state of Law (Shari'a). There were also well organised cities in the Abbasid Caliphate and in Muslim Spain. Finally, Islam is more than a warrior ethic. Islamic salvation requires two basic elements; 'faith and good works'. 'Good works' include this-worldly activities, which are seen as worship. Aydın (1993) also argued that Islam encourages industry in this world.

It is ironic that Max Weber's uncle, Karl David Weber, who was a convert to Calvinism from Lutheranism, once told Marianne Weber, Max Weber's wife, confidentially that he would prefer Islam because Christianity favoured the enjoyment of wine at communion, and directed the common people to eternal salvation in the hereafter instead of encouraging industry in this world (Roth, 1993).

The Ottoman Turkish empire in sixteenth century was thought by some westerners to be more prosperous and superior to Europe. For example, the imperial ambassador at Constantinople, the Flemish humanist Ghislin de Busbecg, wrote pessimistically in 1560:

'On their side are the resources of a mighty empire... experience and practice in fighting,... habituation in victory, endurance of toil, unity, order, discipline, frugality and watchfulness. On our side is public poverty, private luxury... broken spirit, lack of endurance and training

...Can we doubt what the result will be ? (Koenigsberger and Mosse, 1973:192).

It should be noted that the Flemish ambassador detected some important aspects of the PWE such as frugality, discipline, toil and order. More importantly these virtues were also sanctified by Islam. However, this mentality could not find a way to industrial capitalism, probably because of the limitations on property rights and negative impacts of the other-worldly Sufism.

Turner (1974) pointed out that Weber's thesis supported the main differences between the rational and systematic West and the arbitrary and economically unstable Islamic civilisation. Turner (1974) also argued that Weber repeated the ideas of the nineteenth century philosophers and politicians on the difference of the West and Islam, and his interpretations of Islam was mostly indirect, inconsistent and emotional. Weber was criticised by Turner (1974) for not looking into orthodox Islam objectively, and for taking Islam as a hedonistic religion which was incapable of developing 'the spirit of capitalism'. Despite his negative attitudes towards Islam, Weber did not think that it was impossible for Muslims to develop a work ethic. For instance, he argued that Islam was not an obstacle to capitalism as a belief for individuals but that the Islamic state and its inefficiency, and Islamic Law had hindered the development of capitalism in Islamic societies. For example, he saw Turkish Tartar people as modern entrepreneurs in Russia. He underlined the irrational and arbitrary character of the Islamic state which resulting from oriental despotism.(Turner, 1974).

The difference between rationality and irrationality can be seen in terms of separating faith from magic in religion. This is what Weber calls rationalisation and is essence of 'the spirit of capitalism'. For example, in Catholicism, the church has a magical power, transubstantiation, in communion. Every religious ritual in this respect, can be seen as a form of magic from an anthropological point of view. Therefore, the less ritual a religion has the more rationalistic it is. Thus, rationalisation is a progress through denying any sacrament or ritual in religion. Quakerism and other Puritan sects represent the peak of rationalisation in Christianity.

Although there is no official church organisation or priesthood in Islam, visits to shrines; some Sufi ceremonies and beliefs such as ritual spelling the names of God and intermediary role of *shaykhs* are irrational and therefore, against what orthodox Islam stands for. It should be remembered that on the one hand, Weber correctly criticised the other-worldly character of traditional Sufism and the absence of property rights in the Ottoman Empire but on the

other hand he was not aware of the emerging progressive Sufism in the nineteenth century.

It seems that after the 1950s traditional other-worldly Turkish Sufism transformed itself into a this-worldly asceticism. This has been developed as a reaction to modernism and secularism. It may be argued that a this-worldly Turkish Sufism began to play a similar role to Calvinism which encouraged 'the spirit of capitalism' in Northern Europe. A power struggle between secularists and Islamists is especially important in developing such a spirit.

WARRIOR ETHIC

The Islamic warrior ethic has a very important role in Weber's criticism of Islam. He saw Islam simply as an ideology of the Arab warrior class (Weber, 1982). However, both Islamic and western sociologists criticised him for exaggerating the role of the warrior ethic in Islam. As Braudel (1991) pointed out, Islam was born as an urban trade civilisation. Muslim merchants had an important role in Muslim society.

Jihad or holy war has played a considerable role in the history of Islam but this was not necessarily an obstacle to capitalistic development. *Jihad* simply means struggle. It may be an armed or a financial or an intellectual struggle for the sake of the faith. In the Islamic tradition military *jihad* is considered a lesser *jihad* than one's great *jihad*, spiritual growth (Çetinoglu, 1997). Some argued that the warrior ethic could have been transformed into an entrepreneurial spirit in a productive economy. However, the Ottoman economy was based on agriculture and the economic motivation for *jihad* was to collect more tax from peasantry and trade. Its ideology, on the other hand, was to introduce Islam to non-Muslims, and to spread justice and order to whole world. The warrior ethic was an indivisible part of Ottoman despotism. The Ottoman Empire was not based on productivity but her main aim was to tax her subjects as much as possible. For that reason conquests were necessary to survival and the Islamic concept of *jihad* (holy war) was used as an ideological weapon to encourage Muslim subjects to new conquests.

The most important element of the Ottoman administrative system in terms of Turkish work attitudes was the *millet* (community) system. According to the *millet* system, Ottoman subjects were divided by their religious beliefs. For example, all Orthodox Christians were one *millet* regardless their national origin. Religious leaders were also an important part of the Ottoman administration. Each *millet* was autonomous in its internal affairs, including

religious practices and civil law. Religious tolerance was an attractive aspect of the Ottoman system. As Hearder (1966) noted, in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire differed from the rest of Europe in one significant respect. Whereas European countries had allowed no Muslim community to survive, the Turks officially tolerated Christian communities. The only violation of religious freedom resulted from the *Devshirme* system, in which Christian boys were taken by the army and educated as Muslims for their future careers in the army and the civil bureaucracy.

Not only did the *millet* system include religious freedom it also produced division of labour based on religious community, thus destroying any possible capitalistic development among Turks. Non-Muslims, especially Greeks, Armenians and Jews were responsible for trade and money changing. Muslim Greeks and Slavs constituted the army and bureaucracy by the help of the *devshirme* system. After the conquest of Constantinople, the Ottoman dynasty tried to destroy the Turkish aristocracy and possible rivals for the throne, and succeeded. For this reason they kept Turks away from any important administrative or military role in the empire. Even the word Turk became an insult. The remnants of the Byzantine aristocracy kept important administrative positions as Christian or Muslim Greeks (Timur, 1994). Some modern Greek historians like Kitsikis (1996), described the Ottoman Empire as a Turko-Greek empire or an Islamic Byzantine empire rather than an alien Turkish empire. Indeed, Turks were mostly peasants, though few of them had administrative positions until the last two centuries. Turks were accepted by the army in seventeenth century. A small number of Turkish merchants and money changers had eventually disappeared in the nineteenth century.

As a consequence of the *millet* system, the Greek, Armenian and Jewish populations of the empire were prosperous in comparison with poor peasant Turks. Greek novelist Dido Sotiriou (1997) successfully described the economic differences between Greeks and Turks in the beginning of the twentieth century in western Anatolia in her novel 'Farewell to Anatolia', where Turks were living in poverty and Greeks generally constituted the middle class. In the early twentieth century, Turkish nationalists recognised the lack of capitalistic spirit in the Turkish nation. They accused the Ottoman system and Islam of the economic and social backwardness of the Turks.

The devastating impact of the *millet* system on Turkish economic life was not criticised by Muslim clerics or Sufis, because they saw it as a part of the Islamic system. In addition, Muslim religious bodies were not separated from the state. Modernist attempts were seen as blasphemy by the religious

classes. For instance, the nick name of Sultan Mahmut II was 'the infidel Sultan' because of his westernising reforms. Since the 1820s westernising secularists, who were bureaucrats and army generals, accused Muslim clerics and Sufis of preventing reforms and encouraging backwardness. In fact, the Ottoman administrative system was essentially the responsible factor in the backwardness of the Turks rather than İslâmic belief itself.

After the 1908 revolution, Islamic elites has begun to loss their power in public sphere. The Turkish Army became the most secularist and modernist organisation in the Empire. It appears that after the World War II, It is understood by the Islamists that trade and industry were the only places in which they can create their own economical and political power. While the military dimension of *jihad* was ignored, the economical and political dimension of *jihad* was encouraged. This process helped to overcome the negative consequences of Ottoman *millet* system and warrior ethic. It may be argued that in the course of time the traditional militarist tendencies among Islamists transformed into a entrepreneurial ethic.

CONCLUSION

From a Weberian point of view, Islamic societies have three disadvantages in developing a work ethic or 'the spirit of capitalism'. These are (1) oriental despotism, (2) warrior ethic and (3) other-worldly Sufism. Despite a long despotic heritage, the negative consequences of Ottoman despotism on the Turkish work attitudes have gradually been decreased since democratic reforms starting from 1839. Property rights have also been secured in the late Ottoman era.

As a result of secularism-Islamism conflict in Turkey, Islamic warrior ethic or the spirit of *jihad* has been replaced with an entrepreneurial attitude to work. Since Islamists lost their power in military and public space they sought to get power in trade and industry. In addition, Islamic way of life forbids certain leisure activities such as gambling, alcohol drinking, and dancing. It is believed that this Islamic Puritanism discouraged consumerism and fostered a work-oriented attitude among practising Muslims.

It appears that traditional Sufism has transformed itself into a modernist, this-worldly Sufism. The political struggle against the secularist establishment encouraged practising Muslims to adopt the modernist idea of economic progress. A minority psychology possibly helped to develop a work ethic. It seems that the rising Islamic entrepreneurial class in Turkey is bringing its own

work ethic. This work ethic includes most of Protestant work ethic characteristics.

An analytic overview of Turkish history shows that Weberian criticism of oriental despotism, warrior ethic, and Sufism has to be accepted in the Turkish case. The sources of the high level PWE characteristics of practising Muslim Turkish managers lies in the new modernist, progressive and this-worldly Turkish Sufism. The key questions, however, are: to what extent Islamic ethic does contribute to the work ethic in Turkey; and similarly, to what extent does Islamic capital contribute to the Turkish economy. Although we do not have empirical findings, it may be argued that practising Muslim managers are more work-oriented than their secularist counterparts due to their minority psychology and religious motivation. In short, the higher PWE values of Turkish managers can be explained by their belief system, and the political and economical situation in which they work.

On one hand, it appears that nineteenth century Weberian criticism of Islam in terms of economic behaviour is not valid in the modern Turkish case. On the other hand, it seems that religious motives are still important in business life. A clear conclusion of this paper is that Turkish Sufi movements are playing a role which is similar to that of the Calvinists of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth century in Northern Europe. In practice, the role of the Islamic ethic and heritage should be considered as an important factor in business ethics in Turkey.

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