

**A Weberian Critique of Weber:  
Re-Evaluation of Sabri F. Ülgener's Studies  
on Socio-Economic Structure of Turkey**

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**Abstract.** Efforts to understand the transformation that has been experienced in Turkey for two centuries in the areas of politics, economics and intellect indispensably lead us to Sabri F. Ülgener. His unique approach in examining socio-economic changes, his different methodology and concepts that are developed by him; his researches stemming from economics and expanding through law and literature are referred as important initiations for understanding the differentiation in world-view (zihniyet) through huge historical changes. Ülgener, actually investigated the process of modernization in historical manner from a theoretical approach. In this manner, his analysis on world-view is a valuable contribution in offering explanations for current modern transformations after Ottoman society. As it is indicated in many studies about him, Ülgener is one of the exceptional thinkers who can use the data that were collected through many fields like economic, sociology, history and literature in his researches. In this article, theoretical framework of Ülgener's analysis on world-view is to be examined in a critical view of point.

**Keywords.** Economic Sociology, Culture, Sabri Ülgener, Economic Mind.

**JEL.** Z13.

**1. Introduction: Sources and Emergence of Ülgener's Thought**

**T**here are four main frame that gave shape to the thought of Sabri F. Ülgener (1911-1983) who was brought up in the time of the foundation of the Republic and therefore, who is actually one of the first outcomes of the Republican environment. The first one was the characteristics of family environment in which he spent his childhood. Secondly, the main features that occurred through the issues that his generation faced and experienced are important factors in his nurturing. The third effect that shaped his thoughts was German social scientists whom he met at the Faculty of Economics. Through them, he met German historical school, especially Max Weber and placed him in the methodological and theoretical center for his own researches. The fourth factor was the problems of social change which emerged along with development, modernization, integration to world system issues that Turkey encountered after World War II. Ülgener performed his historical analyses while trying to find applicable solutions for these kinds of problems.

Ülgener was born in Istanbul in 1911. He is a descendant of an intensely Ottoman soldier class which related to Seyh Şamil in mother side. The family

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included important people who had roles in near Turkish history; being first of all among the Committee of Union and Progress and then in Kemalist cadres. The father side of Ülgener was actually known as being scientists (*ulema*) in Safranbolu. His grandfather İsmail Necati Efendi and father Mehmet Fehmi Efendi were one of the important members of *ulema*; to such an extent that they used to organize royal talks (*Huzur Sohbetleri*) before the presence of the Sultan. His father also delivered fiqh and Mecelle (law) lectures in Faculty of Politics (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*), Faculty of Divinity (*İlahiyat*) and Law Faculty in İstanbul Darülfünûn (University). He was appointed to Istanbul Müfti Office after declaration of the Republic and served in this post till the end of his life. Ülgener added “F” letter which corresponds to “Fehmi” as his middle name in order to show his respect to his father after his death. We can easily see the traces of this family environment that shaped Ülgener’s thoughts in his scientific aspect. Ülgener’s deep knowledge about classic Ottoman culture is on the utmost level and he built his thought on the basis of *sufi* and *divan* literature texts and poems.<sup>2</sup>

The second huge factor that shaped Ülgener’s thought was the intellectual and scientific environment of Turkey in the early period of his academic development. According to Sayar (1998) who was a student of Ülgener and wrote a monograph about him, he was a member of 1910 generation that gave its main directions to Turkish thought and he reflected this generation’s features. As Sayar’s words, 1880 generation declared the Republic; 1900 established and 1910 criticized it. As members of the older generation Ziya Gökalp, Osman Nuri Ergin, Yahya Kemal Beyatlı, Fuad Köprülü, Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı, Peyami Safa, Hilmi Ziya Ülken and Ahmed Hamdi Tanpınar can be counted among people who established the Republic, and they influenced 1910 generation’s thinking structures. In exchange to this founder generation’s conservatist approach, 1910 generation entered into Turkish thought mainly in 1940’s and they had a critical approach against the current socio-political system in different terms and styles. Moreover, although 1900 generation had an ideology that was shaped through concrete aims like saving the nation and re-building the state, this collective mind-set experienced some changes with fractions occurred in 1940’s. The generation Ülgener belonged to built their own intellectual and political views in a different manner than the previous generation with influences of political and economic structural changes in the related period. Some important people of this generation like Niyazi Berkes, Mümtaz Turhan, Nurettin Topçu, Behice Boran and Kemal Tahir produced different perspectives on the current discussions that were shaped by the rapid political and social changes (Sayar, 1998, pp. 223–224).

Ülgener started studying in Faculty of Law in 1932 after completing his education in Istanbul High School. He became an assistant in Institute of Economy and Sociology in the same university after graduating in 1935. In 1936, he started working in the newly established Faculty of Economics in Istanbul University. This faculty was founded by some migrant German scientists like F. Neumark, Wilhelm Röpke, Gerhard Kessler, Alexander Rüstow, Alfred İsaac who came to Turkey in 1933 after Hitler came into power in Germany. Ülgener, who learnt German language with his own efforts, started making translations for these instructors’ lectures. Sayar (2013, p. 289) indicates that Rüstow in particular had a major effect on Ülgener’s interest in German Historical School and also on his meeting with Werner Sombart and Max Weber. According to Sayar, he was the main influence for Ülgener to adopt the Weber sociology which enabled him to produce unique studies in the field of economic world-view.

<sup>2</sup> Here, I do not want to mention the life of Ülgener in detailed. Those who are interested in the subject can refer to Ahmet Güner Sayar’s works in different volumes.

Orhan Türkdoğan (1985) names Ülgener as the “Turkish Weber” for his proximity to Weber in methodology, concepts and analyses. Türkdoğan (1985, p. 108) depicts Ülgener as a Turkish intellectual who tried to create an evaluation about economic system in terms of ethics and world-view<sup>3</sup> with a special reference to Weber. Sayar also mentions him as the “Turkish Weber.” However he thinks that labeling him as an agent of a western sociologist in Turkey is full of exaggeration (Sayar, 1998, pp. 251–258, For a further discussion about this concept, please see 2006). Ülgener remained in Weberian atmosphere in all his studies during his lifespan, and Ülgener’s family and social background, disciplinary framework of his studies, concepts and methodologies, resemblance of their main problematic issues could be seen as the main reasons for this naming. This naming which initially might be seen as a compliment actually refers to his thought limits and restrains them within a specific context. In the following years, Ülgener made several Weber critiques and tried to build a new research framework for himself in order to get rid of this framework.

Another huge factor that shaped the thoughts of Ülgener was the current developments in Turkey after 1945. Turkey adopted a liberal developmental policy depending in particular on the Marshall Plan, therefore, the direction of historical analyses in the framework of this issue started to change. Regression issue which was previously mentioned within political analyses started thereafter to be investigated within economic terms like having a different point of view about state’s role in economy, entrepreneurship, creation of capital and private property. . Not having an entrepreneur middle class which was heavily needed in those years was an opposite situation along with the common developmental approach in the period. Further more as an urgent problem, the need to investigate and analyze social factors that hindered entrepreneurship to emerge in the society showed up. Likewise, while the necessities for creating a modern society were being analyzed within the framework of modernization models, the need to reveal factors that restrain this emergence was obviously seen. On the other hand in solving social problems, the emergence of socialist perspective as a political regime and as an alternative explanation in economic development and his finding an opportunity to be represented in academia have created a current political context for his historical explanations. For this reason Ülgener’s historical explanations start to represent an alternative liberal position.<sup>4</sup> It is possible to see a close connection between direction of his researches and the development of liberal free market economy in Turkey.

## 2. Ülgener’s World-View Analysis

Having shaped his thought around these four pillars, Ülgener chose the effect of world-views on socio-economic structures as a research field for himself with the influence of Weber. Like Weber, Ülgener who also had a law background tended towards studying economics and sociology, and then shaped his studies around the concepts of “ethics of economics” and “economic world-view”. In this framework, he focused on “Ottoman society in the period of decline” and tried to explain roots of the changes in world-view in this period using his deep sufism and divan literature knowledge he obtained through his family (Uğur, 1983).

<sup>3</sup>He uses Turkish word *zihniyet* as a central element in his analysis. In this definition, it can be said that he added this word the meaning of *weltanschauung* which generally means world view in German cultural world. I will use “world-view” to define *zihniyet* throughout this paper.

<sup>4</sup>As it is seen this is fitting global encounter between Marx and Weber, Please see. (Sunar, 2012)

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According to Ülgener, world-view refers to the overall material and non-material collection of a certain period. In this context, he ascribes this concept a meaning of *weltanschauung*, which basically means worldview in German cultural world. In addition to this, he sometimes used this word interchangeably for the spirit of the era, ethos and culture.<sup>5</sup> Although usage of world-view seemed resemblance to morality, Ülgener was more interested in the reflections of these norms in social life rather than more internal dimensions of moral norms. In short, world-view is “to adopt an intimate approach to the world and world relations!” (Ülgener, 2006b, p. 14). However, this is not about a personal adoption but represents a social existence:

“World-view is a symbol of a collection of rules and regulations which can be generally repeated from the memory to make himself/herself and other people believe in the value judgments that are adopted in this direction to be right -whatever the direction is- and also to keep the attention alive in that point.” (Ülgener, 2006b, p. 14)

Ülgener tried to build a comprehensive framework to explain disintegration by investigating the changes that occur in an overall world-view which emerges in a specific society during a specific term.

No need to say that the interpretive approach that Ülgener adopted in the background of this analysis has a major importance. Interpretive approach focusing on social act pays significant attention to the meanings that actors attach to deeds. In this framework, in order to identify the real importance of social act, the imposed meanings should be found out. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to understand the *mind framework* of the era, and to define the actual wider changes that direct the meaning change. As Weber did, Ülgener put changes in the quest of religious salvation to the center and especially focused on the change on man’s understanding of destiny which shapes the individuals’ main attitude toward the world. In this framework, formation and changes in Islam’s understanding of destiny are placed in the center of his economic ethic analysis. Without doubt, this research project that seems to be totally Weberian has some other components. One of the most important of those is to try to find new solutions for the materialist explanations which are brought forward by Marxists for Ottoman social form and the underdevelopment of Turkey. Actually, this is an appropriate situation for him to get to know more of Weber.<sup>6</sup> For although Ülgener was under the influence of Weber from the beginning of his studies, his actual recognition and adoption of Weber into his theoretical framework happened in two years (1947-1948) that he spent in Harvard University. Here, Ülgener met Weber who also passed through the filters of American social sciences and thus was able to produce contemporary explanations against socialism; then he grew connections within this recognition for his following years. For example, the discussions and disputes that he had with one of his colleague in the same department, Sencer Divitçioğlu, who produced Marxist explanations about Ottoman social form shows that he was aware of the political usage of the Weberian thought.<sup>7</sup>

Another connection of Ülgener with Weberian theory is the problem of development which was placed at the center of social scientific researches in Turkey in 1950’s- as in the whole world. Ülgener went to USA with the

<sup>5</sup>For the discussion about world-view, Please see. (Ülgener, 2006b, pp. 13–17)

<sup>6</sup> Although Ülgener was influenced by Weber in all his studies, the time that he actually learnt and put him in the center of his own researching programs was happened in the two year (1947-1948) that he spent in Harvard University.

<sup>7</sup> This work can be utilized to see Ülgener from Divitçioğlu perspective (Divitçioğlu, 2012, pp. 105–109)

scholarship financed by the newly implemented Marshall Plan in Turkey. In these years, developmental theories started being shaped within this plan which had important roles in re-shaping world after the war. These theories later on enabled the modernization theories to emerge. Modernization theories suggested that non-Western countries should follow the Western model in order to develop and to achieve the societal changes. According to this explanation depending on the unique Western modernization model, in order to implement the Western developmental system it is necessary to make reforms on economy, politics and social life.

### 3. Main Theme of Ülgener

After meeting Weber in the aforementioned framework, the main question of Ülgener was also shaped by Weber's own questions. Weber asked two questions - one negative and one positive- as he explained modernity: Why did the modernity emerge in West? And why could not the modernity occur out of the West?<sup>8</sup>Weber depended on the first question in his analysis of Western societies while focusing on the second question in analyzing non-Western societies. Therefore he examined the west within positive causality chains while analyzing the others within negative causality chains. In this framework, it has been claimed several times that Weber built a system of thought within a selective causality from the current situation to backwards in the history.<sup>9</sup> Similar to Weber, Ülgener searched for the main reasons of the underdevelopment, lack of modernization or with his own sayings, disintegration of the Ottomans. The main theme of his studies was to explain the factors that hindered the development of capitalism in Ottoman societal form. Negative questions such as "Why could not we embrace capitalism?", "Why could not we become modern?" "Why did we stay backward?" shaped the intellectual and scientific atmosphere of 1950's, a period that Turkey was in a search of development and trying to take place in the capitalist Western block. Ülgener searched answers for these kinds of questions via the studies on world-view.

As also mentioned above, similar discussions existed in the whole world in that period since many countries became independent by breaking colonial ties. In this period in which modernization theories were quite widespread and definitive, analyses stemming from American academy about the postcolonial modernization of non-Western world became very popular and was spreading throughout the world. Parallel to this, modernization and development issues were very popular in Turkish academy and the concepts that were produced in the US were being rapidly transferred into Turkey. In addition to Ülgener, some people like Mümtaz Turhan and Şerif Mardin investigated Ottoman-Turkish social form with the conceptual tools that were by-products of modernization literature.

The negative characteristics of the question that Ülgener asked became a factor that determined his way of analysis. Like Weber, his definition of his starting point as a negative backward question about the reasons why capitalism did not develop in Muslim communities specified the main characteristics of his analyses. In this context, Ülgener made evaluations by placing modern system's rationalism at the center as Weber did. According to him Islamic system of faith which he normally regards as rational became distant from rationalism because of the spread of mystical religiosity and sufi fortune understanding. This understanding may be

<sup>8</sup>Weber always investigated the West and non-West in a duality. The introductory work which was created by Weber for publishing of his total works a few days before he died (please see [Weber, 1992](#)). This introductory work represents a key to understand his complete works and ideas (please see [Nelson, 1974](#))

<sup>9</sup>For a broad discussion about the subject, please see ([Sunar, 2012](#))

represented in a saying: "a bite and a cardigan". With the diffusion of this understanding the Islamic belief system became more mystical.<sup>10</sup> Through this way of thinking, according to him "hand works started to be considered much more valuable than daily earnings." This fate understanding that leads people to "be content with the less and to resign ate (tawakkul)" has an effect of "education and making people not want nothing" (Ülgener, 2006a, p. 95). This submissive fate belief system that Ülgener frequently called as "oriental fatalism" found an accurate representation in the Ahi unities that represented that period's profession organization. In these organizations, any kind of profession group was expected not to have ambition for the world: "Close the door of passion and open the door of content and sustenance; close the door of fullness and savor and open the door of hunger and asceticism; close the door of people, open the door of God"<sup>11</sup>(Ülgener, 2006a, p. 97).

Ülgener placed great importance to analyze the transformation from a dynamic fate doctrine to a submissive fate belief system. According to him, this did not remain as a transformation in only belief system; at the same time it affects socio-cultural and economy-political structures. The most important effect of those is the preparation of a ground on which political system can easily manage the masses.

Amenable and ample human-being who are ready to be shaped in any way by the rulers would be prepared with the advices in the way of "submissiveness" and "hopelessness", for not only the sub-levels of the sects and artisan associations but also for submission to the political system through ruler's self-interest (Ülgener, 2006a, pp. 115–116).

Therefore, as Weber did, Ülgener reached a definition of oriental patrimonialism. Depending on this definition political system, by consciously making fatalism popular created a control mechanism for the masses. And this constituted the main factor why Ottoman could not become modern.

Ülgener tried to give answers for the question of "why did we remain backward?" by placing in the center the transformation of emphases in the economic world-view from working style to a mystic nature. In this effort, the analysis of *fütüvetnames* (Turkish-Islamic rules and regulations guide) had a special importance. Ülgener in his *İktisadi Çözümlemenin Ahlak ve Zihniyet Dünyası* (The Sphere of Morality and World-View in Economic Analyses) (2006a) regards *fütüvetnames* as a natural part of craft guild organizations which were also a natural part of the economical system in the Middle Ages. In this study, Ülgener tried to show that serious changes occurred in the economic mentality through an analysis of the important pieces from Sufi literature and *fütüvetnames*, which he regarded as the basic texts in moral thought in the Middle Ages.<sup>12</sup> The most serious change occurred in the very meaning of *futuvvet* (conquests). In early period works, *futuvvet* used to mean active and transformative virtues like bravery (manhood) and generosity, but in time the meaning of it changed to passive and personal goodness like ascetic and solitary (*i'tikaf*) actions because of the changing socio-cultural and economic-political structures. In particularly the change experienced in the emphasis from external conquest toward the internal one is an important indicator. This has created an introvert society.

<sup>10</sup>Mustafa Arslan claimed that Ülgener conceived the current religious thinking as the name of differentiation the Islam from its first and essential situation and the long and harsh way of turning to inside and getting closed to outside. According to this, religious thought referred to "the beliefs of the regions that Islam expanded and the general atmosphere that Islamic factors included" (Arslan, 2010, p. 56).

<sup>11</sup>"Hırs kapısını bağlaya, kanaat ve rızık kapısını aç, tokluk ve lezzet kapısını bağlaya, açlık ve riyazet kapısını aç, halktan yana kapısını bağlaya, hak kapısını aç."

<sup>12</sup>For a broad discussion about the subject, please see (Yazıcıoğlu, 2009).

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The beginning of this negative change that he called as medievalization was the 15-16th centuries which were seen as the rising period of Ottomans. In other words, while the West was getting out of the medieval age, Ottomans was returning to it. Ülgener emphasized medievalization in very broad means. According to him, the first indicator of it is going back to the values of the Middle Age (Ülgener, 2006a, 9, 24, 70, 169, 173). The belief that Middle age constituted an internal accurate, constant and solid time frame is an important detail that also indicates Ülgener's conception of history. According to him, the most important value of this era was to deny the personal will (Ülgener, 2006a, 115, 82–83). This kind of lack of will would naturally end with authoritarian and hierarchical pressure (Ülgener, 2006a, 109). Therefore, according to him, the most natural outcome of this kind of a return to middle age was lack of capital and enterprise (Ülgener, 2006a, 18–19).

A 'Middle Ages' which is surrounded by a soul of *agas* and notables pertaining to a great land regime, to a claim of birth and lineage, to an understanding of wealth based on land (on the contrary to the worldview of work based on moveable wealth), and by traditional craft-guild morals and an emerging mystical atmosphere. (Ülgener, 2006a, 21).

Moreover, Ülgener found the reason why capitalism could not develop in the inability to overcome the Middle ages worldview. It is actually interesting that a meticulous historian like Ülgener brought forward this kind of certain borders without questioning if the Middle ages which was defined as stable in European communities existed also in Islamic communities or not. The most important reason of this was to try to produce an explanation for this kind backwardness. The negative character of the first question he asked in the beginning (Why did not modernity emerge in non-Western communities?) resulted in going from outcomes to reasons, and this also resulted in the fact that any previous period from the actual time and period is in all cases seen as a Middle Age. According to him, the main reason of this medievalization was the ascetic development of religious thoughts which also corresponds to the will of political intellectuals. The Sufist ethic which gained the Islamic ethic an esoteric characteristics and thus made people submissive dominated over administrative and territorial area and hindered the potential developments in the society. Ülgener claimed that the main factor which affected medievalization was not the doctrinal Islam ethics but the distorted Sufist ethics which changed over the time:

“The first Islamic understanding without doubt was full of sayings and ideas to wander in the world with the *cihad* mission and promoted worldly gain individually. However, this dynamic and movable life understanding was transformed in to a philosophy of laziness and passivity which did not advise to move from a place and territory since the cities became cities of artisans.” (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 136)

In this context, an example of Ülgener is interesting. The “*harif*” word derived from “*hırfet*” and which used to mean craftsman in a positive way relating to arts and crafts has transformed in a way that reflects the change in Ottoman economic means. The word has gained a negative meaning as “*herif*” which today means rough and coarse man.

### 4. A Weberian Critique of Weber?

Ülgener's approach about Ottoman's backwardness that we tried to summarize in this particular study is actually a problematic approach from its roots. Its analysis includes many valuable data in factual context, but in its explanatory connection points it only means to re-create the classical orientalist point of view.

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The approach that describe Islamic communities as nomadic social forms which depended only on “conquest” which means plundering here depends on oriental despotism theories just like it is in Weber. According to this theory, political area in Islam communities by hegemonizing other aspects brought hindrances on rationalism and encouraged the ascetic religious belief system which can be defined as denying world benefits.

Even if not in the periods that Ülgener completed his own intellectual development, these approaches were strongly criticized after 1960's. Ülgener started approaching the first concepts that built the conceptual framework of his initial studies critically, having been influenced by the literature developed after 1960's and especially by Rodinson<sup>13</sup> (2007) and Turner (1974). He criticized Weber with a Weberian point of view in his work *Zihniyet ve Din: İslam, Tasavvuf ve Çözülme Devri İktisat Ahlakı (World-View and Religion: Islam, Tasavvuf and Economic Ethics of Deterioration Period)*. Ülgener by focusing particularly on the methodological mistakes of Weber tried to depict that Islam communities did not get backwards completely but only in political terms.

When we analyze the critiques that Ülgener turned to Weber in this context - actually the ones that relate to himself too-, we see that Ülgener blames Weber for not strictly following his (Weber's) own way and that these critiques generally focus on the methodological aspect of his thought. Ülgener claimed that his way of presenting phenomena which happened in different times, religions and communities in the same argument resulted in the omitting of some phenomena while some other parts were exaggerated. (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 51). Ülgener thought that Weber's comparison was problematic:

... In one edge on the comparison Calvinism and the related cults which were parts of Christianity in a specified historical time span (*post-reformation period*) is placed; while in the other edge an image of Islam which was almost excluded out of history is placed as a contrast! One is in a relatively specific historical time span of which the beginning and ending period and region are known; while the other is in an unspecified platform of which the beginning and ending period is not known! (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 58)

Ülgener argued that the main reason of this situation was that Weber acted in an elective manner while analyzing the Islamic communities, even ignoring his own methods, and he claimed that this approach narrows down the value of Weber's researches (Ülgener, 2006c, pp. 167–168) “When the first step is hasty and false, the following ones even go over bounds.” (Ülgener, 2006c, 57–58, 71). In this context, Ülgener claimed that the approach of Weber for Islamic communities remained as “the weakest link of the chain or one of the weakest ones” and many of the ultimate results were baseless and one sided decisions. According to Ülgener this was not an approach only pertaining to Weber but it is a common point for many western researchers and historians who made studies about Islamic communities; and the main purpose of this selective manner was to prove the uniqueness of Western civilizations by portraying Islam and Far-east religions as opposites of the West. Therefore, Weber built a society model which was logical on one aspect but mystic and personal in the other aspect. “In order to make the [c]ontrast more obvious, one side is depicted with the exact opposite colors of the other part” (Ülgener, 2006c, pp. 56–57, 64).

<sup>13</sup> Rodinson referred to Ülgener in the introductory part of his book. However, this referral is not to critiques but to other works. On the other hand, in those years, the critiques of Ülgener to Weber had not been formulized, yet.

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Ülgener criticized then on-logical and constant Islam Picture depicted by Weber within these kinds of procedural problems (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 61), and he claimed that “Islam as a religion which could adapt itself to the world in a limited time scale” “offers the Muslim believers a broad approach for the world wealth” (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 67). In this content, he specifically emphasized that “Islam as a religion which has a purpose of opening to the outer world, sees a big support from those who have material and warfare means in their hands for the sake of extalting God’s name (i’lâ-yi kelimetullah); however this does not mean that Islam is totally a religion of swordsmen or a religion that surrenders to a certain social system (especially feudal system) with a blind eye” (Ülgener, 2006c, pp. 71–72). On the other hand, Islam is first of all “a settled / city religion” (Ülgener, 2006c, pp. 79–80). However Weber did not justice to “Islam and particularly the economics ethic of religious belief system” (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 16).

Actually, Ülgener made a unique contribution to Weber critiques by stating that it is not necessary to wait for the religious Reformation in the West “in order to see “work” become a God’s command and almost a worship, while it was only a burden to be endured beforehand”. (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 83). The analysis stating the fact that other religions, and especially Islam do not despise work was mentioned in Turner and Rodinson but obviously brought out by Ülgener with proofs and credible bases; and this represents an important starting point for such critiques to thrive. Ülgener investigated the word “profession” with references to the analyses made by Weber around the word of “Beruf”, meaning of profession in German language. According to this, the word “*meslek*” (profession in Turkish) which was derived from the word of *sülûk* is a Sufi word and it has meanings of being mature and closer to the God; which shows that the word actually means being much closer to the God in an implicit way (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 47, 27. dn). Therefore, analyses which made by Weber about Islamic communities are not valid in this context.

However, Ülgener was aware of the fact that these critiques applied to his own studies, too. Thus in Ülgener’s work, although he himself is a worldview scholar there is not an explanation as to the reasons why Weber did those one-sided analyses and resolutions. . Along with the fact that in order to fill those gaps, Ülgener found a mitigating reason that Weber’s life was not enough long (Ülgener, 2006c, p. 16); he also created a dilemma in himself by continuing to use a Weberian framework in the same study (if not all in his studies) and by also resuming his analyses about Islamic societies from the point where Weber left. In this sense, the main problem of Ülgener who criticized Weber in a Weberian perspective and brought forward his dilemmas and contradictions in himself, is the fact that his basic analysis framework is problematic in itself; and in his own sayings, “the first step is erroneous”.

Therefore in his study, although Ülgener mainly criticized Weber he actually also criticized his own standpoint. For this reason the completion and publishing process of the study took a very long time and Ülgener had indecisive attitude on this issue. At the same time though, this is quite an interesting study. The perspective that is criticized in the first part of the study is placed at the center of the analyses in the second part of the study. In other words, Ülgener does not easily give up the concepts that he fastidiously developed until that day.

### 5. Conclusion: Placing Ülgener into Economic Sociology

In his answer to empiric historians like Barkan and İnalçık who criticized him as being too theoretical, Ülgener by referring to Darwin claimed that “If you do not have a theory, the collected data is meaningless”. Therefore, he tried to resolve the

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Ottoman-Turkish economical backwardness by strictly following a specific theoretic framework. Ülgener found this framework in Weberian world-view analyses and he investigated the roots of stability of Ottoman world's point of view by frequently referring to literature and art works. It should be kept in mind that these analyses that were made by Ülgener by utilizing many various materials are not only intellectual assumptions but they are also solution offers for the current and obvious problems of his period.

The first of these problems was the development issue of the period. If we keep in mind that Ülgener is a developmental economist at the same time, we encounter another frame work within his analyses.<sup>14</sup> Development was the one of the most important subjects in Turkey as in the rest of the world in 1950's. Ülgener attempted to investigate this issue not only in terms of economic analysis but also in socio-historical perspectives. In this context, the framework of analyses that start off from developmental theories is evolved into modernization hypotheses. Modernization was a problematical issue which almost affected all the economic and socio-cultural analyses but it actually also built a framework in which seemingly opposite arguments were gathered together. The point that socialist and liberal arguments criticizing each other were on a consensus was the obvious necessity of modernization and thus the necessity to implement a Western way of development and growth model in order to achieve this target.

The analyses of Ülgener about the reasons of backwardness or not being modernized actually included possible solutions offers too. It is obvious that once the problem is related to the laziness in worldview, the solution will be simply getting rid of this inertia. Therefore, it is necessary to overcome the fatalism, inertia and laziness; and to reach an active and dynamic economical human model. In order to reach this target, religious understandings should be changed. Ülgener suggested getting rid of the hegemony of Sufism in order to reach an individual in search of his/her own interest, instead of a solidarist societal order.

Additionally, Ülgener sees the influence of this economical mindset on the statist structure of the economy. According to him, the fact that entrepreneurs go for the opportunities provided by the state hinders the economical human (*homo-economicus*) to emerge. As opposed to modern western individual, collectivist characteristics of traditional human tend to see the state as completely protective. For this reason, Ülgener suggested the free market structure and supported the liberal economy policies.<sup>15</sup>

However, we can see that Ülgener's critiques about Sufis thinking changed a bit in the following years, because of the facts that competitive schools about criticizing the religious traditional thoughts emerged and also some social problems which were caused by economic growth were observed by him. At the same time, the development theories and modernization hypotheses were criticized heavily in many aspects and they were started to be replaced by alternative explanations in time. Weberian analyses that Ülgener thus used within the frameworks of the rising orientalism discussions were also seriously criticized. Having been influenced by these kinds of critiques, and even though he actually put forward very serious critiques on Weber, Ülgener refused expanding these discussions toward their natural results as the same critiques would include his own studies. The most important responsibility for the current generation is perhaps to resume these

<sup>14</sup>The book titled as *Milli Gelir İstihdam ve Büyüme (National Income, Employment and Economic Growth)* (Ülgener, 2000) which was written in 1962 is one of the results of his works on this kind of issues.

<sup>15</sup> For an evaluation on this subject, please see (Şimşek, 2008, pp. 80–81)

critiques from where they left and to reach different results and theories through using them.

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