

**THE TRANSFORMATION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY
AND ITS REFLECTIONS ON TURKISH CENTER-LEFT**

A Master's Thesis

**by
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The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences
of
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by .

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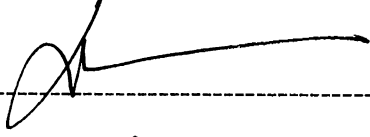
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ABSTRACT

THE TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN WESTERN EUROPE: WHERE DOES TURKEY STAND VIS A VIS THIS TRANSFORMATION?

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This master's thesis is a general overview of the practical and ideological implications of the post-1980 transformation of Western European social democratic parties with specific reference to Britain, Germany and Sweden and the reflections of this transformation on Turkish center-left parties. Within this framework, the roots and developmental trend of Western European Social Democracy have been narrated throughout the first chapter of this study to clarify which social democratic principles and policies have changed during the most recent transformation of these parties.

In the following chapters, which concentrate on the post-1980 period, the reasons for the electoral erosion of the Northwestern European social democratic parties during the 1980's and the way they transformed themselves during the 1990's to stop the decline have been analysed with reference to societal and economic changes on the one hand and to the strategical and structural changes of the parties on the other. The implications of these changes in terms of the shift in the equality principle and the changing function of pragmatism have been highlighted to draw a main profile of the social democratic transformation often referred to as the "Third Way".

The last part of my study focuses on the common and divergent patterns of the Turkish and Western European center-left, both past and present, and compares the current situation of the so-called social democratic parties in Turkey with those of Western Europe presently being conquered by *a la mode* Third Way currents.

Keywords: Social Democracy, Third-Way, Gerhard Shroeder, Tony Blair,

Equality, CHP, DSP

ÖZET

BATI AVRUPA'DA SOSYAL DEMOKRASİNİN DÖNÜŞÜMÜ: TÜRKİYE BU DÖNÜŞÜMÜN NERESİNDE?

Evcan, Nusret Sinan
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Bu tez Batı Avrupa sosyal demokrat partilerinin 1980 sonrası değişiminin pratik ve ideolojik anlamda neler ima ettiğine özellikle İngiliz, Alman ve İsveç örneklerinden yola çıkarak genel bir bakış ve bu değişimin Türkiye merkez sol partilerinde yansımalarının bir analizidir. Bu çerçevede, çalışmanın birinci kısmında Sosyal Demokrasinin kökenleri ve gelişimi son dönemde hangi prensip ve politikalarının değiştiğini daha net bir şekilde görebilmek amacıyla ele alınmıştır.

1980 sonrasına ağırlık veren çalışmanın sonraki kısımlarında, Kuzeybatı Avrupa sosyal demokrat partilerinin 1980'lerde düşen seçim performansları ve bu düşüşe istinaden 1990'larda kendilerini nasıl değitirdikleri hem sosyal ve ekonomik değişimlere hem de partilerin stratejik ve yapısal değişimlerine atıfta bulunarak anlatılmıştır. Bu değişimlerin eşitlik kavramındaki kayma ve pragmatizmin değişen fonksiyonu göz önüne alındığında ne ima ettikleri Üçüncü Yol adıyla atıfta bulunulan sosyal demokratik değişimin genel bir profilini çizmek amacıyla ele alınmıştır.

Çalışmanın son bölümünde Türk merkez solunun geçmişte, gelişiminde ve günümüzde Batı Avrupa merkez soluyla ayrılan ve birleşen yönlerine odaklanılmış ve sözde Türk sosyal demokrat partilerinin bugünkü durumu şu anda moda olan Üçüncü Yol dalgalarıyla fethedilmiş Batı Avrupa sosyal demokrat partileriyle karşılaştırılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Demokrasi, Üçüncü Yol, Tony Blair, Gerhard Shroeder, Eşitlik, CHP, DSP

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Although writing a thesis may later create adaptation problems to social life, I believe it is extremely useful in expanding one's boundaries of knowledge on a specific issue. In this respect, I first of all thank myself for having the courage to begin and complete this study no matter what its quality is.

Special thanks to my supervisor Ömer Faruk Gençkaya who contributed to this study with his valuable feedback and guidance.

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Introduction

The analysis of Social Democracy requires a detailed look at 20th century Western European history with a comparative eye and with a broad vision of the general tendencies on the continent which kept Social Democracy alive throughout the century despite electoral erosions.

The SPD's Erfurt congress in 1891, which marks the beginning of classical Social Democracy, its Bad Godesberg program, which signals a break with its Marxist origins, and its 1989 program, which refers to another transition, this time towards social policies including new-left topics and towards a more free-market economic line; all have guided or at least influenced the transformations in other Northwestern European social democratic parties.

The 1970's signified a broad societal transformation for Western Europe which reflected itself in a change in the social and economic preferences of Western European citizens. Another important change accompanying this trend was the weakening of the welfare state for various reasons.

This societal transformation led to a change in social democratic parties during the late 1980's and 1990's, both in their strategic plans, policy options and their social and economic stances (with certain reservations for the last two). The aim of this transformation was to catch up with the changing parameters of social and economic expectations and to maximize the electoral support. In this era, the parties concentrated their efforts on adapting themselves to new trends to regain their electoral support which was somewhat eroded during the 1980's. For that reason,

most of the Western European social democratic parties included environmentalist and peace-keeping approaches to their programs to embrace the rising trend of the issue-based left.

With respect to economics, they sometimes covertly and sometimes openly sent the message that a free market economy with pure competition was inescapable and that privatization was a necessity. In their discourse, however, they maintained much of their classical rhetoric especially in terms of social equality and solidarity although they abandoned their old-fashioned rhetoric on the necessity of state control of social and economic life and on the positional importance of the working class.

However, the genesis of the most recent changes in Western European social democratic parties under the term “Third Way” seem to imply a more fundamental change for these parties than simply an adaptation to the changing climate. Both the meaning of the “equality principle” and that of pragmatism seem to have different connotations for these parties at present, compared to their connotations prior to the 1990’s. The definition of the equality principle, which was previously more inclined to “income equality” for social democrats, now tends to shift closer to an “equality of opportunities” definition as a result of the most recent calculations of the so-called “Third Wayers” who began to dominate the German SPD, British Labor and Swedish SAP. By the same token, the social democratic pragmatism which used to be conceived as a means to achieve social equality, now seems to be conceived by “Third Wayers” more as a goal in itself. More importantly, these social democratic parties which prided themselves on being in close touch with the masses and on their internal party democracy, now tend to be more leader-oriented and less in direct touch with the masses. While the leaders of most social democratic parties have been reducing their relations with the “working class” to be able to appeal to new-left libertarian cleavages

for the sake of democracy, they seem to fail in creating a coalition of interests from these new cleavages and in organizing them democratically in the party grassroots and, as a result, have paradoxically been reducing the democratic channelling of their parties. Instead, these new leaders such as Tony Blair and Gerhard Shroeder, and a number of professional elites around them, seem to prefer media communication to grassroots communication and “top to bottom” politics to a politics motivated by a democratic organizational network. Although these parties have been victorious in the most recent elections because they are said to be successful in establishing a hegemony in their society by their leaders’ tactical discourse, their success also seem to depend on their conservative rivals’ failure in economic and social policies.

The major objective of this thesis is to give a general overview of the alleged transformation of Social Democracy in the contemporary Western European context with special reference to Northwestern Europe (Sweden, Germany, England) in the last two decades and to search for the answers “What are the causes and consequences of this transformation” and “Where does Turkey stand vis a vis the latest developments in Western European Social Democracy?”. To accomplish this task, economic, social, cultural as well as political variables will be considered and this will involve extensively looking at two periods; first from the 1980’s until the mid-1990’s, when social democratic parties faced an erosion in their electoral support in Western Europe; and second from the mid-1990’s to present day, when they more or less regained this support. The electoral trends of the social democratic parties however display only a superficial indication of what is really going on. Therefore, my principal aim in this study will be to analyse the positional changes (in terms of their economic and political stance) of social democratic parties in relation to the interrelated social, political and

economic transformations in Western Europe and with respect to the organizational and structural dynamics of the parties themselves.

Regarding the effects of the recent “Third Way” formulas on the Turkish center-left parties, one should note that the presently growing distance between the grassroots and the leader in Western European social democratic party politics is not very alien to the Turkish center-left parties. And, it should be noted that the working class has never been such a strong actor in Turkish center-left party politics as it was in Western European social democratic parties. Therefore, the “Third Way”, aiming at reducing the influence of the working class on party decisions, is quite applicable by the center-left parties in Turkey as Turkish politics was already motivated by the early republican “classless-ness” rhetoric. However, regarding the level of social inequalities in Turkey and with respect to the divergent cleavage structures of the Turkish and European settings, the “Third Way” formulas, recently adapted by the Turkish centre-left parties, have not been able to lead to the similar electoral results experienced by their Western European counterparts.

In this study, a historical descriptive method will be used to explain the background developments of Social Democracy in the selected countries. Then, the causes and consequences of the Social Democratic transformation will be analyzed in a comparative perspective. Both the original party documents, including party programmes, election circulars, leaders’ speeches and secondary sources on the subject matter will be the main unit of analysis.

Within the framework of these hypotheses, we have to look at what has really been changing in the Western European social democratic parties. To understand these changes and to better reflect the contemporary trend of Social Democracy in Western Europe and in Turkey, it is inevitable that a chapter be devoted to the roots and to the

analysis of classical Social Democracy. Classical Social Democracy and the lines along which Social Democracy was transformed in the post-World War II period are best reflected by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), which acted as a model for most Northwestern European social democratic parties when they developed their plans, programs and policies. For this reason, in the first chapter, my focal point while analysing classical Social Democracy will be Germany, in addition to touching upon the general developmental trends of other Western European countries' social democracies.

The method which will be used in the first chapter will be a comparative and historical analysis intensified on the German model. The second part of the first chapter will deal much more with political theory while trying to clarify the differentiating tenets of Social Democracy from Liberal and Socialist schools. The social democratic equality principle, for instance, which has common characteristics with both Liberal and Socialist thought is actually a combination of the two schools, and therefore different from each one. Equality is chosen, in this respect, as the major concept of the comparative analysis of Social Democracy and other modern ideologies.

In the second chapter, I will analyse the electoral erosion of the social democratic parties in Northwestern Europe during the 1980's in relation to changing social, political and economical parameters influencing the electoral process.

The third chapter will be the analysis of the common patterns of transition in Western European social democratic parties and what these changes imply. The new left debates taking place both inside and outside these parties (sometimes in the form of new parties), the ideological changes in these parties (if there are any), the question of whether these parties may still be called "social democratic" after having allegedly sacrificed a great part of the material equality principle (redistributive justice) to the

liberal principle of equality of opportunities and having broken their traditional ties with the labor unions, will all be discussed in the third chapter. A further principle concern of the third chapter will be to analyse the strategic changes in the social democratic parties together with the tactical changes in their media appeal, image changes and most importantly the keys of their electoral revival after consecutive election defeats. In this part of the study, the most recent “Third Way” debate conquering the social democratic parties mostly in England and in Germany will be highlighted in terms of its tactical maneuvers and its political and economic connotations.

Both the second and third chapters, dealing with the structural economic and social changes (accompanied by globalization of the economy and the emergence of the left-libertarian cleavages) which caused a transformation both in social and economic expectations and in the social democratic parties’ political attitudes, actually discusses a change in the parties’ traditional way of understanding and interpreting equality.

In the final chapter devoted to today’s Turkish Social Democracy, I will attempt to answer the question: “Where do the so-called ‘social democratic parties’ of Turkey stand in comparison with the most recent developments in Western European Social Democracy?” The social, economic and political parameters in Turkey in comparison to Western Europe and the historical gap between the Turkish and Western European setting in terms of these parameters are key to understanding Turkish Social Democracy’s difference from Western Social Democracy in its origins, in its development and at present.

In the final chapter I will make an assessment of the recent developments in the Turkish Social Democracy in relation to the social and political trends in the country

and a comparative analysis of the post-1980 era of Turkish Social Democracy vis a vis the ongoing transformation of Western European Social Democracy in a comparative perspective.

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN WESTERN EUROPE: FEATURES AND A BRIEF HISTORY

Social Democracy is one of the most debated political views of the 20th century. The popularity of Social Democracy comes from the flexibility of its meaning and its content. It can neither be conceived as a purely theoretical ideology, nor can it solely be understood as a pragmatic project that is characterized by adjustment to the requirements of changing social and economic conditions. In Hans Keman's (1993:292) article, Social Democracy in its original form is defined as follows:

Social Democracy is a label that has been used throughout the history of the labor movement. Already before Marx the term was known to denote the political radicals of the working class. It was employed by many different "socialists" such as Bakunin, Saint-Simon, Lasalle, Liebknecht, Morris, Owen and many others – to distinguish themselves from the bourgeois democrats (Keman, 1993: 293).

Ideologically, "Social Democrats differed from other political radicals in that they strived for a politically and economically egalitarian society, which would not stop at the attainment of liberal democratic rule"(Keman, 1993: 292-293). The definitions of Social Democracy cannot be reduced into one simply due to the absence of a strong and clear-cut theoretical program designed for this purpose. However, one cannot analyze Social Democracy without placing it within a definitional framework and this frame is characterized by Social Democracy's goal of attaining political and economic equality within the confines of a politically democratic and economically capitalist system. Social Democracy is inspired by socialist ideals, but is heavily conditioned by its political environment, and it incorporates liberal values. "The Social Democratic project may be defined as the attempt to reconcile socialism with liberal politics and capitalist society" (Padgett and Paterson, 1991:1).

Although the Marxist idea of class struggle is very influential in the shaping of Social Democracy at a social, ideological and party level, it basically owes its original form to Eduard Bernstein's criticisms of Marxist predictions (Heywood, 1997:55). Despite the fact that the term Social Democracy was already in use before the German Social Democratic Party's (SPD) formation, the broadly accepted view is that Social Democracy's real starting point was the SPD's Erfurt Congress in 1891 and that its founder is Eduard Bernstein.

At the end of the 19th century, the fresh socialist ideas flourishing all over Western Europe started to expand rapidly throughout the world. Germany, in this respect, had a pioneering role in the beginning and expansion of social democracy; not only as Karl Marx's motherland, but also having a large variety of opinions and thoughts concerning socialism. "Most social democratic parties were created after the German SPD and followed its lead as a 'model' – for instance, The Austrian (1889), the Swedish (1889) and the Swiss parties" (Sassoon, 1996:11). "The Norwegian Labor Party, founded in 1887 like its Danish counterpart, took its program straight from the SPD. Even the Finnish Social Democratic Party, which one might expect to be somewhat influenced by Russian Marxism, drew its main inspiration from Germans (Sassoon, 1996:12). In Austria, the Low Countries and Scandinavia, we can mainly argue that the Social Democratic parties have been built on Marxist ideology. Depending on SPD programs, statements of party principle often contained references to the classic forms of Marxism. Openings in the constitutional order, however, and a limited labor forces led the Scandinavians progressively to revise their principles and to go for alliance with the bourgeois parties. Belgians and Dutch, by the same token, were less doctrinaire, at the beginning of the century, than their German counterparts. (Padgett and Paterson 1991: 4)

In Britain, it was not until World War I that labor was fully organized on a mass scale. In the British Labor Party, founded in 1900 under the name “The Labour Representation Committee” and which took its present name in 1906, Marxist Socialism was not a spiritual source, as opposed to the German SPD.

In the Labor Party, socialist ideology was overshadowed by a laborist ethos derived from its trade union roots. The ideological source of the Labour Party, apart from its labor union roots, was Fabian Socialism. Fabian society consisted of middle class, respectable civil servants who concentrated on practical reforms rather than searching for theoretical roots. Marxism made virtually no impression at all on the Labour Party (Padgett and Paterson, 1991: 5).¹

In Southern Europe, comprising France, Italy and Spain, the development of Socialism and labor spirit was slower compared to the northern countries due to the uneven growth of industrial production. Prior to World War I, the number of workers was still less than a million in France compared to one-and-a-half million in Germany and even more in Britain. State repression also cut down any potential acceleration of the revolutionary labor split. As Padgett and Paterson (1991:6) emphasize, during the first decades of the 20th century in the Mediterranean countries, “lacking the ballast of organized labour, socialism remained dominated by intellectuals and prone to factionalism and fragmentation”.

The French, Italian and Spanish experiences of Social Democracy reflect a different developmental path in the pre-World War II era both in their electoral support and in their transformative pattern compared to the Northwestern European type of Social Democracy.²

¹ It would not be a mistake to claim that British Social Democracy was already built on reformism while reformism became the dominant path of the German SPD, as opposed to Orthodox Marxism, during the 1910's.

² However, common policy patterns may be observed, especially in the last three decades not only because of a universally applied ‘reel politik’, but also due to the international interdependence.

On the other hand, in parallel to the general trend of the north, by the time World War I started, Social Democracy, as the practical, revised version of Marxist Socialism, started to gain more acceptance and weight in Germany compared to Marxist Socialism.

Apart from the southern case, both in evolution and in transformation, the social democratic process in either Scandinavia or in any other place in Western Europe is more or less parallel to German development. Therefore, thinking of some features of German Social Democracy in parallel with the Social Democracy in a general Western European context in the first half of 20th century would not be misleading. In the following section of the chapter, the question of whether social democracy can be accepted as a “scientific theory” or not will be a point of focus.

Of course, if we refer only to Eduard Bernstein’s (revisionist) works, it is apparent that his theory will remain rather weak considering the fact that his practical solutions were for the most part far from scientific and disciplinary methods. In the light of the idea that practice may sometimes create theory, as in the example of Social Democracy, this chapter will concentrate on the theoretical implications of the social democratic practice in its classic form and the historical evolution of Social Democracy based on the German model. After a brief summary of some main theoretical concepts on which Social Democracy built its principles, the “social democratic equality principle” will be given special emphasis as the main tenet differentiating Social Democracy from other ideologies.

1.1 The Roots of Social Democracy: Germany

The term “Social Democracy” in Germany, which was already in use before 1848, did not have the specific political meaning that it was to acquire by the late 19th

century (Breuilly, 1987:5) The departing point of Social Democracy, however, was based on the never-changing belief that social reforms and democracy should go hand in hand. The first groups who were influenced by the socialist ideas in Germany were artisans and non-skilled workers. But there was little industrial production and consequently the number of workers was not sufficient enough to organize an influential socialist force. In 1863, the first organized workers' association called "Allemeigner Deutsche Arbeiter Verein" (ADAV), or The German Workers' Union, was established under Ferdinand Lasalle's leadership as a reaction to liberals, who were predominant in the German parliament at that time (Breuilly, 1991:12). The reaction was due to the insufficiency of the liberals in mediating between the growing demands of the organized labor (mainly artisans at that time) and the Prussian king. A majority of the artisans, on the other hand, preferred to remain peaceful with the liberals to attain their short-term interests and established another union called "Verband Der Deutschen Arbeitervereine" (VDAV), or The League of German Labor Unions. In 1869, the main body of VDAV joined with some important figures from ADAV and established the Social Democratic Workers' Party (SDAP) (Breuilly, 1991:13). The Social Democrats were then gathered under a single Social Democratic Party (SDP) in the Gotha Unity Congress of 1875 (Tegel, 1991:15). In theory, this new party was a socialist establishment which would aim to fight for workers' interests. However, since the beginning, many factions tending to compromise with capitalist values and the liberals were occupying important ranks within the party. Revolutionary Marxist tendencies, however, as the source of inspiration and *raison d'être* of the SDP, were still more influential within the party itself (Schorske, 1991:19).

The real unification within a single party, however, was in 1890, when the party changed its name to the “Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands” (Social Democratic Party of Germany or SPD) (Tegel, 1991:17). Since this date, the SPD has rapidly become the greatest mass party in Europe, its presence continuous until today.³ Perhaps more interesting than the party’s establishment process, the SPD has been a forum for various voices in terms of ideology and stance towards capitalism. The Erfurt program which was written in 1891 by the famous Orthodox Marxist Karl Kautsky and so-called revisionist Eduard Bernstein was major proof of the paradoxical nature of the early SPD (Tegel, 1991:17). The Erfurt doctrine made it clear that there was a major gap between the party’s theoretical stance and its practical solutions. On one hand, Kautsky’s Marxist dogma defined the SPD as a revolutionary party following the Marxist path, and on the other, Bernstein was providing practical solutions to immediately improve workers’ standard of living. Bernstein was in favor of remaining in the democratic parliamentary system and fighting for workers’ interests within the existing capitalist order (Bernstein, 1961) whilst Kautsky maintained that a socialist revolution causing the collapse of capitalism would be inevitable. In this respect, Suzan Tegel (1987:17) says:

The Erfurt program was divided into two sections: Principles and demands. In the first section prepared by Kautsky, an inevitable passage to the Socialist order as a result of class struggle was defined. The second part prepared by Bernstein defined the reform demands... Amongst the demands were voting rights for every man and woman over the age of 20, proportional representation, redistribution of national income, direct democracy applications such as referendums, freedom of unions, an end to gender discrimination, secularization, wealth tax. (Tegel, 1987:17)

It is argued that the Erfurt synthesis was full of ambiguities (Özdalga, 1984:47). Would the SPD be a revolutionary party or a reformist one? As theoretically

³ During the Hitler years, the party continued its activities in exile despite its banning.

both would not be possible, SPD's destiny would mainly depend on which faction within the party would show more dominance. The changing parameters of German domestic politics in later years would either push the SPD to take a more revolutionary stance or would force it to remain in peace with the capitalist order and derive as much benefit as it could for workers within a democratic system. The Erfurt program was a document representing the ideological deadlocks that the SPD was facing in those years. Consequently, the clash between the two tendencies embedded in the document has been more apparent in the following years and ended up with the collapse of the party (Özdalga, 1984:47).

1.2 Factions in the SPD and the Rise of Reformism

As a natural reflection of the Erfurt program, there were three basic factions in the SPD, each of them representing different versions of socialism. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were radical Marxist leading figures who were always in favor of making the SPD a revolutionary party. August Bebel and Karl Kautsky were moderates who were trying to mediate between Marxist Socialist and Social Democratic tendencies. Lastly, there were *revisionist*⁴ social democrats like Bernstein, who will be my main focus during my theoretical analysis of German Social Democracy (Tegel, Breuilly, 1991) .

At the beginning of the 20th century, the reformist wing started to gain more weight and dominance within the SPD. The reason for that was the rise of labor unionism which was providing outside financial support for the reformist wing of the SPD. This support was due to the fact that labor unions understood the fact that they

⁴ Revisionism is the modification of original or established beliefs; revisionism can imply the abandonment of principle or a loss of conviction (Heywood, 1997:412)

could obtain their interests within the existing system and they discovered that their financial conditions were not deteriorating contrary to Marxist expectations. Consequently, a SPD which represented them in parliament answering their immediate demands would be a short cut to reach their goals compared to a Marxist-oriented party, who would organize them for a pointless revolution when they were already in a better position than before. In addition, the SPD had already started to become a mass party, claiming not only the votes of the workers, but also those of the middle classes. The improvement of the middle classes' economic condition was on the SPD's agenda, which, in turn, meant the SPD remained peaceful with the existing order. Yet another factor which contributed to the strengthening of the revisionists within the party was no doubt the effects of the socialist revolution in Russia, which led to the proletarian dictatorship. The fact that basic freedoms and labor unionism passed into the hegemony of a single party in Russia created more awareness in Germany about the importance of democratic values and remaining loyal to the democratic system.

1.3 Bernsteinian Social Democracy - a theory, a criticism of Marxist predictions or simply a guideline for the practice?

Few scholars would claim that Eduard Bernstein's challenge to Marxist theory was a theory itself. It was no doubt the failure of the Marxist predictions in foreseeing the conditions of the workers which allowed Eduard Bernstein to so easily criticize socialist theory. It is rather difficult to prove that Bernstein was a genius who created an ideology which soon became the most popular in Europe. Bernstein simply corrected the apparent mistakes of the Marxist theory, but history had already proved them to be mistakes. It was thus not very difficult for him to claim that the class

struggle was not worsening, but in contrary, workers were becoming more and more wealthy. Instead of anarchy, order was being established (Bernstein,1961).

For Bernstein, socialism would not come as a result of a revolution, but as a result of the development of capitalism. The revisionists headed by Bernstein, tried to develop individual ethics, which would develop as a result of capitalism's internal dynamics as an outcome of the material development. They therefore rejected the idea of dialectics advocated by Hegel and Marx .

Bernstein advised the SPD to fight for immediate goals. These were a parliamentary government, free labor unions and the development of the cooperatives. Bernstein went so far as to define socialism as the legal inheritor of liberalism. This, in turn, meant, more than simply criticism, but an overt rejection of Marxism. He replaced the concept of dialectical materialism with the concept of progressive idealism which, for most scholars, was an oversimplification of the Marxist theory.

Bernstein's understanding of science was lying on extreme oversimplifications. Through slight observations, he tried to replace a scientific philosophy with a functionalist classification... The validity of his criticism against Marxism does not prove the correctness of his understanding of science (Özdalga, 1984:57)

Bernstein was also very skeptical about the Marxist economic determinism and was strongly against the possibility of a proletariat dictatorship. The revisionists, assuming a close connection between socialism and democracy, saw socialism as the direct outcome of democratic development. Socialism, in their eyes, should be tied to democratic ideals and to democratic tradition.

Whereas Marx had located the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the heart of the society, social democrats saw only a disjunction between law and economics, between democracy and capitalism which could be resolved by political action (Kloppenber,1988:285)

They also wanted to keep the bourgeoisie on their side and get their support. They did not snub the small reforms because these would at least help to ameliorate the workers' position. It has also been argued that revisionists could even participate in coalitions with right wing parties to reach their goals (Çeçen,1984:101).

Revisionists also criticized Marx's negative stance towards nationalism (or extreme emphasis on internationalism). For them, under the rule of a democratic state, workers could not remain silent in terms of what happened to the nation or to the state.

Bernstein's criticism, whether simplistic or not, was a milestone in the development of the social democratic worldview. The social democratic nucleus created by Ferdinand Lasalle in Germany under the name "étatist socialism" found maturity in Bernstein's critical statements. The Marxist Socialist path, which was more scientific, was left ineffective depending both on changing conditions and on the fact that democratic socialism was pragmatically more plausible than the Marxist ideals. On the other hand, we cannot consider Bernstein as the creator of an ideology or a well-defined theory. Just like Bernstein; Jean Jaures in France and Fabians in England tried to reach socialism by means of democracy and peace. Blood, agitation or violence never became a second alternative for those Social Democrats. The similarity of the social democratic transition in those countries was no doubt not coincidental. In fact, these revisionists did not simply sit back and write a social democratic theory. As was already mentioned, the phases of capitalist development in these European models in parallel to industrial progress, the wealth and capital acquired with the help of colonialist expansion and the consequent relative economic relief that the workers attained were sufficient outcomes to falsify the Marxist theory, at least temporarily. Bernstein, Jaures and other social democrats' conviction to remain loyal to democratic

values was mostly due to a pragmatic sentiment that the workers' conditions would ameliorate if social democratic parties ruled the countries from within their parliamentary systems so that workers' immediate demands would not have to wait until the orthodox Marxist "wait and see revolution" strategy could be realized (Bernstein, 1961).

Despite the fact that Bernstein is accepted as the father of Social Democracy, its real creators were neither Bernstein, nor Jaures or Lasalle. The social democratic situation apparently owes its presence to the changing social, economic and political conditions in Western Europe. Saying that Social Democracy, in its founding origin, was not a theoretical project would not be an oversimplification (Heywood, 1997:55).

However, denying that the social democratic project requires the definition and revision of important theoretical concepts such as "equality" or "solidarity" would not be correct. We may conclude that Social Democracy was more a way of life and worldview than a scientific theory while being inspired by Liberal and Marxist theories. Although theoretical concepts such as equality, freedom, state, gender, nationalism, solidarity and so on were revisited by either the Social Democratic parties' programs or by thinkers defending socialism through democracy, there was neither a bible nor a constitution devoted to a social democratic theory like the "Communist Manifesto", the bible of communism or "Two Treatises of Government", the constitution of classical liberalism.

1.4 The Theoretical Synthesis of Social Democracy

The revisionists' failure to create a theoretical guide to their practical offerings and the absence of a well-established path to follow, kept the SPD far from a position of power in the German political scene for many years. During the Weimar Republic,

previous to Hitler's dictatorship and for some years after Germany's defeat in WWII, the Social Democrats were still lacking an efficient program to achieve their goals, although they had gained enough experience and history had taught them a lesson. The SPD's Godesberg program, which was adopted in 1959, was an important document signaling the real breakage with Marxist origins and placing the ultimate goal of welfare statism. Similarly, social democratic parties in either Scandinavia or in other Western European countries were in a process of giving up Marxist considerations based on a strict class struggle.

The readiness of the European parties to embrace the liberalized doctrines of democratic socialism varied quite widely from country to country. In Scandinavia, West Germany and Holland, the transition was relatively smooth, culminating in a watershed around 1958-60. By this time, all these parties had adopted programs from which the axioms of working-class socialism had been largely expunged. In Austria, the process was less thoroughgoing, and residual traces of old doctrines remained. In Britain and Belgium the left of the parties resistant to change, and in the British case ideological revision was attenuated in the 1960's in an uneasy compromise between revisionists and fundamentalists. In France and Italy, socialist parties were even more reluctant to cast off their traditional ideological mantle. Here the road to ideological revision was long and faltering (Padgett and Paterson, 1991:24).

The Bad Godesberg program, a document still far from theoretical goals, was carrying explanatory statements about what the social democratic principles were and offering at least an outline of theoretical components such as freedom, solidarity, justice and equality. This program was clarifying the fact that the Social Democracy was a synthesis of modern theories. The Godesberg program was anticipated by Anthony Crosland's *The Future of Socialism*. Crosland distinguishes five criteria which have subsequently constituted the core values of Social Democracy: political liberalism, the mixed economy, the welfare state, Keynesian economics; and a belief in equality. These principles were sometimes embodied in formal programmatic

statements, as in the case of the German, Austrian and Scandinavian parties”(Crossland, 1964).

1.5 Equality Principle In Focus: What Makes Social Democracy Different From Socialism and Liberalism

The democratic component of Social Democracy, together with its friendly stance towards capitalist development, was more oriented towards liberal theory. The equality principle accompanied with the justice and freedom rhetoric were quite similar to liberal values as well. However, the classical liberal understanding of equality should rather be conceived as an “equality of opportunity” and “equality before law” whilst social democrats expanded equality’s meaning by adding “social equality” to its formula. Democracy, on the other hand, is both a *sine qua non* of Social Democracy as well as the liberal one but in Revolutionary Socialism, as its name emphasizes, rejects the democratic path.

In terms of the economy, for social democrats the socialization of the means of production weighed heavier than their private ownership and this ideal was never completely achieved. Social democrats preferred to remain moderate in this respect as long as private efforts did not infringe upon a just and equal income distribution. The production could be private, but the distribution should be social, as Bernstein argued to Kautsky, who defended that socialism should be in the production phase. “...theoretically Bernstein was right because as long as the production and the income were distributed equally, the equality principle would be secured no matter who produces”(Cem,1984:175). This moderation once again shows that the social democratic equality principle tries to moderate between liberalism and socialism but actually it is neither socialism nor liberalism.

Yet another assumption concerning the equality principle was the belief that equality was the precondition of freedom and vice versa. One of the well-known deadlocks of the liberal theory or its paradox, here, repeats itself once again in the social democratic principles. When every individual is free to pursue their own wishes, how then could one be sure that one's freedom would not mean another's oppression?

Social Democrats faced here what Jean Jaures called the essential truth that despite professed guarantees of equal rights, a small group of individuals, privileged by education and wealth, exercises decisive political and economic power. Since the concentration of power precluded the exercise of positive freedom, social democrats hoped to transform equality of opportunity from a slogan to a fact by working to achieve at least approximate equality of condition through the gradual distribution of wealth. (Kloppenber, 1988:282)

The social democratic equality principle is different from the liberal conception of equality in that it has a *communitarian*⁵ meaning although late liberals such as Taylor, also added communitarian reformulations to liberal theory. Social Democracy claims to offer equality and freedom for the whole society. To achieve this goal, Social Democracy sets the state control of social, political and economic mechanisms of a country as a precondition where it once again approaches Marxist Socialism. The public ownership of basic industries, the redistribution of the income and products by means of taxes and social services and equal education for all are requirements of social democracy (Meyer,1991).

It is easy most of the time to include the principle of equality in constitutions, in party programs and in various theories. However, it is not easy to define the exact meaning of equality once and for all, nor to practice it totally. There is the difficulty

⁵ Communitarianism is the belief that the self or the person is constituted through the community, in the sense that individuals are shaped by the communities to which they belong and thus owe them a debt of respect and consideration. Although it is clearly at odds with liberal individualism, communitarianism has a variety of political forms. **Left-wing** communitarianism holds that community demands unrestricted freedom and social equality (the view of anarchism). **Centrist** communitarianism holds that community is grounded in an acknowledgement of reciprocal rights and responsibilities (the perspective of Tory paternalism and Social Democracy). (Heywood,1997:136)

that the theoretical flexibility of Social Democracy makes it difficult to create and adopt internationally common or broadly accepted strategies to realize an ideal equality. By theoretical flexibility, I mean that there are various social democratic party programs in the world which contain different ways of approaching the problems. The notion of equality according to the SPD in Germany may differ from the Swedish SAP or from the Greek PASOK and no one would come out and say one of these parties is more social democratic than the others due to the absence of a clear cut theory to follow. The relativity in defining the social democratic principles often makes the analysis of Social Democracy as a single worldview quite difficult and complex.

What does the principle of equality really mean for Social Democracy?

Per Selle, a Nordic Social Democracy analyst, says:

At all events, an attempt must be made to differentiate between equality of opportunities and equality of results. If one is talking primarily about equality of opportunities, one is saying very little, because so few people would oppose this that there would hardly be room for variation in societies without feudal traditions and strong Catholic institutions... If on the other hand one means equality of results, or at least a genuine redistribution, one must demonstrate exactly where this had taken place. Good studies showing that social democracy has pursued a policy in which wealth is taken from the rich and given to the poor, which must be the broad definition of redistribution, are to put it mildly, hard to find... Redistribution is not equality, even though it may be possible make it sound that way. It is our view that the idea of equality, meaning equality of results, has never held an ideologically strong position in social democracy. It is more like a myth, with strong interests engaged in sustaining that myth (Selle, 1991:142).

In the light of this argument, equality will only carry a meaning when the results are equal. The notion of social security, as a key element distinguishing Social Democracy from other schools of thought, appears like an illusion of equality. Most German and Nordic social democrats saw full employment as a precondition of equality (Esping-Andersen, 1997:2). However, security and employment only guarantee ordinary people a position where others cannot treat them in an arbitrary

manner. It does not necessarily entail the existence of equality especially when there are tremendous gaps between the salaries different jobs offer. The contemporary goal of establishing a welfare state should therefore take this marginalization into consideration so that being employed will mean being materially equal.

Equality is often conceived by social democrats as solely improving people's social status, bringing workers out of poverty. But this alone cannot define equality either. In this respect Selle says:

The use of the concept of equality - without expanding on its contents - was useful as a remedy against poverty and in the promotion of civil rights. As we use the term today, however, it is more like a goal in itself. To an increasing degree, equality has acquired the status of a moral principle. But mobilization based on this principle is no longer easy, because the surroundings are no longer what they once were (Selle, 1991:150).

In any case, income redistribution and economic security for all citizens, is an undeniable component of equality in today's circumstances even though the gender equality, the equality of opportunities, the issue of gays and lesbians and the equality in democratic participation should also be fulfilled to speak of a pure equality. The social democratic parties were indeed very successful in promoting and maintaining a great level of material equality until the 1970's and this component of equality was their distinctive feature. However, when the issue-based, non-material equality which refers to various equalities from gender equality to equality of opportunities, started to be voiced by economically satisfied citizens during the 1970's, these parties faced an unexpected challenge. They started to be criticized by the citizens who actually owed their material satisfaction to those parties with successful economic policies (Kitschelt, 1994).

Furthermore, the economic picture also started to deteriorate. Neo-liberal choices began to overweigh centralized economic planning for various reasons

including the requirements of international market and the welfare states' failure to promote growth. The social democratic parties were in a real dilemma over whether to continue with economic equality, or replace it totally with the liberal conception of equality of opportunities (Sassoon, 1996). I will attempt to answer this question in the third chapter.

1.6 Social Democracy's emphasis on state

Throughout the history of Social Democracy, another basic tenet which differentiated it from liberal and socialist schools was its emphasis on state ownership and on bureaucratic control. Although such a stance sounds close to a revolutionary socialist state, a social democratic state is respectful to democracy, freedoms, private ownership and investment as long as the latter does not infringe upon the social equality principle.

The social democratic state has sometimes been conceived as the enemy of the business class, however the aim of Social Democracy while conceptualizing its understanding of state was to put the state in a mediating but neutral position between business and labour (Cem, 1984). To those who may argue that state intervention and bureaucratic centralization may have authoritarian connotations, social democrats legitimized their stance by emphasizing social equality as a precondition of democracy.

In all cases, the central role of the "social equality" principle in understanding why Social Democracy is different from other ideologies reflects itself once again. After all, the nucleus of the social democrats' state formulation was equality.

However, once the centralized bureaucratic network created by the social democratic welfare states started to obstruct the growing libertarian demands of the post-1980's, social democrats in government were unable to restructure the

bureaucratic state apparatus in a manner to promote de-centralized governance and diversify democratic channeling to respond to these demands. Consequently, as they could not revise their state formulation, social democrats in a way obstructed the political realization of democratic and libertarian demands, therefore were unable to legitimize a centralized state structure solely in terms of social equality.

1.7 The second transformation in Social Democracy

Not only the vagueness of the term “equality”, but also the theoretical deadlocks that it created were sometimes displayed in inefficient efforts to reduce inequality without even knowing what equality meant. As time went on and the 1980’s approached, a second blood transfusion was needed for Social Democracy in general. The first blood transfusion was getting rid of Marxist theory in orchestrating social democratic programs (Paterson and Thomas, 1986:6). The Godesberg program in Germany in 1959 was a declaration that the SPD had also become the party of the bourgeois. The party also strengthened its belief in the necessity of capitalist development and the promotion of democracy. However, in the 1980’s, the theoretical and practical deficiencies of the social democratic parties not only in Germany, but all over Europe, were strongly felt. The ever-growing industrial production began to take its effect on the environment.

The SPD’s Berlin program in 1989 was not only a revision of the social democratic principles, but also a conversion to the quickly changing social, political, economic, technological and environmental conditions. Meanwhile some key theoretical concepts of the Godesberg program constituting the sine qua non of Social Democracy were kept within the new program. These were freedom, justice, equality, solidarity, democracy, constitutionalism, and a mixed economy. Environmental

problems, control of industrial growth, more emphasis on gender equality and healthier work conditions were some of the new issues that social democrats would deal with in this new era (Padgett and Paterson,1991)

Various theoretical ambiguities of Social Democracy still remain at the end of 20th century. The practical reformist character of most social democratic parties in Europe overshadowed the theoretical shortcomings. In fact, Social Democracy as a worldview rather than a theory still follows its initial practical guidelines mentioned in the second part of the Erfurt congress. Bernsteinian pragmatism is still fresh in terms of its belief that when the problems appear the steps should be taken immediately within the parliamentary democratic order. By the same token, a programmatic renewal also took place in Scandinavian countries to appeal to the new-left libertarian demands and in England in a different context.⁶

The practice of the social democratic principles display peculiarities in every country, despite following a general pattern. The first and ultimate social democratic principles were planned and set in Germany. The vital role of the Erfurt synthesis cannot be ignored while spotlighting the meaning of Social Democracy. The Scandinavian experience, introduced as a perfect model of social democratic success, owes the commencement of its social democratic system to the Erfurt spirit. The Swedish Social Democratic Labor Party's (SAP) first program was quite similar to Erfurt in terms of its content and essence. The creator of this program, Axel Danielsson, defines this program as loyal to the Erfurt spirit but bringing some more independent statements. (Danielsson quoted in Özdalga:1984:26) As Social Democracy was "the theory of the practice", the first country to become aware of

⁶ New-left libertarian demands represent the changing social expectations such as environmentalist concerns or wishes for free-market economy.(Kitschelt, 1994)

Marxism's wrong predictions was also Germany, as it was maybe the first country, amongst its continental counterparts (England excluded), which realized the very fact that industrialization was going hand in hand with improvements in workers' economic positions. It was therefore natural that the German model acted as a vanguard to other European social democratic parties, although in later stages Nordic Social Democracy began to deviate from its initial German source and became more successful, especially in attaining the *welfare state* ideal⁷. The theoretical guidelines that various European social democratic parties followed displayed differences. These were not very sharp distinctions or deep contrasts. On the contrary, such differences were compatible with the nature of social democracy. Every country, each having different policy priorities, was expected to set different perspectives and principles in dealing with their peculiar problems. Consequently, each social democratic party in Europe adapted their programs depending on the nature and scope of the problems.

In its historical evolution, we may mainly talk about two basic ideological transformations for Social Democracy both for Germany and for other European models. The first was the demise of Marxism which influenced the early phases of Social Democracy. Although, Marxism was not completely forgotten, at least in terms of its special emphasis on the working class, its theoretical implications could no longer be considered valid especially after the 1940s. The second major transformation that Social Democracy allegedly faced, was, this time, correlated with the "end of ideology" trend which became very popular through the end of this century. This process was apparently related to the collapse of the Soviet system and to the currents of globalism the world has been passing through for more than a decade. This, in turn,

⁷ The modern welfare state became an intrinsic part of capitalism's post-war golden age, an era in which prosperity, equality, and full employment seemed in perfect harmony (Esping Andersen, 1996)

left the presence of a right-left axis on the political spectrum quite vague. Or, in a more scientific jargon, the concepts and discourses of the left and right entered a phase in which they had to be redefined. During this period the social democratic parties in Western Europe more and more applied *catch-all*⁸ strategies to maintain their power positions after realizing that class-based politics and centrist approaches were actually loosing credibility in the majority. Herbert Kitschelt says, in this respect, that the centralized management of social democratic policy institutions has become the target of libertarian, decentralizing political demands.

Socio-cultural and political-economic change thus fosters a recentering of the political space from purely distributive conflicts between socialist left and capitalist right positions to a more complex division that incorporates a second communitarian division between libertarian and authoritarian demands. (Kitschelt, 1994:280).

The classical or old Social Democracy, in this definition, represents the authoritarian communitarianism whereas the *new-left*⁹ represents a new libertarian interpretation of the communitarianism. However, it is doubtful whether it breeds a communitarian concern in what we call the Third Way which is based on *neither nor* politics.¹⁰ In this new address, it is sometimes claimed that the losers are the traditional non or semi-skilled blue-collar labour whilst the winner is sophisticated, skilled yuppie (young professional) labour and business.

This socio-cultural and socio-economic change which refers to the transformation of the clichéd worker ideal-type is sometimes associated with trends of post-industrialism which signals a shift in the importance of industrial production to the

⁸ Catch-All is first used by Otto Kirchemier as a party typology. Catch-all parties aim at appealing to all interests in the society. See Kircheimer (1966:177-200)

⁹ An ideological movement that sought to revitalize socialist thought by developing a radical critique of advanced industrial society, stressing the need for decentralization, participation and personal liberation (Heywood, 1997:409)

¹⁰ The Third Way will be touched upon in the third chapter

service sector and *post-Fordism*¹¹ which refers to a change in consumers' choices from uniform selections towards a more sophisticated and complex variety of goods and services.

For the Post-industrialists, it is the dynamic of information and knowledge which is taking us beyond the industrial era and into a world of services centered on information technologies and networked offices. For those who would move us beyond fordism or mass production, it is the dynamic of flexibility which is taking us towards a more pluralistic, less bureaucratic, more decentralized mode of economic life. (Allen, 1992)

In this respect, the difference between “old” and “new” Social Democracy, on the verge of the year 2000, has become more and more debatable in terms of their old and new solution proposals. For that reason the next chapter will deal with the climate prior to the transformation of social democratic parties in Northwestern Europe which is associated with their electoral decline during the 1980s.

¹¹ Transformation resulting from the shift away from large scale production methods (Heywood, 1997)

CHAPTER II

THE REASONS FOR THE ELECTORAL DECLINE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN WESTERN EUROPE DURING THE 1980's

Major reasons are listed for the electoral decline of the various Western European social democratic parties in the post-1980 period. With the exception of the Southwestern European countries of France, Italy and Spain, the majority of Western European social democratic parties, which were the electoral champions of the second part of the 20th century, faced an observable trend of decline in the post-1980 era. To be able to make a healthy comment on the reasons for this electoral decline we have to broadly categorize the social, political and economical transformations that Europe faced beginning in the 1970's and the parties' internal, structural dynamics which affected the failure of their political strategies. The major claim is that these social democratic parties were, for a period of time, unable to convert themselves to the new requirements of these three broad aspects. This requires the analysis of the multi-faceted and interdependent reasons for this declining trend.

2.1 Societal change

“The Social Democratic Keynesian Welfare State, established in the post World War II era, has contributed to the transformation of citizens’ preferences, but now becomes the victim of its own success.” says Herbert Kitschelt (1994:280), a statement which summarizes the social deadlock in the social democratic welfare state. The ideal of the welfare state developed by the social democratic parties of Western Europe was aimed at improving citizens’ economic standards by redistributive measures. Such an ideal, planned in the post-World War II era, reached the peak of its success at the end of the 1960’s. Under such a trend, both the socio-economic status and the preferences of the traditional labourers who were taken as the primary voters for the social democratic parties and those of the middle-class bourgeoisie were transformed. According to Paterson and Padgett, during the 1980’s an ethos of aggressive and egotistic individualism had overtaken the principles of collectivism and social solidarity which represented the ethical foundations of Social Democracy (Padgett and Paterson, 1991:49).

Concepts such as worker mobilization, corporatism, social solidarity and equality were the engines of Social Democracy during the post-war period with the aim of improving workers’ economic standards, but in attaining these economic goals Social Democracy also transformed the social identity of its core supporters, workers.

Fred Inglis asks, “Does socialism end with the epoch in which it apparently won its great victories and sunk under its greatest failures?”(Inglis,1996:85). A manual worker in Western Europe, prior to the 1970’s, primarily wished to own a car or a house simply to have a better quality of life. However, the growing post-1980’s type of

worker in Western Europe, having satisfied his/her material expectations, sought a more complicated, diverse and sophisticated menu of choices from the quality and variety of television programs to the cleanness of his/her environment. The old socialist discourse and action is said to have been too class-centered to appeal the sophistication of such demands.

This shift may actually be seen as a change in focus from social equality and equal redistribution rhetoric (with whose help workers and the lower-middle classes acquired economic relief) to the development of individualized preferences and new ways of life associated with de-materialized expectations. (Kitschelt, 1994)

Whilst the labour unionism and the number of blue-collar workers were in decline during the 1980's in Western Europe, a bourgeoisification of the working class, a rise in the white-collars and the creation and rise of various service- and issue-based jobs depending on the dynamics of social change and expectations were observed. However, relating the social cause of Social Democracy's decline simply to the decline in the numbers of manual workers would be a reductionism.

Rough predictions along the lines of 'the fewer workers, the fewer socialist voters' may be difficult to sustain. Nevertheless, the idea that major socio-economic changes would have no effect on the fortunes of the socialist parties is equally unsustainable. The collapse of manufacturing in much of Western Europe was part of a new phase of capitalism, one in which a large factory based working class was no longer necessary. The Fordist worker, whose prominence in Europe was taken for granted by the Socialist tradition, had become less central to capitalism. In Europe, capitalism required a smaller, highly paid and highly flexible, skilled working class. These skilled workers were now a relatively prosperous group, a real 'aristocracy of the proletariat', fairly well-integrated into the market economy, partaking of the abundance of consumer capitalism, requiring, if at all, the protection of organizations more similar to the craft unions of the last century than the politicized mass unions of later years"(Sassoon, 1996:656).

Perhaps much more than the decline of the traditional understanding of the proletariat, one of the main reasons for the social democratic parties' decline in

Western Europe during the 1980's was the fact that most of these parties lost to a greater extent their energy and capacity to socialize and mobilize masses. By masses I do not necessarily mean workers, but all the middle and lower class citizens from shopkeepers to public employees. Consequently, "when the Labour movement became narrowed down to nothing but a pressure-group or a sectional movement of industrial workers, as in 1970's Britain, it lost both the capacity to be the potential centre of a general people's mobilization and the general hope for the future"(Sassoon ,1995).

The basic shortcoming of the social democratic parties was possibly their failure to respond to new-left libertarian demands which flourished during the post-industrial era. This was partly due to their classical labour union connection which formerly gave those parties a mass party characteristic when the industrial proletariat used to be the core accelerator of social dynamism. However, after the 1980's, these laborers and their labor union ties with social democratic parties started to represent an old-fashioned dogmatism which rather limited new openings in those parties to the rising service sector proletariat representing more libertarian cleavages as an outcome of their de-materialized expectations. I will look extensively at the politically weakening influence of the Social Democratic parties' labour union connection in the section devoted to the political reasons for social democratic decline.

Another reason why the Western European social democratic parties lost their mobilizing and socializing capacity was due to the fact that their centralized planning schemes and social bureaucratization measures implemented for the maintenance of social equality actually obstructed the preferences and the participatory avenues of the rising new, liberal-minded bourgeois worker typology. A social dissatisfaction therefore showed itself when the social democratic parties could not open up new political

strategies to alter their concept of centralized government (Kitschelt:1994, Sasoon 1996, 1997, Selle 1991).

The social reasons for the social democratic decline are closely linked to structural economic changes which also changed the social fabric and which were correlated to the political strategy failures of the social democratic parties which, in a way, resulted in a loss of contact between these parties and society.

2.2 Economic Reasons

One of the most significant political economic reasons which is assumed to have had an effect on the decline of social democratic choice is the weakening of the welfare state which explains a great deal of the social and political components of the social democratic decline as well. Social Democratic efforts to build a welfare state has politically and economically focused on the importance of centralized bargaining. According to social democratic strategy marginal workers would be cleared from the labor market by a welfare state providing them with a lifetime wage(Esping-Andersen,1985:156).

Old age pensions, health insurance, sickness pay, and free education removed market compulsions to sell labor power, strengthening working class solidarity and bargaining power in primary labor markets. Just as most analyses equate corporatism with successful social democratic efforts in the labor market, they take the universal, tax financed, and institutional welfare states of Scandinavia as the genesis of efforts to decommodify the reproduction of labor and to make people somewhat indifferent to welfare and work. As a result Social Democratic parties now need non-blue-collar votes to win the elections. European social democrats have generally tried to put white collar groups under the welfare state's umbrella in order to build a glacis of middle class interests around core working class interests in welfare. But a universal welfare state relies on high levels of taxation to generate large inter- and intra-class and intergenerational transfers. These taxes can create political opposition among both white and blue collar groups if they are disproportionate to the perceived benefits of the welfare state or alternate ways of reducing risks. Thus, social democratic efforts to 'manufacture its own class base' through welfare reformism may backfire and generate an opposing coalition"(Swenson, quoted in Schwartz,1992:258).

The Northwestern European social democratic parties' electoral decline was partly due to this opposing coalition which was generated, as predicted by Swenson, by the austerity measures, tax burdens and general deteriorating economic picture. The period of ever growing prosperity, near full employment, a constant increase in incomes, and high economic growth rates was over. A new period of stagnation, mass unemployment and high state budget deficit had begun in Northwestern Europe. This was accompanied by a process of economic globalization which seemed to set sharp limits on all national policies of economic regulation.(Meyer, 1996:125). Consequently, social democratic parties, when in office, had to tackle a weakening economic picture, and "found themselves in a decentralist system of industrial relations with a weak welfare state and a small public sector"(Kitschelt, 1994:67). The crisis of the welfare states during the 1980's revealed itself, in varying degrees, in nearly all Northwestern European countries, specifically in Scandinavian countries and in Germany.

But is the demise of the redistributive welfare measures solely related to the fate of social democratic parties? Kitschelt (1994:69) says:

Most important, where socialist or bourgeois governments lost when presiding over a weak economy in the 1980's, the main winners were not in the opposite political camp, but parties running primarily on non economic platforms. One may claim that disgust with the major economic policy alternatives advanced by conventional parties in the political arena and support of newcomers as protest voting is one way the electorate votes on economics. A comprehensive welfare state no longer benefits socialist parties. Conversely, socialist governments have little incentive to abandon weak welfare states to boost their long-term electoral constituency.(Kitschelt,1994:69)

In any case the weakening of the welfare structure in countries such as Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Norway, Denmark and Finland during

the 1980's as a result of the globalization of economies, the decline of economic growth and the rise in unemployment during the time social democrats were ruling these countries, have certainly contributed to the electoral erosion of these countries' social democratic parties.

Budge's and Fairlie's salience theory suggests that socialist governments suffer more from a worsening economy than bourgeois governments, because voters attribute more economic competence to bourgeois parties (Budge and Fairlie, 1977:267-306).

In Germany, for instance, the 1976 and 1983 elections showed that the SPD consistently lost votes to the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) as the economic picture was deteriorating under SPD power. The 1974, 1979 and 1983 elections proved the same for the British Labour. In Austria, paradoxically, the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ) strengthened its power in the 1975 elections despite its poor economic performance in power prior to elections. However, it was in a serious decline in the 1983 and 1986 elections partly due to the economic problems faced under the SPÖ government. "In Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands, where socialist parties generally held on to their 1970's vote share in the 1980's, the economy voting theory reveals little about electoral outcomes." (Kitschelt, 1994:81) In Sweden, the 1976 and 1985 losses of the SAP were to a certain extent economic (declining growth and increasing taxes) although unemployment fell throughout this period. In both Sweden and Germany, conditions of full employment (a requirement of welfare state) were eroded during the 1970's and 1980's, making the demand to reduce unemployment more important than the need for capital formation (De Beus and Koeble, 1994:522).

In an in-depth look, the role of socio-economic change as I already mentioned, as well as the structural economic change that it brought about was the broader reason

for the electoral decline of the social democratic parties in Western Europe during 1980's. In this respect economic globalization and international interdependence, post-industrial employment, the declining importance of the social democratic parties' labour union connections and the European Union factor were all influential in the social democrats' losses.

In a broader analysis, the climate created by the so-called currents of post-industrialism and post-Fordism were influential on the new political preferences which left the socialist parties' classical strategies quite old-fashioned. Whilst the number of classical industrial proletariat was declining, the service-sector proletariat was in a gradual rising trend. In addition to this increase-decrease trend, Jonas Pontusson (1995:525-526) demonstrates that "there is a consistent, patterned relationship between industrial organization and employment structure, on the one hand, and the mobilizational capacity and policy influence of social democratic labor movements on the other." In terms of the relationship between the reorganization of industry and decline of social democracy, it is arguable that mass unemployment in addition to deregulation and other supply side measures associated with the rise of conservative (neo-liberal) political forces benefitted small businesses and decreased the average plant size (Pontusson,1995:526-527). Both the Swedish and British data shows, according to Pontusson, that the decline of large plants' employment share in the 1970's resulted in the weakening trend in Social Democracy in the next decade when the labour union density fell. These changes seem to be the micro events shaping the trend towards a post-Fordist change which was observed as various, different, small production units depending on various different preferences replacing large production units responding to uniform, non-diversified interests representing Fordism.

2.3 Political Reasons

To be able to analyze the political reasons for the inter-related, triangular causes of the social democratic parties' decline in the Western European setting, we have to look at the structures and connections of the parties which in a way kept these parties away from the adoption of effective strategic choices and establishment of a hegemonic appeal to the constituencies. If we look at the strategic patterns that three important Western European parties followed throughout the 1970's and 1980's we can see an important part of the reason for their electoral decline.

In Germany for instance, the major political strategic mistake of the SPD, in the 1987 election campaign, was trying to reconcile the demands of bourgeois white collar workers with those of the new social movements but neglecting the traditional workers' support (Kitschelt,1994;Gillespie,1993). At first, in 1978, the SPD disregarded the environmental and other new-left issues. "The Greens entered the scene after a prolonged period in which the social democrats had moved to the right, engaged in an economic austerity policy and ignored the genuinely left, libertarian feminist and ecologist demands" (Braunthal 1983). However, in the 1983 campaign, rather than running on issues of economic renewal and growth, the party focused its efforts on peace and ecology issues. After the 1987 defeat, the SPD switched to a more libertarian appeal to compete with the Greens. At the same time, however, the party under the leadership of Oskar Lafontaine advocated more free-market economic policies to compete with the government parties.

Party leaders expected a strategy combining sharp liberal and moderate redistributive appeals to make inroads into the Green electorate as well as white collar support from the bourgeois coalition, but to risk the continued loyalty of some traditional and labour union clientele (Kitschelt,1994 :166).

In any case, because of such strategic instability and inconsistency, the SPD was far from the power position throughout the 1980's.

In Sweden, although "the SAP had moderated its economic stance (which used to be very centrist) in order to preserve its pivotal position" (Krauss and Pierre, 1990:240), its failure to develop an anti-nuclear stance, which benefited the Communist party which used it as a tool against the SAP in 1976, and the labour unions' demand for a wage earners' fund for the socialization of industry put the SAP in a difficult position (Lewin, 1988: 274-304). The party's positive response to this socialist demand was certain to put the SAP into strategic difficulty because wage earners' funds were not only against the ideal of free-market efficiency, but also against libertarian calls for citizens' participation and political decentralization (Kitschelt, 1994:171). The SAP lost the 1979 elections when it felt obliged to enact the law for wage earners' funds. "Even when the party was reelected in 1982 after several years of conservative government instability and economic decline, its own voters perceived an increasing gap between its leftist economic program and their own preferences" (Holmberg and Gilljam, 1987:303). In 1985, however, new-left themes threatened the SAP's electoral position. "While the party still fought the 1985 campaign on the issue of economic recovery, it lost votes in major urban areas where voters perceived the SAP as not sufficiently anti-nuclear." (Sainsbury, 1986: 293-7). In 1988 and 1991 the SAP lost because it allegedly failed to develop a sufficient new-left strategy and an economically pro-market position.

In Britain, following their defeat in the 1970 election, the Labour Party leant towards a more socialist economic position. Labour started to favor unilateral demilitarization, more nationalization and campaigned for Britain's exit from European Community. With this stance Labour's popularity was further eroded. According to

Kitschelt (1994:178) Labour regained government office only because voters were even more disaffected with the conservatives. "After the 1979 electoral defeat, the party never looked back as it accelerated its move to old style socialist appeal embedded in Labour's 1983 election program" (Kitschelt, 1994:178). "This document set the party on a course opposite of that chosen by Labour's voters who progressively drifted to the right in the 1970's" (Kavanagh, 1987:169) At the same time, the party's purist socialist program made few efforts to appeal to liberal concerns (Rochan,1989). Labour supported the British Disarmament Movement but failed to address feminism or the ecology movement. Above all, the party defended the continuation of the nuclear industry to satisfy the labour unions. In 1983, Labour suffered its greatest electoral defeat since the 1920's. Labour's old-fashioned leftist stance was neither satisfying its working-class constituency nor its middle class supporters (Robertson: 1984:132). Before the 1987 election, "Labour, under a new leadership, presented a mixed program that still included enough 'Old Left' to enable the conservative government to attack Labour's 'loony left'" (Butler and Kavanagh, 1988).

Paralleling these three cases, the majority of Northwestern European social democratic parties (apart from the Danish social democrats) suffered electoral losses due to a great extent, to their strategic mistakes. They sometimes obsessively stuck to economic recovery and austerity packages and built their election programs on these topics. When they understood that the new social movements necessitated the adoption of ecological, gender or local-government based policies they suddenly shifted their strategies to these issues and played on totally non-economic propaganda or at various intervals mediated between both economic and new-left issues for political socialization. This inconsistent behaviour no doubt created discontent amongst their traditional voters as well as their potential voters. In this respect, it is

inevitable to talk about the rise of the new-left parties in an extended manner not only as an independent political actor but also as a major electoral threat to the traditional social democratic parties. However, the “social movement based” new left’s rise can also be seen as a political factor which motivated social democratic parties to enter a transformation which would embrace the new libertarian demands. In this respect, the rise of the new-left in the form of a new social movement and at the party level will be touched upon in the next chapter within the same context as the strategic and policy transformation of the social democratic parties which brought them electoral victories in the second half of the 1990’s.

Perhaps the most important issue to point out, while highlighting their political strategic failures, is that these parties have not been able, for a long time, to break their strong connection or even interdependence with the labor unions which has obstructed their way for renewal in that they cannot respond to the changing social expectations and extend their territories for political maneuvering.

“Social Democracy’s decline was blamed on the parties’ close links with the unions, and yet the party union relationship is a defining characteristic of social democratic parties” (Taylor,1993:133). “History, however, has created a complex organizational and doctrinal legacy, and the party-union relationship can be seen as an example of ‘hardened power’ complicating renewal” (Heidar,1984:13). “Reconciling old and new Social Democracy risks the further erosion of what remains its largest single source of organizational and electoral support: the Labour movement” (Korpi 1983:9).

In Sweden, the SAP’s 1982 election victory with the Third Way (neither Keynesianism nor Monetarism) coincided with a severe political-economic crisis and resulted in instability in government-union-party relations. The 1985 and 1988 elections indicated Social Democracy’s exhaustion and culminated in the loss of the 1991 election (Mioset, 1987: 403-456).

This placed the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) in a difficult and complex position. Economic success depended on the LO's ability to secure support for austerity while portraying social democratic government as the best defence of an increasingly restive membership (Taylor, 1993: 135).

In this period, the SAP attempted to initiate a non-socialist agenda by espousing a tax reform, postponing the nuclear power phase-out and applying to join the EC. The LO saw the tax reform as a major concession to market liberalism and the EC had been traditionally regarded as a capitalist club and its membership contrary to Swedish neutrality. The LO was seen by some social democrats as an obstacle to renewal while the LO became increasingly vocal in opposing the SAP's economic policies. The LO/SAP relationship, though politically close, is structurally indirect and is weakening appreciably (Taylor 1993:135).

In Germany, where the SPD had considerable problems managing the unions, Oskar Lafontaine, the party chancellor in 1989, attempted to reduce the unions' influence on party politics while he tried to alter the classical social democratic policies by neo-liberal market oriented policies (paradoxically he was later accused by "Third Wayers" of being an old fashioned Socialist). During the same year, Lafontainism was blocked in the party congress by the traditionalists and unionists. However, SPD's 1990 election programme emphasized gender and environmental issues, despite the opposition coming from the unions. Finally, the traditionalists were persuaded to accept some of Lafontaine's arguments. The unions stepped back from their demand for a shorter working week with no loss of pay, but stood against any attempt to develop greater labor flexibility. (Taylor, 1993)

The party's inclination towards new-left policies, and therefore to the Greens, has not been welcomed by the unionists. Herman Rappé, leader of the accommodationist chemical workers' union, became the principal spokesman of the opponents of the 'open door' to the Greens' strategy, bringing him into conflict with a growing majority in the party. The issue exposed conflicting perspectives not only within the labour movement but, perhaps more significantly, between the party majority and an important section of the labor movement. It is hard to see a nearing of ideas between the SPD and the Greens without a corresponding distancing in party-union relations (Padgett and Paterson 1991:219).

In England, the union-party relationship also put obstacles in the path of Labour's policy renewals. The unions' influence served to obstruct policy options (Taylor, 1993:140). Furthermore, in the Labour Party, the unions not only had a voice but they also had a bloc vote with which they could reverse a leader's policy proposals. However, Taylor (1993:140) claims that "despite their bloc votes they have never sought to impose a leadership, bureaucratic style or program on the party; their influence has rather served to close off policy options".

The close union-party relationships elsewhere in Western Europe damaged these parties' further openings to new social and individual expectations. Consequently nearly all the parties became aware of this reality at the end of the 1980's and began to loosen the unions' influence over the party's decision mechanisms.

In addition to strategical failures and the effects of the close party-union relationships, the failure of the welfare state model on the one hand and the inability to adopt a decentralized grasp of political power to counter statism on the other left the social democratic parties with a vacillating attitude towards new issues during the late 1970's and 1980's.

A centralized state structure, as I argued in the previous chapter, was legitimized by social democrats based on the necessity of "social equality". However, this legitimation was no longer a sufficient reason for social democrats to insist on an over-dosed bureaucratic arrangement of social and economic life in their programs not

only due to the quickly growing new-left libertarian demands, but also due to economic globalization and rising international economic interdependence which, in a way, dictates neo-liberal free market economics.

All the above mentioned causes leading to social democratic decline during the 1980's should have been forecast by party politicians and strategists. However, initiating and signalling changes in the parties took considerable time due to the well-established classical policy patterns dominating the internal party struggles. We can say that those social democratic parties whose social democraticness is in question today began to feed on the electoral fruits of their strategic changes at the end of the 1990's.

CHAPTER III

THE RISE OF THE NEW-LEFT AND THE POSITIONAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

An important reason for the social democrats' political decline was connected to the rise of new-left social movements beginning from the 1970's and their electoral rise at the party level.

Along with its negative effects on the electoral success of the social democratic parties, the new social movements also helped these parties to motivate themselves to the new concerns created by these social movements and to change themselves strategically.

While Western European center-left obligatorily cut down on its welfare based policy adventure and concentrated itself towards a more issue- and service-oriented political agenda following the new demands that the changing context brought about (Kitschelt, 1994), this new concentration also gave momentum to both issue-oriented political parties such as the Greens, or peace movements and to changes in the party programs of traditional social democratic parties to appeal to new social movements with which we associate the new-left. The importance of de-centralized policies and the significance of local ruling mechanisms in this changing context were also clearly understood by some leftist politicians as the only way to be able to respond to new, sophisticated and de-materialized social expectations. (Sellers, 1998)

The establishment of the Green party in Germany in 1981, its rise in the following years and the rise of similar issue-based political parties all around Western Europe concretely proves the change inspired by the new social movements. "The Greens advocated increasing environmental protection, reducing nuclear weapons on West German soil, phasing out nuclear power, and involving citizens in the policymaking process on issues such as street planning, housing and urban renewal. Moreover, many former SPD activists formed the nucleus of the Green Party. The Green Party offered them the opportunity to publicize their policy positions unencumbered by the opposition of leading SPD politicians and trade unionists"(Koelble, 1991:5).

In England Labour underwent a process of policy reversals, elite renewal, and organizational rules changes. Economic policy, continued membership in the EC, nuclear disarmament, local housing policy, and rules governing relations between party activists and representatives were central to Labour's internal strife (Koelble, 1991:4).

In the light of these developments, we can talk about two main trends towards a new understanding of the left: First, the enlargement of civil societal needs and promotion of a more individual based society freed of the old, state oriented communitarian calculations which were voiced through new social movements and parties. Second, as the economical reflection of the globalization, an inevitable change towards a neo-liberal free market model which would later be adopted by the classical social democratic parties as way of electoral recovery (although in rhetoric they maintained the equality principle). (Insel, 1992). The latter can also be seen as the natural extension of the capitalist and industrial development that Western Europe experienced during the second half of the 20th century.

3.1 The changes paving the way for the new-left

When we come to the 1980's industrial achievement was already at its peak, Western European investors began either to shift their productions to Asian countries where cheap labour was available or cut down on more production or on investment. The number of industrial proletariat relatively declined and the notion of the poor proletariat was to a great extent replaced by the new notion of middle class proletariat. Technological developments and the growing informational network created a service-sector proletariat which was very different from the old-fashioned understanding of "lumpen proletariat" (Kitschelt, 1994).

The social democratic parties of the continent which were the losers of the previous decade, are one by one adjusting their strategies to the requirements of the expanding post-industrial, global and neo-liberal climates to be the winners of this decade (Germany, Britain).

Once again, the pragmatic social democrats proved that they lost nothing from the founding Bernsteinian spirit: "Change, whenever the conditions necessitate".¹² However this time, the change seems to be much more radical than has been in the history of the social democratic left. As can be recalled, the first change was from Orthodox Marxism towards Reformist Socialism, but the consciousness of a class inequality and therefore the need to alter this by an equal income distribution and by social security measures had always been the differentiating tenets of Social Democracy. This time it seems that the social democratic parties are in a process of real breakage with their origins as result of a cost-benefit analysis between choosing, as their electoral basis, the ever declining numbers of the old type of industrial workers or

¹¹ Information on the reformist spirit of change may be found in *Evolutionary Socialism*, (Bernstein, 1961.)

those workers who are joining the ranks of a new, sophisticated and talented working class.

Following their electoral decline, they mostly tried to mediate between the two classes giving more importance to the latter, as in the case of Britain and Germany, to regain the votes stolen by the new left parties, to appeal to new libertarian economic demands mostly favoring a pure market economy.¹³

In both countries, parties of the new left (the Greens for example) gained support during the 1980's. The non commercial service workers that post-industrial expansion brought to these local economies supplied critical constituencies and activists for this political transformation. As Sellers has argued,

The more extensive educational backgrounds, client-processing jobs, egalitarian work environments and relative job security of these workers helped cultivate support for environmentalist and other 'left-libertarian' causes. The influx of these workers, and of students preparing to enter such occupational categories, has placed the university towns of the late 20th century at the leading edge of the New Left (Sellers, 1998:191).

Not only did the political parties which flourished under the influence of the new social movements increase their influence but the traditional social democratic parties also included issues advocated by the new social movements to their policy options.

Lauri Karvonen and Jan Sundberg comment on the trend in Scandinavian Social Democracy as a result of the parties' new policy options motivated by the new social movements, observing a change in membership habits:

¹³ Although, the social democratic parties have tried to appeal to the demand for a free-market during the 1980's, their efforts to reconcile it with old socialist economic measures have created distrust on the voters' part. When they strengthened their stance towards the neo-liberal free market model in the 1990's and showed it as their preferred economic option, they also strengthened their electoral support.

The relationship between the unions and the party has become problematic as their interests have diverged. Most labour union members are still manual workers whereas an increasing portion of the party members are middle class citizens, often women employed in the public sector. In Sweden where the ties between the unions and the party have traditionally been strongest in Scandinavia, this liason is now under a strong pressure of change. As of 1991, it is no longer possible collectively to affiliate labour union members to the Social Democratic Party. These changes will inevitably result in a declining membership and a loosening of union control over the party (Karvonen and Sundberg, 1991:5-6).

They also suggest that the social democratic parties have increasingly become electoral parties based on catch-all calculations.

Formerly, the social democrats gathered strength from the expanding mass of workers who suffered under capitalism; today, however, their power is weakened as increasing numbers of wage-earners regard the capitalist economy as the main source of their personal welfare. During the long periods of governmental rule, the Social Democrats managed to change the economy to a welfare society where the majority of the formerly underprivileged masses now lead comfortable lives with a modern flat or house, one or two cars, perhaps a summer cottage, and savings for an annual charter holiday to the sunny beaches of southern Europe. The new generation of workers born after World War II tend to take all the public benefits for granted while at the same time viewing government regulations as a hindrance to their individual success (Karvonen and Sundberg, 1991:6-7)

To sum up, the declining trend of the old understanding of the center-left in Western Europe beginning in the 1970's has been accompanied by the rise of the new left. The terminology "new left" has actually been very popular at the end of the 1990's with Tony Blair's New Labour project and a similar attempt by Gerhard Schroeder termed the "neue mitte" (new middle) . Everyone questioned the last Blairite attempt in terms of its ideological stance. Is it a third way which has remained more or less loyal to the socialist principles or simply a neo-liberal formula developed by some party elites or scholars? The adaptation of the social democratic parties to the new conditions is likely to be troublesome for the social democrats in the long run. First of all, the social democratic parties including Blair's New Labour or the Swedish SAP are in a process of giving up welfare policies which used to be the main

differentiating principle of the social democrats from liberals. Such a transformation makes it difficult for social democrats to maintain their former egalitarian efforts. It is evident that a new thought for social democrats solely based on freedom but ignoring ethics, equality and solidarity will not leave any room for social democrats to argue that they are different from liberals.

The genesis of a change towards a “new left” reformulation in the social democratic parties, in a broader sense, is actually twofold. (Sassoon,1997) The first takes its momentum from the necessities that international economy and capitalism in its peak brought about. The requirements that the Single European Act and Maastricht imposes on EU member countries do not leave much room to centralized nation-state policies to continue with extreme social security measures, public spending and more welfare policies which are said to badly affect the free market conditions and obstruct the way towards economic growth. Also as I mentioned earlier, the economies of the former social democracies such as the Scandinavian countries or Germany are already suffering from earlier practices of state redistributiveness. This first genesis resulted in most social democratic parties, at varying levels, to initiate an adaptation to new economic conditions in their policy plans.

The second genesis is social. The effects of new social movements depending on the changing settings has led to demands for more representation for diverse groups and challenges to the uniformist tendencies that modernity has so far offered (Wainwright, 1994).

3.2 Currents of the new-left

The first current of the new left, the issue-oriented left of the 1970's led by environmentalists, feminists, gays, academics and similar social formations, is actually a separate leftist formation different altogether from the social democrats although the initiators of these movements at the party level were sometimes former social democratic party members. Therefore, thinking of this broad concept of the new left solely as a matter of party politics would be reductionist.(Insel, 1992) While the practice of the new left is largely carried out by parties like the Greens, academics are consistently developing new theories and jargons about the content and boundaries of the new left which they associate with trends like post-industrialism, post-Fordism, globalization or radical democracy.

The second new left, particularly the new left of the 1990's, can be mainly seen as a strategic change in the social democratic parties of Western Europe like Tony Blair's new Labour Project or Gerhard Shroeder's new middle whereas the first, broader current of the new left was actually developed as a reaction against the traditional social democratic parties as well as against the political system and the knowledge it reproduces.

For the last twenty-five years or so, social movements in Western Europe have been serious rivals to the traditional parties of the left - Social Democratic, Labourist or Communist - not rivals which play the same game, competing within common rules, but rivals playing a more engrossing game on an adjoining field, sometimes with flair, sometimes in chaos, sometimes taunting the players over the fence, sometimes making a tactical alliance. It is a more fundamental rivalry than the electoral competition created by the parties, like the Greens in Germany or the Green left in the Netherlands, which explicitly support the social movements. What seems to have been going on in Western Europe is an underlying rivalry of political method rather than simply of political parties(Wainwright,1994:193).

By the same token, sociologist Alain Touraine suggested that social movements, as we go through the post-industrialist age, would express themselves

independently of the political investments which aim only at holding the state power (Touraine quoted in Insel,1992:25) One may claim that the new left which is the product of new social movements questions the political method whilst the new-left which is identified with the adaptation efforts of the social democratic parties is actually pragmatic and “catch-all”ist and therefore policy oriented.

The radicalism of the “social movement” based new-left comes from the fact that it questions the totality of the positivist knowledge whose correctness has been taken for granted so far. For instance, the strong modernist belief on the necessity of industrial progress, the traditional roles assigned to woman, a fake pluralism which, in reality, is believed to invite everyone to uniformity and sameness (Lacoste) , the belief that consensus is always healthy but clashing differences will create insecurity, are all social constructs that the current system inherited from modernist assumptions and were attacked by the various segments of the social movement’s new left (Wainwright, 1996).

The meanings so far assigned to the notion of governmentality, to state, and to science were challenged by the activists of the various segments of the new left and by a considerable number of scholars. However, the success of the new left will depend on to what extent the masses support it and make the social movements behind it an intrinsic part of their lives. Such a change inevitably requires the development of democratic and individual consciousness over material calculations. And material calculations may only end in the absence of economic problems. Gorz says that the weaknesses of the new social movements comes from the reality that they only attack the cultural hegemony of the dominant classes and its social outcomes but the economic level of their hegemony is not given any importance at all (Gorz quoted in Insel 1992:26).

In any case, the growing bargaining capacity of the new-left parties as a result of their rising votes is proof that a reaction has developed in Western European societies against the traditional ways of making politics and this change can only be to a certain extent represented by the parties of the new left with the condition that the traditional rules of making politics face a structural change. In this respect the most recent transformations of the social democratic parties in response to both social changes and economic globalization cannot be purely seen as the outcome of the new social movements, they represent rather a strategic and economic reformulation to stop the electoral erosion. Although, these parties have tried to attract the new social movements by including new-left motifs to their renewed programs (England, Germany and Britain), it is not definite how sincere and serious they are in environmentalist, peace keeping and gender issues. After all, a challenge to traditional methods of making politics is not confined to vote hunting.

3.3 The climate prior to the Third Way's victory

I will now analyze the most recent changes in the social democratic parties during the 1990's to illustrate my hypothesis. Often these changes were referred as projects of the Third Way as in the case of Britain's Tony Blair. Germany's fresh chancellor, Gerhard Shroeder, is said to be the latest member of the Third Way club. The nucleus of the last five years' change in most Western European social democratic parties as well as in the Democrat Party in the United States are generally called "Third Way projects".

A conference devoted to the Third Way was held last year in New York, with the participation of all alleged "Third Wayers" including Italy's former Prime Minister Roman Prodi, Swedish Prime Minister and SAP Chairman Goran Persson, the Danish

prime minister, the Portuguese prime minister and of course the so called architects of the project, Blair and Clinton. By that time Schroeder's victory was not yet official and consequently he was not invited to the congress. In addition, the modernizing Finance Minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn represented France instead of Prime Minister Lionel Jospin who was labeled an old-fashioned leftist (Kozanoğlu, 1998).

The participants were said to be the sympathizers of the *a la mode* Third Way project which was allegedly designed for the renaissance of the social democratic parties.

What actually is this "Third Way"? Does it imply a real change as Anthony Giddens argues in his *After Left's Paralysis* or is it simply a neo-Thatcherite effort under the name "new labour" in England or "new middle" in Schroeder's Germany? I will try to answer these questions by referring to the principle of equality which is useful in clarifying the theoretical implications of the alleged changes.

3.4 The Third Way

The week before the European Summit in Amsterdam, Tony Blair delivered a Thatcher style lecture at the Malmö gathering of European socialist parties. "As I said to the Labour Party we must modernize or die" he declared; there was no choice for the European Left but to adopt the New Labour cocktail of 'labour market flexibility and welfare reform'" (Marqusee 1998: 127).

Another ferment of change was voiced by the social democrat K.A. Johansson, Swedish Minister of Interior in 1990, who realized much earlier than British Labour that a structural renewal in the socialist policies was unequivocal: "The 90's must become the decade of the local level. The public sector is to be returned to the people"

(Johansson, 1990 quoted in Selle, 1991:150). The leading Norwegian social democratic ideologist Reiulf Steen echoed more broadly what Johansson said:

I believe in de-institutionalization, decentralization which many claim will lead to greater inequality. Now it is not my experience that centralization leads to greater equality. But, I believe that decentralization is a requirement for creating a balance between rights and responsibilities, between security and responsibility for welfare, a balance which in my opinion is a prerequisite for having a welfare society in the 1990's and for retaining it into the next century (Steen, 1990:26 quoted in Selle, 1991: 155).

In 1997, German SPD Chairman Oskar Lafontaine voiced the need for internationalization, or more appropriately the need for Europeanization: "It is now apparent that labor markets can no longer be organized on a national level. It is also clear that, just as with commodity markets, it is necessary to agree to European regulations...We need the Europeanization of politics and the Europeanization of social and economic organizational frameworks" (Lafontaine, 1998: 76).

To understand the real reason behind the change of jargons, we should look at the almost twenty years' of consecutive electoral defeats of the social democrats, especially in Germany and Britain. There is no doubt that the electoral strategies of the new-left parties have been a motivating factor for social democrats to display pro-environmental, anti-war attitudes in their latest electoral campaigns and there was certainly the effect of socio-economic change as well as the influence of the United States in their inescapable acceptance of economic globalization and the adaptation to the requirements it brought about. The pushing force of the United States in Third Way formulations is not coincidental. Collaboration with the United States in globalization, in international security arrangements and in diplomatic coexistence would, after all, mean more money coming from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The social democratic parties, playing for power, could not have ignored this reality in their policy formations. The collapse of the Soviet bloc, in this respect, also

had a pioneering role enabling the announcement of free-market capitalism as the master of the international economic system.

Social democratic parties, throughout the 1990's, adopted program renewals which not only weakened union influence but also facilitated the leadership to make more decisive steps and adopt faster changes. Unions which at first resisted such renewal, did not, in the end, block it because they did not want to risk losing their traditional allies.

Both the unions and social democracy are committed to liberal democratic parliamentaryism. Society can only be reformed, and union members' interest defended by a Social Democratic party being elected to government. This means that the party cannot rely solely on union or working-class votes and it requires that the unions defer to the parties' electoral strategy. Unions and parties co-operate to achieve separate yet overlapping goals, but this exchange is not symmetrical. Socio-economic change and electoral decline, accompanied with often unhappy experiences in government, compelled social democratic parties in the 1980's to reconsider their programmes and image. The unions were a cause and target of programmatic renewal, but nowhere was union suspicion of programmatic renewal pushed to the point where the relationship was jeopardised. (Gillespie 1993:150)

Closely related to the change in these parties' labour union connections, their economic plans also changed in order to catch up with the so-called realities of globalized economies and the crisis created by rising unemployment.

In Germany, Gerhard Schroeder, three years before being elected chancellor (when he was the party's economic spokesman), said that there could no longer be distinctive social democratic electoral policies, but only a more or less "modern" economic policy (Meier, 1997:136).

In Britain, the declared aim of the New Labour was to win at least two consecutive elections.

This means that Labour must win acceptance by capital as a suitable, and if possible even a preferred, governing party, so that investment will be forthcoming to support the growth on which everything else depends. And, this in turn means being realistic about the constraints imposed by globalization, such as the impossibility of Keynesianism in one country, the need to keep corporate taxation and regulatory burdens no higher than elsewhere, and the need to keep British wage levels down to compensate for lower productivity (Leys 1997:22) .

A desperate sacrifice from welfare policies was also inevitable for the Swedish SAP. An AP article (Turkish Daily News, 1998) says,

When they regained power in 1994, the Social Democrats embarked on an austerity program of cutting funding to Sweden's cherished cradle -to-grave social services in order to extract the country from an enormous debt ...The Social Democrats have promised they can rebuild the welfare state, but say it will never be what it was in the 1960's, when the rest of the world looked admiringly at a country with full employment and medical care that cost only nominal fees ... Moderates (Conservatives) leader Carl Bildt, a former prime minister, says 'The Social Democrats are entering both a parliamentary and political crisis...' Bildt had focused his campaign on characterizing the Social Democrats as trying to hold on to a vision made obsolete by the globalizing economy. Sweden's taxes stifle job-creation and doom the country to marginality.

While it was apparent that the economic policy options of the social democrats would no longer favorize the old fashioned state redistributiveness, they continued to insist on equality rhetoric in their election campaigns and tried to present the image that equality could go hand in hand with free market mechanisms. Tony Blair, for instance, mentioned on various occasions that cooperation could accompany competition. "For him, fair is efficient, cooperative is competitive, deflation means growth..." (Leys, 1997:35).

It was in fact very true that the effects of class politics were nearly totally erased from the policy preferences of the social democratic parties. However, the equality principle, which should be understood as being beyond class politics, remained at the heart of their political strategies (although perhaps not in their real intentions) partly because economic equality represented the real heritage of Social Democracy

and largely because the equality principle signifies a broader appeal compared to class antagonism when equality of opportunities is also included to its overall meaning.

Both Germany and Britain have been ruled by conservative governments in the last two decades. During this time, the enormous economic discontent was due to the huge levels of unemployment and the never achieved promises of prosperity (Green, 1999, Leys, 1997). Both the Labor Party and the SPD, in their election campaigns, benefited from the Conservatives' economic failure and voiced their promises to establish social equality and welfare.

The economic historian Noel Thompson identifies four defining elements in a review of the New Labour's supply side socialism:

First, abundance and choice become the ends, and equality, community and other socialist values the means; second these ends and these means are never held to be in conflict; third, because of this, the power of private capital is not seen as a problem which the state should intervene. Fourth is the priority given to 'traditional city-Treasury goal of stability' equation. (Thompson 1996: 53,54)

Although we witness here the signs of a fundamental transformation in social democratic strategy by placing equality as a means (equality of opportunities) rather than an end (equality of results), the fact that equality is at least emphasized in one way or another, would perhaps be sufficiently appealing to the electorate who already suffered under the Conservative rule.

By the same token, although Gerhard Shroeder in Germany, the elected chancellor candidate of the SPD in 1998, had been known as a modernizer of the economy as opposed to the previous chairman, Oskar Lafontaine, who followed a more traditionalist line, he managed to gain the confidence of the people partly due to his own charisma and greatly due to what the SPD represented in the public eye. "Thus the SPD not only tapped into the populations's fear of unemployment successfully, but also into its unease over the resulting reduction of social cohesion"(Green 1999: 311).

When the SPD came to power in coalition with the Greens, Shroeder appointed former SPD Chairman Oskar Lafontaine as Finance Minister. This was a sign that the party would not throw its traditional equality concern in the garbage as Lafontaine was to some extent representing the traditionalism in the party (although he tried to reduce union influence on the party). “With high unemployment persisting, new initiatives to promote jobs were both the SPD’s and the Greens’ top priority” (Green, 1999:316).

In Germany the efforts to restore the welfare state by creating jobs and in Britain the promise to build welfare demonstrated that the social equality principle was not totally abandoned by these parties, at least in their rhetorics, although their new equality rhetoric did not refer to state control or redistribution but rather to a professional supervision by the state over the economy to reduce injustice (Lidle, 1995).

During the 1990’s and even earlier in the 1980’s, the effects of post-industrialism were underlined as if the old-class cleavages had ended and were replaced by the new, diversified cleavages of the issue-oriented groupings representing a new variation of classes (Tekeli, 1999). However, the changing strategies and programs of the social democratic parties in Western Europe showed that they did not go so far, in their discourse, as to risk a complete loss of their traditional allies (blue-collars or more specifically under- privileged groups) who were, after all, still present although being in declining numbers. Accordingly, “the Social Democrats called for measures to combat both sort of cleavages”(Sainsbury, 1993:50).

“However, contrary to the older rhetoric which favored compensation for the jobless, the principal aim was to provide work” (Sainsbury, 1993:50). This was the principle objective of the so called Third Way not only in Britain, Sweden and Germany, but also in the United States ruled by the Democrats.

The Third Way, in Tony Blair's understanding and in Schroeder's later efforts represents a "neither, nor" mentality. The irony in this is that there is the impression that all the former leftist rhetoric is changing, but the old values still persist. (Ryan, 1999, Applebaum, 1999).

"Positively, the third way is communitarian, and negatively, it finds the third way by avoiding two familiar and famous errors – the belief that political control inevitably improves upon the random and chaotic operations of the market, and the belief that it never does" (Ryan, 1999: 78).

Anthony Giddens, one of Tony Blair's favorite intellectuals, clarified the Third Way project's meaning and drew the lines which differentiate it from both neo-liberalism and Social Democracy as a response against Stuart Hall and Martin Jaques who were implying in their articles that Tony Blair was simply a neo-Thatcherite reformulation who was presented to the electorate under the name "new labour" (Kozanoğlu, 1998). In his defence, Giddens outlined the Third Way from five different angles.

First, he stated that this approach was redefining the left right axis by appealing to globalization, cultural differences and technological improvements. While accepting social justice, the Third Way rejects class politics. It is totally against authoritarianism and ethnic animosity whereas it thinks of individual liberties as respectful to collective resources and social justice.

The Third Way's second characteristic according to Giddens is its commitment to a mixed economy in which competition of monopolies should be prevented.

While Social Democrats try to enlarge the state and the neo-liberals want to reduce its size, the Third Way tries to restructure it. Democracy is believed to improve by means of "direct democracy" practices and referendums.

The Third Way supports a cosmopolitan nation as opposed to the internationalism of social democrats or the conservative nation of the neo-liberals.

The last connotation of the Third Way is the issue of the welfare state. Social democrats see the welfare state as a necessity of a “humanist society” whereas the neo-liberals see it as a source of laziness and the enemy of investment. The welfare state, in the Third Way project, will be an “investor state”. It will invest in human capital adopting protectionism only against unexpected risks (Giddens, 1998 quoted in Kozanoğlu 1998:30).

The Third Way, according to Giddens’ explanations, represents the middle way between neo-liberalism and social democracy. However, on a practical level, there are serious doubts about whether this project can be implemented as easily as it is defined. Giddens himself admits that the Third Way is not a theory and most scholars argue that it is just a pragmatic stance or a strategic reformulation (Kozanoğlu, 1998). There are ironic statements about Blair in this respect and the amount of his knowledge on the Third Way project. An article in Labour and Trade Union Review argues that the Third Way is Blair’s way. He invented it first and is now trying to understand its meaning (Kozanoğlu, 1998).

In Germany, although Schroeder promised to follow Blair’s path (Leicht, 1998), the ambiguity about the details of his “new middle” project in terms of its economic stance are still ambiguous (Dalton, 1999: 177).

After all, Blair introduced New Labour as the party of the business class (Marquesse, 1998:128) and everybody knows that Gerhard Schroeder is the “bosses comrade” (The Independent, 1998: 11). Therefore, it is difficult to maintain that they would implement egalitarian policies.

In terms of equality, it is possible to see that a vague emphasis on responsibility overweighs the principle of social equality. However this responsibility should be a collective responsibility, Third Way architects say, but there is not much guidance on how this will happen (Ryan,1999). It is true that the growing unemployment in Western Europe under conservative governments has pushed the issue of redistribution to a secondary position. On the other hand, this truth remains valid at present for the newly elected social democrats simply because reducing unemployment by creating new jobs seems to be impossible with social redistribution and extreme emphasis on social security which are seen as obstacles to growth. Therefore, the Third Way formula of “finding jobs instead of compensating the jobless” was the best rhetoric, in this “crisis” ambiance, which could be found by the pragmatic social democrats without damaging, at least in appearance, the concept of equality as the *sine qua non* principle of Social Democracy.

By the same token, Third Way project makers do not forget to include a reference to solidarity, another defining theme of Social Democracy, by placing the term “collective” before responsibility..

In fact, if we analyse the history of Social Democracy as summarized in the first chapter, we can see that what reformists did at the beginning of the century and in the post-World War II period was not very different, in terms of strategy, than what they do now. As can be recalled, reformism, at the beginning of the century, was trying to find a third way between Marxist Socialism and Classical Liberalism.

In the Bad Godesberg program, there has been an inclination towards the liberal path when state control was, to a certain extent, sacrificed to private ownership, and class based politics was sacrificed to general issue based politics.

The last instance, the Third Way case can be evaluated as a further inclination towards liberal discourse and action. The signs of this development can be seen following the implicit change in the meaning of equality. As I mentioned in the first chapter, equality, for the social democrats, meant, at first, income equality. Then, the social democrats included the equality of opportunities (when they preferred Reformism to Revolutionism) and, in a way, expanded equality's meaning. Now they are in a trend wherein equality is conceived of more and more with that of opportunity, therefore re-minimizing its meaning. "As the Social Democrats were late in providing a new 'leftist' appeal which could penetrate the changing expectations, they had to borrow the neo-liberal rhetoric to compensate for their electoral losses" (Laclau, 1998:50).

Never ending reformism, with a pragmatic sentiment of responding to changing interests is a defining characteristic of Social Democracy inherited from Bernstein. Consequently, one may claim that Social Democracy's real attachment, regarding such a rhetoric change, is neither to equality (understood in the socialist sense) nor to solidarity. Many people argue that social democrats' real commitment is to maintaining capitalism, restructuring themselves in relation to capitalism's changing phases and trying to balance the electorate demands with capitalist development (Kozanoğlu,1998). As a matter of fact, throughout the history of Social Democracy, whenever capitalism renewed itself or passed through a transformation, social democrats converted their discourse, action and strategies to the requirements of this change. In discourse however they have never failed to refer to their heritage: Equality and Solidarity. This was actually a strategy of reconciliation, an effort to create a compromise between the business and lower classes. Now that the "class" terminology has lost its currency (post-industrialist rhetoric) the notion of lower class has been

replaced by the term under-privileged. The “economic”ness has been replaced by the “issue” ness and in terms of equality, opportunity has replaced income meaning equality has changed its connotation.

“Both the New Democrats in the United States, and New Labour in Britain insist that government can play the role of guarantor of opportunity in the free market, but they refuse to address the correlation between the distribution of wealth and the distribution of power” (Faux, 1999: 74).

The “neither nor” approach adopted by the Third Way social democrats can be seen as a continuation of the social democrats’ efforts to reconcile the voter tendencies. But it seems that their commitment to capitalism and neo-liberalism weighs heavier than egalitarianism in this “neither nor” equation.

“Capitalism is described as the best economic system yet devised for creating growth and efficiently allocating resources, and two-parent families nurturing such values as faith, work, personal responsibility, civility and openness to new ideas are the best social units devised for raising children” (Abrams, 1999:18). Such statements, which are peculiar to the Third Way, seem to avoid economic responsibilities (to which social democrats used to give importance) to a non-economic platform. But such an aversion is legitimized very convincingly by emphasizing ethical values.

Tarik Ali, a writer for the British daily *The Guardian*, illustrates Blair’s tendency to respond to every problem with a non-economic, ethical remedy: “Our politicians prefer to climb on the ‘ethics wagon’ because they are unable to solve the problems of two million unemployed and millions of neglected people” (Tarik Ali, *The Guardian*, 1996).

In every case, one may see that there are tremendous limits to conceiving the current society solely as post-industrial. Although there is an undeniable amount of de-

materialized, libertarian expectations which are waiting on the new left's agenda, the problem of unemployment and the reality that there are under-privileged as well as poor citizens may show the crucial importance of the economic side which has tended to be somewhat ignored in the Third Way by "neither nor" discourse.

Many social democrat sympathizers want to see their parties as the defender of economic equality, maybe much more than the libertarian expectations, and they somewhat believe (through successful media appeal) that their party will achieve economic equality. A German housewife illustrates this point: "My husband and I voted for Mr. Schroeder because we need a government that does something for the workers, for the small people". By the same token, a German stone worker voices his disgust about high unemployment and feels that the tax system was unjust. About Mr. Schroeder, he has yet to be convinced. "I prefer Lafontaine," he says. "Oskar Lafontaine is on the left wing of the party, more in tune with the aspirations of working people. But I accept that Schroeder is worth an extra 4 or 5 percent in votes"(Imre Karacs, *The Independent*, 1998 :11).

In light of the fact that there is no class appeal in the terminologies of both New Labour and the New Middle, and despite the fact that the chairman of both parties define themselves as "the parties of the business class", what makes these people believe that these parties will do something on behalf of the under-privileged masses?

3.4 The political strategy: Globalization and Marketization of the politics.

Perhaps more important than the eroding influence of working class politics, the rise of the new cleavages and in turn the policy changes in the social democratic parties; ongoing globalization and what we call the "age of technology" is in a process of changing the world of "ideologies" in to a world of "flexibilities" (Göle, 1994). In

this context, not only the leftist parties, but also those in the right wing spectrum have difficulty referring to ideological positions and are rather beginning to conceive the art of politics as flexible policies to be changed so as to attract as much electorate as possible. In a way, the spirit of utilitarianism which finds meaning in its maximization of pleasure and minimization of pain at any rate seems to apply to the broader level of politics.

The ongoing changes in the social democratic parties do not seem to comply with the ideal of new social movements as an improved reformulation of the concept of representation and a changing meaning of politics which finds sense in a more pluralist forum.

“Left parties that prided themselves on their class-mass character have turned into flimsier, leadership-centered, electoral organizations that strive for a catch-all appeal” (Sferza 1999). In such a case, one may legitimately ask, “Then, why are they one after another getting into office?” Optimists may say that they are appealing to the masses by new representation schemes or the masses are economically so satisfied that they are voting just for fun.

Or is there an Americanization or globalization of politics as Guehenno claims? (Guehenno, 1999). In the European tradition, a mass political party’s electoral success used to come from its grassroot’s support in particular and from a general mass support in general. Being in direct touch with the masses was believed to be by virtue of democracy. Now that the social democratic parties are becoming more and more leader oriented and using the media as a way of getting in “remote control” touch with

the masses as seen in the case of Blair and more recently in Schroeder's¹⁴, there are legitimate skepticisms about the level of democraticness of such a stance.

In this respect we may speak of an Americanized way of change in those parties in terms of their strategy, media appeal and the ways they establish a hegemony on their constituencies. Al From, who leads the Conservative Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) and is the Third Way's most prominent American salesperson, describes the Third Way as "the worldwide brand name for progressive politics for the information age" (From quoted in Faux 1999:67). If the Third Way is conceived of as a commodity, aren't the electoral strategies, speeches, gestures and leaders themselves representing commodities following the same logic? The meaning of politics in such a scenario is not be very different from that of marketing.

In Germany, prior to the 1998 elections, a typical Schroeder rally included rock music, videos, short speeches and general pronouncements about the future. Schroeder and his young wife presented a telegenic image. The campaign video began inside a spaceship with several astronauts entering a room to be "beamed up" to another ship. The transporter powers up, and all but one of the astronauts are beamed away. The remaining astronaut looks around and then raises the visor on his space suit: it is Helmut Kohl. Kohl, the SPD argued was the candidate of Germany's past; a new chancellor was needed for the future (Dalton, 1999:177).

Tony Blair's media appeal, prior to the elections was somewhat familiar in the gestures, the meanings embedded in speeches and the army of professionals around him who revised every single detail of his statements (Kozanoğlu, 1998). All the technological means were used to better appeal to the electorate. The image of the leader became much more important in terms of "seducing" the voters.

¹⁴ The recent resignation of Oskar Lafontaine as Finance Minister as the man representing the old-left in the party and being a very strong figure in the grassroots level, shows that Schroeder is strengthening the leadership position in SPD

Mass media has actually taken over many of the functions that parties once performed for themselves. The business of winning elections has become more capital-intensive and less labour intensive, making political donors matter more and political activists less. Better to keep the message vague. Or why not let the tough choices be taken by referendums? (The Economist, 1999)

The reform proposals of New Labour such as a constitutional revision, more direct participation, an educational reform and a stake holder economy, roughly meaning that everyone will have a share of the capital (Leys, 1997; Applebaum, 1998), are actually expressions of a more democratic and egalitarian restructuring,

However, the “stakeholder” rhetoric, which helped Tony Blair in his hegemonic appeal, is no longer being emphasized as strongly since his election as prime minister as when he was campaigning for the elections.

After the elections, when he was asked to explain what exactly he meant by a stakeholder economy; as soon as the question became penetrating, Blair backed off, claiming that his ideas were far more general. Since then he has been cautious about how he uses the word. In a speech that he delivered in Derby he defined stakeholder economics simply as “giving opportunities for all” (Applebaum, 1998:50).

However, a stakeholder economy cannot be simply understood as equal opportunity, but rather an equal share of the capital.

Moreover, Blair had promised, during his campaign speeches, to create a Scottish parliament. When he came to power, he backed away from this promise following harsh Tory criticism that a Scottish parliament with taxation powers would certainly result in higher taxes for Scotland. Consequently instead of creating a Scottish parliament:

He said he would hold a referendum in Scotland on both whether to form such a parliament and whether it should have powers of taxation. This change of policy has been interpreted as a betrayal by his Scottish supporters. However such a change was in fact consistent with Blair's pre-election strategy: Propose a radical idea, listen to the criticism, retreat. (Applebaum, 1998:56).

In Germany, the resignation of Oskar Lafontaine from his position as Finance Minister and from his party have parallel connotations. Lafontaine had for a long time been accused by British and German Third Wayers of being a dogmatic leftist. Despite his strong connections with SPD grassroots, his power in the SPD was limited as he was seen as a threat against further globalization of the German economy (*Newsweek*, 1999). In the end he could not stand up against so much pressure and resigned. His sudden resignation has major implications for Germany. First, it became apparent that the SPD which had campaigned on the issue of "equality" before the elections was actually more dedicated to a globalized economics which functions on a pure free-market basis. Second, the power coming from the grassroots was no longer sufficient in influencing and shaping the final party decisions.

In this respect doesn't the Third Way's "leader orientatedness" and break with the grassroots connection symbolise an anti-democratic formation within the parties themselves and in their connection with the masses?

The Left parties that are today doing the best are those that have most effectively distanced themselves from their sectoral working-class appeal and have embraced "New Politics" issues and groups (Kitschelt, 1994). They have put their fate in the hands of young and often charismatic leaders with both a strong personal and mass media appeal and have contested to the "marketization" of their economies and societies. Consequently, the message given to the electorate is short, pragmatic and designed in an attractive fashion to appeal to the psychology of the electorate. When we add the unemployment which climbed in the long period under conservative

governments in Britain and in Germany, the keys of their electoral success become obvious.

The theoretical conclusion which may be drawn from the Third Way is that the pragmatism which used to be a means to achieve the social democratic goal of equality, is in a process of becoming a goal in itself. If social democratic parties are now changing into leader oriented institutions for the sake of efficiency, stability and pragmatism, and evaluating socialism as a means rather than an end, such a stance does not have very promising implications in terms of democracy and the fate of the “social equality” principle.

The French Socialist Party (PS) is an important exception to the route “Third Ways” follow in terms of the political side of the coin. In terms of economics, the necessity of market economics was also accepted by Lionel Jospin’s PS despite some reservations. After Tony Blair announced to the French National Assembly “there is not an economic policy of the Left and an economic policy of the Right , but only a good and a bad policy,” Jospin corrected him by noting that things were much more complicated. “There are good Left policies and bad Left policies, and good right policies as well as bad right policies,” he stated (*Le Monde*, 1998).

The PS also harshly stood against the loss of connection between parties and society, saying, “Yes to marketization of the economics but no to marketization of society” (Kozanoğlu, 1998:31).

The best way to understand the record of the French Socialists is to look at them not as being beyond or behind other European Lefts but as an example of a citizens’ party. More universalist than class oriented, more focused on political issues having to do with democratization of power than on social and economic questions, and rather loosely and democratically organized, the PS success has been contingent on the pursuit of an inclusive and social view of citizenship (Sferza, 1999:107).

What New Labour did in England was to propose a partnership to a particular strata (business) rather than democratizing the power as in the case of the PS.

The reason why I excluded France from this study is because socialist dynamics often diverge here as well as in Italy and in other Mediterranean countries from the transformative patterns of the Northern countries. Although common patterns may also be found, dealing with too many exceptions would keep this study far from drawing a general and consistent picture of Social Democracy's strategic transformation in Western Europe. As Kitschelt (1994) argues, Southwestern European politics are often motivated by a "socialist" discourse which he claims to be closer to a communitarian spirit in parallel with the Catholic tradition compared to the Northern "social democraticness" which can be conceived as closer to liberal ethics motivated by Protestant values .

The concepts which tied all these parties together by a "Socialist International" connection was their emphasis on equality and solidarity which were accepted as being a universal part of Social Democracy.

What we are observing at present in Northwestern Europe, following the Third Way currents, is the declining relevance of the material meaning of equality and its leaning towards the liberal conception of "equality of opportunities". But what if not everyone is equally talented to benefit from these opportunities? (Tekeli, 1999). According to Blair, it is the spirit of "collective responsibility" which will be the guarantor of social equality.

What we are also witnessing is the erosion of the "democraticness" in the representative pattern of these social democratic parties when they distance themselves from their worker roots and try to homogenize their appeal (Sferza, 1999). Using media channelling effectively and successfully appealing to the psychology of the

electorate, both the SPD and New Labour won the most recent elections because they achieved, to a certain extent, to retain their traditional workers constituency on their side and at the same time appeal to the libertarian and free market demands by their “neither nor” discourse. The Swedish social democrats, by the same token, owe their continuing electoral success to “their transformative ability to be both a citizens’ and a workers’ party” (Sferza, 1999:119).

It can be summarized that the ferment of change in those parties was activated by a change in their strategic appeal (homogenization), and a necessary change towards the global free-market model which does not favor state redistribution (neoliberalism). The term for legitimizing the economic change was the “Third Way” which still allowed a material equality dimension to survive to some extent by its “neither nor” connotation and the rhetoric which weakened the focus on the worker constituency was “we need more democracy.”

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, THE THIRD WAY AND TURKEY

While Western European social democratic parties were in the process of proclaiming a reformulation in their discourse and action under the guise of the “Third Way”, and one by one taking office with a new tactical stance, the center-left parties in Turkey, as well as other parties, were closely monitoring their formulas for electoral success and trying to derive lessons from “Third Wayers” in terms of strategy and discourse.

To frame the differences and similarities between Turkey and Western Europe with regard to the present reformulation of Social Democracy, comparing the divergent developmental patterns of Turkish and Western European social democracies is essential.

As I mentioned in the first chapter, Western European Social Democracy originates from industrial relations as a quest to defend the rights of the workers within the democratic order while remaining at peace with the capitalist system. The commencement of the social democratic movement in Western Europe, in this respect, dates back to the beginning of the 20th century when labour unions began to be effective in the political scene.

Western European history, prior to the formation of Social Democracy, digested many important developments such as the Protestant Reformation, Industrial Revolution and struggle for democratic rights. These developments created a fruitful ground for the formation of Social Democracy and its recognition by the masses. At the turn of the 20th century, the key cumulative outcomes of the developments

Western Europe experienced over the previous four centuries could be briefly outlined as; class formation accompanied by industrial development, secularism, and democratic representation.

Numerous scholars have mentioned that the Turkish picture is fundamentally different from that of Western Europe. These scholars express at different occasions that neither Turkish politics, nor its history or its social development have followed the same patterns as Western Europe. (Heper 1994, Mardin 1973 , Cem 1984)

The reasons for these historical divergences from the West in the formation of Social Democracy (or its inability to develop) in the early Turkish Republic may be outlined as being threefold: The late arrival of industry and the consequent absence of class formation (Cem 1984, Emrealp 1991) , the difference in cleavage structures due to the lack of industrial classes and to the absence of a reformation movement in the past (Sancar 1998), and an authoritarian state structure inherited from the Ottoman empire and its implications on the political culture, on the organizational freedoms and therefore on the civil societal action (Özbudun 1988, Heper 1994). Such factors can be more extensively categorized; however these basic three are key to understanding the late arrival of Social Democracy to the Turkish setting.

While the Republican People's Party (CHP), the first allegedly center-left party in Turkey, founded its very basis on the national liberation movement led by Kemal Atatürk, Western European Social Democracy was the outcome of the Industrial Revolution and the collateral horizontal political mobilization of the working class (Sancar 1998). In the 19th century, the number of industrial proletariat had already surpassed the one million mark in Germany, Sweden and Britain, whereas this number was only 14,000 in Turkey when the Republic was proclaimed.

Social Democracy in Western Europe owes a great part of its development to the size of the industrial proletariat and to the fact that the proportion of the population living in metropolitan areas to the whole population was very high, whereas this picture is reversed in Turkey's case (Cem 1984:276). Reflecting the size of the industrial class, trade union formation in Turkey was much later and slower compared to Western Europe and much smaller in scale.

Another important divergence, in comparing Turkey to Western Europe, arose with respect to the cleavage structures of both settings. While Western European Social Democracy originates from functional cleavages based on the relations of a particular strata vis a vis the means of production (the outcome of Industrial Revolution), the economic delay in terms of industrialization had different political and social outcomes in Turkey with regard to cleavage structures. The cleavage system that shaped Turkish politics was grounded on cultural and regional oppositions rather than functional cleavages committed to class and collective interests as in the West (Sancar 1998:330).

The Protestant Reformation also had an impact on the shaping of functional cleavages in Western Europe, especially in Britain and Sweden. Although the Catholic resistance to some extent slowed the secularization and centralization in the cases of Germany and France and kept the Conservatives, in later years, equally strong with the Social Democrats, the Protestant church, in terms of its commitment to the spirit of "labour", was very influential in the promotion of social democratic values and the acceleration of the social democratic movement in general. (Sancar,1998)

"Religious reformation in the Western sense remained utterly alien to Turkish society, as well as to the entire Muslim society. Although a number of reformation endeavors can be cited, they appeared to be entirely dissimilar in scope and in essence

when compared to the reformation process in Europe” (Tarik Zafer Tunaya: 1997 quoted in Sancar).

Center-periphery and religious-secular cleavages are the primary keys in understanding Turkish politics (Mardin, 1973), whereas functional cleavages (labour-business) which Western Social Democracy has been dealing with, have, for a long time, been secondary in Turkey due to the late arrival of industry and to the absence of a secular reformation movement.

One of the principle obstacles on the road to Social Democracy was the strong and centralized state authority of the early Turkish Republic which was inherited from the Ottoman tradition. “The resulting situation has been referred to as the ‘absence of civil society’ which means the weakness or absence of corporate, autonomous intermediary structures” (Özbudun, 1988: 250).

Although the number of voluntary associations in Turkey rose tremendously in the multi-party era, organizational autonomy and the level of organizational participation in such associations were still much lower than in Western European democracies. Moreover, expectations from the state service were an overdominant feature of Turkish political culture. The constitutional conceptualization of this feature was a social state instead of a welfare state.

4.1 CHP from Republic to Left of the Center

Following authoritarian state tradition, the foundation of the Turkish Republic was an elite driven attempt rather than a mass commitment. It was not until the two-party era that we may speak of a democratization which is a fundamental requirement for Social Democracy. The cleavage structure in Turkey, however, helped the conservative Democratic Party (DP) to fulfill the function of democratization through

its attempt to appeal to territorial (periphery) and cultural (religious) cleavages. (Schuler,1999). Especially in the post 1950 period, the periphery has enjoyed the interests deriving from the state-political party relationships which were basically channelled through the center-right parties.(Ayata:1992)

The CHP, on the other hand, the single party through which Republican policies were channeled was unable to establish contact with the rural masses. The movement 'towards the people' for which so much clamor had been made in the first years of the Ankara government, was thin, and the possibilities opened up by the Republic for establishing new links between government and peasants were not fulfilled" (Mardin, 1973:183)

Here, we may highlight the difference of the roots of the CHP from the Western European social democratic parties in terms of its ideology, strategy, social base and organization. It is possible to say that the CHP was not founded on a well defined ideology, but was rather built on a weak ideological mixture referring to the efforts of searching for a "third way" which would neither be capitalism, nor socialism (Emrealp 1991: 165). As strategy, the CHP suggested the realization of a classless society which would be unified by a glue of progress, nationalization and statism.

"Our principle is creating a society which is diversified in terms of services for the realization of an individual and social life rather than dividing the people into opposing classes" (CHP Program 1935). However, as the Turkish Republic was an outcome of an elite calculation, it neither was able to conduct this project in relation to a social base nor was it successful in extending the limits of its organizational capacity from the center to the periphery.

The elitist structure of the party lasted until the 1970's. This era experienced the development of a Turkish industry which was still much smaller in scale compared to the industrialization level of Western European countries. The proportion of the size of the industrial workers to the whole working population was still no more than 17%

even in 1983 (Cem, 1984). During the “statist” years of Republican Turkey where workers were not included in politics, bureaucrats were in charge of maintaining an economic growth which kept the Republican regime legitimate and acted as a glue of unifying social forces. In this respect, it was not surprising that the issues of socializing and democratizing the society were not included on the CHP’s list of preferences (Emrealp 1991:171).

From among the famous six arrows of the CHP, “populism” symbolized the fusion of a classless society. By the 1940’s, the CHP, in direct opposition of its name, started to be conceived by the periphery as a party representing the state versus the people.

Despite its efforts to socialize and organize the masses by the intermediary of the Köy Enstitüleri (Village Institutes) and Halk Evleri (People’s Houses), due to the practical failures to make such organizational channels functional, the CHP was far behind the organizational style of the Western European mass parties which kept them in touch with their grassroots until the 1990’s (Emrealp 1991:175).

One of the first signs of an attitude change in the party was the adoption of the “left of the center” rhetoric to describe a new identity for the CHP. A 1969 election circular of the party emphasizing the change in the discourse stated, “The people will no longer be at the mercy of the state, from now on, the state will serve the people” (CHP election circular, 1969 quoted in Bila, 1979:447).

This stance was no doubt due to the changing social and economic picture of Turkey. While the confrontations based on the ideology intensified under the influence of the developments in Western Europe, the developing working class had also found a fruitful ground, with the help of the libertarian constitution of 1960, to activate labour union movements and to extend its freedoms. “Not only the strengthening of the

labour unions, but also rising student and intellectual movements started the search for a political platform from which to voice their concerns” (Emrealp, 1991:177).

The CHP, with the newly flourishing cadres representing a leftist challenge to the elitist tradition of the party, and the changing mentality of its leadership becoming aware of the importance of developing new strategies to prevent further electoral defeats, was a platform uniting such tendencies together with the rising Turkey’s Workers’ Party (TIP). The aim of the new CHP, in theory, was to embrace the rising working class, but also to represent the territorial cleavages (peasants in the periphery).

As early as 1950, the election defeat to the DP was a turning point signaling the CHP to reconsider its stance vis a vis society. At the party assembly meeting held after the defeat, the assembly announced that the party would become a “peasants’ party”. On the other hand, between the years 1961-64, the laws issued by the CHP government on the issues of labour unions, collective bargaining and strikes were a motivating force for the working class (Bila, 1979). Meanwhile Chairman İsmet İnönü was still reluctant to devote a new identity to the party and openly denied that the party would be socialist, preferring the term “center of the left”.

It was not until Bülent Ecevit’s leadership that the party’s leftist identity and its mass character was officially declared. The first elections (1973) that the CHP entered under Ecevit’s chairmanship showed that there was a considerable rise in the percentage of votes the party received compared to the previous elections. Despite Ecevit’s appeal to the “periphery” together with the party’s new stance towards industrial workers, its success mainly came from the latter group. Whereas the CHP raised its support tremendously in industrialized cities such as Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir, Zonguldak and İçel; it faced an electoral erosion in cities such as Ağrı, Bitlis, Van,

Erzurum, Ordu, Niğde and Çankırı which mostly represent the periphery (Bila, 1979). The election results therefore indicated that the CHP was still not the party of the “peasants”, however, it was apparent that its plans to attract the rising industrial workers had been successful.

In this respect, we can summarize the CHP’s positional and structural evolution since its foundation until 1973 with the following parameters. The party shifted its strategy from bureaucratic elitism to mass appeal and therefore extended the boundaries of its social base (Sancar, 1998) Although the CHP, at its very foundation, was introduced as the people’s party, it did not succeed until the 1970’s to reach the people and more importantly to “represent” them due to its bureaucratic elitist character and its centralist authoritarian organization (Emrealp, 1991). The CHP, under Ecevit’s chairmanship inescapably gained a class character when the party appealed to the interests of the workers.

The CHP, in a way, followed the developmental path of the Western European parties but from the opposite direction. As I mentioned in the first chapter, at the beginning of this century the Western European social democratic parties were founded with the aim of representing labour. They then extended the boundaries of their representation by appealing to the middle classes enlarging their organizational and grassroots-based channels in order to gain a mass character. Finally, in the last twenty years, they experienced a “representation” crisis in the changing social, economic, cultural and technological climates following which their working class connection obligatorily eroded. The parties thus (Britain, Germany) became more leader- and “professional-” orientated for the sake of emphasizing a “catch-all” classlessness in their rhetoric. At the grassroots level, when the excessive decisional priorities given to labor began to create negative outcomes for the electoral

performance of these parties, the Social Democrats found the solution in weakening the class connection to be able to respond to the diversified expectations with a flexible party structure. The claim to represent the diversified citizen's expectations, which was actually a claim to be more democratic, paradoxically required the emphasis on a more leader-oriented structure just to sound ideologically more coherent and establish a consistency at the policy level.

In the CHP case, the picture turns upside-down, at least in appearance. The party which was first characterized by its elitist, centralist organization, changed its organizational structure to be able to appeal to the territorial cleavages characterized by the peasants and functional cleavages characterized by the working class.

Nevertheless, such a structural and organizational change in the CHP turned the party into the focal point of the various factions and perhaps too many "socialist" expectations were attributed to the party (Emrealp, 1991). When Chairman Ecevit saw that the party was in an ideological deadlock in 1974, he clarified the party's ideology. The name he preferred was the "democratic left". The democratic left, in his opinion, represented a "left" peculiar to Turkey's socio-economic conditions. In addition to workers, the peasants were given special emphasis in this democratic left formulation (Bila, 1979).

By the same token, the proclamation of the party's ideology as democratic left in a way signaled that Ecevit wanted to step back from a further opening of the party as a socialist "class platform" based solely on workers' interests. Equal weight, in turn, was given to peasants together with all the wage earners, artisans and shopkeepers while the CHP leader avoided implying any strong relations with labor (Emrealp, 1991). This strategic maneuver awarded the CHP with an electoral victory of 41% in the 1977 elections. In a way, the CHP touched the workers, felt that it could be

dangerous to be “class centered” for electoral concerns and retreated. After all, the military was still a very strong actor in Turkish political life as a natural extension of the inherited authoritarian state structure, and business circles should have been convinced that the “democratic left” project was not a revolutionary attempt but rather concern for a democratic opening.

Consequently, the CHP’s claim to embrace the working class was left as an unfinished project due to the return back to early Republican “classless-ness” rhetoric. In this respect, the CHP was once again unsuccessful in creating a clear cut ideology and drawing a boundary of representation to maintain the long term support of the masses (Soysal, 1975) and during the short terms that the CHP was in government between 1973 and 1980, it could neither reduce the economic inequality, nor was it able to go for a fully planned democratization in an ambiance where social tensions had reached a peak.

4.2 Post-1980 Era: A Brief Chronology of the Turkish Social Democrats

While the 1980’s represent politically the electoral decline of the Western European social democratic parties, it represents efforts to restore democracy in Turkey. Following the military coup of 1980, which was legitimized as the only solution to end the climbing social and political tensions in the country, the army governed Turkey for the following three years until the generals decided to call elections and returned back to democracy. However, the restrictive constitution drafted by a small number of technocrats and academics in consultation with the army officers was not democratic in essence although the majority of the electorate approved it.

By the same token, Social Democracy had to restore itself in the post-1983 era. As most of the active CHP members and its leading figures as well as the party itself were banned by the military for ten years, the first center-left party, the Populist Party (HP) which was founded in 1983, was a limited platform from which to activate a broad social democratic movement. On the other hand, The Social Democracy Party (SODEP), another center-left party which was believed to represent the real social democratic movement, was not allowed to enter the 1983 elections because the military had vetoed the party's founders list. The party was, however, officialized after the elections. Both parties were united in 1984 under the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP).

A separate center-left party, the Democratic Left Party (DSP) was formed in 1985 under the guidance of banned politician Bülent Ecevit, but officially led by his wife Rahşan Ecevit until Bülent Ecevit and other banned politicians returned to active politics with a referendum held in 1987. Ecevit became the chairman of the party as soon as he returned to the political scene.

In 1991, the CHP, ten years after its closure in 1980, returned to the political scene through the efforts of Deniz Baykal and his friends who represented the largest faction in the SHP. Baykal resigned from the SHP and became CHP chairman. In 1994, the SHP was dissolved and joined the CHP with Deniz Baykal re-elected party leader. Since 1994, the center-left in Turkish politics has been represented by Ecevit's DSP and Baykal's CHP. Due to the unsuccessful results that the CHP obtained in the 1999 elections, Baykal resigned and left his place to Altan Öymen at the most recent party convention.

4.3 Social, Political and Economic Ambiance in the post-1980 era

The military coup of the 1980's, like the earlier coups, was perhaps the major reason that Social Democracy, in the Western European sense, could not find maturity in the Turkish setting. Due to the anti-democratic effects of the military coup in 1980, the primary objectives for the parties representing the left, in the first few years after the military had returned to their barracks, were naturally expected to be the democratization of the regime, altering the restrictive and anti-democratic constitution dictated by the military and challenging the ongoing economic liberalization led by Prime Minister Turgut Özal who preferred to ignore the social and economic inequalities in his neo liberal project. However, neither the SHP, nor the DSP were very quick in their efforts to push for the amendment of the Constitution. It was as late as 1991 when SHP deputies officially proposed the amendment of the Constitution (Schuler, 1999).

Although the center-left parties of the post-military regime were expressing the need to democratize the country, their primary efforts, for electoral concerns, were rather concentrated on their opposition to the Özal government. During the first five years of the Özal government, Turkey realized a spectacular economic growth and at the end of the 1980's, the size of its economy was bigger than that of Sweden. Despite the growth, the income gaps and social inequalities widened during that era. It was legitimate, therefore, for the center-left parties to play off the potential discontent due to economic inequality.

Like Özal's growth-led pragmatism, the politics of the 1980's are characterized by the deadlock of ideology and the victory of pragmatism (Rustow, 1994:9). The political dynamics of the 1960's were based on the confrontation between leftist and rightist ideologies. This conflict resulted in armed clashes between the two camps during the 1970's. However, from the early 1980's onwards, the political debate centered on policy rather than political ideology (Göle, 1994:213).

With regard to the society, the ideological conflicts of the 1980's created resentment in the majority. The approval of the restrictive constitution by a broad consensus was actually a sign that society had put its faith in "good policies" rather than "good ideologies." However, when the Özal-led government's policies widened the income gap and resulted in increasing economic discontent in both the lower-middle and lower classes, the SHP, as a social democratic alternative, began to represent "hope" for the growing under-privileged strata. The SHP which played carefully on bread and butter issues achieved to be the first party in the 1989 municipal elections. However, in a very short period of time, the SHP's votes started to decline as it could not successfully play the role of the "party of the small people". Prior to 1991 elections, this role was successfully played by the center right True Path Party (DYP) as the follower of the DP tradition in being the party of the peasants, and later on played by the Islamic Welfare Party (RP) which appealed to the voters by a successful organizational maneuver emphasizing a kind of "Islamic Socialism" (Schuler, 1999).

During these years, the SHP's representative capacity was not very spectacular due to its organizational democracy debates. The party, as the follower of the CHP, was a forum where various factions competed for leadership rather than being organized at the grassroots level so as to maximize its representative abilities. In such

an ambiance, the CHP started to present an inconsistent image to the electorate whereas Bülent Ecevit's DSP increased its popularity in the electorate's eyes despite the party's leader-oriented structure. Although in theory, lacking a strong grassroots connection was a failure in terms of democracy, it was a positive step in terms of electoral gains in the ideologically loosening political atmosphere, as we can see later in the cases of Blair and Schroeder in Western Europe. After all, in an ambiance where policies clash instead of ideologies, a party discourse freed of clashing ideas and opposing factions would sound much more consistent and appear much more stable to the electorate compared to a party in which everyone expresses different concerns. What Ecevit wanted to settle in his new party was based on such a calculation: A single party should have a single voice to prove its decisiveness and know-how on how to carry out policies.

While the DSP was in a gradual rising trend due to Ecevit's commitment to drawing a stable and consistent picture of his party, the SHP, due to its practical failure to establish a single coherent voice to penetrate the masses, lost the electorate's confidence. The SHP's inability to turn its internal clashes into a line of consensus later persisted in the CHP after the party was dissolved to join the latter. But can we tell that it was the party's commitment to its internal democracy which actually prevented the CHP from taking the lead in the Turkish politics? Indeed, the ongoing oppositions in the party did not really seem to be simply voiced in favor of making the party a more democratic institution to be able to better represent the masses. The principal motivation of these oppositions basically rested on a desire to reach the leadership position in the party. "More broadly, the genesis of these oppositions was based on the idea of 'you do not know how to rule but I do'"(Schuler,1999:21). Therefore, the CHP was not able to get in touch with the masses either at the organizational mass

level (as opposed to the case of the RP) or at the “image” level (as opposed to Ecevit). Consequently, throughout the 1990’s, the CHP, as a party claiming to represent Social Democracy in Turkey, failed to convince the electorate that it was the right address to attack social inequalities and to restore democracy.

4.4 CHP: A party incompatible with social changes

Perhaps, the most significant failure of the SHP and later on CHP was its inability to create a discourse which would respond to new social expectations in order to embrace the rising new social movements peculiar to Turkey.

The new social democratic parties and above all the CHP, were founded by a group of intellectuals and bureaucrats who were close to the educated middle classes in the big cities but were quite remote from the grass-roots activists of the CHP. (Ayata, 1993:43)

Although, the largest faction during the SHP years, known as *Yenilikçiler* (Pro-reformation) led by Deniz Baykal, Ertuğrul Günay and other leading figures in the party had begun, as early as 1989, to voice demands for renewal which would be compatible with the transforming social dynamics, their challenge was limited to voicing the necessity of structural reforms like membership, leadership and intra-party democracy instead of being focused on catching-up with changing social expectations. (Kahraman, 1999). Later on, this group has re-named themselves as new left and began to question the party’s ideological loyalty to its past . However, the ideologues of the so-called new left (a new left peculiar to Turkey) were still hesitant about totally abandoning the Six Arrows constituting the basic principles of the party. According to Günay, the Six Arrows is neither a taboo nor needs to be completely rejected. (Günay, 1991). The question whether the Kemalist ideology would remain as

the basis of the party program or should it totally be abandoned has been the main debate for the Turkish social democrats during the period 1990-1995. Being stucked in the reductionism of the ideological debates, the social developments, on the one hand and intra-party debates in CHP and SHP, on the other, have not been compatible with each other.

While CHP was re-established by the new-left group and was in search for its new identity, Murat Karayalçın took the lead of SHP in 1993. In Karayalçın's account, the democratization and transformation were the major issues to be tackled with. Although social inequalities were slightly addressed by Karayalçın's SHP, a clear-cut message could still not be given to society about how to initiate an egalitarian agenda. Karayalçın's manifesto of transformation was rather motivated with the necessity of catching-up with the globalization. The globalization in Karayalçın's opinion, should be realized in four levels as, world, Turkey, party leadership and individual.(Karayalçın, 1993). On the other hand, Aydın Güven Gürkan, the leader of the opposing faction, stressed that "The, new world order' looks for the weakening of the national and social wills and it is not based on the reconciliation and adjustment between different and free national wills but is based on the single, powerful and dominating will base (Gürkan 1993).

Although Karayalçın was elected party chairman in SHP's 1993 congress, his position as leader was not very secured as Gürkan was not only dominating the party's parliamentary group, but also challenging Karayalçın's policies by harsh criticisms claiming that the party was moving to the right in a period when Turkish people needed Social Democracy more than ever. Finally, SHP entered 1994 municipal elections with a two-headed structure. The party could only get 13,6% of the votes which meant a sharp decrease compared to 1991 elections when SHP's votes was

20,8%. Hasan Bülent Kahraman (1999) explains the decline of SHP's votes with the distrust in the people against SHP's corrupt mayors in metropolitan cities and the presence of re-established CHP and Bülent Ecevit's DSP dividing center-left votes into three.

CHP and SHP merged and took the name CHP in 1995. In the 1995 elections the CHP votes were at its lowest level (10,4%) since its foundation. Deniz Baykal took the lead of CHP after this dramatic election result. However, under Baykal's leadership the party has returned to its origins (Kahraman, 1999) although Baykal and his friends were previously questioning the party's past. After 1995, CHP has never been able to expand its representative boundaries by responding to the dynamics of social change. The new inspirations created by globalization and post-modern changes putting its stamp on European Social Democratic parties' transformations in the last decade, have not really showed their face in CHP. Together with its excessive 'laicism', the party failed to address religious liberties, instead the CHP conceived laicism or secularism as a limitation to religious liberties, therefore CHP's name was further identified with an authoritarian state in people's eyes (Schuler, 1999). During that era neither the party was able to bravely offer a democratic remedy for the Kurdish problem, nor it was capable of attacking economic inequalities with a clear-cut program. Instead, CHP's time was devoted to deal with its internal party conflicts and with never ending factions competing for the leadership rather than formulating new programs to cope with the new kinds of representation patterns motivated by changing social parameters.

With regard to that, another reason for the failure of the CHP, in the 1990's can be explained, by looking at two crucial developments in Turkey; the rise of political Islam and nationalism. In this respect, while the 1980's represented the "end

of ideology” trend for Turkey, parallel to Western Europe, this argument is not as valid in the 1990’s as in the previous decade. When the CHP failed to address social equality and democratization properly, the rising Islamist RP fulfilled this mission with its representative capacity on these issues. The RP, using religious myth as the source of social equality and successfully reflecting its argument to the underprivileged masses by an organizational dynamism, was the rising star of the 1990’s. The CHP, on the other hand, was labeled by the RP as the “enemy” of Islam when it resolutely defended the principle of secularism. The CHP’s protection of secularism was actually legitimized by the party in the following manner. The CHP claimed to prevent Islam’s abuse for political purposes. In the CHP mentality, the use of Islam for political purposes meant the abuse of religious feelings for political gain. However, CHP efforts to bring this message to rural areas were less appealing to the rural population than the RP’s message which stressed that the CHP was actually an enemy of Islam (cultural cleavages) and that the CHP represented the state with its emphasis on Kemalist secular doctrine, whereas the RP represented democracy, and therefore, the people (Schuler,1999).

By the same token, although the CHP was not very successful in creating democratic solutions to the Kurdish problem, the fact that the SHP (before the CHP’s return to the political scene) entered the 1991 elections in partnership with the Democracy Party (DEP) allegedly representing the Kurds (and therefore the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK)) was tactically used against the SHP by other parties competing for nationalist votes. This was a negative factor in the SHP’s and later the CHP’s electoral performance. In addition, the CHP was not able to properly defend the idea that the Kurdish problem should be solved by more democracy and economic improvement of the southeastern region rather than an armed conflict, whereas the

DSP, which preferred to ignore the democratic and cultural side of the issue, insisted on the importance of economic parameters in solving the problem and saved its image with respect to nationalist votes.

4.5. A key to understanding why left-libertarian cleavages do not work in Turkey

While we can speak of common developments in Western Europe and in Turkey in terms of the abandoning of strict ideological trends and with regard to governments' inescapable commitment to globalize the economy, the political developments identified with the new social movements and an increasing social demand for free-market economics have not been realized as extensively in the Turkish setting. There are basically two reasons behind the absence of parallel movements in Turkey and Western Europe. First, the increasing social and material inequality which manifested itself in the form of religious and nationalist movements and second the lack of a functioning democracy.

Although Nilüfer Göle claims that “new issues were taken up and defended by such disparate civil societal groups as women, ecologists, Islamicists, veiled Muslim students, homosexuals and new left movements” (Göle quoted in Heper,1994:238) the gender, ecology and peace movements were incomparably low and localized compared to those of Western countries. After all, the rising ethnic nationalism and religious fundamentalism which were far more expressed than gender, ecology and peace movements certainly have more authoritarian connotations compared to the latter which rather have pluralist meanings. Therefore an effort to identify the “new social movements” in the two settings do not really seem to be possible regarding the divergences of these movements' nature, scope and political implications.

The difference of nature between the new social movements of Western Europe and those which are dominant in Turkey may be found in Fuat Keyman's words. He explains the rise of Turkish nationalism as society's escape from the insecurity that is caused by the uncertainty of state-civil society relations.

The nationalist thought which proceeds as Islamic Nationalism and New Nationalism and which finds its expression in anti-pluralism and anti-liberal democracy tries to overcome this uncertainty by a search for identity which stands for uniformity refusing the demands for diversity. This understanding of identity reflects itself as secular identity, Muslim brotherhood, nationalist left, ethnic Turkish identity which finds its expression in the slogan 'either love this country or leave', Kurdish nationalist identity and various other identity codifications. Despite the differences amongst them they have a common departure: All of them found a forum to be voiced under the changing diversificating social context but all of them act against pluralism in the last instance (Keyman,1999:10).

Consequently, while the new left movements in Western Europe have reached a considerable amount of recognition, the fact that an effective civil society could not be developed in Turkey yet and the absence of an opening up to redefine the state-society relations are major obstacles to initiate such debates at a concrete level. And when the parties of the center-left do not make any effort or design any project to alter or restructure the current state-society relations and try to appeal new social expectations with democratic formulas, the Islamist and Nationalist movements having uniformist connotations surpass the pluralist choice as an alternative to Kemalist statism.

Not only at the cultural and democratic level, but also the economic criteria show development inconsistent with Western Europe. While in Western Europe, the increasing unemployment necessitates more job creation, and more job creation necessitates investment and consequently more investment necessitates a free-market economy because state capacity to create jobs or compensate the jobless is limited (Esping-Andersen, 1996), this equation still does not occupy a strong position in Turkey as it does in Western Europe. After all, it should not be forgotten that Western

Europe built the free market formula on the relative success of its material equality programs. However, neither the social security structure in Turkey, nor the level of its social equality is on a level comparable with that of Western Europe. Therefore, an emphasis on the free market and neo-liberal formulas disregarding the social equality concerns may not really work in the eyes of the Turkish electorate, especially if social democrats voice such arguments.

4.6 Turkey and the Third Way

Altan Öymen, who recently became CHP Chairman following the party's definitive electoral defeat, says: "In the end, Western European social democratic parties which freed themselves of class-centered politics, came to the same line of thought as the CHP which was against 'class politics' since its foundation "(Turkish Daily News 1999).

In terms of the latest picture in Western Europe, the principal accelerators of the "Third Way" rhetoric were the elimination of the "obstructive" capacity of social democratic parties' trade union connections in their "catch-all" electoral considerations and the inescapable "free-market" model created or even dictated by the dependent structure of the globalized world economy which was proclaimed as having no alternative after the collapse of the communist bloc. A considerable part of the "free-market demand" actually came from the rising service-sector proletariat and the materially satisfied classes whose expectations were oriented towards libertarian issues (Kitschelt, 1994) and against a bureaucratic authoritarian state control over social life.

The relevance of the inescapability of a globalized economy is as valid in Turkey as in Western Europe considering the economic dependency of Turkey to the West. However, reaching a considerable electoral victory by underlying the necessity

of the neo-liberal model is not very promising for the electoral fates of the CHP and DSP when comparing the level of social equality and economic satisfaction in Turkey.

Former CHP leader Deniz Baykal used Blair-type “Third Way” rhetoric on different occasions, stating, “It is a pity that the infrastructure of the free market model could not yet be developed in Turkey” and “We will have collective responsibility. The notion of collective responsibility does not prevent the individual’s expression of his/her ambitions” (Baykal quoted in Kozanoğlu, 1998). A CHP document explaining the new economic model of the CHP, states that the party favors an economic plan which is open to global world economics, producing at the level of international competition and prices, creating world brands, promoting export, improving industrial infrastructure and producing new technologies” (Kozanoğlu, 1998:32),

However, the globalization of economies was not sufficient reason for the Turkish electorate to vote for the CHP due to the reasons that I have outlined in the previous part of this chapter. In addition, a mutual relationship between the CHP and trade unions did not exist after 1983 (Schuler,1999) so the CHP, already disconnected with the working class, did not pass through a stage of getting rid of its class connection in contrast to the Western social democratic parties. After all, the CHP prided itself on being a mass party without commitment to a particular class (Alpay,1986). However, as I already mentioned, the reasons why the CHP was not able to actually be a mass party were its incapability to enlarge its representative capacities by successfully appealing to the cultural as well as territorial cleavages and due to its inability to appear consistent to the electorate with regard to its internal structure.

The success of the “Third Way” rhetoric expressed by New Labour in England and the New Middle in Germany, were outcomes of a well designed media appeal

associated with the charisma of the leaders and the hegemonizing capacity of the “Third Way” through its “neither nor” discourse. However, we cannot claim that the “Third Way” was planned at the mass level and brought up to the party leadership. Rather it was planned by professionals and academic elites and reflected to the electorate using successful media channeling. We also see that both Labour and the SPD are more and more becoming mediatic leader-oriented parties (Sferza, 1999). In such an ambiance, being a mass party has become virtually impossible when the “image” has replaced the “human touch” and consequently “media appeal” planned by professionals has replaced a “mass appeal” planned at the grassroots level. In turn, the leader names are now replacing the party names, as can be observed in the case of the German worker who began his comments by, “I voted for Mr. Shroeder because...”

Although Bülent Ecevit is closer to the leader-oriented calculations of the Third Way, the fact that he only won a “pyric victory” was maybe the signal that he was not mediatic enough, or that he could not successfully reflect the hegemonizing capacity of the “neither nor” principle.

In Turkey’s current situation, one may claim that as long as politics in Turkey is carried out based on the ongoing antagonisms in the form of secularist-Islamist, Turkish-Kurdish, Alewite-Sunite and nationalist-socialist oppositions, the social democratic parties do not seem to be able to maximize their area of representation by homogenizing their appeal. And as long as the social and material inequalities persist together with the democracy deficits, such antagonisms are not likely to disappear. However, even in such a deadlock, the center-left parties can not legitimize their electoral defeats simply claiming the the people do not understand them. After all, the politics requires the creation of new formulas to get rid of deadlocks. Under this

circumstance, CHP could possibly play more on religious liberties instead of being stucked in a false “laicism” and could better reflect the cruciality of economic inequalities, instead of stepping on the “global economics” phase now defended by European Third Wayers. With such a strategical move, CHP’s representative boundaries would certainly be more expanded than its current situation

Although the DSP corresponds to the line of the Third Way in terms of leader orientedness and Ecevit’s Blair-like appeal to ethical values, the CHP seems to represent only the “show” aspect of the Third Way without its “message” aspect. Deniz Baykal has frequently used the image of a young and charismatic leader, posing informally, with a sweater draped casually over his shoulders, for party photographs. In the CHP’s November convention, just before the most recent elections, Baykal approached the podium in dramatic style. Running down the stairs leading to the stage to the beat of pop music and a flashy lights show, Baykal was showered with rose petals. This show broadcasted the message that Baykal represented Turkey’s future in a manner similar to Shroeder who represented Germany’s future behind a telegenic image. However, apart from its “show” side, CHP could not decorate its media appeal with the well designed, short but effective messages used by Shroeder and Blair.

On the other hand, Ecevit and his “democratic left” project were far from being marketed as a “show” commodity. Ecevit himself represented “stability” and his party “consistency” (Schuler,1999). Added to the fact that PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was arrested just prior to the elections, when Ecevit was prime minister and the fact that Ecevit was known a leader with “ethics”, it was not very difficult for the DSP to win the elections.

Several months after the elections, newspapers declared that Ecevit was the Third Way’s Turkish representative (Sabah, 1999). Ecevit confirmed this claim (in a

way echoing CHP Chairman Öymen's words) saying that long before Blair and Shroeder, he was in favor of a "modernized left" and that his democratic left was planned long before "new labour" was invented (Milliyet, 1999). Regarding the meaning and particulars of a "modernized left" he refers to the necessity of a globalized economics, the crucial importance of being an EU member and adaptation to technological improvements. In this respect, Ecevit deserves to be labeled a "Third Wayer" due to the similarity of his idea of a modernized left to that of Blair and Shroeder.

The position of the Turkish center-left parties and Third Wayers seem to coincide on two crucial aspects. "Neither" of them talks about class boundaries any longer "nor" do they tend to see pragmatism as a means to achieve equality. They rather seem to conceive of pragmatism as a goal in itself.

On the other hand, while Western European Third Wayers are very successful in adapting the pushing momentum of social changes to their party languages in order to manufacture a consent for the people, the so-called Turkish social democrats are failing to speak society's language because the state still seems to be their only dictionary.

CONCLUSION

The target of this study was to shed light on Social Democracy's development throughout the 20th century, specifically focusing on the theoretical and practical implications of the most recent transformations of the social democratic parties in Northwestern Europe in terms of their structure, strategy and discourse and the reflections of their positional changes in Turkish centre-left parties. The dimensions of these changes could not have been highlighted without touching upon the changing social, economic and political factors which were sometimes the cause and sometimes the outcome of the social democratic transformations.

In this respect, we have seen in this study that there have been basically two transformations with respect to the strategical positions and social base of the social democratic parties. The first was an inclination towards a mixed economy, in the World War II era, through a softening of the statist positions which went hand in hand with the adoption of a welfare state model based on Keynesian economics reconciling statism and private investment and with the extension of the parties social base from workers to the middle classes. These ideals were best achieved by Scandinavian social democratic parties and by the German SPD to some extent. The British Labour party, due to the resistance of the party's left, has not softened its statist roots for a long time, although the social base of the Labour party already comprises the middle classes.

Despite the acceptance of private investment, these parties maintained their strong ties or even interdependence with the labour unions until the 1990's and

although these parties had broadened their social bases, the fact that they continued a mutual relationship with the labour unions kept them more committed to labour's interests in the last instance.

Another defining and unchanged feature of these parties was their grassroots oriented structures by which the channels of democratic participation was somewhat opened up to the masses. Until the late 1970's, the social democratic parties owed their success to the structure of their parties with the help of which the interests of wage earners were represented by a consensual pragmatism efficiently functioning with the socially egalitarian formulations.

Beginning with the 1970's and accelerating during the 1980's, Northwestern European Social Democracy experienced a "representation" crisis in the changing social, economic, cultural and technological climates, following which its working class connection began to erode. In response to the electoral erosion of the 1980's, as the outcome of the shifts from national to global, from Fordist to post-Fordist production, from industrial to post-industrial, from lumpen to bourgeoified proletariat, from classes to citizens and from uniform to diversified new-left libertarian demands, those parties felt the necessity to alter their representation schemes and revise their principles. This is when we can talk about a second and fundamental transformation in Northwestern European social democratic parties

In this era, instead of reformulating a new socialist and egalitarian agenda in which the representation of diversified expectations could still be realized at the grassroots level, the parties, (Britain, Germany) preferred to become more leader and "professional" oriented for the sake of emphasizing a "catch-all" classlessness in their rhetoric. At the grassroots level, when the excessive decisional priorities given to the labour began to produce negative outcomes for the electoral performance of these

parties, the Social Democrats found the solution in weakening the class connection to be able to respond to the diversified expectations with a flexible party structure. The claim to represent the diversified “citizen’s” expectations, which was actually a claim to be more democratic, paradoxically required the emphasis for a more leader oriented structure just to sound ideologically more coherent and establish a consistency in the policy level.

The new social democrats, often called Third Wayers, have turned the pragmatism, which used to be Social Democracy’s instrument to achieve egalitarian goals, into a goal in itself whose accelerator is no longer a “social equality” principle but rather the “adaptation to a globalized economics”.

When analyzing the Turkish case, the Northwestern European parties’ transformational pattern turns somewhat upside-down and follows the opposite direction in the CHP. The party which was first characterized by its elitist, centralist organization, changed its organizational structure in the 1970’s to be able to appeal to the regional cleavages characterized by the peasants and functional cleavages characterized by the working class. By the same token, the pragmatism, in early Republican CHP, was conceived of as a goal, calculated at the elite level, to elevate Turkey to the level of modernized nations. The “modernization” ethos in the Republican elite mentality was identified with Western Europe just like the idea of a “modernized economics” seems to signify the U.S. economy in the globalizing tendencies of Shroeder and Blair.

However, while the reason for CHP’s pragmatism was a desire to achieve an instant modernization project by skipping the “class formation” phase, the Third Way project is designed to maximize the boundaries of party representation, efficiently cope

with global realities by getting rid of the excessive influence of an already organized labour, and more importantly, to attract more voters.

Moreover, the absence of functional cleavages in the Republican years was maybe the primary reason for the adoption of a “classlessness” rhetoric by CHP elites. The concern, in the CHP case, was not to enlarge the representative capabilities of the party simply because there was no other party to compete with. When functional cleavages developed and regional cleavages began to be occupied by the newly founded DP, the need to represent and the need to appeal to the masses became inevitable for the CHP. As late as the 1970’s, the CHP began to transform itself into a mass party.

In the global, un-ideological atmosphere of the post-1980’s coupled with the declining electoral trend of the traditional Northwestern European social democratic parties during this decade, the Turkish centre-left parties preferred to follow the *a la mode* Third Way pragmatism in the 1990’s, this time skipping the welfare state and social equality phases that Western European Social Democrats had already to a greater extent achieved. However, given the complexity of the cleavage structures in Turkey, rising economic inequality and growing antagonisms in the form of secular-Islamist, Turkish-Kurdish and privileged-under-privileged groups, the centre-left parties imitating Third Way discourses could not find the electoral success and hegemonic aspirations of their Western European counterparts. Although the Turkish social democrats imitated Third Way discourses, they were unable to use their strategies for expanding their representative abilities. If CHP had followed Third Way strategies but not its discourse, it would have turned its secularist stance to an advantage based on promoting religious liberties. However CHP preferred to conceive

and reflect secular position as limiting religious freedoms and therefore limited its own rise.

With respect to giving priority to “pragmatism” over the principles of equality and solidarity, however, the Turkish Social Democrats followed a similar line to the Third Wayers .

When the idea of “reformism” had altered the revolutionary spirit in the formation of the social democratic world view, hardly anyone could have guessed that the *fin de siecle* social democratic strategy would be so focused on pragmatism at any price, although positional changes should actually be seen as being quite legitimate for a world view whose accelerator is reformism. After all, reformism signifies a transformation and transformation requires pragmatism in the last instance. As a matter of fact, if we conceptualize Social Democracy solely in terms of pragmatism, the ongoing transformations of the social democratic parties, which are associated with adjustments to global economies, and the reduction of state control over social and economic lives may well be legitimized.

On the other hand, while it can be noted that pragmatism is the accelerator of Social Democracy, can it be its *raison d'être* at the same time? Here, one should note that Social Democracy has been built on the principles of equality and solidarity. With such a departure, a state intervention to social and economic life used to be legitimized by Social Democrats as a way to guarantee the realization of equality and solidarity under a “welfare” umbrella. In this respect, the new “pragmatism” should not be evaluated as “pragmatism at any cost” but rather as “pragmatism to enhance equality and solidarity” so that one may claim that Social Democracy is still loyal to its principles.

In the changing world picture, globalizing tendencies overweigh the realization of nation state goals. Pragmatic and flexible policies are given more importance than ideological principles. In terms of economics, international interdependence is at its highest level since the foundation of Social Democracy. Trying to maintain state protection over economically disadvantaged citizens is seen as a hindrance to global free-market economics in general and to the promotion of investment and creation of employment in particular.

On the other hand, state regulations to maintain social equality are seen as bureaucratic obstacles to the realization of democratic freedoms and capabilities.

If social democratic parties extended their social base throughout this century, from workers to middle classes and from middle classes to “wage earners”, there is no doubt there were “catch all” considerations in this formulation. However, another basic reason behind the transformations in Social Democracy was the Social Democrats’ growing awareness that a whole notion of equality could not be reduced into the economic interests of a particular class. And Social Democracy could not ignore the growing libertarian demands because, after all, it had to be responsive to demands for freedom as it was responsive to the principles of social equality and solidarity.

Just like liberals, the Third Wayers claim that democracy and libertarian openings are not incompatible with the notion of social equality. They claim that while individuals are free to pursue their own ambitions in a free market, they would at the same time feel a collective responsibility for the community to which they belong. They trust in individual rationality in respecting the overall interests of the community. State capabilities should therefore be focused on creating new jobs and supervising the free market but not on compensating the jobless or regulating the market. Following this calculation, the protection of social equality will depend on individual rationality, on

collective responsibility and on state supervision. However, the limits of state supervision and through which institutions it will operate are actually left unexplained.

Just how much the presently ruling Third Wayers care about the “social equality” aspect will become clear in the near future. However, in their present image, freedom seems to weigh heavier than social equality. By the same token, the equality of results has been, to a great extent, sacrificed to the equality of departure (opportunities).

Social Democrats used to say that the equality of results was the precondition for freedom. Now that they imply that freedom will be the guarantor of equality of departure, they are somewhat ignorant about the “result” phase of the equality. This alone signifies that Social Democrats are now minimizing the broader meaning of equality which includes both opportunities and a social aspect.

Social Democrats used to embrace the masses through their grassroots channels, by giving them the opportunity to participate in policy formation and decision-making. Now, they do not need to include them in such processes because following the calculations of the Third Wayers, policies can be prepared by professionals who may design the necessary programs to better appeal to citizens’ preferences.

In this respect, while highlighting the necessity of liberalizing the economy and responding to the libertarian cleavages, they paradoxically minimize the democratic channels in their party structures.

While trying to homogenize the area of their representation, they obligatorily cut down on the disproportionate influence of the working class on party decisions. However, instead of developing new participatory avenues for the party politics by

which different libertarian demands may have a proportional influence on party decisions, they escaped to the pragmatic attractiveness of “from top to down” politics.

The political success of the social democratic parties was measured by their long-term capability to change the social and economic structure. Social Democrats used to be the champions of reconciling pragmatism with responsiveness to mass participation in party politics. In this manner, Social Democracy has been able to transform the underprivileged masses into materially satisfied citizens and, perhaps unconsciously, it played a significant role (by welfare state) in the transformation of class antagonisms based on ideologies into fragmented preferences based on individuality.

Social democratic parties are now failing to reconcile and activate these fragmented preferences and turn them into a “coalition of interests”, although the party leaders and professionals are quite disciplined in hegemonizing the electorate through successful discourse and media appeal.

However, given that the Third Way underestimate the “social” concern , and the “democratic” structuring is eroding at the party level, we are actually witnessing a fundamental transformation in the social democratic parties. This transformation cannot simply be explained by the expansion of Social Democracy’s boundaries of representation. The ongoing changes signify a challenge to the ideological rotation of social democratic parties and to the basic principles they used to defend. Consequently a new name may legitimately replace “Social Democratic” and be given to those parties.

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