

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE EXTENDED ESSAY IN POLITICS:

***THE SECOND SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC
TRANSFORMATION OF THE REPUBLICAN
PEOPLE'S PARTY OF TURKEY AND THE VALUES THE
PARTY SHOULD UPHOLD TO MAINTAIN ITS
RELEVANCE IN CONTEMPORARY TURKEY***

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1. ABSTRACT

This extended essay aims to assess the future of the Republican People's Party (CHP) of Turkey, with the question analyzed being "In order to regain more relevance in Turkish Politics, how should the CHP revise its social and political values, which values should be added?". In order to set the scene, a condensed account of how the CHP adopted its current values is given in the beginning of the essay. This is followed by a profound assessment of the relevance of Kemalist and social democratic theories and their applications by the CHP has been made, and suggestions for revisions with reasons. These assessments, along with independent suggestions, have been mainly supported by the Kemalist, social-democratic theories and the Rawlsian theory of justice. The investigation of relevance and the assessment for revision starts from the foundation of the Turkish republic and the CHP and reaches our current day. Incidents attesting relevance, recent poll, election and referendum have also been utilized in the assessment and in have served as bases in forming suggestions. The Kemalist and social-democratic principles have been differentiated and assessed separately while although they do hold similarities, they are essentially different theories. The conclusion drawn from this essay is that, the CHP should revise its values to emphasize social-democratic values more than Kemalism, while also emphasizing the principles of populism and revolutionism of Kemalism. It has further been asserted that the CHP should defend freedoms, both in the negative and the positive sense. It has been proposed that the CHP to act as the problem-solver, given its revolutionist identity and its having founded modern Turkey.

Word Count: 270

Change on the Horizon

2. Introduction and Context

This essay aims to assess the relevance of the values that the CHP upholds as a self-labeled Kemalist, social-democratic, left-wing political party to contemporary Turkish politics. The question under scrutiny has been whether these values are still relevant and how should they be amended or revised. My aim has not been to suggest the CHP ways to gather more votes but my humble assertion is that this essay may help in defining and assessing the role of an important political institution of Turkey and suggesting a revision for its relevance. This essay aims to suggest a transition for the self-labeled *revolutionist* CHP for adaptation to modern day Turkey.

a. Introduction to Turkish Politics and the Republican People's Party (CHP)

i. Republican Era Turkey and the CHP

In order to better evaluate the relevance of the Republican People's Party's values to modern day Turkey, it would be logical to start with an outline of politics of Turkey and how the CHP came to adopt its current values. For these purposes, I will first outline the political system of Turkey.

The Grand National Assembly of Turkey was founded in 1920, without the presence of any political parties. With a brief period of bicameralism in Turkey between the two coups d'état (1961-1980), Turkey's main legislative organ has been the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

Turkey's oldest political party which serves as the main opposition today, the CHP was officially founded in 1923 (the same year the republic was formed) and was the major institution of the single-party period. As its founder, Mustafa Kemal Pasha was also the foun-

der of the Republic of Turkey and was elected the president of the National Assembly, the CHP can be regarded to be “the Party that formed the state”¹. The Grand National Assembly of Turkey had been stated to be anti-imperialist and defending the right of legitimate self-defense of the Turkish nation, it has further been asserted that the Grand National Assembly aimed to bring the sovereignty of the people of Turkey².

In the second convention of the CHP, the bylaws were changed to include republicanism, populism (this differs from the Western understanding, states the holder of sovereignty is the Turkish nation) and nationalism (based on citizenry, not ethnicity)³. These are the first three of the “6 arrows” which are the original principles of Kemalism and the CHP. The last three arrows of secularism, revolutionism and statism, were added to the bylaws in the third congress of the party in 1931⁴. As its founding principles suggest, the CHP advocates the secular nation-state and the values proposed by the six arrows (which constitute its emblem).

ii. The Second Transition and Adoption of Social Democratic Values

After the Early Republican Era (the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk), the party was under the leadership of İnönü. In a convention in 1966, the “left of centre” view of İnönü was adopted as the Party’s ideology⁵. While the founding principles of the CHP did suggest such values to a degree, the CHP was more a centre party, which did not have outright left or right inclinations. This is supported by the fact that the Democrat Party, which went on to have right-wing liberal rhetoric and defeat the CHP in the general elections of 1950, also

¹ (Bila, page 14)

² (Arar, pages 15-16)

³ (Giritlioğlu, pages 68-73)

⁴ (Konda Research 2010, page 2)

⁵ (Konda Research 2010, page 3)

marking the successful transition to the multi-party system, had been founded by CHP members ⁶.

In 1974, the bylaws were amended in accord with the “democratic leftist” rhetoric⁷. In addition to the “six arrows”, the following were adopted in 1976 under the leadership of the social-democrat leader Ecevit, pursuing the democratic leftist rhetoric and aims. Six new rules, freedom, equality, solidarity, supremacy of labor, integrity of development and self-rule of the public were adopted. This marked the total democratic left-wing transition of the CHP which re-structured itself as a “social democratic” party. Same year, the CHP became a member of the “Socialist International”⁸, an international organization for “social democratic, socialist and labour parties”⁹.

iii. The Military Coup and the Second Coming of the CHP

After the military coup of 1980, the CHP, along with all other political parties, was abolished. Many other institutions that followed the Kemalist and Social Democratic line of CHP followed, and in 1992 after a law allowing the founding of political parties with the names before the coup, the CHP was formed again. Under Baykal’s leadership (from 1992-2010, with short breaks), the CHP was the main opposition and structured its opposition mainly on the conservation of the secular values. The CHP was more distanced from social-democratic values in this period and was widely recognized to be politically statist. It was even speculated that the CHP was to be banned from the Socialist International¹⁰. The major criticism of the CHP under Baykal’s rule was about its hesitancy to change and its conformist attitude towards its share of vote. The CHP was regarded too rigidly Kemal-

⁶ (Ahmad, page 123)

⁷ (Konda Research 2010, page 3)

⁸ (NTVMSNBC Archives, June 29 2008)

⁹ (Socialist International Web Site)

¹⁰ (Gürsel, July 6 2008)

ist. It is often stated that, the CHP has not revered its social democratic principles in this era and became more of the statist, rigid party it was. It is further asserted that this has caused it to lose its bonds with the hopeless and outcasted masses, which could identify themselves with social democracy¹¹. The current bylaws of the CHP, which was formed in this era, does explicitly state that the CHP is a democratic left-wing party that defends the six arrows as outlined by its bylaws and the “Universal Values of Social Democracy” (including a wider list of social democratic principles than the 1974 bylaws had¹²).

iv. Back to Social Democracy

After Baykal resigned from his position after an outbreak of a crisis about his personal life, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu took leadership and he has been largely regarded as the leader who could make the CHP a true alternative to the right-wing conservative, ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP)¹³. After Kılıçdaroğlu took the position in may 2010¹⁴, he reinforced the social-democratic rhetoric he employed in the party convention. He is regarded to be trying to take the CHP from the “statist” position of the Baykal period, back to the CHP of the 1970s, and to its social democratic roots and to the “populist arrow” of the six arrows, as some influential columnists state¹⁵.

The values that the CHP champions are as outlined above. “The six arrows of Kemalism” and (a more comprehensive version of) the “six social-democratic pillars” of Ecevit’s era are still the main principles of the party. However, going back to the 1970s rhetoric without any further change may be disastrous as Turkey has evolved.

¹¹ (Tosun, page 6)

¹² (CHP Web Site, Bylaws)

¹³ (Cemal, December 2010)

¹⁴ (Milliyet Web Site, 22 May 2010)

¹⁵ (Muhtar, 22 December 2010)

The aim of this essay is not to advise the CHP on how to become a catch-all party, but it is to suggest a newly molded ideological stance that fits with the current day Turkey and will both fit ruling and opposing roles. This essay aims to first make an assessment of the values the CHP champions and their relevance, and second, to suggest ways the CHP could reconsider its approach about some values to increase the party's relevance in modern Turkey. It is seen that the electors are used to changes in the party's policy and the party only gains votes and not loses by adopting new values. The current elector population of the CHP is not significantly conservative, therefore the CHP can and should attempt to change and reform.

3. Assessment of the Relevance of the Values the CHP Champions to the Modern Day Turkey

Values that are assessed not to be much relevant with the Turkish society of the 21st century do not necessarily have to be changed. Although it is not the case, a political party can, and in my opinion should, advocate democratic values even in an environment where democracy is not a set of values valued much by the society. The CHP has had a transformative role on the Turkish society and its values, and should carry on its transformative role while also transforming itself (i.e. *Revolutionism* which can now be interpreted as progressivism). The CHP should be transformative, but should remember that it is a political party competing in a system where contested elections take place and its opposition role can change.

Political parties cannot be expected to fit completely with each voter's perspectives, and voters look for parties that they think have a similar position for some topics with. Therefore, the CHP, while renewing its perspectives should have a populist approach, meanwhile it also should not be hesitant to defend some values such as anti-cronyism that

may or may not be shared by the larger public. This is the point where it should balance its *revolutionist and populist* principles. The CHP, as a healthy party of opposition and a prospective ruling party, should ideally not give up its stance on subjects such as state corruption, secularism or the integrity and the unity of the state; while it also should be the advocate of democracy and freedom.

a. Assessment of the Relevance of the Six Arrows

The CHP, as a political institution has played a role that no other political party in the Turkish political system has played. The CHP founded the republic, therefore the republic and the party still share an ideological background. Thus, when parties such as the Justice and Development Party, which is regarded to be an Islamic/Islamist party by the secularists along with many international¹⁶¹⁷ and national observers¹⁸, try to reform the political system or almost any aspect to the country, excluding the economics, they face much resistance from people, especially from those who define themselves as secular and modern.

i. Secularism

The relevance of secularism in the public is important in assessing its relevance to contemporary Turkey. However, before moving on with the analysis, it should also be noted that secularism should be upheld by the CHP even if it loses the quality of being an effective component of the rhetoric, while it is a principle which is a prerequisite of democracy in a predominantly muslim society.

¹⁶ (Cagaptay, October 26 2009)

¹⁷ (Lang and Pederson, February 20 2003)

¹⁸ (Filiz, 28 December 2010)

The relevance of secularism in Turkish society and politics can be seen through the “Cumhuriyet Mitingleri” (the Republic Protests) which were a set of mass rallies demanding that “religion and politics should be kept separate”¹⁹ and also reacting against Prime Minister Erdogan’s candidacy for presidency and as a reaction to the AKP’s alleged Islamist agenda^{20,21}. The masses held posters of Kemal Atatürk and the slogans included “Claim your republic”, “Turkey is secular and it will stay so” and “Unite for the republic”²², these testify that there is significant support for the principle of *secularism*²³. Some reforms, such as the distancing of the military from politics and the perceived Islamization met resistance and unrest.



Image 1. From the Republic Protests in Ankara, more than 370 000 people attended.²⁴

¹⁹ (BBC, 14 April 2007)

²⁰ (Hurriyet, 20 November 2006)

²¹ (Hurriyet, 11 May 2007)

²² (Armutçu, Yalazan and Akin, 15 April 2007)

²³ (Tavernise, April 15 2007)

²⁴ (NTVMSNBC, 16 April 2007)

Further on, the results of 2010 referendum also testify to the relevance of the 6 arrows alone, 42% of the voters voted no on the referendum, and it is estimated that more than 40% of the people who voted no casted their votes this way because of 2 clauses of the text²⁵, which the opposers asserted helped AKP breach in the high judiciary system which is predominantly secular. These attest to the relevance of the principle of *secularism* in the society.

ii. Nationalism

Almost all political parties in Turkey share nationalism as an essence of their rhetoric. The principle of nationalism of CHP is not based on ethnicity but on citizenry. Nationalism is still clearly relevant to the society and there is no need for the revision of this principle, except the CHP, as a social-democratic party, should also support tolerance towards different ethnicities *within* Turkey²⁶.

iii. Populism

Populism, as defined in the introduction of this essay, is still relevant in the society and will probably continue to be so. Populism as defined by the CHP bylaws is seeking solutions among and for the people. The CHP should continue and strengthen its underscoring of this principle, while this will enable the party to shift its image to a problem-solver and not the “status-quo perpetuator”. The voters do not have much belief in their party that it may be able to solve the fundamental problems in the *essentially contested* areas. Only 10.5 percent of the people state that they think the CHP can resolve the fundamental prob-

²⁵ (Hurriyet, September 14 2010) This is according to the *exit polls* conducted for the highly regarded Turkish newspaper, Hurriyet, by the polling company A&G which predicted the results of the referendum by at most 0.2 margins.

²⁶ The constitution states that “All people who are bonded to the Turkish Government with citizenry are Turks.” (article 66), as does other examples such as the German constitution (article 116).

lems which they indicate are poverty and state corruption²⁷. This will require the CHP to form better bonds with the public.

iv. Republicanism

The principal of *republicanism* (*Cumhuriyetçilik* in Turkish) refers to the sovereignty of the people, while “cumhur” in “cumhuriyetçilik” means demos. This principle of upholding democracy through *contested elections*²⁸ (elections whose nature is democratic and outcome uncertain beforehand) should be one that the CHP defends along with *secularism*, as they guarantee democracy.

v. Statism

Referring to *economic statism*, this was limited to the government using its initiative in areas where the private sector is not willing or capable to do so²⁹. Today, privatization of government initiatives is common, and the Turkish private sector is capable of investing in virtually any area. Being the 15th largest economy of the world³⁰, and having a private sector whose spending was almost sixfold that of the government’s, *statism* is clearly not as relevant as it was in the post War of Independence Turkey in which private sector was not powerful enough to invest as much as needed. However, the CHP can and should defend universal healthcare and free education as a social-democratic institution.

²⁷ (Konda, 2007)

²⁸ (Przeworski, et. al., page 19)

²⁹ (Kocaeli University Web Site, January 12 2011)

³⁰ (World Bank, Data Sources)

Turkey: Demand, output and prices

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	Current prices TRY billion	Percentage changes, volume (1998 prices)				
Private consumption	601.2	-0.3	-2.2	6.3	4.6	5.6
Government consumption	107.8	1.7	7.8	0.1	4.4	4.8
Gross fixed capital formation	180.6	-6.2	-19.1	25.3	13.4	12.2
Final domestic demand	889.7	-1.3	-4.3	8.6	6.2	6.8
Stockbuilding ¹	- 3.0	0.3	-2.3	0.5	0.4	0.0
Total domestic demand	886.7	-1.0	-6.4	9.2	6.6	6.8
Exports of goods and services	188.2	2.7	-5.3	7.1	5.8	8.2
Imports of goods and services	231.7	-4.1	-14.3	14.1	11.5	12.9
Net exports ¹	- 43.5	1.7	2.8	-1.8	-1.7	-1.7
GDP at market prices	843.2	0.5	-4.8	8.2	5.3	5.4
GDP deflator	—	12.1	5.3	7.1	6.2	5.7
<i>Memorandum items</i>						
Consumer price index	—	10.4	6.3	8.5	6.9	6.4
Private consumption deflator	—	10.8	5.0	8.5	6.7	6.4
Unemployment rate	—	10.7	13.7	12.0	11.7	11.0
Current account balance ²	—	-5.6	-2.2	-5.1	-5.7	-6.3

Note: National accounts are based on official chain-linked data. This introduces a discrepancy in the identity between real demand components and GDP. For further details see *OECD Economic Outlook Sources and Methods* (<http://www.oecd.org/eo/sources-and-methods>).

1. Contributions to changes in real GDP (percentage of real GDP in previous year), actual amount in the first column.

2. As a percentage of GDP.

Source: OECD Economic Outlook 88 database.

Chart 1. The chart showing Turkey's private and government consumption³¹

vi. Revolutionism

The principle of *revolutionism* can serve as the indent for the social democratic principles to attach. This principle allows the modification and revision of policies and principles, and although people may not adapt to changes in party policies as quick as the party programs do, this principle along with the founder-of-the-state role of the CHP is what makes the CHP a prospective problem solver. The principle of revolutionism is still relevant, as social and democratic institutions of secular democracies, and those of the Turkish democracy are still imperfect. Challenging the thesis of the “End of History” by Francis Fukuyama, Turkey still has fundamental disputes unresolved. It also holds many institutions and laws not suitable for a secular, social democracy as outlined in its constitution and founding principles. The principle of *revolutionism* can also be utilized to adopt the Rawl-

³¹ (OECD, Turkey: Demand, output and prices)

sian theory of justice³². *Revolutionism's* importance cannot be overstated, Turkey needs reforms and the CHP should play an active role in supporting and making reforms.

Summary

The CHP can use this in its advantage, and it can combine the principle of *revolutionism* and make, suggest or support reforms. The benefit drawn from such a utilization of two distinct sets of principles may be the complementary usage of these, some amount of change of the party's image as the "defender of the status quo" in liberal³³³⁴ and conservative³⁵ spheres as testified by the opinion columns and articles in newspapers that bear the flags of liberalism (Taraf) and of conservatism (Zaman) as well as in the eyes of the public, and the realization of a second social *democratic* transition with emphasis on *revolutionism* and *populism* of the six arrows. The CHP is the only political party that can make significant reforms in the country while not inducing doubts, through its state-founding role.

The CHP, should be more *revolutionist and populist*, and should de-emphasize some of the six arrows (such as statism) and strive to regain its social-democratic image.

b. Assessment of the Relevance of the Social Democratic Pillars

Turkey cannot be said to have concluded its democratic transition, and cronyism, clientelism and such are still prevalent. In this political culture, it may be expected for strictly democratic and liberal values to contradict those of a part of the population as suggested

³² This theory is set forth in his book "A Theory of Justice" (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press Cambridge, Massachusetts 1999), and the revision of the theory was stated to be on the left of the centre which also fits with the CHP's perspectives.

³³ The "Taraf" (The Side) newspaper is, without doubt, distanced to the CHP. Most of its columnists either claim to be or are labeled "liberals". This note is written in order to contextualize the opposition from the self-labeled liberals of Turkey against the CHP. (Ipekci, November 5 2010)

³⁴ (Altinok, May 25 2010)

³⁵ (Disli Zlbak, August 01 2010)

by an influential columnist³⁶. However, this should not prevent the CHP from having these values, while it should not submit to mediocratical values. This is not to say that the CHP should seal its perception as elitist.

The social-democratic values are still relevant in a society where living standards are still not high³⁷ and with 70.4% of the population indicating that the most urgent problem of Turkey is “poverty” and 20.9% stating that it is the “inadequacy and inefficiency of the social security system”³⁸, and poverty, income distribution and unemployment³⁹. In such an environment, a social democratic party is highly needed and the statist CHP has failed to fill this role.

The perception of the CHP is its being an elitist party can be broken through the principles of social democracy, combined with populism and revolutionism. In addition, the CHP should regain its center-left, mass party, social democratic role. The CHP should also form bonds with people living in the ghettos, villages and other places it has neglected.

4. Further Amendments to the Social and Political Values of the Party

a. Social Values

It should be noted that Turkish political culture is all-engulfing, in that, even while assessing the *social* values that a *political* party should have, the subject becomes concerned with politics. Social values of people do define their political leanings, and in Turkey this does work the other way around.

³⁶ (Turgut, 25 December 2010)

³⁷ Percentage of the population suffering poverty is 15.12% according to the official data (TUIK, 2009)

³⁸ (Konda 2007, page 2)

³⁹ (Bugra, 23 May 2010)

i. The Laicist Stance

As outlined in 3.a. of this essay, secularism is a prerequisite for democracy in Turkey. However, this should not necessarily be considered to implicate the exclusion of religion from private lives of people. Although I may fail to supply enough evidence, there is a palpable amount of dissent towards people who *look religious* from the members and members of the parliament of the CHP. This trend should be broken, but the strict separation of the state and religion should not. Another problem about the CHP's laicist stance will continue to be its self-contradiction. The "Presidency for Religious Affairs" is one of the oldest institutions of the republic, being founded in 1924, and can be said to be the state apparatus that controls religious affairs. Although its suggestions ("*fetva*"s) are certainly not mandatory to perform, its existence contradicts with the principle of the separation of the state and religion. The CHP should reconsider this.

ii. Social Democracy, Social Help and Social Service

In the ruling period of the AKP, the manner of the delivery of social help has changed significantly. The government is now distributing aid, and people actively participate in the reception of it. This is often criticized by the CHP⁴⁰, and the form of giving this aid can be subject to criticism, but the aid itself should not be. This aid should be supported to sustain while the CHP seeks ways to eradicate poverty and unbalance in income distribution.

iii. Social Justice

A Rawlsian approach that fits with the current views of the party can be employed. Rawls' theory is widely recognized to be left-of-centre after his revision of his theory. It has a fundamental principle that fits well with the social-democratic and progressive rhetoric and values. The following principle can guide, along with the whole concept of justice as

⁴⁰ (Bayram, 16 November 2008)

put forth by “A Theory of Justice” by John Rawls: “(...) laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust.”⁴¹.

iv. Stance on Ethnicities and Ethnical Politics

Turkish political life is much transformative on the public, and the public seems not to be disturbed by the increase of individual rights. The CHP should, support the granting of individual rights, but is expected to be more hesitant to do so for collective rights. Unity and integrity of the state are two values that the CHP has (through the principle of statism) and compromising on these grounds would be politically impossible for the CHP. The CHP should respect individual ethnicities, religions and languages as a social-democratic party.

The support for the pro-Kurdish terrorist organization PKK is marginal in Turkey, and even if it is, the CHP cannot align itself with the demands of the PKK for the sake of gaining votes.

b. Political Values

The CHP has reportedly and evidently ceased to be a mass, centre-left party. It is appealing to the city-dwelling, modern portion of the society⁴² (many of whom are *concerned moderns* and *morally upright moderns*⁴³). “The CHP is stuck to a certain area, geographically, spatially, demographically and culturally. Thus, it is not a mass party anymore.”⁴⁴.

For the health of the political system, it should refill this role and develop its social-democratic rhetoric and values.

⁴¹ (Rawls, page 3)

⁴² (Konda 2010, page 9)

⁴³ (Konda 2008)

⁴⁴ (Konda 2010, 11)

*i. Institutional Relations**a) Relations with Socialist International and European Left-Wing Parties*

The CHP in the Baykal era had gone so far as to not attending the Socialist International conferences and claiming that the CHP could leave the SI⁴⁵ and the CHP was “cross with” its German counterpart Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)⁴⁶. This has changed under Kılıçdaroğlu’s leadership⁴⁷ and it is crucial for the CHP to have good relationships with its counterparts and European umbrella organizations.

b) Relations with the Turkish Military (TSK)

The CHP should distance itself from the military, and has been doing so. Although it has stayed silent towards the military intervention on politics in the past, it is now actively against the Military playing any role in politics⁴⁸. The CHP, as a champion of democracy, should oppose any military intervention on politics, but not the Turkish Military itself.

c) Stance Towards the European Union

It has been softening its relations with the EU, under Kılıçdaroğlu’s leadership, and should continue to do so. As a social-democratic party, the CHP should be a proponent of the efforts that will increase the prosperity of Turkish citizens and will increase social justice.

⁴⁵ (Bila, 29 June 2008)

⁴⁶(IstanbulHaber.com, September 21 2010)

⁴⁷(Milliyet, November 03 2010)

⁴⁸ (NTVMSNBC, July 29 2009)

*ii. General Political Values**a) Should be more liberal than its peers*

Democracy, modernism, jurisdictional government are important principles that the CHP should pursue. The CHP, should be a trailblazer in freedoms and rights, it should not be perceived as an obstacle in front of reforms. Given that they do not contradict with the revised principles outlined above, the CHP should support the liberal interpretation and reform of laws and institutions.

b) Positive and Negative Liberties (Negative Libertarianism)

Negative liberties should not suffice in the definition of liberties by the CHP. Positive liberties⁴⁹ should also be taken into account. Whether interpreted to be collective or individual, the CHP should emphasize positive freedom and in that the freedom of speech and opinion.

c) Should Get Out of Center Politics

Eastern provinces have been much neglected by the CHP. As an indication, its share of votes does not exceed 2-3%percent in many eastern Anatolian provinces⁵⁰. The CHP, as a social-democratic party, should be tolerant towards different ethnicities and should offer another way for the society in the eastern provinces who are stuck between the ethnic politics of pro-Kurdish parties and the pro-Islamic politics of the AKP in the region.

⁴⁹ (Plato, January 3 2011)

⁵⁰ (Haberler.com, Mart 29 2009)

5. Conclusion

The founding party of Turkey, hurt by the elitist and statist image, but adorned with social-democracy and the six arrows, can still be relevant in the contemporary Turkish politics. The CHP can, if effectively used, reinstate itself as the problem solver and reformer, using *revolutionism and populism* and its social-democratic values. The CHP can, thereon make and support the much needed reforms for the real democratic transition of Turkey.

To maintain its role as a central figure of the Turkish political culture and scene, it is crucial for the CHP to get over the statist conservative approach it has had. The CHP is missing its natural supporters, who are from the middle-to-low income groups, as a social-democratic institution, and it has been mainly become irrelevant for many. The CHP should use revolutionism to both change itself and transform Turkey once again, into a more (social) democratic, just state.

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