

LÉGERÍN

N. 01

“Insistence on socialism is insistence on being human”



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INDICE

The meaning of Lêgerîn in kurdish is “Search for freedom”.

For this reason we adopted this name. As millions of persons around the world, we search and fight for liberty. We hope to contribute with our materials, to have the right mechanisms and methods to be victorious in this fight.

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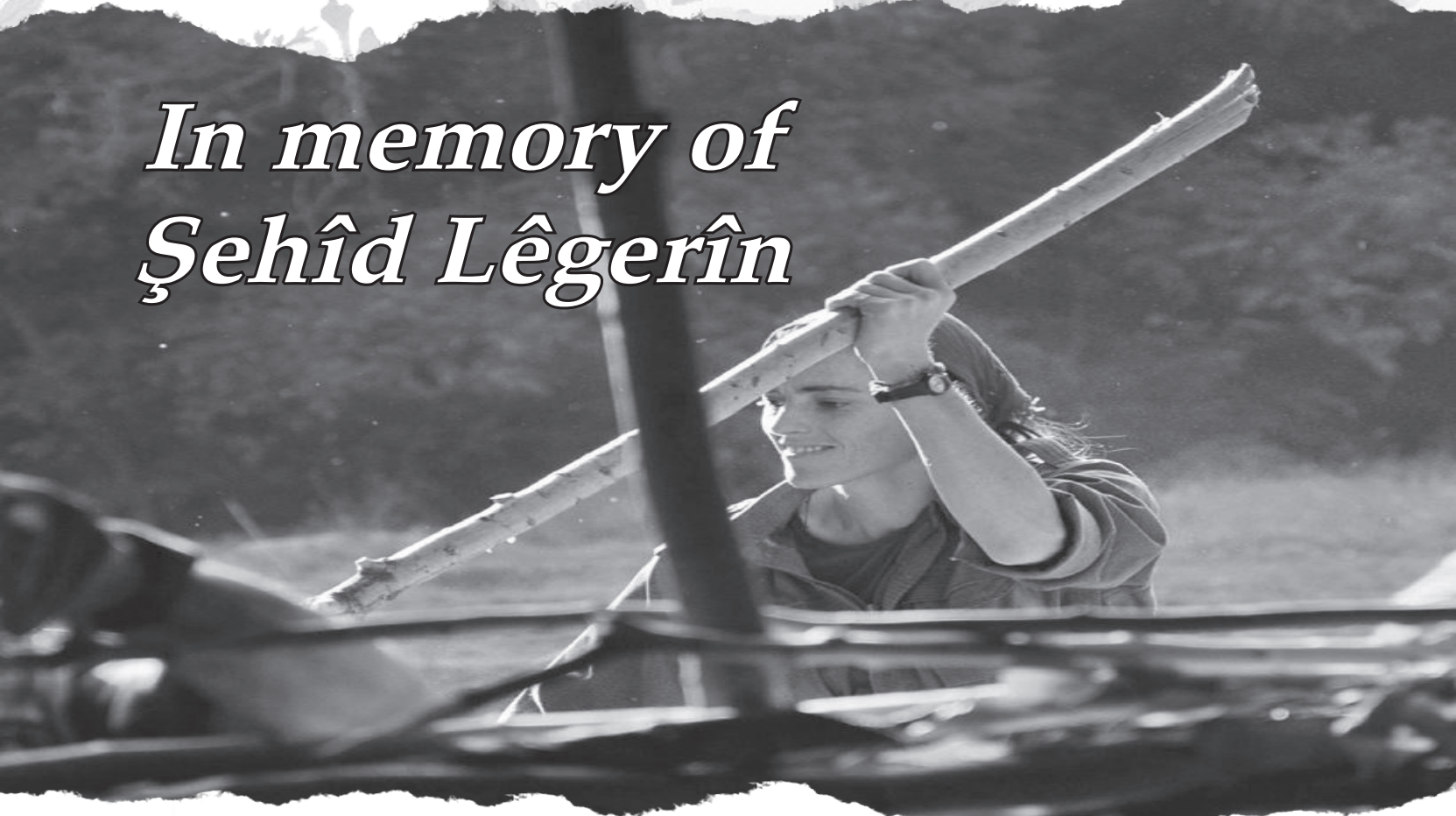
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In memory of Şehîd Lêgerîn



People which have a big love for life and woman which want to life freely form themselves while walking on this hard paths. The ones that make the decision to walk on the path of freedom are the ones that know how to create themselves new. The ones that accept the struggle against big injustice, nastiness, colonialism as a form of life, know also that it's not just the path of some few people. They know that it's not just done with smartness and strength but more with strength and following your heart. They become one with the path they walk on. They become the path. They become the aim they wanted to reach on this path.

To choose the difficult, to choose the impossible is the character of those who with a strong conviction for freedom set foot on the path of freedom. The ones which want to continue their life with "human dignity" doesn't choose the easy and cheap successes. One of the things that makes them different is this: To pass this sort of borders in our head which were made by the mentality and the rules of life of the capitalist-patriarchal system one always has to be questioning and being an actively thinking person. To find new thinks one always has to be searching. This was actually the quality of Alina Sanchez "Legerin" which in her search for a free life showed the bravery to go to the other part of the world, thousands of kilometers away from the land she was born on. I will not talk very

long about the life of comrade Legerin, which in every approach, in every movement in life showed the beauty of the thoughts and the heart looking for freedom. I will tell you some from different times and places each other crossing memories. The first time we met in Europe. The first time when I saw comrade Legerin it had a very different effect on me. She came in contact with the Kurdish people and it's struggle for freedom while coming to Europe for traveling. She was a medicine student. In this field she also met with young Kurds which study the same. This for hundreds of years ongoing struggle against colonialism, capitalism on the American continent, the experience and stories of the resistance of woman and the peoples had a big impact on the personality of comrade Legerin and her daily standing. She made it to one of her fundamental principles and to her philosophy to stand against injustice wherever it occurred and to stand side by side wherever resistance happened.

This was exactly the first energy I took from her when I first met comrade Legerin. It seemed that she knew the Kurds for ages and also knew the Kurdish freedom struggle very well. Even though she met people for the first time and didn't new the language she was able to directly interact with them very warmly. Someone's sincerity, someone's naturalness is a proof of how strong the convictions of a person is. We didn't spoke the same language

with comrade Legerin but as woman, in the search for freedom we had a lot in common. We spoke with the language of our hearts and an intuitive logic. She was a woman that had the power to do so. In her eyes, you could see that she had quiet a few questions. Questions that were a lot more than just "Who are the Kurds, where is Kurdistan?" She wanted to understand and learn about the ideology, the philosophy of this struggle. Yes, she was very interested in the deeper ideological-philosophical-historical and society aims of this struggle.

Every revolutionary has the thirst for adventure, that's how it should be. That always leads him/her towards the new and it's one of the things that are like an obstacle for being kept in a place or staying there for too long. That's at the same time this aim of the universe this 'search for freedom'. It is important to know that the path of the revolution is not decorated with a lot of safeties or circumstances of guarantees for your life. Stability, a constant ener-

On the one hand she studied and learned about Kurdistan and the Middle East while on the other hand she told revolutionary woman and man from Kurdistan the history of colonization and resistance of America. She managed to connect this for hundreds of years ongoing search for freedom from the people of her soil with the one from the Middle East. She walked through the mountains, miles and miles. Under the sun of Kurdistan she sweat, got tired and set step by step forward on this dusty paths. And whoever she met, if it was someone who just joined the struggle or someone already 40 years fighting on these mountains, she didn't hide her deep down from her heart coming smile. Her Kurdish made progress with confident steps. She listened to everyone very carefully. Her laugh came so much from the inside, her participation in daily life was so natural that with her modesty she was able to create an atmosphere of deep friendship. Whoever saw her would assume that

She wasn't an spectator. I saw in her the position of a woman of the vanguard that was assuming its revolutionary responsibility

gy doesn't exist. A revolutionary or an explorer has to keep the energy always in a flow in relation to the search, the movement or to create something new. This exactly, this flow of energy was possible to see in the character of comrade Legerin.

Comrade Legerin chose her name by herself. Legerin in Kurdish means "search" or "to search". How meaningful... What a nice and meaningful connection to Abdullah Öcalan, the founder of the Kurdistan freedom struggle, the founder of this struggle and it's first traveller and his questioning of life and special form of searching... Because the Kurdistan freedom struggle is not just the search of liberation for the colonized earth but also for the colonized woman, people, spirits, cultures, minds and hearts.

The second time when I met with comrade Legerin it was in the mountains of Kurdistan in the area of the guerilla. She is visiting the guerilla in the mountains of Kurdistan for discusses and talks with them about historical, society and ideological topics. We met in the academy of Şehit Zeynep Kinacı from the Free Woman's Movement of Kurdistan. Comrade Legerin gave seminars about South America from the historical-religious-mythological-geographical-cultural and society aspect.

she was living together with the guerrilla for ages.

Her effort to read and understand the new paradigm of comrade Abdullah Öcalan was very high. She had a very different approach then just 'to show solidarity with the Kurdish people'. She joined with the responsibility of a revolutionary to put this paradigm for a democratic, ecological and woman's liberating society into practice. Whenever a guerilla fighter or guerilla commander saw her, after finding out that she was from Argentina they 'told her about Ernesto Che Guevarra and what Che's meaning and importance was for them'. And also 'Yes our revolution and our people need support in the health and treatment sector'. But comrade Legerin didn't shared this view to see herself just as a 'doctor'. She said: 'actually one could call everyone on this mountains, everyone which is resisting is Che' and she said that will be returning to this soil as a revolutionary. She had this promise she gave to her family, her mother and especially to her father that she 'would finish the medicine study and get her diploma'. Comrade Legerin gave her promise during this visit to the mountains of Kurdistan and especially to the comrades from the freedom guerilla of Kurdistan. And she went back to her country.

Comrade Legerin successfully finished her medicine studies in Cuba in 2012. She got her diploma. Then she went back to Argentina. She fulfilled the promise she gave to her loved ones. With her Kurdish comrades she met some in the same year on her own soil. She told them that she wanted to go to Kurdistan. She was told that as an international doctor her contribution to the revolution was very meaningful and valuable. But she aimed at something a lot bigger. She didn't want just to become 'a doctor'. She didn't want to live in the capitalist system and make some contribution with her job. She says: 'I don't have any dream, wish or search to return to this life within this system. I don't want to live in this system. I want that you get me right. I don't have the plan to go to Kurdistan and help and then come back here. I want to join the establishment and creation of a completely new system.' This woman that was able to overcome all these borders which were drawn by this oppressive-state-colonizing system, this person that joined this revolutionary journey to live bigger, more meaningful and free also led us to develop new points of view. And comrade Legerin joined the more and more growing struggle to create and build an alternative system, a system of democratic confederalism in Kurdistan, in Rojava.

Her path to walk on she found in the paradigm of democracy, ecology and woman's liberation. I had the luck to meet her once again in Rojava. She worked in the hospital of Serekaniye. It was in the time when the offensive to liberate Minbic was started. A historical struggle against ISIS was continuing. To save the wounded from the battlefield comrade Legerin and the whole health workers worked day and night. Every death slipped over her looked like a shadow. It was readable from the look on her face how hard this pain was to lose a person physically. And to get a person back to life... In these moments one could see how the eyes of comrade Legerin were filled with light and how the sun was glimmering in her face.

She worked in hard conditions. In these circumstances we had a chat for some hours. We shared our thoughts, criticisms and suggestions on the Revolution of Rojava. And yes, once again I saw what kind of deep ideological analysis my comrade made, with the point of view of our new paradigm and our existing positive and negative experience of this revolution. She was not a spectator. I saw in her the standing of a vanguard woman that was taking her revolutionary responsibility. She had ideas and thoughts on everything from criticism to solutions. She was someone that didn't give up while confronted with difficulties but shared her quest for a

solution with others. That way she was a vanguard for a communal life. She had the maturity, wherever it should be, in which revolution of the world, to be able to keep this standing, to take this responsibility.

While we said good bye to each other she said: 'I'm really sorry but I have to go back to the hospital, they bring wounded comrades, I have to be there.' and went away. While I was looking at her walking away I understood once again that the Rojava Revolution and in general the revolution in Kurdistan with comrades like Legerin managed to make itself universal, growing more and more on a very stable fundament. Legerin became our bridge to connect us to the universal energy and to all the universal values of humanity. She opened up a new path for us. She managed to become one of our paths for the search of a free life. Now our march is toward all these Legerins.

The day that we were physically separated from her, March 17th of 2018, was a really hard day for us. To continue the path on which we walked with comrade Legerin, to be honored by being on the same side of the struggle with her, to get to know her sacrifices gave us big responsibility and it strengthened us in our insistence in the search for a free life.





Interview with the Internationalist Commune of Rojava

In 2017 the Community converted itself into a political space for the young internationalist participants of Rojava's revolution. The Internationalist Community runs the Sehîd Hêlîn Qereçox's Internationalist Academy (named after Anna Campbell, a YPJ fighter who fell defending Afrin against the Turkish invasion in 2018). The Academy offers education on the ideological basis of Kurdistan's revolution, as well as in the history of internationalism, in order to discuss Global Democratic Confederalism perspectives.

Could you tell us more about how you organize your lives? What does it mean living in community?

Being in a Community means lots of things at the same time. On one hand, we're a place where young internationalists involved in Rojava's revolution. On the other hand, we also have the internationalist academy, so we can understand the ideological fundamentals behind this revolution. We also educate the comrades about internationalism's history, so all have the possibility on developing a better understanding of what internationalism means today. Sometimes being part of the Community also means that we actually maintain the common space and organize our lives in a communal way. We practice sports and organize small seminars together on relevant themes for a project, or to help us better understand the revolution. For example, the last seminar we made was about orientalism. The comrades have the possibility on joining all other revolutionary activities taking place in Rojava, such as social, institutional or structural work. In society's jobs, our comrades

organize younger participants or implement plans like communal activities. Various initiatives have been done by the community, like the ideological work for the Make Rojava Green Again campaign. Overall, we can say that the kind of internationalism taking place in Rojava nowadays has many aspects and it is relevant in every level of revolution's defence. Our companions arrive from many places. Lately a lot of colleagues from Cataluña, Switzerland, England and Germany have joined our ranks.

Which role does education sustain in your lives inside the Community? Do you learn new things in Rojava? Where are you going to use this new knowledge?

Education is revolution's perpetual part. We opened the academy in order to provide ideological education to our newcomer comrades, but education is also something perpetual. In times of practical work, we're all reading, discussing and developing ourselves. Education can also occur whilst visiting institutions or while we ideologically discuss with someone inside the society. Moreover, putting the projects into practice it's something that teaches us a lot. We try to know ourselves, to change ourselves: "why didn't I succeed in the tree planting project?" Especially the newcomers learn a lot in little time. Learning Kurdish is also really important, even more so for the newcomers, for it is the basis for everything. Most of our practical knowledge comes from society or from comrades who stay here longer, because it is necessary to understand the mentality and the Rojava organization to put something into practice. We continually develop our thoughts, because

under the conditions of war and embargo we also have to know how to do something that lasts.

To what extent does community life shape your consciences? Do you feel a difference between your lives in the commune and the political work you have done in your home countries?

Community life does make you think differently, because it's the basis of thinking and planning socially instead of living by yourself. We stop thinking individually: "Is this good for me?", and this questions morphs into: "Will this bring progress?". Living in capitalist modernity often puts us in contradiction because we were mostly seeking selfish goals. We thought we would be happier having our own bedroom, our own home, our own car and personal schedule. But that isn't the case since in the end humans feel alone. In communal life you're almost never alone, either ideologically, nor emotional or physically. All of your struggles and contradictions, including the days that the house is too cold: your comrades live with you. Maybe there was unity, some sense of community in our lives in Europe. But the stronger the fight in Rojava, the more the community grows. It is also important how much we're able to change our personalities and find our place in the struggle. Nothing here in our lives remains abstract, each of our contradictions or problems are here, and that's how you learn to fight and develop yourself and along others.

Members of the commune, especially women, have been publishing excellent papers on the struggle against patriarchy. Are there autonomous efforts specifically from women inside the commune?

The commune is a place where we print the Kurdish women's movement philosophy and Abdullah Öcalan's ideology in a significant praxis to us whilst young internationalists. In this manner, we can also say that we always saw the necessity of having autonomous programs, distinct education days, the possibility of engaging a while in the works of the women's movement or Jineloji's education. We have been seeing great necessity of establishing a militant personality in the fight for women's liberation. In addition, we must say that Turkey's intention on destroying Rojava, and other states' objective, such as Russia and USA, of suffocating and stripping away the meaning of our struggle has had profound effect on the situation of women in Rojava. That's why our efforts, in some effect changed since the last offensive. Now we can say, for example, that the female comrades in our society develop meaningful roles of younger women's organization, as well as in the opportunity of learning deeply about women's liberation and

about themselves. We join the works of Rojava's Younger Women Unity and it's also possible that the female comrades join the Kongreya Star efforts, Rojava's general women liberation movement. Both the younger women and the general women organizations participate in the management of our society and the solving of women's issues in Rojava, focusing differently according the roles the younger perform within the society.

Recently the "Make Rojava Green Again" campaign book was published. Could you share with us your understanding of ecology, including its social consequences?

We understand ecology as something unreachable without overriding the state system and the hierarchical patriarchal society. On patriarchy nature is seen as something inferior to human beings, and as something that can be exploited limitlessly. But we see the necessity of surpassing this for mankind's and nature's wellbeing. It is mandatory seeing nature as something alive, and that demands society without oppression to flourish. We must strengthen society's capacity of democratizing and creating itself, so we might be capable of developing the economy within a local and sustainable structure, respecting people's basic needs. At the same time, state forms of socialism and liberation struggle with their high modernizing and industrialist standards have often neglected this issue, to say the least. It seems significant that they decided to work on ecology-related issues as internationalists. Theoretically and practically, what is the relationship between ecological struggles and the nature of the revolution? Today we see a horrible war being waged in the revolution in Rojava. This war also has great ecological implications, as it holds our capacity to advance in the development of a new economic and ecological system. It destroys society and its ability to progress on the basis of building a local ecological food system. Therefore, we can say that the states not only neglect this problem, but aim to destroy this revolution and the solution it could offer to ecological problems as well. In this way, we also see that more and more European environmentalists are watching the revolution in the North and Syria. Not only have we decided that we will work on ecological issues, but it is a great search for change, which we can now see in societies all over the world.

In the recent past, the women's liberation movement in Kurdistan has expressed the need to go beyond solidarity to build concrete and joint struggles for global liberation and democracy.

Do you agree with this perspective? If so, how do you assess the role of the Internationalist Commune of Rojava in articulating internationalism in the 21st century?

We agree with the fight for the global liberation of women and the fight for democracy, especially as the women's movement is now developing this perspective in a global initiative within the framework of democratic Confederalism. Our goal is for all our comrades to play their part in building this. If we want to succeed in making the 21st century the century of women, as Abdullah Öcalan said, we, as young internationalists, will also have to take a step forward. In all our service, we may wonder how we are working to achieve this in practice. We can see that the Internationalist Academy will participate in this process by offering education. At the same time, especially for comrades in Europe, it is important to overcome individualism, because European societies have been severely damaged by the state and capitalist system, and so free women are also forced to surrender to the system. In this sense, we believe that it is important to work through our attitudes for the formation of a society that receives free women in its heart.

What are the concrete ways internationalists outside Rojava can help defending the revolution?

We hope that more and more people will feel that the revolution in Rojava is also theirs. We also believe that it mustn't be understood as something separate from the rest of the world. We can say that after the last attacks there was an assessment that two things were important parts of the revolution's defence: the forces on the ground in Rojava and the actions that were taking place internationally. In this way, the concrete work of internationalists outside Europe must also be diverse: direct solidarity work will be needed, but also work at various other levels. Diplomatic work, solidarity, education, building an organization of supporters all over the world. Whether it is to foster a deeper understanding of the works of Jineoloji or of the young revolutionary organization. The better we understand Abdullah Öcalan's perspectives, the more we will find the spirit and creativity to achieve progress at all levels of the revolution. And each one of these companions in the movement, as well as each organization, will also ask themselves what they can do in defence of the revolution. This is the most important thing we want to explain to everyone: keep on moving, keep on fighting and to put all our heart and creativity into it, so that we can achieve more progress, regardless of the ob-

stacles. It is as our comrades always say: the first rule of war is to always keep moving and be fast. This is also true for all jobs outside Rojava in these times. We have to be prepared for every possibility, because the war has also become tougher.

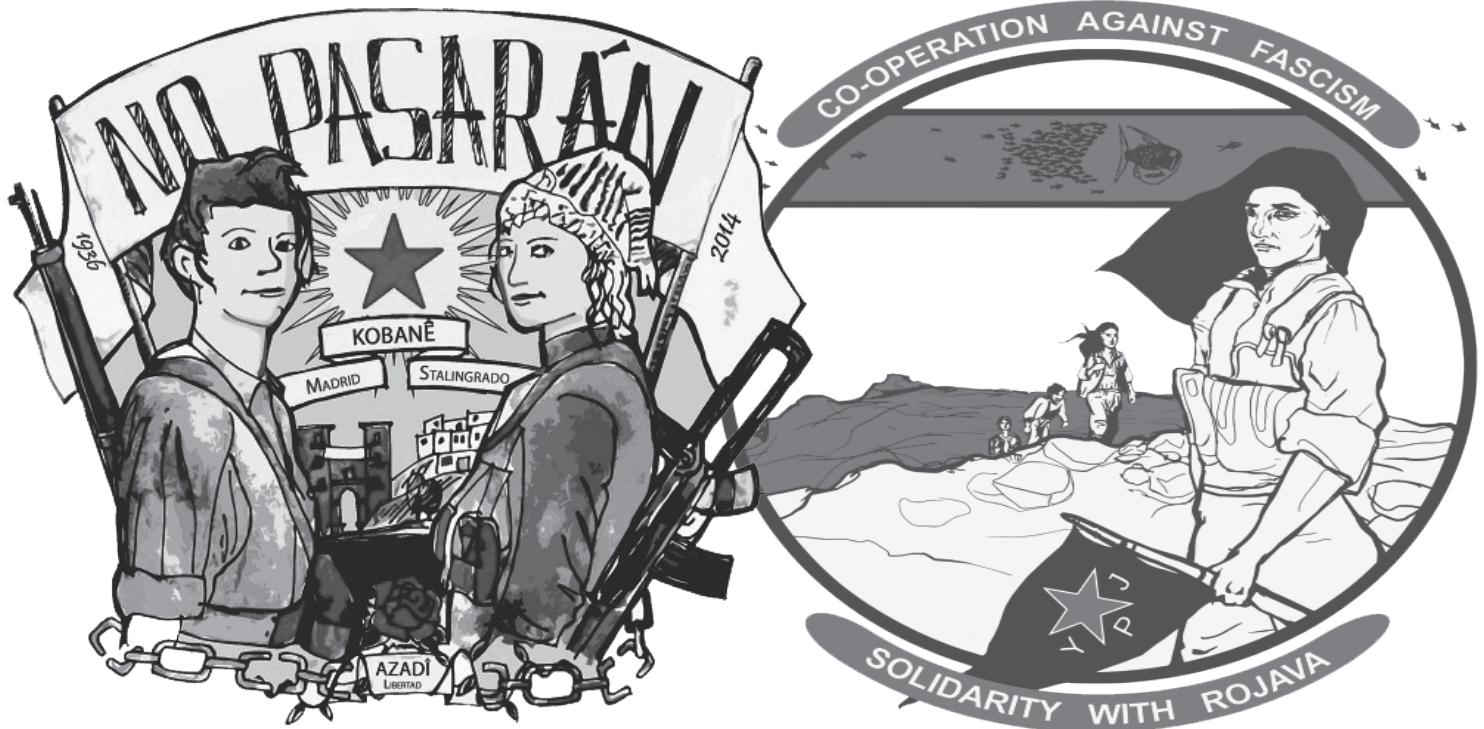
Any other comments or general calls you'd like to make?

We hope that our comrades find their places on this revolution in Rojava or in its struggle throughout the world, bearing in mind we hope this revolution is an important step on overcoming patriarchy and capitalism.



The Komun-Academy editorial team, interviewed the Internationalist Commune of Rojava, but we reduced to Lêgarî magazine, the full interview can be found at their website.





INTERNATIONALIST PERSPECTIVES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

All living organisms, whether simple or complex, have developed their own ways of self-defense to protect their lives and the beauty they offer to the world. The rose protecting itself through its thorns is an example of this. Self-defense is therefore as essential to life as water or the sun. For human beings, self-defense is not only a biological necessity, it is above all a social necessity.

From the beginning, the first human communities had to look for different ways to protect themselves from the attacks and dangers with which they lived in their reality. But this reality was very limited; attacks of some animal, shortage of food, cold or storms, and punctually some possible attack of another human group. As the years went by, the realities in which the different human societies lived together became more and more complex, while at the same time connecting with the realities of other human societies. Today, this connection is global, and what happens in the reality of one society can quickly affect a society on the other side of the planet.

We can really see this connection as a characteristic of the Universe itself, of which we are all a part and a consequence. The Chaos Theory also tells us about this through the so-called butterfly effect. Thus, the deforesta-

tion of the Amazon or the killing of bees in one part of the planet can lead to real disasters for human societies on a global level, as well as for the rest of living beings. The example of COVID-19 also shows us that, in this globalized and interconnected world, a virus in one particular place in the world can quickly become a global epidemic that affects and alters the lifestyles of millions of people and societies. To give another, this time more pleasant, example, the revolution of Rojava, a small territory with a few million inhabitants, continues to influence thousands and thousands of people everywhere from its beginnings and leads them to change their ways of thinking and relating. We see how everything and everyone is connected to each other, both locally and globally, influencing us daily and historically, personally and socially.

Kurdistan and the Cancer Nation States

We find ourselves in World War III, this time with the epicentre in the Middle East, specifically in Kurdistan, where the great international powers are currently carrying out their plans against Life. The nation-state imposes itself like cancer cells on every corner of the world through massacres

and rapes, destroying societies and nature with the fists of the dominant man. Likewise, the Nation-State has manipulated the mind of society so much that it has become convinced that it no longer needs self-defense, because the State, through control and militarization and false concepts of democracy and freedom, has come to protect us. Is society not a living organism as it is composed of hundreds or thousands of living beings? Then, why, if all living organisms have their own methods of self-defense, have complex human societies renounced this vital need by surrendering our lives to a murderous system?

At this point and connecting to history, which is a living spiral full of cumulative events, we must ask ourselves; if the first human communities were aware of the need for self-defense in their concrete realities, should we not realize a system of self-defense according to the complex and interconnected reality of today?

Internationalism in practice

People from all over the world have traveled to Rojava to learn first-hand about the revolution that has been going on for some years, many even gave their lives in defense of it; thousands are influenced by the knowledge of the Zapatista communities, which are a beacon of hope since they rose up in 1994; other thousands went to Abya Yala and participated in the different revolutionary processes that took place throughout the century. Thousands came to Abya Yala and participated in the different revolutionary processes that took

place throughout the 20th century, just as thousands came to take up arms in the Spanish state during the 36th revolution to defend socialist principles from the clutches of fascism. The struggle against patriarchy, the State, capitalism and colonization must be international and organized through the creation of a system of self-defense that responds to current realities, where internationalism is not an objective in itself but a collective view from which we all recognize each other from the diversities that enrich us.

We should not understand ourselves as observers in solidarity with the struggle of other territories, but rather we should feel inside and participate in that struggle, because if the attacks are global, the resistance must also be global. In this sense, the best way to show solidarity and support the revolution in one place is to take steps towards the revolutionary struggle in the territories where we live, steps decided on the basis of love for our history and our land, because connecting with our roots will be the best way to take the struggle to a global level, because what internationalism could we talk about if we did not feel love for the history and the struggle of the land to which we belong? Could we fight for revolution in one part of the world if we didn't get excited every time we thought about making revolution within the society we are part of? Love for our land, our history, our culture, will allow us to develop a love for other lands, histories and cultures, a love that is deep and really necessary to carry out the struggle successfully.



The fight for freedom demands action

Rêber Abdullah Öcalan says that the aim of the universe is freedom, and this can be seen in the song of a nightingale, in the thousands of colours of nature or in the efforts of a captured animal to free itself from its cage. Human beings, as part of the Universe, are also in search of freedom, and in internationalism they have found a formula to collectively reach free life and at the same time be able to defend it. But

local level, democratic and ecological societies.

In recent years we have seen how women's demands in one part of the world have turned into campaigns of struggle and international solidarity, such as MeToo or Ni una menos; we also saw how the whole planet was filled with women wearing green scarves in solidarity with the struggle for abortion of the comrades in Argentina; during the months of October and November 2019 dozens of Women Defend Rojava (WDR) committees were created throughout Europe - committees that continue today - to expand the

**THE KURDISTAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT CLAIMS THAT
THE 21ST CENTURY IS THE CENTURY OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION.**

the struggle has to be carried out in the spirit of the 21st century. Historically, internationalism was based on class understandings and/or national liberation. But these understandings are insufficient and do not aim at creating a common alternative. Everywhere in the world we see how women are becoming aware of their own strength and are taking the lead in the struggle; Kurdistan, Chiapas, Chile, South Africa.

resistance of the Rojava revolution and the North and East of Syria to the attacks of the Turkish army; women from all over the planet have participated in the international meetings of women who struggle organized by the Zapatista comrades? we could give many more examples that show the strength of women in their search for freedom. It is time to convert this force of search into an organized force, from the local to the global and vice versa, connected internationally to develop the struggle for a free life in a worldwide way, and thus bringing women, societies, peoples and nature towards liberation.

**A revolution for women
from around the world**

The Kurdistan Women's Movement claims that the 21st century is the century of women's liberation. Therefore, developing the struggle in the spirit of this century means putting women's liberation at the very heart of the struggle. In this sense, the ideological, practical and scientific tools developed by the Kurdistan Women's Movement and offered to women all over the world show us how women should be the vanguard of internationalism in the 21st century. With the science of women, Jineolojî, we will develop a scientific base that connects all the knowledge, experiences, struggles and resistances carried out by women and peoples in rebellion, driving us to take deep steps on the path of the search for free life and building an international self-defense that will ensure the successes we achieve. The proposal of the Kurdistan Women's Movement about the World Women's Confederalism is a concrete alternative that goes beyond the classical understandings of internationalism, and aims to develop a world organization that, through the liberation of women, develops, at the

**Casilda Ginestá
Comité de Jineolojî de Europa**





Interview with Riza Altun, co-founder of the PKK and member of the KCK Executive Council

This was an interview published in RojaCiwana website, and you can find the whole of it in their website or in our website (spanish)

Revolutionary movements and people around the world, especially in Europe and Latin America, watch the PKK and Rojava with growing interest. However, most of them cannot make sense of the relationship between the US-led international coalition and the socialist and anti-imperialist identity of the Kurdish movement after Kobanê.

Q: Isn't this a contradiction in your point of view? Or is it a temporary situation that arose due to the political, ideological and sociological besiegement and isolation of the Kurds? What is your explanation for this?

To understand the current political situation, one needs to know how it developed in the first place. The recent developments are not results of political relationships based on planned strategic and tactical relations. Rather, they should be evaluated and seen in terms of political and tacti-

cal outcomes of particular political situations, as well as of people's active struggle and resistance. When the latest crisis in the Middle East emerged, the PKK already had a 40-years history of struggle. This struggle was essentially against the imperialist-capitalist system embodied by colonialist states that control four parts of Kurdistan in the name of the capitalist and imperialist system. For exactly forty years, these states supported the imperialist and capitalist colonialist powers and tried everything to suppress the freedom movement.

The international conspiracy against our leader (Abdullah Öcalan) is a result of the efforts by these powers, a systemic approach to eliminate our movement. At the start of the Middle East crisis, their approach was to exclude our movement to suppress and eventually destroy it. This approach was based on the relationship and alliance of the imperialist and colonialist powers. We can see this when we look at what happened in Syria. When the chaos in Syria erupted, many circles in the name of the Syrian opposition developed relationships with international imperialism and regional colonialist powers. The circles around the Kurdish freedom movement were

the only side to mount resistance to defend themselves with no connection with any state. There was no support for them from any power. When some powers that deepened the Syrian crisis, such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia, targeted Kurds through their proxies, our people started resistance in accordance with the ideas of our leader Apo, Abdullah Öcalan. The Syrian regime and the so-called Syrian opposition tried everything in their power to suppress this resistance. Kurds then responded when organizations like ISIS, Al-Nusra, Ahrar Al-Sham, etc. attacked the majority Kurdish regions with the support of the Assad regime. This is how it all started. When this battle and the resistance started, Turkey, Iran, Syria and other similar powers were supporting the Salafist, extremist terror groups that were attacking the Kurds in Syria. Other powers, particularly the US and Israel were also supporting these groups. They were developing projects and forced these groups to act in accordance with their interests.

The Salafist groups attacked Kurds with these states' support and this continued until the resistance in Kobanê. Kobanê was a turning point. Until the resistance in Kobanê there was no single regional or international power that supported the Kurdish freedom movement in Syria. There was no power that developed even a tactical relation with the Kurds. They collectively did everything they could to eliminate the Kurdish movement. Iran acted together with the Syrian regime to crush Kurdish resistance. On the other hand, the US and Israel tried to suppress the resistance by supporting Salafist groups with various policies through Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Kobanê was the turning point of the struggle. The powers that wanted to dominate the Middle East through ISIS, pursued a very deliberate and relentless policy. They followed the same strategy as Genghis Khan or Tamerlane (Timur), which helped them conquer the entire Middle East in a short period of time: unlimited violence and savagery. When ISIS beheaded people in

front of cameras and published their atrocities, it wasn't out of primitive barbarism. Rather, these actions were a result of their strategy to create a climate of panic and fear, to make people surrender. After the first massacres, the fear spread by ISIS arrived before ISIS itself, so that towns and cities were handed to them without any resistance. The first resistance against ISIS took place in Şengal (Sinjar). PKK guerrillas and YPG-YPJ fighters in Rojava mounted the first and only resistance against ISIS when latter's gangs attacked the Ezidi people there. Although they have an enormous military power, the US, Russia and EU countries simply watched the massacre unfold; the PKK's HPG and YJA Star guerrillas along with YPG-YPJ fighters saved hundreds of thousands of Ezidis, Christians and Muslims from genocide.

The resistance in Şengal gave breath to the world

They asked "Despite their enormous military power, why don't the US, EU and other global and regional powers act against this atrocity? Do they try to benefit from this barbarism?" The new situation put the legitimacy of international powers and regional states up for discussion, while generating prestige for the PKK and our leader Öcalan. It destroyed the "terrorist organization" label which was stuck on the name of our movement by Turkish colonialism and imperialism. After this, no one could carry on with their relations with ISIS or similar organizations. Especially the countries that define themselves as "democratic states" had to search for new tendencies to continue their existence in the region. However, despite the resistance in Şengal and its results, regional powers like Turkey continued with their policy towards ISIS and other Salafist organizations. They later diverted ISIS to Kobanê and tried to secure its fall into ISIS' hands. The goal was to destroy the gains of Rojava's Kurds, but most importantly the gains of the freedom path in the Middle East.

This served everybody's interest at the time. The regime and its indirect international supporters were looking to benefit from this, in addition to Turkey and Saudi Arabia. ISIS built a tactical and strategic relationship via the anti-Kurdish approach of these powers. This is how the attack against Kobanê developed. Despite it all, a great resistance was put up against the attack on Kobanê and this resistance was embraced by the people in all four parts of Kurdistan. All the Kurds in Northern, Southern and Eastern Kurdis-



tan showed great sensibility towards Kobanê. The longevity of the resistance increased the interest of people of the region and international public opinion. After 100 days of resistance Kobanê was on the top of the agenda in the world. After Kobanê was on the world's agenda, the failure of ISIS caused a split. At that point, the regional and global powers re-evaluated their political and military positions and started a new process on their part. The Kurdish resistance in Kobanê, Rojava created new circumstances. The international community and public opinion created pressure on the US and other international powers to interfere in the situation. The resistance mounted in Şengal, and after that in Kobanê, moved the conscience of international community. The relationship between the US-led coalition and the YPG was seen as as legitimate and necessary as the alliance between the US and Soviet Union against Hitler's fascism at the time of World War II. Both sides needed that kind of relationship just like the US and the Soviets did back then. Thus, a tactical relationship was developed with the US against ISIS. It is more important to see how this relationship developed and what the intentions of the parties in this relationship are, than to reach a conclusion

di Arabia, which were, however, failing. This would not result in a different outcome either. The third option was to move further by developing a relationship with a new force that proved its success on the ground. This third one was the choice that the US had to make. Instead of continuing with Turkey and Saudi Arabia and repeating a previous practice by fighting against this freedom force that had achieved success, the US chose to become a partner with the success this resistance revealed, which would obviously benefit itself too. This was a crafty imperialist approach which attempted to attribute any gains to itself. The US calculated this very well when it developed a tactical relationship. The US started a process based on supporting the resistance of YPG forces as an approach of the international coalition against ISIS. Of course, the freedom struggle of the Kurds in Rojava is based on freedom and equality on a socialist basis. It is the expression of a political path based on the fraternity and unity of peoples. On the other side, the imperialists are fighting to impose their hegemony over the Middle East. These very different strategic and ideological positions entered a merely tactical relationship in Kobanê. The other developments that followed can be

As during World War II, the alliance between the Soviet Union and the United States against Hitler's fascism was considered legitimate on both sides and by society

by only determining the ideological positions of the parties. Otherwise, for forty years the US has been fighting against the PKK and the PKK is fighting against the imperialist system in the body of colonialism. But there is a new situation and chaos in the Middle East that concerns the world system. There is not only the oppressed peoples' and socialist movements' struggle against imperialist powers in this chaotic situation. There are also struggles between imperialist powers themselves, or between imperialist powers and regional powers or local reactionary tendencies. This struggle creates opportunities in which all parties can get into tactical relationships while moving forward to reach their objectives.

Therefore, every party tries to do this as they benefit from the power and capabilities of others. Various political and military positions make this possible. At the beginning of the crisis in the Middle East, the US faced several options after the political and military investments it had made in Syria through Turkey and Saudi Arabia, resulted in nothing. The first option was to leave Syria, i.e. to leave the region. Doing so, the US would back down from its politics of world domination. The US wouldn't possibly be able to do so. The second option was to invest more in the policies that it pursued towards Turkey and Sau-

seen as a continuation of this tactical relationship. In itself, this relationship is a very painful one. On one side the freedom movement is trying to extend its territory and leads a struggle to create a free Middle East by developing democratic solutions, while the other side tries to extend its hegemony in the Middle East. This is not a relationship in which the parties support each other, but instead are in constant conflict.

Q: Can we say that this is a very rare situation, maybe the first of its kind? Is there a tactical partnership that arises from the intersection of the interests of oppressed peoples' forces and hegemonic imperialistic powers?

Maybe in the Middle East this is the first of its kind, but it's not something that's unheard of in the world. If we look at the history of struggles for freedom, we can find a lot of examples. There are some examples in late history, especially during World War I and II and in the Soviet revolution period. The Soviets and the US saw the common points of their struggle against fascism during World War II. Now when we evaluate this, how can we define the position of the Soviet Union? Would we say that the Soviet Union collaborated with imperialism after evaluating its relations with the US or the UK? This would

be a very shallow and dogmatic approach. There are several examples from the October Revolution as well. After the October Revolution, economic and political agreements happened with the capitalists and imperialists. If you look at the nature of these agreements, there is no denial of socialism on the Soviet part. There is no denial of socialism when Lenin developed relationships with imperialists. The same thing goes for the agreements made during World War II. Here, one can talk about the necessity of developing tactical and strategic relationships and agreements for the October Revolution. Yet the struggle against fascism during World War II required the creation of an anti-fascist common front.

How long will these relationships last?

If we look closely, these kinds of relationships are limited to the period of any given problems' existence. That means they are not at the level of constituting strategic relationships. Just like how the agreements of the October Revolution came out of conjunctural situations and just like how these agreements become worthless when the conjunctural situation was over, the same happened during World War II. The alliance that developed during World War II was an anti-fascist stance, which emerged from the Soviet Union's desire to defend its territory under intense attacks, combined with the interests of other anti-Nazi powers. This agreement remained in place as long as fascist attacks continued. But once fascism was defeated, all parties returned to their own political positions and moved on in accordance with their respective ideological-political path. There are not many examples of this in the Middle East. This is the first of its kind, and a unique situation. The conflict and the struggle in the world can be read as World War III.

The Middle East is one of the most affected territories of the global conflict. This means that we may witness some developments that we have never seen before in the region. For example, we may witness complicated

PKK. These three courses are in conflict with each other and among themselves, especially the first two ones. Therefore, these forces can continuously develop different relationships and alliances in accordance with the priority of their interests and conflicts. Every power positions itself open to relations and alliances while conflicting with each other. Our definition of "World War III" is based on this reality. When we predicate on this definition of World War III, we will see various new strategic, tactical relations. When this is the case, many powers are supposed to develop tactical relationships to move forward to their strategic goals, although it may look contradictory. This goes for everybody. This is within the nature of politics and diplomacy. This should be expected. Therefore, making judgments by looking at the open political and military situations might be too shallow and narrow of an approach. Taking the right approach means this: Capitalism is in a deep and structural crisis. It's a global crisis, which can be felt intensely in the Middle East. The conflict in the Middle East is taking place at both the military and political level. Therefore, an ideological and political approach alone is not enough. An organized and military position is needed at the same time. When you take an organized and military position, that means you will constantly fight against the status quo in order to change and transform it and develop a new structure. This is a practical process. If it's not evaluated correctly and the dialectics of the progress are not implemented in a good way, dogmatic approaches may result in one's elimination. In that case, a situation where the line of freedom cannot be expressed may emerge. Because of this, we need to know and analyse the field very well. We have to be precise when we decide when and what to do against something. When we make gains or capture a place, we must evaluate carefully how it will be defended and how it will be used to build

Instead of repeating its previous practice of continuing to fight Turkey and Saudi Arabia against the force of victorious freedom, the United States saw a greater advantage to themselves by cooperating with the successes achieved by the resistance.

tactical and strategic relationships of the regional status-quo states, international imperialism and socialist revolutionary movements, which all act to strengthen their positions. Because the reality on the ground is very complicated. There are three main courses. The first is the imperialist course and involves big powers. This is represented by the US, Russia and the European Union states. The second course is defined by the regional status-quo states. These are represented by countries like Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia. The third course is that of socialism, democracy and freedom. This is represented by leftist and socialist popular movements, such as the

and establish socialism. If we don't look at it from this perspective, we will never be able to understand the freedom path or the positions of regional status-quo states and international imperialism. If we mix all these with each other and stand apart with our theoretical approaches, acting as though we are great defenders of freedom, while remaining without the power to influence, we will in reality gravely harm the struggle and resistance of the people.

Q: These are tactical relationships, this is understandable. Now the Federation of Northern Syria and Rojava forces have relations with the US and

Russia. These are great imperialist powers. How can one protect socialist identity when having political, military and economic relations with those powers?

Firstly, I have to tell you this: Our struggle is carried out by carefully considering the historical experiences of other struggles for freedom. You have to take this into consideration. Secondly, there is no way that someone will understand us from real socialism's point of view. From the practices of real socialism, we know that we cannot carry out a freedom struggle by polarizing the world in the form of fronts and defining ourselves within one of these. The world is not in that state and it's not possible to carry out a freedom struggle by isolating and marginalizing yourself within the world's capitalist system. We have to see the problem as a whole and act accordingly. We are living in a capitalist world system.

We want to create an area of freedom to struggle against capitalism, imperialism and colonialism. Now we have no opportunity to position ourselves in an existing area of freedom. We want to create one inside this world, which is held captive and enslaved. The freedom areas that we want to create are now under other powers' control. But the social and political groups have very serious discrepancies among themselves. We can only move forward in the name of socialist idealism by benefiting from these conflicts and discrepancies. Creating polarization and taking position in it is not for the benefit of socialist powers. If we approach the problems with real socialism's understanding of polarization, we will have to face all imperialist and colonialist powers. But in reality, the imperialist and colonialist powers are not homogenous. There are various contradictions and discrepancies between them.

A failure to benefit from these conflicts and to gather strength and positions in the name of socialist ideas will be a great loss for the socialist ideology. If we look at the issue by only differentiating the socialists and capitalists-imperialists, we will be left with only a few whom we can call friends on the ground. And with a compilation of these "friends" it will be very difficult to move forward in this great struggle. When there is an opportunity, everything we take from the capitalist-imperialist system will make the socialist movement stronger while making them weaker. When this is the case, we need to move forward with the necessities drawn by our ideological and political approaches by organizing and opening areas of freedom. There are hegemonic powers, which are in relation with the capitalist system, in front of us and they control those areas. And we have to open a space for ourselves in these areas.

Bijê Rojava!

Bijê Kurdistan!

Bijê PKK!

This was an interview published in RojaCiwana website, and you can find the whole of it in their website or in our website (spanish)





JAZIRA

EUPHRATES

PHILIDELPHIA

ALBUQUERQUE

CHICAGO

AFRIN

AR-RAQQA

SEATTLE

PORTLAND

WINNEAPOLIS

DIVIDED BY SEA, UNITED IN SOLIDARITY



*My path as a young internationalist
until I join the Revolution*

What drove me to make this decision is not easy to explain. My life has always been a constant change. In my way of thinking, of relating and of seeing life. I was lucky to be raised by a mother who knew how to plant in me the social conscience, the importance of morals, ethics and emotional intelligence. Enough to be able to see from a young age that the world was not right. That there were injustices and inequalities that would not allow me the illusion of living peacefully without taking an active role and responsibility to change that situation.

At a certain point in my life I experienced with part of my family the migration process from Latin America to Europe. This moment would mark my childhood, being the point from which after experiencing racism and discrimination I would begin my search for a model of thought that would give me hope for the future. From which I could work for a different world, in which living together in harmony and peace was not a dream but the only conceivable reality.

In my search process I was influenced by multiple ideologies, ways of life and militancy, which as they became meaningful to me, I adopted in my conscience, discarding in turn what I thought did not guide me towards these goals of freedom.

During these years I experienced politics in multiple ways, from the most passive, marginal, dogmatic and shallow forms; passing through the famous "identity politics" and logic of "ethical consumption"; to the most structured and militant forms of political participation that I could find among the

circles of people with whom I began to relate. I always saw myself much more inclined towards the forms of imagining politics that would start from the social bases; from horizontality, popular power and that would try to tend towards the most radical analyses (not in the yellowish sense used by the system's propaganda media, but understanding it as those analyses that would seek to solve problems from their "root"). In that sense, I was never too tempted by the forms of possibility analysis that lead to taking part and getting lost in the trap of liberal democracy; or on the other hand by the structures and methods of the hierarchical movements that seek to implant models per-designed from outside and from above to society.

The influence and seduction of the system

Of course, before continuing, I feel obliged to clarify that although this search represents the cornerstone that has guided my evolution and the most important vital decisions I have made in every moment of my short history, my life has not always been a constant dedication to this search. Much

of it has been a totally "normal" life (Subject to the norm). In countless moments I have been tempted and caught up in the charms of liberalism. For its promises of success and personal fulfillment; for the attraction of drugs and its tempting and soothing alienation from reality; for the laziness and mentality of doing things "for the sake of doing" and getting away with it; for the promise of eternal and pure romantic love that becomes the meaning of existence; for the life dedicated to the constant search for ever stronger and more innovative stimuli; for the attractive technology and its powerful capacity to simulate experiences, to provide immediate satisfaction and to make you feel in a parallel world to which you can escape when the real world allows you to.

I have been tempted many times by the seductive voice of the system that constantly repeats to us: "Let yourself go", "Don't think", "Nothing is possible", "Nothing matters", "Live in the moment", "Live for yourself"... That sweet ballad of death that leads us to become sacks of flesh with no will, no capacity for agency beyond what we are told to do. Of the freedom we are allowed. A voice that subliminally recites: "Turn off your heart and over-stimulate your brain while you let yourself be carried away by the current of this ro-

analysis and theoretical proposals of Abdullah Öcalan. I found so much charm in his holistic theoretical approach (not only in politics and economics, but in philosophy and history) as well as the implementation by the PKK organizational method.

Perhaps if the same theories and methods had been theorized initially in the United States or some country in Europe, I might have joined sooner. Maybe that would be the case for thousands more people. This is how our minds work, so deeply influenced by the culture of globalization and its stereotypes. But there were historical coincidences that this movement would not start in the most active centers of historical colonialism, but in Kurdistan.

Adherence to the revolutionary movement

But I did not join, despite what many still think, the Kurdish movement. It's been a long time since it was an all-Kurdish movement. Or only for the liberation of Kurdistan. I joined an international revolutionary organization. That even in Kurdistan itself as well as now in the whole Middle East is how it is understood. The struggle and organization is carried out by multiple peoples. Different ethnicity. Different histories converging on the same path of liberation. I can't think of a better way to describe it.

Life is only life if it is lived in freedom.

And you are only free if you fight.

ten river waiting without thinking, the moment when we reach the precipice and nothing else matters. The moment when there's nothing more that can be done.

I have to admit that many times I succumbed to this life. Many times I gave up and embraced nihilism and despair. I lost count of the times when my weak body was crushed by the great weight of the system's influence. Of its monstrous structure. And it almost beat me.

But just when I needed it most, without seeing it coming, I found myself faced with the possibility of making the most important and definitive decision of my life: to start devoting the time I have left in this world to participating in a real revolutionary movement. And not just any movement. A movement that truly has the capacity to turn potential into fact. Hope into true freedom. For me, this was the moment when I decided that my long search would finally find a path of truth (Heqîqat).

From the beginning I would have liked it to be this way, but I ended up getting used to the relaxed rhythms of European cosmopolitanism. To the repetitive agendas and cyclical problems. To small groups with airs and graces. The symbolic manifestations and actions and the always missed return to the house and normality.

But already from the last times of my life inside the system I had caused a great attraction to the

In this way the revolutionary paradigm and methods that Rêber Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) would inaugurate represent for the world and for history the possibility of building a common revolutionary path. In which we can finally see a world and a life worth living.

Our revolutionary role

Now, through the revolutionary practice of the PKK, it can be said with complete certainty that there is no longer only a different way of understanding the world. But we now know how to make it happen. Of course, out of ego and mistrust (typical of attitudes that have been learned from the colonial system) there will be many people who refuse to accept this movement for the liberation of our world and who with their heads held high will tell themselves they don't need it. That they can stand on their own two feet. But our role is not to beg people to understand. It is to start building with those people who want to be an example. To be part of this moment and this historic movement and to show by practice how through total dedication to revolution there is no other option but victory. A victory that is needed now more than ever and that we will build not only

with our iron will, but through practice that can reach more places and be practiced by more people.

Of course we, like all people in history who at some point were in a similar circumstance, assume that these vital choices make us very dangerous enemies of those who want capitalist modernity to be maintained and the status quo not broken. Of those who wish both on the surface and on the bottom that nothing in the world would change.

In this way, we will be condemned a thousand times over by people who are alienated from and dependent on the system, while at the same time we will be persecuted, tortured and killed by its apparatus of repression and death. Just like all the people who have fought for freedom in history.

But what drives us to revolutionary life is not because our goal is death, but the opposite. Because we love life so much that we can't help but want to protect it and want it to be free. Life is only life if it is lived in freedom. And you are only free if you fight.

That is why. The time has come to stop the massacre of our people, the forgetting of our history and the destruction of our planet. And for that reason, for every person,

the moment must come when both questions are asked, which already in '68 began to be questioned. Those same two questions that gave me the last push in my decision.

**If not you, who?
If not now, when?**





Criticism and self-criticism within the Kurdish revolutionary movement

Criticism and self-criticism belong to the most important methods of revolutionary parties. When used in a constructive and scientific way it can serve as main dialectical dynamic inside the revolutionary movement. But when instrumentalised for power and oppression criticism and self-criticism can become extremely destructive for the whole struggle. Unfortunately there are negative examples where this method -objectively- was not practiced for liberating the personality and overcoming the ideology and mentality of the ruling system, but for the destruction of personality and construction of new power relations, like within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during Stalin, but also small groups within the German Left during the 1980s. These negative examples have led to a mistrust towards the method itself and as a result to its deactivation. The deactivation of criticism and self-criticism as a main and systematical method of the revolutionary praxis, in turn, weakens both, the ideological and the practical struggle of the organisation.

There might be no other revolutionary movement today in the world that practices criticism and self-criticism as productive, effective and extensive as the PKK. The PKK was founded in 1978 as

cadre party. Its first cadres were deeply influenced by Marxism-Leninism. Insofar criticism and self-criticism have played a central role within the Kurdish revolutionary movement just from the beginning. But if we have a look at the history of the PKK and especially the writings of its leader Abdullah Öcalan, we'll see that the focus of criticism and self-criticism inside the Kurdish cadre party has changed by time. Öcalan describes this process in his Political Report to the 5th Party Congress in 1995 in detail. There he underlines that the main activity and work of the PKK during its first years was ideological criticism. This process had already started in 1973, the year this group of Kurdish and Turkish students started to organise as an ideological group and continued after the official founding of the Kurdistan Worker's Party in 1978, until the 1980s.

The group around Abdullah Öcalan was reading books and brochures, making research and discussing for hours with the aim to make a profound ideological, political, social and historical analysis of the history of the Kurdish question and the nature of the 'enemy' (primarily the Turkish state and generally the imperialist world system). For them it seemed crucial to first decrypt the lies of the fascist and colonialist Turkish state and recreate the

Kurdish identity, which had disappeared in the darkness of history. The criticism of the first period focused on 'social chauvinist ideology' as official Turkish Kemalist state ideology and its pseudo socialist masks. Öcalan explained the reason behind the focus on the Turkish state and its ideology in the following way: "You should well know that the official ideology is a reality (even if it is made up of a lie) and that without fighting against it nobody will be able to open the path to a healthy independent idea and thus to national liberationism. You can overcome in praxis what you overcome in thinking." While underlining the importance of critical theory, he pointed out that theory is nothing without practice: "Unveiling the lie of the enemy. But the enemy cannot be defeated only with criticism. Success in criticism is not enough. There is a difference between winning in theory and winning in practice. There are plenty petty bourgeoisie organisations that do not even think about taking their criticism one step further and put it into practice."

Especially after launching the guerrilla struggle against the Turkish army on August 15, 1984 it became more and more obvious that the main obstacle to victory was not the strength of the enemy but "the enemy inside", means the personalities of the cadres that did not revolutionise. As a result the focus of criticism changed: "Starting from 1985 the personality problem showed us that there is no choice then turning the criticism weapon on ourselves. (...) Our instruction of November 1985 was full of criticism. After that date every year we had a period of internal criticism. When we started to extend this criticism weapon into our party and from there to Kurdish history and the depths of the Kurdish society we realised that we have been shot from inside and our main illness lies within ourselves. You can unveil the enemy all you want, you can let him end up being wrong; but if you are not able to enlighten your inner despite a right ideological and political line and to clean the dirt of hundreds of years, you won't be able to take a step.

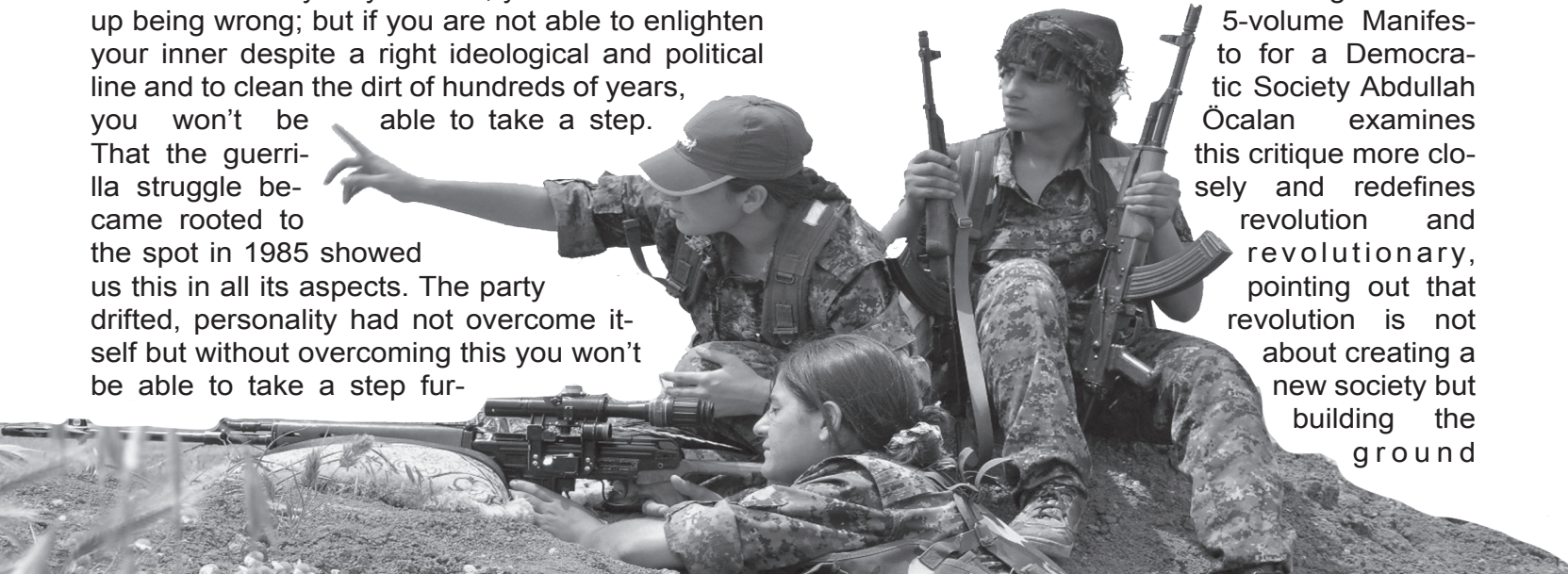
That the guerrilla struggle became rooted to the spot in 1985 showed us this in all its aspects. The party drifted, personality had not overcome itself but without overcoming this you won't be able to take a step fur-

ther. The analyses were developed to overcome this situation and we still continue with them. This was a very big criticism until the 1990s. We try to set ourselves right. Look at our analyses until the 80s; they all focus on the enemy. But from the mid-80s until today our analyses are inward-oriented."

The dialectical relation within this method

The criticism within the Kurdish revolutionary movement under the leadership of the PKK is based on the dialectic between the individual and society as well as between past and present. Not the individual but the society and not the moment but history is analysed when criticised. When practiced on the personal level the individual is treated as a microcosmos of a much wider social and historical reality. In this sense the ultimate goal of the revolutionary militant is 'knowing yourself'. By developing an understanding of herself/himself, the militant unveils how colonialism, class, power relations, patriarchy and sexism, liberalism, nationalism, scientism, religionism etc. have shaped her/his personality, way of thinking, feeling and acting. Therefore the actual revolutionary process is occurring in the personalities. Because revolution is not only about liberating a country or establishing an alternative system; it's about liberating life. The revolution inside the revolution is about breaking the chains of power in heart and mind, it's about overcoming the ruling system with all its expressions. The revolution is not happening outside the revolutionist and the militant cannot play a leading role in the revolution while not parallelly realising it inside her/his own personality. This is also a way of preventing social engineering, where the cadre positions herself/himself above society as if she/he was perfect and the society should

be changed. In his 5-volume Manifesto for a Democratic Society Abdullah Öcalan examines this critique more closely and redefines revolution and revolutionary, pointing out that revolution is not about creating a new society but building the ground



for the democratic society (which already exists and has always existed) to live and organise in its distinctive way. In this sense the revolutionary is not the one to create a new society but to lead the drive in the rebuilding process of a democratic confederalist system.

Criticism and self-criticism is a learning method

It is an essential and integral part of life. But at the same time it's a tool of ideological struggle inside the movement. It's a main duty of the revolutionary to lead class and gender struggle. This is how comradeship is understood. Every revolutionary has responsibilities towards its comrades. They are obliged to support and strengthen each other through criticism and self-criticism. Closing your eyes to the faults and wrong attitudes of your comrade is not seen as a service to friendship. On the contrary, comradeship is built up on mutual efforts to strengthen each other through showing up wrong attitudes and weak characteristics. Comradeship needs openness. The principle of openness and clarity prevents gossip and creates trust and confidence. Criticism and self-criticism need trust and sincerity. Without trust criticism would be misinterpreted as a way to damage and harm the criticised person. But the aim of criticism as revolutionary method and tool is support in the process of transforming and liberating yourself. The militant does not walk through the process of liberating her/himself alone but receives support from her/his comrades and the movement itself. This is norm and part of the revolutionary culture. This is reflected in the relationships within the movement.

But there are also structures of criticism and self-criticism. Critique can be expressed on a personal level, too. Like education criticism and self-criticism are essential and integral parts of life. But as part of a collective process criticism and self-criticism happen also on the official level, like tekmlil, meetings, educations and conferences. Moreover writing a self-criticism report is also an important tool for reflecting your own practices, your difficulties, your attitudes and your approaches. The most official place and tool of criticism and self-criticism is the platform. Platforms can be conducted either at the end of an education period, a party conference or in special situations, where the practice of a militant should be reflected and analysed from a critical perspective. Before the platform the militants have the opportunity to express their reflections in a written form. The self-criticism report reflects the analyses of the militant on her/himself, her/his practice as a revolutionary militant, the pro-

gress she/he made, the obstacles that hinder the person from reaching her/his aims, character analyses, attitude towards women's liberation ideology, faults and her/his determination in the revolutionary struggle. The personal reflections are supported by the comrades present, who after the reading out of the written self-criticism report have the opportunity to share their criticism and their observations concerning the comrade on the platform. As the criticism here does not aim to attack or to destroy the personality of the criticised comrade, both positive and negative, strong and weak aspects of her/his character and practice is expressed. The platform as a collective structure of comradeship shows support in the process of self-discovery because the ultimate goal is to reach the most profound understanding of yourself in order to liberate yourself.

Criticism and self-criticism are seen as a main weapon in the revolutionary struggle. But this weapon does not kill but it transforms. Those who know how to use this weapon will be able to improve their revolutionary personality as militants as well as the struggle in general. Moreover this weapon ensures a constant ideological struggle in all parts of life. As tool it ensures that the comrades are open to each other and that difficulties are solved in a most productive and collective way.

For the Kurdish revolutionary movement criticism is a learning method. On the one hand it's a method to expose the whole system of power and exploitation, oppression and slavery. But criticism is not only about analysing and understanding the existing. Only with the power of criticism the new one can be founded. The path of creating the new lies on the ground of critical discussion. That's the reason why socialism itself is the most critical ideology. Within the PKK everything starts with a critical discussion. Everything is exposed first in the mind. This means that there is an indissoluble bond between criticism and thought or conception. This bond lies in a dialectical relation to the practice. Progress in practice depends on criticism. Through criticism the path towards progress can be enlightened.

The difficulties that appear in practice are solved through criticism. That means criticism is also a method of resolving problems and overcoming difficulties. The reality of the PKK can be defined as dialectics of clashing with your own faults. This is why the PKK is a self-critical movement.





The anticolonial resistance and the paradigm of the PKK

The context in Latin America and Africa is very similar, in many respects, to that of the Middle East. These similarities exist because of the inhuman exploitation of the European nation-states in their period of colonialist and imperialist expansion. Since the beginning of the “discovery” of the African and American continents, the original peoples have been suffering from the external intervention of capitalist states and their economic interests, motivated by monopoly aspirations. Because of the process of extermination and assimilation carried out in both continents, the consequences of this horrible period can be seen up to today.

Not surprisingly, from the beginning of the occupation of the territory, the natives offered great resistance to the “civilized” mentality and to their capitalist understanding of “progress”. This was one of the reasons why the colonizers committed several genocides (physical and cultural). The cultures found in the territory were diverse, from the state structures of the Aztec Empire in what is now Mexico to the Kingdom of Benin in what is now Nigeria. Dozens of already organized states were subjected to colonial domination through force, extermination and genocide. Among them, the Luba Empire, the Lunda Empire, the Kingdom of Cazembe, the Kingdom of Congo, the Inca and the Mayan Civilization. In addition to the great empires that existed (some with more than 4 thousand years of existence), thousands of tribes lived in these territories and organized themselves in different ways.

However, it is common to find tribes that lived

in common, as is the case in Brazil. With about 300 different ethnic groups and 270 different languages, most of the tribes survived from subsistence agriculture, there was no centralized form of power, the economy was based on exchange and equitable division of surplus, religion was not dogmatic or monotheistic, the education of children was the responsibility of the community, no time was not linear and animism was common to all tribes. In the African continent, tribal organization was the common way of managing the existing societies and many were subject to the great empires of the region, (already mentioned above) very similar to the process of domination of the empires that existed in the Middle East region throughout history (Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian, Ottoman, etc.). However, multiculturalism and the diversity of these tribes and ethnicities have remained present within these societies and many still survive the process of assimilation today. It is not difficult to find similarities between these forms of organization and the societies that inhabited Mesopotamia in the Neolithic period, the difference is that instead of a city-state being the colonizer, in the case of Africa and Latin America, the nation-states were the colonizers with their capitalist and ultra-nationalist mentality.

The similarities between these regions and Kurdistan

Although they succeeded in gaining their inde-

pendence from the colonizing states, some before others, they now face countless problems on both continents. Among them, extreme poverty, social inequality, economic dependence, violence, neo-colonialism, etc. Although these processes occurred in different forms and ways, we can find some similarities between them and try to understand why these societies are in the current situation. One of the points we can analyse is the formation of the nation states as their solution for national liberation, here, we can observe a parallelism between the Kurdish question and Rêber Apo's understanding of the nation state. In the early days of the party and the Kurdish liberation movement, the idea of creating a Kurdish state to defend the interests of the Kurdish people was seen as a possibility of obtaining decent living conditions. Since the Kurdish people have been denied their own rights of existence. Their language, culture, tradition, social organization, were forbidden. They were criminalized for being who they are, in their own territory - divided between Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. This reminds us of a Zapatista saying: "To be seen, we cover our faces; to be named, we deny them our names; we bet on the present, so that we have a future? and to live, we die. Once again, the similarities of the inhumane systematic form of capitalism became evident. In Kurdistan or Chiapas, this system enslaves and kills everything and everyone who dares to think differently.

However, over time and a process of deep analysis, by critics and self-critics, the idea of the nation-state was reconsidered. The state is incapable of offering life in a free society, once its formation is directly related to a process of assimilation, authoritarianism, subjugation

of diversity, nationalism and especially patriarchy. As such, it is the main perpetrator of the mentality that enslaves and exploits people. Even some independence movements that had a progressive ideal, such as Haiti in 1804 (it was the first Latin American country to declare independence and the first to end slavery), could not escape imperialist exploitation and submitted to the external interests of other states so that it could be recognized by other states and exist as a nation-state.

Beyond the Nation-State

It is not possible to be free while being organized as a nation state, it is necessary to build an alternative to the state and its mentality. This alternative is the reorganization of society around the political and moral society (ahlaq), this can be observed initially in the primitive socialism in the societies of the neolithic period. From this analysis, democratic confederalism emerges, the Rêber Apo paradigm expressed and implemented by the Kurdistan liberation movement in all its dimensions, from the Bakur Mountains to the Rojava revolution. This is why these democratic ideas of the party can contribute to the advancement of society in Latin America and Africa and develop a truly free space. Even more so because these are societies rich in multicultural diversity, with communal origins and a strong heritage of resistance, as well as Kurdish society.

Since the reorganization of the party around the new paradigm, it is not difficult to observe and see these similarities between Kurds, Latinos and Africans. All of them went through an extremely violent colonization process, they had (and still have) their territories occupied and exploited, they have serious problems related to the patriarchal mentality. However, Rêber Apo's ideas are not so well known in Latin America and Africa, due

to the small or non-existent Kurdish community in these places. It is crucial that we try to connect with the existing struggles in these societies and develop together the alternatives to live free from the oppression and slavery of the capitalist system. Both continents have many stories of resistance, anti-colonial movements, guerrillas who fought for national liberation and



original societies that still resist and try to keep their beliefs, way of life and form of organization alive. These ideas would certainly be welcomed by the Latin and African people,

they lacked an understanding of the mentality of the capitalist system as a whole, beyond mercantilism. So even though they had well-intentioned actions and attitudes, it was not enough to break the system's cycle and create a real alternative. This was the "mistake" the party understood, so that we could learn from it and the youth could redirect all their strength of spirit to revolution.

At many points, the youth occupied a crucial space in the struggle against the capitalist system. Among them, the most recent one was known as the Students' Spring, where thousands of schools were occupied by students from Chile, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Angola and some other countries, fighting for better educational conditions, a curricular table focused on their human and social capacities, which is totally opposite to the commercial logic established in our daily life. The youthful spirit could be noticed in every action carried out by the stu-

as women's liberation, ecology and freedom are issues that are already being addressed by existing movements. An easy example to note is the growing empowerment of feminist movements on both continents, as can be seen in Chile, Mexico, Argentina, South Africa, etc. However, as much as they can mobilize millions of women in the streets and have achieved some improvements throughout history, they still find themselves chained to the patriarchal system and unfortunately see dozens of women being killed every day by this disgusting system. It is not by chance that these movements know the Kurdish Women's Movement well, and no doubt, from this awareness, more fruitful relations of unity, mutual aid, bases of international solidarity, etc. could be created. These would be the first steps towards leading a unified struggle against the patriarchal state and internationalizing the women's revolution that is taking place in the Kurdish movement.

The problems caused by the capitalist mentality can easily be observed, for example, the destruction of the environment and the global climatic consequences generated by unrestrained exploitation in the name of so-called "progress". The same term and the same mentality that the colonizers had in the 16th century... with the passage of time, the terms could change, but the practice and the mentality is usually the same until today.

The global revolt of 68's and the Youth Spirit

As in Europe, the front line of the struggles inspired by '68 in Latin America and Africa were young people. Bending their youthful spirit, their will to change, their dreams of revolution and hope, they were the heart of this moment and the first ones interested in building an alternative. But



dents, from the reforms made in the abandoned public schools of the State to the physical resistance in the streets during the mobilizations where the police used all their devices to attack them. This spirit is present in the youth up to now. It is not by chance that those who initiated this gigantic and beautiful mobilization in Chile, and who have been occupying the "streets" for the last months until now, were the youth (most of them were women with 15 to 18 years old). Once again it is evident that there is a need for long-term proposals and projects, as well as a paradigm, otherwise these movements will have the same end as those of '68. Once again, we can clearly see the flames of hope. The hope of building a true democratic alternative.

Since 2008, with the prolonged financial crises, all the relationships already established between capitalism, liberalism, sexism and conservatism have deepened and become polarized. Consequently, there is a more urgent need to understand the struggle in a deeper way and to learn from other experiences, especially the theories and practices of the Kurdish movement in the last 42 years, influenced by thousands of years of historical resistance in defense of free and communal society.

United line for the Democratic Nation

Democratic confederalism offers a way to organize these societies, respecting their characteristics and multiculturalism . It is increasingly clear that Rêber Apo's ideas, although developed from Kurdish society, can be applied to other societies because of their universalism, their recognition of the existence of differences in society, the importance of women's liberation (without it, it is impossible to overcome the current state and system), the negation of dogmatic ideas and the creation of a revolutionary personality focused on its morals and ethics, one way of visualizing the veracity of this is, for example, the participation of internationalist hevals (friends) in the party and the exchange of experiences this creates within the par-

ty. This is one of the beautiful faces of the movement, the way everyone has a space and a voice within the party, in the struggle for human freedom. The natural characteristics of the Latin and African people, such as the joy of the people, the comradeship, the celebrational of life and an internal flame that calls for a change in society, would be more than welcomed by Rêber Apo's understanding and would complement with more colors, the rainbow that is the Kurdish struggle. People from all continents and from all corners of the global earth working together, communally, to build a real alternative to the capitalist system.



NOT THIS TIME!



The voice of Şehids

The Şehids of our movement has a special importance in our memories and in our daily struggle. Those who gave their lives for the ideological principles of the movement (that is, the liberation of women, peoples, ecology and democratic modernity) have earned all our respect and much more. Their commitment to the struggle, their ability to give everything for others, to keep nothing for themselves, inspires us. In a world governed by selfish and individualistic mentalities, the course of their lives feeds the fire of resistance within us. Our best homage, to continue the fight, to continue their struggle.

The march of history inexorably brings its share of events, struggles and resistance. Faced with the development of history, some choose the ostrich strategy, others escape reality. We choose participation, action. It is the passivity of the people

that allows dictators to build their empires.

What about our generation?
Who are the employees?
Who are the resistance fighters?
What battles do we have to fight?

This is the opacity that Frantz Fanon speaks of. However, we find an element of response in the life of struggle and resistance of our winches. They open a path for us, show us an example to follow. It's not about glorifying their deaths, it's about celebrating their lives. It is about understanding and being inspired by their struggles. We take from their lives the examples to save us from the passivity in which the system wants to keep us. Their lives are hopes of freedom for all humanity. In the history of our movement, women and men have chosen to break the chains imposed on them by the system. By this courageous decision, some have fall-

en victim to violence and state terrorism. To forget their deaths, to forget their lives, would be to kill them a second time, to offer a definitive victory to our political enemies.

In Europe, and particularly in France, there are many political problems. And their links with the problems in the Middle East are sometimes problematic. However, the attacks that the French people suffered within themselves during the attacks by the Islamic state demonstrated these links.

While religious fascists collaborated with local fascists to obtain weapons and plan bloody massacres. French anti-fascists and resistance fighters planned their trips to Rojava to fight Daesh's despotism and build the ongoing social revolution in northeast Syria. While the Zemmours and Fourests exploded the hatred of minority communities (in order to sell their bad books or films), feminists and Muslims from all over the world left for Syrian Kurdistan. While the artists took advantage of the excitement of the attacks to sell their albums and claim to be the poets of victimization, both young and old were gathering the courage to join the front line, hospitals or schools of young Syrian democracy.

Those who have left the anonymity imposed on them by their decisions and commitments. We celebrate those who have fallen so as not to forget, but behind all those who gave their lives are those who have returned, those who remained, those who continue their revolutionary tasks.

Faced with the colonialist, patriarchal and capitalist reality of Europe, we feel close to those who have chosen to fight, sometimes with weapons in hand, for internationalism, radical feminism and revolutionary socialism. In the West, the distressing observation of so-called revolutionary groups hidden behind meaningless and sectarian lifestyles

and discourses does not provide us with any concrete examples for a victorious revolutionary struggle. The Sehides of our movement had the "courage to love life to the point of being at peace with their own end, the courage to meet the ideal of understanding reality and act accordingly". This is what inspires us, this is what we celebrate. Let us learn from them, from their decisions, from their journeys, from their commitments. We feel close to their struggles, we feel close to their lives. We feel even closer to them because they have fallen to defend our rights.

This text is dedicated to all those who gave their lives to fight fascism in the Middle East



OVER 15,000 REVOLUTIONARIES
FELT IN ROJAVA,
DEFENDING THE
DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

Şehîd Namirin
Martyrs are immortals!



Democratic modernity: the era of the women's revolution

By Abdullah Ocalan

Woman's freedom will play a stabilising and equalising role in forming the new civilisation and she will take her place under respectable, free and equal conditions. To achieve this, the necessary theoretical, programmatic, organisational and implementation work must be done. The reality of woman is a more concrete and analysable phenomenon than concepts such as "proletariat" and "oppressed nation". The extent to which society can be thoroughly transformed is determined by the extent of the transformation attained by women. Similarly, the level of woman's freedom and equality determines the freedom and equality of all sections of society. Thus, democratisation of woman is decisive for the permanent establishment of democracy and secularism. For a democratic nation, woman's freedom is of great importance too, as liberated woman constitutes liberated society. Liberated society in turn constitutes democratic nation. Moreover, the need to reverse the role of man is of revolutionary importance.

The dawn of the era of democratic civilisation represents not only the rebirth of peoples but, perhaps more distinctively, it represents the rise

of woman. Woman, who was the creative goddess of the Neolithic society, has encountered continuous losses throughout the history of classed society. Inverting this history will inevitably bring the most profound social results. Woman, reborn to freedom, will amount to general liberation, enlightenment and justice in all upper and lower institutions of society. This will convince all that peace, not war, is more valuable and is to be exalted. Woman's success is the success of society and the individual at all levels. The twenty first century must be the era of awakening; the era of the liberated, emancipated woman. This is more important than class or national liberation. The era of democratic civilisation shall be the one when woman rises and succeeds fully.

It is realistic to see our century as the century when the will of the free woman will come to fruition. Therefore, permanent institutions for woman need to be established and maintained for perhaps a century. There is a need for Woman's Freedom Parties. It is also vital that ideological, political and economic communes, based on woman's freedom, are formed.

Women in general, but more specifically the Middle Eastern women, are the most energetic and active force of democratic society due to

the characteristics described above. The ultimate victory of democratic society is only possible with woman. Peoples and women have been devastated by classed society ever since the Neolithic Age. They will now, as the pivotal agents of the democratic breakthrough, not only take revenge on history, but they will form the required anti-thesis by positioning themselves to the left of the rising democratic civilisation. Women are truly the most reliable social agents on the road to an equal and libertarian society. In the Middle East, it is up to the women and the youth to ensure the anti-thesis needed for the democratisation of society. Woman's awakening and being the leading societal force in this historical scene, has true antithetic value.

Due to the class characteristics of civilisations, their development has been based on male domination. This is what puts woman in this position of anti-thesis. In fact, in terms of overcoming the class divisions of society and male superiority, her position acquires the value of a new synthesis. Therefore, the leadership position of woman's movements in the democratisation of Middle Eastern society has historical characteristics that make this both an anti-thesis (due to being in Middle East) and a synthesis (globally).

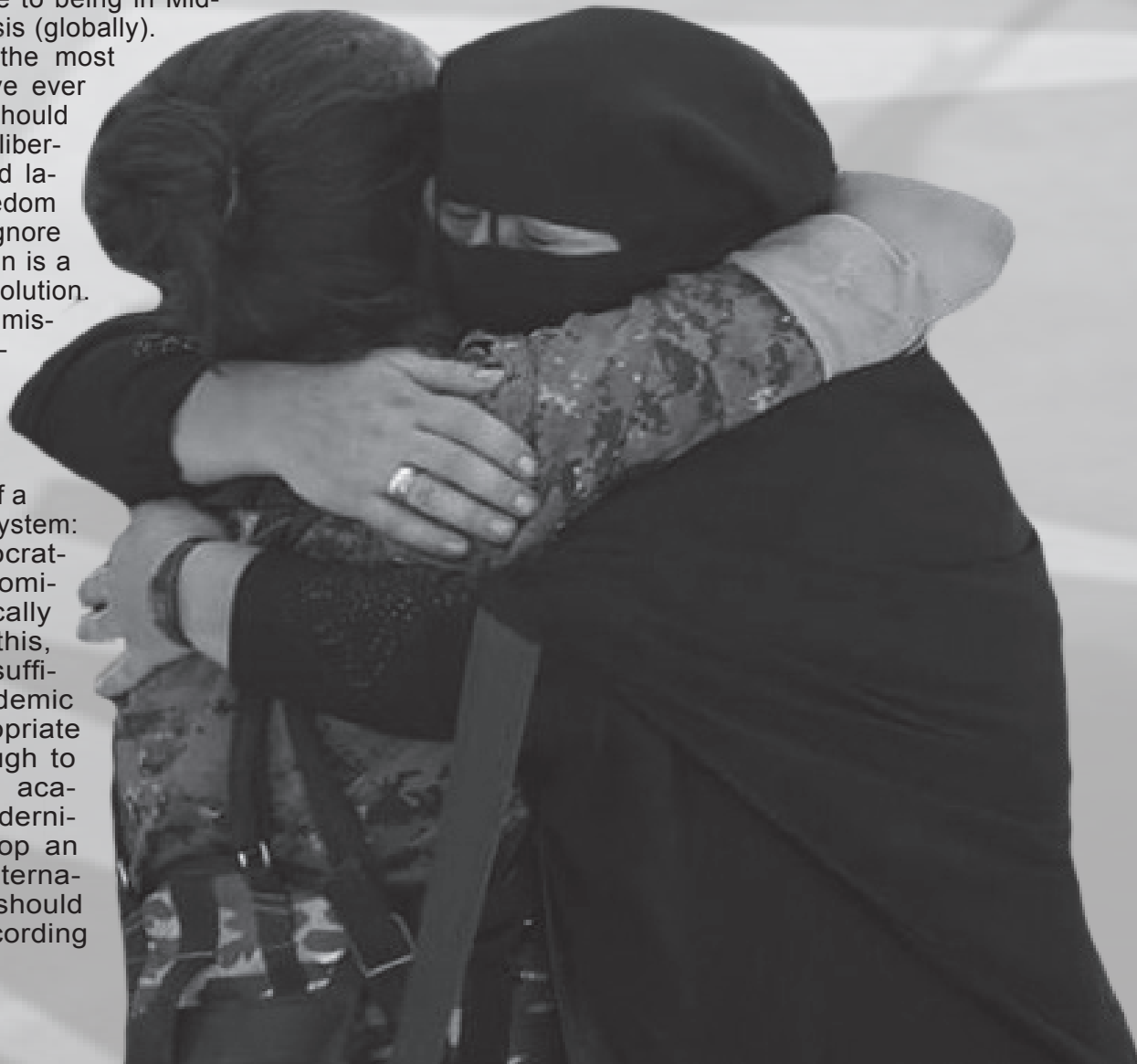
This area of work is the most crucial work that I have ever taken on. I believe it should have priority over the liberation of homelands and labour. If I am to be a freedom fighter, I cannot just ignore this: Woman's revolution is a revolution within a revolution.

It is the fundamental mission of the new leadership to provide the power of intellect and will needed to attain the three aspects crucial for the realisation of a democratic modernity system: a society that is democratic as well as economically and ecologically moral. To achieve this, we need to build a sufficient number of academic structures of appropriate quality. It is not enough to merely criticise the academic world of modernity—we have to develop an alternative. These alternative academic units should be constructed according

to the priorities and the needs of all the societal areas, such as economy and technology, ecology and agriculture, democratic politics, security and defence, culture, history, science and philosophy, religion and arts. Without a strong academic cadre, the elements of democratic modernity cannot be built. Academic cadres and elements of democratic modernity are equally important for attainment of success. Interrelationship is a must to attain meaning and success.

The struggle for freedom (not only of women but of all ethnicities and different sections of the community) is as old as the enslavement and exploitation history of humanity. Yearning for freedom is intrinsic to human nature. Much has been learnt from these struggles, also from the one we have been waging for the past 40 years. Democratic society has existed alongside different systems of mainstream civilisation. Democratic modernity, the alternative system to capitalist modernity, is possible through a radical change of our mentality and the corresponding, radical and appropriate changes in our material reality. These changes, we must build together.

Finally, I would like to point out that the struggle



for women's freedom must be waged through the establishment of their own political parties, attaining a popular women's movement, building their own non-governmental organisations and structures of democratic politics. All these must be handled together, simultaneously. The better women are able to escape the grip of male domination and society, the better they will be able to act and live according to their independence initiative. The more women empower themselves, the more they regain their free personality and identity.

Therefore, giving support to women's ire, knowledge and freedom movement is the greatest display of comradeship and a value of humanity. I have full confidence that women, irrespective of their different cultures and ethnicities, all those who have been excluded from the system, will succeed. The twenty first century shall be the century of women's liberation.

I hope to make my own contributions – not only by writing on these issues, but by helping to implement the changes.



BIJIR JAWA

MIKA ETCHEBÉHÈRE, ARGENTIN REVOLUTIONARY IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR



Mika Etchebéhère was born in Argentina on March 14, 1902, to a Jewish family that had fled the persecutions of Czarist Russia. He took his first steps in politics when he was 14 years old in the anarchist group of the city of Rosario. A few years later she founded, together with other anarchist militants, the feminist group Louise Michel. In 1920, at the University of Buenos Aires, she met the man who would become the love of her life, Hippolyte Etchebéhère, whose heart, like Mika's, beat with revolutionary fervor. Influenced by the Russian revolution, in 1924 they joined the Communist Party of Argentina (PCA), from which they were expelled two years later for their "anarchist" positions.

Mika and Hipo, as she called him, decided jointly not to have any offspring, as they did not want to put obstacles in the revolutionary path they had promised to follow. They travelled to Patagonia, where they spent four years collecting testimonies of the massacres of the rural workers committed by the Argentine government, and working as dentists (they had studied dentistry) in order to accumulate the money needed to travel to Europe, where everything pointed to the realization of the revolution. The life they spent together, surrounded by the beauty of Patagonia, was about to catch up with them, but, as Mika said, "we had

imposed on ourselves another destiny; that of fighting for the revolution. Thus, in 1932 they settled in Berlin. In Berlin they decided to enroll in the Marxist school of the Communist Party in order to learn German and thus be able to approach the workers. From these years, Mika tells how the workers in Germany were really prepared, armed and organized to carry out the revolutionary struggle, but the Party's directives acted as a brake, and the expected revolution was not carried out.

The Spanish Civil War

With Hitler's rise, they went to France and settled in Paris. The tuberculosis that Hiccup had been carrying for several years got worse and he was hospitalized. At this time, he and Mika decided to get married because it was the only way she could go to visit him in the health center. They followed closely the events in Asturias in 1934 and wanted to participate, but they quickly saw how the Government of the Republic repressed the revolt, so they stayed in France. In 1936, the doctor recommended Hipo to go somewhere where the climate was better for his tuberculosis, so that same year he went to Madrid, with the will to write a book about the events of 1934. A few months later, in July 1936, Mika went to Madrid to meet Hiccup and

stay with him. A few days after Mika's arrival, on July 18th, the failed military coup d'état started the Spanish Civil War and the well-known Revolution of 1936. Mika and Hipo did not hesitate, they had found their much sought-after revolution, and quickly joined the POUM as volunteers. Hiccup, because of his militant determination and the military knowledge he had, since he had trained himself for the revolution, was chosen as commander of the Motorized Column. Mika, a member of the same column, was especially in charge of cleaning up, organizing the first aid kit, writing to the families of those who could not write and preventing fights between militiamen.

ing, half-serious mouth, saying, "We've known all this since we were 18. We chose the fight, the fight and the death." After telling herself that the only way to accept and cope with Hiccup's death was to continue the fight they had started together, she returned to Madrid in early November. "I am staying here because I belong to this war."

He participated in the defense of Madrid with his company of militiamen, going from trench to trench during the attacks, bringing cough syrup to his combatants and making sure they had good coats. He developed relationships with the militiamen based on respect, trust and admiration. In 1937 she was arrested by the Communist Party and interrogated by Trotskyists in a Cheka. The anarchist Cipriano Mera obtained her release. She joined Mujeres Libres and fought at the front until June 1938, when the women were sent to the rear, where she participated in literacy courses and training tasks in a CNT hospital in Madrid. She continued to participate in the activities of Mujeres Libres until the fall of Madrid in March 1939, after which she returned to Paris.



On August 16 of the same year Hiccup was killed in combat. Mika took her place, reaching the rank of captain, a nickname with which she became known as the only internationalist woman with this rank in Spain; La Capitana. Without having yet been able to mourn Hiccup, they participated in the defence of Sigüenza, where they were trapped resisting from the Cathedral. Mika expressed in the following way how she felt during this time; "Among these strangers who have accepted what I accepted, and who I am just beginning to know, I feel in my place like nowhere else, protected and protective, free because I am tied by ties that I have wanted".

After managing to escape the siege of Sigüenza Cathedral, at the end of October he returned to Paris. "Live? So you want to live? To live without him? After the war, in the world before his death? In a world without trenches, without airplane bombings? You know better than that. And suddenly I think of the look he would give me, in his half-smil-

ed by Trotskyists in a Cheka. The anarchist Cipriano Mera obtained her release. She joined Mujeres Libres and fought at the front until June 1938, when the women were sent to the rear, where she participated in literacy courses and training tasks in a CNT hospital in Madrid. She continued to participate in the activities of Mujeres Libres until the fall of Madrid in March 1939, after which she returned to Paris.

The Second World War and the post-war period

During the Second World War, because of his Jewish origin and his status as a leftist militant, he returned to Argentina,

where he stayed until the end of the war, after which he returned to Paris. At the age of 66, he actively participated in May 1968, setting up barricades and teaching the youngest girls to cover their hands with gloves so as not to be discovered by the police. She also organized and participated in the mobilizations in Paris against the dictatorships in Latin America. She died on 7 July 1992, at the age of 90, and her ashes became water from the Seine River.

Internationalist example to be followed

Mika is an example and a symbol of an internationalist stance that does not start from a distant solidarity, but connects from the heart and from the depths of the soul, feeling part of the revolution and putting her life at risk for the defense of it. He also showed that the com-

mand of a woman is not only based on tactical reasoning, but on the dialectic between analytical intelligence and emotional intelligence, from comradeship and love for their comrades and for the revolution. It also represents the personality of a free and revolutionary woman, in constant search for freedom, a freedom that goes beyond the individual, which becomes meaningful at the moment it becomes collective. Moreover, the love that Mika felt for Hiccup, beyond becoming a bond and following the path of classic relationships, was a driving force in Mika's revolutionary heart, thus being a love in the service of the cause of freedom.



Casilda Ginestà
Comité de Jineolojî de Europa





The life of Sakine Cansiz “Building utopias here and now”

On the morning of January 10 2013, millions of Kurds woke up to the horrific news of the murder of Sakine Cansiz (Sara), Leyla Şaylemez (Ronahî) and Fidan Doğan (Rojbîn) at the Kurdistan Information Centre in La Rue Lafayette in central Paris. Immediately tens of thousands of Europeans, Kurds and supporters burst onto the scene of the crime to show their anger. Three days later, hundreds of thousands of people of different nationalities and cultures took to the streets of Paris, professing against this cowardly act of political execution.

Sakine Cansiz was co-founder of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) and a leading figure in the Kurdish Women’s Movement. She was one of the few revolutionaries who became a legend in her lifetime, especially because of her historical role in the resistance at Diyarbakir prison in the early years of the PKK. Fidan Doğan was a representative of the International Congress of Kurdistan (KNK) in France, taking the cause of the Kurdish people to international meetings and institutions such as the European Parliament. Leyla Şaylemez was a young activist of the Kurdish Youth Movement and the Kurdish Women’s Movement. The assassination came at a time when there were glimpses of peace and freedom, a few days after a political delegation managed to visit Abdullah Öcalan in Imrali prison. However, the killers did not realize that the

seed sown by Sakine Cansiz and her companions would become flowers, trees and forests in the years to come, in the Redwood revolution, in the solidarity of the women of the Middle East, in the struggle for the liberation of women around the world that was in the making...

Sakine Cansiz was an Alevi Kurdish woman, born in 1958 in Dersim, in northern Kurdistan. A thorn in the side of the nationalist system of the Republic of Turkey, the people of Dersim suffered the genocide of 1938 following an uprising led by Seyit Riza. An estimated 70,000 people were killed in bombings ordered by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and tens of thousands more were deported. The name Dersim was erased from the maps and replaced by Tunceli “iron fist” as a symbol of the imposition of submission and silence in the region. Seyit Riza’s age was reduced in the state records (he was over 70 years old) so that his execution was legal. Before he died, it is said that he stated: “I could not compete with your tricks and lies. This has been a problem. But I did not submit. It may be a problem for you.” Sakine Cansiz was a daughter of the village of Dersim, bathed by the waters of the river Munzur. However, at the time of her birth, fear and silence took hold of her community. Like many young people of the time brought up under state doctrine, she grew up unaware of her Kurdish identity. Everything changed when she

met some Kurdish and Turkish working-class students grouped around Abdullah Öcalan, who called themselves “revolutionaries of Kurdistan”.

Before joining the Kurdish revolutionaries, Cansiz had been deeply influenced by leaders of the Turkish movement who were executed such as Deniz Gezmiş and Mahir Çayan.

Sakine explained her first contact with revolutionary life this way: “The idea of revolutionary political struggle took me down a path that changed my life completely. I met young comrades who lived nearby. Their way of life, their values and approaches to moral concepts changed me deeply. I realized that they carried the torch of freedom in their hands”.

Rebellious and emotional by nature, Sakine Cansiz was attracted to the revolutionaries of Kurdistan not only because of their revolutionary theory, but because of the ways in which the new group developed the ability to “feel people’s pain”. Her first contacts with her comrades were during her teenage years, when she sent food and other supplies to poor students in the ruined houses of the neighbourhood. In their own words, the Kurdish revolutionaries were a clear and autonomous alternative to the two dominant options: the social chauvinism of the Turkish left, which denied the specific conditions of Kurdistan, or conservative Kurdish nationalism, which had little to offer in terms of social change and class struggle. Early in her youth, she identified the first major contradiction she experienced in her private life: the condition of womanhood in Kurdistan.

In the 1970s, after leaving home and rejecting a traditional life she did not want, she began working in factories to organize working women. In the course of her riots and actions she was imprisoned several times. In prisons in different parts of Turkey, she witnessed a variety of forgotten but rebellious people: miserable factory workers, proud gypsies, strong-willed prostitutes and traumatized survivors of genocide. In her memoirs, she paid tribute to these fascinating lives and affirmed her belief that they were likely to become militants of the revolution. Her decision to professionalize the revolution coincided with her comrades’ decision to found a party.

In the late 1970s, the “supporters” organized committees in many regions of northern Kurdistan. Sakine Cansiz was charged with building the women’s movement, a duty she took to heart. She alone managed to bring together

er large groups of young women for discussion and education. On November 27 1978, at the age of 20, Sakine Cansiz became one of the two co-founders of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, participating in its founding congress.

The military coup of 1980 and the resistance in prison

At that time, the infamous coup d’état of September 12 1980 was already in the air because of the attacks on revolutionary groups in the country, especially those in Kurdistan. Shortly after the founding of the party, Sakine Cansiz and several of her comrades, including members of the Central Committee, were arrested in a raid in 1979 in Elazig. During the coup, she was transferred to the newly built prison in Diyarbakir, based on the US prison system, where martial law destroyed human dignity. To this day, the vast majority of the atrocious human rights violations in Diyarbakir prison remain undocumented. They include rape and sexual violence, electric shocks, drowning in sewage, and forcing people to eat dog excrement. The Turkish state wanted to break them down morally so that they would give up their identity as Kurds and socialists. Although Turkey has not acknowledged the facts or taken responsibility for them, this barbarity has been burned into the memory of the Kurdish people. In those years, the PKK, similar to other revolutionary groups, faced total annihilation of its structure due to the coup regime.

Torture by the state went so far that some prominent party members like Şahin Dönmez became informants. Others, who fought against the temptation to become informants because of the unbearable tortures, were saved from the abyss of betrayal precisely by the atmosphere of friendship and solidarity created by people like Sakine Cansiz. Thanks to her, there were no informants in the women’s ward.

Among the members were PKK founders such as Mazlum Doğan, Kemal Pir and Hayri Durmuş. They created an atmosphere of constant rebellion through cultural activities and political events. Their strategies to avoid the state project included ideological defences in the courts against colonialism, educational and political work in the modules, physical self-defence, death fasts and immolation.

Mazlum Doğan had an act of final rebellion on

Newroz Day 1982, in which he lit three matches on the table, taking his own life with the message "Surrender is treason, resistance brings victory."

In prison, Sakine Cansiz wrote about Mazlum Doğan's act: "We tried to understand the purpose of Mazlum action. Finally, we understood that it was related to Newroz. His message was clear, he proclaimed 'Resistance is Life!'"

Following Mazlum Doğan's action, four prisoners, Ferhat Kurtay, Eşref Anyık, Necmi Önen and Mahmut Zengin set themselves on fire in protest. It was under the leadership of PKK core members Kemal Pir, Hayri Durmuş, Akif Yılmaz and Ali Çiçek, that on July 14 1982, the beginning of a death fast was announced to protest against the conditions in Diyarbakir prison. All four of them died. However, the resistance in Diyarbakir prison triggered unprecedented popular support and the decision to start the armed struggle on August 15 1984.

The prison authorities attacked particularly the women, wanting to impose traditional feudal patriarchal notions. The most famous prison director, Esat Oktay, was known for his sadism, enjoying the cries of pain from his tortured victims. A man with no respect for honour and human dignity, Oktay was murdered in the street by someone who sent greetings from Kemal Pir, who had died in prison. Oktay was obsessed with the idea of sterilizing women by infecting their fallopian tubes and damaging their genitals. He

explicitly expressed his desire to extinguish the Kurdish "race".

In his memoirs Sakine Cansiz wrote: "As a sadist, he showed a tendency to beat women between their legs until they bled, threatened to shove sticks in them and used his own fingers to pull the labia apart."

Sakine's confrontational stance towards Oktay is legendary, and

all PKK supporters know how she spat in his face while he tortured her. The PKK's male prisoners of the time have written about the ways in which Sakine Cansiz's struggle in prison encouraged them to resist e desperation.

Sakine Cansiz's resistance in Diyarbakir prison led to a new approach to women in Kurdish society. It encouraged women to join the revolutionary structures in the cities and moved them towards politicization in the villages. Beginning with their resistance in prison, Kurdish women's activism gained greater respect and support among the masses.

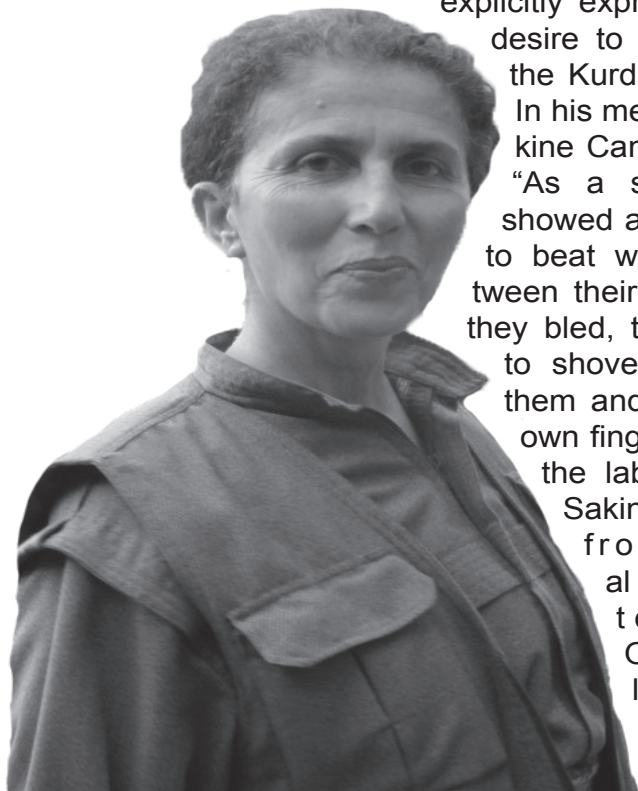
By the time of her release in 1991, she had spent 12 years of her youth in the prisons of Elazig, Diyarbakir, Bursa, Canakkale and Malatya. Right after that, she continued her active struggle in the ranks of the PKK. After that, she went to the PKK's Mahsum Korkmaz Academy in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, where she joined ideological education led by Abdullah Öcalan. Aspects of her will power, struggle and life were often taken as examples in Öcalan's speeches. It was Öcalan who encouraged her to write about her life. Her memoirs were written in 1996 and made available to the public post mortem in three volumes. In the 1990s, she took on important tasks in organizing the Kurdish movement in Palestine, Syria and Rojava.

An indispensable importance to the advance of the women liberation

She believed that it would be possible for women in Kurdistan to reclaim themselves and their history by joining the militant struggle of the PKK. She described the struggle for freedom as follows:

"This movement addresses the essence of the human being. In all of our debates, our education and speeches, humanity and human values are the starting point. We are discussing the development of humans and society, and the historical stages and values of humanity. Women, who wanted to understand these issues, identified with the freedom movement. At the beginning of the struggle for Kurdistan and the political struggle, the participation of women in this revolutionary process was very difficult. However, we succeeded and gained the power to shape our movement".

In her own words, the time she spent as a guerilla fighter in the mountains of Kurdistan were the most beautiful and significant moments of



her life. Sakine Cansız's participation in the struggle for free Kurdistan is parallel to the chronology of the organized Kurdish women's movement. She played a crucial role in the formation of the autonomous women's army (today YJA Star) and the women's party (today PAJK). She was not someone who waited for orders. Instead, she took responsibility, even in the most difficult moments. Because of her strong character personality, she was known as a companion, who would never accept male domination or other forms of anti-revolutionary behaviour. Her struggle was against social backwardness and injustice, yet she was attentive to the social realities and conditions of her people. She had a collective and communitarian personality that established solidarity with all those around her, but she was also stubborn and fearless when it came to expressing her criticisms and disagreements. Throughout her life, she always encouraged her comrades to move forward, to be strong and persistent. As described by one of her early life-long friends, "Sara was always ready as if she were about to leave, but she always worked as if she were going to stay forever".

In 1998, Abdullah Öcalan gave her the mission to take over the tasks and responsibilities of the Kurdish freedom movement in Europe. Among other tasks, she organized and educated cadres of the movement in various European countries, as well as the Kurdish migrant community. She also established links with different progressive movements outside Kurdistan, respecting diversities and emphasizing the importance of fighting for common human values such as alternative, feminist, left and democratic movements to build democratic autonomy structures and a democratic, free and gender-free

society. It therefore played an important role in building solidarity for the Kurdish cause. She was always recruiting, organizing and educating her people, particularly young women, until her last breath.

In her eyes, the struggle was the determining factor of freedom: "In my utopia, you must fight for freedom throughout your life. In a liberated Kurdistan, the struggle must be glorious.

In the light of this remarkable and legendary life, no one would have expected this heroine to be murdered in cold blood in an insidious assassination in the heart of Paris. From day one, the Kurdish women's movement emphasized the barbaric nature of the murder as an attempt to strike at the heart of the Kurdistan revolution: the liberated woman. Although the murderer, Ömer Güney, was identified from the beginning, it is known that the Turkish state intelligence service ordered the assassination to sabotage the peace process. The French authorities have not exposed the political nature of this crime. The murderer died in mysterious circumstances in prison, just a few weeks before the trial began. Every year, the Kurdish movement organizes a mass demonstration in Paris along with other women's movements to demand "Justice and Truth!". Kurdish

women will not rest until the case of the Paris massacre is completely solved in all its dimensions.

Sakine Cansız always wanted to return to Dersim as a guerrilla fighter. And, in fact, she returned to her homeland as a heroine. Her grave became something like a shrine, a place of pilgrimage for the oppressed, the youth, the workers, the women. Millions of people said goodbye to her, carrying her coffin from Paris, via Amed, to Dersim.

In the revolution of Rojava, women's liberation efforts pay tribute to Sakine Cansız and her comrades.

The struggle initiated by a



small group of young women now reaches a stage where revolutionaries are discussing their philosophy and practice from Brazil to India. The women, who liberated the world from the fascist rapists of ISIS, did so by taking on war names like Sara, Rojbîn, Ronahî. Today, new generations of Kurdish children are being educated in Sara's values and mentality.

As the women's movement often says,

"They can cut our flowers, but they can't stop the spring!"

Never forget!
never forgive!





FRANTZ FANON ANTICOLONIAL INTERNACIONALIST

Frantz Fanon was born in 1925 and died 36 years later in 1961. He was born in Martinique, which at that time was still a French colony. Martinique is a territory whose history is linked to that of slavery. In 1635 it became a French colony and was administered by the “Compagnie des Iles d’Amérique” (French slave company) and was a center of the black slave trade until 1848. It became a French department in 1946 after a long political struggle led by, among others, the famous anti-colonial leader, poet and writer Aime Césaire.

Origins and personal history

Frantz Fanon was born into a family of descendants of African slaves. However, he had the opportunity to follow a quality education at Schoelcher School (the best school on the island at the time) where he regularly followed the lessons of his favorite teacher Aime Césaire. With the establishment of the Vichy regime in France, Martinique was occupied by French military Vichists whose racist behaviour and abuse of non-white populations exacerbated social tensions on the island. Determined to fight racism and its fascist roots, young Frantz Fanon fled the territory to join the “Forces de la France Libre” to fight the

Nazi occupiers and their French collaborators.

He was sent to an Allied detachment along the Mediterranean to fight against the Axis forces, then was sent to France where he fought for the liberation of the territory, especially in Colmar where he was wounded in battle for which he received a military decoration. During his service in the allied forces Fanon witnessed and suffered the racism of the white Europeans towards the non-white soldiers who fought with them against fascism.

For example, his unit was “whitewashed” (retreating non-white fighters) to receive photographers before crossing the Rhine, or in liberated villages villagers preferred to dance with Nazi prisoners rather than with their black liberators. These experiences will have a great impact on Fanon’s mind; he will often refer to them to describe the mentality of the settlers.

After the war, Fanon returns to Martinique where he will finish his high school education. He then returned to France to study medicine and psychiatry thanks to a scholarship he earned as a veteran. During his studies he will do a dissertation on the psychological effects of colonial domination on black individuals. This essay is a response to the racial discrimination he witnessed through his many experiences. His thesis was rejected by his professors, which did not prevent

him from publishing it in the following years under the name of "Black Skins White Masks". This text describes the injustices suffered by blacks in France and the psychological consequences of these injustices on individuals, for example, an integrated feeling of inferiority compared to whites:

"To ask a black man from Upper Niger to put on his shoes, to say of him that he is incapable of becoming a Schubert, is no less absurd than to wonder if a Berliet worker does not devote his evenings to the study of lyricism in Indian literature or declare that he will never be an Einstein". (Black skins, white masks)

"I slip into the corners, remain silent, long for anonymity, oblivion. Here, I accept everything, but don't let anyone see me anymore!" (Black skins, white masks)

After his studies he went to work as a psychiatrist with another eminent revolutionary psychiatrist, Francois Tosquelles. He is a veteran of the Spanish Civil War and has had many experiences of occupation, (occupation of Catalonia by Spain, of the Franquistes in Republican Spain and then of the Germans in France). Tosquelles describes the psychic structure of the occupation, thus explaining that it is not a simple historical fact. Tosquelles'

theses will influence Fanon's reflections. Together they will discuss the effect of patients' cultures on their psychological pathologies.

Acting as a psychiatrist

In 1953 Fanon returned to Algeria where he had already been posted during the war. There he established himself as a psychiatrist and practiced a social approach in his therapies to better understand the cultural context of his patients. The following year, in 1954, the war of national liberation for the independence of Algeria began.

As a doctor in a French hospital, Fanon cared for French soldiers traumatized by the torture they inflicted on the rebels and Algerian civilians. At the same time, he also cares for the victims of torture. The situation offers him an extraordinary insight into the psychic mechanisms at play. However, the situation is untenable for his character, for his deep desire for justice. He joins the ranks of the FLN (National Liberation Front) and resigns from the hospital. He writes for the LN newspaper "El Moudjahid", travels around the world to support the struggle and gives lectures to members of the Algerian resistance.

During the Algerian war he became ill and was diagnosed with leukemia. His days are numbered. Shortly before his death he wrote a last book in which he collected his analyses and reflections. This last book will be a manifesto of the struggles for national liberation and of the colonized peoples.

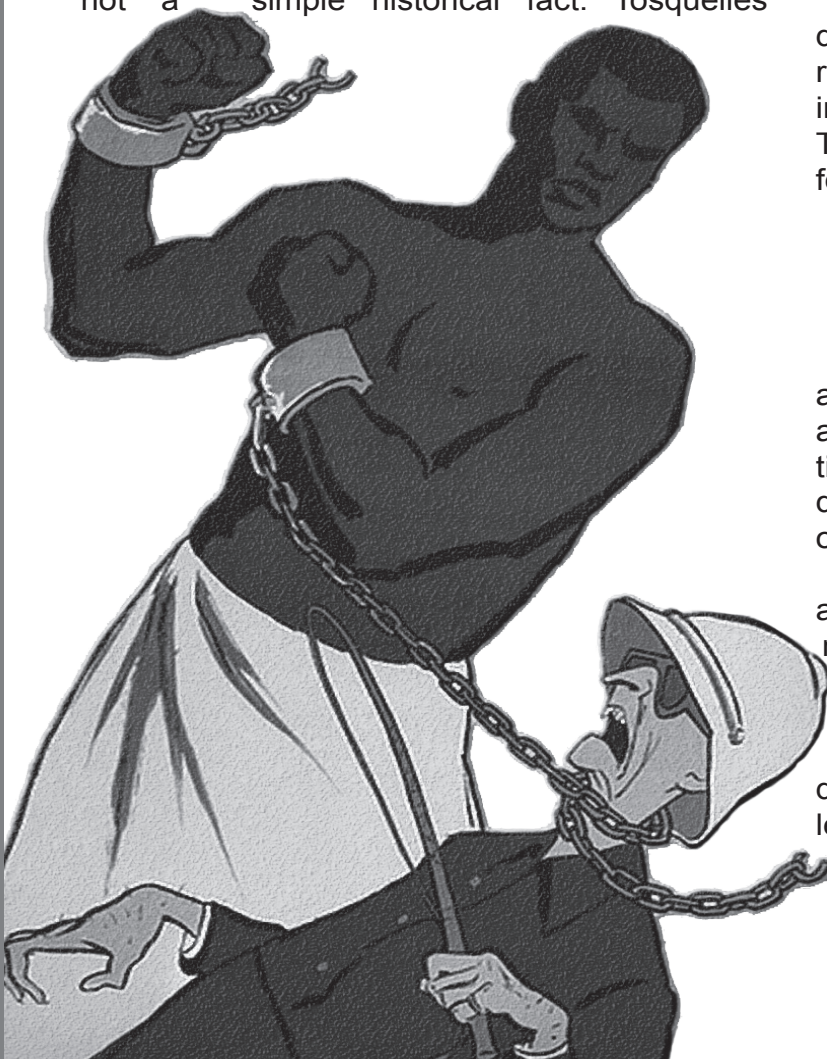
Reference in the fight against colonization

The figure of Frantz Fanon is a reference for all emancipation movements and struggles against domination. These analyses of the relationship between power and violence explain the dialectic of colonization and clarify positions to overcome a dominated and colonized mentality:

"Colonialism is not a thinking machine, it is not a body endowed with reason. It is violence in the natural state and can only bow to greater violence.

"On an individual level, violence detoxifies. It frees the colonized from their inferiority complex, their contemplative or desperate attitudes. It makes them fearless, it rehabilitates them in their own eyes.

His life journey has given him a deep un



derstanding of the psyche of the colonizer and the colonized. Through the diversity of these sources of inspiration he was able to formulate a universal philosophy of liberation, emancipation and decolonization. His texts speak of Blacks, Algerians, French, but also of the Americas and Africa. He understood the necessary connections of the liberation struggles.

His identity as an internationalist fighter allowed him to interpret the importance of respecting and valuing cultures around the world. He understood that nations cannot be free until all peoples are free:

“Self-consciousness is not closed to communication. On the contrary, philosophical reflection teaches us that it is the guarantee of this. National consciousness, which is not nationalism, is the only one that gives us an international dimension”.

For him, liberation from colonized mentalities can only be active. These writings urge us to act in order to take action, to be part of a struggle for the emancipation of each and every one of us:

“Politics is about opening the mind, awakening the spirit, bringing the spirit into the world. It is as Césaire said: “to invent souls”. Politicizing the masses is not, cannot be, making a political speech. It is trying to make the masses understand that everything depends on them, that if we get stuck it is their fault and if we move

forward, it is their fault too
“Each generation must, in relative opacity, discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it.”

“The immobility to which the colonized are condemned can only be questioned if the colonized decide to put an end to the history of colonization, to the history of plundering, to make the history of the nation, the history of decolonization exist.

Although it focuses essentially on issues of the relationship between the North and the South, the ques-

tion of colonization, and especially the colonization of mentalities, can be transposed to a colonization of classes or gender. The capitalist class colonizes the working classes, the patriarchy colonizes women, colonizes their mentalities. Just as blacks can develop a feeling of inferiority towards whites, workers and women can develop a feeling of inferiority towards capitalists or men.

Also, as Marx described it when he spoke of the opium of the people, Fanon criticized religion as an anesthetic function to contain the desire for justice of the colonized:

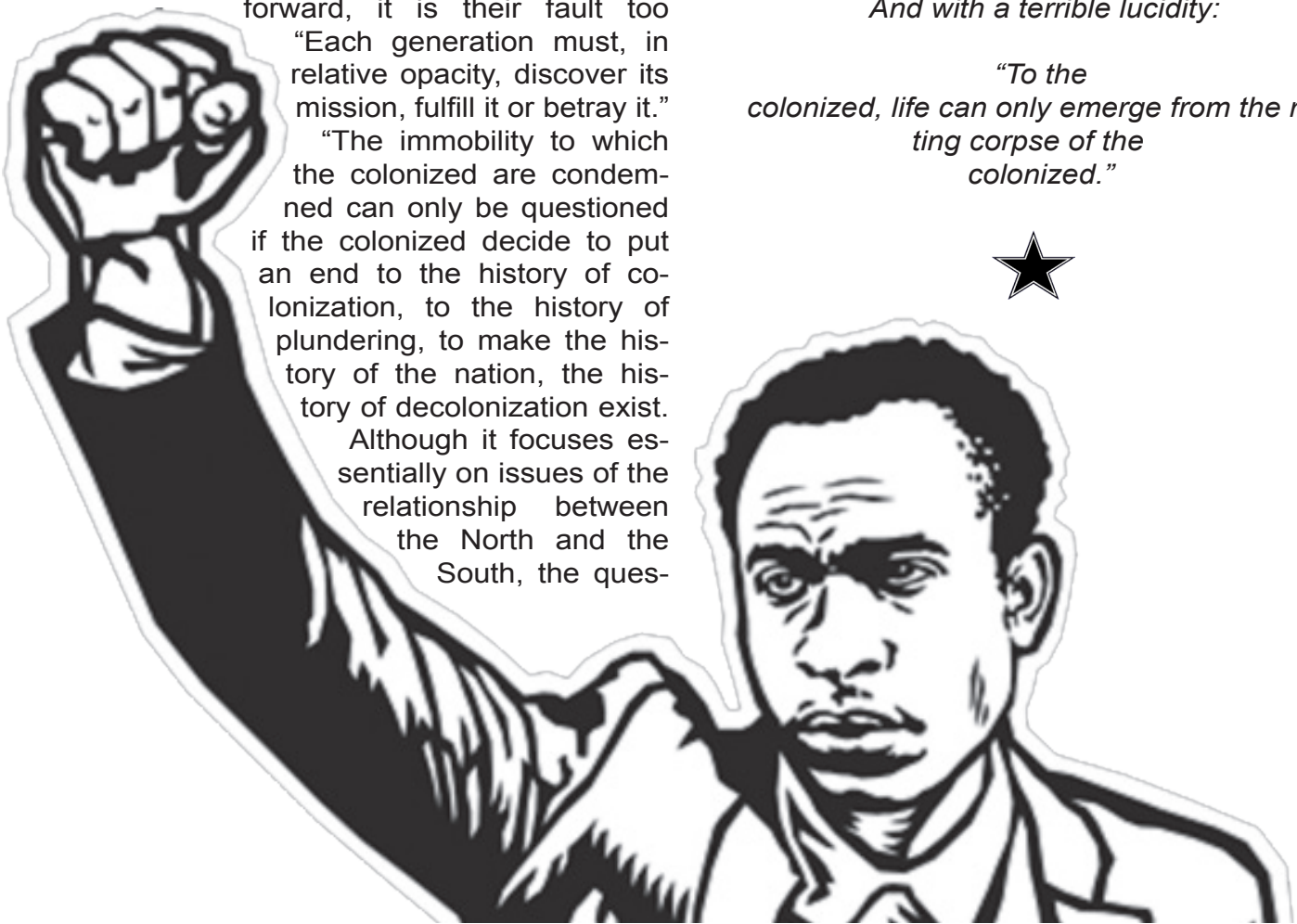
“The colonized also succeeds, through religion, in ignoring the colonized. Through fatalism, all initiative is taken away from the oppressor, the cause of evil, misery and destiny to return to God. The individual thus accepts the dissolution decided by God, flattens himself out in front of the colonizer and in front of destiny and, through a kind of inner re balancing, achieves a serenity of stone”.

Fanon’s intransigence towards power, colonization and the mentality that allows him to exist is a humanism. The cry of empathy from a person deeply moved by injustice:

“When you hear bad things about the Jew, listen, people talk about you!”

And with a terrible lucidity:

“To the colonized, life can only emerge from the rotting corpse of the colonized.”



Ya se mira el horizonte
Combatiente zapatista
El camino marcará
A los que vienen atrás

Vamos, vamos, vamos, vamos adelante
Para que salgamos en la lucha avante
Porque nuestra Patria grita y necesita
De todo el esfuerzo de los zapatistas

Hombres, niños y mujeres
El esfuerzo siempre haremos
Campesinos, los obreros
Todos juntos con el pueblo

Vamos, vamos, vamos, vamos adelante
Para que salgamos en la lucha avante
Porque nuestra Patria grita y necesita
De todo el esfuerzo de los zapatistas

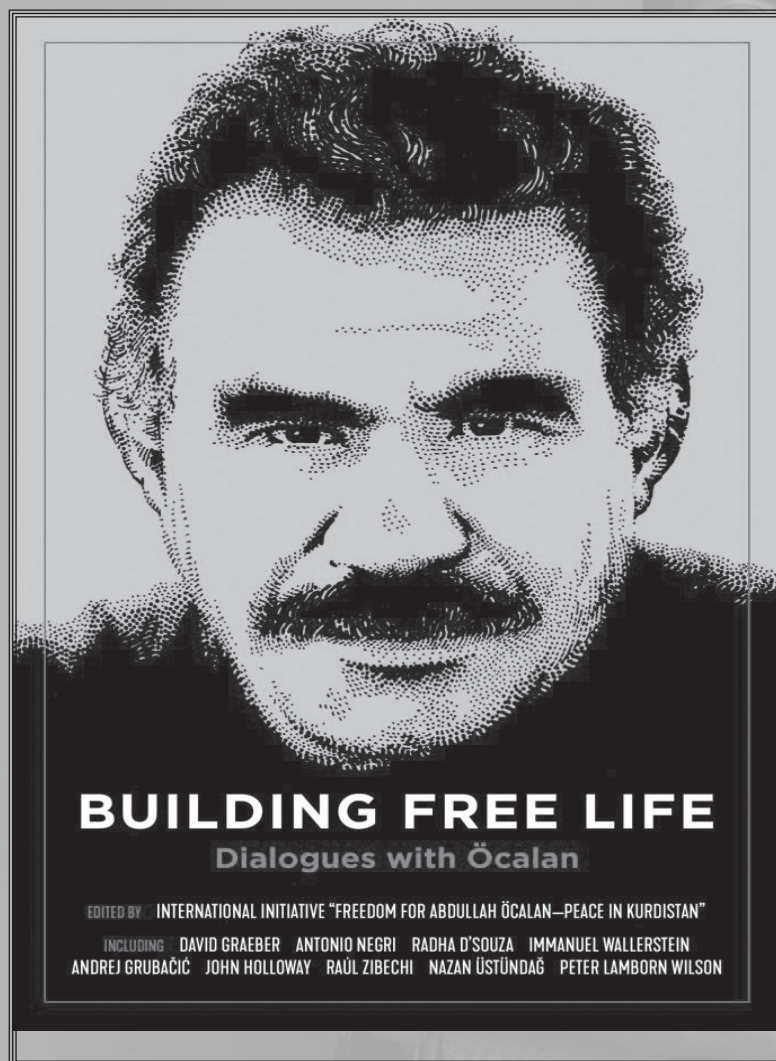
Nuestro pueblo dice ya
Acabar la explotación
Nuestra historia exige ya
Lucha de liberación

Vamos, vamos, vamos, vamos adelante
Para que salgamos en la lucha avante
Porque nuestra Patria grita y necesita
De todo el esfuerzo de los zapatistas

Ejemplares hay que ser
Y seguir nuestra consigna
Que vivamos por la patria
O morir por la libertad

Vamos, vamos, vamos, vamos adelante
Para que salgamos en la lucha avante
Porque nuestra Patria grita y necesita
De todo el esfuerzo de los zapatistas.

BOOK RECOMENDATION



Building Free Life

Author: Radha D'Souza, David Graeber, John Holloway, Antonio Negri, Raúl Zibechi

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From Socrates to Antonio Gramsci, imprisoned philosophers have marked the history of thought and changed how we view power and politics. From his solitary jail cell, Abdullah Öcalan has penned daringly innovative works that give profuse evidence of his position as one of the most significant thinkers of our day. His prison writings have mobilized tens of thousands of people and inspired a revolution in the making in Rojava, northern Syria, while also penetrating the insular walls of academia and triggering debate and reflection among countless scholars.

So how do you engage in a meaningful dialogue with Abdullah Öcalan when he has been held in total isolation since April 2015? You compile a book of essays written by a globally diverse cast of the most imaginative luminaries of our time, send it to Öcalan's jailers and hope that they deliver it to him.

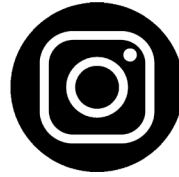


The meaning of Lêgerîn in Kurdish means “Search for freedom”.

Lêgerîn magazine will be published every 3 months on our website www.revistalegerin.com, making it available for download and printing. Besides the journal, other authorial contents and the revolutionary movement will be published on our website!



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Follow us on our social networks, follow our updates! We also have a channel and group in the telegram for the dissemination and discussions about the texts and their themes.

Feel free to contact us via our emails, we will be happy to answer any questions you may have. From disagreements on texts and a request for materials, to questions about the movement itself.

Serkeftin!

