

The image features a broken metal chain as the central visual element. The chain is made of several interlocking links, but one link is broken, with its ends protruding. The background is composed of three distinct geometric regions: a light green area on the left and bottom, a red diagonal band across the middle, and a yellow area on the right. The text is overlaid on these regions.

ABDULLAH ÖCALAN

THE THIRD
DOMAIN

RECONSTRUCTING LIBERATION



For over two years of his solitary confinement in a cell which the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) has described as one of «*claustrophobic design*», Abdullah Ocalan worked on his submissions to the European Court of Human Rights. Deprived of access to the outside world, he used this channel to communicate his ideas on the history and future of the Middle East at a time when, in the aftermaths of 11 September 2001, the talk of a «*clash of civilisations*» gained unprecedented political momentum. Ever since the new, staunchly pro-US Muslim conservative government came into power in the parliamentary elections in November 2002, Ocalan has been completely denied access to lawyers and relatives for farcical reasons. In more than a hundred days, he has not seen anyone apart from his guards and a delegation of the CPT which barely confirmed that he was still physically alive by mid-February 2003.

The ideas put forward by Ocalan have found strong resonance within Kurdish society and played a part in the re-organisation of the liberation movement. In April 2002, the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) dissolved and the Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK) was founded, an umbrella for different organisations such as the new Iraqi-Kurdish Party for a Democratic Solution (PCDK) which conceives itself as an alternative to the worn-out semi-feudal parties of Jalal Talabani and Massoud Barzani, or the Free Women's Party (PJA), an autonomous all-women politico-military organisation with members from nearly all the different communities of the Middle East.

While KADEK recently announced it would wage a defensive war if attacked by Turkey or indeed any other force, one of their main political goals is to support any force progressively challenging the status quo in any of the 4 countries where Kurds live.

By building up patterns of civil society «*At an equal distance from the despotic state and from conservative traditional society*», different ethnic and religious groups in the Middle East could establish a democratic federal union embracing the whole of the Middle East and transcending its political borders without actually altering them. For this cri-



sis-ridden region in the two-pronged grip of neoliberal globalisation and retrograde, patriarchal dogma of religious or secular nationalist provenience, the emancipation of women is a prerequisite for any social progress. Thus, the gender question becomes the primary political issue in 21st century Middle Eastern politics.

For the Kurdish question, Ocalan proposes a solution in the framework of such a democratic union. Nationalist ideas based on the perspective of independent statehood or defending atavistic, centralist, unilingual and unicultural set-ups are critically rejected with reference to the state as a mechanism of oppression - *«perhaps the oldest tool in history that has remained unchanged»*. Thorough democratisation of all the states Kurds live in and societies they are associated with could both solve the Kurds' own problems and help establish their unity across the respective borders so that they would form a bridge to the benefit of all the communities living in these heterogeneous states.

Ocalan's vision is that by contributing to a process of building up such cross-border umbrellas of civil society, the Kurds would not only accelerate the advent of democratic civilisation in the Middle East but actually become part and parcel of a geopolitical and cultural renewal that will have repercussions on the West, too - heading towards a synthesis of civilisations instead of their destructive *«clash»*.

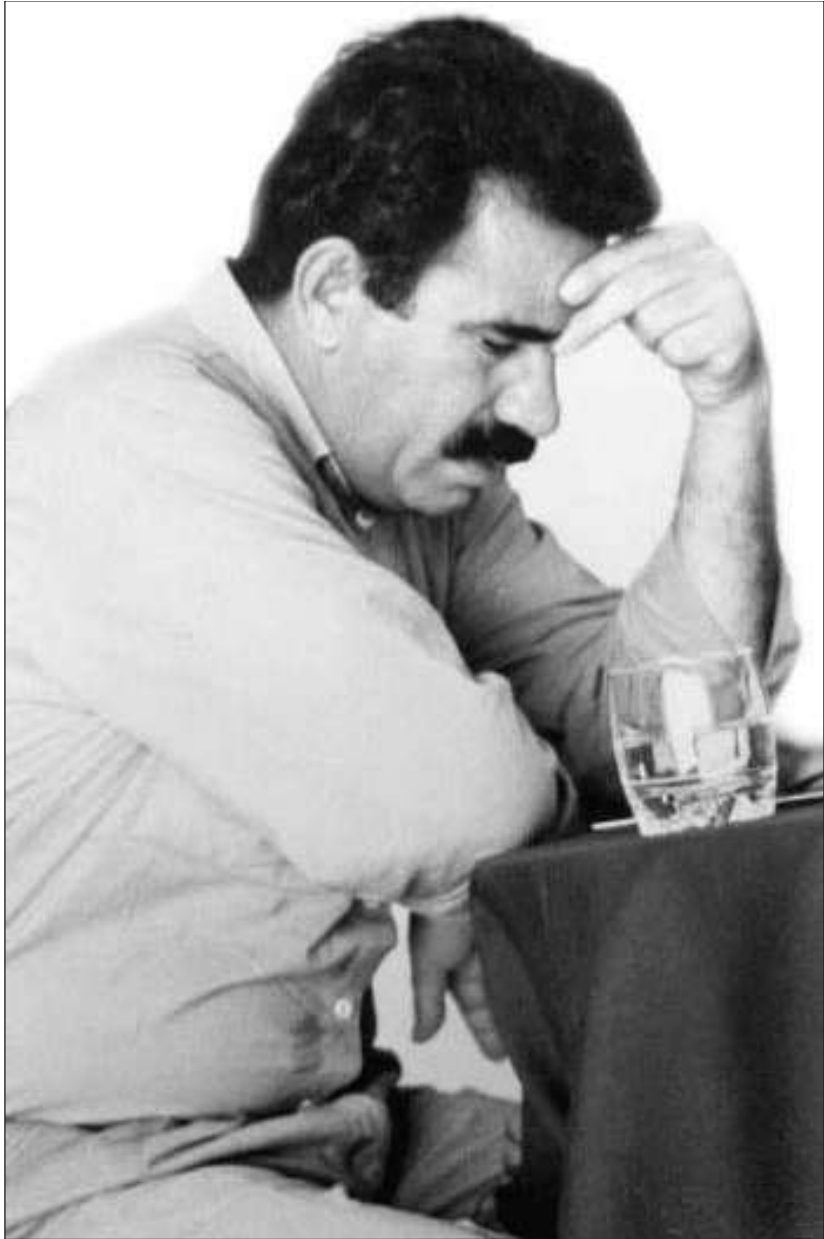
International Initiative "Freedom for Abdullah Ocalan - Peace in Kurdistan"

Cologne, March 2003



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INTRODUCTION

The defence submissions Ocalan presented in his grotesque kangaroo court trial on Imrali Island included ideas on how to peacefully resolve the conflict within the political borders of Turkey (published in English language under the title 'Declaration on the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question', ISBN 3-931885-18-6). These ideas were based on the concept of universal democratisation as opposed to that of national autonomy. On looking back, Ocalan regards these submissions as a call to de-escalate a situation where his abduction, effected under the participation of the USA and a number of European states, «offered a gift-wrapped package to chauvinism, which had reached a degree of hysteria; a package thrown from above into the arena of the twentieth century, as if it were a Roman spectacle in which people are fed to lions.»

But the two volumes of submissions he drafted to the European Court of Human Rights are no longer only addressed to the Turkish public. He has expanded upon his older ideas on a general analysis of civilisation. Such analysis is compulsory for an understanding of both his own apprehension and the Kurdish issue at large. «Due to the fact that the circumstances that led to my arrest and the forces that carried it out are linked to the dominant forces of modern civilisation, it is obvious that my defence would have to be staged in this fashion [...] I used my right to defence feeling that it is my duty to utilise the democratic legal platform that the ECHR is in order to say some things that [...] had to be said here on behalf of the peoples of the world.»

What Ocalan has to say is not so much a matter of pragmatic calculations concerning the balance of powers between those involved in the conflict, but instead relates to the course of world history. From the very begin-



ning the movement had been keen on breaking up the status quo in the Middle East - even at the times they were but a handful of Kurdish and Turkish students in Ankara rallying around the ideas of Abdullah Ocalan in the mid-seventies. Their objective then was a socialist union of the Middle East, and the first step towards this union was to be taken by putting an end to the oppression of the Kurds in four countries. For Kemal Pir, Turkish co-founder of the PKK, it was manifest then that «the revolution in Turkey goes via Kurdistan».

The collapse of 'real socialism' was evidence that this objective would have to be achieved beyond the dogmata of bipolarity and without the utopian perspective of a world revolution. Nevertheless, the fact that there was a New World Order now did not prompt the PKK into abandoning the original objective by narrowing it down to espousing national and cultural rights for the Kurds within the given community of states in the Middle East. What Ocalan really is concerned about is to leave the political borders of the Middle Eastern states unaltered while radically changing the content of the polities they delimit.

Despite all the arbitrary restrictions imposed on him, Ocalan was able to finalise the two volumes entitled «From the Sumerian Clerical State towards Democratic Civilisation» in the Turkish original just shortly before a tragedy occurred that triggered off a chain of events which has rendered his theses more up-to-date and more indispensable than ever: September 11. The remaining part of the old world system was rocked by a shocking and devastating event that heralded a new and more intense stage in the struggle for a new international system. When the KADEK was founded in April 2002, they discussed how to relate the theses of Ocalan to what happened in the world after the Twin Towers collapsed. When the USA declared the Third World War, this firstly and foremostly meant that from now on all international legal norms and commonly accepted criteria had lost their validity and international relations would henceforth be determined by strife and war. From this war there will emerge new norms, new forms of relations and a new system, and those waging it have already made clear that it will last for long years to come. As a matter of fact, all the regions in the world that formerly stood under



the influence of the Soviet system in whatsoever way have gone through far-reaching processes of change in the first decade after its fall. Those processes often meant an almost total political, economic and ideological re-orientation, in the course of which some old states dissolved and others were newly founded and social structures changed to a drastic extent. With the Soviet Union's exiting from the world stage, all problems related to the conflict between the USA and the USSR have been left for the Western system under the leadership of the USA to deal with. In trying to grapple with these problems, the system will have to change. Recent events have already illustrated how fissures can burst into crevasses that may deeply and irrevocably affect the functioning of international institutions. Just as the Eastern part of the system of the 20th century has gone through dissolution and changes over the last ten years, it is now more or less predictable that the Western side of the system will go through comparable changes over the next 10 or 15 years. Even now it is foreseeable that neither NATO nor EU, nor indeed the UNO will be the same anymore. Irrespective of who committed the atrocities of 11 September or what their intentions were - this, too, is a lesson to be learnt from it.

The international system of the 20th century emerged from the chaos of the First World War, which in itself was an eruption of conflicts between rival European powers in their quest for dominance in establishing a universal order of capitalist civilisation. For the first time there was a system that truly encompassed the whole of the world and was controlled from certain politico-economic centres. Two epochal events catalysed by the First World War were the establishment of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, allowing several European states to establish direct rule over the Middle East for the first time. The Second World War with all its unforgotten horrors has not changed much about that basic constellation. Considering this historic correlation, is it surprising that the first war following the collapse of the Soviet Union was the Gulf War on Iraq in the early nineties? The talk about the Third World War basically means that this said status quo is now broken apart and a new order supposed to be created. Since violence is still regarded as a primary means of solving the problems of the old system, one of the reasons why Iraq has been



earmarked as the disposal point is that its present structure poses an obstacle to any attempt at tackling both the Israeli-Arab conflict and the Kurdish issue in the way envisaged by the USA.

Having said that, a sober assessment of this scramble for the Middle East will reveal that this is a conflict expressing itself on one level as a conflict between the old status quo, i.e. the various autocratic (Iraq, Syria), oligarchic (Turkey, Egypt) and monarchic (Saudi Arabia, Jordan etc.) regimes of the region, and divergent concepts of transformation. On another level the conflict expresses itself as one between those who understand change as a process according to their narrow vested interests and hegemonic plans, and those who strive for democratic change and unity between the peoples of the region. In other words, the present configuration of conflict in the Middle East is both a struggle between the predominance of international capital and the ambitions of the peoples to live in freedom and dignity, and one between local nationalisms and projects for peace and democratisation.

In his work, Ocalan retraces this rather intricate dialectical scheme to a more general tendency in recent world history: «In this context, there is at present a double contradiction between the chauvinistic owners of nation states, who have turned into modern tribes, and the cosmopolitan representatives of international finance capital on the one hand, and between all peoples and these two forces on the other. Whilst the inward looking forces of the nation state deprive their own people of modern democracy and the enriching effects of technological development, they also enter into a clash with international finance capital on the matter of globalisation, and in both cases they play a reactionary role. The nation state may use the national independence slogans that perhaps played a limited progressive role against the imperialism of old days, but in essence it has fallen into the position of mediating to its population the role of being an ultra-colony of the supranational establishment, because the objective conditions of the past no longer exist. When cornered, such regimes can become subservient and more dangerous than before, conceding to the big forces what belongs to the people in return for crumbs for their own elite. The institutional-



sation of the new regime between the imperialism of finance capital and the collaborating national representatives takes place in this framework.»

This analysis implies that the progressive civil forces struggling for justice and democracy shall take a stance according to the interests of the peoples of the region.

Once we apply the principle «think global, act local», we will see that the Kurds will hardly be well advised to come forward with projects beyond what they will be able to realise. The solution envisaged by Ocalan in this context is a Democratic Union of the Middle East, in which states and societies would undergo thorough democratisation with the perspective of merging into a confederal entity. Over and above general issues of strategies of democratisation such as gender equality, social justice, human rights safeguards, decentralisation and devolution, there are rather specific topics which Ocalan discusses: An Arab-Israeli peace, a democratisation of Islamic forms of governance such as in Iran, the establishment of cultural and political pluralism in Syria and a democratisation of Turkey by solving its Kurdish problem - with all these, he asks primarily what it is the Kurds can contribute. The Kurdish conflict, beyond being an end in itself, thus is being regarded as an obstacle before progress and development in the Middle East and its resolution as a contribution to the quest for rights and liberties of all the other nations and minorities of the region as a whole.

Democratisation: The path to a new form of civilisation?

The term of democratisation used so frequently acquires a meaning central to Ocalan's thinking because in it, he perceives the spirit of our age: «The fundamental characteristics of our age can be defined as an amalgam of the general crisis and disintegration of civilisation based on class society on the one hand, and the characteristics of a transitional period leading to the formation of the identity of the new civil-



isation on the other. Although the different aspects of both worlds are in a bitter struggle against each other, neither of them is capable enough to rapidly and completely overwhelm and annihilate the other. In any event, such a black and white dualism would be in contradiction with the fundamental laws of nature. [...] Humanity will live by realising the multitude of colours we know from nature in society. [...] Modern democracy is based on the wealth of social forms. It is not so much about a compromise of the two extremes, but it can be regarded as a system that envisages unhindered expression and perseverance of all these forms as the most fundamental principle, one that respects the wealth of formations that society creates and will continue to create throughout history.»

Ocalan warns us that democracy must not be regarded as a mere form of determining political power, but as «a system in which all of the social sections, especially women as the oldest, most oppressed class and gender, and children, can express themselves freely. It is a system that takes science and technology as the basis for progress and for solving not only the internal contradictions of society but also the ever-increasing contradictions within the environment. It is a system that is based on change and transformation under peaceful conditions.»

Democracy is «a long term and comprehensive form of civilisation. It shelters both the elements of class society and of classless society, but above all provides for free and unbound expression of all the variations of both elements.» Class struggle is augmented by programmatic themes such as the liberation of woman, the protection of the environment and of animal rights, and the control and regulation of technology.

If that is so, democratisation cannot be reduced to reform packages as some would have us believe, but demands a wide organisation and participation of all sections of the population. The vehicles of that are independent civil organisations. Projects as these aim at creating an awareness of being a bearer of rights in society and at changing, democratising traditional social structures, mores and codes of behaviour. But they also aim at democratising politics, the «mediate link between society and state». Democratisation



of the state itself should begin with generating a «susceptibility for democracy with the state» by means of a strong and conscious civil society and active participation in politics, and tendentially lead to a «transformation of the state» into a mere «general tool of co-ordination» of society and to establishing public «control over it as the fundamental institution of democratic politics.» So here we have a programme the realisation of which requires an immense amount of work if it is to be fully realised - not only for states such as Iraq and Turkey, but also for Western polities. Speaking for the Middle East, it furthermore requires a «mental revolution» which would consist of the three steps of an authentic renaissance (a rebirth of the civilisational values of the Middle East), a reform of religion and an enlightenment embracing all of society. Such revolution would entail for the Middle East a «separation from its reactionary ideological identity and personality».

The following excerpts from Ocalan's book will serve to illustrate the central concepts of this thesis.



CONCERNING DEMOCRACY

«There may be numerous definitions of democracy. Its class character, the form of the compromises and the nature of the peace it seeks to bring about may be debated at length. It may be suggested that it is not a system of civilisation on its own. However it is possible to say that for the first time, however insufficient it may be, democracy has provided for all the nations, cultures, for all the different ideological, economic and political preferences a comprehensive and peaceful environment for development and competition. It is very important to emphasise that at the end of the Twentieth century democracy has not only secured its victory, but also overcome its narrow class base. Democracy hitherto did not so much as formally encompass the entirety of those officially regarded as citizens and failed to go beyond a form of administration dominated by a narrow community of rich citizens. In a way, the class reality in modern democracies was similar to that of Athenian democracy. However, the democratic system that began to emerge by the end of the Twentieth century has overcome these narrow foundations. Not only has it opened up to other classes, but also provided for self-expression and self-organisation in such fundamental spheres as thought, belief, cultural life and political organisations in the widest possible sense. All antagonists more or less have a chance to change and develop themselves without the use of force. So here, the struggle of antagonists in terms of class, nation, world views, in the economic, cultural, social and political spheres does not cease; nor does solidarity among those of a certain group come to an end. Relationships and contradictions do not freeze. Instead a new era arises in which the struggle resulting from them can be waged in a peaceful manner, in compliance with given laws.



«Therefore modern democracy may be regarded as a form of administration and a way of life that overcomes the sanguinary forms of rule resorted to throughout the history of class-based societies and comes closest to a system providing for the free expression of everybody; providing for the free expression of the different ethnicities, religions, genders, economic and political groups. One might do well to point out that this is the first time in history that such has happened.

«The development of contemporary democracy has been from within, and it has been evolutionary. It has not come forward with dramatic effects. However if the intention is to allow the human mind to be creative, it can be suggested that no better regime than this has been found yet. [...] One of the main points our analysis of civilisation seeks to show is that neither the emergence nor the disappearance of classes can be brought about by means of force. The determining factors are mainly related to technological capacity. Where technical productivity renders the further development of a certain community possible, class divisions become inevitable. This is because every member of the community benefits from such development. During the initial phase of slave society the circumstances of life for many slaves were significantly more secure and sustenance was comparatively easier available than before. These material facilities are at the heart of the development that brought about class divisions. The dialectics of class-related progress throughout history bear evidence to this reality.

«Consequently, the real socialist experiment in particular clearly indicated that throughout the period of capitalist civilisation, even if classes were physically removed by means of force through revolutions, they would eventually re-emerge at the first possible opportunity. Some classes were forcibly removed during real socialism. However this did not prevent the creation of bastardised new classes. This also relates to the technical level of the period. A social phenomenon that the technical level allowed and provided for the development of, can only disappear when the technical level has become such



that it is no longer needed. Revolutions, use of force and counter-revolutions may obstruct some social phenomena but they cannot remove them entirely. Consequently, the societies that consist of such phenomena will only vanish or transform into different societies when technological developments in their sub- and superstructure make this inevitable. [...] The fundamental strength of democracy derives from the fact that it offers the correct method of solving problems, not from individuals being infinitely and whole-heartedly committed to it or otherwise.

«Modern democracy requires a democratic state. A democratic state is based on the appointing of fundamental decision making and executive organs elected by society. Dynastism, the imposition of authoritarian decisions or appointments unrelated to popular vote erode the state's democratic character. In classical state theories and practices, state power is regarded as something swaying above society in a suppressive fashion, and the rulers are presented as the embodiment of divine will. They wear masks of sanctity handed over from father to son or from various authorities to others. In this con-



Kurdish refugees in France in a protest



text, the history of civilisation virtually emerges as the history of the state's anti-democratisation against society: Rising above society, suppressing society, hiding itself, convincing society of its eternal origins and making itself mysterious, these have become the arts of statesmanship. In this context the best state is regarded as the one that controls most, that rules as it likes, exploits and starts wars at its whim. Civilisation, as it were, ascribes some of its more significant developments to such activities of the state.

«Modern democracy, however, reverses these qualities of the state. It retraces the basis of the state upon increasingly complex social relationships, it expends specific effort to render itself transparent and open, and it intends to ensure that the state is perceived as a source of trust and not fear, as a guarantor of fair distribution, and not exploitation. Such a state loses its classical connotations. It will try to correspond to the definition of the state as the supreme coordination of the complex system of relations in society. The state would be restructured so that it becomes a decision-making and administrative power for affairs that individual sections of society cannot cope with and that must not be privatised, such as general security, education, health, transportation and diplomacy.

«Presently there is an intense struggle over the change and transformation of the state from that of the classical concept towards the concept of contemporary democratic state. The institution that is most resistant to modern democracy is the state itself. There can be no doubt that the old, deeply rooted institutions and traditions of the state, which are as old as civilisation itself, are to blame for that. However, it has been realised that the state can no longer resist the scientific-technological revolution but has to transform itself, and all across the world development in this direction gathers speed by the day.

«In the process of development of contemporary democracy, human rights and women's liberation are matters of increasing significance. To regard human rights and women's liberation as matters that belong to capitalist society would be a flawed assessment. On the



contrary, it was in the era when capitalist civilisation slowly began to be overcome, when the insufficiencies of its traditional form of government and way of life became manifest that there was progress in these matters. Human rights and women's liberation are two fundamental elements of the general democratisation of society. The more that the classical framework of civilisation is transcended, the greater the chances for development become, and therefore these two fundamental concepts gain greater significance in determining the path to development of the new civilisation. They are not the product of the social conditions of capitalism; they are the products of a social development that left capitalism behind. From this point of view they respond to the criteria of contemporary democracy. The development of contemporary democracy primarily manifests itself in human rights and women's liberation. Seemingly these two issues are going to play dominant roles in determining the departure of the new civilisation. Human rights and freedom of woman - almost removed from the books of class society throughout its history - are to be the most fundamental fields of renovation, triggering off far-reaching overall development. Whilst human rights will determine the foundations of the legal framework of the new society, it will be mainly women's freedoms that will establish the social grounds of it. Developments secured in these two fields will determine the evolution and depth of modern democracy.»

The role of force in history

«The final stage in the history of civilisation based on class society is the age of capitalist civilisation. The most significant phenomenon that emerges in this period of disintegration is the fact that there occur scientific-technological revolutions of such impact that they literally invalidate the use of force in social transformation, with the exception of legitimate self defence. Let us not forget that throughout history, force has, in the service of the politics of the rulers and exploiters, not played much of a part beyond wrecking



havoc. Due to the fears that derive from the theftlike character of property, the ruling class has been clutching at force as their greatest safeguard; they cherished and praised it, and felt that violence should be the subject of exaggerated stories of heroism. As a matter of fact, the gods that did not know force in the earliest mythologies, assumed in the due course of the history of class society, especially throughout the feudal ages, attributes related to the punishment and condemnation of their creatures.

«The role of force in social transformations is far smaller than one would anticipate. Force has played a transforming role during qualitative leaps in social processes where conservative obstacles had to be confronted. Although such acts of violence helped with short-term ends and qualitative leaps, in due course they had to be transcended and so they were. But the major part of the force used throughout history in its permanence caused destruction and ruin in the form of conquests, invasions, plunder and the like, though under the guise of divine orders. The suggestion that if a participant in such ventures died he would become a martyr, and if wounded be rewarded as a veteran with a share of the booty, is part and parcel of the malediction inherent in historiography. If we regard the history written from such perspective as a cursed history, then a true history needs to be written which would champion the oppressed of humanity as the genuine heroes of conscience and labour.

«Ignorance is one of the decisive factors leading to violence. The more practical experience and science defeat ignorance the clearer the meaninglessness of violence becomes. In the history of humanity, force has largely been the product of the lack of development of science and its practice. The theory [advocated by Frederick Engels] that force is the midwife of a newly emerging society should be understood correctly: The task of a midwife during the birth process is to reduce the mother's pain and assist with a healthy birth. However, the nature of the force used in history has always been that of restraining the already born healthy children, i.e. human beings, and depriving them of opportunities to a free development, and at times



destroying them. This, then, had nothing to do with midwifery, but was akin to the function of the executioner or at the mildest the gaoler keeping people in captivity. The highly excessive and merciless use of force in history superseded the natural evolution of society, and stretched it beyond its limits.

«Modern democracy takes society's transformation in accordance with natural evolution as its base, and relies on the awareness that this is based on powerful scientific-technological foundations. Having said that, this does not necessarily mean that democracy is a compromise between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary force. In fact, it would be entirely wrong to think so. Democracy is essentially not a compromise with force or a situation of conceding to those who wield it. On the contrary, democracy is based on the removal of violence from the social agenda. This has nothing to do with submission. Quite the contrary, this ambition is an expression of the belief that real emancipative development can only take place in the absence of force. In that respect, modern democracy calls for the auto-criticism of all kinds of civilisational entities that are based on force. Democracy is a regime of a radical self-criticism. This stance against violence is not tactical, nor even strategic, but a principled one. [...] This principle embodies a deep philosophical foundation and as such does not primarily refer to political or administrative strategy and tactics, but regards these as practical necessities. [...] Peace should not be understood as submission to force, since on the contrary it emphasises the removal of force from society. It is based on the firm belief in a society without wars in a civilised world.

Concerning Legitimate Defence

«Legitimate self-defence is the other significant principle of modern democracy. In societies where modern democratic relationships do not exist, or where democracy is under attack, the preservation of one's own existence on the basis of legitimate defence is



not only a right, but in fact the most fundamental constitutional right. At the end of the day, submission to undemocratic laws and regimes cannot be called a democratic attitude! This does not include the annihilation of the anti-democratic forces in a counter attack, but rather envisages overcoming injustice through raising consciousness, organising society and exercising the right to demonstrate continually. Such legitimate resistance does include forms of armed resistance and draws its legitimacy from contemporary democratic principles. Any action beyond the scope of this is not within the parameters of legitimate defence.»

Linked to these reflexions is a self-critical appraisal of the earlier concept of violence advocated by the PKK: «The main source of insufficiency and deviation in the ideology and mode of action, throughout the birth and development process of the PKK, was closely related to its concept of the state and the way in which it applied violence. The relationship between the dictatorship of the proletariat in socialism and a revolution based on violence is an obvious one. Revolutionary violence, and, in the event of its success, it manifesting itself institutionally in the dictatorship of the proletariat, revealed its contradictory character in real socialism, and was unable to prevent itself from becoming a capitalist tool of force.»

When the PKK terminated armed struggle following the capture of Abdullah Ocalan in 1999, they did so in a continuation of the unilateral cease-fire they had already been observing for several months. The guerrilla units withdrew from Turkish territory and positioned themselves in Northern Iraq pending developments that they hoped might bring indications of a political settlement. Yet, the abduction of the Kurdish leader not only necessitated a thorough reassessment of where the struggle was going, but also formed the corollary of a discussion on the underlying theoretical shortcomings on the Kurdish part, too, that undoubtedly had contributed to the deadlock which had beset the Kurdish conflict. Ocalan's book is, in a way, a political report on his own reflexion on the theoretical outlook and ideological premises of the movement. Now that the KADEK, which refers to



Ocalan's book as their manifesto, has positioned its fighting forces so as to defend themselves in the event of an attack, the hopes for a full demilitarisation of the conflicts have been impaired. Return to zero?

Many things have changed over the last years. It is important to note that the KADEK is neither a mere continuation of the PKK's strategies under a different name, as Turkish officials would have us believe, nor has the movement been quelled and shrunk to a marginal force, as Western commentators often suggest. Apart from having restricted the use of arms to situations of self-defense, the KADEK has adopted a programme which foresees the democratic political struggle in a field at equal distance from the despotic state and from traditional conservative society - the third domain.



THE THIRD DOMAIN THEORY

«The organization of all elements of civil society according to their own identities and needs as an alternative to the ruling system»

«Theory and practice of civil society is related to the innovations in scientific-technological revolutions in the 20th century. It was the emergence of a material basis through these revolutions, that has increased the chances of success for civil society. Institutions once exceptional and marginal have now become essential ones.

«The third domain is the domain of democratic politics. A specific civilian mechanism for each need that became pressing under the increasingly complex circumstances of civilisation is required. These mechanisms are neither firm mechanisms of revolution nor the belts of communication that the state has extended to society. They are independent organisations built according to needs, with an identity that stands somewhere in between the state and society and has some distance from both of them. They are neither against the state nor collaborating with it. They are under the command of needs that they are a response to. They have limited membership and their structures are built according to the functions they carry out. They are the kind of organisations that upon completing their tasks disappear or transform into different organisations with new tasks. This model has proven itself to be the path necessary to escape from the deepened impasse of revolution and counter-revolution. Due to increasing needs in all fields from the economic sphere to culture, from sports to the environment, from peace to human rights, the significance of this domain increases by the day. As the most vivid and productive field, the domain of democratic politics will be able to come up with as many solutions as there are varied, functional and well co-ordinated



civil society organisations. It is the path of democratic politics, which creates a larger variety of alternative solutions. Life presses for more projects and practices to develop civil society. Whichever institution, party or person has civil society projects, organisations and studies, they will be the ones that will be able to make the most significant contributions towards the democratisation of the society and the state. Those parties and institutions that are uninfluenced by the mentality of rentier politics, are the ones that shall extend themselves toward a democratic society and state, and will do this job. From now on history will allow people or institutions with this theory, programme, strategy and tactics to play a role of transformation. In situations where society is at an impasse as a result of a crisis, and where the state mentality deepens this impasse and becomes a barrier, this role means creating an opportunity to produce solutions by means of the theory of the third domain. It means a taking a theoretical and practical path that will enable greater success if sufficient and correct efforts are spent and the requirements are complied with.

«Democratic politics, as the third domain between the state and society, has attained the role of a renovating and productive institution.



Students demanding budget spendings for education, not for war!



Neither a healthy democratisation of the society, nor the state developing a sensitivity in this direction, could be suggested without the mechanisms of democratic politics in every sphere, from economics to politics, from human rights to the environment, from culture to health, from education to peace. The modern institutions that are established in every sphere, starting with the political parties, are the fundamental intermediary links that determine the democratic and fair character of the values, which should be continually conveyed from society to state and from state to society. It seems that these civil society organisations that emerged as the third domain of society have become the essential elements of our age.

«Women and youth being in most urgent need for peace and freedom, multi-faceted women's and youth unions are among the top-priority institutions of civil society. Organizations accurately responding to the historic and concrete situation of women and youth and their political aims can overcome the obstacles posed by conservative society and the despotic state and even become pivotal tools of civil society whose traces will be followed by the whole of society. Youth and women's unions in which the balance between quantity and quality is well-kept are a guarantee of the victory of civil society.

«The dominant attitude towards children is much more wrong and dangerous than one would expect it to be. This reality is dominant and institutionalised in all areas, from the family to the school and from the street to the playground. Real nightmares are allowed to dominate the world of children. The world of the elderly is surrounded by a similar disregard. It is as if a steel wall had been erected between them and their children. Class society has also generated insensitivity in this regard. It is an inescapable task that democratic society should reform these two fields as well. Children have a world of their own that should never be betrayed and its requirements should be respectfully complied with. Betraying their world has cost society a loss of great value. The elderly have a world of wisdom that is filtered through the sieve of life experience. A society that does not learn its lessons from this world cannot possibly think soundly and survive. For this reason the worlds of chil-



dren and the elderly are not consuming, but enriching and productive, worlds. Modern civilisation's inescapable task is to win these two worlds by means of re-institutionalising them on the basis of rights and freedoms that require the application of the principles of democratic society with special attention to their specific circumstances. Democratic civilisation is also the age in which children and the elderly are regarded with love and respect, and society is unified with this awareness and moral attitude.

«Another significant element in the new phase of the movement is the addition of the environmental question to its aims. The extent of the contradictions with the environment, that are just as significant as internal social contradictions, has become apparent. Environmental protection is in fact the protection of land, vegetation, water, air and the climate. The firmest protective precautions on these fundamental matters need to be essential items in the movement's programme. The protection of animals and the prevention of savage methods of slaughtering animals must be included.

«Humanity, having continually been divided along ethnic, religious and national lines, is encountering a situation in which it should be united on the basis of the common language of technology, science and democracy. Internationalism has become more livable and indispensable than in any period in the past. Law has made it possible that for the first time the principle of as much sociality as necessary and as much individualism as needed has become one of the central principles of modern life. Probably the most meaningful development in history is the accomplishment of an optimum balance between social and individual existence.»

Civil Society - A new model for the Middle East

«There is an urgent, pressing need for an aggregate of theory, programme, strategy and tactics of civil society for the Middle East. An



alternative civil society can be of a vital importance in overcoming the current deadlock and showing the path to be taken if it is equipped with organizations which are neither an extension of the state nor of traditional society, hold independent world views, are interlinked in general co-ordination, have a detailed programme and function according to concrete requirements - and are aware of the most efficient forms of action in order to achieve their aims.

«Materialising the model for the Middle East with consideration to historical, social and political realities is important. In order to emphasise the main points the following can be stated:

« — In the economic sphere, starting with the consumption aspect, the organisation of a relevant society, community or group of people will materialize a power of transformation. Even in advanced societies consumer groups become influential. Especially if consumer cooperatives, transport companies, tourist and travel companies, production associations, solidarity and charity organisations, trade and finance associations have foundations that are purpose-built alongside their legal foundations, they will become a force to be reckoned with. In such circumstances the state and society may become almost subordinate.

« — In the social sphere, starting with health and education, a society that has organised itself on its own strength becomes a determining factor. Again, a civil society that organises its own activities and cultural institutions, such as theatre, cinema, literature, music, painting and documentaries, would be a very attractive and influential one. In terms of sport, facilities such as sports centres, stadiums, running pitches especially dedicated to youth and women, activities such as trekking and cross-country runs, bear great significance from the point of view of physical and mental health. Especially in an underdeveloped urban environment, facilitating mass sports is becoming one of the increasingly vital necessities. Instead of the mind-numbing official sport that only addresses spectators, the sort of sport that is based on the active participation of civil society is a candidate to become one of the most contemporary institutions of society.



« — As a result of unlawfulness, and the general frailty of law awareness, the self-organisation of civil society in the legislative field is becoming one of the most essential elements. It is vital that all civil society associations and popular groups should have law centres. Law centres can further law awareness, show the path to legitimate democratic politics, form the nucleus of the fight against unlawfulness and thus are essential civil society institutions for introducing a universal constitutional order.

« — As mechanisms to achieve direct power in the political sphere, political parties are institutions that deserve to be treated with great significance. Highly organised and conscious political parties that reveal society's own strength and heed a constitutional perspective are the mechanisms that civil society cannot do without. They should replace the traditional parties based on extracting revenues from state and society.

«In order to overcome the violence-focused societies preponderant in certain areas and among certain communities, and move towards a society focusing on peace, there is a demand for specific peace groups and peace units of bigger organisations; one of their tasks would be to activate a consciousness of the meaning and importance of peace and the ways and means to achieve it. In societies which have internalised violence down to their marrow, such as Middle Eastern societies, peace, i.e. tools and actions aiming at peace, will be quite prominent institutions of civil society. They can play a crucial part in the development of a democratic society and a democratic state if they believe in the necessity for peaceful action and have a strong dedication to their cause.

«An important aspect of the third domain theory is that it aims at achieving results by structuring itself in an exemplaric fashion without antagonizing the existing legal system or insisting on destroying state and societal structures that create deadlocks and are not solution-oriented, but by seeing and naming their insufficiencies, mistakes and vacant spaces. This is almost like saying; 'If you can't do it, I will'. From economy to technology and environmental issues, from



Our children are not alone - a hungerstrike of mothers of political prisoners

the social sphere to law, culture, the sciences and humanities, from sports to all branches of the arts, from ideology to politics, a new, common and organized alternative society needs to be built.

«Legitimate self-defense as a general problem of civil society is among the fundamental matters to be correctly grasped and applied. The possibility of attacks on civil society either from the state or from traditional society is not remote. Those forces that intend to make them fail or provoke them will always keep this possibility alive by using, secretly or openly, legal and illegal methods. This is because their interests are jeopardised and their profits are endangered. It is not easy for them to accept this. Since the old society and some state structures will become dysfunctional and their authority will be shaken, the possibility of their resorting to illegal methods and force always exists. These situations bring to the fore the matter of legitimate self-defense as an indispensable legal right. The form and content of self-defense must be very clearly understood. When encountering a situation in which they need to defend their rights which are guaranteed by the Constitution, international conventions and laws,



all individuals and equitable groups are entitled to exercise their rights, from the right to organise uprisings and demonstrations, to making collective petitions and applying to courts, individually or collectively, entirely or partially until the injustice is undone and their rights are reinstated. If a nation faces injustice because its linguistic or cultural rights are being declined, and the legal and political avenues to a solution are blocked, then the nation in question may enter into a long or short resistance. This is not an insurgency but a legitimate, legal right. In fact, failure to exercise this right would amount to a breach of law.

«Rejection of one's own rights or refusal to exercise them is the greatest lawlessness. Where this occurs, the laws of the jungle will reign. Therefore individuals, societies or peoples actually violate the law by remaining silent. To claim one's rights and to rebel when one is deprived of them falls into the ambit of the sacred right to resist. This is indeed the essence of how law and justice emerged. Nobody, and no nation, has the right to keep quiet and be submissive where breaches of their rights occur. The real violation of the law, poisoning society and the state, derives from such subservience. Legitimate self-defense is the essential fundamental legal stance in the creation and exercise of law. Individuals, societies and peoples who do not comply with the requirements of this, do not have the right to consider themselves human beings or to complain. The First, Second and Third Generation Rights, including the individual's civil, economic and social rights and people's cultural rights, as well as the right to self determination, are the ones that universal law particularly considers to be the most essential rights, and the ones it recognises as the cornerstones that democratic civilisation is based on.

«The system of organised civil society will be completed once there are umbrella organizations of the quality of Democratic Federations embracing all those institutions of civil society, both within a given country and beyond its borders, in solidarity with similar organizations in neighbouring or other countries.»



THE CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAW

«I shall have to qualify what the term law signifies to me: Law refers to a set of social rules compliance with which is secured by force. There is both written and oral law. There was no law as such in the ages when societies were made up of clans and tribes.

«There are rules which are more or less spontaneously observed; these might be defined as common law (mores) or natural law. Another word for mores is ethics. The distinction between ethics and law is that while the latter is kept up by the use of force and works within a predefined framework of sanctions, the former is kept up without resort to any formalized sanctioning power, if you will, spontaneously. Law becomes a prevalent phenomenon when a specific set of rules is needed in order to resolve conflicts that arise from the division of societies into classes.

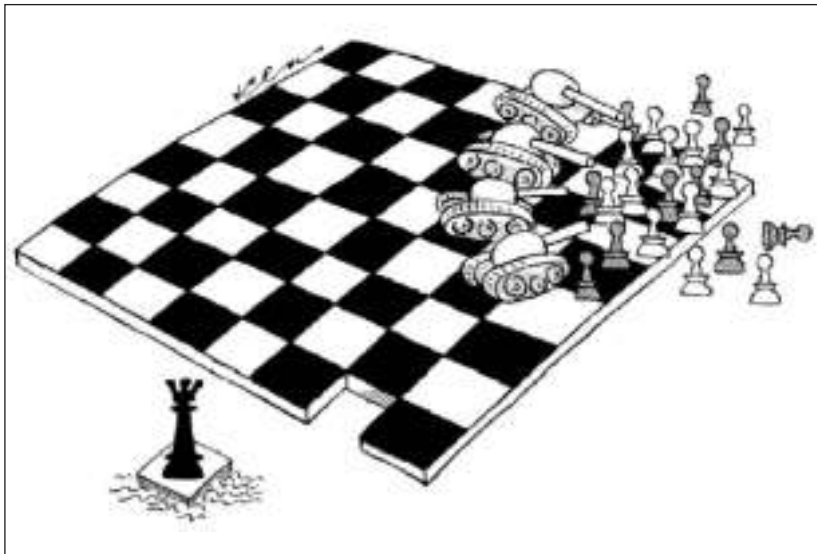
«The sources from which law emerges, then, are by and large the powers that form and govern the state; irrespective of whether the concrete organ is a king or a parliament, there is a class-related essence to law. It can be seen that primordial mores become or are evaluated as a major source of legal rules. Legal rules may be set up per convention of learned circles involved with speaking law, or they might be superimposed by foreign powers from outside a given society.

«Clerical law might be regarded as the most reactionary form of law since it is neither common law nor does it provide for the accommodation of conflicting interests but refers to the authority of a monarch emerging from within society but exalted to the rank of a supreme being as its exclusive source. This conception of law has had



a palpable impact on the developmental retardation, the despotic fashion of wielding power and the difficulties in front of democratisation in Eastern societies.

«The actual birth of law begins when ancient Roman society transforms into a city-state in the latter half of the 8th century BC and legal provisions are made by consuls elected as representatives of society rather than by a king. This is not to say that the will of the king was not a source of law in Roman society, but that among the initial fundamentals of this society there was the requirement that Roman citizens govern their own affairs by virtue of their own delegates and within the framework of definite, publicly known and sanctioned rules. Roman law left its imprint on an era that lasted until the Justinian period of the Eastern Roman Empire (second half of 6th century AD). Having gone through repeated transmutations, it still serves as the basis of contemporary law. What is important is that here we have a form of law which was not depicted as being an emanation of divine will but was of a secular char-



Imrali chess, courtesy of Klaus Becher



acter as it was developed, as it were, by the citizens themselves. This difference in conceptions of law forms one of the reasons why Western civilization became supreme over Eastern civilization. A secular legal system protects and empowers the individual citizen vis-a-vis state and society by fostering awareness of citizenship and individuality. The Middle Ages saw a process of differentiation to the effect that while in Eastern societies, law retained its position as an emanation of divine will, new classes emerged in Western societies that started to impose their own will on monarchic authorities and achieved a first breakthrough when the Magna Charta was drafted in the 13th century to vanguard the interests of the budding bourgeoisie in what might be seen as an act of restoring or continuing the tradition of Roman law. In Eastern societies, there was no comparable innovation in law that would reflect the will of any newly emerging social force. On the contrary, alleys of innovating given law by virtue of divergent interpretations as had been the case in the institution of *ijtihad*, the determining of conflicts on the basis of Islamic case-law, were closed and *shariah* came to mean nothing other than the unilateral declaration of the law-giving will of monarchy.

«The pivotal point in our discussion of law, then, is the coming in of any social force or movement creating a space for itself by pushing back the delimitations of the status quo and its legal system. Any force failing to ensure a reflection of their interests in legal codes will, even though it may be an actual force, fail to officially secure any rights. The transformation into legal provisions of rights, i.e. of statements of the free will of individuals or groups, ranks among the primary problems in any given legal system. The best way to resolve societal disquietude and troubles is to ensure that they are remedied by way of finding a legal expression of the underlying conflict of interests. This way is the democratisation of law.

«When the capitalist mode of production became the prevalent form, it brought with it a highly complex social structure. It would have been impossible for the bourgeoisie as the vanguard class to



compromise with the old feudal monarchic legal system. In order to create its own legal system, it had to revive Roman law. Renewing especially the civil law, the young bourgeoisie initiated constitutional movements that were to form a basis for the legal system as a whole. An individual constitution for each individual nation state became their basic aim. Constitutions were to become the symbol of social transformations.

«Modernity always also refers to the Rule of Law. In both national and international relations, there is a strong tendency to weave extensive networks of legal conventions that would not leave a single relation without a specific regulation. The democratisation of political regimes expands the groundwork for law. A new era in which the rights of all citizens are safeguarded steps into the forefront as the era of human rights. Western civilization would from now on be defined as the age of democratic law.

The part played by law in the resolution of societal problems

«Throughout history, all the important issues would be solved by military and political means. The strength and power of the military caste are rooted in this reality. It's military power that would determine who's in the right and who's in the wrong. Politics would accordingly allot the duty to achieve the optimum results under conditions of given military strength. There would be no talk of any universal principle of justice in society. Justice would be determined by the sword. Contemporary law emerged from the struggle against this understanding, and it was one of the major successes it achieved during its gradual development that the Military and the Political were bound to a certain set of rules. International bodies such as the UN or the EU are shining examples for the process of overcoming the national delimitations of law and investing it with a universal dimension, facilitating the establishment of a safer and more stable world order.



«Law now has priority over politics and military both on the domestic and on the international plane. The incessant quest for solutions within the legal framework for any given problem has become a contemporary method. It would henceforth be considered a severe breach of method if any power were to ignore legal possibilities and immediately go for military-political solutions. The right thing to do in any critical situation or relation is to explore the limits of law; only if that fails and all legal avenues are blocked will it be legitimate to resort to politico-military means. The recent past of European countries is full of religious, social and national wars; following two world wars, they intensified their quest for a democratic legal system. By channeling conflicts into non-bloody venues of solution and by resorting to an advanced legal framework, something which is most dearly required, it becomes possible to prevent wars or military hostilities from wreaking immense havoc. A rather noteworthy feature of contemporary European law is the fact that it does not stop at generating legal norms but has brought about a dynamic notion of law that offers facilities for ensuring preemptive solutions to any problem that may arise on the basis of positive law. At the same time, it has established as its most essential function not the protection and strengthening of the state vis-a-vis its citizens, but on the contrary the protection of the citizen from the power of the state by virtue of endowing her or him with consolidated fundamental rights. It is not the state that needs to be protected but the individual, the citizen. Even beyond that, that system which has hitherto ignored different cultures and minorities without caring about their suppression, has now begun to display a good deal of sensitivity towards the issue of affording them protection within the fundamental ambit of law.

«The question of minorities and cultural entities finds more and more reflection in legal codifications and is increasingly taken into account as such when solutions are sought. In that way, a variety of societal issues that would in the past have triggered off uprisings or wars, the escalation of social antagonisms or hostilities are now being dealt with under legal conventions and thus find the instruments necessary for their resolution. This approach comes under the name



of a democratic legal system since it encapsulates the whole of society and generously equips it with legal means. Here we have a lesson which Europe has drawn from its outstanding historic experience that forms an example for the world community. The most concrete expression of a democratic legal system in Europe is the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Human Court of Human Rights as an institution commissioned with implementing it. There is even talk of a European Constitution.

«This short historical appraisal and definition of the present state might help us to deal with the Kurdish question and make use of law as a possibility on our way towards a solution to this question.»

The events in the months that led up to March 2003 - when the European Court of Human Rights decided in the case of Ocalan versus Turkey - have resulted in a de-facto situation which far removed from being conducive to solving human rights and minority issues within the framework of international law. While the new Turkish government under Erdogan has declined any legal or other visits to Ocalan for months on end, mounting tensions between Kurds and Turkish authorities have indicated that the coming months may be marked by massive civil unrest in the Kurdish areas of Turkey. On the other hand, the highly controversial deployment of US-American and even Turkish troops in Northern Iraq contains within it the potential to involve the Kurds of Iraq in a complicated and perhaps protracted conflict.

Despite the growing dangers, many Kurds are optimistic that insofar as they manage to implement the political project expressed in the defense submissions of Ocalan, they will be able to emerge from the tribulations besetting the Middle East as a strong community at the heart of a democratic solution to the problems of the region.

Although the practical experience the Kurdish movement has gained since the last Gulf War has consolidated the population's confidence in their political leaders, the theory Ocalan puts forward however is not simply



deduced from observations made concerning global political developments in the late 20th century. It is in fact embedded in an elaborate critique of civilisation. The entire first volume of the book submitted to the ECHR deals with the question of how the peoples of the Middle East may bring about an antithesis to the given thesis of the world system. Such authentic antithesis will be necessary in order to arrive at a «synthesis of civilisation». In Ocalan's eyes it is a prerequisite for moving forward in human history.

The interested reader is referred to the work itself which is due to be published in English in Summer 2003 (already available in German under ISBN 3-926529-15-6) since it would be impossible to sketch this theory within the limits of the brochure you are holding in your hand. The following excerpts concerning the debate on the evolution of state power from its first hour in ancient Mesopotamia to the supranational bodies of the 21st century may at best give an adequate picture of the actuality of the civilisation that once emerged from the heart of the Middle East.



STATE, RELIGION AND SOCIETY - THE SUMERIAN EXAMPLE

«The slave-holding civilisation of Sumer was raised above the values created during the nearly 10,000 years that Neolithic [young stone age] society lasted in the Fertile Crescent [the region from the Eastern Mediterranean to the plateaus of Iran]. By a judicious mixture of trade and violence, but predominantly by convincing neighbouring communities of the productivity of its system, did this civilisation appropriate the whole of Neolithic technics and know-how. It also managed to institutionalise it in the form of crafts and distinct professions and thus turn them into extraordinary riches and fecundity. In a striking parallel to US imperialism's attitude towards peoples across the globe in the contemporary world, ethnic groups and peoples of the Neolithic era were paralysed vis-a-vis the emergence of Sumerian slave society. Especially during the Assyrian era Sumerian imperialism uprooted and overwhelmed peoples of its time to such an extent that lasting influences still remain in the Middle East and across the world. Staking to the ground, crucifixion, deportation and forcible dispersal became methods of terrorism and genocide and left lasting marks in the human memory. This first planned and systematic domination and exploitation of the human species within class society has been maintained, developed and continued unto our contemporary era. If, with the aid of the technical progress, planned and systematic massacres are exercised on an ever-mounting scale in our era, this should be related to the depth in which the first civilisation's practice has been ingrained in human memory. Once the wheel of cruelty and exploitation was established in human history, it has not, so far, been possible to stop this wheel. Humankind managed to split the atom but is far from being able to break this whirling wheel.



«It is this situation that in the human mind, which now has a consciousness different to that of animals, causes pain, generates a notion of honour and leads the way to a different line in history, the emergence of resistance and a tendency towards freedom. The institution of prophecy in the Middle East has exactly this meaning. As can be seen from this magnificent first example, civilisation starts with the grand scale theft of the inventions of Neolithic society, a form of egalitarian and peaceful communal life that is reflected in human memory as the dream of paradise. Those who escaped this theft were treated as outcasts and condemned to be non-historical. With the invention of the state structure and all the values that Sumer assimilated, the new form of society turned into a true monstrosity that devoured all the ill-equipped individuals and ethnic groups.

«Being the first and most original example, Sumer gives us the most suitable tool to analyse civilisation and clearly outline the source of the power that the state has. First and foremost there is this incomparable concentration of power against the individual, and the



Sumerians leading a bull. From the Standard of Ur. About 2400 BC.



ethnic group the individual identifies himself with, particularly against the sections of society excluded from the state apparatus. In the process of state building the masterly and cunning ideological inventions of the Sumerian priests shaped the society's mind and wonderfully created the image that the designed state structure was the celestial system's reflection on earth. The main purpose of mythology and theology has always been to ensure that the birth of a sacred and eternal class society would be regarded as an integral function of the order of nature. The divine authorities were really the dynasties of the emerging kingdoms. But if this had been put bluntly, it would have been difficult to make society believe in the system and perhaps its establishment and continuity would not have been possible at all. First and foremost the state must be made out and established on the ideological level. The state emerges when ideological conviction is unified with Neolithic society's technology and the creation of a surplus product. As the former is secured, the latter will create benefits, and this man-made fusion leads to a previously unforeseen productivity.

«The Sumerian temple is clearly the uterus of the state. in defiance of later explanations, the state is not the scientific expression of human reason, but the theological and dogmatic expression of the human mind. I am offering a new and straightforward description: Civilisation, or strictly speaking the state as its essence is the theological expression of dogmatic understanding of the world at the primitive stage of class differentiation where scientific thought has not yet formed. Its foundations were the dogma of belief and not science. Perhaps in this context the most outdated tool is the state itself, especially its classical forms that do not include the people. In later chapters we will see that, although to a limited degree, Europe took an important and progressive step ahead and ingrained democracy in the character of the state. This of course was only possible because of the unprecedented resistance and liberation struggles of peoples, classes, nations and individuals.

«There is a very close relationship between the state and god, par-



ticularly between a highly centralised state and the idea of monotheism. [...] it seems to me that Marx's assessment to the effect that the ideological power at the root of the state is a mere reflection [of relations of production] carries an omission with a dangerous tendency. One of the fundamental reasons for the lack of practical success of Marxian theory is his underestimation of religion which he simply labels as «the opium of the people». In my opinion 'theology' deserves a thorough analysis as much as money and the state do. In order to understand Sumerian civilisation one must analyse its theology. Theology is the Sumerian science of class struggle. Without analysing the social projections of concepts of theology one cannot possibly analyse Sumerian ideology and thus the whole of antiquity which is based upon it. Again, without analysing monotheist religions one cannot analyse the classical and medieval ages, let alone understand the formation of modern day logics and literature. Theology leaves its imprint in the consciousness of all societies. Without deciphering this imprint and erasing it one cannot create a positive society on a scientific basis. As I am intending to show in great detail, one of the biggest omissions and mistakes of «real socialism» was that they did not come anywhere near the ideological and historical sphere of society and were biased in their analysis of the state. Social reality cannot be satisfactorily explained by mere analysis of money and capital. Quite the contrary, this only leads the way to falling into a different form of the idealism that the materialists continually criticised. In the end, this is just what real socialism did by surrendering itself to capital. It seems it was inescapable that flawed Marxist thought would lead in this direction for the reasons we have attempted to explain.

«The power of ideology and forms of theology is not less than that of either money or the state. Nevertheless these three elements are interlinked and infiltrate one-another. Perhaps never in human history have three elements had the opportunity to infiltrate into one another and create such a great power as these three elements. This is what takes the appearance of the relationship between «the father, the son and the holy spirit». Not only an apparition this is - the mode of



Copper relief (probably) above the entrance of the Ninhursag temple at Tell al-'Ubaid. About 2300 bc.

their formation is exactly the same: Whilst the one pushes towards materialisation, the other one increasingly spiritualises. In the Sumerians these three elements adhered to one another. From this threesome one gives birth to earthly power whilst the other creates eternal power.

«For reasons related to its failure to analyse the state and civilisation in conjunction with theology, the modern sciences are to be held responsible for their inability to prevent millions from becoming the victims of dogmatic regimes. Thus modern science has fallen into the same position as the sorcerer who became the victim of his own sorcery. When the modern society's ideologists, who claim that they rely on scientific thought, manage to analyse the threesome of theology-state-money in a balanced manner and in its original form, and develop their social projects accordingly, only then will they be able to liberate themselves from the devastation emanating from this sorcery.

«Whilst examining the Sumerian class society and the history of the civilisation it created, one of the other important matters is the correlation between science and philosophy on the one hand, and mythology and religion on the other. It is generally accepted that the inventions made between 6000 and 4000 BC in the Tel Khalaf culture can only be compared to inventions and technologies that emerged



after the sixteenth century AD. To regard class society as the source of scientific inventions and technology is erroneous. On the contrary, the greatest accumulation of knowledge and technology was realised before class society and the Sumerian example proves that the ideological hegemony of the state actually played a conservative role. What Sumer added to the knowledge and technical discoveries was limited. They were largely to do with monopolising the knowledge and technical wealth of the agricultural society and establishing an ideological hegemony upon it. Knowledge was idealised as the gods' gift (*kayra*) to the humans who were regarded as the servants and functions of the gods, and not seen as the product of human labour and practice. This is one of the greatest distortions of history. The power of ideological illusion that the Sumerian priests created in the history of class society has the greatest share in the establishment of the state and the dominance of its class character over civilisation.

«Adam and Eve's fall from grace especially is the most fundamental mythological expression of the beginning of class divisions and its mythological narrative is striking and poetic. [...] The conflict between Abel and Cain reflects the clashes of those dealing with agriculture and the domestication of animals.

«The weakness of women's status is told with a poetic mythological narrative describing how the goddess lost her place and importance amongst the community of gods (*pantheon*). One step ahead in the monotheist religion the woman becomes the enslaved gender both in society and in its ideological expression and illusion. The woman is expected to shut up and be locked up. No trace remains from the era of goddesses. The woman becomes the offender and sinner who tempted Adam into committing the original sin. She is held responsible for all evils. There a striking superiority emerges in favour of the male gender, and mythology and its product religion justifies and attaches a dominant character to it. The male dominance is praised at every level and man is hailed as the sacred representative of religion. What we have here is the history of the sly augmentation of gender slavery. If you look at the older Sumerian mythology,



the grand and wise father Enki still advocates compromise with goddess Inanna, but Marduk, who later emerges as the god of Babylonia, finally strikes down the mother goddess personified in Tiamat whom he kills and shreds into pieces. «*Enuma Elish*», the epic saga of Babylonian creation, is thus important in two directions. The absolutist nature of kingship has become a made out feature, and this was written down in the historically important Codex of Hammurabi.

«Sumerian mythology established its own rules in the form of religious laws and elevated them to a status whereby breaching them would be virtually unthinkable. This marks a qualitative step in class and gender slavery and brought with it multifaceted processes of institutionalisation of hierarchies. The future for the establishment of an absolute authority equal to the divine powers was wide open. The women were doomed to private slavery in matrimony or public slavery in brothels and these steps were embodied in institutional and legal codifications.

«When polytheist religions regressed significantly in the culture and geography of the Middle East, the Patriarch Abraham came to symbolise the path that would lead towards the grand history of the monotheist religions.»



PATRIARCHY - THE ENSLAVEMENT OF WOMAN

In the course of a long process, the Kurdish movement has created structures in which women are more involved, and there are more women in leadership positions, than in most comparable social movements in the Middle East and indeed elsewhere. But both organisationally and in terms of theory, the active participation of women has created something more than strengthening the numbers. Several years ago, Ocalan said, «... I find it quite crucial to develop a thinking which expressly includes the female dimension, and gradually arrive at an ideology guided by a female viewpoint and set up a corresponding form of organisation. This is relevant to the entirety of issues before us, from tackling the problems we are facing in war to creating the conditions for a peace based on freedom.»

The gender struggle, the devastating effects of both the feudal traditional and the capitalist outlook on family and sexuality, and the possibilities of liberating social relations between women and men, were always central issues to the discourse of Ocalan and the PKK, and accordingly much attention was directed at organising women. But it is in his recent book that Ocalan concentrates on the historic and ideological ramifications of the creation of patriarchy in ancient Mesopotamia.

«The Neolithic village revolution was the second stage in the process of human socialisation after the formation of more or less stable units of people using language and tools. This particular revolution that began perhaps as far back as twelve thousand years ago, was the biggest step forward in social formation. The influence of this advance upon the development of human kind is ongoing in terms of material and moral institutions as well as mental predispositions. The



Neolithic revolution, and the sedentary rural society based on this, brought about many things that have continuously been and still are feeding civilisation. Agriculture and the domestication of animals, thoughts, lingual structures and concepts referring to such products and the relevant tools, the discovery and use of metal ores [...] are but a few of them.

«Religious worship was predominantly centred around the mother goddess. In nearly all the settlements of this period there were found numerous statuettes that may be described as mother



Children in Kurdistan

goddesses. The representation of the woman manifested itself in the stars and moon but was mainly represented as the mother of the local natural forces. It was woman's labour that created agriculture and tamed animals. As the childbearing mother, the woman became sacred as the creative force of life. Nature is the mother earth. The representation of woman as the crop-yielding force of trees, plants and nature in natural characterisations bears a deep meaning.

«The role of the male may have been powerful where hunting was



the main form of livelihood. But with the demise of hunting, the male species seemed to have lost importance. The history of the woman means the history of cereals, small size cattle, fruit trees, village households, weaving, the pickaxe and domestic mills. The basis of respect was labour and production. This is the history of produce created by labour, of socially reared children and established households. This also meant a transition from sign language to a richly expressed language, concepts based on significant productive instruments. Therefore this means a transition in the creation of human intellect. When around the 4th millenium B.C. ploughing [oxen-drawn plough] began to play an increasing role in agriculture and pastoralism became more important, this was at the expense of woman's role in production. Women were progressively confined to the house and so they remained until the present day. In this context, unarguably and with absolute certainty, the conceptualisation and inscription of history neglected women's role in history. The fundamental reason for a history without women was that due to the progression of male dominance in parallel with the process of civilization, women were gradually excluded from the institutions of sub- and superstructure of class society. The result of this is that our entire understanding of history rests on a distortion that in turn is rooted in the man-made inequality of the genders.

«The matriocentric religion of Neolithic society exerted an enduring impact on numerous later varieties of secret (mystical) philosophies. Whilst these religious formations reflected the reaction of the oppressed classes against official religion on the one hand, they also represented the female gender, her life characteristics, the religion of nature, the friendship between human and god, and her peaceful characteristics on the other. Overall, they are marked by a more worldly and secular approach. Throughout history most secret centres of worship and heterodox esoteric orders have attempted to retain a certain affinity to the female gender, but notwithstanding that they never managed to liberate themselves from the intense exploitation of the female gender inherent in social roles and codes attached to religious beliefs. The backwardness of technology and science have



much to account for this. These religious orders can be regarded as the power of opposition in the name of the oppressed in the Primordial and Middle Ages. Despite their being widespread throughout history, the fact that their leaders were vilified by cruel persecution or bought off, subjected them to considerable degeneration, torture and surveillance. However, it is also true that since Neolithic society, and until the present day, religious orders and sects in opposition have largely reflected the beliefs, resistance and lifestyles of wretched and exploited sections of humanity.

«History is the history of man who gains power as class society emerges. The hegemonic class character emerges simultaneously with the hegemonic male character. [...] Until the present day the hegemonic male character has not left us much possibilities to deal with gender issues on a scientific basis. There are even stricter taboos on gender issues than there are on religion. [...] The fact that throughout the course of history woman has been deprived of her identity and personality and has been held as the permanent prisoner of man has had more devastating effects than even the creation of social classes. The imprisonment of woman can serve as a measure for overall slavery and humiliation, a criterion for the distortion of society with lies, theft and brutality, a measure of pollution and servility. To reverse this history will inexorably have intricate social consequences. The rebirth of free woman will inevitably result in general emancipation, enlightenment and justice.»

Problems of method and the responsibility of the Intellectuals

«History is mostly being reduced to only mean as much as is supposed to serve to underline the assumption that the age of those who write it is the decisive and crucial one. [...] Any understanding of history approved by the political authorities of a given regime is bound to be instrumentalised in legitimising of the system as it is, even if it has the highest scientific ambitions. What they do is none other than



Female fighters in discussion

the practice of Sumerian priests. The use of scientific information probably makes it even more dangerous. In our scientific era the embellishment, exaggeration and demeaning of information inflicts greater damage on society than the mythological and religious influences. If mythology and religion are an opiate, then manipulative academic studies are a dagger stabbed into the core of society. Whilst it may be comparatively easy to cure the numbing effect of opium it is much more difficult to heal the piercing and mortal effects of the dagger. The most fundamental reason for regimes based on modern science and technology reaching such enormous dimensions of exploitation and oppression, is closely connected to the methods in which science as been employed and practiced, and not to the undoubtedly barbaric methods of torture and the like that the regimes apply. The responsibility of science and its representatives for all the wars, including the two world wars, poverty, environmental pollution, gender inequality, the balance of nuclear horror, excessive population boom, technological madness and the like is not less than that of the politicians and military commanders, it is certainly more. The priests of science have succumbed to this state of affairs. To point a finger at



Antiquity and the Middle Ages and immerse oneself in the clear waters of 'scientific methods' does not in reality lead to a catharsis of present civilisation. This is not an exaggeration. All comparisons indicate that the twentieth century caused more destruction, torture, starvation and disease than all the preceding centuries combined. What this proves is that: if there is to be a genuine responsibility towards history and society, the fundamental paradigms of our era, their methodologies, outcomes and by-products, their scientific methods and especially their practices, should be radically revised. Unless this is done those responsible will not be cleared of the accusation that they have not caused any lesser harm than that caused by any caste of priests or magicians.

«What I'm trying to say is that behind every damaging and painful development there is a plan or programme designed on the desk of a scientist who has completely forgotten moral values, and who never questions whom and for what purpose he serves. What lies beneath this is a twisted understanding of history and society, flawed by a lack of proportion. The historical importance of basing a reconstruction of social development on Sumerian society and its emergence from Neolithic society may be better understood in the light of this criticism: As the history of civilisation begins with Sumerians, Sumerian civilisation in turn derives its sustenance from the agrarian-village revolution the centre of which was located in the fertile environment of the land between the Tigris and the Euphrates. Since 10,000 BC this land has nourished all the civilisations that it created at the expense of its own fertility. She is the mother that gave birth to civilization. Here is the land and the people with which written history began, and where the dialectical principles of history can first be observed. I am not stating this out of sentimental or patriotic motives. I am doing this in order to satisfy the needs of the criticism I briefly stated, which is generally accepted in our modern era. I repeat the vital necessity for a correct beginning to the analysis of civilisation. It is a well-known fact that in order to describe a historical and social entity, we have to correctly conceive its beginnings. If history and society are not analysed correctly they will never be rescued from being a per-



manent source of danger and crisis. [...] Basing social projects and programmes on incorrect historical views and abstract schema has always produced bitter results in various types of social movements and state structures [...] In so far as the foundation is constructed incorrectly, and if relevant adjustments are not made when and where appropriate, collapse is inevitable. None of the preceding eras has experienced the truth of this rule as we have in the modern era.

«There are various other sources that nourish history, there are various different momentums. But the point is to determine the main source of the flow, and its strength in supporting and leading on the small rivers and lakes of other sources that, just on their own account, may not be of much consequence. However on meeting in the main channels and accumulated behind dams, they can be transformed into energy. History also has the aspect of being a mainstream. [...] The main river of the historical flow reached our modern era by being fed from numerous branches. It may have been temporarily suspended in whirlpools, or may have slowed down at times, but eventually it has grown bigger and faster. The fundamental duty of historians is to establish which societies contributed to the flow within the context of time and location. [...] Although it may be important to discuss whether development is a linear process or one in spiralling circles, this is of secondary importance to the method. [...] One of the other conclusions of my approach requires appreciation in direct proportion to its truthfulness and merits. Although history is a comprehensive whole, each element has its own place and value within it. The value of even the smallest society or ordinary individual cannot be denied. Just as history is reflected in society and society is reflected in history, so society manifests itself in the individual and the individual reflects itself in society. As an expression of the dialectical method's application to history, the most fundamental conclusion that historical materialism will reach lies within this formula.»



THE CURRENT CRISIS OF CIVILISATION

«The state as concentrated and institutionalised politics is the invention and tool of the slave age. The fact that Marxist sociology analysed it predominantly on the basis of capitalism resulted in significant omissions. The principles and structures of the state were designed by Sumerian priests. The state has no scientific foundations. As the tool of the crudest class exploitation it is based on the mythological thinking that is even more backward than religious ideology. According to the observations of priests, the state was the earthly reflection of the unchanging celestial order. In whatever way the gods ruled the celestial world, the state should rule the world in the same way. The rule of the gods, the epitome of holiness, was to be reflected in the rule of the state. This idea of the sanctity of the state is a highly dangerous view which has protected itself from the mythological beliefs of the Sumerian priests to our present age and serves to uphold exploitation and persecution.

«It may in fact be suggested that the entire history of class society has strengthened and continued this Sumerian view of the state. Each new ruling class perfected the tool even further. The state is perhaps the oldest tool in history that has remained unchanged. At the same time it remains one of the subjects on which society is most ignorant. Even religions have been through great transformations, whilst the state still remains sacred and is protected. This view is maintained because of its importance to the ruling and exploiting class. The approach to politics and the military is similar, because of their relationships with the state. The state governs the social structure, and the exploitative system based on utilising technology, using political and military means. This function is continually perfected, if necessary by means of the use of force.



«The state that capitalism took over was exactly the product of Sumerian priests. As a result of all the ruling exploitative classes' awareness that they have to seek the security that the state offers, and their knowledge that they cannot live for even one day without the state, the state becomes an icon to be worshipped. They will not question or analyse the state. They would only dress it up in new clothes, or attach to it new functions or trappings in accordance with their own identities. This is such an immensely strong tradition that even when the Soviet Revolution claimed that a workers' state had been founded, they ended up surrendering to the old clerical state. It is no coincidence that the Soviet style states were the ones that appeared most similar to the ones designed by Sumerian and Egyptian priests. The only difference that the revolutionaries of real socialism made to the state was the removal of the outward show and symbols that had been attached to it since the Sumerian age. However, it was noticed that presenting the idea of the sacred state, and the persecution and forced labour that is the essence of it, as the dictatorship of the proletariat, was self-deluding, although this was late in occurring. Tearing down the trappings was regarded as fragmentation of the state itself.

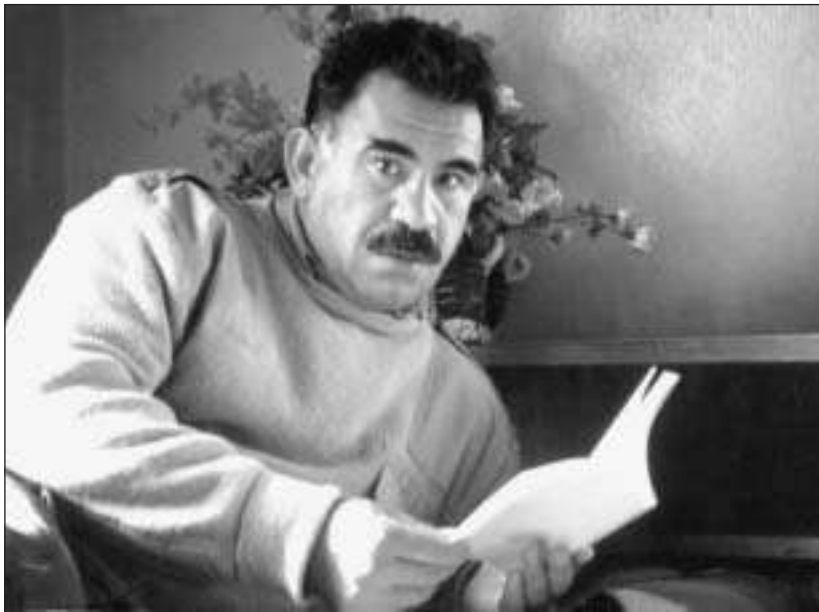
«The dictatorship of the proletariat as a phrase may be associated with the workers. But all dictatorships are about exploitation. So to uphold a dictatorship for even one day means to become a tool of exploitation. The delusion concerning the state and dictatorship was one of the reasons for the collapse of Soviet socialism. Oppressed labouring classes, and therefore societies, never need the state as a tool, because it is this tool that continues class divisions. The reason for its existence is class society.

«Whilst developing this analysis we take the classical state as our base. We intend to indicate that, and this includes the Soviet form of the state, this tool has not changed. When suggesting that the state has not changed, we mean its principles and functions. The argument is not about the existence of very different state rules throughout history. Throughout history the reason why the sincere efforts of numerous revolutionaries, who selflessly fought for a free and equal world



without oppression of humanity, came to nothing relates to mistaken concepts and actions around the state. So many systems that they founded brought the greatest problems upon them. This is because they did not understand the most sacred creation of the Sumerian priests. It is such a tool that it has the ability to continually distort and baffle society with the firmest and most ignorant basic concepts about this sanctified symbol, which is most difficult to restrain.

«Probably the most important historical outcome of the scientific-technological revolution in the 20th century was the disappearance of the material foundations of class divisions. This has to be regarded as the most important event in history. Disregarding its effects on social development, and continuing to uphold the theoretical approaches to class relations and contradictions that were shaped according to the technology of the 18th and 19th century, would be misleading. What differentiates feudalism from capitalism is scientific-technological progress. This development gave birth to all political and social insti-



Abdullah Ocalan during his days in Syria



tutions, including the nation state, the republic, and secularism. Another outcome of this development was that it accelerated class and national struggles.

«The social, political and military outcomes of the second great scientific-technological revolution in the 20th century can be seen as greater and more permanent than those of the previous one. The magnitude of the scientific-technological revolution makes this possible. The outcomes are still emerging. The first was the disintegration of the blocs. The first important outcome of this revolution was the collapse of the Soviet regime. It is generally accepted that although there were several other reasons, this revolution may have been the most important one. The second most important outcome was the nation state losing its former significance. Borders have already lost much of their significance. It is clear that communication technology has played an extraordinarily revolutionary role in this process. Orientation towards an information society gathered a speed that is incomparable with any other period. The internet itself is a great revolutionary phenomenon on its own. Theoretical analyses that fail to take into account the economic, social, political and military outcomes of the revolution in mechanical, electronic and nuclear technology cannot possibly grasp correctly the period in which we live. Furthermore, without a correct evaluation it is not possible to develop a correct political programme, strategy and tactics. It is obvious that there is a need for a profound debate, criticism and self-criticism on these matters. The most important reason for the ideological crisis encountered arises from the weakness of the level of understanding on these matters.

«If the scientific-technological revolution forces class society into an inescapable transformation, the development of the new ideological identity and political programme has great significance. History shows us that in such periods great debates and quests for solutions come about.

«Capitalism itself is dissolved as a system of civilisation. Real socialism is not the only system that has dissolved. The defeat of fas-



cism is in fact the defeat of capitalism. The defeat in the colonies is another aspect of this. And the USA's defeat in Vietnam was the defeat of neo-colonialism. What were defeated in the Second World War were in fact those structures of both systems based on old science, technology and philosophy. These structures were largely based on the scientific-technological and philosophical interpretations of mechanics. The technical level was that of an application of the laws of mechanics in the factories. There was a considerable need for the manual labour of workers. The scientific level was only at the level of nurturing positivism. Previously it has been pointed out that politics were conducted by old theories, even ones using mythological approaches. Whilst bourgeois liberalism ended up with fascism and chauvinistic nationalism, socialism ended up with etatism and social nationalism of a highly authoritarian and totalitarian kind. The Second World War was not an ordinary war. It signified the intention of a radical restoration of capitalist civilisation, which had entered into its deepest crisis. The attempts to develop a corporative rule to ensure survival that each class based social system would make during the period of its collapse bear some resemblance to extreme etatism. On the other hand, however, the Third International, which was founded to defeat the capitalist system through revolution, despite the fact that it did not suffer a defeat during the war, and indeed despite considerable successes after the war, couldn't be saved from collapse because of ideological problems.

«Attention should be drawn to the fact that both systems departed from the crisis in a state of balance, and not thorough success. This proves that capitalism can no longer strengthen its position through war, and that the era of unlimited hegemony remains in the past. Another significant point that has emerged is that bi-polarity was a wrong concept; to put it more correctly, the lines adopted in the struggle that developed between oppressed classes and nations on the one hand and capitalist imperialism on the other revealed their inadequacies and mistakes. Therefore the outcome will be neither 'the end of history' nor the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but only a deep crisis of the class based system of civilisation in its final stage of



capitalism. The other significant proof of this crisis manifested itself in the failure to put the outcomes of the scientific-technological revolution to the service of humanity in order to create the wealth, plentitude and mental advancement that they could have generated in the aftermath of the war. Had the dominant ideology and politics not existed, the technological foundations to both solve class and national contradictions without war, and to create plentitude would have already existed.

«The most favoured profit mechanism of finance capital is the international stock exchange. Profit making by means of the stock exchange, which capitalism relies on, means making great amounts of money without working. This in a way resembles the system placing itself on the gambling table. No other mechanism so clearly reveals how irrelevant and unnecessary the system has become. This situation, i.e. the decline in ownership relationships, the state of affairs of the dominant relations of production, does not only lead to harmful effects on the entire society by poisoning it with the casino mentality, but actually delays the chance of the birth of the new system. By accustoming society to the system of hunting for cheap gains (stock exchange, bonds, foreign currency etc.) social morality is made degenerate and rendered more conservative. This brings a society against creative and renovative developments. This is not a local phenomenon but a generally encountered development. If the existing capital and technological foundations were dedicated to investments in the fields of social needs, environment, health, education, and job creation, this would result in minimising class differences and solving all sorts of contradictions that may emerge with ease and without the use of force.

«The most significant matter that needs to be recognised is the fact that just as the system of civilisation based on class societies emerged as a result of technology, the removal of it will also be the outcome of the new level of technological progress. Just as technology became the powerful call to slave civilisation, it now becomes the same powerful call for the irrelevance of class society. Without the need to go



into a deeper theoretical analysis, any ordinary person with average knowledge can easily recognise that this is the reality that we all live in.

«The second important matter is to study the main characteristics of an alternative that needs to be brought on to the agenda. It is obvious that bloody revolutions will not be necessary; in other words, the technological foundations have eliminated the need for this method. Under the present circumstances, where information and communications technology enables even the shepherd in the mountains to communicate with all corners of the world via a mobile phone, and where any sort of restrictions have lost their meanings, it is obvious that with the exception of self-defence violent methods have lost their meaning. Examples from across the world clearly indicate that even the harshest state rules can no longer break the power of technology. Technology not only brings unlimited means for greater production, it also provides immense opportunities to equip the consciousness, and to arrive at a level of organisation in order to remove political obstacles. With this view the rule of class society becomes redundant and unnecessary.

«During the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, as with all the other periods of history, clandestine organisations, rebellions and lengthy wars were the inevitable methods. But the radical scientific-technological revolutions that took place for the first time in history during the second half of the 20th century have put an end to this. Some authors count three fundamental periods in history. The first period is regarded as the agricultural revolution and village society, which we often referred to. This started at around 10,000 BC and went on until 3,000 BC, i.e. the emergence of the city-state. The second period was regarded as the period of urban society, whereby urban crafts, manufacture and industry emerged. This covered the years between 3,000 BC and 1950 AD. The developments that led to the greatest scientific-technological revolution that took place after the 1950s determined the new historical period. Although this classification may have serious omissions, because of its emphasis on the



fundamental causes in the relationship between technological production and society, this view deserves attention.

«The collapse of the Soviet system clearly indicated that the balance between the blocs, which relied on the nuclear terror behind them, could not have been a permanent one. A conclusion that this was the victory of the opposing bloc is not a realistic one. The collapse only proved that insistence upon an impasse is not a solution, and that the crisis has a radical character. It revealed that in the aftermath of the Second World War the models of a solution put forward were bankrupted and became invalid. Europe's experiment with a small army and the USA's experiments with the missile shield system prove to be aimed at protecting some temporary interests and at saving the day rather than at more radical solutions.

«The reality that these brief observations have put forward is that a historical transitional period has become inevitable. This inevitability originates from the remnants of the old system of civilisation with their powerful effects on the one hand and the inability of humanity to determine the new point of departure on the other. Such transitional periods have often been encountered in history. In fact some systems presented such periods in the shape of empires. There are some striking examples of transition between the first institutionalised forms of slave civilisation and the later institutionalisations of their peak and collapse periods. Between the establishment period of the Sumerian and Egyptian Empires and the peak of the Greco-Roman Empires, Hittites, Hurrit-Mitanni, the Phoenicians and the Phrygians acted as the carriers of economical, social, political, mythological, technological and scientific achievements in a transitional role in all spheres. They became the tools of conveyance of the great achievements of civilisation to their local domains, from the East to the West. In this context particularly they bore the characteristics of a transition.

«Another more significant example is the Byzantine and Persian-Sassanid Empires' roles as the transitional stage between slave and feudal civilisations. Both of them became the link between the primi-



tive age and the Middle Age, the transition from slavery to feudalism. Another example was the western European monarchies' role as the bridge between feudalism and capitalism. Monarchies became the intermediary stages, forms of transition from feudalism to capitalism. Although Russian Tsarism and the Ottoman Empire differ from them in many aspects, they were also examples of a similar transition. Such kinds of transitional period and their established expressions become bridges between the old and newly born civilisations, and they have the elements of both civilisations in their bosoms. In fact one of the requirements of scientific philosophy is the acknowledgement that the temporary co-existence of the elements of both old and the new is inevitable. All developments in nature must go through these types of temporary co-existence. Since society is a continuation of nature, the dialectics of development are inevitably applicable to society.

«This transitional period, between the deep and permanent crisis of the old system of civilisation and the emergence of the new departure, can appropriately be called the Age of Democratic Civilisation. The rule of democratic regimes as a compromise at the end of the twentieth century was not an arbitrary choice but a consequence of the material circumstances. Arrival at that point largely depended on the determining role of the collapse of the fascist option of capitalism and of the totalitarianism of real socialism.

«Capitalism's opting for fascism cannot be reduced to the Hitlerite form of fascism. This was a process born out of the wholesale reactionary character of capitalism as a bloody regime, and the hegemony of finance capital. It has been known that such developments did not emerge only in the centres of capitalism, but also in the peripheries and fringe countries. Fascism, which became the harshest regime that history encountered, derives from the fear that the potential collapse inspired, the chauvinistic characteristics of nationalism and the increasing potential of socialism to become a system. In the foundations of its failure, however, lie the level of freedoms that humanity achieved in general, and the successes of the scientific and technological revolution. This situation forced capitalism into a new



option. Since a wholesale victory of fascism was no longer possible and collapse was not an option, a long-term compromise became inevitable. The compromise regime, which was called democracy, was not very alien. Particularly because of the great achievements of the technological revolution, democracy's ability as a regime to prove that it not only accommodated but also encouraged development, encouraged capitalism towards democracy, and this confidence increased. Despite the initially limited practices, towards the end of the twentieth century democracy was regarded as the form of life and rule that was most suitable as a universal system and it became prevalent.

«In the modern democratic process the capitalist system did not disappear, but it left its age of previously unlimited hegemony behind. Its hegemony, exploitation and lifestyle were restricted at a higher level. The modern democratic criteria are themselves the manifestation of further restriction and restraint of capitalism; capitalism is compelled to share its formerly exclusive power of exploitation and rule with labourers and the people.



Newroz celebrations in Kurdistan



«Consequently, seen from a different angle, modern democracy means the re-organisation and administration of the processes and institutions of exploitation and political rule of the whole system of capitalist civilisation. This reorganisation would enable labourers and popular groups to contribute and participate in the processes and institutions. Under this system capitalism cannot unilaterally determine exploitation and political power as it did in the past, and labourers and popular groups cannot overthrow the capitalist system entirely, and by force, in order to establish their system in a revolutionary way. [...] This reality could be called capitalism conceding a democratic transformation. Instead of facing the choice of winning or losing through bloody confrontations, capitalism sees the need for acceptance of the evolutionary process in the course of which it may win but will have to engage in redistribution as far as necessary to keep up the system. In this situation neither a return to the old days of classical capitalism, nor its annihilation through revolutions, is a valid alternative.»

The human dimension of the crisis

«Technological development [of the forces of production] has made a leap far beyond the given socio-political and ideological structures. [...] Whilst the contradiction predominantly generated developments within the inner structure of society and focusing on the framework of a fair distribution [of generated wealth] during the classical capitalist era, in the new period the contradiction has turned into one between nature, the environment and the sum total of social administrations. The national and international ruling forces played a fundamental role in the growth of the contradiction, because they did not and indeed could not use technological progress for the sake of a better reorganisation of societies and the environment due to their individual, family or group interests. The social and political forces that are in control of the nation states and the clumsy and dysfunctional supranational institutions specifically need to be named as the forces that pose a threat to



the age in which we live. Administrations that believe that the answer lies in nuclear balance and missile defence systems can still come into office, and regional problems are stirred up in order to maintain the arms race. Technologies that cause environmental damage are being silently tolerated. Sufficient resources have not been allocated for fighting the diseases spreading in proportion with technological development, for confronting the lack of education, democratically controlling the population boom, even though available technologies would make these tasks simple. Of course the old modes of production and political establishment are fundamentally responsible for the ongoing situation.

«As one always encounters narrow oligarchies and tyrannies in times of crisis and collapse in any age, today, too, there is an abundance of modern oligarchies and dictatorial regimes masking themselves as democracies. Democratic criteria do truly impose themselves, but at the same time there are authoritarian oligarchic regimes that contradict the former, and these coexist with each other in a state of interdependency. A handful of stock exchange speculators that have very little to do with production tamper with the economic structure in order to extract unmerited profits, whilst petty interest groups can bring any kind of oligarchy to political power by manipulating the media.

«It is obvious that there is a tremendous antagonism between the whole of humanity and the owners of the oligarchic regimes that are developing ever more intimate and closer relations. The magnitude of the potential dangers this situation poses is beyond doubt: Not only hunger, illness and deaths caused by regional wars, but also the rapid destruction of environment and climate to an extent that threatens to render the world uninhabitable and last not least an individualism unbound and on the loose. Against the background of a frightening population growth, we are thus heading towards a genuine Armageddon.

«No matter how often our age may be called that of information and communication, in all the institutions of sub- and superstructure, starting from the political institutions, there are still laws and rela-



tionships prevalent that have their origins in the mythological age of slavery. At the end of our analysis of capitalist civilisation we will see that the social traditions, which the state institutions occupy the centre of, have not been changed over the last five thousand years but have been continually strengthened. This institutionalisation is essentially contradictory to science. Whilst science is carried out, it becoming the fundamental principle that determines the social system is continually obstructed. For this reason the central contradiction is between, on the one hand, the state which has ideologically been defeated in mythology, religion and idealist philosophy but continues its presence as an oppressive institution, and science, which is in a position to reform society based on scientific principles, on the other.

«The age of science that is so often referred to in our days has not created the corresponding social structure. Although science itself is in constant development, an ethics of science has not been defined even on the level of principles. Therefore it is not impossible that uncontrolled science might bring forth regimes more dangerous than those of the mythological gods or the earthly representatives of the monotheistic religions.

«Just as the Sumerian priests once decreed that the divine celestial order demands that slaves be buried alive along with their defunct kings, the naked logic of self-interest as a populist form of capitalism does not know any values that could not become the object of the lust and exploitation of simple self interest. The general degeneration and vulgarity that is encountered during the crisis period of systems reaches its greatest extremes in capitalism. The magnificent age of individuality has been seemingly transformed into an age where instinct-driven, treacherous big-time theft is officially acknowledged and the interests of immoral individualism protected by most sophisticated security measures.



CRITIQUE OF REAL SOCIALISM

The discussion about local ways to a global alternative to capitalist civilisation becomes all the more important the sharper the general crisis of civilisation gets. Ocalan rejects Fukuyama's dictum of the 'end of history' just as much as Huntingdon's idea of a 'clash of civilisations'. But the practical failure of real socialism has made him critical of its faculties of evolving into an alternative to the capitalist system. The PKK had brought forward its critique of socialism - a fruit of intense debates and rich experience - for years, but it is now that the Kurdish movement has formulated an alternative on an ideological and programmatic level. Firstly, Ocalan points out that the level of knowledge at the time the founders of scientific socialism lived did not permit an analysis of early forms of society and was especially ignorant of the 'Orient': «Not even a single shard of information about the Sumerians had surfaced. Even classic antiquity was a long way from being understood correctly. No archaeological study, nor any theoretical evaluation of the Neolithic society, existed. [...] The capitalist society, which had been analysed, was only reaching the stage of its maturity. It was largely its mode of production that had been analysed. [...] Without a comprehensive analysis of the history of civilisation, a restricted analysis that predominantly relied on the economic aspects only was as groundbreaking, but just as little as having deciphered the alphabet. It is obvious that relying on such restricted grounds it would be impossible to shed light on society as a whole, let alone succeed in establishing a programme and a course of action for revolutionary transformation. Subsequent developments indicated that a share of the mistakes that resulted in failure was caused by these inadequacies.»

Secondly, Ocalan argues, even the «real-socialist revolutionaries» were still imbued with a certain amount of faith in the state as a holy insti-



Abdullah Ocalan in Palmyrah

tution, a faith handed down right from the days of the first creation of the state in Sumer. This tradition still had its repercussions in the attempts to establish a workers' state: «However, it was noticed that presenting the idea of the sacred state, and the persecution and forced labour that is the essence of it, as the dictatorship of the proletariat was self deluding, although this was late in occurring. [...] This delusion concerning the state and dictatorship was one of the reasons for the collapse of Soviet socialism.»

National liberation movements, «regarded by the centres of real socialism as objects of foreign policy» had in most cases brought about states «qualitatively inferior and degenerated» even in comparison to the «regimes of classical colonial rule» since they had attempted to realise a «second-hand copy of classic capitalism and real socialism» in alienation from social power and consciousness of history.

Accordingly, democratic society and civil institutions under real socialism were feeble, although «socialism itself is a theoretical prognosis that can only become real following thorough democratisation».

Thirdly, Ocalan regards the labour to be spent on the individual human



being as a prerequisite for a socialist society. Until each and every individual person is given the opportunity to get rid of the psychic disposition implanted into it under feudal and capitalist social relations, there can be no talk of a liberated society. «The developments that capitalism provoked in the matter of individualism are striking. This is a matter that deserves to be subjected to the deepest analysis in both its positive and negative aspects. Real socialism's attempt to propagandistically dismiss individuality as a negative collateral effect of capitalism resulted in its falling far behind on the matter of individual rights at a later stage. Socialism should have acted in the opposite way, and dealt with this matter far more intense than capitalism did. [...] The true value of any regime may be characterised best by looking at the features of the individual human beings it brings forth.» So when Ocalan repeatedly emphasises that with his book he firstly and foremostly seeks to spark off a «revolution in mentality», he makes reference to the fact that people from Middle Eastern societies will only be capable of freedom once they have stripped off obedience to authority and dogma, a repercussion of the theocratic absolutism of Medieval Islamic empires and indeed millenia of preceding forms of social regulation by material and spiritual power. In the final analysis what is required is the formation of individuality hitherto crushed under the heavy burden of age-old social restrictions and moral codes. One may point to a certain affinity to Foucault's concept of power, according to which an analysis of power ought to be less concerned with state sovereignty as an edifice, but rather with networks of power running through bodies, sexuality, family, forms of behaviour, knowledge, techniques and many other things. The state as a super-power merely co-ordinates them. As a matter of fact, an article by an anonymous Kurdish woman printed in Turkey, in dealing with Ocalan's writings in the context of the liberation of woman, argues that although states may appear as the enforcers and ruling classes as the profiteers of oppression, «the system which makes possible repression and exploitation in the first place is fundamentally formed in the gender relations, and it is in gender relations that it finds its primary manifestation.» Consequently, it would be impossible «to smash or transgress the super-structure erected above it» as long as we unquestioningly accept and reproduce «the organisational cell core over which this order takes shape».



Can Socialism become an alternative form of Civilisation?

«Socialist ideology, and the socialist system it created in opposition to the capitalist system, failed to become a different civilisation. Whether as a result of its ideological identity, or as a result of its premature birth or its mistakes, it failed to transform the longing for freedom and equality of the labourers and peoples into a differentiated development of civilisation. Despite claims for this, in the end it did not go beyond state capitalism. Numerous ideological tendencies and social movements similar to this have emerged in history. Although based on religious grounds and tribal regimes, the departures of the prophets Abraham and Moses represented tribal socialism in their initial form. Societies that were overwhelmed, replaced and terrorised, especially under the Assyrian hegemony during the antiquity in the Middle East, were only able to continue their existence in collective life forms as mystical religious orders. What is more, the clerical regimes of Sumer and Egypt were the first sacred examples of state socialism. They led the way to civilisation through state economies that somehow seem to resemble the Soviet regime. The Neolithic society prior to this was arranged as a communal society, which centred round the mother-woman. This social regime, which can be described as primitive socialism, did not know state establishment, and it existed for thousands of years. It was this regime that fermented humanity. It reverberated in the idea of paradise that continually nurtured human dreams of equality and freedom.

«Jesus Christ, and indeed the Christian movement of the first three centuries, offered the most shining example of religious socialism, both in length and in essence. The educators of this period represented ideology and practice in their personalities to such an extent that until that period they were rarely equalled.

«The departure of Islam, too, is among the foremost examples of the communal form. The equality and respect that existed amongst its members took the form of a sacred family. In its pure form the reli-



gious community (*ummah*) is a kind of feudal socialism. After both Christianity and Islam had reached state level the function of individual persons and dynasties increased and the religious community would distance itself from communal socialism. The increased importance of private property degenerated the initial socialist character and turned it into simply a hollow ideological shell. As a reaction to this privatisation, a large number of sects and religious orders continued their purity and their collective lives for a lengthy period. The numerous seemingly religious movements of the Middle Ages were in fact the collective orders of the oppressed that were opposed to the exploiting and dominant regimes. The weakness of their technological foundations prevented these movements from becoming alternative regimes based on equality and freedom. Despite the fact that some of them existed for hundreds of years, and that some even became political authorities at state level, their inability to become a model of civilisation is related to the weakness of their scientific-technological foundations. In addition in their essential ideological identities they were based on a class society model. Consequently they only epitomised the desire for equality and freedom in their dreams. On this basis they directed themselves towards sacred and human love, nurtured the dream of heaven, kept fraternal feelings alive, and transformed these into a powerful moral and literary tradition.

«Even at the birth of capitalism Mores' *Utopia*' and Campanella's *Country of the Sun*' represented the dream of an ideal socialism. Numerous individuals and societies heroically fought against religious dogmatism in the name of the freedom that gave birth to capitalism. In their struggles they did not have any doubt in their minds that they were fighting for equality, freedom and fraternity, and not for the subjection of other people as servants to their individual passions. The fundamental slogan of the French bourgeois revolution was 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'.

«And Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, stated without any hesitation that they had established their ideological identity by taking from the movements of German



philosophy, French socialism, and the English working class movement. Even this brief narrative indicates that labourers and oppressed peoples always fought for a communal life based on fraternity and an ideology that encompassed equality and freedom, that they suffered for it, and heroically resisted, from the primitive communal regime of the Neolithic era until the stage of scientific socialism. If they were unable to establish the regimes they deserved, the reason for this was neither lack of conviction nor insufficient struggle but the lack of the technological circumstances with which to reach their sacred aim. It was because of their technological backwardness that they were condemned to the civilisation of class society.

«The working class movement under the guidance of the Communist Manifesto was the last link of equality and freedom in this chain of history. The authors of the manifesto were aware of the utopian character of the movements prior to theirs. For this reason they made a diligent effort to be scientific. However their scientific nature was restricted to their era. Capitalism was going through its most mature age and it had just started to encounter crises. It had immense self-confidence. It claimed that history began with capitalism, and that this was destined for eternity. No matter how scientific it was, this socialism could not yet step solidly on the ground. The working class movement was at its infant stage. There was no sign of a liberation movement in the colonies. Despite this, they were not reluctant to courageously declare the class stance both ideologically and practically by establishing the First and Second Internationals during the second half of the 19th century. The aspect in their stance that deserved respect was their relentless struggle for and defence of workers' rights. That was the prophetic aspect of their stance. The talk of such periods could not have been a debate about whether the strategy was suitable or not. In his rebellion against the terrible regime of Rome, Jesus was not in a position to think about strategy and tactics, and he was without any weapon other than his firm belief in his god. However, he did not have the slightest hesitation in taking the step forward that was meant to enable humanity to enter into a stage of infinite freedom, which did become a significant step in history. Steps



of this nature were always granted sanctity. The movements of the founding heroes of socialism, and their initial social basis, also deserve such sanctity. Political successes or bitter losses were secondary issues in comparison with the essence of their struggles.

«The failure of the Paris Commune and the collapse of the Second International did not prevent scientific socialism from further embracing its aims, and in the Leninist stage it achieved a great political strength and state power. In the classical definition, one third of the world declared that the proletariat and oppressed nations had made the transition to the age of socialist civilisation. It laid claim to being in competition with capitalism in all spheres of life. For the first time in history the republics of equality and the freedom of the oppressed truly showed their strength by standing on their own feet for a lengthy period. However, these republics collapsed, they lost their historical significance before the end of the 20th century without lasting even a hundred years. Whilst the propaganda motivated scientists of the bourgeoisie declared this development to be the bankruptcy of socialism, Marxists judged the same development to represent various forms of betrayal, and those who piously believe in socialism regarded it as the collapse of their sacred dreams. More sober minded and genuinely scientific approaches concluded that both the great disappointment and the betrayal theories were easy options based on subjective judgement. Whatever had happened was expected to happen. Dreams and desires had collapsed because they did not fulfil or represent what was expected of them. As opposed to being disenchanted or pleased about this, the method of science has always been to question where the truth lies, and to find a path to success.

«The Soviet experiment has not been subjected to analysis in depth, and, even more significantly, all the outcomes of its collapse have not yet become apparent. Various matters are still in the dark, and are waiting for a new era. Despite this, the factors that are already apparent indicate the failures of the philosophy and practice. The questioning of whether the practice was socialism, or nationalism,



was freedom, or totalitarianism, or was equality or state capitalism is just beginning. These questions do not belittle the genuine historical importance of the struggle of millions of labourers and numerous heroes, who upheld the belief and consciousness of scientific socialism, and they do not suggest that these struggles were in vain. On the contrary, as the only correct path through which to own up to these values, this questioning points out the indispensable importance of the correct analysis of this practice, filtering it through the sieve of science. Without successfully completing this task successful progress towards achieving the sacred aims of freedom and equality cannot be possible.

«History has often witnessed grave errors, which have led to the exact opposite of the desired outcomes being fought for. It will happen again. As long as human life forms exist, they will understand how to arrive at a more correct scientific expression of the noble ideals of equality and freedom and will ensure a decisive advance along the correct path and achieve success.

Dogmatism and Individuality

«It is not a coincidence that individualism was the domain in which real socialism was defeated most badly. This is because its greatest delusion, and probably its greatest treachery and injustice, concerned the matter of the individual human being. If real socialism was abandoned in a hurried fashion for capitalism despite all of its mistakes, this - no matter how deservedly it may be criticised - indicates that the sensitivity to the individual and the individual's rights, along with the provision of certain concrete measures, was one of the reasons for this preference. The individual's freedom is one of the issues that should not be left solely to capitalism. Let us keep in mind that during its departure from the Middle Ages, and throughout the Renaissance, capitalism started to gather strength by promoting the individual, who began to recognise himself.



«Clarity on this point is very significant. Individuality and individualism are two different matters. However much individuality is important, individualism is a matter that should be avoided just as much. Capitalism extracted the individualism from individuality. These two concepts lead to very different ends. Socialism cannot be possible without individuality. One cannot become either a consistent democratically minded person or a socialist whilst having a feudal character that is a remnant of the Middle Ages, or the individualism of a capitalist character that co-exists this. Individuality is a very comprehensive matter. Western civilisation covered a great distance on this matter. Individuality primarily questions the process that lasted hundreds of thousands of years, and employed all sorts of methods, and that resulted in the individual's dissolution into a society that knew no boundaries. Seeking answers to questions concerning the extent and benefits of socialisation, and at which point it becomes meaningless and harmful, is an important task. Answers to the question of what the benefits would be, and the harms, of fully belonging to a society, tribe, religious or secular order will give a more realistical idea of the significance of individuality. Slave society's answer was the annihilated individual, who was unable to own even his own shadow, and who was alienated from itself to the degree that she or he was buried alive in the monarch's grave upon the king's death. The slave society mentality broke the individual's will to such an extent that it simply turned it into a tool and a material existence subjected to ownership.

«The feudal age and feudal society softened the level of slavery. Yet the hegemony of dogmatism was very powerful. The fate of the human was determined before his birth. A deep fatalism paralysed the mind and spirit. There was no need to think and create. The most revered will had determined everything anyway. There was no need to waste effort. Whatever had been decided would have to happen. The luck secured would be the amount that god had determined. The fatalism that had mortal effects throughout the period, during which the Middle Eastern civilisation became especially conservative, was born thus. In fact, this logic can be retraced to the point where Plato's



philosophy was being converted into theology. In the name of Islam and Christianity initial ideas turned into dogmas as the consequence of theology. This led the way to a mortal effect that prepared the ground for freezing the mind and dulling the spirit for thousands of years. This was the essence of dogmatism.

«During its emergence, western individuality fought mercilessly with church dogmatism. The formerly progressive philosophies of Aristotle and Plato were converted into the stereotyped dogmas of blind faith, in order to receive submissive humans through the church and mosque.

«Even if it was to a limited degree, dogmatism was transcended by the progress of scientific methods and the birth of the Renaissance. Humanity began to break dogmas like a bursting dam, engulfing the world, becoming creative, loving and becoming itself. Using the powers unfolded by the birth of the individual, capitalism wielded individualism as a weapon, in order to launch a new beginning. This time individualism developed to such an extent that leashing it became a problem, and whilst the god kings had been singular they now became thousands. The pendulum went from one extreme to the other. Despite this what happened was one of the greatest revolutions in the history of humanity. The individual, who was liberated from the shadows of artificial gods and all kinds of dogmas, gathered such a speed that restricting individualism and leashing the profit crazy capitalist became a big problem. The balance was lost. There was a desperate need for counter precautions. Otherwise the capitalist individualism would have torn to pieces the society that symbolised the accumulation of atomised labour for hundreds of thousands of years. At this point socialism became an indispensable historical need.

«Socialist ideas, and the development of scientific socialist theories, were the product of this historical necessity. Once the narrow class approach was transcended socialism would have played this historical role against capitalism on behalf of the whole society, and would express its strength to stand against capitalist individualism in the vital interests of humanity.



«However, exactly at this point, the reaction against individualism and profit mindedness brought along with it the undermining of the significance of individuality. Real socialism in particular regarded individuality as the propaganda game of western civilisation. It regarded individuality and human rights matters as material for ideological attacks, and felt the necessity for rigid precautions against such concepts. This stance was one of the most significant reasons for real socialism's dissolution on individuality and individual rights. In the end it received a blow in this domain and the course of its collapse was accelerated.

«It is possible to further develop criticisms directed against real socialism in various areas. The intention of these attempted criticisms, presented as outline definitions, is of course to clarify concepts such as the socialist individual and society. Despite the negative aspects suggested about real socialism, it is nevertheless true that the transformation of the age of history it intended was conversion of a utopia into a concrete, practical matter. Whilst the disintegration process points to errors, it also sheds light on what the correct solutions should be. The collapse elements were utopianism, which had a powerful historical foundation, and her twin sister vulgar materialist philosophy. It is obvious that both approaches could not represent scientific socialism. On the contrary, the more that scientific socialism transcends all sorts of dogmatic utopianism, and purifies dialectical materialist philosophy from vulgar materialism, the better the 'ideological identity' of humanity, the indispensable guidance for action and life that follows the path of the new departure of civilisation, can be established in an able and practical way. With the new ideological identity, individuality and social existence, freedom and equality can be balanced on the basis that the technology provides, and the intended social transformations can play their role in a permanent fashion in the openings of the new civilisation. Scientific socialism will assume this role by establishing itself as the left wing of modern democratic civilisation. Humanity will believe in the existence of democratic civilisation, comply with its requirements, and the vic-



tory of scientific socialism will be secured in the awareness that the most esteemed motto of humanity 'from each according to their ability and to each according to their need' cannot be achieved unless modern democratic civilisation is achieved and its requirements are complied with.



THE OVERALL IMPLICATIONS OF GENDER STRUGGLE

«The freedom of woman is central to the formation of the new civilisation. It will create a balance and ensure general equality. After having been erased from society following the dissolution of Neolithic society, woman is to take her place under free and equal conditions for the first time. All the necessary theoretical, programmatic, organisational and practical works necessary for that end have to be done. We can say that the transformation that woman shall generate is going to be the most radical transformation in society. All sections of society can be only as equal and free as woman is. The democratisation of woman will determine the outcome of the attempts to permanently install democracy and secularism. This short programmatic definition is meant to show that the new social movement will draw its uniqueness from the colours of woman.

«The women's movement is a movement for peace, democracy, it is a movement that aims at stopping war where it is meaningless, but it is at the same time a call to arms for all these ends. The women's question has always been postponed, and now it needs to be prioritised. That is what I have been trying to do. Unless women emancipate themselves first, it is rather unlikely that even those men regarding themselves as most progressive will make any proper contribution to liberation of the classes, of the nation, of society, culture and so forth. I have realised that in order to make sociological studies of Kurdish society one must begin with the situation of woman. The role allotted to woman has always been that of an adjunct of the man who rules over her. This situation underlies any class society from its very beginning, and this in turn is the point at root where all oppression of woman starts. From my own



ethical viewpoint, this must be dismissed as highly unethical. We should want woman to be entirely free, rule herself as much as she can, gain as much awareness as she can, unfold her powers.

«This is a starting point. The various feminist movements have few chances to realise a female ideology and practise the liberation of woman; our movement is more radical in that it does not only treat the problem as one of gender - of one sex -, it does not treat the problem on a feminist basis. In fact it does do that, too, but at the same time it goes beyond that. While gaining a full understanding of gender, our movement tries to incorporate all of the social and political implications this has into its overall scope in the form of social necessities. It endeavours to arrive at an appropriate ideology and form of organisation and seeks to become the carrier of the necessary collective will-power to accomplish this task. It might come as something new but I am convinced of the necessity of this outlook, especially if we are to respond to the increasingly discussed issues of peace and environmental protection. In transforming society from the shame-



Women take a prominent place in the popular uprising



fully spoiled and somewhat fascistic character it has attained under male dominance into a peaceloving society that is imbued with the love of nature and rejects wars, the liberation of women and an overall ideology focusing on women's liberation is of vital importance.

«In short, the female ideology is not a gender ideology but a social ideology. If we are to approach all problems within this principled, ideological framework, I guess we will have to revise all approaches, ideologies, and consequently all forms of organisation based on them, be it in the economic, cultural, political or military field that have been there hitherto. And one very important part of this is the family. Why? Because it is a patriarchal institution and therefore generates war, inequality, suppression.

«The ultimate victory of democratic society is only possible with woman. The oppressed peoples which have been literally crushed into the ground vis-a-vis class society ever since the Neolithic age and woman, who shares this destiny, are those with the real potential for democratic advance. They are both taking their revenge from this history for what it has made them suffer and placing themselves on the left-wing of democratic civilisation, thus they create the antithesis and became the most determined social forces in the path to a truly equal and free society. The democratisation of the Middle East - as an antithesis to decaying European civilisation - will be possible through the participation of women primarily, followed by the youth in general. The awakening of women and their participation in history truly amounts to the establishment of an antithesis to given civilisation. The world of women, their consciousness, their love and protectiveness, may well give birth to new values of civilisation. It is male domination of civilisations based on class characteristics that has put women in the position of being a powerful antithesis. If they overcome class differences and put an end to male dominance, this will in fact go beyond posing an antithesis; it will have the value of being a new synthesis. Consequently, the fact that women have the leading role in the democratisation process of the Middle East bears the historical characteristics of both an antithesis (due to the Middle Eastern origins) and at the same time of a synthesis.»



Abdullah Ocalan - A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

As a child of poor parents Abdullah Ocalan was born in Omerli, a village in the Halfeti-District, Province of Urfa, in the Kurdish Southeast of Turkey in 1949. Leaving his village after secondary school, he studied Political Sciences at the University of Ankara. He successfully completed his studies and entered the civil service in Diyarbakir. Influenced by the unacceptable situation of the Kurdish people, who were denied the right to live their own identity and culture by the Turkish state, Abdullah Ocalan became an active member of the Democratic Cultural Associations of the East, an association supporting the Kurdish people's demands. After the military coup in 1971 he progressed to investigate the Kurdish question. In 1978 the Kurdistan Workers Party, PKK, was founded with Abdullah Ocalan being the party leader, a post he retains until today. Besides numerous works on culture and the general situation of his people, Mr. Ocalan has explored subjects like philosophy, matters of faith, gender and environmental issues in plenty of lectures and books.

In response to the continuing persecution, the Kurdistan Workers Party, PKK, launched an armed struggle against the Turkish central government in 1984. Their aim was to exercise the right to self-determination of the Kurdish people. During this war approximately 40,000 people lost their lives.

Since 1993 the PKK declared several unilateral ceasefires to stop the war. But neither the military nor the political leadership of the Turkish state were willing to extend a conciliatory hand to the Kurdish liberation movement. Even legally elected members of the Turkish National Assembly who did not deny their Kurdish origin were accused of «separatism» and have since served prison sentences of over ten years. An uncountable amount of human rights violations have been committed against the Kurdish people. Since then, thousands of complaints have been lodged with the European Court for Human Rights in Strasbourg and the Turkish state has been found guilty in many instances.

On 1 September, 1999, the PKK stopped the armed struggle and withdrew their units from Turkish territory. Thus they wanted to contribute to a political, democratic solution for the Kurdish question. They have indicated they would be prepared to lay down their arms if adequate steps are taken to address the problems. They stand up for a solution of the Kurdish question within the borders of the Turkish territory and demand constitutionally guaranteed rights for Kurdish identity and culture. They demand the right to an unhindered practice of Kurdish culture, the right to education in their mother tongue, a general amnesty for reconciliation within society and also the right for free political activities and organisation. For the return of the over 3 million displaced persons and refugees to their homes, the movement demands security, compensation and the reconstruction of the war-damaged infrastructure. So far, little progress has



A PKK contingent in Lebanon in the early eighties

been made. To be successful, a democratic understanding has to be developed within Turkish society. Freedom for Kurdistan, Democracy in Turkey - both these aims are tightly linked. On 4 April 2002, the PKK with its 8th Party Congress announced that the process of transformation and change would reach a climax with a new program and statutes. The party declared that the PKK had fulfilled its duties and aims and was disbanded. KADEK (Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress) was formed on 4th April 2002 and Abdullah Ocalan was elected as the General President of KADEK. Although mainly concerned with political activities, the KADEK has declared they would defend their positions in the event of any attack.

It is not since today that Abdullah Ocalan is being regarded as a national leader of the Kurdish people in wide sections of the population. Mr. Ocalan has been held under solitary confinement on Imrali Island in the Turkish Sea of Marmara since he was captured in Kenya on the 15th of February, 1999, in a manner contravening international law. Though initially sentenced to death, this sentence was commuted into life-long aggravated imprisonment when death penalty was conditionally abolished in Turkey in August 2002. As far as the conditions of imprisonment allow, Mr Ocalan tries to contribute to the difficult process of finding a peaceful solution for the Kurdish question. Although Turkish parliament has abolished the death penalty and allowed for broadcast and publication in Turkey, little has in fact



changed for the Kurdish people.

On 12 March 2003, the European Court of Human Rights has found Turkey guilty of breaching Mr Ocalan's human rights. The court held that the manner of detention was flawed in several respects, that he did not enjoy a fair trial in a domestic court and that the imposition of a death sentence following an unfair trial amounted to cruel and inhumane treatment. On the same day, the Democratic People's Party (HADEP), part of a progressive alliance for peace and democratisation, was outlawed. It was on that day, too, that Ocalan could see his lawyers and relatives for the first time in four months.

Although the decision announced by the ECHR on 12 March addressed important points concerning Mr Ocalan's individual rights, it has not tackled the political dimensions of this extraordinary case - notably the European involvement in the abduction has not been an issue of consideration for the Court.

Situation of imprisonment of Abdullah Ocalan

- ◆ Since his illegal abduction from Kenya in February 1999, Abdullah Ocalan is imprisoned on the Prison Island of Imrali, in the Sea of Marmara. He is the only prisoner on the fortress.

- ◆ The cell in which Mr. Ocalan is imprisoned is sized at 13 sqm. All sanitary facilities are located in the same cell.

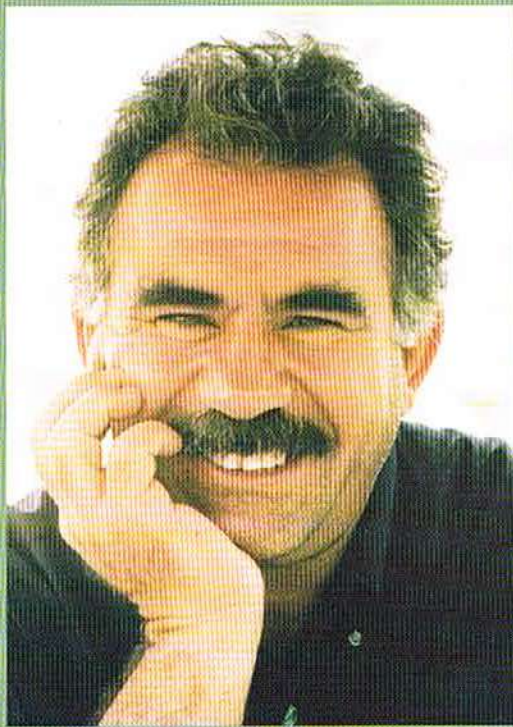
- ◆ Mr. Ocalan is allowed aeration for 1 hour twice a day. The aeration room is a pebbled yard, sized approx. 40 sqm. The yard is surrounded by walls and covered by barbed wire on top, so the sky can only be seen from between these wires.

- ◆ Mr. Ocalan receives legal visits for 1 hour a week. The only other visitors who are allowed to see him are close relatives, once a month, for the same period. Scheduled visits are often cancelled by the authorities under the pretext of adverse weather conditions.

- ◆ His freedom of information is strongly restricted. He cannot watch TV, his radio is manipulated so that only a single station can be received. Many of the books brought by his lawyers are not handed out to him, and very few of the letters he receives are given to him, even these undergo censorship.

- ◆ Due to the hard conditions of solitary confinement the state of health of Mr. Ocalan is impaired. Problems of respiration are increasingly a cause for concern. Under the conditions of the Prison Island of Imrali successful therapy is impossible.

- ◆ The described conditions of detention find no comparable example in Turkey whatsoever.



"No matter how often our age may be called that of information and communication, in all the institutions of sub- and super-structure, starting from the political institutions, there are still laws and relationships prevalent that have their origins in the mythological age of slavery. At the end of our analysis of capitalist civilisation we will see that the social traditions, which the state institutions occupy the centre of, have not been changed over the last five thousand years but have been continually strengthened."