

# The new PKK Part 1



## The New PKK

### Between Extremism, Political Violence, and Strategic Challenges (Part 1)

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[zur deutschen version](#)

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Contrary to its importance for Turkey's political development and for European domestic security, the (banned) *Kurdistan Workers' Party-PKK* has only rarely been the object of academic interest. Furthermore, most papers are problematic, as their authors position themselves either as opponents of, or apologists for, the organisation. Important exceptions worth mentioning are the publications by Aliza Marcus[1], who was the first to pen a sober history of the PKK, as well as the section dealing with the new PKK - or KCK - in a collection of articles on Turkish foreign policy, edited by Baskın Öran[2]. Marcus' papers cover three decades, from the organisation's beginnings in the radical, left-wing Turkish student scene of the 1970s up to the crisis at the beginning of the new millennium. She primarily deals with PKK policy in Europe and the insurgency against Turkey; she does not focus on ideology and organisation.

The present paper will attempt the opposite: the PKK's ideology and organisational structures will be analysed on the basis of its own documents and selected works by Abdullah Öcalan.[3] The organisation's historical development and current positioning will only be referred to in order to position the ideology and explain the structure. It is not intended to provide a comprehensive history of the PKK, the production of which would be premature, anyway. Despite this, the organisation's realignment and restructuring can only be understood against the background of recent developments, from Öcalan's arrest in 1999 until today.

#### From PKK to KCK

When Turkish special forces arrested Abdullah Öcalan, the fugitive leader of the PKK (in Kenya in 1999), and returned him to Turkey, the end of the PKK seemed nigh. One year before, and following a dramatic power struggle with Ankara, Damascus had expelled the PKK and closed down its camps in Lebanon.[4] About the same time, and by using the classic counter-insurgency methods (resettlement, employment of special forces, mountain combat), the Turks had managed to regain the initiative and push out the PKK fighters, who withdrew to the region of the Qandil Mountains, on the Iraq-Iran border. Regrouping and resuming combat was out of the question for the PKK: first, because it was only tolerated in its fallback areas in northern Iraq and severely restricted in its freedom of action and movement by the regional government of Kurdistan, and second, because the PKK went through an existential crisis, as well as one of legitimisation.

This crisis led to a power struggle, which the radicals around Cemil Bayk, Duran Kalkan, Mustafa Karasu and Murat Karaylan managed to decide for themselves. Their victory led to the exit of the reform wing around Osman Öcalan, Nizamettin Ta, Hdr Sarkaya, ahnaz Altun and Faysal Dunlayc. Above all, the members of this group criticised the leader cult concerning Öcalan, the brutal and random executions within the organisations (see below), as well as its claim to sole representation. Their position was therefore more self-critical, democratic, and geared towards all of Kurdistan. This was also reflected in the *Party of Democratic Patriots Kurdistan-PWD*, founded by them and located in Iraq,[5] which is committed to cooperation with other Kurdish parties and a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question in Turkey. As a political force, however, the PWD hardly plays any role. The only thing of some relevance is that the exit of veteran cadres and the foundation of the PWD marked the apex of the massive crisis which the PKK went through between 1999 and 2002. General war-weariness in Turkey and prospects of a peaceful settlement of the Kurdish question in the course of the country's EU-initiated democratisation seemed to guarantee the end of Kurdish resistance as organised by the PKK.

There are many factors that actually made the organisation's return to the political and military scene possible. The Turkish government, as well as the PKK, stymied any emerging, alternative Kurdish forces, so that the PKK continued to be able to dominate Kurdish politics. The PKK's resurgence, however, especially required the reductionist view of the Kemalist elites, not only during the *Neo-Kemalist Phase* between 1997 and 2006).[6] Following the confrontation with the Erbakan government in 1997 and Öcalan's arrest in 1999, they felt politically as well as ideologically vindicated, and thus refused to see the Kurdish aspect of the PKK-led insurgency.[7] The political dimension of the Kurdish question therefore continued to be ignored, and the emergence of the PKK regarded exclusively as a problem of security policy, possibly also of economic underdevelopment. *Mountain Turks* - the Kemalist way of referring to Kurds for over a century - may no longer have been acceptable, yet public recognition of the Kurdish language(s) remained completely out of the question: in 1999, President Süleyman Demirel still rejected the demand for Kurdish language training in schools and for Kurdish to be used in the mass media, citing an alleged threat to national unity.[8] Using this logic, the Turks ignored the imprisoned PKK leader for years. He used the time and reinvented himself on moral, the prison island. Since then he has been presenting himself as a Kurdish Nelson Mandela.

In his writings, Öcalan dealt with his organisation's existential crisis by joining the debate between the PKK organisations located in Europe and the leadership in the Qandil Mountains, and by calling for the PKK's ideological and organisational restructuring.[9] Apart from the internal conflict over policy, it was especially the changed geopolitical situation in the region which could no longer be interpreted with the organisation's simple, anti-imperialist ideology. The rebranding of the PKK - officially disbanded in 2002[10] - can be regarded as the outward sign of this ideological and organisational clarification process: in 2002, the *Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress-KADEK* replaced the PKK. This was disbanded in 2003, and its place was taken by the *Kurdistan People's Congress (Kongra-Gel)*, which was absorbed into the *Democratic Confederation of Kurdistan-KKK*, which, in the same year, was renamed *Group of Communities in Kurdistan (KCK)*; on the problem of terminology see below). At approximately the same time, Öcalan ordered the creation of new PKK, now KCK-structures, in other countries of the region.

## The KCK Agreement

The new form of organisation was laid down in a paper published in Turkish in 2005, which became known as the *KCK Agreement (KCK-Sözleşmesi*, cited as Agreement). A pdf-file of the document's complete version - with both prefaces and the KCK symbol on the front page - was published on the PKK fanpage of a certain Azad Badiki.[11] A version without preface was published and analysed by the Turkish think-tank *Ankara-Strateji*.[12] A Persian and an Arab version were published in 2014. Both are similar in gist to the Turkish text, however with the content adapted to the Iranian and Syrian conditions, respectively. The Persian version became known by the title *Complete Text of the Social Contract of the Democratic and Free Society of the East (KODAR)*. This document is no longer accessible on the internet,[13] in contrast to the Syrian (Arab) version, which was even translated into English.[14] No Kurdish version (Zaza, Kurmanci, or Sorani) has yet been published.

The text consists of two parts: (a) two philosophic-ideological preambles or prefaces and (b) the 46 Articles (*maddê*) divided into 13 sections (*bö lûm*) making up the KCK Charter. Both parts are similar to the prefaces and statutes of the old Kongra-Gel.[15] Öcalan's authorship is only certain with regard to the first of the two preambles of the KCK Agreement, the second invokes him with extensive quotes from his speeches and writings. In their historical and philosophical discourses, both hark back to the Manifesto, published in 1978 by the PKK Central Committee.[16] They were, however, expanded by the new political and scientific insights Öcalan, the voracious reader, gathered in prison. This especially concerns the adoption of eco-anarchic concepts by the New York born, radical socialist Murray Bookchin (1921-2006), which Öcalan combined with his hitherto predominantly Leninist approach.[17] The statutes, however, are likely to be revisions, which he edited. The way it was formulated, this Charter lies somewhere between national constitution and party programme, which would reflect the text's historical development.

The text of the KCK Agreement is certainly no masterpiece. It is extremely ideological and organisation-driven. In addition, several points are difficult to understand, because precise instructions concerning the organisational structure are pitted against imprecise and contradictory terminology. In some cases, the meaning of terms is actually changed into the opposite (e.g. *democratic*) or entirely disposed of (e.g. *confederalism*). The verbatim Turkish translation of Kurdish titles and terms also means something different than the version used by the organisation. In addition, the suspicion arises that Öcalan uses "*society*" (*toplum*) synonymously with "*collective*" (*topluluk*).

Ideologically and organisationally, the text falls squarely into the programmatic tradition of other authoritarian regimes in the region. The following will examine the KCK Agreement concerning its ideological content and the intended organisational structure.

## Ideology

As was to be expected, assessments of the ideological content of the Agreement vary. Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden regard the paper as a great and new "*radically-democratic*" concept of the PKK.[18] The authors, however, overlook the organisation's many problematic aspects, especially its authoritarian and undemocratic nature. In contrast, Mümtazer Türköne and Tayfun Sezer regard the Agreement as nothing more than a continuation and adaptation of hackneyed PKK positions or as a variation of the Soviet system.[19] In this interpretation, however, they ignore the question of why the organisation is perceived as attractive, and simply factor out Turkey's actual political problem, namely the Kurdish question. The PKK/KCK is primarily a guerrilla organisation and therefore hardly democratic, something liberal authors such as Oran have already drawn attention to.[20] The PKK-KCK continuity is laid down in Article 36 of the Agreement, according to which the PKK "*is no classic party, pursuing power, but an ideological, moral, and organisational being*", which "*is the ideological force within the KCK system*". This is why "*everybody active within the KCK system must apply the PKK's ideological and moral standard*". Seen this way, the KCK is the ideological and organisational casing for the PKK.

## Communist Heritage 'Kurdified'

In many ways, the KCK remains faithful to the PKK's extremely left-wing-Turkish history.[21] Article 41 of the Agreement formulates one of the utopian goals of the KCK to be the creation of a regional confederation on the basis of brotherliness and equality to "*create a just global system, without exploitation and oppression, against global imperialism*".

This is also where the KCK's economic policy belongs. Economic activity and property are allowed for everybody, pursuant to Article 7m, providing that it is not based on exploitation or results in "*status differences*" (*statü eitsizli*). Article 4a and, similarly, Article 35b of the Agreement formulate "*the safeguarding of the transition from a metastasising economy, geared towards profit, to a communal (komünal) economy, geared towards practical value and participation*", as a further purpose of the KCK system. Kurdish businessmen and entrepreneurs such as Mehmet Aslan from the Chamber of Commerce in Diyarbakır[22] criticises the inflexible position of the KCK/PKK as naïve and romantic.[23] As a rule, such criticism is regarded as inadmissible and is rejected.[24]

Symbolism and emblematics also remain shackled to the revolutionary left: the only things to disappear were sickle and hammer, the red star remained, to which was added the solar symbol, which had already been present in the red-green flag of the Kongra-Gel, but was now reunited with the red star. Various branches of the PKK sport variations of red-yellow-green, except women's groups, where purple dominates. KCK supporters generally avoid carrying the Kurdish national flag (red-white-green with the solar symbol), as this is identified too much with the "*reactionary*" regional government of Kurdistan in Iraq.

Kurdishness naturally plays a central role; it is, after all, the most important motivation for the fighters to join the organisation. Article 4h demands a democratic solution to the Kurdish question, recognition of the Kurdish identity at all social levels, and education in the mother tongue. The fact that the Agreement does not support these general demands with concrete suggestions or models is, at first sight, not problematic. Much more tricky is the fact that neither the Agreement nor any other important PKK/KCK text broaches the issue of the linguistic differences between Zaza and Kurmanci speakers, to mention only the most important languages of the Turkish Kurds.[25] Hülya Oran, co-chairwoman of the KCK, acknowledged that, in twenty years with the PKK guerrilla, she forgot her Zaza and had to learn Kurmanci. A fate she shares especially with Alevite speakers of Zaza, who, in the PKK, are linguistically assimilated into Kurmanci or Turkish, and culturally into Islam.[26] As most PKK/KCK members come from Turkey, Turkish is the command language, just like that of the information texts and all of Öcalan's publications, which are only slowly being translated into Kurmanci; ethnic Turks such as Duran Kalkan and Mustafa Karasu hold high-level positions in the organisation.

One possibility to retain communist ideas and to combine these with Kurdishness is to indigenise core Marxist terms. This is why, in the preface (Agreement, p 4), Öcalan draws attention to the following point: "As you know, the word *Kom* [community, union] is Aryan. The words *komün* [commune] und *komünizm* [communism] can be traced to the same origin. The Kurdish word *Kom* means any type of commune." It must be added that, by *commune*, Öcalan does not understand an administrative unit, but the revolutionary *Commune de Paris* of the 1870/71 uprising. The same applies to the use of the Kurdish word *civak* (society) in the text of the Agreement. *Civak* is consistently translated as "democratic society" (*demokratik toplum*). The same applies to the use of historical-sociological arguments, such as, e.g., the positive assessment of the historical role the clans and the tribal confederations played. In the Agreement, these are introduced as representatives of a "natural, democratic, communal (*komünal*) society" who had opposed the "centralisation of national society" (Agreement, p 2). This positive assessment is surprising, given decades of tensions between the PKK and the region's tribes. The implicit, but compellingly logical, conclusion from the argument is that the Kurds had already been communist before communism had existed, or that all Kurds tend towards communism. Such protochronic arguments are not really new, and were already used by the Romanian communists.[27] During the battle for Kobane, the indigenisation produced odd results, with the PKK interpreting the fighting as an "Aryan-semitic culture war".[28]

## Ecology and Feminism

The attempt was, however, made, to overcome dogmatic Marxism through the introduction of new, left-wing discourses. This is nowhere clearer than in questions of ecology and feminism. Suitable terminology and paradigms were, on the one hand, taught by Europe's eco-left, and, on the other hand, are the product of Öcalan's Bookchin reception.

### Ecology

The latter certainly applies to Öcalan's political ecology, which is, however, only feebly represented in the Agreement. The rest of Öcalan's texts also has little to say about ecological ideas or ecological awareness.[29] Ecology is only briefly mentioned in Article 11, nonetheless, and without any further explanation, the preface (Agreement, p 6) calls for an ecological revolution. Article 9e employs Bookchin's terminology by stating that "life in an eco-collective (*eco topluluk*)" and "in harmony with the ecological balance" are fundamental rights. Articles 10f and 10g commit everyone to the protection of the environment. Here, the Agreement seems to lag behind political developments in the region, because for the past twenty years a strong eco-activism has informed the political realities of south-east Anatolia. In eastern Turkey, the protection of the environment has a fundamentally different significance, as it must inevitably address the issue of the ecocide carried out by the armed forces (burning down forests, dam projects for military-strategic reasons)[30] and is therefore part of the debates on security as well as environmental policy.

### Feminism

Öcalan and the PKK/KCK have, without doubt, made important contributions to feminism. The PKK is the only organisation in the region, apart from the *Baath Party* in Syria and the last remaining communist splinter groups, to propagate equal rights for women on a secular basis (e.g. Articles 4c and 4d). Every year, on 8 March, on the occasion of *International Women's Day*, Öcalan sends a personal message, and the Agreement stresses the importance of feminism and of women's liberation; because "the level of freedom in a society depends on the level of freedom women in this society can enjoy" which means that "one cannot speak of true democratisation and the creation of a free, socialist life if one does not battle the dominant, male ideologies, morals, and culture" (Agreement, p 6).

Ideological support for this is provided in numerous texts by Öcalan, who assesses feminism positively and understands it to be an uprising against the oldest form of exploitation - i.e. patriarchy.[31] Required reading for the guerrilla is, above all, Öcalan's text *Killing the dominant male is the fundamental principle of socialism*[32] of which numerous versions exist. It must be added that "male" (*erkek*) and "male ideology" means any form of patriarchy and *machismo*. Years ago, (almost) all the KCK's top positions were double-headed (a man and a woman) and a quota of 40% was laid down for the People's Congress (Article 12a). The leadership is made up of five men and two women.[33]

The defence of Kobane made the female units of the PKK/KCK world-famous and produced a lot of sympathy for the PKK in the West. Women joining the PKK/KCK guerrilla understood this as an act of liberation from the paternalisms of both the Turkish state and of the family.[34] It must be assumed that the female fighters and politicians of the KCK/PKK enjoy the respect of that part of Kurdish society which sympathises with them in any case. This must not, however, lead to the conclusion that the existence of a female guerrilla is enough effectively to change the traditional image of women and of patriarchy. Studies of other conflicts[35] in which female militias played an important role rather show the considerable tenacity of traditional patterns of thinking and behaviour. Independent gender studies which examine the representation of women in top positions, such as the Executive Council, or which scrutinise the - rather male image - of the asexual-pseudo-masculine fighting heroine are still outstanding.

### Democratic "social confederalism"

The key concept of Öcalan's ideology is the *Group of Communities in Kurdistan KCK*. This, however, is translated by Öcalan with the neologism *democratic social confederalism* or *confederalism of the democratic society* (*demokratik toplum konfederalizmi*) (Agreement p 4). The terms *democracy* and *confederalism* as defined by Öcalan therefore have to be clarified.

### Rejection of the Nation State

The ideological view of democracy as well as of regional solutions is grounded in a total rejection of the nation state (*ulus-devlet*), the end of which is predicted numerous times in the Agreement (p. 2, 3). The nation state is regarded entirely negatively, as the peoples in the region have suffered because of it, and as the individual created by it is a slave (Agreement p. 7). Pursuant to Marxist readings, Öcalan stresses the close connection between the nation state and capitalism.[36] The nation state is therefore “*the greatest obstacle to social development, democracy and freedom*” (Agreement, p. 2). 1970s Turkey is, without any doubt, the nation state serving as an example for Öcalan. The Turks, however, neither invented the nation state nor nationalism; both, according to Öcalan, are Jewish creations - just as capitalism is, at least the design of modern capitalism, which the nation state serves. From this, Öcalan deduces that any type of nationalism is, essentially, a type of Zionism.[37] To him, Turkey’s speedy recognition of Israel is proof of the Turks’ great need to be recognised as a nation state by the international community.[38] As a regional player, Israel in turn needs Kurdish nationalism to keep the region’s powerful nation states in check. And, indeed, there are Kurdish nationalists willing to cooperate, in “*the feudal echelons of the tribes which are currently transforming themselves into a bourgeoisie*”.[39] This means the leadership of the Barzani tribe, which has been enjoying good relations with Israel since the 1960’s.

The strict rejection of the nation state concept is also a rejection of the nation-building project pursued by the Kurdistan regional government in Iraq, which has been gaining in respect among the world’s Kurds.[40] Öcalan also makes critical remarks concerning the KRG, which wants “*to establish a belated mini-nation state in a small territory of Kurdistan*”, this “*political entity in Iraqi-Kurdistan cannot, however, be called a nation state, ‘semi nation state’ (yarm ulus-devlet) would be the more apposite term*”. According to Öcalan, the nation state is not the answer to the Kurdish question, and the KCK system therefore does not strive for the foundation of a state, as is stressed on numerous occasions in the text (Agreement p. 4 and Articles 4b, 4f). Rather, the present nation states are to be made democratic for the benefit of the Kurdish people, and therefore borders overcome.

## Radical Democracy

The logical consequence of the rejection of capitalism and nation state is the rejection of democracy in the western-democratic sense. The place of a representative, liberal, or bourgeois democracy is taken by a democracy that is radical (Agreement p. 4 and Article 4a), participatory (*katilim*, Article p. 6), collective/collectivist (*topluluk*, Agreement p.2), and direct (*dorudan*, Agreement p.6 and Article 24). Öcalan stresses that “*my concept of democracy is not that of a democracy of individuals (bireyler demokrasisi), but that of a democracy of the collective (topluluklar demokrasisidir, Agreement p.4)*”.[41] The focus on the collective in the KCK system is therefore the most important distinguishing feature *vis-à-vis* the western concept of democracy (Agreement p. 5). In his rejection of the modern concept of democracy, he follows the Marxist thesis of bourgeois democracy being the ruling class’s instrument of power: “*Even if one limited the power of representative democracy, it is, as the upper class’s instrument of rule, not capable of satisfying the peoples’ need for freedom and democracy*” (Agreement p. 6).

Compared with liberal democracy, radical democracy would “*turn the people into power*”, because “*it is based on organising the people from the rank and file upward*” and “*the basis and the consequence of the [KCK] system is radical democracy*” (Agreement p. 5). To achieve this goal, everybody must belong to a *komün* [see below] (Agreement p. 4) and, pursuant to Article 10h and Article 10k, participate in an organised manner in political life. In political reality, this means belonging to one of the branches of the KCK system, the most important principles of which, pursuant to Article 44c are “*democratic participation, initiative, and collectivism*”. Once implemented, this system will “*make it possible to overcome the notion of democracy, which began with the Athenian democracy and Magna Charta*” (Agreement p 5). This is why it would be futile to develop a democracy, supported by the capitalist system or the imperialist powers. Rather, it must be ensured that the democratic choice, which develops upward from the rank and file, dominates (Agreement p 2 no 5). “*On this basis, with the help of a radical and deepened democracy, socialism will rise to new heights.*” (Agreement, p5).

The parallels to *real socialist*, Baathist and Libyan models under Ghaddafi are obvious[42], not only in his fundamental criticism of the West’s representative democracy, but also in the planned design of the KCK, even if the political language employed uses Bookchin’s eco-anarchist vocabulary. This means that Öcalan’s concept of a *people’s* or *grassroots democracy* must be regarded as communist in the widest sense, and therefore as undemocratic. This explains the absence of terms such as the separation of powers and rule of law, i.e. essential principles for a functioning democracy.

At the same time, the PKK/KCK’s radically anti-Western concept of democracy makes it easier to latch on to the respective radically left-wing *mii ieus* in Europe and Turkey. In Turkey the PKK traditionally had close ties to the *Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party/Front* (DHKP-C),[43] the Maoist *Liberation Army of the Workers and Peasants of Turkey* (TIKKO) and its successor organisations the *Communist Party of Turkey /Marxist-Leninist* (TKP-ML) and the *Marxist-Leninist Communist Party* (MLKP)[44]. The PKK is said to have signed a working agreement with the DHKP-C in 1996 that is still in force.[45] The TKP-ML, which also recruits in Germany, fights on the YPG’s side in Syria.

In Europe, the PKK and its affiliated organisations have enjoyed decades of excellent ties to equally radical parties and organisations.[46] The case of Andrea Wolf became famous - an RAF sympathiser who joined the PKK and fell in an engagement near Van.[47] In 2010, German PKK sympathisers founded the *Tatort Kurdistan*[48] action alliance, which included, *inter alia*, the Nav-Dem (see below) on the side of the PKK, and on the German side the *Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany* (MLPD)[49] and the *Antifascist Revolutionary Action Berlin* (ARAB).[50] Beyond that, Janet Biehl, Bookchin’s former assistant, attempts to establish Öcalan’s and Bookchin’s political discourses at the academic level and to connect them with political activism.[51]

## Confederalism

The term *confederalism*, introduced into the Turkish language by Öcalan (*konfederalizm*) is highly problematic, as it is derived from *confederation* (*konfederasyon*), i.e. union of states, but rarely alludes to it and has also taken on an idiosyncratic meaning. Öcalan only once mentions that he does not mean a union of states (Agreement p. 4). At another point, he uses *confederalism* and *confederation* synonymously, however he refers to the regional or sub-national, national, and international level. Öcalan himself gives the following, not really helpful definition of *confederalism*. “*Democratic confederalism (konfederalizm) is on the side of the peoples’ global democracy, against global imperialism. It is a system in which all peoples and all of humanity can live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. On the global level this means a march towards democratic confederation (konfederasyon) and a departure towards a new era.*” (Agreement p 3)

The creation of a “*democratic social confederation of the Middle East*” (Article 41) is to be a preliminary stage. This is informed by a future Kurdish entity (or construct - *yapılmas*) in Turkey, Iran, Syria, and even Iraq, created by “*all Kurds coming together, uniting their own federalisms and forming a superordinate confederalism*” (Agreement, p 2, point 6), as stated in Article 45 “*on the democratic-confederal union of Kurdistan*”. This *confederalism* must, however, be distinguished from all national confederations (*devletçi konfederasyonlar*). Elsewhere, the term *democratic confederalism* is to be understood as the *regional level* of a tripartite hierarchy of law consisting, according to these remarks, of the level of EU law, the law of the nation state (*üniter devlet*), and of *democratic-confederal* law (Agreement, p3/7), i.e. the *democratic confederalism*. This is to unify the Kurdish people, without calling into question or recognising the borders of the existing states (Agreement p 2/7). At the regional level, *democratic confederalism* only appears in the light of Bookchin’s understanding of *confederalism*.<sup>[52]</sup> For him, *confederalism* is a network of various administrative councils, elected in popular face-to-face assemblies. Such assemblies are, as remains to be shown, actually laid down in the KCK statutes, and should, in line with Öcalan and Bookchin, organise society along radical-democratic lines. This means that democratic *confederalism*, the principles of which, pursuant to Article 4a, are to be used to realise the purpose of the KCK - i.e. the “*creation of a democratic form of organisation for Kurdistan’s society, based on ecology and the freedom of the sexes*”- is nothing else, but the KCK system itself.

This produces a soberingly simple picture: Öcalan demands that all states accept the introduction of the KCK system and thus the establishment of the PKK in all regions where Kurds settle. There, the KCK/PKK would then rule like in a one-party state.

### Quasi-Statehood

Although statehood as such is rejected, the KCK acts like a state. From the PKK/KCK’s point of view, and pursuant to Article 5, everybody in Kurdistan is *yurtta*, a “*freeman of the homeland*”. This neologism is used to avoid the impression that statehood is claimed. The text’s actual intention becomes clear in the Persian version: it simply uses *citizen (shahrvand)*. Turkish publications critical of the PKK are therefore not completely wrong when they refer to the Agreement as a constitution (*anayasa*) for a PKK state.

Pursuant to Article 5, *homeland freemanship (özgür yurttaşlık)* is enjoyed by “*everyone born in Kurdistan and resident there, as well as by all supporters of the KCK system*”. The further reference to the KCK is necessary to include all those Kurds living outside of Kurdistan. Kurds in Europe and the GUS are separately listed in Article 18 as *yurtta*. Kurds in the region are obviously claimed from birth, so that *Kurdistan* and KCK coincide in this case. Whoever is not Kurdish (*dier uyruklardan olup*) may, pursuant to Article 6b, request membership from the next highest KCK organ. The opposite is also possible: pursuant to Article 6d, one can resign *homeland freemanship*. As a rule, the KCK system should be attractive to ethnic and cultural minorities, as Article 19 allows them to form confederations and associations within the framework of the KCK system. Pursuant to Articles 7-10, *homeland freemanship* is connected with rights and duties which correspond to those of a citizen. The duties are exhaustively listed in various subsections of Article 10 (paras a-k). They include, apart from the duty to protect the environment and cultural property (Article 10f), also liability for taxation (Article 10i), conscription (Article 10c, and more clearly Article 31 a, b, c), and the duty to return to the *homeland* (Article 10j); Article 10k, the commitment to participate in the social life *in an organised manner*, has to be read in connection with Article 10i, the *duty to adapt to the morals of the free and democratic society*. This means, one must become part of the KCK system and accept the PKK’s ideology and be shaped by the PKK/KCK, the result being a new, communist type of human being.<sup>[53]</sup> As the KCK is to be applied to all Kurdish regions, Öcalan’s claim to sole representation is evident.

### Claim to Sole Representation

The claim to sole representation is openly stated only in Article 45, according to which “*KCK takes seriously the actual will of the people in all parts of Kurdistan*” and strives towards a common economic, cultural, and defence policy. In this, the KCK remains true to the infamous self-righteousness of the PKK, which, from its earliest times, regarded itself as the one legitimate and true revolutionary-Kurdish force, and had difficult relations with other Kurdish organisations from its foundation.<sup>[54]</sup> The PKK always knew how to deal with doubters and dissenters. Thus, when students and young intellectuals from Europe poured into the organisation at the end of the 1980s, a wave of executions in the Beqaa Plain was the result, with hundreds of PKK members being the victims.<sup>[55]</sup>

The claim to sole representation is implacably used against PKK dissenters. The most important of whom was, in the middle of the 1990’s, Selim Çürükkaya, for whom Günter Wallraff lobbied Öcalan and effected the suspension of the death sentence.<sup>[56]</sup> The former PKK members and commanders organised in the PWD are pursued especially doggedly.<sup>[57]</sup> The PWD plays almost no political role; they are taken seriously, however, by the PKK/KCK leadership, as is proven by a number of assassinations: in 2006, Faysal Dunlayc, a PKK dissident, fell victim to an attack near Koy Sancaq in northern Iraq.<sup>[58]</sup> Thereafter, Öcalan is said to have limited the murders. The last attempted attacks in 2013 are attributed to Cemil Bayk. This way he wanted to prevent the PWDI’s participation in the planned, big Kurdish national congress.<sup>[59]</sup>

The claim to sole representation is especially targeted against the Kurdistan regional government, and here especially at the KDP and its leader Massud Barzani. In a way, the KDP, which in the 1990s took action against the PKK together with Turkish security forces, has become the PKK’s nemesis, exacerbated by the personal animosities between Öcalan and Barzani.<sup>[60]</sup> Both, Barzani and Öcalan, have their supporters call them leader of all Kurds, and ensure that sympathetic media mean their organisation when talking of ‘the Kurds’. It is not just a question of power as such - power structures on the ground were actually of secondary importance until the 2014/15 crisis. More important is the ideological difference: the KCK/PPK operates a project that is, in the final analysis, revolutionary and utopian, whereas the nationalists of the KRG pursue a nation building project. Both starting positions require political strategies which contradict each other. The incongruity of both positions makes political and military cooperation almost impossible, as was evident in Iraq and Syria between 2013 and 2015.

### Organisation

At first, the Turkish authorities underestimated the extent of the PKK’s regrouping as KCK. When, in 2008/09, they began to grasp the scope of the KCK organisation, they interpreted it as preparations for an uprising. The subsequent human rights violations and perversions of justice in the course of the KCK operations and trials<sup>[61]</sup> can be explained, partly, by political panic, and partly by revenge and resistance on the part of the bureaucracy against Erdoğan, whose negotiations aimed to prevent an unholy alliance of the Gülen movement and nationalists. The KCK used the chance the trials offered for *democratic action (demokratik eylem, Article 34)* propounding the issue of the use of the Kurdish language in court.<sup>[62]</sup> In connection with events in Syria (Kobane) in 2014 as well as before and after the elections of summer 2015, the KCK system again came under massive pressure from Turkish security agencies. Their intention effectively to weaken and eliminate the KCK’s organisational structures is obvious. This applies to the military as well as the civilian structures of the KCK.

### Civilian Structures

In many areas, the KCK operates like a disciplined cadre party tailored to one leader, and it boasts a military element as well as its own justice system to ensure discipline and order. The claim to sole representation and the presumed membership of all Kurds in the KCK are, on the one hand, conditioned by ideology, and on the other hand, they reflect the experience of the insurgency movement, which seeks to control as large a part of the population as possible by preventing the advent of independent political discourses and organisations. This is to be achieved by organising the population, the logical result of which is the creation of a parallel, underground administration, similar to the Algerian FLN in the 1950s.

Beyond that, the KCK is designed as an umbrella organisation open to all Kurds, and as such made up of a large number of sub-organisations and groups, whose affiliation to the KCK is often not clear to those on the outside. When visiting the region, international delegations often gain the impression that they have spoken with 'the Kurds', as represented by various groups, when, in reality, they really only met PKK/KCK representatives.[63] This way, the PKK's claim to sole representation is (un)wittingly accepted and reinforced.

In the course of the KCK trials various organisational schemes were drafted, obviously based on PKK[64] original documents, and which, with a few exceptions, reflected the structures described in the Agreement. The PKK's structure is therefore conceived on four levels: (a) *pan-Kurdish*, (b) *parts (parça) of Kurdistan* (Iran/rojhilat, Iraq/baur, Turkey/bakur, Syria/rojawa), (c) *provincial or regional level*, and (d) *community level with its cells*. At the pan-Kurdish level, the leadership (i.e. Öcalan), the People's Assembly, the Executive Council (i.e. Kandil) and the *Central Departments are active*. These elements embrace the entire KCK system.

### The Leadership: Abdullah Öcalan

The KCK system is a simple pyramid structure (Agreement p 2/4, Article 2). Although the opposite is stated at some points in the text, the pyramid is conceived top-down, i.e. with the *leadership (önderlik, rêberî)* Abdullah Öcalan at the top. The imprisoned Öcalan may no longer be able actively to lead the KCK/PKK; he remains, however, the organisation's symbolic as well as unifying figurehead. This is why his supporters refer to themselves as *apoci*.[65] The task for the leadership - i.e. for Öcalan - is clearly defined pursuant to Article 11 and is similar to other authoritarian regimes or underground organisations with a leader cult, such as, for example, the *Baath Party*.[66] Öcalan "*represents the people at every level*", which is either the result of, or the reason for, his rejection of representative democracy. He controls policy and takes the final decision (*son karar merçidîrî*) in all issues of fundamental significance, which makes him his own constitutional court. He is also the organisation's chief ideologue, as he assesses the decisions of the General Assembly of the People's Congress with regard to their revolutionary character. He appoints the President of the Executive Council and confirms the decisions of the Executive Council in issues of fundamental significance. Election or deselection is not envisaged for a leadership obviously installed for life, and the women's quota is also eschewed.

Like many other leaders (not only) in the Middle East, Öcalan sees himself as more than a simple party leader, but as the father and teacher of the nation and, especially, as a political philosopher. A declaration of the KCD-E (see below) states: "*Mister Öcalan is not only a political leader; at the same time he is a theoretician, an academic, and a seminal figure for society*." [67] Öcalan has written a series of books on historical, philosophical, sociological, and political topics, designed as contributions to research, national education, and as political guidelines, which, however, have not been met with great interest outside PKK circles and are generally not regarded as contributions to academic thought.[68] This is what he writes about himself and the KCK Agreement:

"[...] I am convinced that I have created a new philosophy of life and a new system for our people. I am proud to be its founder. I am now calling on all our people to unite under the green flag with the red star on the golden sun, to build our democracy and create home rule. I hereby declare that I will raise this cherished standard high and will successfully continue in my role as leader, as I have done up to now. [...]" (Agreement p. 3)

In the 1990s and after his arrest in 1999, the leader cult surrounding Öcalan became well-nigh Stalinist in its dimensions; there were dramatic self-immolations by Kurdish activists in Europe.[69] The last such action was documented in 2006. Further proof of Öcalan's idolisation by his supporters is provided by the hunger strikes, carried out in protest against the conditions of his detention, for example in 2006 and 2012.

A *leadership committee (önderlik komitesî)* disseminates his thoughts and informs the global public of his wellbeing and importance (Article 14 /6). The conditions of Öcalan's detention are repeatedly addressed by his supporters. In 2007, a rumour concerning an attempted poisoning was spread, for which independent observers could find no evidence.[70] The leadership committee also controls the campaigns for his release or for extra privileges; the implementation of the campaigns is left to the European groups.[71]

For years, Öcalan was the sole prisoner on the island, with erratic access to information. The biggest complaints, however, concerned visits: from 1999-2007 he received 126 visits from relatives and 626 from his lawyers. This means, only a fraction of requests was granted. This situation deteriorated even more in 2011 and 2012. The lawyers also complained that the confidentiality between client and counsel was in many cases not safeguarded by the prison administration - i.e. the Turkish state.[72] Direct communication between Öcalan and the leadership in Kandil was naturally impossible, this is why the lawyers informed Öcalan about latest developments in the KCK/PKK leadership, domestic Turkish politics, and political developments within the region and Europe. The fact that some of the lawyers forwarded Öcalan's instructions to the organisation had legal consequences for them and also resulted in temporary isolation for Öcalan.[73] According to a press release by *Maf-Dad e. V. – Association for Democracy and International Law* of 23 July 2015, visits by lawyers and family members have been made impossible since 2011 and 2014, respectively.[74] Despite this, Öcalan was allowed to be visited by representative of BDP and HDP. A meeting in 2013 was of historic significance, as Öcalan, with a view to the 2015 elections, suggested the creation of the HDP,[75] which, in hindsight, proved to be the correct strategy. According to Maf-Dad, the last visit of an HDP delegation on mral took place on 5 April 2015.

Öcalan remains key to a peaceful solution, there is general consensus[76] that the armed fighters in the mountains will only lay down their arms on his orders. The problems of political coordination between mral and Kandil become most apparent in this point: Öcalan can only manifest his influence on the organisation through calls for peace. The most powerful weapon for the executive council in Kandil is the resumption of violence. The back and forth in the organisation's peace and armistice policy can also be interpreted as a silent power struggle between Öcalan and his old comrades.

The Turkish government, however, has shown itself flexible *vis-à-vis* the imprisoned PKK leader. There have been numerous meetings between him and high-level members of the Turkish intelligence, such as Emre Taner und Hakan Fidan.[77] At the end of 2012, renewed peace negotiations began between Turkish representatives, Öcalan, and the leadership in Tandil. As a part of this, Öcalan, in his message on the occasion of the Kurdish *Newroz* celebrations in 2013, called on the PKK fighters to withdraw from Turkey. The peace process, however, faltered, because the PKK/KCK in Tandil, presumably for reasons of negotiating tactics, rejected as insufficient a bundle of reforms proposed by the Turkish government in 2013.[78] On the occasion of *Newroz* 2014, the Turkish authorities allowed the public reading of Öcalan's message during a rally in Diyarbakr, where the banned standards of the PKK, KCK and its various organisations could be shown openly. Öcalan reiterated his readiness for peace. The peace process, however, was overshadowed by increasing violence, which escalated after autonomous Kurdish self-rule was declared in Syria.[79] Yet, on 1 March 2015 an agreement[80] between HDP representatives and the government was proclaimed, celebrated as historic by the Turkish press. Pursuant to this declaration, the withdrawal of PKK fighters should begin within three days, and an extraordinary congress decide to lay down arms. On 21 March 2015, Öcalan called in vain on Kandil to convene the congress.[81] Something similar happened during the escalation in summer 2015. At that time the human rights organisation Mazlum-Der[82] announced that Öcalan had called on the government and the KCK/PKK to declare a ceasefire, which was called into question by representatives of the PKK /KCK leadership. Rather, Cemil Bayk and Murat Karaylan demanded the immediate cessation of combat operations, the end of Öcalan's isolation, and support for democratic autonomy.[83] The fact that these demands were illusory does not diminish Öcalan's importance. Galip Ensariolu, the AKP MP for Diyarbakr, declared that the dialogue with Öcalan would not be suspended, but continued.[84]

## Executive Council

The *Executive Council* (*yürütme konseyi*, *konseye rêveber*, Article 13) is the centrepiece of the KCK system's leadership; another name for it is *Kandil*, where the organisation is located. According to the Agreement, it consists of a *Chairperson* (*bakan, serok*) and thirty members. The members of the Executive Council are elected by the *People's Congress*, entrusted with tasks by the leadership - i.e. Öcalan - and confirmed by the *General Assembly of the People's Congress* (*Kongra Gel Genel Kurulu*). The Chairperson of the Executive Council, however, compiles the list of candidates to be elected. The Chairperson may only be elected twice "*from among the freemen of the homeland (yurtta)*" (Article 13a), although a core team of electable leaders has emerged: Cemil Bayk, Murat Karaylan, Mustafa Karasu, Duran Kalkan, Riza Altun, Zübeyir Aydar, and Sabri Ok; possibly also Sakine Cansz, who was murdered in Paris in 2013. On the basis of information published, a total list of names of Executive Council Members cannot be assembled. Discretion may have something to do with this; younger members, rising from the cadres, tend to retain their aliases for a long time (e.g. Bese Xozat, Dr. Bahooz Erdal).

Article 13c entrusts the Chairperson with great responsibility concerning organisation and coordination, and with the corresponding powers. The Chairperson decides general policy, and chairs, if necessary, the meetings of the *Military Command Council* (*komuta konseyi*). The Agreement text clearly talks of one person as chair and not of a double-headed leadership. However, since at least 2013, i.e. the transition from Murat Karaylan to Cemil Bayk, co-chairmen were introduced also here (*ebakan, hevse-rok*). At present, Cemil Bayk and Hülya Oran (Bese Xozat) are joint chairpersons. As their allocation of tasks is not laid down in the Agreement, it must be assumed that the principle of seniority is applied, which is evidenced by the fact that the most important declarations in the past two years came from Bayk.

Pursuant to Article 13b, the Executive Council is the KCK's highest executive organ. It coordinates "*all organisations, agencies (kurum), divisions, and committees*", implements the decisions of the leadership and the People's Congress, ensures that the People's Congress is conducted in an orderly fashion, executes court decisions, and appoints the "*public prosecutors (savclari)*" of the (obscure) "*Administrative Law Court*" (see below). The Executive Council must report to the leadership in detail, for which, presumably, the lawyers are used. The duty to report also applies *vis-à-vis* the *People's Congress*. Pursuant to Article 13e, the Presidium (*bakanlik*) of the Executive Council coordinates the five *Central Departments* (*alan merkezî*), i.e. ideology, policy, social affairs, people's defence, and economy, as well as the *Organs for Coordination* (*koordinasyon-lar*) for the four parts of Kurdistan, foreign territories, as well as for women, and the young.

## People's Congresses, Elections and Assemblies

Pursuant to Article 12, the *Kurdistan People's Congress* (*Kürdistan Halk Kongresi/Kongra Gelê Kurdistan*) is designed as a parliament for all of Kurdistan, and acts, according to the Agreement, as Kurdistan's highest legislative body. In reality, however, it is regarded as the PKK's parliament and functions similarly to a general assembly. Its most important function is electing the Presidential Council, the Executive Council and its leadership, as well as confirming the People's High Court and the electoral commission.

Pursuant to Article 12a, this body, consisting of 300 members, is to be elected every two years "*by the KCK-freemen of the homeland living in the four parts of Kurdistan and foreign territories, corresponding to their number and degree of organisation*", and meets annually in April. Extraordinary sessions can be called at the request of the leadership, the Presidential or Executive Council (Article 12b). The People's Congress is presided over by a Presidential Council of five (*bakanlık divanı*), consisting of a speaker/president and four deputies (Article 12c). Subsequent to a number of terms by Zübeyir Aydar, Remzi Kartal has had this role since 2013. The Presidential Council appoints the members of the "*Electoral High Commission*" (Article 15) and the High Court (*Yüksek Adalet Divanı*), as well as the judges of the Administrative Law Court and the People's High Court (Article 12d). The actual work, however, is done in seven Permanent Commissions: social affairs, policy, ideology, finances, women, people's defence, and PR. Independent experts can also be co-opted into these commissions. As the bulk of the commissions overlaps with the Central Departments, it must be assumed that this is an attempt at parliamentary control of the KCK. The functioning of the People's Congress in the time between the General Assemblies is ensured by the Interim Committee of the People's Assembly (*Kongra-Gel Ara Dönem Kurulu/Civata Dema Navber ya Kongra Gel*), consisting of the Presidential Council, the Permanent Commissions, and the Executive Council (Article 12f).

An elected parliament, the People's Assembly (*Halk Meclisi*), which has to report to the People's Congress (Article 16), is also envisaged for each of the four parts of Kurdistan (*parça*) (Articles 16-19). These parliaments also have to elect an executive (pursuant to Article 17), the Executive of the Democratic-Ecological Society (*Demokratik Ekolojik Toplum Yürütmesi*). This executive must report to the Executive Council as well as to the People's Assembly. For regions outside of Kurdistan (EU and CIS) there is only the general provision that they should organise themselves accordingly, with ways and means left to them (Article 18). In reality, these plans of a pan-Kurdish quasi-parliamentarianism were hardly implemented in the KCK system.

The implementation of the system in Turkey was given to the KCK's Turkey-coordination, which, as *People's Assembly Turkey* of the KCK-TM, began its work in 2006 at the earliest. In the course of the mass arrests in connection with the KCK trials, the Turkish authorities smashed the KCK/TM in 2009/10. Its place was taken in 2011, in a modified form as the BDP's umbrella organisation, by the *Congress for a Democratic Society DTK*[85] whose focus is the creation of the "*democratic autonomy*" - i.e. the establishment of the KCK system.[86] The DTK is a very active organisation and held its seventh congress in Diyarbakr in summer 2014, where Selma Irmak and Hatip Dicle were voted co-chairpersons.[87] A similar umbrella organisation, dealing with the organisational aspect of the KCK in Syria, is the *Movement for a Democratic Society TEV-DEM*[88] Syria is also home to the *People's Assembly for West-Kurdistan MGRK*, the only working KCK parliament.[89] It also has two co-chairpersons: Sînem Mihemed and Abdulselam Ehmed. The *People's Assembly East-Kurdistan EGRK* appears to be inactive. If the logic of national people's assemblies, as set out in the Agreement, is adhered to, then a similar construct can be expected for Iraq; up to now, however, nothing has become known.

This role could be taken on by the *National Congress of Kurdistan - KNK*[90] Evidence for this can be gleaned from the fact that the National Congress' homepage not only lists Kurmanci and English, but also Sorani, the most important administrative language in south Kurdistan; a part of the "*conventiori*" could also be interpreted in this way.[91] An argument against this might be that the KNK succeeded the Kurdish exile parliament in Europe in 1999[92], and has always been rather European, which means that it could be regarded as a European People's Assembly. However, it also claims to be a pan-Kurdish parliament. Like the other People's Assemblies, the KNK is also directed by an Executive Council, and represented by Nilüfer Koç and Rebwar Rashed, two co-chairpersons, whose two-year term ends in 2017.[93] The congress is dominated by the PKK/KCK, and works rather like an umbrella organisation of various cultural associations, but also numbers left-wing and even Islamist parties among its members, which again points in the direction of a pan-Kurdish parliament. Important parties such as the KDP and the PUK, however, do not participate, but the KCK groups from Rojava do.

The attempt to establish the KNK as a pan-Kurdish and KCK-dominated representation foundered in 2013, due to the KCG's resistance. Following altercations with the KDP, the KNK was only a participant in the planned, yet doomed, pan-Kurdish conference (*Kongreya Neteweyê Kurdî*) of summer 2013.[94] As a whole, the impression arises that the KNK is a relic from an earlier time and has not yet found its place in next to the KCK structure.

Ideally, the Agreement stipulates almost identical organisational structures for all levels below that of the People's Assemblies (which have yet to be established everywhere): there are Provincial Assemblies (*eyaletbölge meclîsleri*, Article 20) and a corresponding Executive (Article 21). Only half the members of the Provincial Assemblies are elected, the rest are appointed by means of a quota system by the *Assembly of the Free Society* and other KCK organs. The *Assemblies of the Free Society* (*özgür toplum meclîsleri*, Article 22) are active at the town and borough levels. Pursuant to Article 23, their delegates are elected from among the members of the *komün* and civil society as well as the democratic - i.e. pro-KCK - oriented members of the borough councils; however, only under the precondition that the system could be established in parallel to/with the civil service. The *Free Society* also has an executive (Article 24). Here the KCK takes on the function of a normal party. The main element of the organisation is the *komün*, a core term with Öcalan, which, pursuant to Article 24, "*is the organised state of the people in the street and in the village*". Elsewhere, Öcalan declares that "*everybody must belong to a komün and must express themselves as a part of a komün*" (Agreement p 4). In principle, therefore, these are local cells with compulsory membership for Kurds. At this level, elections and an executive committee with similar duties to report to the next higher level are also envisaged.

### Central Departments (*alan merkezleri*)

The actual organisational work of the KCK system is done in the *Central Departments* (*alan merkezleri*, Article 14). These constitute the actual party and guerrilla apparatus and are at the disposal of the Executive Council as executive organs (Article 13a, see above). The Central Departments consist of 7 - 13 members, led by a group of three. They have to give monthly progress reports to the Presidium of the Executive Council, and implement the decisions of the People's Congress, the directives (*genelge*) given by the Presidium of the Executive Council, as well as their programme, following approval by the Executive Council, in accordance with their own guidelines. The Central Departments are autonomous in the design of their work, and they can form several subcommittees and coordination organs, if required.

### Central Department for Ideology

The *Central Department for Ideology* (Article 14/1) is responsible for the KCK's entire ideological and propaganda work, i.e. carrying out propaganda, ideological agitation, as well as the ideological training "*of the cadre and of the people*", on the basis and within the framework of Öcalan's theoretical and ideological works. In the Agreement text, this Central Department is supported by three committees. The *Press Committee* controls the press' adherence to the party line (pursuant to Article 14/1c), the *Knowledge and Enlightenment Committee* (Article 14/1a) is responsible for research and the training of the cadre and the people's democratic education, the *Culture Committee* (Article 14/1b) focuses on *developing the culture of Kurds and of minorities*. By means of the *Committees for Knowledge and Enlightenment* as well as *Culture*, academics, researchers, and artists are to be brought to toe the party line. These committees' activities are probably behind the support for Bookchin's eco anarchy at the universities, or the organisation of a conference on *Jineoloji* feminism, according to Öcalan's teachings, at Cologne University.[95] The attempt to establish political-ideological control over all Kurdish artists repeatedly results in tensions. The dispute with Ivan Perwer, a singer living in Paris, became famous, as he resisted appropriation by the PKK.[96] What remains unexplained is the task of the *PKK Foundation Committee* the existence of which emerged from a KCK organisation chart published in the Turkish press.[97]

### Central Department for Policy

A further KCK centrepiece is the *Central Department for Policy* (Article 14/2), responsible for the political work in Kurdistan and Europe. Its responsibilities include the organisation of the ecological-democratic society (or of the collective), the development of a protest culture, as well as creation of a democratic organisational structure (*demokratik örgütlenme*) and of a legal system. In order to fulfil these tasks, it is made up of the *Committees for International Relations, for Minorities and Religious Issues, for Legal Issues, for Policy*, as well as the *Ecological-Regional Leadership Committee* (Article 14/2a-e).

The *Political Committee* (Article 14/2a) heads the organisation and is responsible for relations with friendly organisations. This is where its responsibilities intersect with those of the *Committee for International Relations* (Article 14/2d), which, according to the chart[98] published in the daily *Zaman*, the professional organisations (writers, jurists, artists, etc.) and religious organisations (Alevites, Yazidis, Imams) subordinated to, which is surprising insofar, as, pursuant to Article 14/2e, there is also a *Committee for Minorities and Faiths*. The latter ensures the free organisation (*özgür örgütlenmes*) of the minorities and their participation in social life on the basis of equal rights. What is difficult to understand is that it is exactly this committee which is tasked with fighting "*anti-democratic and reactionary mentalities*" - unless *mentalities* stand for the traditional representatives of the minorities, such as, e.g., the Church hierarchies, the Sheikhs of the Yazidis, or the Babas of the Alevites.

Also subordinated to the *Committee for International Relations* are the European organisations based in Brussels, the *CDK-Democratic Society Coordination of Kurdistan*[99] and *Kon-Kurd*. CDK functionaries work conspiratorially, on principle of order and obedience.[100] They mostly use *Kon-Kurd* for their work, the *Confederation of Kurdish Associations in Europe*. In 2014, *Kon-Kurd* was renamed and restructured into KCD-E *European Kurdish Democratic Societies Congress*. [101] The new arrangement KCD-E now runs CDK and Kon-Kurd closer together. [102] *Kon-Kurd*, and now KCD-E, function as the international umbrella organisation for the national unions of Kurdish associations, i.e. *Yeh-Kom* (since 2014 *Nav-Dem*) in Germany, [103] *Fed-Bir* in Great Britain, *Fed-Kom* in the Netherlands, [104] *Fey-Kurd* in Denmark, [105] *FKKS* in Sweden, [106] *Feyka* in France, *Feykom* in Austria, [107] etc. As a rule, these associations are the face the KCK presents to the public and also serve as an "*information channel to the rank and file*" [108] for the CDK and the KCK. Apart from extensive campaigns and propaganda work, *Nav-Dem* also establishes contacts to political decision makers, in order to gain support for the PKK's concerns. [109]

The *Committee for the Ecological-Local Executives* (Article 14/2b) is responsible for the creation of the *komün* at village and town level, by taking "the measures necessary for the development of ecological knowledge, organisational culture (*örgütülülük*) and the conduct of life". In Kurdistan and at the international level it shows solidarity with those organisations and institutions who work in the fields of ecology, environmental protection, and local administration. What this solidarity actually looks like is not made clear. If the general behaviour of the KCK /PKK is taken as a guide, it stands to reason that the organisations active in the fields mentioned are to be influenced in Öcalan's favour and brought into line. According to the organisational chart,[110] the same committee is responsible for coordination with the subsidiary parties PYD in Syria,[111] PÇDK in Iraq,[112] and PJAK in Iran.[113] There are problems with the DKB in Turkey, the *Democratic Foundation Unit*, which is described as a party, yet sometimes referred to as a militia.

Remarkably, neither the Agreement nor the published organisational charts mention the BHP/HDP. BHP/HDP and PKK supporters and sympathisers come from the same *milieu*. The BDP, however, has its own party history, which is independent of the PKK and works within the framework of Turkish laws and Turkish parliamentarianism. As local politicians and parliamentarians, the HDP/BDP politicians are much more pragmatic and solution-oriented than the ideological activists of the KCK/PKK operating in the underground. This regularly leads to tensions, especially in Diyarbakr, and, apart from the obstructions and restrictions on the part of the Turkish government, this constitutes the biggest obstacle to the region's economic recovery.[114] Indeed, the development of an independent, democratic party, acting on the basis of the rule of law, does not go together with the KCK's claim to sole representation. According to Selahattin Demirta, the precursor of the BDP, the *Democratic Society Party-DTP* has no more organisations at borough level, obviously in order not to hinder the creation of KCK structures.[115]

The affiliation of formally independent organisations such as parties, associations, and trades unions (Articles 39-42) remains unclear. These must not pit themselves against the KCK system and can, at best, boast the symbolic independence of block parties. At least, upon a judicial order, parties can leave the KCK system (Article 39f).

The remit of the *Justice Committee* (14/2d) is to develop the awareness of "democratic justice" (*demokratik hukuk*), as well as document and fight infringements, human rights abuses, and war crimes. On the basis of the Agreement, the relationship with the justice system (Article 27-30) cannot be completely clarified. The *Supreme Court* (*Yüksek Adalet Divanı*, Article 28) concurrently functions as a type of Constitutional Court, i.e. as the guardian of the KCK Agreement (Article 28a) also responsible for treason, then again as the highest instance (Article 28b), as well as the Administrative Court for complaints lodged by the top echelon of the leadership, such as the Executive Council. Its seven members are appointed by the Presidium of the People's Congress (Article 28e). A separate *Supreme Court of Administrative Justice* (*Yüksek dari Adalet Mahkemesi*, Article 29) is primarily responsible for misdemeanours by the cadre and disciplinary offences. External to the system are the women's organisations and the military, which, pursuant to Article 27, have their own courts. In contrast to the 'supreme' courts, which mainly deal with matters pertaining to the KCK leadership, *People's Courts* (*Halk Mahkemeleri*, Article 30) are provided for the simple people. The justices of the *Supreme People's Court* (Article 30a) are appointed by the Presidium of the *People's Congress*, the prosecutors (*savc*) at the simple *People's Court* by the Presidium of the *Association of the Free Society*. In regions with strong KCK/PKK underground structures, there has been real success in establishing people's courts as an alternative and informal legal system, which partly relied on traditional forms of justice.[116] As mayor of Diyarbakr, Osman Baydemir experienced the power of these courts:[117] In 2011, he was summoned in order to justify his campaign for Öcalan's freedom, which, according to the KCK/PKK, had been too weak.

### Central Department for Social Affairs

In the *Central Department for Social Affairs* (Article 14/3), the *Social Committee* looks after the nearest and dearest of fallen warriors (Article 14/3a). The Tasks of the *Committee for People's Health, Language and Education*, as well as of the *Workers' Committee* (Article 14/3b-d) are stated in such general terms and imprecisely that they can, at best, serve as declarations of intent. The tasks of the *Coordination of the Freemen of the Country* (Article 14/3h), which is supposed to establish the organisation/to be in charge of establishing the organisation, are also stated imprecisely. A (conscious?) overlap with the *PKK Foundation Committee* in the *Central Department for Ideology* is a distinct possibility.

Article 14/3f is more important: the *Komalên Ciwan Youth Organisation Coordination*. This coordinates the KCK youth organisations in consultation with the *Democratic Youth Federation of Kurdistan* (Article 38), whose representatives are active in all KCK organisations and are tasked with developing their own form of organisation. In the regions of Kurdistan (*parça*) and beyond, the following organisations are active: the *YDG-H Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement*[118] in Turkey, *TCM Mesopotamian Youth Movement* in Iraq, the *TCA Free Youth Movement* in Syria, the *TCD Democratic Youth Movement* in Iran, and the *YXK Union of Students of Kurdistan* in Europe.[119] Of these, the YDG-H and the YXK are of greater importance. The YDG-H has played a leading role in riots during the past years.

If the organisational chart published by *Zaman* and *Milliyet* can be believed,[120] then changes have occurred in the women's organisation of the *Central Department for Social Affairs* and in economic affairs. The *Union of Free Women YJA* (Article 14/3g) was taken out from the *Central Department of Social Affairs* and transformed into a separate Central Department, which appears logical given the great importance of women's rights and is also hinted at in Article 37, the *High Women's Council KJB*. The KJB is superordinate to the *PAJK Kurdistan Women's Liberation Party*[121] and to the armed women's units *YJA-Star*, the successor of the *Free Women's Union of Kurdistan YAJK*. The idea was that PAJK was the counterpart of the PKK, *YJA-Star* that of the HPG, and KJK the equivalent of the KCK.[122] The latter, however, did not work out, as the *KJK - the Confederation of Women in Kurdistan*[123] is, in general, congruent with the KJB. Pursuant to Article 37, the women's organisation KJB and the youth organisation KCD organise themselves *separately and autonomously* (*özgün ve özerk*) within the structures of the KCK system, i.e. with individual names and symbols, which means that every PKK/KCK structure has to be viewed multiplied by a factor of two or three.

The remit of the *Central Department for the Economy*, stipulated in Article 14/5 of the Agreement, is to solve the Kurds' economic problems. This Central Department was obviously disbanded and integrated into the *Central Department for Social Affairs* as the Committee for the Economy and Finance, which, according to the report by the federal agency for internal security of the German Ministry of the Interior, is the "*PK KS' accounting and controlling department*".[124] This office boasts full-time employees, responsible for the accounts of revenues and expenditures, as well as cash transport in Europe. Appeals and taxes[125] represent the main sources of income, which can amount to a couple of hundred euros for average earners or several thousand euros for successful Kurdish entrepreneurs. Total revenue from the end of 2013 to the beginning of 2014 was approximately € 25 million in Europe and € 9 million in Germany. The largest part of the money is used for the organisation's European propaganda and infrastructure, a small sum is transferred to the combat zones of the Middle East.

(To be continued)

### Abbreviations

ARGK	Artea Rizgariya Gelê Kurdistan	<i>People's Liberation Army of Kurdistan</i>
CDK	Civaka Demokrata Kurdistan/Kürdistan Demokratik Toplum Koordinasyonu	<i>Democratic Society Coordination of Kurdistan</i>

DKB	Demokrati Kurulu Birlii	<i>Democratic Foundation Unit</i>
DTK	Demokratik Toplum Kongresi	<i>Congress for a Democratic Society</i>
DTP	Demokratik Toplum Partisi	<i>Democratic Society Party</i>
EGRK	Encumana Gêla Rojhilata Kurdistanê	<i>People's Assembly East-Kurdistan</i>
Feykom	Rat der Kurdischen Gesellschaft in Österreich	<i>Council of Kurdish Society in Austria</i>
FKKS	Federasyona Komeleyên Kurdistanê li Swêdê	<i>Federation of Kurdish Associations in Sweden</i>
HPG	Hêzên Parastina Gêl /Halk Savunma Güçleri	<i>People's Defence Forces</i>
HPJ	Hêzên Parastina Jinê	<i>Women's Defence Forces</i>
HRK	Hezên Rojhilata Kurdistan	<i>Forces of Eastern Kurdistan</i>
Hüda-Par	Hür Dava Partisi/Partiya Doza Azadi	<i>Free Cause Party</i>
KADEK	Kongreya Azadiya Demokratika Kurdistan	<i>Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress</i>
KCD	Komalên Ciwanên Azad	<i>Union of the Free Youth</i>
KCD-E	Kongreya Civakên Demokratîk a Kurdistanîyên Ewropa/Avrupa Kürt Demokratik Toplum Kongresi	<i>European Kurdish Democratic Societies Congress</i>
KCK	Koma Civakên Kurdistan	<i>Group of Communities in Kurdistan</i>
KJB	Koma Jinên Bilind	<i>High Women's Council</i>
KKK	Koma Komalên Kurdistan	<i>Democratic Confederation of Kurdistan</i>
KNK	Kongreya Neteweyîya Kurdistanê	<i>National Congress of Kurdistan</i>
KODAR	Komale-ye Demokratik va Azadi-ye Rojhilata Kurdistan	<i>Democratic and Free Society of the East</i>
Komalên Ciwan Komalên	Ciwan Koordinasyonu	<i>Youth Organisation Coordination</i>
Kongra-Gel	Kongreya Gelê Kurdistan	<i>Kurdistan People's Congress</i>
Kon-Kurd	Konfederasyona Komalên Kurd Li Avrupa	<i>European Kurdish Democratic Societies Congress</i>
MGRK	Meclisa Gela Rojavayê Kurdistan	<i>People's Assembly for West-Kurdistan</i>
MLKP	Marksist-Leninist Komünist Partisi	<i>Marxist-Leninist Communist Party</i>
Nav-Dem	Navenda Demokratik ya Kurdên li Alemanyayê	<i>Democratic Society Centre of Kurds in Germany</i>
PAJK	Partiya Azadiya Jinên Kurdistanê/Kürdistan Kadın Özgürlük Partisi	<i>Kurdistan Women's Liberation Party</i>
PÇDK	Partiya Çaresariya Demokratika Kurdistan	<i>Kurdistan Democratic Solution Party</i>
PJAK	Partiya Jiyana Azada Kurdistanê	<i>Party of Free Life in Kurdistan</i>
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan	<i>Kurdistan Workers' Party</i>
PWDK	Partiya Welatpêrezên Demokratên Kurdistan	<i>Party of Patriotic Democrats in Kurdistan</i>
PYD	Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat/Hizb al-Ittihad al-Dimuqrati	<i>Democratic Union Party</i>
TAK	Teyrebazên Azadiya Kurdistan	<i>Kurdistan Freedom Falcons</i>
TCA	Tevgera Civanên Azad	<i>Free Youth Movement</i>
TCD	Tevgera Civanên Demokrat	<i>Democratic Youth Movement</i>
TCM	Tevgera Civanên Mezopotamiya	<i>Mesopotamian Youth Movement</i>
TEV-DEM	Tevgera Civaka Demokratik	<i>Movement for a Democratic Society</i>

YB	Yekîneyê Berxwedana ingal	<i>Resistance Units ingal</i>
YDG-H	Yurtsever Devrimci Gençlik-Hareketi	<i>Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement</i>
YAJK	Yekitiya Azadiya Jinên	<i>Free Women's Union of Kurdistan</i>
YJA	Yekitiya Jinên Azad	<i>Union of Free Women</i>
YJA-STAR	Yekitiya Jinên Azad - STAR	<i>Free Women's Units - STAR</i>
YPG	Yekîneyên Parastina Gêl	<i>People's Protection Units</i>
YPJ	Yekîneyên Parastina Jin	<i>Women's Protection Units</i>
YRK	Yekîneyên Parastina Rohîlatê Kurdistanê	<i>East Kurdistan Forces</i>
YXK	Yekitiya Xwendekarên Kurdistan	<i>Union of Students of Kurdistan</i>
YPS	Yekîneyên Parastina Sivil	<i>Civilian Defence Units</i>



- [1] Aliza Marcus, *Blood and Belief. The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence*, New York, 2007.
- [2] Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk D Politikası, Kurtulu Savandan Bugüne. Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, [Turkish Foreign Policy from the War of Liberation up to Today. Principles, Documents and Interpretations] (vol. III 2001-2012), Istanbul, 2013, p.740-750.
- [3] As a reference I use the third volume of his *Manifesto for a Democratic Society*. see Abdullah Öcalan, *Özgürlük Sosyolojisi, Demokratik Toplum Manifestosu*, Neuss, 2009.
- [4] Robert Olson, *Turkey's Relations with Iran, Syria, Israel, and Russia, 1991-2000. The Kurdish and Islamist Questions*, Costa Mesa, 2001, p. 105-124. On the role of Egyptian and Iranian mediators see Murat Yetkin, *Kürt Kapanı. amdan mral'ya Öcalan [The Kurdish Trap. Öcalan from Damascus to mral]*, İstanbul, 2004; Turkish titles and quotations translated by the author.
- [5] [www.pwdnerin.com](http://www.pwdnerin.com) On the background see: Chris Kutschera, 'Turkey-Kurdistan: PKK dissidents accuse Öcalan', *The Middle East Magazine*, July, 2005 [http://www.chris-kutschera.com/A/pkk\\_dissidents.htm](http://www.chris-kutschera.com/A/pkk_dissidents.htm).
- [6] cf. Necmi Erdoan, 'Neo-Kemalizm: Organik Bunalım ve Hegemonya', [Neo-Kemalizm: Organic Crisis and Hegemony], in, Ahmet nsel (ed.), *M odern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, II Kemalizm*, [Political Thinking in Modern Turkey: vol. 2, Kemalizm] 5th edition, Istanbul, 2006, p. 584-591.
- [7] Typical of this approach was former Foreign Minister smail Cem. cf. Ozan Örmeci, 'İsmail Cem's Foreign Policy (1997-2002)', *Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 23 May 2011, p. 223-245.
- [8] Kemal Kiriçi, 'The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy', in, Leonore G. Martin und Dimitris Keridis (eds.), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, Cambridge (Mass.), 2004, p. 277-314, here 283.
- [9] Marcus, *Blood and Belief*, p. 286-301.
- [10] cf. <http://rojbas2.wordpress.com/pkkden-kckye/>.
- [11] Quoted according to: *KCK Koma Cıwakên Kurdistan Sözlemesi* <https://rojbas1.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/koma-civak3aan-kurdistan.pdf>. see also: [https://tr.wikisource.org/wiki/KCK\\_Sözlemesi](https://tr.wikisource.org/wiki/KCK_Sözlemesi).
- [12] [http://www.ankarstrateji.org/\\_files/11102011152912-YLB6Z.pdf](http://www.ankarstrateji.org/_files/11102011152912-YLB6Z.pdf).
- [13] I would like to thank Mr. Sherwin Taheri, Hamburg, for having provided a copy. cf. the Kodar homepage <http://kodar-online.com/>
- [14] [https://peaceinkurdistancampaign.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/english-version\\_sc\\_revised-060314.pdf](https://peaceinkurdistancampaign.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/english-version_sc_revised-060314.pdf).
- [15] *Kongra-Gel Programme*, [http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/isku/hintergrund/kgk/programm\\_statut.pdf](http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/isku/hintergrund/kgk/programm_statut.pdf).
- [16] *PKK Kurulu Bildirisi*, 1978 [PKK founding document, 1978] <https://rojbas1.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/pkk-kurulus-bildirgesi1.pdf>.
- [17] Wes Enzinna, 'A Dream of Secular Utopia in ISIS' Backyard. At a College in Kurdish Syria, Rojava tries to train its future leaders', *The New York Times Magazine*, 24 November 2015. Bookchin has little relevance and is not recognised by leading Marxists of the present; there is no reference to him in the following introduction to Marxist thinkers of the present: Andrew Pendakis, Jeff Diamanti, Nicholas Brown, Josh Robinson and Imre Szeman (eds.), *Contemporary Marxist Theory. A Reader*, New York, London, 2014.
- [18] Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden, 'Reassembling the Political: the PKK and the project of Radical Democracy', in, *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, 14/2012, p. 2-16.
- [19] Tayfun Sezer, *Manifesto'dan KCK Sözlemesine PKK/KCK'da Söylen* [From manifesto to KCK Agreement/discourse in the KCK], in, *Uluslar arası Güvenlik ve Terörizm Dergisi*, 3 JAN 2012, p. 41-65; Mümtaz'er Türköne, 'What sort of organization is the KCK?', in, *Today's Zaman*, 23. Oktober 2010.
- [20] *KCK Sözlemesi ve Olay* [The KCK Agreement and the KCK incident], in, Oran (ed.), *Türk D Politikası*, p. 748.
- [21] Joost Jongerden and Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, 'Born from the Left. The making of the PKK', in, Joost Jongerden and Marlies Casier, *Nationalism and Politics in Turkey: Political Islam, Kemalism and the Kurdish Issue*, London, 2010, p. 123-143.
- [22] [www.dtsso.org.tr](http://www.dtsso.org.tr).
- [23] International Crisis Group (ICG), *Turkey's Kurdish Impasse: The View from Diyarbakır*, (Europe Report, No 222) 30 NOV 2012, p. 9 notes 72.
- [24] Ahmet Pelda, 'Kürt Sermayedarların tedirginlii' [Kurdish entrepreneurs' frustration], *Özgür Gündem*, 27 OCT 2014.
- [25] On the problem of political identity, ethnicity, and assimilation see Gunnar Wießner, 'Ethnicity and Political Identity among the Kurds', in, Peter Alford Andrews, *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey. Supplement and Index* (=Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients 60.2), Wiesbaden, 2002, p. 206-221. There are similar problems in the KRG with Sorani, Kurmanci and Gorani. Regarding the variants of Kurdish and Kurdish language policy see Jaffer Sheykholeslami, 'The language varieties of the Kurds', in, Wolfgang Taucher, Mathias Vogl, Peter Webinger (eds.), *The Kurds. History, Religion, Language, Politics*, Vienna, 2015, p. 29-50.
- [26] *Bese Hozat'tan Büyük İtiraf: Dersim kültürü ve Dili PKK saflarında asimile oluyor*, [Important confession by Bese Hozat (=Hülya Oran): Dersim culture and language are assimilated in the PKK] <http://www.cilagazete.com/bese-hozattan-buyuk-itaraf-dersim-kulturu-ve-dili-pkk-saflarinda-asimile-oluyor/> This is a transcription of her interview with *Nuce TV* of 2 FEB 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjQ1T0IYw7U>.
- [27] cf. Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, 'Fascisme et Communisme en Roumanie', in, Henry Rousso, *Stalinisme et nazisme. Histoire et mémoire comparés*, Paris, 1999, p. 201-245, here p. 215 notes. 28. David Priestland, *The Red Flag. A History of Communism*, London, 2009, p. 404.

- [28] Ezgi Demirsu, 'Aryan-Semitik Kültür Çatması', [Arian-Semite clash of cultures], *Yeni Özgür Politika*, 22 AUG 2014, <http://www.yeniozgurpolitika.org/index.php?rupel=nuce&id=33475> and <http://www.pkconline.com/tr/index.php?sys=article&artID=2135>.
- [29] In his writings, *Özgürlük Sosyolojisi*, p. 118-121, 323-325, he does not defend any idea, it seems that he is working on the topic.
- [30] cf. ErcanAyboan, 'Zunahme von umweltzerstörerischen Projekten in Kurdistan', *Kurdistan Report*, 169, September - Oktober 2013, p. 51f. Joost Jongerden (et.al.), 'Environmental destruction as a counter-insurgency measure in the Kurdistan region of Turkey', in, *Geoforum* 2008, p. 1-12.
- [31] Öcalan, *Özgürlük Sosyolojisi*, p. 317-323.
- [32] *Erkei Öldürmek Sosyalizmin Temel ilkesidir*, [Killing the dominant male is the fundamental principle of socialism] <http://www.komunar.net/tr/index.php?sys=nuce&dw=nivis&id=1210>.
- [33] Hakk Özdal, 'Ad Örenilmeyen Kadın PKK'li Kim?' [Who is the female member of the PKK whose name nobody knows?], in, *Radikal*, 7 MAR 2013.
- [34] Ann-Kathrin Seidel, 'Am Berg der Amazonen', in, *Zenith*, März-April 2014, p. 38-47.
- [35] cf. Annette Weber, 'Women Without Arms: Gendered Fighter Constructions in Eritrea and Southern Sudan', in, *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 5 FEB 2011, p. 357-370.
- [36] Abdullah Öcalan, 'Ortadou'da Modernite Savalar', [Wars of modernisation in the Middle East], *Serxwebûn*, vol. 33/no. 394, OCT 2014.
- [37] Öcalan, *Özgürlük Sosyolojisi*, p. 248f.
- [38] Abdullah Öcalan, 'Ortadou'da Modernite Savalar (II)' [Wars of modernisation in the Middle East], *Serxwebûn*, vol. 34/no. 401, JUN 2015. <http://www.serxwebun.org/index.php?sys=naverok&id=421>.
- [39] 'Komplo ve tafiye planlarn boa çkardk', [We have foiled their conspiracy and elimination plans], *Serxwebûn*, JUN 2014, p. 8.
- [40] Extract from *Manifesto for a Democratic Civilisation*, published as *Ortadou Kapitalist Modernite Kar Demokratik Modernite* [modern democratic times instead of modern capitalist times for the Middle East], Lekolin, 27 JAN 2014. <http://www.lekolin.org/haber-3911-ORTADOGUDA-KAPITALIST-MODERNITEYE-KARSI-DEMOKRATIK-MODERNITE.html>.
- [41] cf. Jongerden and Akkaya, p. 6f.
- [42] An analysis of Ghadafi's *Green Book*. Dirk Vanderwalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, Cambridge, 2006, p. 102-106; and the same, 'Libya's Revolution in Perspective 1969-2000', in, Dirk Vanderwalle, *Libya since 1969. Qadhafi's Revolution Revisited*, New York, 2008, p. 9-55.
- [43] Cf. Austrian Ministry of the Interior, *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013*, Vienna, 2014, p. 75 - 76.
- [44] [www.mlkp.info](http://www.mlkp.info).
- [45] Batuhan Colak, *PKK ve DHKP-C'nin bitmeyen Dostluu* [eternal friendship between PKK and DHKP-C], *Vahdet*, 4 APR 2015, <http://www.gazetevahdet.com/pkk-ve-dhkp-cnin-bitmeyen-dostlugu-1612yy.htm>.
- [46] The following is based on: Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BVG), *Die Arbeiterpartei Kurdistans (PKK)*, Cologne, July, 2015, p.35 - 36.
- [47] <<http://www.andrea.libertad.de/>>; <[https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrea\\_Wolf](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrea_Wolf)>.
- [48] <http://tatortkurdistan.blogspot.de/>.
- [49] [www.mlpd.de](http://www.mlpd.de).
- [50] <http://arab.blogspot.de/>.
- [51] Janet Biehl, 'Bookchin, Öcalan, and the Dialectics of Democracy', *New Compass*, 16 FEB 2012. This is the text of a lecture given by Biehl at Hamburg University. Bookchin's *Institute for Social Ecology* ([www.social-ecology.org](http://www.social-ecology.org)) also publishes Öcalan's writings.
- [52] cf. Murray Bookchin, *The Rise of Urbanization and the Decline of Citizenship*, Sierra Club, 1987. and the same, *Toward an Ecological Society*, Montreal, 1980. The latter was translated into Turkish (*Ekolojik Bir Toplumla Doru*). The following is based on Murray Bookchin, *The Meaning of Confederalism*, 1990 <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/murray-bookchin-the-meaning-of-confederalism.pdf>.
- [53] Olivier Grojean, 'La production de l'Homme nouveau au sein du PKK', *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, 8/2008, §§5-10.
- [54] Martin van Bruinessen, 'Between guerrilla war and political murder: The Workers' Party of Kurdistan', *Middle East Report*, 153, JUL-AUG 1988, p. 40-46.
- [55] Marcus, *Blood and Belief*, p. 134-140. The figure of 17,000 executions, reported in: Nizamettin Ta 'Bir PKK Evinin içinden görüntüler', [reports from a PKK household], Sabah, 15 FEB 2012 seems too high. Ta used his experiences to write: Dara Botan [=Nizamettin Ta], *Tanrlarn Yaratmad Cehennem: Bekaa* [Bekaa, Hell not created by the gods], stanbul, 2012. The descriptions of PKK dissident Selim Çürükçaya seem more reliable. According to him, 52 party critics of Öcalan were murdered on his orders in twenty years. cf: 'Die Kurden beschmutzt', *Focus*, 8, 22 FEB 1999.
- [56] cf. 'Die Kurden beschmutzt', in, *Focus*, 8, 22 FEB 1999.
- [57] [www.pwdnerin.com](http://www.pwdnerin.com), on the background cf.: Chris Kutschera, 'Turkey-Kurdistan: PKK dissidents accuse Öcalan', in, *The Middle East Magazine*, JUL 2005, [http://www.chris-kutschera.com/A/pkk\\_dissidents.htm](http://www.chris-kutschera.com/A/pkk_dissidents.htm).
- [58] Ramazan Yavuz, 'Kani Yılmaz Irak'ta öldürüldü', [Kani Yılmaz (=Faysal Dunlayc) was murdered in Iraq] *Radikal*, 12 FEB 2006.
- [59] 'Eski PKK'lara saldm giriimi' [assassination attempt against former members of the PKK], CNN Türk, 24 AUG 2013, <http://www.cnnurk.com/2013/dunya/08/24/eski.pkkilara.saldiri.girisimi/720747.0/>.
- [60] Hatred of the KDP has almost become a dogma in the PKK, cf: Abdullah Öcalan, *Ayaklanma Taktii üzerine Tezler ve Görevlerimiz* [our theses and duties concerning the tactics of insurgency], 2010, p. 12-21. On the background to the tensions between the PKK and the Iraqi Kurds see Koray Düzgören, 'Türkiye'nin Kürt sorunu', [Turkey's Kurdish problem], *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 13, p. 853-862, especially p. 860f.
- [61] 'KCK-Operasyonlar', [KCK operations], in, *Oran, Türk DPolitikas*, p. 747, 749, 750.
- [62] 'KCK Davasında Kürtçe Konusu - Hukuki Durum' [On the legal position concerning the use of Kurdish in the KCK trial], in, *Oran, Türk D Politikas*, p. 750.
- [63] 'Österreichische Abgeordnete besichtigen Kurdengebiete', *Die Presse*, 28 OCT 2014.
- [64] Gamze Polat, 'PKK Kendi Devlet Sistemine Kurmu: te KCK'nn yaplanma emas' [The PKK has created its own state system. The organisation chart of the KCK], *Zaman*, 14 APR 2009, cf. <http://medya.zaman.com.tr/2009/04/14/yapilanma2.jpg>.
- [65] After 'Apo', the Kurdish short form for Abdullah, cf. e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJTwm1ngWE>.
- [66] On the organisation of the Syrian Baath Party, see: Raymond Hinnebusch, *Authoritarian Power and State Formation in Baathist Syria*, Oxford, 1990, p. 167-169.
- [67] 'Lange Demonstration: Freiheit für Öcalan, Freiheit für Kurdistan', *Erklärung des Demokratischen Gesellschaftskongresses Europa*, 28 JAN 2015, <http://civaka-azad.org/lange-demonstration-freiheit-fuer-abdullah-oecalan-freiheit-fuer-kurdistan/>.
- [68] e.g.: Öcalan, *Özgürlük Sosyolojisi*, (like footnote #3). That Öcalan regards himself as a social scientist can be gleaned from the existence of the *KOMÜNAR Abdullah Öcalan Academy for Social Sciences*, [www.komunar.net](http://www.komunar.net)
- [69] cf. 'Blutrache für Apo', *Der Spiegel*, 8/1999, p. 22-35.
- [70] *Cour Européenne des Droits de l'Homme*, 'Affaire Öcalan c. Turquie (No 2)' (requêtes nos 24069/03, 197/04, 6201/06 et 10464/07; arrêt) 13 OCT 2014, p.11/60, 12/61.
- [71] cf. 'Rolle und Situation Öcalans' on the homepage of *Civaka Azad*, the *Kurdish Centre for FR* <http://civaka-azad.org/category/c20-hintergrundin-formatoren/c24-rolle-abdullah-oecalans/>.
- [72] The previous remarks were taken from the following *arrêt* of the European Court for Human Rights: *Cour Européenne des Droits de l'Homme*, 'Affaire Öcalan c. Turquie (No 2)', i.c., p. 3/15, 6/31-33, 7/34 and 35, 8/38-42.
- [73] *ibid.*, p.7/41, 8/42-43, 9/44, 10/51, 11/59.
- [74] Visiting rights were not officially suspended; according to *Maf-Dad*, the weather and the state of the boats used to travel to mral were given as a reason. It publishes little on its homepage <http://www.mafdad.org>. The declaration mentioned above was published on the *Civaka Azad* homepage. <http://civaka-azad.org/category/c20-hintergrundinformationen/c24-rolle-abdullah-oecalans/>.
- [75] Walter J. Fend, 'Kurdish Political Parties in Turkey', in, Wolfgang Taucher, Mathias Vogl, Peter Webinger (eds.), *The Kurds: History, Religion, Language, Politics*, Vienna (BMI), 2015, p. 51-86, here p. 63.
- [76] Cengiz Çandar, *Dadan ni PKK nasil Silah Brakr? Kürt Sorunu'nun iddetten Arndrlmas*, [Descent from the mountains. How does the PKK disclaim violence? The liberation of the Kurdish question from violence], *TESEV Istanbul*, July 2011, p. 37.

- [77] For an overview of the negotiations between Turkey and the PKK, see: Oran, *Türk D Politikası*, p.128. cf. Hasan Cemal, 'Erdoğan Öcalan fazla küçümsedi', [Erdoğan has underestimated Öcalan], [T24.com.tr](http://t24.com.tr/yazarlar/hasan-cemal/erdogan-ocalani-fazla-kucumsedi) <http://t24.com.tr/yazarlar/hasan-cemal/erdogan-ocalani-fazla-kucumsedi>, 11801.
- [78] Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BVG), *Arbeiterpartei Kurdistans (PKK)*, Cologne, July 2015, p. 14, 15.
- [79] BVG, *Arbeiterpartei Kurdistans*, p. 16-19.
- [80] 'Dolmabahçe'de tarihi açıklama', [Historical declaration in Dolmabahçe], *Milliyet*, 1 March 2015
- [81] Abdülkadir Selvi, 'Sahi Öcalan, diri diri mral'ya neden gömüldü?' [Really! Why was Öcalan buried alive on mral?], *Diken*, 15 December 2015.
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- [95] <http://jineoloji.org/kul/>; <http://jineoloji2014.blogspot.eu/>.
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- [97] <http://medya.zaman.com.tr/2009/04/14/yapilanma2.jpg>.
- [98] *ibid.*
- [99] Bundesministerium des Inneren (BMI-D), *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013*, Berlin 2014, p. 270.
- [100] BVG, Arbeiterpartei Kurdistans, p. 19.
- [101] [www.kcd.eu](http://www.kcd.eu).
- [102] BVG, Arbeiterpartei Kurdistans, p. 6.
- [103] [yekkom.com](http://yekkom.com)
- [104] [fedkom.nl](http://fedkom.nl)
- [105] [www.kurder.dk](http://www.kurder.dk).
- [106] [www.fkks.se](http://www.fkks.se).
- [107] [www.feykom.at](http://www.feykom.at): the renaming into *Democratic Kurdish People's Centre*, which Baltac draws attention to cannot be confirmed. cf. Köksal Baltacı, 'Gastarbeiter und Flüchtlinge: Kurden in Wien', *Die Presse*, 21 OCT 2014. The BVT apparently does not regard Feykom as a part of the PKK, but as an association of sympathisers. cf BMI-Ö, *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013*, p. 41.
- [108] BMI-D, *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013*, p. 271.
- [109] BVG, *Arbeiterpartei Kurdistans*, p. 19. The same may be assumed for Feykom, cf. <https://wientv.org/selahattin-demirtas-co-vorsitzender-der-hdp-der-tuerkei-besuchte-wien>
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- [111] [www.pydrojava.com](http://www.pydrojava.com).
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- [114] cf. the interviews with Osman Baydemir in ICG, *Turkey's Kurdish Impasse*, p. 5, 6, 14-17
- [115] Salahattin Demirta, 'Die Regierung weiß genau, was und wer die KCKler sind' (open letter to Hasan Cemal, columnist of the Turkish daily *Milliyet*), 17 FEB 2012, <http://civaka-azad.org/die-regierung-weiss-genau-was-und-wer-die-kckler-sind/>.
- [116] ICG, *Kurdish Impasse*, p.9
- [117] 'te Baydemir'i sorgulayan KCK'ı belediye içisi' [Here the civil servant who interviewed Baydemir], *Zaman*, 8 OCT 2011.
- [118] <http://rojaciwan.com/>.
- [119] <http://www.yxkonline.com/>.
- [120] <http://medya.zaman.com.tr/2009/04/14/yapilanma2.jpg> 'Terör Örgütünün Türkiye Meclisi Yapılanması', [The organisation chart of the Turkish assembly of the terror organisation], *Milliyet*, 28 MAY 2009, and the graphics here: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/Gundem/SonDakika.aspx?aType=SonDakikaGaleri&ArticleID=1100049&PAGE=1>.
- [121] <http://www.pajk-online.com/>.
- [122] Elif Ronahi, 'Die PKK ist eine Frauenpartei', press statement 27 DEC 2014, see <https://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/isku/pressekurd-turk/2014/48/06.htm>
- [123] <http://www.kjk-online.org/>.
- [124] BMI-D, *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2013*, p. 283. Bundesministerium des Inneren, *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2014*, Berlin, 2015, p. 129, 130
- [125] Europol, TE-SAT 2012, *Terrorism Situation and Trend Report*, Den Haag 2012 p.24 und TE-SAT 2013, *Terrorism Situation and Trend Report*, Den Haag, 2013, p. 11, list racketeering, money laundering, help in illegal immigration, drug and human trafficking, and ad revenue from the PKK media empire as the main sources of income.

