

Proletarians of all countries, unite!



From the ‘Call for Peace and a Democratic Society’ to the 12th PKK Congress: Completed Liquidation Process, Strategic Disintegration and Ideological Capitulation¹

The 12th Congress of the PKK and Abdullah Öcalan’s “Call for Peace and a Democratic Society” should not be understood merely as tactical shifts or organizational reconfiguration, but as the concrete expression of a qualitative break in ideological orientation. This orientation marks a deliberate departure from the historical revolutionary character of the Kurdish national liberation movement and from the strategy of political independence grounded in the right to self-determination (RTSD); instead, it attempts an ideological re-founding aimed at integrating into the existing system. Terms such as “democratic nation,” “common homeland,” “moral-political society,” “democratic confederalism,” and “stateless solution” appear at first glance as alternative models to existing forms of rule—but they are rooted in a postmodernist approach that abandons revolutionary strategy, class struggle, the right of the oppressed to armed resistance, and the struggle for national independence, thereby forming the ideolog-

¹<https://ci-ic.org/blog/2025/11/04/icl-statement-from-the-call-for-peace-and-a-democratic-society-to-the-12th-pkk-congress/>

ical ground for a liquidation strategy targeting real liberation struggles of oppressed peoples.

The 12th Congress and accompanying declarations characterize the legitimacy of the Kurdish people's anti-colonial struggle since the 20th century as a "spiral of violence," label armed resistance as a "burden of the old paradigm," and assert that the new era must be shaped through a "democratic, moral and peaceful solution." This stance, however, denies the collective historical resistance of the Kurdish nation, which in all four parts faces colonial-fascist occupation by nation-states. Treating the nation-state not in terms of class dominance but solely as the "institutionalization of male-dominated thinking" leads into an idealistic line that explains history not through class struggle but through abstract ethical crises.

Since 1999, the ideological line developed by Abdullah Öcalan has gradually moved away from the course of armed confrontation, anti-colonialism, and socialist influences pursued in the 1980s and 1990s; it has shifted into a position that no longer stands in conflict with the imperialist system but rather aligns with the politics of imperialist restructuring. The 12th Congress represents the final institutionalization and political declaration of this ideological rebuild. Particularly the rhetoric of a "democratic solution" serves to deny the colonial structure of the Turkish bourgeois state and delegitimize the Kurdish people's right of self-defense; the state's century-long policy of destruction, assimilation, displacement, and systematic oppression of the Kurds is reduced in this rhetoric to mere "authoritarianism" or "nationalist deviation," while the class character of the state is completely omitted. Öcalan's ideological system thus offers no class analysis of this structure. The Turkish state is not portrayed as a colonial apparatus of oppression but as a "negotiable actor"—in contradiction both to the primary analytical principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the Kurdish people's historical experience.

Negotiations with the state do not bring about substantive changes in the fundamental policies of the Turkish bourgeois state; yet, this ideological orientation effectively withdraws revolutionary legitimacy from the struggle, elevating peace from a tactical to a strategic position and revealing that Öcalan's line systematically opposes class struggle and revolutionary violence. Moreover, the dissolution of the PKK and the declared cessation of armed struggle signify internalization and unilateral implementation of the conditions imposed by the Turkish state. The final communique of the Congress appeals to Turkey's Grand National Assembly (TBMM) and political parties, expressing hope that the state can take on a "historic role"—which amounts to recognition of the legitimacy of the existing colonial structure. Öcalan's opposition to socialism is not a mere theoretical difference; it signifies the liquidation of the ideological foundation of the revolutionary struggle. He labels Marxist class theory as "dogmatism of the old world" and replaces it with concepts like "moral society," "free individual," "mythical reason"—thus rejecting the materialist-historical basis of socialism and placing idealistic, individualistic, and culturalist ideas at the center. This ideological shift is not

only a break with the socialist tradition but a reorientation shaped by the influence of imperialist ideologies (notably postmodernism).

Hence, the 12th Congress and the “Call for Peace and a Democratic Society” are not a simple compromise document, but signal the liquidation of the revolutionary line with regard to class struggle, socialism, and national liberation perspective. This line legitimizes not only the current policies of the Turkish state but also devalues the Kurdish national anti-colonial and anti-annexationist self-defense struggle, condemns socialism as a “repressive relic of the past,” and, under the guise of rejecting state solutions, in fact denies the necessity of the proletarian state as a revolutionary transitional power of the oppressed. Reducing this process to internal Kurdish debate underestimates its objective significance: that a movement like the PKK, which for years led a revolutionary struggle against imperialism, annexation, and fascism, has adopted such an orientation has far-reaching implications not only for the Kurdish people but for movements in the entire region.

From a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Perspective: The Significance of the Liquidation Process

The program announced at the 12th PKK Congress and Öcalan’s “Call for Peace and a Democratic Society” represents more than an organizational transformation of a national movement: it corresponds to a qualitative liquidation. This liquidation directly targets the principle of revolutionary armed struggle, the pursuit of national liberation based on independence, and the legitimate resistance of oppressed peoples to ruling classes. Öcalan’s line not only breaks with the Kurdish movement’s past but represents a postmodernist, reformist, and pacifist assault on revolutionary theory—part of the worldwide ideological offensive of the bourgeoisie.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism defines revolutionary strategy clearly: the dictatorship of the proletariat, revolutionary violence, people’s war, and the right of oppressed nations to self-determination. Mao Zedong’s theory of people’s war emphasizes that the struggle of oppressed nations against imperialism and feudalism is not merely defensive but aims at building a revolutionary power, especially in colonial and semi-colonial contexts. This war is not only a military phase but an ideological, political, and military mobilization of the oppressed people. The positions formulated in Öcalan’s paradigm and at the 12th Congress contradict all these universal revolutionary principles: ideas like “overcoming armed struggle,” “peaceful solutions as strategic foundation,” “stateless democracy,” and “free individual” directly oppose the class-struggle-based revolutionary strategy of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

In this view, the state is understood merely as a form of domination instead of as a class instrument, and “democratic consensus” is propagated instead of the organized violence of the people. As a result, the class character of the state is obscured and the struggle confined within reformist limits. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism’s historical

practice highlights the counterrevolutionary nature of liquidationism: Lenin, in his fight against the Mensheviks, emphasized the necessity of armed uprising and revolutionary organization, condemning pacifism as a bourgeois ideological tool; Mao Zedong criticized the “peaceful evolution” of liberal bourgeois forces in China and shaped the ideological basis of people’s war precisely in opposition to them. Within this context, the PKK’s framing of armed struggle as an “old burden” and guerrilla warfare as a “negative historical experience” does not reflect a mere tactical move—it is an ideological assault on the socialist ideal.

Another aspect of this rupture emerges in relation to imperialism. From the Marxism-Leninism-Maoism’s perspective, imperialism is the principal enemy of oppressed peoples worldwide, and the liberation struggle of oppressed nations is directed primarily against it. Öcalan’s line reverses this assumption by developing a political posture that integrates into regional reorganizing projects of imperialism. As seen in Rojava, relations with the U.S.-led imperialist coalition are not just tactical but constitute a strategic dependency. Consequently, the Kurdish movement has been transformed from a revolutionary subject into an actor within imperialist power dynamics.

This orientation—developed post-1999 in Öcalan’s paradigm—advances philosophical foundations that directly challenge the core tenets of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism: concepts like “mythical thinking,” “moral society,” “free individual,” and “stateless solution” may initially appear radical innovations but in reality replace class struggle with cultural reform, collective mass movements with individual conscience, and revolutionary breakthrough with system-conforming adaptation.

From the Marxism-Leninism-Maoism’s standpoint, authentic renewal of revolutionary movements must involve tactical adaptation to new conditions while maintaining ideological core principles—and extending the struggle without abandoning its strategic aim. Öcalan’s line, however, entirely relinquishes the strategic goal of revolution, ideologically aligning with the so-called “civilizing” reform projects of the imperialist system. It operates under the assumption that “revolution is impossible,” prioritizing transformation through system-compliant change rather than through the strength of the people. Terms such as “stateless society,” “nonviolent solution,” and “pluralistic identity politics” illustrate this conciliatory, reformist orientation.

The liquidation process is visible not only in theory but also institutionally. The PKK’s decision to end the armed struggle was accompanied by a complete restructuring of organization into system-compatible structures. The “democratic politics” proposed under this banner imply retreat into state-recognized legal channels, limitation of opposition to parliamentary structures, and abandonment of self-defense.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism defines the people as the central subject of revolutionary change—not in cultural or identity terms, but as class-determined, organized, armed, and conscious. Öcalan’s line, in contrast, defines the people culturally and proposes their liberation through “ethical transformation.” This approach depoliticizes the

people and strips them of revolutionary subjectivity. Concepts such as “conscience,” “morality,” “self-administration” replace class warfare with idealistic and individualistic worldview. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has always considered the ideological struggle against liquidationism an integral aspect of class struggle: Lenin’s battle against Menshevik liquidators, Mao’s fight against right-opportunist lines, İbrahim’s struggle against revisionism are historical examples. Öcalan’s line must be understood as a similar liquidationist process, and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism’s stance toward it must be revolutionary restoration and ideological resistance.

The Rejection of the Kurdish Nation’s Right to Self-Determination

The right to self-determination of the Kurdish nation (KD-SDR) is both historically and presently the foundational principle of the Kurdish people’s struggle. From the Marxist-Leninist standpoint, the RTSD is the legitimate and revolutionary foundation for the resistance of oppressed nations against national oppression. This right is not limited to cultural recognition or local autonomy—it includes the right to secession and independent statehood if necessary. But Öcalan’s line and the orientation adopted at the 12th PKK Congress reject this fundamental right outright. Instead, they propose integration through terms like “stateless solution,” “common homeland,” and “democratic nation”—not just an ideological shift, but an explicit declaration of historical capitulation.

Lenin defined the RTSD as the right of oppressed nations to determine their own fate and emphasized that denying this right promotes chauvinism of the oppressing nation and weakens revolutionary solidarity. Proletarian internationalism demands recognition of the right to secession both by revolutionaries in oppressed and oppressing nations. Freedom is only possible if all nations are free—this right is not merely theoretical but a practical instrument of struggle. The Kurdish nation is subject to systematic oppression by colonial, denialist, and assimilationist regimes. In Turkey, this oppression manifests through policies of comprehensive destruction targeting Kurdish language, identity, territory, and social organization. Since the founding of the Republic of Turkey—through the Treaty of Lausanne and the 1924 constitution—the Kurdish nation has been legally denied, physically oppressed, and ideologically demonized.

Since its founding in 1978, the PKK engaged in a revolutionary struggle against these structures—aiming to realize the RTSD and the vision of an independent, unified, democratic, socialist Kurdistan. But post-1999, Öcalan’s ideological line diverged from this essential perspective: the goal of statehood was ridiculed as “state fixation,” Kurdish aspirations for freedom were portrayed as a “trap of nationalist tendencies,” and liberation was relocated to a stateless democratic society. Although these proposals may appear radical, they are in truth an ideological trajectory that deconstructs the notion of independence and favors accommodation with the colonial system. A state-

less solution replaces the overthrow of colonial states with transformation within their existing structures. The Kurdish nation's struggle is reduced to a local identity reform. In this context, the narrative of a "common homeland" echoes the ideological thesis of Turkish state indivisibility. Öcalan's claim that Kurds are not condemned to statelessness but achieve freedom precisely through statelessness aligns with official Turkish ideology, which defines the right to secession as "grounds for war." This represents not just a rejection of a revolutionary right but the implicit recognition of the ideological legitimacy of the annexing and occupying state. The Kurdish liberation struggle is thereby depoliticized into a "reform struggle over identity," tacitly accepting unstated state sovereignty.

Öcalan's line abandons the Kurdish populace's revolutionary right to secession and instead seeks a solution based on partnership with Turkish supremacy. His aim is not merely reconciliation with the Turkish state but acceptance by imperialist powers and positioning as a viable actor within the global system. Terms such as "stateless democracy," "pluralism," and "ecological society" resonate with the dominant ideological paradigms of the contemporary imperialist system. They offer no fundamental critique of contemporary capitalism but propose an "alternative governance model" within its logic.

In reality, this means abandoning forms of struggle based on revolutionary popular violence in favor of a movement aligned with international NGOs, reformist identity politics, and local democracy. The revolutionary principle of RTSD is thus dissolved into a postmodern "localism." Öcalan's theory displaces it with moral transformation of the "free individual." This deprives the people of their collective, revolutionary subjectivity and shifts the struggle from the historical, class-based political realm to an ethical-moral plane. From a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist perspective, the people are a collective subject that determines its destiny through class struggle—and secession is the state expression of this subject. Lenin said: "The most revolutionary form of struggle against national oppression is to openly defend the right of the oppressed nation to secede." This must be recognized by revolutionaries in both oppressed and oppressor nations.

The decisions at the 12th PKK Congress openly declare that this right is no longer organized or defended. The dissolution and cessation of armed struggle show that the line has become an ideological capitulation. The appeals in the Congress statements to the Turkish parliament express recognition of state legitimacy; ending the people's war means abandoning self-defense. The theoretical and political consequence is integration of the Kurdish national struggle into the framework of colonial states—offering not a revolutionary break but a reformist compromise. This approach aligns with "conflict resolution strategies" advanced by the imperialist system in the region: models that bring local actors under control, detach identity demands from class

character, and support internal system reforms. This is precisely the political program Öcalan promotes.

Legitimizing the Annexing and Occupying Structure of the Turkish State

The Republic of Turkey was founded on a multi-ethnic territory in the interests of the Turkish bourgeoisie—not merely as a capitalist economic system but as an apparatus of oppression enforcing Turkish national dominance, especially over the Kurds and other nations. The annexationary character is not an external facet but a constitutive feature deeply embedded in the state’s internal structure: its legal system, education, administration, ideology, and collective memory. Therefore, the Turkish state is not only the primary obstacle to the Kurdish nation’s RTSD but also a historic class rule system aimed at systematically suppressing this right.

According to Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory, nation-states are constructs in which the bourgeoisie institutionalizes its market and class rule. The founding process of the Turkish Republic was not a bourgeois revolution but a transformation of the centralized, militaristic-sultanistic structure inherited from the Ottoman Empire according to bourgeois interests. This transformation began with the annihilation of non-Muslim peoples in Anatolia (Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians) and was continued through systematic policies against the Kurds. From the Sheikh Said revolt in 1925, the Dersim massacre in 1937–38, the 1980 coup, to village destructions in the 1990s—the Turkish state employed armed violence at every stage to crush Kurdish resistance.

Despite this reality, Öcalan’s line and the 12th PKK Congress deny or obscure the colonial character of the Turkish state. Terms like “common homeland,” “democratic consensus,” appeals to parliament, or the state’s “transformability” serve as ideological tools to legitimize the annexing, occupying state. Systematic repression is framed as isolated errors or nationalist deviations, and the state is presented as reformable. Öcalan’s claim that “the state is transformable” shows a deliberate avoidance of class analysis. Yet especially in Turkey, the state is the apparatus through which the dominator class—comprador bourgeoisie, large landowners, military, bureaucracy, intelligence, and police—maintains its rule.

The Kurdish nation is the direct target of this apparatus, which employs all legal and illegal means to suppress its RTSD. This structure cannot be changed through reforms or constitutional improvements; it can only be overthrown by revolutionary rupture. Öcalan, however, maintains belief in the possibility of state transformation. With calls for a “new constitution,” “democratic self-governance,” or “parliamentary representation,” he seeks solutions within the system. His statements that “parliament has a historic role” reflect this line. This approach moves away from revolutionary content and ultimately reproduces existing class relations.

Öcalan’s line embodies ideological dissimulation that aims to relegate the Turkish state’s policies of denial, destruction, and assimilation to “dusty chapters of history.”

Most clearly, this legitimization appears in his interpretations of the Treaty of Lausanne and the 1924 constitution. While naming them as foundations of Kurdish denial, he relocates the solution to before their formation—toward an alleged “Turkish–Kurdish partnership”—and nostalgically refers to the republic’s founding principles. From a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist viewpoint, liberation of a nation is not based on the oppressor state’s history but on the history of its own struggle. Lausanne and the 1924 constitution represent eras of colonization and total dominance for all peoples of Turkey, including Kurds. Referring to these periods to invoke a “common homeland” means distancing oneself from the Kurdish national resistance narrative.

One of Öcalan’s central arguments toward the state is the need to overcome the “authoritarian mindset.” But this assessment conceals the class character of the problem, leaning ideologically on individualistic liberalism. The narrative of “mental transformation” is reductionist—it tries to explain structural state violence through psychological, cultural, or individual factors. But the Turkish state is not the product of malicious individuals or cultural aberration—it is the direct product of class interests and integration into the imperialist system.

This form of legitimization simultaneously serves imperialist interests. Öcalan’s relations with the Turkish state under the “peace process” and “dialogue” do not reflect revolutionary opposition to a NATO-oriented state structure, but a political program of adaptation to it. The Turkish state is one of NATO’s key military instruments and a strategic outpost of the imperialist system in the Middle East. Expecting a “democratic transformation” from this state amounts to offering reconciliation to imperialism—and naturally integrates the national liberation struggle into it.

In Rojava, the practical results of this line are visible: the avoidance of direct confrontation with the Turkish state in self-government, strategic alliances with the U.S., and the defense of “soft transition models” reflect Öcalan’s tendency to evade structural conflict. Focusing on reforming the Turkish state results in tacit acceptance of imperialist encirclement and perpetuation of the bourgeois state. This harms not only the Kurdish people but all oppressed groups in Turkey’s freedom struggle. Every appeal for “democratic politics” that fails to expose the state’s colonial structure is doomed and remains confined within bourgeois limits.

Adaptation to the Turkish Ruling Class and Imperialists

A national liberation struggle must not only confront the immediate oppressor state, but also break with the imperialist global order. Therefore, revolutionary liberation

movements must be ideologically clear against any conciliatory or reformist strategy that attempts to resolve the conflict within the boundaries of the oppressor state. But the 12th PKK Congress and Öcalan's political line abandon this principled stance. They deliberately construct a political positioning compatible with the Turkish ruling class and imperial centers.

This structure imposes structural violence not just on Kurds, but also on the working class, peasantry, and other oppressed strata within Turkey. At the same time, it integrates into NATO and imperialist EU circles, effectively becoming an executor of their regional strategies. Öcalan's redefinition of the system as a "democratic republic" is at its core an ideological position that legitimizes bourgeois rule. It does not foster revolutionary combat against the Turkish state's violence apparatus; it seeks its approval to participate in a "solution process."

Relations with imperialist centers are yet another sign of this adaptive strategy. Today, as the U.S., EU, and NATO seek new regional structuring, Öcalan's line does not oppose the imperial system but aligns with it. In Rojava, a self-governance model developed with U.S. military-political support highlights the non-confrontational nature of this orientation. The 12th Congress declared a strategic realignment that extends this imperial adaptation into Turkey. The dissolution and end of armed struggle are the military expression; statements like "The Grand National Assembly of Turkey has a historic duty" or "We call on political parties, civil society organizations, and opinion-makers to support the process" are its ideological forms.

Such calls prevent revolutionary exposure of the Turkish state's structural nature and bourgeois class; they once again portray them as "changeable," "negotiable," and "partners." From the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist perspective, reformist lines like this demonstrate that collaborative attempts with the bourgeoisie have the potential to paralyze revolutionary struggle. Öcalan's line has realized this potential: the cessation of armed struggle is not only a military retreat—it implies ideological rejection of class war. Öcalan's refusal to analyze the bourgeois state historically—preferring terms like "authoritarian mindset," "male-dominated reason," or "system crisis"—represents further legitimization. This perspective erases classes, production relations, and property forms, depoliticizing the struggle by transforming it from confrontation with the bourgeoisie into individual morality and cultural ethics.

This adaptation is aimed not only at neutralizing the Kurdish struggle but also weakening the revolutionary potential across Turkey and the Middle East. Öcalan's proposed solution is a project that secures dominance of Turkish ruling classes and their international backers. Framed in concepts like "stateless democracy," "identity-based autonomy," and "democratic confederalism," it does not represent an anti-imperialist rupture but integrates into imperialist rule.

Distortion of the Legitimacy of Kurdish National Resistance

For over a century, the Kurdish people have resisted colonial oppression by Turkish, Arab, Persian, and other nation-state regimes. This resistance was never merely a series of cultural or ethnic demands—it has been revolutionary self-defense and an existential struggle against genocide, assimilation, massacres, and national negation. In Turkey, this struggle symbolizes a historical fight against systematic annihilation by the Turkish state and against the regional order imposed by imperialism. Its legitimacy lies in response to colonial violence and in the universal realization of the oppressed’s right to liberation.

Öcalan’s current ideological position and the PKK’s orientation as formulated at the 12th Congress systematically distort this legitimacy. They condemn the struggle historically with terms like “spiral of violence,” “conflict-centered paradigm,” or “negative impacts of real socialism.” The legitimate defensive struggle of the Kurdish people is reframed as a “mistake of both sides,” evidencing a liberal ideology that equates colonialism with resistance. Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory makes clear that such neutrality is itself a bourgeois ideological cloak.

Öcalan’s historical depictions of Kurdish resistance strip it of class content and revolutionary meaning, reducing it to moral language and ethical crisis. The people who resisted become the “violent”; the state becomes a “transformable actor.” This reductive framing depoliticizes the people, delegitimizes armed self-defense, and adapts the struggle into a liberal idiom.

In the 1980s, the PKK’s guerrilla movement marked the Kurdish nation’s emergence into subjecthood. The 1990s “Serhildan” phase saw rural Kurds and the poor rise politically and awaken national consciousness. Yet Öcalan—in his post-1999 rhetoric—does not portray this era as a popular emancipation movement, but as an externally induced “spiral of violence.” This aligns closely with official Turkish rhetoric, which has long interpreted Kurdish mobilization as “terror escalation” or “provocation.”

From a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist perspective, the armed resistance of a people is not optional but necessary under conditions of colonial or semi-colonial subjugation. The legacies of Lenin and Mao define revolutionary violence as constitutive, not ancillary. Mao’s dictum “Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun” applies universally where oppressed peoples cannot rely on peaceful transition—and can only establish power through armed struggle. The Kurdish guerrilla struggle was not merely military action, but ideological, political, and social practice of self-defense.

But Öcalan’s current ideology condemns armed struggle. He instead promotes “democratic politics,” “peaceful solutions,” “dialogue,” and “ethical society”—which destroy the idea that the people can secure their freedom through armed resistance. These are not tactical adjustments but ideological liquidation of the people’s historical revolu-

tionary legacy. The 12th Congress institutionalized this orientation: its declaration to end armed struggle, dissolve the organization, and “develop new methods of struggle” definitively denounce the people’s war line.

What was once guerrilla power in Rojava has been replaced by professionalized structures allied with imperialist powers. Popular participation was supplanted by security apparatuses; the revolutionary core was overshadowed by pursuit of “stability” aligned with imperial centers. Öcalan’s call for a “democratic solution” is thus an ideological project hostile to the guerrilla struggle, relying on bourgeois reconciliation. It devalues the Kurdish people’s historical achievements—their status as revolutionary subject—and labels them as “burden of the past,” urging to leave the past behind. This actually disconnects the people from their power and will.

For this reason, Öcalan’s line is not just a condemnation of armed struggle, guerrilla war, or legitimate self-defense—it’s an ideological construction that falsifies the Kurdish people’s historical legitimacy. From a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist perspective, such ideology is a systematic attack on the revolutionary essence. The legitimacy of resistance stems from the fight against colonialism; this legitimacy endures only through revolutionary means.

Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Perspective on Legitimacy and Öcalan’s Ideological Attack

According to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, resistance is not only a right but a historical duty of the oppressed. It demands revolutionary violence against the ruling classes, nations, and imperialist systems based on oppression and exploitation. Especially for people living under colonial conditions, armed struggle is not optional but a condition of existence. The struggles of oppressed nations against chauvinism and exploitation are integral to the proletarian international revolutionary strategy.

Lenin emphasized in “The Right of Nations to Self-Determination” that revolutionaries in oppressive nations must openly defend the oppressed nation’s right to secession and actively support their struggle. In his 1916 writing “The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations,” he defended the legitimacy of armed forms of resistance, calling it “revolutionary war.” Mao developed this further with the theory of people’s war.

Hence, resistance is not merely a form—it is the content of revolution. Legitimacy of struggle against class oppression, national oppression, and imperialism is fundamentally linked to these conditions. This theoretical heritage underpinned many 20th-century revolutionary movements, which grounded themselves in the historical legitimacy of armed resistance—they understood it not just as a tool but as constitutive, because Marxism-Leninism-Maoism posits that people can only build power through the weapon of the people.

But Öcalan's line condemns this revolutionary legacy and endorses an idealistic, liberal project expressed in terms like “nonviolent solution,” “ethical society,” “democratic compromise,” and “conscience revolution.” This approach reduces collective right of resistance to individual ethical transformation, depoliticizes the people as revolutionary subject, and frames revolutionary violence as “a pathology of the past.” Öcalan's ideology is not abstract theory—it is a deliberate political decision with real consequences.

His approach to a “democratic solution” aims at creating common ground with the state, criminalizing self-defense, and condemning revolutionary resistance. The 12th Congress's institutionalization of ending armed struggle is not descriptive—it is prescriptive. Öcalan critiques people's war using terms like “militaristic effects of real socialism,” “state fixation,” and “security-centered politics”—direct borrowings from Western liberal and postmodern language—recasting resistance as a cultural rather than political struggle.

This approach aligns ideologically with conflict resolution projects emerging from imperialist centers. It not only delegitimizes resistance, but reframes it as an ethical crisis, obscuring the nature of the oppressor. From the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist standpoint, this is a direct assault on revolutionary legitimacy—it challenges not just form but historical justification of resistance, aligning with the colonial state and creating ideological alienation from the people. Öcalan's belief in the transformative capacity of the existing state has become a project to co-opt the people's struggle into the bourgeois apparatus—fully compatible with the imperialist “peaceful solution” strategies.

His ideological attack is both theoretical and practically devastating. Declaring “the time of guerrilla war is over” is not mere observation—it is strategy. Organizational dissolution, weapon lay-down, elimination of self-defense—all destroy foundational codes of resistance, aiming to reduce the people into a community of “ethical individuals.” Yet Marxism-Leninism-Maoism defines the people not only as a moral subject but as political, military, ideological—hence resistant struggle is integral.

Öcalan's ideological position opposes not just past revolutionary struggle but future potential: he refuses to trust the people's own power, instead relying on the state's democratizing possibility. From a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist view, this is ideological surrender and dissolution: the people are stripped of subjectivity and become cultural objects. That's why Öcalan's ideological attack is dangerous not just within the PKK but for regional popular movements and revolutionary strategies.

Ideological Attack on Socialism

Öcalan and the PKK's current ideological orientation does more than dismantle the revolutionary foundations of the Kurdish struggle—it also targets the scientific and historical principles of socialism. Institutionalized by the 12th Congress and embedded in a postmodern ideological framework—expressed through terms like “democratic

confederalism,” “moral-political society,” and “democratic modernity”—it aims to weaken the core categories of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Öcalan’s critique of socialism is based on portraying state and class struggle as outdated elements of an “old paradigm,” arguing that states are universally sources of oppression, domination, and war, and socialist regimes merely perpetuate this legacy. Yet according to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the socialist state is not oppressive—but transitional: a stage by which the proletariat ends bourgeois rule and builds power alongside the masses. Lenin conceived of the “withering away” of the state following class abolition; Mao demonstrated with the Cultural Revolution that class-struggle continues in socialism via the Cultural Revolution, demonstrating that class struggle endures even under socialism.

Öcalan’s rejection of the state relies more on liberal-individualist and postmodern-anarchist sources—abstracting the state from class relations and interpreting it as cultural or patriarchal constructs (“male-dominated reason,” “authoritarian mindset”). This idealism fails to recognize the state’s material class basis. For Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the socialist state is essential as long as classes exist; only in a classless society can a state truly vanish. Öcalan’s “stateless democracy” thus embodies an illusion of gradual transition to socialism—and, for Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, represents capitulation.

His ideological framework undermines socialism by rejecting class, negating material relations, and neutralizing revolutionary struggle—transforming it into moral preference compatible with capitalism. Öcalan’s concept of “democratic confederalism” discards collectivist-planned economy in favor of cooperative economy within market structures, abandoning key Marxist economic categories like value theory, surplus value, class struggle, and dictatorship of the proletariat.

This ideology rejects class analysis and depoliticizes revolutionary struggle, reducing it to ethical matters—closer to anti-Communist liberal narratives focusing on bureaucracy, state elites, or oppressive socialization. Öcalan’s adoption of these narratives indicates ideological convergence with imperialist anti-communist discourses. The consequences manifest concretely—for instance, in Rojava, despite claims of socialism, private structures persisted and economic cooperation with imperialist powers like the U.S. was cultivated, even under the banner of “humanitarian intervention” and women’s rights.

These developments show that Öcalan’s ideological war on socialism is not abstract but concretely aligns him strategically with imperialist adaptation. From a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist viewpoint, this orientation is the liquidation of revolutionary dynamism: socialism is no longer understood as a project towards a classless society, but as a system achievable without overthrowing ruling classes. The state remains necessary insofar as classes exist—and a stateless ideal posited without an actual revolutionary

transition constitutes betrayal. Öcalan’s “democratic modernity” reduces socialism to cultural reform—altogether undermining proletarian perspective.

This ideological move must be regarded as submission—not only weakening Kurdish freedom movement, but endangering the socialist perspective of all oppressed peoples. Therefore, countering Öcalan’s ideology requires not only political argumentation, but robust defense of socialism’s scientific basis, historical legitimacy, and revolutionary claim.

Conclusion: Ideological Juggling and Overall Assessment of the Liquidation Process

Viewed within the historical context of revolutionary struggle, the 12th PKK Congress and Abdullah Öcalan’s “Call for Peace and a Democratic Society” cannot be dismissed as mere tactical shifts or structural reorganization; they constitute the proclamation, institutionalization, and international alignment of a comprehensive ideological liquidation process—targeting both the Kurdish liberation movement and the broader revolutionary movement in Turkey. From a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist standpoint, this is not merely an organizational decision—it is the direct negation of revolutionary line and people’s war, as well as an ideological assault on socialist theory.

Öcalan’s line aims at a simultaneous triple liquidation: the denial of national liberation, the delegitimization of revolutionary violence, and the attack on scientific socialism. It labels the Kurdish nation’s right to self-determination as “nationalist fixation” and “state obsession,” effectively criminalizing the national liberation struggle—an integral part of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory—and proposes not the overthrow of colonial states, but partnership within the existing state. This rhetoric functions as theoretical justification for the denial and destruction policy of the Turkish bourgeois-colonial state.

Accordingly, the 12th Congress resolved to end the armed struggle and dissolve the organization—an expression of the rejection of revolutionary popular resistance and the guerrilla line. Terms like “spiral of violence,” “conflict-centered paradigm,” or “ethical revolution” are used to delegitimize resistance. In their place emerges pacifism and unconditional surrender. The legitimacy of people’s self-defense is depicted as a “pathology” of the past, while the line of revolutionary war is condemned as error. This twofold liquidation is completed by ideological assault on socialism: Öcalan denounces Marxist-Leninist theory and socialist state as totalitarian, militaristic, and immoral—and counters them with abstract, liberal phrases: “democratic modernity,” “stateless democracy,” and “moral-political society.” These concepts strip socialism of its class-based, collectivist and revolutionary substance and replace it with cultural preference aligned with the capitalist order. This triple ideological transformation is not random—it is the outcome of a deliberate and planned orientation.

Öcalan's line is not only a transformation internal to the PKK, but a strategic political repositioning that aligns with imperial restructuring strategies in the region. Terms like "democratic nation," "democratic confederalism," and "communal economy" have become slogans compatible with Western soft-power strategies, civil-society liberal leftism, and imperial agendas—demonstrating that Öcalan's line functions not as an alternative, but as an integrated instrument of these strategies.

This line also translates into legitimizing the oppressive apparatus of the Turkish state on ideological level. The 12th Congress's language constructs an ideological framework that portrays the Kurdish people's struggle and the Turkish state's systematic violence as a symmetrical conflict—thus obscuring genocide, occupation, assimilation, and economic blockade. This rhetoric neutralizes the people's right to self-defense. Such negation is not just an internal reorientation of the PKK—but emblematic of a universal liberal subsumption of legitimate struggles of oppressed peoples.

Öcalan's ideological environment dissolves historical people's struggles into a liberal utopia of reconciliation, abolishes revolutionary rupture, and replaces class conflict with cultural diversity. This orientation represents a strategic watershed not only for the revolutionary movement in Turkey and Kurdistan but worldwide: it functions to marginalize all movements advocating revolutionary rupture by branding them "violent," "totalitarian," or "immoral." The 12th PKK Congress was, on a state level, a political gesture that appeased the Turkish state and the imperialist states within NATO; on an ideological level, it was a postmodern desmontage of socialist heritage. The PKK's self-dissolution is not only the end of an organization—it opens the 50-year history of Kurdish revolutionary struggle to liberal integration.

For Marxist-Leninist-Maoist forces, this scenario is both a historical warning and a strategic call to action. The ideological void left by the PKK's liquidation must not be filled by imperialist or state-driven reformism—it must be contested with renewed revolutionary clarity. The ideological void exposed by liquidation presents strategic possibilities for the resurgence of class-based revolutionary and people's-war-oriented Marxist-Leninist-Maoist line.

Thus, the task is clear: to resolutely defend the scientific principles of socialism, the legitimacy of popular revolutionary resistance, the validity of people's war, and the right of oppressed nations to revolutionary liberation. Öcalan's line seeks to rewind history and chain revolutionary aspiration to liberal negotiation tables. Our response must be the defense of resistance—not capitulation; revolution—not reformism; clarity of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism—not ideological distortion.

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