

# A Trinity of Power 'Patriarchy/Capital/State' in Gender Inequalities Intersectionality, Decoloniality, Kurdish Women and Jineolojî

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**Abstract** Capitalism, state and patriarchy play an important role in gender inequalities; here we focus on the ways in which this 'trinity of power' has been acting as an integrated system from its early stage, according to Abdullah Öcalan, *Sociology of Freedom* (2020) where he criticizes dominant masculinities, and calls for women's leadership in building direct eco-democracies. The paper tries to connect path-breaking political proposals of the Kurdish Women's Movement about Democratic Confederalism and Jineolojî (Women's Science) with intersectional/decolonial feminisms emerged in last decades; and some Indigenous theoretical/practical perspectives.

**Keywords** Women's Liberation. Intersectional Decolonial Feminisms. Kurdish Free Women Movement. Democratic Confederalism. Jineolojî (Women's Science). Indigenous theories and practices. Intersectional alliances and social coalitions.

**Summary** 1 Introduction, Positionality and Purpose. – 2 A 'Trinity of Power' in the Construction of Women's Slavery. – 3 Intersectionality, Decoloniality and Jineolojî. – 4 Native Non-Dichotomy and a 'Third Way' in the Politics of Alliances. – 5 Conclusive Notes.



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## 1 Introduction, Positionality and Purpose

This essay stems from Abdullah Öcalan's analysis of gender inequalities, starting from the roots, which are found in the making of patriarchy, capitalism and the state. We'll look at them as an integrated system: trinity of power.<sup>1</sup> The paper also attempts to contribute in creating a dialectical bridge between the non-Western theoretical and practical experience of the Kurdish movement and decolonial intersectional feminist perspectives emerged in the last decades, both in the 'global north' and in former colonies. I suggest intersectional and decolonial approaches are very close to – yet different from – the innovative perspective of the Kurdish women's movement, and their political proposals.

In the first part of this work, we understand how Öcalan does not procrastinate the liberation of women to some 'post-revolutionary' phase. Several leftist social movements of the past took for granted when justice and equality would be achieved, then gender inequalities could be solved – in this way postponing the solution of women's oppression.<sup>2</sup> Instead, Öcalan brings forward the issue, stating women are at the center of any positive transformation and any politics of radical eco-democracy. The construction of Jineoloji ('women's science') was suggested by the Kurdish leader as a revolutionary way to address the thousands of years old 'women's slavery'. Even though the concept of Jineoloji, in the form of a need, was already circulating among Kurdish women since the 1990s, Öcalan gave impetus to the internal debate on the subject; inspired women's politics and intellectual agency, quality international literature<sup>3</sup> and transformative practices: women have produced their own autonomous structures and knowledges.

The second part of the essay, from the political standpoint of intersectional decolonization of knowledge, presents some of the main concepts in Jineoloji as a new social science proposed by the Kurdish women's movement. Here I have a double aim: the first is to introduce the topic to a broader audience of students, scholars

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**1** Would like to thank all those who helped in different ways to the production of this essay. I am particularly grateful to Melike Yasar of the Kurdish Women's Foreign Relations Office (Repak) and Kurdish National Congress (Knk).

**2** Terminological Notes. I use the word 'woman' to intend Cis- Trans- and socialized women. Terms like 'Native' or 'Indigenous' are considered as synonymous, and refer to different societies such as Aboriginal, First Nation, Maori and Adivasi.

**3** In this essay, I quote only published materials, mostly in English, from sources such as books, articles, and websites connected with the Kurdish women's movement and the debate around their political proposals. Far from being all-embracing, my contribution offers a minimal background to understand the argument, and few references for further readings.

and activists; the second, to contribute in answering a theoretical/practical question about what is innovative in Jineolojî, focusing upon which aspects are original, or even ground-breaking, with respect to feminisms.

In the last part I will share some thoughts and intuitions around non-dichotomous viewpoints. There are epistemological elements in Native experiences, theories, methodologies, and social relations, resonating with the Kurdish Women Movement's political strategy of searching for a 'third way', going beyond the limits implied in binary oppositions and western dualities. Looking for alternatives helps in the process of divorcing from the trinity of power, their systems of oppression and the solutions they offer. Furthermore, building a connection with Indigenous theoretical/practical politics (which found expression at an international level during the last five decades) could be useful in view of future intersectional alliances, fostering social coalitions; and in the building of the World Women's Democratic Confederalism, one of the proposals of the movement.<sup>4</sup>

Non-hierarchical, bottom-up solutions emerging from the theory of Democratic Confederalism – proposed by Öcalan in his prison writings – found implementations in the actual experience of Rojava in North and East Syria<sup>5</sup> as well as in refugees-camps. In a global situation marked by ecological and economic crisis, near-bankrupt states, institutional fascism/racism (Basso 2012), and war scenarios, the idea to find solutions may sound like an exaggerated aspiration. Yet, this is what societies (especially women) always did for millennia, interweaving solidarity during difficult times, inventing forms of co-existence and cooperation to face adversities.

Before going further, I would like to unveil my intersectional position in terms of oppressions and privileges; and my posture as a scholar/activist, who looks at the political proposals of the Kurdish Women Movement as pivotal for the contemporary challenges within feminisms and in societies at large. Being an intersectional and decolonial eco-feminist helped me to locate the relations

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**4** In the economy of this work, the theory and practice of World Women's Democratic Confederalism, as well as other ideas, will not be discussed. The analysis focuses on elements closely related to the aims of the paper. However, this proposal is worth of mention, as an horizon of the international debate.

**5** Democratic Confederalism in Rojava was established in 2012, in a critical geopolitical situation, surrounded by authoritarian regimes in Iran and Syria, with Isis terrorists and the Turkish army at times cooperating toward the common goal of eradicating Kurdish people from their own land. Rojava made possible a women's revolution: the Social Contract was approved in 2014 to ensure the self-government of three cantons and the coexistence of different ethnic and religious groups – without re-building forms of monopoly of power and the state. The challenge of raising issues related to patriarchy called international attention toward such an experiment of radical and ecological gender democracy, in a vexed corner of the world, the north and east of Syria.

between women's productive and reproductive work within different environments; and in understanding how hierarchies of class, age, sex/gender/sexuality, race/ethnicity, ability, religion, status, are intertwined in the creation of the patriarchal family and society. As a former factory worker who had the chance to study during the evening, achieve a school degree, and enroll in the University, I feel particularly close to the Kurdish women's effort around community education through Academies open to everybody, and the practice of direct democracy in everyday life.<sup>6</sup> Their work has been a source of great inspiration while teaching in a difficult southern margin of Europe where communication skills, non-authoritarian pedagogy, inventiveness, laboratories and collective activities are at play. As a researcher/traveller, today I enjoy academic status, European citizens' rights and fair skin privileges, due to an enduring system of inequalities striving in a global frame still characterized by the persistence of white supremacy and neoliberal/colonial relations.

The focus on the interconnectedness of different monopolies of power and systems of domination presented in Öcalan's work is very helpful to strengthen the intersectional praxis in research and activism, to avoid making fixed hierarchies among different types of oppression. The various forms of subjugation cannot be fully understood separately: each one is co-constructed in the trinity of power. Each specific oppression related to capital-state-patriarchy can be better recognized in the intersection with others, and fought against in relation to others. Ranking among inequalities (besides being a divisive political practice) is problematic in itself: any pre-determined order of importance may differ according to historical time, geopolitical location, and it is affected by the observer's intersectional standpoint (Corradi 2018).

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**6** Here I am not going to use interviews carried out in Fall 2019 (in Qamishlo, Rojava; Makhmur Refugees Camp and Erbil, Iraq) which may be reserved for further elaborations. Although brief, I must say the experience of dialogue with women of different organizations in the field helped me to better understand the perspective of inter-ethnic and inter-religious Democratic Confederalism, its strength in theory, empirical methods, and implications in society at large.

## 2 A 'Trinity of Power' in the Construction of Women's Slavery

Whereas the woman  
is reduced to a possession  
or a commodity,  
there cannot be any men  
who behaves morally.  
(Abdullah Öcalan, *Beyond State,  
Power and Violence*, 2022)

Two important premises: in the construction of women's slavery, Öcalan dates back to five thousand years ago the beginning of patriarchy; early forms of city-state; private property and accumulation, made possible by a gradual shift toward sedentariness.

A separate analysis of patriarchy is not possible in light of Öcalan's contribution: three main entities state/patriarchy/capitalism are presented as deeply intertwined from the very beginning: I refer to their articulation as a 'trinity of power', since they constitute an inextricable system of exploitation and oppression. Importantly enough, in the seemingly inseparable dyad 'nation-state', Öcalan targets the state, for having always been against the society, actually *the opposite of society*. But he rescues the concept of nation (as Native place), hoping for a Nation of different nations.<sup>7</sup>

In this paragraph, I am referring mainly to his books: *Beyond State, Power and Violence* (2022); and *The Sociology of Freedom. Manifesto of the Democratic Civilization, Volume 3* (2020). Surprisingly enough, the latter starts by wondering about the reasons why all socialist revolutions of the past failed. The answer is: they avoided to question the existence of the state, and the monopolies of power implied in patriarchy and capitalism. As he argues, no socialist revolution questioned colonial modernity, positivistic science, the ways knowledge is produced, and the state's role in the education of society.

In Öcalan's prison writings, definitions such as 'state society' or 'capitalist society' are presented as misleading, since they hide all the different relations that were outside or against the system. In the same way, expressions such as 'feudal society' or 'slavery society' reflect the dominating point of view. Instead, it would be important to

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<sup>7</sup> Scholars and activists in the Left are suspicious of the term 'nation' (not be confused with 'nationalism') especially in these times of resurgent fascisms and winds of war. It is important to re-signify the concept of nation as country, articulating proper distinctions from its racist and xenophobic use by far-right groups and nationalist parties. The trinity of power's responsibilities should be separated from those of society by looking at nations as being mostly subjugated to the domain of the states. Past re-significations of the concept include examples such as 'LGBT Nation' or 'Queer Nation' - indicating a common cultural tie among people with different gender orientations and sexualities. Also among the Native-American peoples, 'The Five Nations' refers to a political practice of alliance and co-existence.

focus on different forms of democratic civilization, as an 'alternative' always survived in all types of human societies, based upon social co-existence, solidarity and democratic innovation. Öcalan (2020) also asserts the preeminence of society over politics, and the primacy of social sciences over all sciences, in a process of transformation so that all sciences could become liberated and oriented towards the needs of society. He criticizes the 'Enlightenment' and *positivistic science* as an ideology legitimizing patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism as a system. As a matter of fact, positivist science was instrumental in 'demonstrating':

- a. the superiority of men, with the physical and moral inferiority of women;
- b. the superiority of whites, while establishing the lack of status as 'full humans' of the colonized populations - for they could be enslaved with no regrets by the Europeans; and
- c. the superiority of capitalism as the highest form of wealth production, more 'rational' than domestic modes of production (centered on life, subsistence and social reproduction, instead of on the supreme value of profit).

Öcalan mentions the Enlightenment also because such an 'age of Reason' allowed "numerous systematic physical and cultural genocides by the nation-state" (Öcalan 2020, 318). He underlines the *weak points* of positivistic science, among which the unrealistic vision of a continuous progress; a never-ending development; which remained undiscussed in real socialism, and through all types of revolutions. As the colonial matrix of power survives the formal end of colonialism (Quijano, Mignolo, Segato, Walsh 2024), the faith in science survives the failure of positivism; Öcalan ironizes around how positivistic science conquered even the heart of utopian socialists: "they are all children of Enlightenment, *with an unlimited trust in Science*" (Öcalan 2020, 136; emphasis added).

Science is an expression of the trinity of power and its capability to function in an integrated way; Öcalan believes we should be more critical of capitalism, patriarchy, and colonialism, pointing out how the challenge to science expressed by feminists in the 70s *did not grow*. In fact, the radical critique of patriarchal, capitalist, and colonial science, first formulated in the West by Sandra Harding (1986), never reached the mainstream; her pioneering work inaugurated a whole field of feminist studies, yet did not translate into a widespread contestation of the *state role in education, health and environment protection* - just to mention some of its most evident fiascos. Another weak point of positivistic science identified by Öcalan is the claim of Western knowledge to be neutral - which does not keep into account two issues: the economic-political-military influences on science, and the intersectional *standpoint* of the observer. The task of assessing the

non-neutrality of science calls for self-reflective practices, starting with the scientists' intersectional positioning in terms of sex/gender, class, race, ability, culture, religion, geopolitical background. The awareness of knowledge being *situated* should make scientists feel responsible when choosing theories and methodologies of research (Smith Tuhiwai 1999), which are usually hierarchical, non-participative, and geared toward the interests of the monopolies of power.

What indigenous people call *white male science* is a main expression of the 'trinity of power' in action: capitalism, state and patriarchy during thousands of years, gradually overthrew matriarchal types of societies; and history moved increasingly toward aggressive forms of masculine dominance. Öcalan refers to this process as an *historical deviation* from what he defined as 'natural societies'. His longer diachronic perspective of 5,000 years helps to better envision the making of patriarchy/capitalism/state as happening with the diffusion of agriculture and increased periods of sedentary life, which made collective accumulation possible.

When cooperation left space to competition, accumulation became 'privatized'; and the control shifted from the women's common domain to the males of each family/clan. The possibility of *producing and accumulating more than others* created inequalities and established the foundation of social classes, with a hierarchy among male owners; subsequently, casts were formed on the basis of the division of labor. Women became private property and were kept in slavery, exploited for their reproductive role, besides their work: the more progenies a man could ensure for himself, the more arms the family could count upon, the more production could be accumulated. He would achieve a higher position in the clan - and eventually his clan would benefit from a greater wealth and power in the competition with others. As Sara Morace (2016; 2012) pointed out, the submission of males to the state ensured them the private property and the submission of their women and children.

City-states such as Uruk from the 4th millennium B.C. became the dominant form of sedentary civilization, with social stratification, division of labor and specialization. In Öcalan's theory, outside the walls still lived 'barbarians': nomadic civilizations remained as antagonistic forms of civil society, keeping matriarchal values, and Goddesses symbolizing a symbiotic relation with nature. The nomads had low division of labor, almost inexistent social stratification and hierarchies. The 'travelling horde' (Cucchiari 2018) could rely on scarce possibilities for accumulation; it had to maintain a respectful relation with the environment; a strong social bond between all members, and the spiritual bond with female divinities representing nature, abundance and cooperation. Öcalan connects the shift toward male Gods - symbols of competition, strength, and male struggle for supremacy - with the loss of women's power, and the beginning of

their enslavement.<sup>8</sup> He insists on natural societies, where solidarity was the fulcrum of life and reproduction more important than production: women's wisdom was governing, ensuring cooperation and adaptation to the laws of nature. Male dominance created ambitious disharmonic societies, driven by greed, fear of scarcity, wars, invasions and enslavement of those belonging to defeated societies. Women in particular were precious spoils of war: the making of a state seems to need a surplus of reproductive force and often implies the kidnapping of women.<sup>9</sup>

Öcalan wonders about overcoming thousands of years of women's slavery, invisibility in history, economy, politics, arts, medicine, and mathematics. Women were considered to be inadequate, ridiculous, and deficient in any field of knowledge; their contribution was denied, appropriated, and misused. For millennia, they were objects of violence, scorn and toxic narratives about their wickedness. At the same time, the trinity of power was celebrating masculinity in all its aberrations: killing 'enemies' in wars; invasions, exterminations; and the 'gynocide' of women who did not want to submit to patriarchy: centuries of witch-hunt to cancel their knowledge, wisdom and even the memory of their resistance.<sup>10</sup>

In *Beyond State, Power and Violence* (2020), Öcalan questions everybody: no one can call themselves out, since the relation between man and woman represents a form of 'hidden slavery'. Therefore, even the poorest husband, with his wife "can behave like a little emperor". The dominant social narrative takes place in everyday life behaviors and it is based upon considering women as inferior; imposing men's point of view and interests; strengthening the patriarchal ideology and legitimizing toxic conducts through silence and complicity. Males believe in their superiority - also when they do not exert any direct forms of violence, they enjoy male privileges. Öcalan, explains how human beings represent "nature becoming aware of itself", asserting women are *closer than men* in that process of understanding, since they are "universal and divine" beings: it can be seen in arts, politics, science, and in revolutions.

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**8** The city-state produced a functional category of older males as priest and decision-makers, and an army of young men for defense and expansion. Such processes lasted centuries; some societies were not attracted by the growing cities and kept a nomadic life in mountains or forests, at the margins of the new civilization (Öcalan 2020; 2022; Cucchiari 2018).

**9** Examples range from the Romans to the Isis: the building of a state seems to always imply violence, torture and massive rape; the dispossession of women's knowledge, and the exploitation of their capacity to generate life.

**10** The 'witch hunt' lasted through the age of 'Enlightenment', it still happens in special economic zones (Sez) and areas of 'structural readjustment', where new forms of primitive accumulation are violently taking place against society (Federici 2018).

Between men and women, the 'divine' aspect should be reflected in the relation. Yet, men demonstrate to even "use mortal weapons against their body"; and manipulate women by using "the deceptive rhetoric of love". Öcalan in his work also explains freedom, which also consists in moving from the city to the rural areas, re-establishing a friendly and symbiotic relationship with the non-human part of nature, committing ourselves to overcome existing relations in what he calls a *battle for love*. Clearly, he refers to an affect quite different from the dominant and individualistic feeling based on possession: it is a type of love able to reconnect humans in the struggle for the collective goal to live in the present time (not in an imaginary future) freedom, beauty and 'equality in the difference'. He considers the choice to stop working for the state or for the capital to be practicable and urgent, to build cooperation toward an eco-agrarian, eco-industrial society based on reproduction and wellbeing. With our quotidian activity, we all support the trinity of power and its unsustainable profit-driven productions: a change of goal at the everyday life level is seen as the first step for building a truly democratic society.<sup>11</sup>

By belonging to a state, we all support the system financially and with our work - without any type of popular control over the administration of socially produced wealth - in this way contributing to maintaining a creamy layer of apparatuses and corrupted politicians, which represents a heavy cost on the nation's shoulders. A considerable amount of the country's wealth is drained by bureaucracy and officials involved in 'patron-client relationships' (Putnam 1993). An intricate system of 'favors exchange' functions in the interfaces of capitalism and politics: elected representatives (with their families/friends); administrators, business-man, profiteers, courtiers with hooks for extra-legal services in the backstage. The results are disheartening: salaried workers pay mandatory taxes cuttings from one third to half of their incomes - which should be used for quality schools and hospitals, health promotion and prevention; appropriate environmental protection and maintenance of infrastructures; housing and welfare for the population. In reality, such resources are mostly allocated to support the functioning of the bureaucratic state itself; growing military forces; and a welfare favoring banks and big businesses.

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**11** Öcalan considers as paradoxical when the societies believe to be the nation-state. Even in the political Left, many believe 'the state is us' while the state should be seen as 'the opposite of society': it does not serve the needs of people but those of capitalism and patriarchy. For this reason, crucial sectors such as health and education cannot be abandoned in the hands of the state: they are seen as a task of the community self-government.

### 3 Intersectionality, Decoloniality and Jineolojî

We were told that we had either not read enough on communism or, if we had, we had not fully understood it. Then the feminists began to express the same idea, that as Kurdish women, we had not read enough on feminism or, if we had, we had not fully understood that either. (Azize Aslan, *Anticapitalist Economy in Rojava*, 2023)

This paragraph aims to bridge intersectional and decolonial approaches in feminism with theoretical and practical aspects of the Kurdish women's movement and the Jineolojî perspective, highlighting their innovative quality. In Öcalan's works, the overcoming of exploitation of man, women and nature is connected to an understanding of patriarchy, capitalism and the state as an integrated system from the beginning; the intersectional approach looks at inequalities relating them with each other and with the structure of society – which has been shaped by such a trinity of power and by the collective practices of those who resisted and found alternatives.

In decolonial intersectional research we analyze *simultaneously* the various interacting aspects of a system functioning as a whole starting from the bottom. It is a patient work of decoding and disassembling different axis of power and oppression by identifying inequalities of gender, class, status, religion, culture, sexuality, age, ability, located in their own geopolitical background. Such intersecting categories should be understood as *mutually constitutive*: this is why a positive transformation cannot succeed by struggling against one aspect of the oppression at the time (Davis 1981; Anzaldúa 1987; Hill Collins 1990).

Such an enterprise implies the decolonization of our concepts and categories, which means looking at how they have been socially and historically constructed in the making of the trinity of power through different economic, social, religious, sexual and political forms.<sup>12</sup> The integrated system of hierarchies and inequalities emerges with clarity; classism, racism, colorism, heterosexism, and ableism, together actively participate in changing forms of colonialism – at different levels: financial, cultural, digital and military – as they work at the same time for the benefit of the trinity of power. A decolonial activity of disengagement from the dominant system of knowledge production could start from *de-linking oneself from institutions* (Mignolo 2007) in parallel to working towards the decolonization of language, relations, concepts, and methodologies (Smith Tuhiwai 1999). As we'll discuss in the third part, decolonization includes the overcoming of binary thinking and dichotomies in our relations, activism, teaching and research.

<sup>12</sup> See Lugones 2007; Mohanty 1984; 2003; Vergès 2021.

A decolonial analysis of the *context* is pivotal for building intersectional alliances and social coalitions based upon cooperation and solidarity. As Öcalan (2020, fn. 16, 382) sustains, democratic forms of civilization always existed, based upon *Asabiyyah* – ancient Sumerian term for social solidarity – without which we would not have survived the last Ice Age. He considers *Asabiyyah* ‘engine of history’, a fundamental bond for societies everywhere, to be re-discovered by scholars and activists who are committed to social transformation – and by feminists, since social solidarity has been interwoven for millennia by women.<sup>13</sup>

A matristic perspective and practice existed at the dawn of all societies: “there are many elements that come from the matriarchal society but we could not create a link between this evidence and our life”. Before the creation of Democratic Confederalism and *Jineolojî*, “we talked about it in terms of utopia, but then we understood that *it still exists in our life* [...] this means that we must have autonomous structures to self-manage our problems and solutions, we cannot wait for someone, a man, the state, to do it for us” (interview to Zilan and Avrin, as quoted in Piccardi, Barca 2022, fn. 10, emphasis added).

In the last decades, a vast array of publications welled up from the Democratic Free Women’s Movement (DFWM) in Northern and Eastern Kurdistan, and were translated into several languages among which Turkish, German, English, Spanish and Italian, spreading news and reflections about *Jineolojî*. It is not in the capacity of this essay to provide a comprehensive account of the rich production of materials – research projects, pamphlets and books. I will introduce just few key concepts, to spur a debate in the feminist arenas about what is innovative in the *Jineolojî* approach.

A seminal publication of the Democratic Free Women’s Movement titled *Jineolojî in the Search of Truth* contains most of the important concepts recalled in the following works. It explains the meaning of *Jineolojî*, from the word *Jin* (woman) and the word *Jiyan* (life), sustaining how women were the first to have self-consciousness, since “life occurs within the body of women”. For there are “indestructible bonds between women and life [...] women are the ones who build the natural society with moral and political values” (DFWM 2013, 5).

The inspiration of *Jineolojî* relies on a simple principle found in Öcalan’s writings from prison: “Those who cannot think for themselves cannot govern themselves”, at the basis of what is announced as a “new paradigm of mind building”. In other words a *change of mentality* is necessary, geared towards overcoming dichotomies imposed by the hegemonic system, among which:

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**13** *Women Weaving Futures* for exchanging ideas, praxis and solidarity, see: <https://womenweavingfuture.org/>.

'subject/man, object/woman; subject/master, object/slave; subject/state, object/society'. The mental instruments through which the trinity of power reproduces itself – from mythology to religion, from art to science – are grounded in these dichotomies. They are crucial in the reproduction of social sexism: "the relation between men and women couldn't be transformed into a property relation without the establishment of a paradigm legitimizing the property over women, *before other private properties*" (DFWM 2013, 3; emphasis added). In other words, the property of women is seen as having produced a 'domino effect' in creating all other forms of private property.

Jineolojî, the science of women, is seen as playing an important role in many topics and fields of knowledge – with a focus on the analysis of slavery, including the mental one in the form of internalized codes and values. Such a de-patriarchal mission starts, quite radically, from relations in everyday life: while not calling themselves 'feminists' (feminism is seen as only one of the forms of resistance, emancipation, and liberation) they give central attention on the *bonds among women within societies* – considered to be decisive for building a 'democratic family' (DFWM 2013, 8; emphasis added).

As noted before, ideas expressed by intersectional and decolonial feminisms have common points with Öcalan political theory; an important relation can also be found between the eco-feminist movement and the approach of Jineolojî, in terms of environmental vision and attention to local struggles. German sociologist/activist Maria Mies, co-mother of eco-feminism (Mies, Shiva 1995), has been tributed for her contribution by the Academy of Jineolojî and Jineolojî Center of Europe (2023). Particularly, the work about women as the last colony (Bennholdt-Thomsen, Mies, Von Werlhof 1988) has been 'completed' in Öcalan's theory around *women as the first and last colony*. In fact, during an epochal passage in human history (from nomadic gatherer-hunter societies to sedentary agricultural city-states) women have been *first* colonized for being producers of that 'very special commodity' that the labor force is – in so determining a different accumulation capacity among the males. While today women represent the *last* colony of capitalism both in the so called developed countries and in the Global South: either unpaid and naturalized in *housewifization* processes (Mies 1986); or underpaid as domestic helpers; forced to long hours in fading away subsistence economies or migrating for 'care jobs' in the cities; industrial or sex workers; kidneys/corneas 'donors' or eggs providers, also renting their uterus in the growing sector of reproductive technologies (Corradi 2021a).

Ecological politics, alongside women's liberation and radical democracy, can be an alternative to the present Earth-shattering crisis. What may be regarded as a concrete example of eco-feminist experience took place since 2016 in a women-only settlement: Jin War eco-village, in the North-east of Syria, an ongoing realization

of Democratic Confederalism (Cioni 2019). In the book *Make Rojava Green Again*, the experience of an ecological society in construction is presented by authors of the Internationalist Commune of Rojava (2018) committed to actively modifying the relationship between humans and nature, theoretically and practically. As Debbie Bookchin clarifies in the 'Preface', only when we will put an end to hierarchical relations among humans (men over women, elderly over youth, a religion or ethnic group over another and so on) will we be able to cure our relation with the natural world (Internationalist Commune of Rojava 2018).

A truly ecological society, oriented towards autonomy, self-governance and the common good, can be achieved putting into discussion all forms of domination, starting with patriarchy. Jineolojî proposes to build 'a feminine mental world' which implies a radical intervention on the dominant male mentality (negatively affecting males, females and others). Nobody is free from such an influence: being patriarchy five thousand years old, as a long lasting social construct, it cannot be dismantled without a collective political action specifically oriented to the goal of overcoming toxic masculinities, anywhere they are found. Disassembling the dominant male mentality is also related to searching 'ways for a counter-production' of new critical narratives, able to overcome present patriarchal sciences in favor of women-centered social sciences, economy, history, architecture, demography, medicine, and law.<sup>14</sup>

A concept by Öcalan, *Kustina Zilan* indicates the necessity to 'kill the dominant male' inside everybody. It was formulated few years before his illegal imprisonment; and denotes a sharp political interest in dismantling patriarchy, as early as in the mid-Nineties. The translation of his writings on the subject inspired ideas and practices also beyond Rojava: some examples are offered in a conspicuous publication titled *Killing and Transforming the Dominant Male* (Andrea Wolf Institute 2021). It contains episodes of male rebellions against patriarchal masculinities, like the case of fishermen in the Basque Country; and a 'theory of eternal divorce' from the power system (Jineolojî Committee 2018, 42). Some case studies are presented - one of which with interviews to male workers in Qamishlo (*de facto* capital-city of the Jazira Canton); and experiences about educating men in Kobane and Cizire. Jineolojî calls for 'woman's freedom, equality and democracy' through actively eliminating the patriarchal/masculine domination structures and culture. Yet some perplexities are raised about the role of the 'family unit' and the role of women as mothers still much emphasized in Rojava. Moreover, the

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**14** When not otherwise specified, the source of online materials is the European Jineoloji website <https://jineoloji.eu/>.

implication of a 'relationship of identity [that] is forged between the female body and the homeland' has been criticized as inherent to nationalism (Dinc 2020, 53).

The emphasis on education (*Perwerde*) has always been strong in theories and transformative practices produced by Jineolojî: here I want to mention a project having men as protagonists. After the bombing and occupation of Afrin by the Turkish state in 2018, hundreds of thousands of people were displaced from Afrin to Shehba, in an area where Jihadist gangs, including Isis, were active and committing atrocities. The region was liberated by the Syrian Democratic Forces in 2016, establishing an autonomous democratic system. Even though the situation was not idyllic and only a part of the population participated in the experience, it was a serious attempt of self-administration, inter-ethnic and inter-religious co-existence (Jineolojî Committee Europe 2021a) - with women in the leadership, co-chairs system and councils for all areas of life, protecting women's free will and their lives with self-defense. However, because of violence deeply entrenched in society, underage marriage, rape, femicide and women's suicide were still happening.

This is why, "despite the harsh conditions of all the impacts of war, displacement, the economic and military sanctions of the Syrian state, and daily attacks from the Turkish state" the Jineolojî Research Centre and the Kongra Star (Regional Women's Council) of Afrin and Shehba decided to step into a leading role in fighting patriarchy, by assessing how "primary duty is the promotion of education, discussions and actions that develop women's empowerment; collective memory; organization; cooperation and self-defense" (Jineolojî Research Centre of Afrin and Shehba, Kongra Star 2022, 5).

As the Report narrates, around 450 men organized in different working groups participated in an educational initiative of the refugees camp, strongly wanted by the women. They analyzed for days important topics directly related to everyday life: the patriarchal mentality embodied in the family structure; how women are portrayed; how men could see themselves as responsible for the transformation of sexist mentalities and for the eradication of gendered oppression. A new perspective emerged, with practical commitments and plans - which constituted what the Report defined as 'a leap forward', toward solving the problems of women, society and family, with full participation and shared responsibility - in the context of autonomy, for building a Democratic Nation. Among the achievements, authors mention also conceptual tasks: the re-signification of the concept of 'honor'; the condemnation of the property over women and children; the blaming of violence; the promotion of a culture of connecting and sharing; the will for *Hevjiyana Azad* - a 'free life together'; and the necessity of reclaiming love, without a desire for supremacy, a true love for women, society and nature.

Alternative teaching methods were identified with cultural projects and workshops in neighborhoods, communes, and with families; also involving the *Kongra Star* for monthly initiatives to contrast all types of gendered violence (Jineoloji Research Centre of Afrin, Shehba, Kongra Star 2022).

In such initiatives, the instruction and coaching of men is given by women and it is considered one of the important tasks of this revolution in Rojava (Sima 2023). In the meanwhile, women's education proceeds in all spheres of life: direct access to the knowledge of women and actualization of their scientific production will reshape women individuality and sociality, enabling them to find methods for deciphering power-seeking male-dominant structures - and attitudes. It may be useful to paraphrase again "the colonial matrix of power survives colonialism" (Quijano 2024) to explain how the *patriarchal matrix of power survives patriarchy*. In facts, by not addressing male dominant structures and behaviors, women may be able to achieve a formal equality - with women's councils, equal opportunities, and double leadership - while still having severe issues related to patriarchal power in everyday life, relations and politics.

Jineoloji warns about the risks of approaching the problem of gender inequalities from a "narrow legal-political equality standpoint". They also notice how, being "highly fragmented in itself, feminist movements contributed to liberalism" (DFWM 2013, 14). In fact, such a fragmentation and lack of unity had the effect of inducing the women's movements in western countries to the acceptance of *solutions offered by the state, the dominant science, the world of business, and educational institutions* - with the result of politically de-radicalizing parts of feminism (Eisenstein 2009). As posited by the Democratic Free Women's Movement "through history, the solutions offered by the powers who created the problems, result in the same consequences [...] strengthening the dominant civilization system" (2013, 6). These words invite to reflect upon feminists' enthusiasm around artificial intelligence and reproductive technologies - without considering their risks for human health (Corradi 2021a). Furthermore, genetic manipulation of plants and animals, (nowadays called Tea, 'Technologies of assisted evolution'), with the invention of potentially dangerous nano-bio technologies, seem to be enhancing state and capital control over bodies, life and the land, while diminishing people's autonomous possibility of subsistence.

The organizations of women intellectuals and movements are pivotal in order to determine priorities and policies in the construction of women's freedom. For centuries, women were defined as "the weakest and less powerful members" - not seen as wise inventors, producers of knowledge and those *commencing the sociality* (Morace 2012; 2016). Knowledge structures are power-oriented not just under capitalism, but also in former 'socialist' countries: both systems were

able to turn social impulses towards change into “fresh blood to nourish the powers”. For that matter, Jineolojî “dwells into the source of all these failures” and gains “consciousness and organization to overcome the power structures, so as to develop a renewal in the domain of social sciences” (DFWM 2013, 7). Such a radical transformation implies the possibility of women’s self-defence – both materially and symbolically – in autonomous spaces.

The repression of women’s political agency, especially by the Turkish state, targeted Kurdish women community leaders, lawyers, journalist, writers, and even Member of Parliament Gültan Kışanak who wrote from jail *The Purple Color of Kurdish Politics* (Kışanak 2022) with other women prisoners. Women through centuries have been considered “as a trouble and kept under severe isolation”, used in wars and by the state in different ways, also creating “dominant women models of each era”.<sup>15</sup> The collective explanation of women and their abuse is not related just to the emotional/sexual sphere; but also in terms of historical, economic, social and mental exploitation. Women’s freedom can be enhanced in relation to democratic civilization and experience, with the comprehension of “alliances with other subjects” (DFWM 2013, 8), which seems to refer to all those who are not included in the gendered binary system.

The knowledge structures of patriarchy, state and capitalism are in a crisis due to multiple issues impacting the trinity of power as a whole: financial and ecological calamities; problems of physical and mental health at a systemic level; increasing violence in the family, and against vulnerable subjects; a profit economy of production/accumulation that leads toward wars for energy resources, raw materials and water. Jineolojî proposes itself as an alternative to existing relations and perspective: by re-writing social sciences, a general renewal and re-thinking of the social body is stimulated. While positivistic science wanted to control nature with the mentality of dominating it as an object, Jineolojî believes in re-establishing a respectful tie and cooperation with nature and among humans – which imply processes of truth, beauty, ethics, aesthetic. Today “the transformation of knowledge into an instrument for power is realized through disengagement with morality” and it is such a disconnection that brought the world to the present unsustainable situation (DFWM 2013, 10).

Jineolojî is not just a ‘feminine perspective on science’, it challenges institutionalized academic paradigms by unveiling hierarchies; and

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**15** Middle Eastern women have been used in Orientalist narratives to legitimize foreign intervention in wars. In the case of Kurdish Women’s Units for self-defense (YPJ) they happened to be exotified by western media, and “rather than being depicted as they are typically, as passive, silent victims (requiring liberation), YPJ women are instead depicted atypically as agentic (as liberators)” (Gunaydin 2022).

granting value to the knowledge coming from (what bell hooks called) the 'margins', E.g., economically challenged women in rural areas and in the urban working class. This approach is based upon the expertise of women linked to their livelihoods, their bodies, and their environment (Rostampour 2024). As it has been shown, already in the 1990s Kurdish women had a strong perception of how power relations related to gender, culture/ethnicity and class profoundly affect their lives: their existence was and still is "marked by interconnected systems of oppression". The role of Jineolojî "not only strengthens their agency, as they begin to organize autonomously, but also create challenges to some foundational boundaries of the modern state" (Ferreira, Santiago 2018, 495).<sup>16</sup>

The Kurdish scholar Dilar Dirik in *The Revolution of Smiling Women. Stateless Democracy and Power in Rojava* looks at how women are re-weaving societies departing from a crucial standpoint: everyday life - a strategic milieu first proposed in the West by Marxist sociologist Agnes Heller in her famous book *Every Day Life* (Heller 1984).<sup>17</sup> Dirik (2018) analyzes the Kurdish freedom movement from a gendered perspective, departing from women's experience; everyday life relations and politics in the construction of direct democracy; leadership and education; consciousness and freedom in building Rojava's Democratic Confederalism - a social revolution with the unique feature of going beyond state, patriarchy and capitalism *simultaneously*.<sup>18</sup>

Jineolojî is often presented as an 'alternative science paradigm' - a view challenged by feminist scholars Najde Al-Ali and Isabel Käser, who proposed a different interpretation: "we argue that Jineolojî resonates with epistemological principles articulated in feminist standpoint theory and in transnational and decolonial feminism, and as such, it should be recognized as contributing to these approaches" (Al-Ali, Käser 2021, 214-5). Although some original features expressed by Jineolojî in terms of critical epistemology are recognized, authors are oriented toward considering Jineolojî "a continuation of critical feminist interventions to knowledge production rather than a new methodology or new scientific paradigm" (239). The article originated an intense debate and was the object of an 'Open Letter' containing severe criticisms by the Jineolojî Committee of Europe (2021b). This document also exposed flaws in the research, descending from authors having missed interactions, during their stay, precisely with

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**16** On the role of women in the dissolution of the state see Gunaydin (2021); Dirik 2021.

**17** For Kurdish women's narratives and everyday life in the context of Turkey, see Handan Çağlayan 2020, 155-206.

**18** On the role of Kurdish women see also: Shahvisi 2018; Ferreira, Santiago 2018; Cioni 2019; Käser 2021; Dirik 2022; Rostampour 2023.

the women involved at the Jineolojî Academy, and Jineolojî Faculty in Rojava University at Qamishlo. In the reply, authors admitted limits and shortcomings in their research. Because of a non-participative methodology in the design, the goal of research was missed – and an accusation of Orientalism raised, even though authors had no intention to be detrimental to the Kurdish women's movement, but were motivated by solidarity (Al-Ali, Käser 2022).

Having no authority nor intention to assess if Jineolojî represents a truly new paradigm or just a great contribution to world's feminisms, (Her/story will tell), I see Jineolojî both as the continuation of a long path walked by feminists of all types (especially intersectional, decolonial, indigenious, queer, Anti-speciseism and eco-feminists) with a deeply transformative non-Western original approach, having strong elements for a 'paradigm shift', as Kuhn would say. I am going to contribute to the debate – without the pretense to be exhaustive – by trying to answer to an ongoing research question: which are the theoretical and practical innovative aspects of Jineolojî, with respect to feminisms?<sup>19</sup>

Jineolojî presents unprecedented aspirations and targets:

1. While in the past feminisms produced critiques of the dominant sciences, and the knowledge imposed by the dominant system, *Jineolojî is willing to become a new scientific paradigm* – by proposing innovative methodologies.
2. Being interested in the creation of a system of free communal life, based upon independent knowledge, *Jineolojî transforms its critique into a constructive project, a practical way of living.*
3. A remarkable goal of Jineolojî is to *overcome separations among feminist epistemologies and perspectives*. It is impossible not to notice how the present fragmentation is divisive, while unity is needed to fight the trinity of power.<sup>20</sup>
4. Another challenging purpose is represented by the practice to *change men and dominant masculinities* in concrete ways (Andrea Wolf Institute of Jineolojî Academy 2021).

These points clearly indicate strong differences with most of the feminist experiences expressed in the West – and call for urgent attention. I believe future advances in the diffusion of Jineolojî also

<sup>19</sup> Distinctions with feminism are never presented as divisive in Jineolojî: "It is important to discuss feminism as part of Jineoloji [...] [which] will after all be founded on the lineage of feminism [...] we call [them] the rebel of the oldest colony [...]. Woman is the first oppressed class, nation and sex" and should *organize autonomously*, with other women (DFWM 2013). About the rebellion of the oldest colony, see Gunesser 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Patriarchy, capitalism, neo-colonialism, and androcentric social sciences still have a strong grip over society; a conflict-ridden feminist arena is not only self-harming, it is a guarantee for defeat.

relate to the possibilities of opening a wider debate with intersectional/ decolonial perspectives; indigenous theories, methodologies and social movements.

Jineolojî Studies is ready to become “a part of academic studies [...] establishing academic cadres [is] important for both Jineolojî and the Free Women’s Movement”. The issues of *slavery interiorized by women* is central today, and needs a double edge intervention: against the reality of “women aspiring to have power” who pursue individualistic goals to promote themselves; and against the reality of “weak, feeble minded, vulnerable women” (DFWM 2013, 14-15).

At the end of this section, would like to mention some of the unwritten regulations emerging in the ‘common life together’ among women in Rojava and beyond: an extraordinary code of conduct which may add practical inspiration to the theoretical reflections. The emphasis on ethical/political behaviors finds articulations in the rule of never criticizing a woman in front of men; nor expressing disapproval at her back; while offering appreciations as well as compassionate and caring critiques in specific settings called *tekmlî*.<sup>21</sup> Such self-determined collective practices and other social tools are meant to improve co-existence, and may be very helpful in changing attitudes, de-patriarchalize conducts and manners – also within the feminist arenas, and in social movements at large.

#### 4 Native Non-Dichotomy and a ‘Third Way’ in the Politics of Alliances

For the embattled  
there is no place  
that cannot be home  
nor is.

(Audre Lorde, *The Black Unicorn*, 1978)

In this last part I am sharing intuitions about Native non-dichotomous approaches, reverberating with the search for a ‘third way’ expressed by the Kurdish women movement. Many Indigenous peoples do not identify themselves with the state – given the genocidal practices they were confronted with, during and after colonialism. Their political postures resonates with Öcalan’s theory about the necessity of a conceptual separation between Nation – as the native land or ‘birth place’ – and the State as part of the trinity of power. Indigenous technologies of survival, based upon consensus politics, were established and developed mostly maintaining a *non-dual approach* in the creation of new knowledge while preserving the old one, to

<sup>21</sup> On *tekmlî*, ‘criticism and self-criticism’ see Guner 2021, 117.

serve the communal life. This is a feature I feel as being in tune with the Kurdish experience.

In some Native contexts efforts are made to re-affirm the value of ancient knowledge, traditional medicine, ways to produce food and save water. The idea to rescue a political (non-essentialist) 'maternal principle' is differently defined in various types of indigenous and communitarian feminisms. E.g., in Aymara-Quechua language, *Pachakuti* indicates a transformation, currently going on in the hierarchical order, and it implies words: female is mentioned before male - and not the opposite, as it used to be. While *Warmikuti* salutes "Women coming back to the community" (Montilla Oliva 2025). This is very similar to what Öcalan recalls in the term *Amarji* - ancient Sumer word meaning 'going back to the Mother'.

In indigenous knowledge, separations and dichotomies seem to be a starting points for hierarchies and inequalities (Connell, Corradi 2014; Corradi 2016; 2019). When patriarchy prevailed, myths of origins were revised: Goddesses of prosperity became subaltern to Gods of war; a hierarchical order took place between male and female, owner and non-owner, rich and poor, sedentary and nomads, civilized and 'barbarians'. The intertwined interests of patriarchy and accumulation, in the making of city-states, gave origin to a ranking type of organization in terms of power, status, and wealth (Öcalan 2020). A social ladder based on possessions and abilities was instrumental for the functioning of the new structure; and eventually it became undisputable: God's Will. The division of labor created separate functions for religious/political leaders (older males); different ranks within the growing army (young males); artisans/peasants, a low cast of servants; and the slaves. Öcalan underlines how in ancient history the Circle<sup>22</sup> represented in the *Aşiret* (a horizontal social structure) is replaced by the *Ziqqurat* - a hierarchical configuration having vertical features: the Pyramid (Öcalan 2020; 2022).

A binary way of looking at the world became an important feature in the dominant civilization: western dichotomous thinking was born on clear-cut divisions between white and black, right and wrong, true and false; creating hierarchical separations between humans, animals and 'Nature'; between intellectual and manual work; reason and affect; whereas the second elements is always found in a subaltern position. The same can be said for the dichotomy between mind and body; which keeps spirituality as a third unseen aspect, or colonized by a cast of clergy. Duality proved to be a rationally functional approach for the trinity of power; yet limited for not

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**22** The Circle as a social form of gathering is still existing in Native and Aboriginal contexts, where members of the community share deliberating processes.

keeping into account inextricable social dynamics, processes and elements of change in deep relations with each other.

Dismantling dichotomous thinking is important also in political terms: the method of 'searching for a third way' to overcome polarizations relates to the needs of contemporary societies. Last century was characterized by the existence of 'two blocs' - western capitalism and so called real socialism (or 'state capitalism'); today we can witness a different situation. With increasing instability and war scenarios, the proposals of Democratic Confederalism and Jineoloji constitute an experiment, *a third way* in the direction of overcoming armed conflicts, implementing inter-ethnic and inter-religious co-existence; radical eco-democracy, and free women's political agency.<sup>23</sup>

Kurdish enthusiasm in developing a third position also means the search for a *third way of life* - neither enslaved by capital nor by the state: social life can be self-governed, according to shared principles. Such a posture is not new: Indigenous peoples, who have been surviving western 'civilization' for centuries, know the practices of internal democracy, direct democracy, conflict resolution and collective evaluation about outcomes and obstacles. They have been looking for political *medians and minimum common denominators* to advance the common good, finding consensus at each step in the decision making processes. (Corradi 1997; 2021a).

Democratic Confederalism implies this (new for some, forgotten for others) change of mentality, to promote practices liberated from the influence of positivism and from the attitude of dominating or being dominated. It should be taken for granted that everybody today is still entrenched with various forms of toxic masculinity, heterosexism, ableism, orientalism, and desire of possession: it couldn't be otherwise. The task of deconstructing patriarchy and 'prevailing attitudes', is part of the larger collective undertaking of *disassembling the colonial matrix of power within each person*.

Such a process is framed in Öcalan's idea of a 'radical divorce' from all forms of power: it implies collectively wondering about which system to build and how to proceed; which democratic principles and structure to put into place; how to promote sociability and cooperation in communal households and lands;<sup>24</sup> which relation to have with the authoritarian state - and also with internal domineering attitudes. Being able to filter and discriminate what comes from the 'trinity

**23** In a context of spreading wars, where oppressed people are on both sides, a *third way* cannot be expected by political parties, a state or a consortium of states; it is the product of free societies, based on inter-communality (Corradi 2021b) and representing the possibility of co-existence and cooperation among different peoples, ideas, religions, and cultures.

**24** On Solidarity Economy see: <https://www.solidarityeconomy.coop/>.

of power' and what comes from society (but it is appropriated by patriarchy, state and capitalism) implies the capacity to collectively decode and understand realities, in a respectful and supportive setting.

Often a facilitator role in communication becomes crucial in order to face internal conflicts with loving attitude; to identify *minimum common denominators* and *feminist median lines* for the construction of social coalitions and alliances (Corradi 2018). It also helps the creation of a climate of reciprocal trust and ego-less participation; while cleaning the environment from what Jo Freeman called *hidden hierarchies*, and toxic behaviors. In the trinity of power, systems of oppression are at work also among those who oppose them: let's think about the strength of stereotypes, in manufacturing of consent and consumerism through the ideological power of advertisements. Any society loses its freedom, when artificial 'needs' are imposed upon people and perceived as authentic; when all causes of addiction are glamourized and culturally pushed, confiscating the brain of younger generations. In different degrees, all are exposed to falsifications and manipulated into seeing the *status quo* persuasively represented as the only reality to live, unchangeable yet fun as in a game.

## 5 Conclusive Notes

In this work I have discussed only some of the ideas and transformative practices of the Kurdish women's movement, indicating commonalities and differences between them and decolonial, intersectional approaches in feminism – focusing on elements for a 'shift of paradigm'. Also have introduced suggestions (not yet fully developed) between the theory/praxis of Jineoloji and those found in Indigenous societies still grounded on caring for nature, other animals and human co-existence, in equality with the respect of differences.

Objections sometimes are raised, during seminars and debates, about Jineoloji being inspired by Abdullah Öcalan – a man. Surely I believe today it is important to claim women-only intellectual genealogies: our contribution in the past was often erased, ridiculed and then appropriated. The pillorying and professional humiliation of women scientists by males is an ongoing phenomenon. Patriarchy still has a strong grip in strategic sites of knowledge production, like the University, also because of competition and self-hatred among women: these forms of internalized oppression, represent strong obstacles in creating alliances and recognizing women-only genealogies.

Other several women's movements in the past, not only the Kurdish, had men as inspirators of liberation ideologies and practices: materialist feminism is ultimately grounded on Marx's analysis and anarcho-feminism on early production by libertarians. The same can

be said for eco-feminism, born in the early anti-militarist, no-nuke, environmentalist and animalist movements. Also Islamic feminism, Hindu feminism, Indigenous and Dalit feminisms have early roots among internal opponents of the system and social innovators, which were mostly men. Several women freedom fighters grew also thanks to radical practices of thinkers and activists who struggled against capital exploitation; the plunder of nature; the state's religious or linguistic oppression; castism and clergy power. In the case of Öcalan, he is an inspiring figure in the Kurdish women's liberation movement also because of his coherence and self-criticizing attitude: his work demonstrates the importance of matriarchal civilizations, Goddesses religions, and early forms of direct democracies based upon social solidarity and women's wisdom.

In this work I mentioned how certain political ideas and practices proposed by Kurdish Freedom Movement are found in different forms among Native, Aboriginal, Maori, Maya, Adivasi societies; and in several declinations of Indigenous and Communitarian feminisms. Especially in the critique of the 'white male science' there are common standpoints: an epistemological change is perceived as necessary to re-evaluate the relation between humans and the non-human part of nature; a focus on 'living democracy' (*Jaiv Panchayat* in Sanskrit); matricentric civilizations of the past and present; a serene acceptance of non-binary bodies and identities; women's wisdom and leadership; new and traditional devices in conflict prevention and resolution within/among communities; the importance of natural medicines - and intuition as an ingredient of knowledge (Corradi 2019).

In conclusion, would like to encourage further research and debates about the proposals of the Kurdish liberation movement, in particular regarding the World Women's Democratic Confederation and Jineoloji (Kurdish Women's Movement 2023); and comparative studies between their theoretical/practical experience and those of Native and Aboriginal peoples.<sup>25</sup> Collective explorations may start by looking closely at *minimum common denominators* and indicators of radical democracy emerging from everyday life; women's leadership and relations; inter-ethnic, inter-religious, inter-cultural forms of co-existence and self government; autonomous productions of knowledge, cooperative economy, and socio-ecological transformations. All these elements are crucial in alliances-building and in the definition of common strategies to decolonize knowledge, de-patriarchalize societies, and liberate life.

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**25** For a comparison between Democratic Confederation and the Zapatista, see Gambetti 2009, and Rebrii 2021.

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