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THEORETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES TO THE KURDISH SEPARATIST MOVEMENT AFTER 2000

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Abstract

Due to the current economic and international balances in the world, instead of using direct military force against each other, states support illegal organizations within the hostile country and conduct operations on the hostile state through proxy wars. In this context, the "Separatist Kurdish Political Movement", which started in the last century of the Ottoman Empire and has evolved into international terrorism over time, is the most commonly used terror method of imperialist states, although it has manifested itself in different forms. This study examines the change in the theoretical and philosophical approach of the Marxist-Leninist terrorist organization under the name of "Kurdistan Workers' Party" (PKK), which is the last form of the separatist Kurdish movement and was founded in 1978, with the international support it has received since the beginning of the 2000s with the Gulf War. In addition, the study will analyze the separatist Kurdish movement, which has gained international support after 2000, increased its goals, and focused on the goal of "Greater Kurdistan" by taking advantage of the chaos in Syria, and will propose original solutions with theoretical and philosophical approaches to political actors and the academic world.

Key Words: Separatist Kurdish, PKK, International Support, Terrorism, Philosophical Background

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1. Introduction

Although terrorism has been threatening societies and countries since the earliest times of history, it can be said that it has replaced hot wars in the current century, especially in the balances established after the Second World War. Unfortunately, terrorism, which has become a universal phenomenon day by day, has started to be used as a tool of states' policies aimed at destabilizing other states.

The most important reason for states to directly resort to terrorism or indirectly support existing terrorist organizations in order to achieve their goals is that they see low-cost terrorism as a foreign policy tool that can achieve the desired result instead of very costly military strengthening expenditures, considering that distance can be gained through terrorism.

When we look at the formation of terrorist activities in Turkey from the perspective of external factors, factors such as the hostile attitudes and behaviors of neighboring countries and Western states stemming from the historical past, the weaknesses in authority and political instability caused by the ongoing wars and internal conflicts in the countries of the region creating a suitable ground for the emergence of terrorist organizations, international interest calculations in the use, exploitation and sharing of natural and natural resources, and Turkey's geopolitical and geostrategic position are important.

The PKK terrorist organization, the last representative of the separatist Kurdish political movement, which was founded under the influence of Marxist-Leninist ideology, a product of the Cold War era, and started its armed activities in Türkiye in 1984, has received varying degrees of support from different countries in every period since its establishment. In the early years of its establishment, the Soviet Union, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Iran, Greece and other countries neighboring Turkey, which had enmity between them for various reasons, played an active role in the PKK's settlement in the region and its terrorist activities against Turkey. After the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, European countries and the United States started to adopt more active policies on the PKK and supported the PKK in various dimensions by using it as a foreign policy tool in their relations with Turkey.

In 1984, the organization started its armed actions and has continuously escalated terrorism in the region since then. Many states and international organizations have taken a close interest in this issue, thus giving it an international dimension. The PKK was seen as the representative of the Kurds of Turkey by the West, or tried to be seen as such. The biggest

reason for this is that the organization has a large overseas organization and brings every issue in Turkey to the agenda of the West through these organizations.

After the 1990s, the terrorist organization PKK started to be used as a tool of pressure on Turkey, especially by European states, and started to be associated with the Kurdish problem in Turkey. Especially some European countries started to see Kurds as a minority and the PKK as an ethnic minority problem rather than a terrorist problem. Thus, while the PKK continued its terrorist activities against Turkey, it was also politicized by European countries using it as a foreign policy tool.

With the capture of Abdullah Öcalan in Kenya in 1999, the PKK began to lose its effectiveness in the early 2000s by transforming from armed action to political action. However, the reorganization of the PKK in the north of Syria under the name of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) after the "Second Gulf Operation" that started with the US invasion of Iraq caused the separatist Kurdish politics to make radical changes in its philosophical background since 1984, and especially with the military and political support they received from the US, they started to increase their effectiveness not only in the north of Iraq but also in the north of Syria since 2011.

The separatist Kurdish elements, which emerged as a result of the policies of Britain during the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, continued to create problems after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Although the Kurdish separatists, who threatened the unitary structure of Turkey by turning into internal rebellions from time to time, manifested themselves in different forms under the Marxist-Leninist ideology during the Cold War period, they transformed into a terrorist organization by initially receiving logistical support from Syria and indirectly from Russia in order to sabotage the hydroelectric dams in the region by using the water problem as a pretext since 1984. With the dissolution of the USSR after 1990, the organization turned its direction to the West, and with the support it received from Greece and the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus, which saw Turkey as a threat to its existence, its Marxist ideology transformed into separatist Kurdish nationalism and started to organize in EU countries under the name of "minority status" and received support. However, the organization, which experienced a leadership problem with the capture of Öcalan, entered the process of disintegration in the early 2000s with the loss of its international support.

The aim of this study is to examine the philosophical background of the Kurdish separatist movement, especially after the Second Gulf War and as a result of the reshaping of the Kurdish separatist movement due to the weakness of authority in the north of Syria with the Syrian civil

war, the political initiatives it started by taking international support as well as armed initiatives, and of the Justice and Development Party (AK Party), which came to power in 2002 and started to seek a solution by seeing the separatist Kurdish movement as the “Kurdish Problem”.

2. Pre-2000 Kurdish Separatist Movement and International Support

In the last century of the Ottoman Empire and the early years of the Republic, the Kurdish separatist movement manifested itself as "Tribal Revolts". The first serious uprising in the Ottoman period was led by Bedirhan Bey (Bruinessen, 1992: 271-278). In 1846, Bedirhan Bey surrendered and after being pardoned by Sultan Abdülmecit, he was given a rank, a salary and assigned to the suppression of the Grit rebellions (Köylü, 2018: 18-19).

After the First World War, various proposals for a "Kurdistan" were developed by state officials at different levels of the British administration. The first person to express an opinion on this issue was Mark Sykes, who signed the Sykes-Picot Treaty on behalf of Britain. During the preparatory work for the draft of the Mudros Armistice Treaty, Sykes stated that all Kurdish regions should be occupied and Kurds should be included in the anti-Turkish movement. Because Sykes thought that in order to ensure the security of the Arab state that was envisioned to be established in the Middle East under British influence, a buffer should be placed between this state and Turkey (Köylü, 2018: 29). According to Major E. W. C. Noel, who had a great affinity for the Kurds and was known as the "Kurdish Lawrence", the Kurdish areas of the Mosul province should be excluded from the Arab state to be established in the Middle East and the Kurds should be given a very wide autonomy. Noel acknowledged that there was no unity among the Kurds. He therefore proposed the creation of three separate Kurdish states: Southern Kurdistan with Sulaymaniyah as its capital, Central Kurdistan with Mosul as its capital, and Western Kurdistan with Diyarbakir as its capital. Noel did not accept that the Kurds could not govern themselves. In his view, the Kurdish lands should be kept as a whole, not fragmented, whether they were placed under British rule or Turkish rule (Kaymaz, 2003: 29-30).

Before the First World War, Armenians were the regional weapon of imperialism. However, after the war, there were no Armenians left in Eastern Anatolia due to deportations. The Armenian state in the Caucasus was a candidate to enter the Soviet sphere of influence. Therefore, Western imperialism had lost its "Armenian card". The most suitable candidate to replace it was the Kurds. With this in mind and in the light of the above-mentioned views, the British, starting from the end of 1918, made an intensive effort to both win over the Kurds and

to turn the Kurdish tribes, which were extremely vulnerable to exploitation, into a weapon against the Iranians, Arabs and especially the Turks, the main powers of the region.

The first separatist Kurdish rebellion of the Republican era broke out in 1925. It is seen that the shadow of the British Secret Services was behind the rebellion that broke out while the Mosul Issue between Turkey and Britain was being discussed at the League of Nations. Unable to get what it wanted in Mosul, Britain put its "B" plan into action and had the "Kurdistan Independence and Independence Committee" established in Erzurum in 1923. This organization, which means "Kurdistan Independence and Liberation Committee", was known as "Azadi" among the people. The first information about this organization, which is believed to have been founded by Colonel Halit Bey, the leader of the Cibran tribe living in Muş and Hınıs, emerged during the interrogations held at the Independence Court established in Diyarbakir after the Sheikh Said uprising. At the end of these hearings in Diyarbakir, the majority of its leadership was executed (Kaymaz, 2007: 160-165; Köylü, 2018: 29).

Türkiye was also affected by the wave of Marxist ideology that swept the world after the 1950s. Kurdish Marxists also started to organize, and founded the Kurdish Independence Party in 1958, the Kurdish Students' Association of Turkey in 1959, the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Turkey in 1965, and the Revolutionary East Culture Association and the Revolutionary East Culture Hearths in 1969 (Şehirli, 2000: 265).

The PKK, considered the last representative of the Kurdish separatist movement, began as an organization in 1974 as the "Ankara Democratic Patriotic Association of Higher Education". At this time, the group was largely composed of students and headed by Abdullah Öcalan. Founded in Ankara, the organization soon moved to Southeastern Anatolia and began to engage in propaganda activities among young Kurds in the region.

The Kurdish separatist organizations that began to consolidate in the political and economic turmoil of the 1970s took advantage of the uncertainty in the environment, thinking that it was time to take action, and began to form the philosophical background of the actions they would launch in the future. In 1974, Abdullah Öcalan, Kesire Yıldırım, Musa Erdoğan, Ali Haydar Kaytan, Cemil Bayık, Haki Karaer, Ali Özer, Kemal Pir and Mustafa Dere, who were students at various schools at the time, gathered around the Ankara Higher Education Association (AYÖD) in the Tuzluçayır district of Ankara and for the first time put forward the Kurdistan issue and started working around this idea. During the discussions, the ideas that *"Kurds are a separate race, that they are exploited by the Turkish Republic, and that Turkish*

colonizers continue to occupy the regions in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, which they themselves recognize as Kurdistan" were adopted (Köylü, 2018: 31).

On November 27, 1978, at a meeting (1st Congress) held in the village of Fis in Diyarbakir's Lice district, the PKK issued its "Declaration of Establishment" and changed its name to the Kurdistan Workers' Party. With this declaration, the PKK declared that it was expanding its field of action and began to implement a new phase of urban action methods. As a Marxist, Leninist-based ethnic separatist organization, it also came into conflict with right-wing organizations. Its ultimate goal was to establish an independent Kurdistan state based on Marxist and Leninist principles in the region including the East-Southeast of Turkey and parts of Syria, Iran and Iraq (DiyarbakırPublicProsecutor'sOffice, 2009).

Since its founding in 1978, the PKK has spread to a relatively wide base in Turkey and has been able to influence and influence this base. It has become a terrorist organization with the power to mobilize. It has created a culture in society using elements such as music, literature, the press and "mythology" (Bakan & Yıldırım, 2021: 211).

As the method of the organization; *"Fulfilling the tasks against oppression and exploitation is only possible through the organization of a political organization guided by scientific socialism, a national liberation front under the leadership of this political organization, and a strong people's army fighting under this front."* (Çandar, 2008: 25; Köylü, 2018: 31) After adopting the armed struggle, it started armed actions in the country in 1984.

Syria was the first country to provide international support to the organization. Öcalan came into contact with the Syrian secret service and was under their control for a while, but the PKK had declared Syria as an enemy of the Kurds just like Türkiye so it operated secretly in Syria for a certain period. After a while, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which trained leftist terrorist organizations in Turkey, also supported Öcalan. The PLO gave the PKK a camp in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and started to give military training to the PKK there together with ASALA militants (Pirim & Örtülü, 2000: 48). Öcalan then established contact with Hafez Assad's brother and came under Syrian control. Syria was thus planning to use the organization for its own interests in the transboundary waters issue with Turkey, which had been going on since the 1970s, by taking advantage of its actions in Southeastern Anatolia (Şehirli, 2000: 270).

Another country supporting the growth of the organization is Iraq. Taking advantage of the demilitarization of the area north of the 36th Parallel after the First Gulf War, the Kurdish separatists seized the weapons and ammunition of the Iraqi Army that withdrew from the region. They also started to organize by taking advantage of the authority vacuum in the region.

Especially in June 1991, Abdullah Öcalan had Osman Öcalan establish the PAK (Partiya Azadiya Kurdistan-Kurdistan Freedom Party) in Iraq and started to influence Iraqi Kurds. In this way, the PKK was able to move in and out of northern Iraq and turn it into a base it could use against Turkey (Ersever, 1998: 107). In addition, Saddam, who gave limited support to the PKK until 1991, started to use the PKK trump card publicly against Turkey, which he thought was hostile to him in the Gulf crisis and war. The PKK terrorist organization left weapons and ammunition to the PKK when the Iraqi army withdrew, with the idea that the PKK terrorist organization would ensure the security of Iraq by creating a buffer zone in the northern Iraqi strip, direct Iraqi Kurds against Turkey, and that the strengthening of the PKK would cut the power of the Peshmerga (Şehirli, 2000: 311-312).

Some individuals, organizations and media outlets have a special place in the formation of PKK policies in Europe. These individuals and organizations, especially those close to the European left, act as spokespersons for the PKK under the name of the Kurdish issue in Europe and influence government policies. These include members and parliamentarians of the German Social Democratic and Green Party, members of the Italian Communist Party, members of PASOK in Greece, parliamentarians in the Duma, the lower house of the Russian parliament, some parliamentarians of the British Workers' Party, many politicians from Sweden and Norway, the German and Finnish Red Cross, the Helsinki Human Rights Watch Committee, and various journalists (Kurubaş, 2004: 222).

Moreover, despite international agreements on the fight against terrorism, some European states have been supporting the PKK, albeit for different reasons, as a matter of national policy.

One of them is Greece, whose interest in the PKK stems not from the Kurdish question, but from the fact that it has always used the PKK as a trump card against Turkey due to many issues such as the continental shelf, Cyprus, disarmament of islands and oil exploration in the Aegean Sea. Despite the fact that many international agreements it has committed to require effective coordination and coordination against terrorism, Greece has always supported the elements against Turkey by following a contradictory policy in this regard (MFA, 1999: 11). Turkey's shift of its economic and military power to the east, and its prioritization of threats to the southeast instead of the Aegean, were comforting for Greece. In addition, as the fight against the PKK shook Turkey's image on human rights in the international arena, Greece tried to put Turkey in an unfair position by creating the impression that its theses on Cyprus were right.

The Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus, which pursues similar policies with Greece, systematically supported the PKK and encouraged the establishment of PKK

associations and their activities against Turkey. On November 12, 1990, it was reported in a broadcast on the Greek television RJK-1 that 4 deputies of EDEK (Democratic Central Union Party) and other parties visited the camps of the organization in the Beka Valley (SETA, 2019: 609-658).

While Germany has declared the PKK a terrorist organization, it has approached the Kurdish problem in terms of human rights and minority rights. It tried to separate terrorism and the Kurdish problem as much as possible and pursued policies supporting Turkey. However, in the following years, the change in the conjuncture in the world and the desire to have a say in this region within the framework of international policies towards the Middle East and Turkey's EU membership efforts led Germany to be more interested in the PKK and the Kurds, and started to treat the PKK more leniently. Germany, which imposed an embargo on military aid after Turkey's 1991 cross-border operation in Northern Iraq, stopped arms shipments to Turkey after the Nowruz events of 1992, and Foreign Minister Genscher was able to ask for the Kurds to be granted minority status (Buzoğlu, 1996: 128).

Italy's interest in the PKK and the Kurds, and the successive events that took place in Italy, started to strain Italy-Turkey relations. In 1996, when the so-called Kurdish Parliament in Exile (PKDW) held its 5th plenary meeting in Rome and some Italian parliamentarians attended the meeting, Italy began to take a stance on the Kurds, and although the Italian government tried to prevent this meeting, it failed, and in 1997, the Italian parliament decided to discuss the Kurdish question in an international conference. In 1998, the Kurdish Parliament in Exile was held in the Italian parliament under the auspices of some Italian MPs, which resulted in a strong reaction from Turkey (Bayraktar, 2009: 136).

France's interest in the PKK and the Kurds dates back to the early 1980s. Founded in 1983, the Kurdish Institute of Paris received the greatest support from the French Foundation for Freedom, chaired by Danielle Mitterand, wife of President François Mitterrand. The French government also provided financial support to this foundation. The Kurdish Conference held in Paris in 1989 under the auspices of this foundation with Bernard Kouchner, Minister of State, was an important stage (Kurubaş, 2004: 254). The fact that French officials dictated the final text, which included the decision to take the Kurdish question to the UN, shows how much France embraced this issue and did not hesitate to pursue its policy on this issue openly. On July 22, 1994, the Foreign Minister of France, Alain Juppe, who continued to provide financial support to the Paris Kurdish Institute, stated that France was in favor of a political solution to the Kurdish problem (Kurubaş, 2004: 260). Indeed, France, on the one hand, pretending that it

does not allow the PKK's acts of violence and detaining PKK members through operations, is one of the countries that has made the most effort to politicize the organization by providing great support to the legal structures of the organization.

In 1994, on the instructions of the terrorist press, KONKURD, KNK-KUK (Kurdish National Congress) and Media TV, the umbrella organization of Kurdish associations operating in Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, France, Germany, Sweden and the UK, were headquartered in Belgium.

The UK, which has been characterized as the cradle of democracy and has been the protector of the Kurds and Arabs in certain periods, is a contradiction and hypocrisy when it comes to itself. Much more than the criticisms it has made against Turkey in relation to a multifaceted and comprehensive phenomenon such as the fight against terrorism are recorded in the UK's own record. In the UK, the PKK continues its activities through 9 associations, 3 unions, 1 committee and 2 offices under the control of the Federation of Kurdish Associations (FEK-BIR).

Sweden is the country with the highest number of Kurds after Germany and France. Sweden, which is also one of the countries with a large number of PKK members, has not remained indifferent to this issue, especially with the intensive PKK publications, political parties and the public in Sweden have closely followed the issue and provided financial aid to cultural activities. Ove Bring, Legal Advisor to the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Maj Lijöow, Minister of Refugees and Immigrants, attended the international Kurdish conference held in Stockholm in 1991 with a declaration and stated that the government supported the Kurds (Kurubaş, 2004: 263). After the Swedish media recognized the Southeast as Kurdistan on a map of Turkey, Swedish State Radio redirected its Kurdish broadcasts throughout Sweden to Turkey and the Middle East in line with Foreign Minister Anna Lindh's statements in 2001 to broadcast in Kurdish in Turkey (Hürriyet, 2012).

The Soviet Union has been interested in the Kurds since ancient times. In particular, the USSR, which was working on the Kurds through Armenia, supported the PKK through Syria. While there are also testimonies of captured terrorists that PKK militants were trained by KGB instructors and Palestinians, journalist and writer Samir Askerhanov, a former KGB military unit agent of the USSR, confirms this by stating that "the USSR has been establishing or supporting terrorist organizations for the transfer of ideology all over the world since the 1970s, and the PKK was founded for this purpose by the KGB, the intelligence organization of the Soviet Union" (Şehirli, 2000: 416). Undoubtedly, the main reason why the Soviet Union created

and supported such an organization was the struggle with the United States over the Middle East.

The US policy towards the Kurdish separatists has generally been supportive in terms of controlling the region, although it has varied from time to time according to its interests in the region (like the UK). This support before 2001 continued after the Second Gulf War and reached its peak especially after the Syrian civil war. The fact that the Kurdish separatist movement has not disappeared and its terrorist activities have not ceased is due to this support of the United States.

Table 1:
Security Personnel, Civilians and Kurdish Separatist Terrorists Killed between 1984 and 2000.

Years	Security Personnel	Civilian	Separatist Kurdish (PKK)	TOTAL
1984	26	43	28	97
1985	58	141	201	400
1986	51	133	74	258
1987	71	237	95	403
1988	54	109	123	286
1989	153	178	179	510
1990	161	204	368	733
1991	244	233	376	853
1992	629	832	1129	2,590
1993	715	1479	3050	5,244
1994	1145	992	2510	4,647
1995	772	313	4163	5,248
1996	608	170	3789	4,567
1997	518	158	7558	8,234
1998	383	85	2556	3,024
1999	236	83	1458	1,787
2000	29	17	319	365
TOTAL	5853	5407	22972	36915

Source: (Doğrulukpayı, 2014)

After 1991, the US's views on the PKK began to change because the organization had become a powerful force in the region after the Gulf War, and the US did not ignore this and included the PKK in its policies in the region. Graham Fuller, former chief of the CIA's Middle East and Turkey desk, stated that "*Turkey should abandon the concept of a state based on the sovereignty of a single nation, and Turkey should move to a federal system that gives the Kurds broad cultural autonomy, while defining the PKK not as a terrorist organization, but as an*

organization waging a fierce guerrilla war without morality (Pirim & Örtülü, 2000: 60)" and the US began to harshly criticize Turkey for torture and human rights violations. From 1994 onwards, the US policy was to use the PKK and other Kurdish organizations in the region, sometimes using them and sometimes abandoning them, to force the countries in the region to adopt the position it wanted and thus maintain its domination of Middle Eastern oil. In 1996, a US report referred to the PKK as guerrillas and Kurds as an ethnic minority (Kurubaş, 2004: 239).

The separatist Kurdish movement PKK, which started with a raid on a police station in 1984, reached its peak in 1993-1994 and came close to its end with the capture of Öcalan in Kenya in 1999.

3. The Post-2000 Kurdish Separatist Movement

The capture of Öcalan in Kenya marked the beginning of a new era for the separatist Kurdish movement. Left without a leader, the organization had reached a new crossroads. At its extraordinary 7th Congress held on January 2-23, 2000, the PKK adopted the approach of strategic withdrawal and so-called legitimate defense in line with Abdullah Öcalan's instructions and went through a structural change in line with this decision. Following these developments, the organization organized its 6th conference with the participation of 138 delegates in Qandil Mountain in Northern Iraq between 05-22 August 2001 in order to complete the 7th Congress, which it considered as the congress of strategic change, and to make the new strategy clear (Serxwebûn, 2001). As a continuation of this movement, the period between September 1, 2001 and May 1, 2002 was declared as the second insurgency period (Serxwebûn, 2001).

The PKK was renamed *Kongreya Azadî û Demokrasiya Kurdistanê* (KADEK) in April 2002 and Abdullah Öcalan was elected as its chairman. In addition, the phrase "KADEK is the only legitimate representative of the PKK" was added to the declaration in order to prevent a future opposition movement (Doğan, 2007: 119). With the declaration of KADEK, it was announced that the organization would get rid of acts of violence and emphasize civil disobedience type actions within the framework of the political democratic struggle method, that conferences would be organized in order to draw the US, EU and Russia into the Kurdish problem, that armed struggle would resume if Abdullah Öcalan was executed, and that armed elements would not be recommended (Sümercan, 2010: 91).

At the beginning of 2000, the Kurdish separatist movement, which almost came to an end, with the Second Gulf Operation launched by the US in 2001 and the invasion of Iraq, the autonomous local Kurdish administration established in the north of Iraq, the Ak Parti's victory in the elections in 2002 and finally the Syrian civil war that started in 2011, completely changed the philosophical background plan of its establishment in 1978 and turned towards the realization of the goal of "Greater Kurdistan".

In the meantime, the organization took advantage of the authority vacuum in northern Iraq and moved its headquarters to Qandil Mountain in Iraq, and on March 28-April 4, 2005, the PKK held its 11th congress under the name PKK Restructuring Congress and returned to the name of PKK (Sümercan, 2010: 94).

In 2002, the AK Party, which came to power, initiated the "Democratic Initiative" process, a new and ambitious step in the solution of the "Kurdish Question". This process is based on the idea that the PKK terrorist movement will be solved through democratization, thus both eliminating the sociological infrastructure on which the PKK terrorism is based and establishing an advanced democracy that will also guarantee Turkey's membership in the European Union. In a speech he delivered in Diyarbakir on August 12, 2005, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan explained the purpose of the opening process;

"A great state, a strong nation has the confidence to walk into the future by facing itself and putting its mistakes and sins on the table... One day these mistakes will be corrected. For this reason, it is my dream and the dream of my friends that everyone is a first-class citizen wherever our flag flies and that our children look to the future with hope... Everyone should know that there will be no step back from the point Turkey has reached. We will not allow the democratic process to go backwards... (Candar, 2008: 2)"

However, the organization took advantage of the government's approach to regroup and buy time to formulate its philosophy. The PKK held its 9th congress between October 26 and November 4, 2003 in the area of Mount Qandil-Dola Koge Camp. At the congress, it was announced that the KADEK organization was dissolved and replaced by the Kurdistan People's Congress (KONGRA-GEL).

The PKK came up with the idea of the KCK (Koma Civaken Kurdistan - Union of Communities of Kurdistan) at the 5th Congress of Kongra Gel (People's Congress) in May 2007 in Qandil. The KCK envisages a bottom-up organization. In addition to the Youth Council, the Women's Council and five other councils purportedly representing Kurds living in Turkey, Iraq,

Iran and Syria and outside these countries, the PKK is represented by political parties and non-governmental organizations such as PJAK (Partiya Jiyana Azad a Kurdistane-Kurdistan Free Life Party) in Iran and PYD (Partiya Yekitiya Demokratik-Democratic Union Party) in Syria, as well as the PKK's armed wing, the HPG (Hezen Parastina Gel). Kongra Gel, represented by 300 delegates elected from the aforementioned councils, is a kind of legislative body or parliament of the KCK.

With the adoption of the KCK constitution in May 2007, the organization completed its organization and began massive actions in cities across the country under the name of civil disobedience, including demonstrations with Molotovs, bombings, ambushes and raids, which were reminiscent of the old days of the PKK. In order to achieve their goal, both the city and mountain cadres were engaged in a great effort to force the Republic of Turkey to sit at the table in order to free their leader with uninterrupted action plans.

In order to bring the government to its knees, bring it to the table and make it accept its demands, the organization began to accelerate its actions in order to increase social pressure on the government by spreading fear through terror.

Encouraged by the protests, the Democratic Society Party (DTP), acting as the political representative of the KCK, organized a large demonstration in Diyarbakir on November 26, 2007 and started to make their demands known to the government. The common discourse of the DTP executives who spoke at the meeting was the demand for an end to the operations as a result of a negotiation with the government and for partial autonomy to be granted to allow the KCK to establish its administration in the cities:

Emine Ayna, DTP Mardin MP and Deputy Chairperson, claimed that the Kurdish people have been played with for 16 years and that they have been constantly accused of escalating violence. Emine Ayna said: "Internal and external operations must stop. There is lawlessness in Turkey. İmralı Prison is unlawful and must be closed immediately. All prisoners and convicts have rights. Mr. Abdullah Öcalan should also be granted these rights. I am not saying this for a slogan, but for a solution. This people are shouting their will. The state must accept this reality. If it is to accept the Kurds, it must accept them in all their reality (Takvim, 2007)."

Seeing all democratic initiatives of the Ak Party Government as a weakness, the KCK and the DTP, through PKK militants, started to increase the dose of sabotage actions similar to the pre-2000 period day by day. As a solution to this situation, the government sought a common understanding by bringing the European leaders of the organization and the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) together. The "Oslo" meeting, which was organized by the

British Intelligence MI5 and the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) and later attended by senior PKK cadres, was kept secret from the public until it was exposed by the Mossad. However, when the records of the Oslo talks obtained by the Mossad were published as a result of the crisis with Israel over the Mavi-Marmara raid, the government was forced to admit that it had negotiated with the PKK. Thus, the government's plan to end terrorism, which was launched under the slogan "Democratic Initiative", ended in a big fiasco.

Despite all the democratic concessions made by the government, the organization and its political representative in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey carried forward its separatist idea with the demand for "democratic autonomy". Aysel Tuğluk expressed this idea at the DPT Congress on July 14, 2011 as follows:

There are no other people in the world with a population of more than 40 million like the Kurds, but whose rights are ignored to such an extent and whose national existence is tried to be destroyed. As the Kurdish people, we want to reject the political statelessness established on the basis of the policy of denial and extermination and to establish our own social democracy on the basis of freedom. We state that we have the power and will to govern ourselves. -Democratic autonomy is a solution model not only for the Kurdish people, but for all the peoples, beliefs and cultures of Turkey to express themselves freely and govern themselves (Ntvmsnbc, 2011).

However, the separatist Kurdish movement had found a new habitat in the Kurdish region of northern Syria as a result of the political changes in northern Iraq caused by the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. As of this period, Syrian Kurds started to carry out political activities against the authoritarian Baath regime for the first time and entered into political rapprochement with the Kurds in Northern Iraq. The fact that the Syrian Kurds' developing relations with Massoud Barzani, the President of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government, damaged the PKK's projects in Syria led the PKK to announce the establishment of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) in order to accelerate its activities in Syria and to make its activities more organized (Caves, 2012). In this framework, the PYD was founded in 2003 by PKK member terrorists in Syria under the leadership of Fuad Omar (Pollock, 2012).

The PYD is the (official) Syrian member of the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), an organization founded by Abdullah Öcalan in Imrali Prison in 2005, which aims to unite the Kurds of Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey into a confederation and independence, and is known to be led by its leaders in Qandil Mountain in Iraq (Wilgenburg & Tanır, 2012).

The real rise of the party, which was passive in the first years of its establishment, started in 2011 with the new vision it created within the framework of these new relations with the

regime. In this new period, Turkey's support for the Arab opposition armed struggle against the regime effective support both internationally and regionally, PYD buffer on the regime's border with Turkey in retaliation in the realization of the deployment project as a zone has been the most effective reason. Indeed, it was noteworthy that the regime handed over the administration of Kurdish areas to the PYD immediately after the July 2012 bombing in Damascus, which killed four senior regime officials and which the regime blamed Turkey as the main perpetrator (Aljazeera, 2015).

The PYD's base in Syria; the foundation of the Republic of Turkey Ararat and Dersim uprisings that took place during the Kurdish rebels who migrated to Syria due to incidents such as The PKK's activities among the Syrian Kurds since the 80s It was formed as a result of political activities centered in Turkey. The PYD's indirect link to the regime dates back to the 80s (Erdemol, 2013).

When we look at the founding philosophy, charter, actions and members of the PYD, it is clear that it is the Syrian organization of the PKK-KCK. There are many examples that demonstrate that the PYD is the Syrian organization of the PKK-KCK. "*The Democratic Union Party (PYD) considers Abdullah Öcalan as its leader, the People's Congress as the umbrella of the people of (so-called) Kurdistan, and the KCK-West (PYDStatute, 2013) as the democratic system for the Kurdish people in Syria (PYDStatute, 2013)*" in the "What is the Organization" section of the party's statute clearly reveals the party's founding purpose.

Founded in 2003, the PYD, which had not yet fully established its institutional infrastructure, seized a historic opportunity with the Arab Spring and turned/transformed into one of the most powerful actors in Syria. Thanks to its armed wing, the YPG, whose official establishment was announced in 2011, and the regime's deliberate withdrawal from the region, the PYD has taken control of Kurdish cities such as Afrin, Kobani, Serê Keniyê, Dêrik and Ras El Ayn (İmrağ, 2012).

The military wing of the PYD is the armed organization known as the People's Protection Units (YPG). Although the PYD established the YPG years ago, it officially announced its establishment in 2011, after the outbreak of the Arab Spring, to ensure the control of Kurdish-majority cities north of the Syrian border. The PYD brought in experienced terrorists from Qandil to form the structure of the YPG. Today, in some settlements in Syria, the PYD is able to establish local governments in line with its ideology and integrate the population into them (Köylü, 2018: 44).

The separatist Kurdish movement in the north of Syria in the form of the PYD and YPG not only found a life space with the Syrian civil war, but also legally gained international support, especially from the US and Russia. Russia, which sided with the Assad regime in the Syrian civil war, expanded its military bases in the country and conducted airstrikes against ISIS and the opposition, was negotiating and supporting the PYD to 'cooperate' against ISIS. The United States, on the other hand, has been conducting airstrikes against ISIS in Syria since June 2014, after ISIS entered the PYD-dominated Kobani canton in September 2014. After the PYD, unable to defend Kobani against ISIS, drove ISIS out of the region with the support of close aerial bombardment by the US, the relationship between the PYD and the US as 'tactical allies' against ISIS began. During the siege of Kobani, the US and Western countries, as well as the KRG, began to support the PYD with arms. The US sent three C-130 planes and 27 containers of aid to the PYD, 24 tons of weapons and ammunition and 10 tons of medical aid, and supported the PYD with anti-tank mines, sniper rifles, BKC heavy machine guns, Dojka, RPG-7 and various rocket launchers (Aydoğan, 2015).

In 2015, the separatist Kurdish movement, supported the DTP, launched terrorist activities in the border provinces of Southern Anatolia for the first time in its history, in the form of a civil uprising (trench actions) inside the cities, creating a Syria-like turmoil in a part of the region and trying to put Turkey in a difficult situation in the international arena, but with the government's decisive and sensitive attitude (without harming the civilian population) and its intervention at the expense of casualties, it had to withdraw before its goal could be achieved. As a result of these actions, 793 soldiers and police officers and 378 civilians were martyred, while more than 4,000 security officers and over 2,000 citizens were injured.

4. Theoretical and Philosophical Approaches to the Kurdish Separatist Movement

Murat Karayılan, currently the leader of the PKK-KCK's Qandil Mountain cadre, said in an interview with Cengiz Çandar;

"Some observers working on the Kurdish Question and Kurdish political circles agree on four revolts. The first one is the Sheikh Sait Rebellion of 1925, the second one is the Mount Ararat Rebellion of 1929 and the third one is the Dersim Rebellion of 1938. The "fourth rebellion" represented by the PKK was the longest and most comprehensive of these, and since the PKK's armed forces have not laid down their arms, it is possible to say that the "fourth rebellion" continues (Çandar, 2008: 1)."

Although this approach is partially correct, Kurds, due to their tribal structure and cultural characteristics, have frequently rebelled against the state authority in their regions, extracted concessions from the authority and worked in favor of those who pushed them to revolt. Although the common characteristic of all rebellions is ostensibly "freedom and independence", in the background they seem to serve the imperialist wishes of a foreign power. Another feature is that although these revolts look like a mass popular movement, they are the movements of masses who unconditionally obey those they call tribal chiefs, aghas, seyits or presidents. Despite the themes of human rights, independence and freedom, it is a major contradiction that those who oppose the movement, those who adopt different ideas and methods are immediately executed and destroyed, which is one of the main characteristics of separatist Kurdish movements. Moreover, in his interview with Cengiz Çandar, Karayılan categorized only the revolts of the Republican era.

The government, on the other hand, approaches the separatist Kurdish movement "as a problem of freedom based on identity". Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç expressed the government's view in his speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly as follows:

"The Kurdish issue or Kurdish identity did not emerge three years ago, twenty years ago, thirty years ago. The existence of Kurds has been a fact for at least a thousand years. You cannot deny this... We will give a person who says 'I am Kurdish' the same right to life, knowledge, education, language, culture, identity as all of us in this country. Denying a person's identity means denying that person. You can think of Kurdish identity, Arab identity, Bosnian identity, whatever comes to your mind... All of them, whoever and whatever they are, will easily express their identity on this land. We will respect that identity. We will give and recognize all cultural rights and constitutional rights of that identity (Candar, 2008: 18)."

However, the writers of supporting the separatist Kurdish movement have a different theoretical and philosophical approach to the issue than the government. According to them, the Republic of Turkey's approach to this issue is the real cause of terrorism. The first of these approaches is:

Since the Kemalist State, at the time of its establishment, claimed to be the heir of the Ottoman Empire, since the Kurds were an important national community within the Ottoman Empire and Kurdistan was a semi-autonomous country, and since the Kurds were needed, the Kurds' existence was not denied. As is well known, when the Kemalist state got its feet on the ground, strengthened its international relations and got Great Britain behind it, it created an official history based on lies. According to the official and, in other words, Kemalist understanding of

history: Kurds do not exist and there is no Kurdish language. "Kurds are Turks". Kurds are not a nation, Kurds do not have a country, Turkey has not invaded and colonized Kurdish lands (Köylü, 2018: 45).

This statement targets the founding philosophy of the Republic and the unitary structure of the country. In particular, contrary to what is claimed, what is really complained about is that the dream of establishing a Kurdistan in the east and southeast with the Treaty of Sevres drafted by Great Britain ended with the Treaty of Lausanne and the proclamation of the Republic at the end of the National Struggle.

In his speech at the House of Commons, the lower house of the British parliament, BDP Chairman Selahattin Demirtaş stated that "*the decisive point in the solution of the Kurdish question is the Kurdish people's right to self-determination*" and that this right must be respected. Underlining that the British government has a special place in the deepening of the Kurdish question, Demirtaş said, "*Britain owes a hundred-year debt to the Kurdish people*", adding a new link to the chain that leads from Sheikh Sait to Seyit Rıza, Mustafa Barzani to Öcalan.

Second approach;

According to the official and Kemalist understanding of history, according to the colonialist approach of the Turkish State, there is no such issue as the Kurdish issue in Turkey, it is an issue created by imperialist powers, foreign powers and those with evil intentions who want to destroy the Turkish State. The Kurds are traitors and collaborators of these imperialist, malicious and anti-Turkish forces. That is why Kurd's rebel, revolt, demand independence and want to divide Turkey (Güçlü, 2015).

However, this approach also contains many flaws. There was no understanding of "colonialism" in any period of the Republic. Because in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, the tribal system in the east and southeast (almost all of them of Kurdish origin) exploited the people of the region and Kurdish youth, who reacted to this, migrated to the cities and fought against the landlordism with the "communist organizations" they established together with Turkish youth. Especially the Democrat Party (DP) government of Adnan Menderes, who was himself a landlord, tolerated the tribal lords for the sake of votes, which took its place in history as an erroneous policy.

Third approach;

The Unionist-Ittihadist Mentality and the Kemalist State represent a mentality and state based on the Turkish Nation. Therefore, it is a structure and mentality that ignores, excludes and even aims to destroy all national communities and ethnic groups other than the Turkish national actor. Because first the state and then the Turkish nation were created. The creation of the Turkish nation would be possible through the Turkification of the Kurdish nation and other ethnic groups (Eryüksel, 2012).

This approach cannot be explained by Atatürk's six principles and his approach to the Turkish nation. The main objective of the Turkish Revolution was to establish "an independent Turkish state based on national sovereignty". In order to achieve this goal, first a total struggle was waged against the imperialist occupiers, then the country was liberated with the republican regime and sovereignty was given to the nation. There was never any discrimination between the people living within the borders of the "Misak-ı Milli", and the principle of populism did not discriminate between citizens on the basis of religion, language, race or gender.

The clearest theoretical approach was proposed by Öcalan, who founded the organization and continues to lead it even in prison. The fiasco in the democratic initiative process led the government to sit down at the bargaining table with Öcalan, and the meets that started in Oslo between members of the MIT and members of the organization were transformed into talks with Öcalan after they were revealed and made public. At the end of these meets, Öcalan announced his letter containing the (so-called) peace conditions and tried to gauge the social reaction. Öcalan mentions two main stages in his letter. The first is that the members of the organization should not be punished if they surrender their weapons, and the second is that the constitutional amendment to be made will transform the unitary structure into a federative structure and grant autonomy.

In fact, Öcalan did not explicitly tell the public about the talks in İmralı in his letter, as it was revealed when the minutes of the talks were leaked. In these talks, Öcalan stated that he was seeking to realize his dream of establishing a new state to replace the Republic:

"It is necessary to leave the old habits of life altogether. Why, because this will be a regime change. Tanzimat, Constitutional Monarchy, the Republic, 1950 is much more important than the transition to multi-party life, this will be deeper than all of them. If we succeed, we will have a brand-new Republic... Radical democracy, full democracy, full democratization of Anatolia and Mesopotamia (Köylü, 2018: 51)."

The purpose of all these theoretical and philosophical approaches in the context of ethnic nationalism is to justify and even excuse the terrorist acts of the separatist Kurdish movement, which has taken away the right to life of thousands of our people for a century under different pretexts.

5. Evaluation

The separatist Kurdish movement, which some circles today insistently refer to as the "Kurdish Question", should be evaluated from its inception to the present day in terms of its theoretical and philosophical approach in three periods. These are tribalism, communist organization and nationalism.

A tribe is a traditional large family community, linked by kinship and with its own special rules. It usually bears the name of the family that is the head of the tribe and all its members are ruled by the person who is the head of that family. There is unconditional obedience and loyalty. Tribal laws take precedence over public laws and are customary rules. This concept passed from Arabs to Kurds with the adoption of Islam. Being a feudal system, tribes often rebel to protect their territories and tribes. Concepts such as democracy and human rights are out of the question within the tribal structure, and all tribesmen must obey the strict authority of the tribal leader.

Having discovered the feudal structure of the tribes in the Middle East, the imperialist states started to use first the Arab tribes and then the Kurdish tribes as pawns to realize their aims in this region. Britain, which made the Sharif of Mecca Hussein revolt through Colonel Lawrence, tried a similar tactic with Captain Noel in the period of the War of Independence against the Kurdish tribes, but without success. However, it used the Cibranlı Tribe in the solution of the Mosul issue in its favor (Sheikh Sait rebellion) and achieved success. Although there were British-backed Kurdish separatist revolts (Ağrı Rebellion, Dersim Rebellion) in Anatolia until the beginning of the Second World War, the period of tribal revolts ended after 1939.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), itself founded by a revolution, initiated the "Communization of the World" project after the Second World War. The implementers of the project were "Marxist-Leninist" armed organizations organized in the form of "revolutionaries" in the target countries. The methods of these organizations were to create unrest against the existing governments by declaring country-wide or regional liberated zones in the countryside and cities, and by armed terrorist acts. Especially targeting political and

economic instability, illegal organizations, after completing their organization by gaining support from poor workers and peasants, aimed at an ideological change through armed actions against the public sector. After the 1960s, the terrorist organization, which found a place for itself as the "New Left Wave" especially in Latin American countries (Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Nicaragua, Honduras) and Far East Asian countries (Nepal, Vietnam), continued until the end of the 1980s.

The Kurdish separatist movement, together with the "New Left Wave", became widespread among poor Turkish and Kurdish youth from the student and working classes living in the cities since the mid-1960s and turned into organizational structures. The goal of this organization, which did not discriminate on the basis of class or race, was defined as putting an end to the political and economic imbalance and inequality in society by realizing the "Communist Revolution". The separatist Kurdish movement, which was organized and carried out actions in the cities until 1978, transformed its actions into Latin American-style guerrilla actions with the establishment of the PKK, moved to the countryside and became regional. In order to delay and prevent the dam projects to be built on the Fırat and Dicle rivers in the Southeastern Anatolia region, the Syrian government, which is close to the USSR, provided all kinds of logistical support to the PKK's rural actions in the region and provided the PKK leadership with shelter and camps in Syria. The social and economic structure in the region, unemployment and poverty, and anxiety about the future have been influential in the participation of young people, who provide the PKK with human resources.

Since 1990, after the collapse of the USSR, the organization, which lost an important ally, lost its sources of income and became illegal in the international arena, has changed its theoretical philosophy in order to receive the support of European states, especially the USA, and has presented itself as the representative of all Kurds living in Anatolia, created the image that they are in a struggle against the lawlessness against Kurds under the name of "Kurdish Question" and turned into regional separatist Kurdish nationalism.

In a short period of time, the organization started to receive support from activist organizations claiming to be anti-Turkish state and human rights defenders, and benefited from the authority emptiness in northern Iraq and the logistical support of Syria, and continued its actions that could cause the deaths of approximately 40 thousand people until its leader Abdullah Öcalan was captured in Kenya.

After 2000, the separatist Kurdish movement, which found support from the international community within the framework of the "Kurdish Question", took its theoretical and

philosophical goals one step further and established the KCK in order to realize the "Greater Kurdistan" project, which encompasses Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. Since 2005, it started armed and bomb attacks not only in the countryside but also in the cities in order to force the declaration of "Democratic Autonomy" in the provinces covering the southeast of Turkey. With the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, the KCK increased its actions by using the arms and logistical support provided by the United States to the PYD, the Syrian branch of the organization.

6. Conclusion

In the last 150 years of Turkey's history, there has been a Kurdish separatist movement, albeit in different forms and with different aspirations, and there will continue to be one after today. This situation is like a legacy that separatist Kurdish nationalists pass on to each other. Although the problem cannot be completely eliminated, it can at least be reduced to the level of political thought with the right policies. As follows;

1. Mao, the leader of the Chinese Revolution, makes the following statement: "*The people are the sea, the guerrilla is the fish.*" In other words, if the guerrilla organizes the people, it hides in its depths, struggles and fights. A terrorist organization without popular support cannot survive. It has been observed that most of the young people who join the separatist Kurdish movement are children of poor families and have very low expectations for the future. The fact that bourgeois Kurds generally leave the region and live-in big cities, especially Istanbul, has led to an increase in poverty in the rural areas of the region. In addition, the feudal system in the region is still in place, however much it has diminished. The fact that the PKK's first action was directed against the Bucak Tribe in Siverek shows that feudalism is the first root of the problem. However, instead of destroying the feudal structure in the region and taking measures to raise the economic level of the people and increase social welfare, the political authorities of the period tried to solve the problem with military measures, which caused the problem to grow exponentially. Considering that approximately 500 billion dollars have been spent on the terrorist problem so far, if this money had been invested in the region, the fate of the region would have changed.

2. The international recognition of the separatist Kurdish movement has been the creation of a human rights-based victimization under the name of the "Kurdish Question". The military interventions in the region since 1984 and the civilian casualties inflicted by the PKK have ensured the international acceptance of the claims. In addition, countries such as Syria, Iran, Iraq, Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus, which are opposed to

Turkey, have openly and covertly contributed to the development of the organization by clinging to this pretext. Turkey's failure to show sufficient diplomatic reaction to the internationalization and magnification of this problem, which is entirely its own internal disorder, has also been effective. Its justified reaction against Syria in 1999 led to the head of the terrorist organization leaving Syria and his capture in a short time. However, its failure to show this reaction for 13 years led to the deaths of thousands of people. Today, the PKK headquarters in Qandil Mountain in northern Iraq and the PYD headquarters in Jarabulus in northern Syria still exist. Although Turkey has the military capabilities to destroy both headquarters, it does not take action.

In conclusion, as long as Turkey provides the welfare and peace of the people and the international democratic and human rights environment it deserves, as well as the social and economic environment in which the people of the region, especially the youth, can build their future by increasing regional investments, the separatist Kurdish movement will never find a space to flourish, nor will it be able to create a grievance internationally.

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