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Third World War in Abya Yala





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Introduction

Thirty-five years have passed since the fall of the Soviet Union. In these years Russia has developed into one of the main competitors of global capitalism. Still, there are many social movements that insist on approaching the global political situation as if we were still in the Cold War era.

The system of capitalist modernity has adapted profoundly to this new post-bloc era. It has succeeded in eliminating a main enemy, the Soviet bloc, and has opened a field for a new kind of global domination, more concealed than ever. This epoch, which the leader of the Kurdish freedom movement, Abdullah Öcalan, defines as the "Third World War", is characterised by an all-out offensive against the eternal enemy of capitalist modernity: society, i.e. all human beings on this planet.

This war strikes at the very foundations of what makes us a society. It seeks to destroy the social fabric, our communal bond, to isolate us from each other and to empty our existence of meaning. It reduces us to mere bodies for exploitation and consumption. It is a metaphysical war of a system that wants to create a materialistic world.

It is difficult to tell people who are taking bullets in their bodies made in the USA, Germany, Israel or Russia that this war is not yet global. Although the Leviathan of our age, the capitalist system, is more cunning in hiding its intentions, this does not make it less true that it is eating us from the inside. The veins of this monster, the trade and transport routes, are expanding through mega-projects and the same corporations seek to reach all parts of the world, not hesitating to eliminate an entire people if necessary, to achieve their goals. In Abya Yala this reality is more tangible than anywhere else on the planet.

In this booklet, we discuss the meaning of the concept of Third World War in the theses developed by Öcalan from Imrali prison and focus

specifically on the continent of Abya Yala and its position within that framework of global politics. Ideas developed from the Kurdish freedom movement's practice of struggle over more than 50 years. A series of concepts that have been used by various organisations and individuals to explain and understand the special character of the present time. We will also see how local struggles in all parts of the world are connected in the way they confront the same system and how that system is one and whole in its plans to dominate the world. A system with many faces and forms, but united by one ideological paradigm: that of capitalist modernity.

Characteristics of the Third World War

"Could it not be that the Third World War, which is so often talked about, is taking place within this unreal, virtual world? Is it not possible that the wars fought in the actual world are simply their manifestations?". (Abdullah Öcalan, Capitalist Civilization, p. 273)

In the realm of international law, the practice of institutions standing back with arms crossed has become normalised. Never before has a war been so broadcast and, at the same time, so ignored as the war against the Palestinian people in Gaza. Even when turning to the United Nations to defend the legal rights of oppressed peoples, the laws did not serve to save the lives of the hundreds of thousands who were massacred. In fact, it sometimes seems that the laws and the system they created were never intended to protect human lives, but rather to protect the assassins.

Genocide is not an exception in the way nation-states act. It is an ancient tradition that has always been practised and is the normality of the nation-state. If we dig deep into history and geography, we see that it has always happened somewhere and at some point in time. Sometimes we talk about the resurgence of fascism, but if you ask the Palestinians, the Kurds and the black and indigenous peoples of Abya Yala, they will tell you that fascism never ended.

This war acts at a deep level, reaching the most personal part of the individual. Sometimes, it even makes us believe that the imposed system benefits us. As citizens, we become defenders of the very system that sucks our blood. In the media we are told one thing, but the reality we live in is something else, and this creates a virtual and parallel reality to the one we actually live in. Öcalan speaks of the "virtual society" and states: "Just as hegemonic powers always possess the most effective weapons in the literal sense, they also have the dominant control over the media as a weapon. Because they use media as a

second analytical intelligence, they can very effectively neutralize society's power to resist. With this weapon, they are building a virtual society." (A. Öcalan, Sociology of Freedom, p. 104)

The main target of this war is women. In physical terms, it is obvious: women always suffer the most in armed conflicts and in the war against women the same statistics state that every 10 minutes a woman is killed (UN Woman, Femicides in 2023). Sexual violence becomes a weapon of systematic terror that is rooted in the patriarchal mentality that underlies war. But what is the reason for the war's focus on women? It is because, historically, women have been advocates of peace and values opposed to those of the capitalist system. This is why they are treated as a major obstacle to be defeated in order to pave the way for unlimited exploitation of nature and humanity.

In addition, Third World War can be characterised by these specific points:

1. Low-intensity warfare
2. Economic warfare
3. Flexible alliances
4. Media warfare
5. Biological warfare

In the brochure "Opportunities and Dangers of the Third World War" published by the Academy of Democratic Modernity these points are discussed in more depth, and in the current text we exemplify them in the context of Abya Yala throughout the content.

The protection of nature concerns all areas of war. If women have been the ideological obstacle to unlimited exploitation, the object of this exploitation has been nature, which, with its abundant riches, offers us everything we need to survive and progress as beings. But the capitalist system has turned that opportunity into an abuse to serve a small elite, with the consequent destruction of biodiversity and natural resources,

both above and below the earth's surface. Even polluting the air and water with no apparent solution in sight.

It is important to note that not all of humanity has surrendered to this system. There is a large part of society that fights against the system. But we must come to terms with the fact that we have not managed to give an adequate response to the difficult situation we live in. Many communist and socialist groups continue to analyse the world in terms of two blocs. Feminist and environmental movements often get lost in cooperation with the state itself and lose their combative essence. Anarchist and libertarian groups often isolate themselves from society and confuse the struggle against the system with ideas of individualistic rebellion. Very few of the left movements practice communalism and anti-capitalism in their daily life and wage the internal struggle against the patriarchal-capitalist mentality that is needed.

Indigenous struggles have much to teach Western-inspired anti-system struggles, for example, in the way they practice anti-system ideas through their territorial autonomy and their philosophies and practices rooted in nature. However, they have failed to protect themselves from state infiltration of their movements and, in many cases, suffer from maintaining their links with the state and lose their connection to their own struggle and their land. The existing patriarchy, which is often disguised as ancestry, is also evident. We need to rethink our conception of the political conditions of the world and our forms of struggle.

The three capitalist crises

Öcalan sums up the importance of the times we live in with the concept of the three capitalist crises that converge in our era: "[...] it is undeniable that the five-thousand-year-old world system of civilization

and modernity in general, and particularly the last four hundred years, is at the zenith of its intellectual and structural crisis. Financial capitalism, which has become a global and hegemonic power, is the most obvious evidence of this." (A. Öcalan, "Sociology of Freedom", p. 302). To begin with, we are faced with the civilisational crisis of capitalist civilisation. This is the long-term framework of the social problem created by the patriarchal capitalist mentality and system. Civilisation is the beginning of the end of freedom of society and nature. In the medium term, we have the crisis of capitalist modernity. For the last 500 years, world history has been dominated by the conditions of industrialism and capitalism without geographical or moral boundaries. This acceleration of the class system, exploitation and societycide has brought war and extractivism to every corner of the world. In the latest stage we are facing the crisis of the financial era. In it, industrialism has given way to a capitalism primarily based on the trade of money for money. An abstract world has been created where trade does not seem to be connected in any obvious way to the material base from which it derives its profit. It is an elastic game that stretches the economy to the point of breaking at any moment.

In this sense, we are living through three historical crises that converge in our era. These crises are due to the impossibility of the capitalist system. The fact that a system that wants more and more from a world that is getting poorer and poorer is historical madness. But out of this chaos, in the cracks that emerge within the system itself, there are also opportunities for democratic forces. "We have the privilege, a painful one to be sure, of living through the breakdown of linear and progressive time, which allows us to open up to other times, unpredictable, uncertain but surely fruitful because, for those of us who yearn for a new world, there is nothing worse than the predictable times of bureaucratic institutional linearity". (Capitalist Civilisation, spanish edition, foreword by R. Zibechi, p. 9). If we read and understand well the characteristics of the times we live in. If we free ourselves from the dogmas of understanding that bind us and kill our movements slowly, if

we are free in our thinking and strong in our ability to act on the opportunities presented to us, we can lead a struggle against capitalist modernity and pave the way to the triumph of democratic modernity, i.e. to a new and free society.

The multipolar global system

In the mentality created by the capitalist state there is no room for cooperation, only for deception and competition. It will always be in conflict, even with its allies. It is a fluid system in this sense. The different entities in the system will cooperate at some times and compete at others. But always in their own self-interest.

During the Cold War era there were two blocs. Although the Soviet bloc could not pave the way to socialism, it still challenged the capitalist bloc. Therefore, the capitalist system was in direct conflict with the soviet bloc. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the world order came to be dominated by a single bloc; the capitalist bloc. But that does not mean that conflict has disappeared. In the capitalist logic of competition, when one pole becomes dominant, it is directly threatened by the second pole, which also wants to dominate.

Thus, the world of a bloc can be understood as a multipolar world, where various capitalist states compete with each other for dominance. While espousing the same liberal mentality based on individualism, competition and aggressiveness, internal conflicts for world domination sometimes arise as well.

In this new world order, the US remains dominant, but China, which is second in the race, has developed new strategies to move ahead and has taken a lot of ground. In recent decades, China has developed its

industry by exporting production from European and Western countries to China, and has built a strong domestic capitalist economy.

Instead of confronting the US on the battlefield, it has turned to developing industrial infrastructure on other continents, mainly in Africa and Abya Yala. Even Russia has joined this strategy and the result has been the creation of a real threat to the dominant position of the US in the world order.

The war in Ukraine was an expression of this internal conflict between capitalist forces. With China's plans to develop a new Silk Road between Asia and Europe, the US saw fit to create a war front between Ukraine and Russia. In this way, it blocked China's plans and bought time to develop its own plans to create trade and energy routes between Asia and Europe. It thus weakened China and, at the same time, secured a temporary economic and territorial dominance in the world.

The world war is between two paradigms

So, alliances between capitalist forces exist and, at other times, they come into internal conflict. But, in the end, they all defend the same system and arise from the same ideology: the system of capitalist modernity, which is the one that has allowed them to extract wealth from the earth with the approval of the world's population, because they implement the liberal, capitalist mentality that allows it. Here we see that the root conflict is between two paradigms of thought, mentality and values, and not necessarily between specific geographies or states. On the one hand, the paradigm of capitalist modernity and, on the other, the paradigm of the peoples and democratic forces in struggle, which

is the contemporary paradigm of communities - democratic modernity. The latter has been defended and led throughout its history by the culture of the mother-goddess and the protective figure of the woman. Therefore, if we talk about two sides of this conflict, it is more correct to define it in this way.

The Middle East is at the heart of the war

Before focusing on the territories relevant to our study, it is necessary to provide an overview of the global context. In order to understand the political situation and the historical roots of the world system, it is necessary to talk about the Middle East. It is where the first neolithic revolution took place and where the democratic culture led by women developed. It is also the place where the state and civilisation first developed, with devastating effects for the whole of humanity.

World War I marked the beginning of the nation-state system in the Middle East. This war was the way in which the global capitalist system finally overcame the system of empires and shifted to a worldwide system of nation-states. The plan of the new industrialist bourgeoisie was to control the resources of the Middle East by dividing the area into smaller, more manageable states. But, just at that moment, the October revolution in Russia arose and the beginning of a two-bloc world order interrupted global capitalism's plans.

Öcalan explains it in these words: "Radical Islam, which had already been declared the new enemy by NATO and thus by the global hegemonic system after the dissolution of Soviet Russia in the 1990s, was in fact being used as an ideological mask. In essence, it was about ensuring the full establishment of the unfinished capitalist hegemony in

the Muslim cultural countries of the Middle East after the First World War. In particular, it was about properly integrating the so-called rogue and bandit states, such as Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, etc., into the system and, in general, about reinforcing US world hegemony. The 'Third World War' waged under US hegemony was to fill the hegemonic vacuum created by the collapse of the Soviet system". (A. Öcalan, *The Kurdish Question and the Democratic Nation Solution*, not published in English).

After the fall of the Soviet Union, plans to dominate the Middle East resumed. It is no coincidence that 1991 saw the start of the war against Iraq and the beginning of the process of the collapse of the states in the region. In our time we have seen these plans culminate in the genocide of Gaza to control Palestine, the war in Lebanon to control Hezbollah and all this to weaken Iran and finally, to destroy the Syrian state and replace it with a proto-state loyal to Western hegemony.

We understand then that the Middle East is a key point in the plans for global domination of the system of capitalist modernity. It is there that the power relations that are projected onto the rest of the world become clear.

Genocide

The brutality and genocidal character of the global capitalist system has resurfaced with the war against the Palestinians in Gaza. In Abya Yala, more than anywhere else, we know the genocidal character of the nation-state. On the one hand, there is that of states that invade to colonise, but also that of nation-states on the same continent that build their existence by glorifying one nation above all others. Genocidal character is at the foundation of the nation-state and the Palestinians have lived this reality unabashedly. In Kurdistan this has been

experienced over the last hundred years, with the impact of the founding of the Turkish Republic, and the Armenian and Assyrian peoples have suffered near-elimination under this system.

In Chile, the Mapuche nation-people see first-hand the brutality of the nation-state when they are persecuted for protecting their way of life on their ancestral lands. The examples in Abya Yala are innumerable. And we must be careful about valuing some genocides over others. It is true that at times some peoples suffer more than others, but, in the end, as long as the capitalist system is strong, genocide will be one of its main tools and this puts the whole of humanity at risk. In reality, this new neo-colonial stage of the global system has not meant the end of genocide, but a new stage in its depth and scope to achieve new economic goals. The genocide in Gaza has been a clear example of how states use the law, not to protect society, but to protect their interests. That is why genocide is legal.

Third World War in Abya Yala

"This war can only end by completely neutralising Iran, stabilising Afghanistan and Iraq and eliminating China and Latin America as a threat. Therefore, we are still in the middle of the war. [...] Sometimes diplomacy, sometimes violence, will escalate. The agenda will be intervened with severe and controlled economic crises. The prioritisation of areas will change, but one way or another the war as a whole will develop in many areas". (A. Öcalan, The Kurdish Question and the Democratic Nation Solution, unpublished in English)

The attack on society

Poverty on our continent is already unsustainable. It is deep and widespread, with absurd scenes of people living on a few dollars a month while others cannot imagine how to spend what they have accumulated. Skyscrapers are built where thousands of people once lived to make way for the fallacious symbols of business. Often, these projects are left empty because no one can pay the rent, a display of violent vanity. In one of the most fertile places on our planet, hunger is an urgent issue. Anyone who tries to raise their voice or raise a fist to express their anger at this situation is persecuted, disappeared or is sentenced under anti-terrorist laws. And all the efforts of the globalist powers are focused on how to aggravate this situation.

Historical framework

Ever since Phoenician ships began transporting goods between the coastal cities of the Mediterranean 3200 years ago. Since the first cities of Mesopotamia began colonising peripheral peoples to plunder their resources and use them as slaves, the capitalist system has continued to develop its methods of exploitation and expand its global reach. The most abrupt example of this occurred when Spanish and Portuguese ships reached the shores of the Caribbean. This marked the beginning of a relationship of plunder of the continent by the hegemonic capitalist centre, which at that time was Europe. If today Europe has impressive buildings and airports, it is because it based its economy on the extraction of wealth from the continents of Abya Yala and Africa. Thus they turned our continents into sources of permanent plunder.

Globalist projects in Abya Yala

The Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico is one of the narrowest areas of Mexico's geography. It connects the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Sea, making it a strategic point for intercontinental and intra-oceanic capitalist trade. Further south, the Panama Canal, dug by the United States and inaugurated in 1914, connects the Caribbean Sea with the Atlantic Ocean and dramatically changed the flow of trade in the area since its use. In Cauca, in southwestern Colombia, there is incredibly fertile land. On one side is the Pacific Ocean and on the other, the Andes mountain ranges. Beyond the mountain ranges lies the Amazon with its impenetrable vegetation. This makes Cauca a focal point of commercial movement between north and south, and, in combination with the world's largest coca production, the eyes and hands of capitalist forces are very much fixed on this region.

These are just a few examples that demonstrate the geostrategic importance of our continent. And there are many more, which is why it is impossible for the monopolistic capitalist system not to look to these lands to secure its advantages in the global market of licit and illicit products.

In Temuco, in the south of Chile, or more precisely in the north of the Wallmapu, the landscape is filled with military forces. Seeing the truckloads of timber leaving the area for the north and, moreover, the empty trucks returning from the north to the south, one understands that these military forces are protecting extractivist interests that extend from the conference rooms of Frankfurt's skyscrapers to the ancestral forests of the far south of the Wallmapu.

With the advancement of electric car development has come the need to extract new types of minerals. The goal of global leaders for 2030 is to put 235 million electric vehicles on the world's roads (IEA, Policies to promote electric vehicle deployment). Each car needs approximately 35 kilos of lithium, and each kilo of lithium requires up to two million litres of water in the extraction process. 60 % of the world's lithium is found in the border area between Chile, Bolivia and Argentina, known as the South America's Lithium Triangle (CSIS).

The largest port on the continent has been inaugurated in Peru. This port forms a central part of the development of the New Silk Road (BRI), China's major project to develop trade routes across all continents and to make the movement of extracted raw materials to production plants in China for global markets more efficient.

What is not seen in the budget figures for these mega-projects are their effects on the people who live in these areas and on the environment. This is why these areas have become some of the most conflictive and dangerous in the world. Ancient cultures have been protecting the balance between nature and people in these areas for thousands of years. And many of these struggles continue, especially under the

leadership of women, but it is important to understand the global interests that exist on these lands and how they are connected to long-term global plans to disintegrate local societies, to make way for unrestrained extractivism, and to be able to identify and address them appropriately.

The Leviathan of the North

The colonisation of Abya Yala reached almost every corner of it. And when nation-states were formed during the bourgeois revolutions of national liberation, instead of liberating the lands from colonisation, they found more advanced and deeper ways to further colonise them. Over the last 500 years, the hegemonic centre of this system has shifted first from Madrid to London, and then from London to Washington. Over the last century, the broad outlines of the continent's policies have been mainly orchestrated by the US, and after the fall of the Soviet Union, the US strategy of intervention on the continent changed. It no longer employs such direct methods of military intervention, but has instead set in motion a long-term project to colonise the minds of the population through the liberal systems installed during Operation Condor, in order to tie the countries of Abya Yala to its cultural and economic hegemony.

In this new era, the US uses the war on drugs as an excuse to develop its military presence in the different countries of the continent. And, when people rise up against the system, it uses paramilitary forces to assassinate, as well as NGOs and the institutionalisation of social movements to silence rebellion through salaries and project subsidies. Hand in hand with this the local armies and police forces always act as a shield for globalist capitalist interests against the communities, also the local bourgeoisie's function as the most loyal allies, managing the issue at the local level. Everything is very openly orchestrated by the US state institutions.

The Southern Command

The Southern Command is the military division of the US military that targets Abya Yala. And because of China's new strong presence on the continent, this military division has clearly stated that it considers China a threat to its national interests. It has explicitly stated that competition for lithium poses a threat to its own national interests and even considers it a national security issue. "Why does this region matter? With all its rich resources and rare earth elements... The lithium triangle, between Argentina, Bolivia and Chile, contains 60% of the world's lithium" explained Laura Richardson, former commander of the Southern Command, making clear its colonialist mentality, as it considers Abya Yala's resources as its own and warns that it will defend them with military measures if necessary.

Colombia in particular, both during its right-wing governments and its current progressive government, has maintained frequent contact with the Southern Command. They offer their country as a first step towards the continent and meet regularly to discuss issues of interest to the US and its national security doctrine. In this way, they reiterate their role as the Israel of Abya Yala, serving as a geographical, political and ideological base to facilitate the domination of capitalist modernity over the continent.

Their points of contact are many: Argentina has even offered to build military bases (Buenos Aires Times, "US, Argentina deepen strategic ties as top military officer visits"), perhaps in preparation for a long-term confrontation with China, which with its increased presence is declared to be one of the main threats to US interests in Abya Yala. The Southern Command not only focuses on developing its own military presence in southern countries, but also trains and funds local armies to carry out military strategies defined at the Pentagon.

China

In the 2000s, as the US was preoccupied with pursuing its plans for dominance in the Middle East through the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, China seized the opportunity to develop its economic presence in other parts of the world. Along with the economic boom based on the development of domestic industry, China gained a lot of leverage in Abya Yala with its infrastructure development and extractivism projects. In fact, China has today become the largest capital investor in Abya Yala, surpassing even the US.

To take work away from the IMF (the International Monetary Fund, a US-controlled neoliberal policy and lending institute), China has charged lower interest rates than its Western competitor and, through loans and investments, has expanded its influence over the continent's nation-states. It should be noted that debts are created at the state, not government, level. Therefore, it does not matter which government will be next, because the debts have already been created. And, unfortunately, Abya Yala governments have been remarkably easy to convince, perhaps in part motivated by the opportunity to get out from under US pressure.

However, for all the economic and political progress China has made in recent decades, it has not yet succeeded in taking the crown from the US in the field of cultural hegemony. The dream of living a liberal, American-style lifestyle still motivates thousands of young people to leave their countries every year in pursuit of that goal. It is to be expected that China will try to take its place even in this respect. But in the end it will be a superficial conflict, as both countries defend the same ideology: the liberal consumer ideology of the capitalist system. It will be to replace one hegemonic capitalist state with another.

A global attack on the women and youth

World War III aims to destroy society, and therefore those who have sustained and protected it throughout the millennial history of capitalist civilization: women, who have therefore become the main target of this war. The figures for femicides are a good example of this. If we focus on Abya Yala, we can see that in 2021, 1,571 femicides were committed in Latin America and the Caribbean, while in 2024, the figure had risen progressively to 4,324 women murdered in one year. The number of femicides has nearly tripled in three years, and 14 of the 25 countries with the highest rates worldwide are in Abya Yala. While the genocide against women, the oldest genocide in human history, continues to advance, a reactionary offensive against women's rights and sexual and gender dissidence, led by the far right, is ravaging our continent and the world.

Women are attacked within the family context through the imposition of a model of thinking that objectifies and diminishes them. They also suffer patriarchal violence, and their submissive role is formalized through state institutions, with the husband as the guardian of state interests in the family. Women's bodies become a sexual industry, and rape culture is encouraged. This is endlessly reproduced in the media, advertising, and music. Their role as slaves to male greed is normalized. And Western cultural hegemony convinces us that a woman who gives away her body is free.

Patriarchal ideas have even been integrated into movements that supposedly fight against capitalism and patriarchy. A political culture has been created in which power, exclusion, intolerance, competitiveness, and the "self" occupy the center of political environments. Women who fight to be heard and have a will of their own are systematically silenced. Their voices are worth less than those

of men or women who adopt the characteristics of a dominant male. Women who fight are categorized as a nuisance and removed from spaces. Öcalan, in his letter of March 8, 2025, addressed to the women's movement, says, "My first test of socialism is knowing how to talk to a woman. Anyone who does not know how to talk to a woman cannot be a socialist. A man's socialism is related to the way he relates to a woman."

But the women of Abya Yala remain strong and resilient. Their role in the uprisings that have taken place across the continent has been crucial. They are also leading the defense of territories against extractivism, often sacrificing their lives to defend the land, forests, rivers, and the community. We can say that women and feminisms in Abya Yala have been at the forefront of social mobilizations in recent decades, and it is precisely for this reason that they are now facing a reactionary offensive against all the advances they have achieved.

Women, understood as a historical, political, and social identity, play a central role in the search for an alternative to the capitalist system. The mindset of women can lead a new, more diverse and supportive struggle, which is necessary to dissolve the power monopolies of the capitalist system, but also of social struggles, where despite widespread female participation, leadership remains male. Ending the hegemony of the dominant male mindset, which has brought us to this world war, is essential to achieving a free life.

However, women's and feminist movements are also under constant threat of being co-opted by the state and demobilized into projects that ultimately serve to perpetuate the patriarchal capitalist system rather than transform it. Hegemonic states use NGOs to impose their liberal ideals on movements fighting for women's rights. They present liberal feminism as the tool to liberate women. Under the pretext of "creating economic independence," women become workers and consumers of the liberal system, when in the history of indigenous communities there

are more examples of women's struggle than Western feminism has managed to produce. The concept of becoming a man cannot liberate anyone, since not even men are free.

Throughout history, women have protected society and the new generations of communities. If she is the main target of World War III, youth, with its spirit of rebellion, also becomes an obstacle and therefore a target of capitalist modernity.

This system, which disguises itself as progress, deeply fears the transformative power of young people, who, by their very nature, question, disobey, and seek alternatives. Youth embodies that energy that transcends traditional forms of power and threatens to redefine how we want to live, leading the system to need to capture youth by any means necessary. Everything that the “war on drugs” (that is, the war on the poor legitimized under a punitive discourse), narco-power, and forced recruitment entails has intensified direct violence toward young people (poor and racialized). On the other hand, through the precariousness of life and work, the system uproots young people from their territories and community networks to turn them into cheap and disposable labor.

In this sense, young people face an undeclared but constant war, where the mechanisms of patriarchy, the market, and the state act in coordination to eliminate their emancipatory power. The criminalization of young bodies, the repression of student protest, the destruction of neighborhood fabric, the demand to fit into empty models of success, and the imposition of an accelerated and “productive” pace of life are forms of colonization that seek to prevent the construction of different horizons. Young people, along with women, are today one of the main targets of control strategies, because it is from them that the capacity to organize and create new worlds is born. “Whoever wins over the youth wins over society” (Kurdish Revolutionary Youth Movement, Youth Manifesto).

The narco-state

There is a unique type of state for Abya Yala. It is the state whose economy is based on drug trafficking; an economic-cultural activity so large that most of its aspects are linked to it. It is a market characterised by its brutality. Partly because of the people who practice it, since the combination of poverty in the territories and enormous profits from the market forces the development of ruthless violence. On the other hand, violence is also exercised against the people who use and lose control of their lives and become slaves of the traffickers. And it is brutal in the sense that it destroys the social fabric, reducing people to mere physical vehicles of dependency and isolation, eliminating any possibility of resistance to the system.

Colombia and Mexico are traditionally known as narco-states. For Colombia, the fertility of the land is key, and for Mexico, the proximity to the world's strongest drug market, the United States. In the last decade, Ecuador has also emerged as a new market very quickly, with difficult situations in the coastal areas that serve as trafficking routes and are increasingly affected as a consequence. It is understandably attractive to be able to achieve unimagined riches when, as a young person, one does not see much of a future and cannot live according to what a life within the system entails. The intense recruitment of young people into the industry has also created generations that already consider the death and violence that drug trafficking brings as normal.

Finally, for the dynamics of the narco-state to function, it involves the clear participation of political and business elites. These elites have put state structures at the service of drug trafficking, taking advantage of Free Trade Agreements to open up new illicit trade routes at the global level. They also support local powers that control territories through military and paramilitary force.

Drug trafficking and militarisation

Capitalism has many faces and is very ingenious in inventing new brutal forms of exploitation, but one of its most violent and tragic faces is drug trafficking. It is true that the presence of drug trafficking poses a danger to society, but this is not necessarily solved by more control, repression and militarisation. The repressive system takes advantage of the dangers of drug trafficking to attack social movements and society, and to weaken their capacity to mobilise and defend themselves in the name of the war on drugs.

In order to cultivate the plants used in narcotics production, the beautiful lands of local communities become the main target of all actors in the capitalist system. Narcos, paramilitaries, armies and foreign capital direct their military efforts to these areas and communities are attacked or recruited in these processes, and many end up becoming instruments of that same system against the protection of their ancestral lands. Extractivist companies and drug traffickers use violence and extortion to create chaos on fertile lands and force communities to work for them, as they do not allow the possibility of cultivation or autonomous ways of life in the areas.

Even in areas where drug trafficking has not yet reached serious levels, such as Wallmapu, the liberal media use the narrative of the war on drugs to justify the militarisation of these areas and to attack the Mapuche people. In the virtual society, any excuse is valid if it can be disseminated through the media.

The "anti-imperialist" axis

Especially in Abya Yala, there are still social movements that define global politics as a struggle between two blocs: one would be composed of the capitalist countries led by the USA, and the other of the "anti-imperialist" bloc, with China, Russia and Iran in the lead, but also including the former real-socialist states, such as Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua. These states are perceived to be the continuation of the Soviet bloc and represent the last hope for socialism on the continent.

In a world order where capitalism is dominant, it can be convenient to present oneself as socialist and anti-imperialist in order to win the support of social currents that are still hopeful for the realsocialist project. For example, Iran knows very well that this narrative often suits them to win the support of oppressed peoples and thus create strategic alliances with states in contradiction with the US. One should ask what socialist content the system of the caliphate with a despotic ayatollah, a deeply patriarchal system, internal policies of harsh repression against minorities and, finally, a highly capitalist economy has. Riza Altun, a martyr of the Kurdish freedom movement, touches on this in an interview: "...being anti-American does not automatically mean anti-imperialism. Anti-Americanism is being against a centre of imperialism. To remain only anti-American is to legitimise other colonialist and imperialist powers".

It is necessary to question the extent to which a state like China is socialist when its main foreign policy strategy is the exploitation of the world's natural wealth. Even Turkey has taken advantage of this trap from time to time to try to prove itself as part of the anti-imperialist axis, something that has allowed it to form deep economic alliances with Cuba and Venezuela. It is the same trick that Kemal Atatürk used with the Soviet Union: portraying itself as socialist in order to win support and create a bargaining position vis-à-vis the powerful West. But it has

become very clear throughout history that the Turkish state never had socialist ambitions and that it was only a tactic to gain temporary advantages.

Iran operates television channels especially aimed at the peoples of Abya Yala to offer programmes with an anti-imperialist tone mixed with images of Ayatollah Khomeini. They even show images of Che Guevara and Hugo Chavez together with General Qasem Soleimani. Turkey, for its part, has launched several soap operas that have aroused great interest in Turkish culture. In this way, it normalises its presence in the consciousness of the Abya Yala population and seeks to achieve a position of cultural hegemony.

These forces converge in the political and strategic alliance of the BRICS, which also tries to present itself as an alternative to US hegemony. However, its agenda does not include anything other than a capitalist project whose aim is to compete with the projects of the main force of capitalist modernity; the US - and to take a piece of the capitalist market.

For the anti-capitalist forces it is necessary to develop their own analyses of the world situation and alternative proposals outside the logic of the state and capitalism. Only with their own thinking and the courage to imagine alternatives is it possible to regain the initiative of world events from the capitalist system. It is necessary to break the cycle of self-repetition in which real-socialist analysis finds itself.

Progressivism

In the 1970s and 1980s, Abya Yala was the inspiration for revolutionaries all over the world. In every country there was a revolutionary movement and sometimes we felt that the revolution was

about to triumph. But the plan of the hegemonic capitalist system, led by the US, was different. With its Operation Condor, a series of anti-communist campaigns carried out by the US and right-wing forces, they put an end to that idea. The aim was to destroy revolutionary movements, which was explicitly described in declassified CIA documents, as killing or capturing their leaders and condemning their cadres to exile. The hope that had been felt turned into a profound crisis for the popular movements.

One of the possible ways out contemplated was social democracy, which involved abandoning the idea of armed conflict with the state and instead gaining a position of power within the legal framework of the state. It abandoned the idea of transforming the system in a revolutionary way and focused on trying to transform the state to serve the needs of the people. However, throughout the project, the parties were integrated into the state apparatus and ended up serving the interests of capitalist modernity.

The co-optation of struggles

There are several progressive governments in Abya Yala, but none of them offer an alternative to the capitalist system. For example, there have been social protests in Chile, Colombia and Ecuador during the last decade, and the progressive parties have always played the role of dampening the rebellion, diverting popular energy towards the legal framework of the state and, finally, giving nothing to the communities for the trust they gave them with their vote. The governments of Correa, Petro, Boric and others have ended up developing capitalism and attacking popular movements.

Co-optation of militants

One of the most serious effects of progressivism is its ability to attract revolutionary militants who once had ambitions to transform the capitalist system. The simple fact that civil servants spend much of their working time in the bureaucratic labyrinth of state work alienates them from their political goals and their social base. Constant engagement with the political agenda to achieve marginal reforms ends up emptying politics of its content. State aparatism has developed over thousands of years and there is a difference between having the power of government and controlling the power of the state. The real strength of the state is based on deep and ancient structures and mentalities that are very difficult to change within the framework of a government.

Political party militants, being within the framework of the state, are also under great pressure to use capitalist logic in financing and managing the reforms they propose. These attitudes are also propagated to society at large when a culture of soliciting support from NGOs and state project funding programmes is created. This plants the idea that one can make a living out of combining social struggle with the interests of the state, which causes economic dependence on the money provided by institutions and, in the long run, allows them to manage the political content of these projects.

For example, we see how progressive governments support their reforms on the revenues they obtain by developing extractivist projects. In this way they create a profound contradiction with indigenous and rural peoples, and perpetuate the attack on nature, erasing any possibility of advancing towards socialism that they once had. We see many cases where progressive governments use military forces to carry out extractivism and develop laws to criminalise indigenous and peasant struggles, thereby creating a military presence on ancestral lands and imprisoning or assassinating leaders of movements that protect the land.

Taken together, the results of these governments have been a step backwards for popular struggles and a step forward for the development of capitalism.

Real socialism

Abya Yala was one of the regions worst affected by the Cold War, for example through the attacks on society in the form of Operation Condor, and in many ways the existence of a world divided into two blocs is still remembered in a real way. The presence of the USA in the north and the existence of real-socialist projects on its territory are realities. However, the proletarian states of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua have become bureaucratic labyrinths that can hardly satisfy the needs of their peoples. The economic blockade imposed on them by the USA severely hampers the development of an economy of their own, but it is perhaps not the only cause of the social problems in those countries.

On the one hand, the blockade is a veil. In Venezuela, the biggest foreign investor is still the US, for all the anti-US rhetoric it may have, this is still the case. In all realsocialist or 21st century socialist countries, development is increasingly moving towards a capitalist system and the private sector is being strengthened. The repressive policies against their own people are already difficult to hide, so the capitalist class is getting stronger and the people are losing influence in the system. Similar to the progressive governments on the continent, the governments of real socialism are in many ways playing a role in perpetuating the capitalist system, not transforming it.

Authoritarian populism

Progressive governments and real-socialist governments, which are supposedly bringing socialism to the people, are leaving a gap between what is promised and what is delivered. Every day this gap is widening and leaving room for a new type of political force: authoritarian populism.

With anti-establishment rhetoric, the right-wing governments of Milei in Argentina and Bukuele in El Salvador have learned their policies not in social science faculties, but in think tanks and marketing schools. With shallow but entertaining arguments, they achieve virality in digital media and awaken the public behind the screen. By appealing to the emotions of frustration, loneliness and anger of the working and marginalised classes, they manage to win votes. They are also the favourites of the capitalist class, for their popular rhetoric is just that, rhetoric. In practice, they carry out policies of dismantling social movements and privatisation of the commons, as well as deregulation of business, the favourite aspects of any political programme of the exploiting class. Hand in hand with this, the militarist discourse is strengthened in societies, which go so far as to legitimise concentration camps disguised as prisons against delinquency, as in the Salvadoran case against gangs.

The market for votes

Authoritarian populist governments pursue policies that are more like a campaign to launch a new product than transformative policies, which is why their main tool is the media. They can bombard the human brain and manipulate the perception of reality to the point that we are so far removed from it that we come to live in a virtual society. They distort

perception to the point that the understanding of reality is a caricature of reality. Thus, they offer superficial solutions to problems that, in reality, are very deep. As citizens, we are deprived of public education and its content becomes meaningless and society is no longer able to analyse its environment. This creates a society with a great limitation to understand and act on reality, and its political activity is limited to participating in electoral votes. This leaves only a minimal point of political interaction which, because of its narrow scope, is very open and very weak in the face of media manipulation.

Nationalism and plurinationalism

Between the years of the rise of national liberation struggles, the creation of a state of the oppressed nations themselves was seen as the solution, the path to liberation. From the 1970s until today, that struggle has failed on many occasions. Instead of bringing liberation to a nation, it has often placed the elite of a once oppressed nation as the new oppressor of its own supposedly liberated nation, and even over other nations and ethnicities in that territory. In this context, we can understand the struggles for plurinational states as a second version of the national liberation struggle. For example, in Bolivia, we can ask what the establishment of a so-called plurinational state has meant for the liberation of indigenous peoples, and to what extent it has become the vehicle for the power practices of a new indigenous elite over its own people and all the nations of that territory. Whether one or the other is in power in a government within the framework of a state does not solve the problem of power and the state. It is a game of replacing one elite class with another.

"The social democrat and national liberation movements have integrated with the modern system above all the others and continue to be its driving forces." (A. Öcalan, *Origins of Civilisation*, p. 118).

However well-intentioned a political nucleus or party may be in governing to liberate its people, that state apparatus cannot isolate itself from the network of inter-state and global power of which it is a part and on which it is fundamentally dependent. In the end, hegemonic states such as the US, the EU and China, and capitalist globalist forces continue to have power over the political dynamics in this plurinational state. The plurinational state of Bolivia is a clear example of how changing one elite class (white) for another (indigenous) and changing one state ally (US) for another (China) does not solve the problem that the nation-state or the plurinational state is creating in society.

In fact, the struggle for representation of indigenous or Afro people in the state is prolonging the problem, as in many cases it absorbs and diverts them towards the line of liberation through a state of their own or representation within an existing state. Instead of focusing on creating their own democratic structures outside the state. The race for a piece of state power also creates in the individual a competitive mentality that seeks to accumulate power, as a trap that leads movements away from liberation, rather than towards it. And, with the logics of the state, plunder and extractivism become normal. And a people whose land is destroyed by extractivism to finance the interests of a state and the capitalist class, how can they seek their liberation through that same state? How can they achieve autonomy by destroying the very land that is the basis of that autonomy?

Environmental destruction

In Abya Yala, the convergence of the struggle for territorial autonomy and the struggle for ecology is very evident. Indigenous peoples do not separate these struggles, as they consider the environment to be the place where they live and grow their food. A community that lives in

balance with its land is the best ally of the environment. Globally, the attraction of our continent is due to this same factor: the land. We have very fertile ground and, underground, there are riches that support the entire global capitalist economy. From the time the first colonialist ship arrived on the beaches of the Caribbean until today, the extraction of these riches has been the main concern of the world's monopolistic capitalist forces.

To obtain these resources, global hegemonic forces use all available methods. These methods include the local armies of the continent's states. They also finance paramilitary forces to appropriate land and make it available for extractivism. Even armed insurgent forces are involved in these conflicts, as the attraction of money is great and so is poverty. Within the indigenous, Afro and peasant communities themselves, government projects and money are used to pit these communities against each other and against their own interests as peoples who live off the land.

Capitalism and its ideology, liberalism, are experts in emptying all aspects of life of their content. In this process, not even social struggles are spared. The environmental movement has suffered greatly as a result. At the beginning of the awareness of the ecological problems caused by capitalism through the environmental struggles, the proposed solution was to diversify energy sources to replace or at least minimise the use of non-renewable sources such as oil. The proposed alternatives are, for example, wind farms or solar panels. But this supposed solution becomes another business for energy companies and a way to relieve political pressure on states and the system.

So, governments pour money into green projects and many social movements benefit from this. But the vast majority of these projects focus on creating new sources of lucrative investment for corporations and not on solving the key problem of the monopolistic capitalist system, thus absorbing the energy of the environmental struggles and

prolonging and obscuring the problem. Thus, the environmental struggle is reduced to a struggle to choose between forms of exploitation of energy sources. Wind farms and solar parks use large areas to generate a level of energy that can compete with that of classical power plants, such as coal and oil. They then create a direct conflict with the communities that live in these places and with the flora and fauna that need the land to survive. In this way, the global war system manipulates the perception that ecology is being fought for and turns a movement for the protection of nature into another field of profit and exploitation.

For example, international conferences, such as COP16, where nature protection issues are discussed, become a space where social movements receive money for their nature protection projects, which in many cases are significant amounts for relatively small collectives. But they are also very low amounts paid by states to silence the contradiction for a while. It is very clear that the amounts given only scratch the surface of the needs to invest in a permanent solution. As such the elephant in the room is ignored: the struggle against the capitalist system, which is the reason why environmental destruction exists.

The future of the peoples

The peoples and communities of Abya Yala are subjects of struggle. They have been resisting for 500 years against a system that was abruptly installed on the continent. More than in Europe, they are communities that have refused to be part of the state, as far as mentality is concerned. They are a permanently latent outburst and have a great potential and will to rise up against the system. But they have not yet found the right way to organise the emotion of rebellion, nor have they succeeded in defeating the system. Despite all the examples of revolutionary struggles and armed struggles against capitalism, many of them have lost their way. It is necessary to analyse why this has happened and continues to happen. It is necessary to analyse further, but not only by describing the capitalist system from a materialist point of view, but also by exploring its effect on our consciousness and our personal relations with ourselves and the people around us. It is a patriarchal, racist and violent system, but it is also the system that has formed us, so we too have these characteristics and we must confront them in order to invent a new struggle that breaks free from the framework of emotions and thoughts imposed on us.

Although in Abya Yala, more than in other continents, thanks to the indigenous, farmers, workers and feminist movements, there is a large number of people organised and mobilised in the struggle, we still need to dream and imagine a new way of living. Who are we, how do we want to live and what do we need to do to achieve it? These are questions we need to explore in depth. We need to step out of our defensive position and find the courage to imagine new ways of living and building together. We need to regain the initiative in our lives and expect nothing from the state.

But we are very lucky, perhaps more so than in other parts of the world, because we have living examples of what human beings can achieve. The struggles in Cherán, Chiapas, the Wallmapu and the Comunidad

de Paz are beacons of hope. We can also take the example of the revolution in Kurdistan, built by people who have been deeply inspired by the history of struggle in Abya Yala. These examples show us that revolution is not something conjunctural. Revolution is built at all times and in all aspects of life. Starting from within, killing the dominant male in every moment of life, rediscovering what it means to love and understanding what true companionship is.

From every rebellion we learn something, and we must organise those learnings into communal strength in all aspects of life. With organisation, we will succeed in turning the fruits of each rebellion into permanent gains. It is possible and necessary to create a democratic confederalism of the peoples, where each unit has the right to be as it is, but where we also create the way to join forces in order to face the dangers and seize the opportunities of the Third World War.

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About the Academy of Democratic Modernity

We strive to communicate the ideas and enriching experiences of the Kurdish Freedom Movement and its paradigm of democratic modernity. Our publications aim to initiate debates with activists, academics and various anti-systemic movements to advance our search for radical alternatives to capitalist modernity and the realisation of a free life. Through educations we want to create a new understanding of democratic politics and a new political and moral consciousness. The dimensions we are engaged in include democratic autonomy, interweaving struggles of social resistance, sociology of freedom, women's liberation, youth autonomy, social ecology, communal economy, as well as art and culture. Through the development of platforms and networks, we want to contribute to strengthening the international exchange of experiences and linking existing struggles. Concrete, local and global alternatives are needed to overcome capitalism. If we succeed in expanding democratic politics in everyday life - through alliances, councils, communes, cooperatives, academies - the enormous political potential of society will be released and used to solve our social problems. We see our actions as a contribution to the development of democratic modernity and democratic socialism. Let us work together to realise our visions and utopias. A different world is not only possible; in view of the world situation, it is desperately needed.

More information at: democraticmodernity.com

