



The Challenges of Building the World Women's Democratic Confederalism¹ An Interview with Meral Çiçek from the Kurdish Women's Movement

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The conference *Our Revolution: Liberating Life*, organized by the Network of Women Weaving the Future and promoted by the Kurdish Women's Movement, took place on the November 5th and 6th, 2022, in Berlin. This conference answered the need to strengthen the transnational organization of alliances between different women/feminist struggles at the global level and was rooted in the evidence that “we must continue to share experiences and prepare for the patriarchal system's new attacks on our body's, freedoms, and minds,” as written in the conference's introductory text².

Nearly 800 women and dissident genders came to Berlin from 41 different countries, from global South to global North, East, and West, with a huge presence of Kurdish women from Kurdistan and the diaspora. The program was intense and, through interventions from the stage and workshops, focused on issues such as nation-states' violence on women, ecocide and the

¹ “The Challenges of Building the World Women's Democratic Confederalism” was originally published by the Academy of Democratic Modernity and can be found at <https://democraticmodernity.com/the-challenges-of-building-the-world-womens-democratic-confederalism/>

² <https://www.youtube.com/c/WomenWeavingFuture>



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capitalist exploitation of women's invisible labor, current "hot wars" and the creation of women's fronts against them, collective responses to the growth of racist, fascist, religious fundamentalist local and global forces, the creation of decolonial knowledge and science from and for women such as Jineolojî, and many other issues related to feminist anti-systemic organizations³. In 2018, the first conference organized by the Network took place in Frankfurt and also saw the participation of hundreds of women from all over the world⁴. Both conferences should be read as important moments in the construction of what the Kurdish Women's Movement calls the World Women's Democratic Confederalism, and of which the present interview intends to explore the main principles and challenges.

The interviewee, Meral Çiçek, is a member of the Kurdish Women's Movement and of the Kurdish Women's Relation Office (Navenda Pêwendiyên Jinên Kurd - REPAK), as well as an organizer of the Berlin Conference, along with many other activists. Her long experience within the movement, and in the international diplomacy work, makes her testimony extremely rich. This interview, which took place in January 2022—so long before the conference—was not originally intended for publication, but as part of a PhD research work. It constitutes a deep conversation on the practical reflections of the Kurdish Women's Movement regarding the difficulties and concrete challenges of creating transnational women's alliances, both through these two world conferences and regional paths such as the conferences in the Middle East and North Africa promoted by the Kurdish Women's Movement during the last decade. Some very technical parts have been removed and others reorganized by Meral and me to assure an easier reading⁵.

The Kurdish Women's Movement (KWM) has always been a transnational movement connecting, through its organization—the Kurdistan Communities of Women (*Komalen Jinen Kurdistan*, KJK)—the women's struggles in the different parts of Kurdistan and the diaspora as well as creating alliances with other women and feminist movements around the world. I imagine that your proposal of a World Women's Democratic Confederalism is concretely influenced by the confederalist structure that already exists within the KWM, is it right? Can you tell me about the idea behind this proposal and its history?

The Women's World Democratic Confederalism is still a process. I think on both the theoretical and practical level, and also inside the KJK, it is still an ongoing process and we're still trying to find answers to our questions and to the challenges that we face in practice. Because one thing is to conceptualize something, like a theory, and another is to put it in practice. Inside the practice you see all the challenges and the challenges are connected to our own personalities, our characters, our behaviors, and to structural issues. I think what changed especially after 2014, was that the

³ The program can be found at <https://womenweavingfuture.org/>

⁴ See <https://womenweavingfuture.org/archiv/resolution-2018>)

⁵ For a more introductory and explanatory approach to the World Women's Democratic Confederalism I suggest watching this video also by Meral Çiçek: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuB9AwaMicU>.

Kurdish women's movement, in order to organize the big movement, asked itself how to do it without building centralism. Imagine, you have such a big movement with the political sphere, the armed wing, the social sphere, you are organized in different parts of Kurdistan and in the diaspora. To coordinate your work, you need a strong leadership, but it's also important for the struggle and for the movement to guarantee a strong autonomy. And this is one big issue: how to create a kind of balance between strong coordination and autonomy of all the different structures? This reflection started especially after 2014, to give more autonomy to the different women's groups or sub-organizations, movements, and so on. The other thing was about building the system. The point is not just to resist against an enemy like the Turkish State, the oppressor, and the patriarchal mind, but at the same time, to establish an alternative. In order to do this, the KJK system started this process of building the women's confederalist system, which is based on different dimensions according to Abdullah Öcalan concept of democratic confederalism and the democratic nation, like health, education, economy, diplomacy, self-defence. All these different spheres compose the women's confederalist system. By doing so, women started to establish an alternative to the existing patriarchal and capitalist modernity. So, when we're talking about women's confederalism, it concerns two sides: organizing our common struggle against the patriarchal system on a worldwide basis and creating a women's system of organization. That is why Öcalan criticizes the revolutionary movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Looking at that experience, he observed that these movements have not been able to create an alternative modernity: they tried to make a revolution based on the existing methods of capitalist modernity, and this couldn't work. What they missed, and what Öcalan considered the core of the twenty-first century's revolution, is woman liberation. So, he said, if we want to make the twenty-first century the age of women's liberation, the most important thing is to be able to create an alternative women's system. Democratic confederalism might be a model for this system. This is what we, as the Kurdish women's movement, are proposing because we see that the need to create a stronger coordination and common struggle of the women worldwide is not just our need. Especially nowadays, and together with the pandemic, we see that people or organized women from different places all around the world are more and more in need of a new transnationalism or a new women's internationalism. So, what the KJK is trying to do with its proposal is to start a common process of discussion that could engage with questions like: Why do we feel the need for strong transnational movements or feminist organization? What is the ground for this common need? What does it have to do with the situation of the ruling system worldwide and with the women's struggle for democracy and freedom? What will be the solution to our quest? And maybe Democratic Confederalism won't be a solution, maybe there's something better. Maybe we will create together something new. We really feel the need to have this conversation together. So, as I said, this is a process, and you need a strong core group that will be able to lead this process in a way. You won't be able to start this process, for example, with liberal feminist organizations. There should be organizations that are already organized on the ground that have a radical approach and academics or feminists who are working on this issue. Who will be the core group of this process? Confronting this issue is a big challenge that we face also in other situations. I'm working as a

representative of the Kurdish women movement in different transnational structures, and sometimes we also try to establish like platforms or coordinations for a special issue and the organization is often not functional, always in the shoulders of few people. So yes, many things should be discussed. Another issue is how to create a balance between the work inside your own movement and the transnational one. Because my primary responsibility is about the situation in Kurdistan. So, how much time am I able to invest in the work of a transnational platform, for example, as coordinator for the Middle East? How much can I go in the countries of the Middle East and propose to women's organizations to be part of a certain conference while my own movement is also organizing conferences? I mean, this is a very big challenge for the women's organizations that are organized on the local or national level, you know? Trying to work also transnationally is very difficult. It is difficult to create this balance because you feel more responsible towards your own national or local organization, and if you have time left you will be able to do something else.

In 2018 the first Conference “Revolution in the Making” took place in Frankfurt. How was the organizational process managed? How did you decide the guests, for example? Who was part of the Network of Women Weaving the Future that organized the conference?

At the beginning the Network was composed by the KWM and some internationalists, so at the beginning there were not so many organizations in it. From the beginning we had this objective to get out of the framework of the Kurdish Women Movement in order to create something collective, so we decided not to organize this conference under the name of some women's group or organization. We said, “let's do it in the name of a network and maybe this year it's mostly the Kurdish women's movement, but next time it will be other groups too.” At first, we were discussing about the contents of the conference itself. So, what kind of conference are we going to do? What the objectives? What kind of agenda do we want to create? And first, we made the program, and according to this program we were thinking about who could talk on the different issues. We didn't create the program according to the speakers, but vice versa. You remember that there were two main panels about women struggles. One was about the women struggles in the present, and we really thought a lot about what the main struggles at that time were. So, when we looked at the situation worldwide, we focused not on the movements themselves, but on the topics or, let's say, the agendas of the movements. For instance, the struggle for abortion was quite strong at that moment in Argentina, but it was and still is a transnational struggle. So, we didn't think about a certain movement and then invite it, but about fields of struggle and which movement could have represented them in the best way. This is how we chose the speakers, starting from the topics, such as self-defence, or sexual violence, and so on. For example, there was this first panel about how we see the situation of the world as women, something like a framework of the political situation worldwide. What is the situation of the ruling system? What is the situation of the women? And then the second and the third panels were about how women's revolution intended not as a closed process. You have different struggles, different women or feminist struggles of the first quarter of the twenty-first century. What are these struggles? What are they fighting against? How are they

organizing themselves? We had, for example, women's struggles from the three parts of Kurdistan, from Afghanistan, from different parts of Latin America, from Black Lives Matter, and so on: contemporary women's struggles and, as speakers, those who can represent them. Then we had one panel about the Kurdish Women's movement that was after the workshops, during the second day, when we had speakers from Rojava.

If in the first conference we concentrated more on the successes of the women revolution and struggles, I think that in the next conference in Berlin it would be good to be more self-critical—but this is my personal opinion. We should focus on the challenges and the weak sides of the women's movements. Asking, what are our problems? Why are we so disconnected from each other? What are the reasons? Why aren't we able to struggle together? I think this would be better, because making propaganda to each other is not so meaningful. In some issues we need to be radical towards each other, we need to be critical and self-critical to overcome the problems that we have. And we need to talk openly about these problems because there are some issues that are connected to structural problems, to the situation worldwide, to the increasing attacks of the patriarchal system; but then there are a lot of issues that are related to us. Let's say, for example, what is the effect of liberalism inside the women's movement? We must talk about this. What about power relations within the movement? What about nationalism, religionism, scientism and sexism, the four legs of the capital and the nation state? How are they now functioning to weaken the women's movements? Nowadays there is a very systematic attack by fundamentalisms against the gains of the women movements, and they are in the name of Islam, of Christianity, of Judaism. For me there is no difference between Erdogan attacking the Istanbul convention and, for example, the evangelists' war against women in Peru or in North America. They are using the same arguments, one with the mascot of Islam, one with that of Christianity. It's the same, it's totally the same. It is religionism. We don't have a problem with religion, but we do with religionism. And the latter is used nowadays not just by forces like Daesh. At the same time, we see that there is something else related with nationalism and chauvinism. For example, we had this conference in the Middle East the past July in Lebanon, and after that I thought that we really need to think about how nationalism and chauvinism are separating us from each other; how are these ideologies weakening or liberalizing the woman struggle today, you know? I think that the Berlin conference should be the ground or the framework for such a conversation. While we will be talking about what is confederalism and how to build it and its mechanisms, we should also ask what are the problems and the challenges we want to overcome.

Why did you decided to do the conference in Frankfurt, one of the centers of the financial-capitalist system? Also, I had the impression, during this first conference, that on the stage there were only women from the Global South, but the public was composed basically by white, European, and middle-class women and activists...

When we talk about Frankfurt, yes, it's one of the capitals of the world-finance, and I think it's also good sometimes to get inside the centers of the ruling system. But the main reasons we choose this city were practical ones. For such a big conference of hundreds of participants, hosted in private

family houses, it's very important to choose a place where you are well organized. And in Frankfurt the advantage was that we have a very strong Kurdish women council there. It is very strong and because they had to take the burden—doing the food, taking the people to their homes, and things like that—it was very important to have a strong local organization. That's one answer. And about the reason why there were more, let's say, European women at the conference, this is something we were talking about when starting the internal preparation process of the second conference of Berlin. The reasons were organizational, on one side, because last time it was mostly the Kurdish women's movement in Europe that organized the conference. The speakers were from other parts, but those who organized the conference were the Kurdish women's groups or associations or committees from Europe itself. While this time, for the second conference, we established something like our own wider preparation committee where we have our representatives from all our communities of the four parts of Kurdistan in the Middle East, and Latin America; and all places where we are based. So, this time the conference is not just on the side of the Kurdish movement in Europe. This time, to ensure the topics and the participation of women from all other parts, such as the Middle East, all our communities have been involved in the process from the beginning so that on one side they feel responsible towards the conference, but on the other side, to ensure a broader participation. I mean at the end it will be again maybe more women from Europe because the conference is happening in Europe, but this is normal. Finally, there are also financial issues, but this time we will really work on ensuring more physical participation also from different parts of the world.

How do you get the funding?

This time we tried to start earlier to ask foundations for financial help. The Kurdish women's movement has a lot of experience in organizing conferences and so on, but in Frankfurt was the first time we had such a big conference and so for the second one we have started the preparation process differently, taking lessons from the first, asking what was not so good last time, so that we will be able to solve problems.

In all this process of building the World Women's Democratic Confederalism, what is the role of the Kurdish Women Movement? Is it a vanguard or a leading group? If yes, aren't you afraid of reproducing centralization of power?

I'm not so afraid because we already have a lot of alliances with women organizations from different parts of the world and we have already established a certain level of trust and democratic culture between us. Moreover, we don't have something finished, like a receipt and say "ok, this is the solution." We think this is one proposal from our side based on our experiences, and we believe that it might be a model for organizing the transnational women's movement; but maybe not. So, we are open, I think that's very important that you are open also to different thoughts, to different ideas. Maybe there will be a very different outcome, maybe it won't be named democratic confederalism. This is also a challenge because also inside your own ranks you have the situation where, for example, somebody saying "Ok, I will prepare everything, I will write everything, and

the other should come and join us.” And this is something we said from the beginning we don't want, because we want to make something together. So, we start with the proposal, but from that proposal the process should be collective. Because otherwise we would again create a structure which will be dependent on us. And it won't be functional. You need to collectivize. If the process doesn't start on a collective basis, you won't be able to carry it on also collectively and it would always be on your shoulders. This is about overcoming centralism as well as new universalisms. There is a difference between something being universal or creating a new universalism and I think one should be very careful about the latter. You can say we want to build a universal women movement or universal women struggle, or there are some issues that are universal; but if you try to create a new universalism from your own localism, this is very dangerous. You should not do this, especially for women's movement; it would bring you again to new power and hierarchical relations. One thing is to name needs, to say we need to do this, or our struggles should be like this, but the how is the second step and the how can be found out only collectively and needs a lot of work. For example, one need, in our view, is to have an academy for the world women's movement. We have no structure for common education, for common reflections. And one idea was, for example, to build the Academy of the World Women's Democratic Confederalism or the Academy of Women's Revolution or something like this. A place where you have, for example, once a year, a common education with representatives of progressive women's organizations from all over the world. Think about it, I mean, think that you have something like this in Rojava, for example, where women from Kongra Star will be together with women from Ni Una Menos, the Zapatista movement, or the Black women's movement, from Sudan, and so on, you know? And where it will not be just about sharing experiences, but making a theoretical production process together, asking what are our challenges, what would be possible solutions, what should be the agenda of our women's struggle, what could be a new campaign or things like that. Having a structure for reflection and for a theoretical production. I think this is also one leg of women's confederalism.

At this stage, the proposal of a Women's World Democratic Confederalism seems to rely on a huge process of mutual-education and collective sharing between multiple struggles, a conversation between movements so, at the end, they can have a collective proposal that is based both on the first idea of the KWM and on all the contributions that come from other women's struggles involved in the process. Did I understand correctly?

Yes. And it is also challenging the format of a conference. Often, you make a conference, and you take so many decisions, but you don't create a body which will be able to follow these decisions or to implement them. But, I mean, why should we take decisions without having an organization? It makes no sense. It's just propaganda. You're just creating a new image saying, “we had this great conference with hundreds of women, and we have taken all these decisions,” but all people forget about the decisions later. Because of this, I think the conference should serve to the organizational process. And maybe not all women that come to conferences want to be part of an organization at the end. So, it's very important to have a lot of conversations prior to the conference. Then, I

wouldn't say—and I mean, I can't decide, we will see what comes out from the process—that the conference is the place for the announcement of a new organization, but rather of the beginning of a process; for example, saying “we, as these organizations or activists or feminists or so on, that are present here, we announce, from this point on, the process of building the women confederalism. Therefore, we are going to establish such a network.” Because maybe we will announce the creation of a network, which will maybe more functional. Maybe we will decide to forge alliances, I don't know. It's not clear, but we should not forget that conferences are functional, so the main objective shouldn't be to organize the conference itself. The conference should serve to another objective. And what is the objectives there? If the objective is about women's confederalism, and if women confederalism is not just one organization that you found and say, “ok now I announced the foundation of this organization,” if it's a long process, so we need to take this way, that of a long process. We have to be clear about our own principles, we have to be clear about our working style, about mechanisms, so it needs time.

You were talking about the challenge of creating a balance between the local and the transnational level of the struggle. How are you facing this issue within the movement?

It is very difficult. In my opinion, if I work in this field, in this structure, this should be my main work. I can't handle it as one sub-responsibility, because it is too much. I mean, if a person has 10 different responsibilities you won't be able to build these bridges of common struggle. You won't be able to, and then the transnational movement wouldn't function, it would always be like one organization with all the burden, having to take the initiative all the time, so it's not creating a functional transnational women's organization or movement. It seems transnational, but inside it's always one organization that all the time is ensuring the process; and this happened also to us. Then it's about resources and when we talk about resources it's not just about financial ones, which are also very, very important, but about the skills of cadres. For this work, to speak other languages is very important. You need to know English. Or if you're working in Latin America, you would need Spanish. And if you do not have enough people with these skills, it's difficult. So, yes, you have also a lot of challenges inside the movements itself. Another important issue is related to financial staff and power relations within transnational women's organizations, because, for instance, for an organization in the Global North maybe is easy to do fundraising, but in our case, I mean, I cannot get out in Kurdistan asking money for a women's conference. And this is true for many other women's organizations in Africa or in Middle East, or Latin America. And sometimes comrades from the North and the richest countries have this Eurocentric point of view that creates contradictions and power relations. Even if we describe ourselves as anti-imperialist or socialist or leftist, we have inherited behaviors and we reproduce power relations inside our own structures, inside women's movements, or in the transnational organizations. So, because of all these challenges, when we talk about creating a transnational confederalism, it's not just about coordinating our work. It's about how to organize a common struggle against the patriarchal system of exploitation; and how to organize this common struggle, how to bring solidarity to a new level beyond mutual support, but really fighting together, struggling together, defending each other,

creating something like the self-defense of the world women's movement. A lot of things are needed. On one side you need mechanisms for it, but on the other side you also need this understanding that you don't say "ok, my national or my local struggle is more important," because your struggle is also part of a transitional one. The exploitation and oppression that you are facing is the local expression of a global system of exploitation.

As the KWM, we have a lot of experiences in coordination work that are not just about solutions but also about challenges. For example, according to Democratic confederalism, each dimension is responsible towards the others. It's a system of common responsibilities and they all need to interact to be confederalist, and often this is not working in practice. For example, let's say the health dimension should have good relations with foreign relations in order to make relations with other movements around the world that are working on, let's say, alternative people's health, or you might need like hospitals or medicines, so you need also relations with the outside, but the relation between this dimension and the other dimension is maybe not so strong because all these dimensions are thinking about themselves, about their own needs, so internally we have a lot of challenges about realizing or living our system or model.

If a committee, let's say of ecology, has to have relations with the grassroots communes, the international level, the health committees, etc., I imagine that a big number of assemblies, reunions and meetings is needed, isn't it? How do you deal with the risk of work overload?

This is certainly a challenge, and we are still working to find solutions. What we see in different experiences is that without wanting it, we create too much bureaucracy, too many assemblies, too many reunions. You have no time left because every day you have to go to one meeting. This is not a solution. You talk too much, and it makes the tempo very slow and very bureaucratic. And I think one reason why we have too many meetings is that it is mainly the same people that go to the meetings or reunions. And it brings us to the issue of collectivizing the responsibilities inside, let's say, each commune, or committee, or dimension. There is still a hierarchy if it's always the same people that go to the meetings, that go to the places of decision making. We need to overcome this hierarchy by sharing responsibilities. Inside even the smallest nucleus you would need democratic role-sharing and coordination, or something like this, so that each person, each member of the unit, has its own responsibilities and its own role. We are still trying to establish the new system with our old behaviors, with our old mentality which is very hierarchical, and which is producing power relations, and so on. Mostly what happens is that you have, for example, 10 people in one unit and just one or two people go to the assemblies. This creates a separation of practical work and theoretical work and democratic confederalism is about overcoming all separations at the same time.

The Kurdish Women's Movement is also organizing women's conferences in the MENA region. Is this process connected with the idea of building the Women's World Democratic Confederatism? How are you relating this regional path to the conferences in Germany?

Of course, it is connected, but the Middle East issue is very difficult. I mean, although we are a Middle Eastern women's movement, and although we have a lot of contacts in Middle East and sometimes people from our movement go to Middle Eastern countries, and so on; we still need to deepen our relations with Middle Eastern women's organization. You know, the ruling system in the Middle East has intervened very much in the sphere of the women's movements or organizations, especially in places where you had war but also in other places. There is a phenomenon called the "NGO-ization" of the women's movement, what Selay was talking about during the first conference, bringing the example of Afghanistan. She was explaining that State sponsors and NGO's foundations try to destroy the authentic women movement of Afghanistan and replacing it by elitist woman's NGOs that are financed by Europe or other countries and create agendas that are disconnected from that of the women from the base. You have the same problem in Iraq and in southern Kurdistan, and you have it more or less in the whole Arab geography. It is such a big problem. I wasn't aware that there is such a big intervention of, let's say, the capitalist or Western hegemony through women's organizations. These NGOs have become a financial source for women that have the skills and speak language and things like that. They earn a lot of money, but nothing is changing inside the society. It is promoting a very liberal approach. This is one issue. Another issue is that in the Middle East we need to do a stronger work for introducing Öcalan's theories. If you compare with Europe, people in EU know Öcalan better because the Kurdish movement has more than 40 years' experience and history of organization, so we have a lot of contacts. In Middle East, instead, it's just a couple of years that the movement started to get seriously involved. When I say Middle East, it's not just Lebanon because here, yes, the PKK was quite rooted because the party central school was there until '92 and Öcalan was based there. So, in Lebanon they had a lot of relations, but not in places like Egypt, for example, or Tunisia, or others. So, it is a process that we just started, and we realized, for example during the Conference, that between us, the women's movements from Middle East, we had some problems with the terminology, as if we speak different languages. For instance, when we talk about fascism, the others look like "God! you call Erdogan a fascist!" you know? Or when we were talking about nationalism in a negative way, for many women nationalism is something that is constructing their identity, it's important. Or when we are talking about women's liberation, they prefer more liberal terminologies; and in a way, this showed us that we need to do more ideological work together. And when we say ideological work, it means to build more opportunities with women from around the Middle East to talk about the women issues, how do we understand the woman question? How do we understand the patriarchal system? How do we understand the nation-state? At the end of the Conference there was the decision to establish something like an alliance called Democratic Alliance of Women from North Africa and the Middle East. This process is almost finished because the idea was to ask each country that was present at the Conference to elect one representative who will participate in a committee and work for this committee for six months to

establish the principles, the agenda, and the road map of this alliance; and this process, as far as I know, has just finished. Now they will start with the practical work, to announce themselves, etcetera. Because they have been reflecting very hard within the last six months about how to work together and I think at the end the framework is Democratic Confederalism, even if they maybe don't use this name.

The proposal of the MENA's conference came from the Kurdish Women's Movement, right? So, also in this case, how did you choose the participants? Did you already have alliances that you wanted to strengthen? Or you invited also new organizations?

In 2013 there was the first MENA Conference held in Diyarbakir, so this time we had the contacts of those who participated before; and then we had also more contacts because, prior to the Conference, delegations of Kurdish women went to different countries like Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, and met those women's organizations that participated already in the first conference, and also other organizations that they either know from somewhere or they heard about, and so on. So, it was prior to the conference that different delegations did a lot of connection work and meetings.

What about the women who work at the local level? Are they also involved in these transnational networks or is more an individual work of the people in charge of this sphere, like you?

No, we always involve everybody around us. For example, if we say that from our committee or from our association one person should be responsible for doing this work, before each meeting or each discussion we come together, we meet and we discuss this issue and we try to build a collective view, and the work will be done according to this view. We don't say "this is my responsibility and I do it by myself," it's always by sharing everything during the meetings, getting different ideas. Because maybe I don't think about something that somebody else might think about. It's very important to change your working style to overcome an individualist approach. Sometimes our work is so individualistic, and we centralize everything in our own person so that, for example, if I get ill tomorrow my work will just disappear. Someone with an individualist approach does not see the strengths of a collective movement and does not feel the need to ask to the colleagues what they are thinking about an issue. Or you say "ok, this person is smarter so I will ask her, not the other who's not intelligent, who has no idea about Europe, who has always been living in the village...I don't need to ask her because she won't know." This approach is something we must overcome, we must change our behaviors, our way of thinking and working. We must start from ourselves to create something new or democratic.

How does Jineoloji, the science of women and life, fits in all this process? I mean, all the Jineoloji educational work, is it also part of it?

Jineoloji's Committees are represented in the preparation of the Conference, of course. They are autonomous. It is very important for us to ensure that the Conference itself is based on Jineoloji's

approach, to have the Jineoloji's view, and that Jineoloji can bring ideas and reflections for this work, answering questions such as: What are the problems of the women worldwide? Based on Jineoloji, we say that it is important that we as women create an alternative way of doing international or transnational work together. It should not be the bad copy of the bureaucratic man, with his smoking, and his bureaucratic bag, no. We should really change it. All our communities and our transnational delegations should represent or reflect the movement itself, its nature and all the different elements inside it. However, as a member of the Jineoloji's journal, I think that we are very good in researching histories and reflecting on situations, but we are still weak in finding solutions. I think maybe that's something we should work more together between Jineoloji and, let's say, Foreign Relations. Because in this process of building a World Women's Confederalism Jineoloji has a main role in finding proposals and solutions: how should women's Democratic confederalism work? What should be the mechanisms? How should the relationship between women's groups be? How to create the balance between the local and the transnational or the universal? I think Jineoloji should try harder to find answers to these questions. Because, and I see it also when I write articles, it is so easy to do research and to show something in its historical context, but it is more difficult to propose solutions. Our role, and particularly of Jineoloji, is not just about describing something. We need to find answers to questions, and we have to work harder in this. Half of our work is to look at the roots of problems, but the other half is to look at the future. Which kind of future do we want and how are we going to reach this? We, as Jineoloji, should be more ambitious in this. Because this is also one of our main criticisms to the current science: we say that science is not able to produce solutions to the problems and questions of society, so an alternative approach to science should be able to do this. For example, we should interrogate ourselves on how we really define transnational women's solidarity. A couple of days ago, I was talking with a comrade from Afghanistan who had to leave the country. Prior to the Taliban's regime, she was always under threat because she was a person who was always very radical in the struggle. Because it was no safe for her, she took the decision to leave the country, but she felt very bad about it. I told her that she had made already many sacrifices for the struggle, and sometimes the sacrifice is to leave your country. You know, we use to say, "as long as you struggle, you live," and I think it's not so important where you are. It would be better, I said to her, if she was in Afghanistan, but under the current situation she could not work and struggle there. Also, I told her that it's very important for us to have the Afghan women's movement inside this building process of Democratic Confederalism because, you know, we all felt very, very angry about what happened in Afghanistan in 2021; and we tried to show our solidarity. And I think that was important that the Kurdish women's movement did not come up with statements, but we mobilize ourselves in a more concrete way. We protested, took actions, but in any case, we could not really help the women there. So, coming back to the idea of women's confederalism or of women transnational solidarity. I mean, what is solidarity? Is it just to make statements or to go to the street and make your demonstration so then you can feel better because you did something, but you could not really change anything? This situation of Afghan women made me think a lot about concrete ways of struggling together, about women's solidarity and what are we talking about

when we say solidarity. It showed me that there is still a lot to do to change things, to intervene as women into world politics. It's not just about protests. We need ways to influence the situation and the reality on the ground...

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