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Interview conducted by the KAF

Kurdish-speaking Anarchists Forum

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How is the situation in the cities of Turkey, especially Istanbul and Ankara during this war on Rojava? Are things carrying on as normal or are they living under the shadow of war?

There is (still) huge amount of nationalist propaganda. The war that the state in, is a beneficial tool of the government. They have changed the political structure of the state according to their wish by claiming to be in war. So, as you have mentioned everything is happening in the shadow of war. This shadow is fearful for normal people and the ones who got the political, economical and social power is using this to keep their position.

What was the reaction of people?

It is hard to say that there is a reaction. In every step of war politics, the state is banning to protest, demonstrate, criticise or even talk about the war in bad meaning. If anything appear (even a comment in social media), it is good reason for government to put people into jail. Many people have been sent to prison just criticise the war on Rojava.

In fact, the other half of the people are convinced this nationalist propaganda. The parties seemed like opposition they act together with AKP. If the issue is Kurdish issue, the liberals, kemalist even some socialist act in the same fascist line.

Are still able to go about your life as normal? If not how has your life changed?

As anarchists or libertarian people; the things are not going well. As I mentioned they have changed the structure of the state and the laws. So any law can be changed according to the wish of the “president”. The armed forces of the state act more courageously. You become open target not just by state but also civil fascists. If you write something on the issue in a newspaper, it is easy to put you in jail.

When the state starts a war, the war starts also inside the country. Big operations to revolutionary people, banning to newspapers and channels... Even while you are walking, you have been stopped by police for anykind of reeason and been taken undercostody as their wish.

Is there any resistant against the war on Rojava in form of protests or demonstration? Has people shown any solidarity to Rojava?

It is not just Rojava war, the social opposition in here cannot do anything because of “state of emergency” since 2015. So they said they finished the process of “state of emergency” but in reality it is not. Moreover, some parts of the opposition have their kemalist reflections in the “Kurdish issue”.

You may aware that there is a campaign of boycotting Turkish products, media and Tourism. We are a part of that

campaign Have you noticed any effects as a result of this campaign to ordinary people in Turkey?

It is really hard to hear or be aware of such campaigns. Because there is a policy of government in media, they do not allow any kind of information to be spread. But if you check the alternative media, it is the only option that you can be aware of. By the help of comrades of KAF informed us, we have been aware and tried to keep people aware about the campaign.

The economy in here is not going well for a while. Because of the economical programs, political process, malpractices of government etc. Probably these kind of campaigns have an affect on economy. But need to be analysed well. So economy is bad for a while for everyone (of course not talking about the rich elites), that's the only thing that everyone is sure. Even this reality is still ignored by state.

How is the situation inside the prisons? Have any comrades from your organisation or other anarchist groups been attacked, arrested by the state like it had happened in the past?

As I mentioned state of emergency in the answer before, since 2015 the conditions of the political prisoners are not going well. The situation for them is "state of emergency of state of emergency". The administration of the prisons have right to act according to their wish. And sometimes these wished are even against basic human rights. By the helps of a comrade who is in jail, we got the information of "inside"... They put 10-15 people to cells for 3-4 people. The conditions are against any kind of moral or right. They even do not let political prisoners to see their lawyers which is a human right violation.

We got punishments like money or paroles luckily during this process. But we are living in such a land that anything can be good reason to be in prison.

Has the anarchist movement able to become a mass or social movement? Has it involved in the people's daily struggles?

Anarchist movement in here has a short history. Modern anarchist movement had appeared at the end of 1980's. Until 2000s, the movement did not aim to socialize, more it has been seen as an intellectual effort. Today, the movement is becoming to be a social movement. You see anarchism more organised and social. From peoples liberation movement to ecology, from workers struggles to women liberation struggle there are anarchists.

In what areas the anarchist groups are active? For example: culture in general [theatre, literature, art, music] social movement, anti-militarism, children rights, education especially in bringing up the children, trade and cooperatives?

Actually, all topics we aim to have experiences. Now as a part of Revolutionary Anarchist Action; we have a 10-year-old collective economy experience as 26A Cafe. Trying to expand the experience, we have 26A Workshop for 4 years (having presentations about anarchism to geography, archeology etc.). For 4 years we are running Young Workers Association which aims to organise young workers in different sectors. It is over 10 years, our women comrades are organising the Anarchist Women organisation to struggle the patriarchy. Again, it's over 10 years, there is an anarchist tradition in highschools in the name of Highschool Anarchist Action. For 6 years, young comrades are organising the universities against fascists in the name of Anarchist Youth. Meydan Newspaper has 51 issue and working for the 52nd issue, it is the longest anarchist periodical publishing for this geography. Again it is over 10 years, we are in anti-militarist movement having the association of Conscientious Objection Association which is the anarchist solution to the war in Kurdistan. The organisation is calling people to be CO's against war.