

Freedom Shall Prevail

The Struggle of Abdullah Öcalan and the Kurdish People

Sean Michael Wilson • Illustrated by Keko

Freedom Shall Prevail is the first graphic novel exploring the life and struggle of Abdullah Öcalan, affectionately known as "Apo."

Highly regarded around the world, Öcalan led the Kurdish freedom struggle as the head of the PKK from its foundation in 1978 until his abduction by the Turkish state in 1999. He has, so far, spent twenty-five years in captivity. In this graphic novel we learn, in his own words, what Öcalan's childhood was like in the partially Kurdish areas of Eastern Turkey and how his political awareness and commitment grew as a student in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Through the personal struggle of Öcalan we also see the terrible devastation that Kurdish people have suffered and learn about the tumultuous and dramatic history of the relationship between the Kurds and the Turkish state.

The book also dives into the theories developed by Öcalan that continue to influence the ongoing struggle today. Expanding on these, the second part of the book gives us a wider consideration of the issues and policies around women's freedom, democratic confederalism and paints an inspiring picture of one of the most impressive attempts to build a genuinely grassroots democratic system anywhere in the world. The struggle going on in the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, also known as Rojava, is one that is directly combating gender and racial discrimination and the abuses of the capitalist economic system—in truly interconnected ways.

This wonderfully illustrated graphic novel is a collaboration between award-winning Scottish writer Sean Michael Wilson and Kurdish artist Keko, with backing and research help from Peace in Kurdistan Campaign and the International Initiative "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan," groups with long term and impassioned commitment to the cause of Öcalan and the Kurdish people's freedom.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Sean Michael Wilson is an award-winning graphic novelist from Scotland living in Japan. His more than forty books cover themes of history, politics, and social issues, including: *Parecomic* (on participatory economics, with Michael Albert, introduction by Noam Chomsky), *Fight the Power! A Visual History of Protest*; *Portraits of Violence: Ten Theorists on State Violence* (with Brad Evans), *Such, Such Were the Joys*, the childhood autobiography of George Orwell; *The Many Not the Few*; and *The Faceless Ghost*, which was nominated for an Eisner Award. His book *Secrets of the Ninja* won an International Manga Award. More of his work can be found at seanmichaelwilson.weebly.com.

Keko is a Kurdish graphic artist living in Spain. *Freedom Shall Prevail* is his first graphic novel.

ACCOLADES

"A timely and important graphic novel, scripted by veteran Sean Michael Wilson and wonderfully illustrated by Kurdish artist Keko, captures the life and importance of one of the most intriguing figures on the world stage. From Marxist and anarchist, leader and martyr to persecution. Öcalan is seen here across his life. This is a fine and revealing work about the Kurds, the Middle East, and the struggles before us."

—Paul Buhle, professor, comics historian, and author of *The Art of Harvey Kurtzman: The Mad Genius of Comics*

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ABDULLAH ÖCALAN AND
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Sean Michael Wilson
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SUBJECT CATEGORY

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