

# Beyond State, Power, and Violence

**Abdullah Öcalan • Foreword: Andrej Grubačić**  
**Editor: International Initiative**

After the dissolution of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) in 2002, internal discussions ran high, and fear and uncertainty about the future of the Kurdish freedom movement threatened to unravel the gains of decades of organizing and armed struggle. From his prison cell, Abdullah Öcalan intervened by penning his most influential work to date: *Beyond State, Power, and Violence*. With a stunning vision of a freedom movement centered on women's liberation, democracy, and ecology, Öcalan helped reinvigorate the Kurdish freedom movement by providing a revolutionary path forward with what is undoubtedly the furthest-reaching definition of democracy the world has ever seen. Here, for the first time, is the highly anticipated English translation of this monumental work.

*Beyond State, Power, and Violence* is a breathtaking reconnaissance into life without the state, an essential portrait of the PKK and the Kurdish freedom movement, and an open blueprint for leftist organizing in the twenty-first century, written by one of the most vitally important political luminaries of today.

By carefully analyzing the past and present of the Middle East, Öcalan evaluates concrete prospects for the Kurdish people and arrives with his central proposal: recreate the Kurdish freedom movement along the lines of a new paradigm based on the principles of democratic confederalism and democratic autonomy. In the vast scope of this book, Öcalan examines the emergence of hierarchies and eventually classes in human societies and sketches his alternative, the democratic-ecological society. This vision, with a theoretical foundation of a nonviolent means of taking power, has ushered in a new era for the Kurdish freedom movement while also offering a fresh and indispensable perspective on the global debate about a new socialism. Öcalan's calls for nonhierarchical forms of democratic social organization deserve the careful attention of anyone interested in constructive social thought or rebuilding society along feminist and ecological lines.

## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

**Abdullah Öcalan** actively led the Kurdish liberation struggle as the head of the PKK from its foundation in 1978 until his abduction on February 15, 1999. He is still regarded as a leading strategist and the most important political representative of the Kurdish freedom movement.

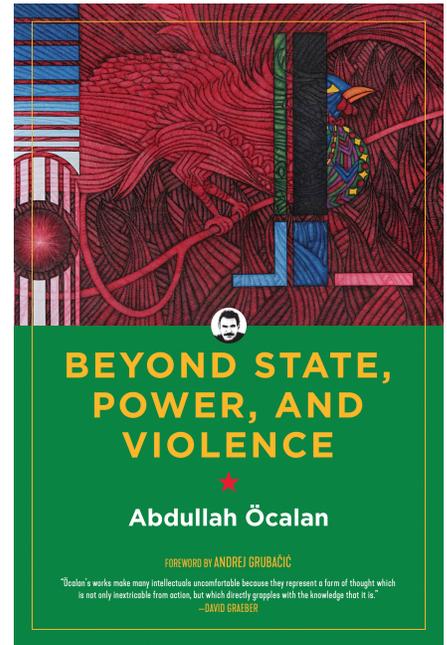
**Andrej Grubačić** is the founding chair of the Anthropology and Social Change Department at the California Institute of Integral Studies—San Francisco and coauthor of *Wobblies and Zapatistas: Conversations on Anarchism, Marxism and Radical History*.

**International Initiative "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan"** is a multinational peace initiative for the release of Abdullah Öcalan and a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question. It was established immediately after his abduction from Nairobi and handing over to the Republic of Turkey on February 15, 1999, following a clandestine operation by an alliance of secret services. Part of its activity is the publication of Öcalan's works.

## ACCOLADES

"Öcalan's writings written in captivity are thus in the tradition of the ideology of the PKK as a left national liberation movement, which also includes the claim to change their own society. However, Öcalan is apparently also one of those whose political thinking was sharpened by the forced abstinence from daily politics and who succeed in further developing their political thinking in captivity."

—Thomas Schmidinger, author of *The Battle for the Mountain of the Kurds: Self-Determination and Ethnic Cleansing in the Afrin Region of Rojava*



## SUBJECT CATEGORY

Political Science/History

## PRICE

\$29.95/\$59.95

## ISBN

9781629637150/9781629637631

## PAGE COUNT

688

## SIZE

6x9

## FORMAT

Paperback/Hardcover

## PUBLICATION DATE

9/20/22

## US DISTRIBUTION

Publishers Group West  
1-866-400-5351

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