



**The Academy of  
Social Science**

# The Academy of Social Science

## Why and What is the Academy of Social Science?

Our mission is to advance the ascent of democratic modernity against-and-beyond the current domination and exploitation of capitalist modernity. We need hardly rehearse the litany of indignities, inequities, and suffering entailed in the operation of this modern world-system, a crisis system predicated on the hierarchy of state, coloniality, class exploitation, social sexism, racism, and the relentless destruction of nature. The historical development of capitalist modernity has brought us to the precipice of planetary apocalypse. We recognize this world-system as a war system, and we see its interrelated and expanding violent conflicts as taking the form of a Third World War. The progress of this system, left unchecked, would conclude in the disintegration of society, the total collapse of organized social life and the ecological bases on which it depends. We characterize this as societycide. Capitalist modernity, however, is not immune to

the disruptions it itself generates. We agree with Immanuel Wallerstein's observation that in times like these, interventions are more important than at other times. He noted that, "...the 'free will' factor will be at its maximum, meaning that individual and collective action can have a greater impact on the future structuring of the world than such action can have in more 'normal' times, that is, during the ongoing life of an historical system." We believe a transformed and transformative social science is crucial for overcoming the death spiral of capitalist modernity. The Academy of Social Science, founded in 2025, is dedicated to the study, research, and promotion of integrative social science, the sociology of freedom. We see this as an integral part of the struggles to break the current societycide and create a world of collective freedom. Inspired by the insights of Kurdish thinker Abdullah Öcalan, we conceive the sociology of freedom as a holistic

and open research programme that values knowledges produced by social movements and communities in struggle alongside more formal scholarship. We embrace of the contributions of anthropology, archaeology, human geography, history, philosophy, political economy, sociology, political ecology, and many other domains of knowledge, but we reject the limitations and legitimacy of traditional disciplinary boundaries. For the sociology of freedom, rather than separate, we understand these domains as constituting an internally related totality, a unitary diversity, of knowledge.

In an important sense the sociology of freedom is a science concerned with human possibilities, both those possibilities already realized in the diversity of past

and present human cultures, and those yet unrealized possible futures immanent in the present. We are particularly concerned with understanding diverse expressions of human freedom, especially the histories of stateless communities and possible futures of alternative democratic systems such as democratic confederalism, “a non-state social paradigm,” as Öcalan defines it. By centering our attention on the fundamental role in the current system of domination – e.g., of women by men and of the young by the old – and by basing our approach on the freedom for all genders, the creativity of youth, and the interconnectedness of all humans and living things, we aim to contribute to the realization of democratic modernity.



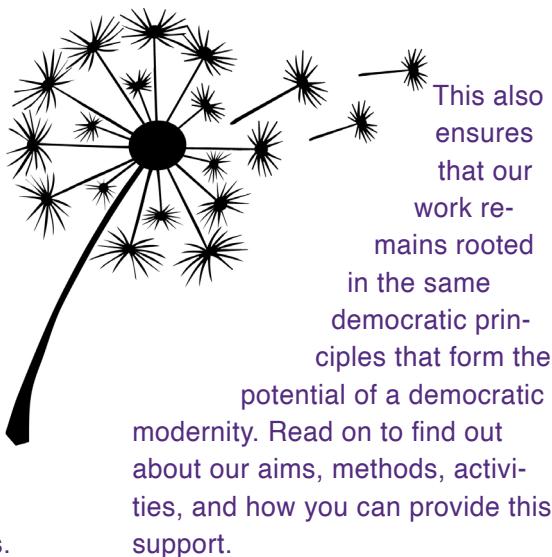
# How the idea was born

Since 2005 these principles and aims have guided the work of a wide range of intellectuals, movements and activists. The work of International Initiative “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan” was pivotal since it focused on translating and discussing Abdullah Öcalan’s paradigm for collective freedom, as well as putting this into dialogue with others who come from different traditions. In 2012, this resulted in the Network for an Alternative Quest, which in four conferences between 2012 and 2023 brought together a wide range of movements, intel-

lectuals, and activists to discuss the crisis of capitalist modernity and how we might chart a way out of it together. The Academy will now develop this approach, working not only with the ideas that Öcalan has so brilliantly developed from within the unimaginable environment of an isolated prison cell, but bring them into discussion with other anti-patriarchal, anti-statist, anti-capitalist ideas that explore how we can overcome the current social catastrophe and build an alternative, communal, communizing world of democratic modernity.

## Independence

To maintain our principles and achieve our aims the Academy must remain free from the influence of any institutions that might compromise our independence and autonomy. To this end, we rely on the practical support of democratic, progressive and revolutionary individuals and organizations.



# What are our objectives?

As detailed below, our primary objectives are

1. Research
2. Knowledge production
3. Education
4. Solidarity and cooperation.

## 1. Research

The Academy's central pillar is researching, creating and publicizing resources on the essential concepts of the democratic civilization paradigm in general and the sociology of freedom with jineolojí as its soul in particular. To do so we organize discussions that can deepen our understanding of ideas such as freedom, truth, democracy, ecology, modernity, ethnicity and nationhood, among many others. To address these concepts in a comprehensive way, we initiate collective research into a broad spectrum of social phenomena and their histories and possible futures, from prehistoric society and the roots of patriarchy, the state, and capitalism; to the arts, religion, and philosophy; to democracy, organization, strategy and anything else required for a

comprehensive understanding.

## 2. Knowledge production

The second pillar is to produce knowledge with and for communities through research that includes not just academic "experts" but also experts through lived experience. These research projects will have different scopes and aims, from understanding the situation of young people in Europe and across the world, to uncovering the effects of the geopolitical situation on people in everyday life, and anything else we might imagine. Such research will be shaped according to community needs.

## 3. Education

The third pillar is to provide education and educational material for activists, community centers, and community institutions and orga-

nizations anywhere in the world in need of support.

#### **4. Solidarity and cooperation**

The Academy's fourth and final pillar is deepening relations and practical solidarity between movements and intellectuals through seminars, conferences and other gatherings. We aim to bring together the knowledge created by the Academy with movements, activists, intellectuals, people's education centers, trade unions, social workers and carers, and all

those who consider themselves democrats, progressives and revolutionaries. This has already been done through the four "Challenging Capitalist Modernity" conferences that took place in Hamburg, Germany, as well as other gatherings and forums. Founding members of the academy have also participated in public seminars, throughout the world. We intend to extend all these forums throughout the globe, inviting a wide group of participants who also strive to create a democratic modernity.

### **How we work**

The Academy's work is organized through communes, each of which will carry out in-depth research on a chosen area related to understanding capitalist modernity, its critical social problems, and solutions that can carry us toward democratic modernity. Looking to the past, present, and possible futures from the perspective of

a democratic civilization provides a broad and varied spectrum of areas to research, comprehend, and interweave. Communes can address any potential area, de-



pending on need and capacity. They are interconnected through the founding assembly who take part in these communes and collectives to avoid repeating the fragmentation of mainstream social sciences. Instead, through the assembly, and collectives, we explore the interrelatedness of different areas of investigation.

Collectives provide the imagination, vision, aesthetics and ways of expressing the various areas of research. The library and archive, the organization of gatherings, and the Journal of Democratic Modernity are the main tools through which the efforts and work of the communes will be made concrete and publicized.

## Communes

The communes are the basis of the Academy, and bring together intellectuals, activists, and other interested people, to create collective knowledge and resources on a given area of research. Communes are formed within the Academy and are organized according to the given group's needs

and aims, e.g., with sub-committees and particular areas of discussion. The aim is to make the Academy a dynamic space for research and discussion, while creating consistency among those who think and write about the vision of democratic civilization.

## Collectives

Collectives provide the depth and the aesthetics toward understanding and expressing democratic modernity and therefore enhance the fruits of the communes. Translation and artist collectives will provide ways of turning these ideas into images, visuals, literature, and music, weaving the knowl-

edge produced into a fabric richer than the individual threads of each group. This will also ensure continuity of expression and style across the communes. They will thus be fundamental to the important work of developing the overall language and ideas of the Academy and presenting them to society.

# Conferences, seminars & other gatherings

These gatherings will provide spaces to discuss and share knowledge with other intellectuals, collectives, working groups, movements and organizations. They are conceived as a means of collective education, with everybody

teaching and learning. Through these the Academy can deepen dialogue and promote mutual learning by offering new concepts from the work of the Academy and considering creative responses from attendees.

# Working areas and projects

## Library & archive

The Mazlum Doğan Library and Archive will provide researchers with access to important works on democratic civilization and connected areas of research.

The library will include several sections, including a Murray Bookchin wing and sections for other thinkers and traditions including Marxism, Anarchism, World-Systems

Analysis, decolonial thought, feminism, Eastern wisdom and indigenous and traditional knowledge systems, and mythology which are essential to the concept's further

development.

The library will bring together materials, guidance, and support for the work done by those already

researching and producing knowledge about democratic civilization and the practical and theoretical experiences of the Kurdish Freedom Movement and other movements.

Above all, the library and archive will provide materials, resources, and support for young students, researchers, and activists.

The collection will include general



literature of jineolojî and feminism, philosophy, history, social and political theory, economics, indigeneity, human/nature relations, art, religion, and more. It will include holdings of the works of Abdullah Öcalan, Murray Bookchin, Fernand Braudel, Maria Mies, Immanuel Wallerstein, Silvia Federici, John Holloway, bell hooks, David Graeber, and other critical thinkers in various languages. The curated

selection in both the library and archives, including physical and digital media, will offer physical and on-line visitors the opportunity to access various relevant sources in one place, and so provide the necessary material for in-depth and in-house research.

The collections are in constant expansion, so book donations on relevant topics are always welcome and deeply appreciated.

## Writing and Research Retreats

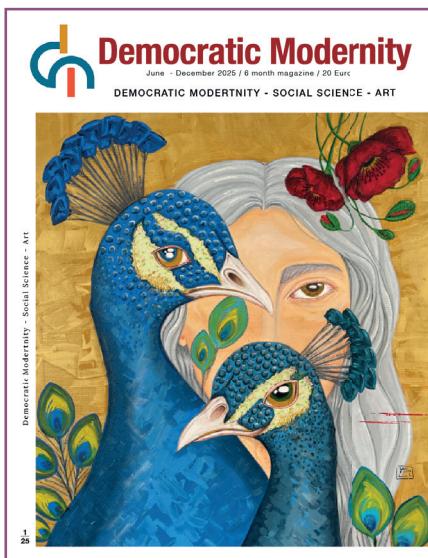
Interested researchers and activists will have the opportunity to spend time at the Academy and undertake writing and research retreats there for various dura-

tions depending on the capacity of the Academy and the particular topic and needs of the writer(s) involved.

## The Journal

The Academy's journal, Democratic Modernity, publishes essays that present the work of the communes and invited contributors, covering the key concepts of democratic civilization and the sociology of freedom, alongside all other relevant subjects.

Some essays and issues will be the result of conferences, seminars, and other gatherings held at the Academy or elsewhere, or



the work of researchers, students, and activists who spend time at the Academy. The journal is thus the result of collective processes of thinking and knowledge production, reflecting the wider aims and methods of the Academy. Like the rest of the Academy's work,

collectives will help to develop the journal, deepen the content of the essays, and maintain its connection to other areas of activity. We aim to publish two issues of the journal per year and will occasionally review requirements and increase as needed.

## Publications

Apart from the journal "Democratic Modernity", the Academy intends to publish books, brochures and other material online and in print. It is proud to collaborate with the International Initiative Edition for its printed publications.

## Cooperation with educational institutions

The Academy cooperates with alternative and progressive educational institutions around the world. The aim is to link together the research and knowledge produced to find a way out of current crises and enhance sociology of freedom.

## Get involved!

If you are interested in working with us in any way, don't hesitate to contact us! The Academy's work and success relies on the practical support of individuals, collectives and organizations who share its principles and objectives, wherever they might be, and however they might be able to help.

[academyofsocialscience.org](http://academyofsocialscience.org)  
[info@academyofsocialscience.org](mailto:info@academyofsocialscience.org)  
Destek için: Free Life Stichting,  
IBAN NL85 TRIO 0321 0708 36,  
Referans: "Academy"

# Your involvement can take many forms:

## Join

one of the communes or collectives or found a new one. Researchers, artists and translators, and all those interested in what we are doing and that want to work with us are always welcome.

## Get affiliated

as a person, group, movement, or institution.

## Voluntary work

can take many forms, from awareness raising wherever one might be based, to residential volunteering for a duration depending on the Academy's needs and activities. Get in touch with us in order to contribute and take part in our activities.

## For the Academy

to achieve its goals it must remain independent and autonomous. It must avoid becoming a source of income for those involved. Likewise, the Academy's publications will be open-access where possible, and otherwise affordably priced to cover costs. Free copies will be available for communities and organizations in need. As a point of principle, the Academy will

not allow itself to become subject to the profit motive or structures of capitalist employment. This means that donations and voluntary work are essential to realize our ambitious plans.

## Donations of books

and other resources are always welcome, but financial donations are particularly necessary to maintain the Academy's physical space and support its activities. Donations can come from individuals, collectives and various organizations, as long as they do not come with conditions that compromise the Academy's independence and autonomy. While all donations are gratefully received, we particularly welcome ongoing financial contributions, including sponsorship of particular areas of activity, education initiatives, conferences, the library and archive, and publications. We also intend to apply for grants, including from higher education institutions, trade unions, charitable foundations, and other third sector and non-profit organizations, again as long as they don't compromise our independence and autonomy, or contradict our aims and principles.

## Follow

our publications on the internet  
and on digital media.

## Subscribe

to our journal.

**All donated time, labor, and resources are deeply appreciated, and are crucial to realizing the Academy's fundamental goal: to develop a sociology of freedom that can act as the framework for realizing democratic modernity.**

## The Founding Assembly



The Founding Assembly, the “Commune of Communes”, comes together twice a year to hold discussions to link the communes and collectives as well as to plan ahead.

### Members of the Constituent Assembly:

**Anna Clara Basilicò** is a social historian and an activist from Italy. Her research interests involve prison history and the history of early modern Mediterranean. She is particularly interested in prisons as sites of encounter and on women carceral experiences.

**Radha D'Souza** is a scholar, activist, barrister, and writer from India. She is a Professor at the University of Westminster, co-founder of the Court for Intergenerational Climate Crimes, and has published extensively on social justice and decolonization.

**Dr. Mechthild Exo** is a peace researcher and activist specializing in de-colonization of knowledge from Germany, feminist-decolonial critique, and grassroots democratic self-organization. She lectures on international development, anti-discrimination, and gender, rethinking key theories in world politics and peace.

**Laura Fantone** is an activist and sociologist from Bologna. Her interests are mainly gender, political participation, migration and refugees. She writes on precarity, art, homophobia, global movements and women in the antifascist resistance.

**Harriet Friedmann** I am a food system analyst, writer, and lecturer. I freely pollinate worlds of academia, policy, and activism. I explore the interplay of commodity frontiers and diverse foodways, focusing on regenerative transitions for biocultural landscapes within Gaia.

**Dr. Muriel González Athenas** is a university assistant at the University of Innsbruck, teaching Empowerment Theories and Postcolonial Studies. Her research interests include gender history, cultural economic history, feminist epistemology, spatial conceptions, and decolonial perspectives and practices.

**Havin Guneser** is an engineer and women's freedom activist, former spokesperson for the "Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan" International Initiative, and organizer of Network AQ conferences. She authored *The Art of Freedom*.

**Andrej Grubačić** is the Editor of the Journal of World-Systems Research and Professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies. He co-authored *Living at the Edges of Capitalism* (2016), which won the 2017 ASA Prize, and authored *Don't Mourn, Balkanize!* (2010).

**John Holloway** teaches sociology at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Mexico. He writes extensively on anti-capitalist struggles

and revolution, with influential books like *Change the World without Taking Power* (2002) and *Crack Capitalism* (2010), translated into multiple languages.

**Reimar Heider** is a physician, human rights activist, translator, and editor. He was a spokesperson for the International Initiative “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan” and was one of the main organizers of the Network for an Alternative Quest.

**Amber Huff** is an anthropologist and political ecologist at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. Her research examines political economy and people’s situated experiences of environmental change, focusing on people’s struggles to claim, sustain and defend life.

**Patrick Huff** is a lecturer at Birkbeck, University of London. His interests are the philosophy of science, Black feminism, Black Radical Tradition, political philosophy, economy and ecology, and anarchism.

**Ögmundur Jónasson** a historian, journalist, trade unionist, Member of the Icelandic Parliament over twenty years and held various ministerial roles. He is also a board member of Finance Watch and former spokesperson for the International Initiative “Freedom for Abdullah Öcalan—Peace in Kurdistan”.

**Joost Jongerden** is an Associate Professor at Wageningen University, specializing in rural sociology and social movement theory. His research focuses on dispossession, displacement, and conflict in the Kurdistan region, emphasizing grassroots responses and solutions he terms Do-it-Yourself Development.

**James Kelman** is a Scottish writer. His first book of short stories appeared 1973. His latest in 2025. He also writes novels, nonfiction and drama. He and partner, Marie, live in Glasgow, nearby their children and grandchildren.

**Nik Matheou** is a lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, focusing on global history and Marxism. His work emphasizes political education, international solidarity, exploring capitalism and subaltern resistance

through libertarian Marxist approaches inspired by the revolutionary paradigm of Abdullah Öcalan.

**Targol Mesbah** teaches critical theory and media at the California Institute of Integral Studies. Her research explores the social, psychic and material relations shaping experiences of war, and the everyday possibilities of living, knowing, loving and dying.

**Denis O'Hearn**, a member of the Qawalangin tribe, is an activist scholar in Belfast, the US, and Turkey. His biography of Bobby Sands, *Nothing but an Unfinished Song* was translated into several languages. He co-authored *Living at the Edges of Capitalism*.

**Norman Paech** taught political science and public law at the University of Hamburg until 2003. He is a member of “International Lawyers Against Nuclear Armament” and focuses on international law, war, peace, and human rights, with notable publications on these topics.

**Werner Ruf**, born in 1937, taught political science at various universities and conducted research in North Africa. He served as an EU human rights expert and published extensively on political Islam, socio-economic developments, and EU policies in the Mediterranean region.

**Raúl Zibechi** is a Uruguayan popular educator and journalist engaged in social conflicts across Latin America. He has authored over 30 books on “pueblos en movimiento,” and received an honorary doctorate from Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (Bolivia) in 2017.



The Academy of Social Science