

## The oppression of the kurdish people and their fight for education: a future of social change

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### ABSTRACT

Throughout history there have been numerous nations that have been subdued by the dictatorship of those who are stronger. One of these nations is the Kurdish people, which has been nullified by such civilisations. The abuse of power they have applied on the Kurdish has been reflected in the prohibition of their language, their traditions, their culture, and the systematic theft of all of their wealth and natural resources, which have been stolen by those who are stronger. We ask ourselves how it is possible to design an educational system in a place that lives in refugee camps, and that most of the time is under the sound of bombs and death. It is unbelievable to give lectures at schools with such precarious material and human resources, keeping in mind that the oppressive states force them to keep learning in the language of the state they live in, they are obligated to continue with educational work in secrecy while fighting not to lose their culture, language and traditions. Because of this, social initiatives such as the one that took place in Rojava, driven by the Kurdish women in the north of Syria, are a great way to end their isolation and annulment as a nation. Serving as a model of multicultural and multilingual cohabitation from which we can learn and bring to our capitalistic western educational systems.

**Keywords:** Education, Mother tongue, Kurdish, Revolutions, Oppression, Multiculturalism, Multilingualism, Women, Self government, Capitalism, Acculturation

## A opressão do povo curdo e a sua luta pela educação: um futuro de mudança social

### RESUMO

Ao longo da história, houve muitos povos que foram submetidos aos ditames dos mais fortes. Um deles é o povo curdo, a quem foi anulada a sua língua, os seus costumes, a sua cultura e sistematicamente roubadas todas as suas riquezas e recursos naturais, que foram saqueados pelos mais fortes. Perguntamo-nos como é possível conceber um sistema educativo num povo que vive em campos de refugiados e que passa a maior parte do tempo sob o ruído das bombas e da morte. É inacreditável que não sejam obrigados a seguir a educação na língua do Estado em que vivem, são obrigados a continuar com um trabalho educativo na luta clandestina para que a sua cultura, língua e tradições não

se percam. Iniciativas sociais como a de Rojava, promovida por mulheres curdas do norte da Síria, são uma boa forma de acabar com o seu isolamento e anulação enquanto povo. É um modelo de coexistência multicultural e multilingue com o qual podemos aprender e transferir para os nossos sistemas educativos capitalistas ocidentais.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação, Língua materna, Curdos, Revolução, Opressão, Multiculturalismo, Multilinguismo, Mulheres, Autogoverno, Capitalismo, Aculturação

## RESUMEN

A lo largo de la historia han existido numerosos pueblos que han estado sometidos a los dictámenes del más fuerte. Uno de ellos es el pueblo kurdo que ha sido anulado como tal por distintas civilizaciones. El abuso de poder que han ejercido sobre los kurdos se ha visto reflejado en la prohibición del uso de su lengua, sus costumbres, su cultura y el robo sistemático de todas sus riquezas y recursos naturales, que han sido saqueados por el más fuerte. Nos preguntamos cómo es posible diseñar un sistema educativo en un pueblo que vive en campos de refugiados y que están la mayor parte del tiempo bajo el ruido de las bombas y la muerte. Es increíble impartir clases en escuelas con recursos materiales y humanos tan precarios, teniendo en cuenta que los Estados opresores les obligan a seguir la educación en la lengua del estado en el que viven, se ven obligados y obligadas a continuar con una labor educativa en la clandestinidad luchando para que su cultura, lengua y tradiciones no se pierda. Por lo que iniciativas sociales como la que se realizó en Rojava, impulsadas por las mujeres kurdas en el norte de Siria es una buena manera de acabar con su aislamiento y anulación como pueblo. Sirviendo como modelo de convivencia multicultural y multilingüe del cual podemos aprender y trasladar a nuestros sistemas educativos occidentales capitalistas.

**Palabras clave:** Educación, Lengua Materna, Kurdos, Revolución, Opresión, Multiculturalismo, Multilingüismo, Mujer, Autogestión, Capitalismo, Aculturación

## INTRODUCTION

The fact of the non-consensual kissing of one female player, in summer of 2023, by the president of the Royal Spanish Football Federation (Rubiales), is yet another example of the continuous abuse of power that men have committed, and continue to commit, throughout the length and breadth of our land. The abuse of power by men over women, the abuse of power by white western men over other less developed communities, the abuse of power over children and, in this case, the abuse of power over entire villages that occur nowadays... are not given a thousandth of the media coverage that the case of Rubiales and Jenniffer Hermoso has had in the world's media.

We do not see the subjugation suffered by the Saharawi people or the Kurdish people in our daily newspapers, and we do not know how thousands of people live in the 21st century, displaced from their homes, whose hopes of having a life in line with the technological, scientific and social development, that we enjoy in the Western world, are completely annulled.

The Kurdish people have been under the sovereignty of empires from ancient times to the present day and have never been able to feel free and at peace. Once subject to the Persian, Ottoman and British empires, today their territory is divided among several countries in the East and Asia, such as Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey, which do not give them the independence they claim, mostly due to the great wealth of minerals and oil that their lands possess. So the Kurdish people are being overruled, as such, by more powerful foreign powers that are plundering their natural resources and not caring how the Kurdish population lives.

So we ask ourselves how the life of the people inside the refugee camps and villages can be organised with the meagre means at their disposal and, more specifically, how an education system can be organised in an area where armed attacks occur frequently and where poverty, lack of teachers, books and schools, are more than evident. The Kurdish people have been banned from receiving education in their mother tongue, and they have been submitted to the educational system in wherever state they were at that moment. Our aim with these lines is to get to know this people a little better, and to give prominence to them, who are invisible in the media because it is not interesting or profitable to talk about them.

## **KURDISTAN**

The Kurds are an ethnic and linguistic group with a common culture and history living in the Middle East, in the north-eastern plains of Mesopotamia, and in the mountainous areas between the Taurus and Zagros ranges. From the 7th century onwards, they suffered Arab-Muslim invasions, but they retained some freedom and kept their language and identity. It was in the 15th century that they began to fragment, first between the Persian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, although with the latter the Kurds continued to maintain some autonomy until the 19th century, through the millets.

After World War I, it seemed that an independent Kurdistan was possible with the Treaty of Sevres, but it never came into force due to opposition from Turkish nationalists (Isla, 2019). During the development of the Turkish war of independence between 1919 and 1922, they seemed to support Kurdish nationalism, however, once their republic was constituted, and the Treaty of Lausanne was recognised in 1923, where Kurdistan was divided between Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq, everything changed. At that time, the use of Kurdish in schools, Kurdish language publications and Kurdish associations were banned (Lemée, 2023). Despite having a large representation within the Turkish state, for Lopez (2019), the Kurdish population has only been subject to restrictive political decisions, and a public discourse that denies the existence of minorities, understanding that they are an impediment to the consolidation of the Turkish state, which is why policies to repress their traditions and culture were carried out against them. Considering that Turkey was formed as a state in 1923, the Kurds could have been given the possibility to have a space where they could develop as a people, but the Turkish nationalist power eliminated this possibility, and persecuted them. Turkish nationalism persecuted all minorities living in the area, which caused the Kurdish elites to start revolts against the Turks, that are still going on to a greater or lesser extent today.

To better understand the current distribution of Kurdistan, the terms used by the Kurds are set out below. The territory in south-eastern Turkey is called Bakur (northern Kurdistan), Rojava (western Kurdistan) is in northern Syria, Bashur (southern Kurdistan) is in north-eastern Iraq, and Rojhilat (eastern Kurdistan) is in western Iran. All this territory has been subjected to constant subjugation and assimilation following the decline of the Persian and Ottoman empires and by the states into which it is divided, which encouraged the emergence of nationalist sentiments.

## **THE MOTHER TONGUE**

The right to education in the mother tongue, to use it in the private and public sphere, freely and without discrimination, is recognised by various international treaties, including the *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities adopted by the United Nations* (UN, 1992), as well as the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UN, 1989), which in Article 30 recognises the right to use the children's own language in States where there are minorities. However, although there have been various international conventions and treaties since the end of the 20th century in which the prohibition of the use of the mother tongue is considered a violation of human rights, it has been used for centuries, and it continues to be used, as a tool to restrict the freedom of different peoples, and in this case, of the Kurdish people.

The policies of the states in the Middle East of denial, restriction and prohibition of the Kurdish language, together with assimilation policies and violence against the Kurdish population, have given greater impetus to the political and social mobilisations of Kurdish nationalism, which, over time and depending on the area, have ranged from the interest in forming their own state, to establishing administrative autonomy, to being satisfied with the recognition of their cultural and linguistic rights.

These policies have deprived and continue to deprive them of the right to express themselves in their language, thus restricting their identity and culture, but have served in the political discourse as a social cohesive force for both the Kurds of Kurdistan and those of the Kurdish diaspora to strive to preserve their culture, language and identity.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) supports linguistic and cultural diversity, the struggle to preserve them, and their importance in education (n.d.). In this way, it approved the celebration of International Mother Language Day, which has been celebrated on 21 February since 2000. This day is used by various groups such as the Confederation of Kurdistan Women's Communities or the Kurdish Language and Culture Network to raise their voices and demand the liberation of their language, since the mother tongue is a symbol of identity and culture of the people.

It may be particularly striking, in these contradictions, that Turkey, a member of UNESCO, does the opposite and stipulates that the only mother tongue to be taught in schools is Turkish; although it opens up the possibility of offering other languages as optional (Republic of Turkey, 1982), which is ridiculous and insufficient, considering the reality of its population.

As a consequence of centuries of prohibitions against the Kurdish language, literature has also been affected. With a very strong oral tradition, it began to emerge in written form in the 15th and 16th centuries (Akin, 2014). However, it did not develop much because of the custom of writing works in Arabic, Persian or Turkish. This was later compounded by various political restrictions after the First World War and the division of the Kurdish people among several countries, which forced Kurdish writers to use the language from where they lived whether it was Arabic, Persian or Turkish.

One of the works written in Kurdish that became most famous during the 20th century, as it is considered the origin of nationalist sentiment, was the epic poem *Mem û Zîn*. At the end of this work, its author, the poet Ehmedê Xâni (1692), explains his motive for writing his work in Kurdish:

I have chosen our language, contrary to the custom hitherto of writing in Arabic, Persian or Turkish, so that it will not be said that the Kurds are ignorant, that all peoples have books except the Kurds, so that no one can say that the Kurds do not know how to write of love, that they do not know how to speak of philosophy. The Kurds are not an immature people, they are not ignorant, they are just a humble, simple people, who have not yet found a leader with the ability to lead them; a protector to develop the arts, science, philosophy, poetry, literature, mysticism and theology, news gazettes... If all things were led by a leader with power, Kurdish poetry would wave at the top of the universe. (P. 36, quoted in Martorell, 2016).

This is how he described the reality of the Kurdish language, which, unfortunately, is not very different from today's reality. Among others, the Kurdish population, in general, finds it difficult to access online resources due to the scarcity of information, resources and scientific publications in their language, and they can only resort to translation from other languages (Aziz, 2023). Currently, the presence of a language on the web, is quite important, and this could be used as both an opportunity and a necessity to increase the dissemination and representation of Kurdish on the web.

## **THE KURDISH POPULATION IN THE DIFFERENT TERRITORIES**

No official statistics are kept in Turkey about our topic of research, so according to estimates by the Kurdish Foundation-Paris Institute (2017) the Kurdish population is around 22 million, about 26% of the country's total population. It is the largest Kurdish population in the world and continues to suffer severe repression, including a ban on the Kurdish language. After the construction of the Republic, a great political strategy was started where institutions were created, books were published..., all in order to claim that all the inhabitants of Turkey are Turks through cultural repression, linguistic assimilation and even falsification of their history (Férez and Ala, 2023).

The Turkish Constitution (Republic of Turkey, 1982) states that the language of the entire state is Turkish, and in Article 42, the right and duty of education, it further specifies that no language other than Turkish shall be taught as a mother tongue. Thus, in contrast to Turkey's religious, ethnic and linguistic richness, its government of extreme nationalism is obstinate in the hegemony of Turkish identity in order to strengthen the nation-state (López, 2019). This is why the criminalisation of the

Kurdish is the order of the day in Turkey. The penal code is very harsh in relation to attempts to secede from the national territory, not allowing rights such as protecting and developing Kurdish culture and language, which are considered to be against national unity. Defending their language or their region becomes a crime, so civilians are arrested and accused of being traitors to the homeland for simply saying "this is Kurdistan", speaking or singing Kurdish. Moreover, they even ban concerts on the grounds that Kurdish music is to be played (Albani, 2021).

On the other hand, another of the tactics used by the Turks to keep the Kurds under control, were the pharanoiac works that only benefited the Turks and forced the population to abandon land that would be occupied by reservoirs and aqueducts, as a Turkish government official put it: "If the Kurds are busy working, they will not have time to fight" (Martorell, 2003, p. 126).

Bombings, military occupations, forced displacements, unfounded investigations, accusations and arrests of political leaders, journalists, human rights defenders and even assassinations are what Turkey is experiencing. A continuous violation of human rights with the aim of rendering other cultures invisible and making their languages and history disappear. However, as Albani (2021) is confident, there will still be people who fight to preserve their legacy, for example, the dengbej who, through their music, keep the stories alive.

In Iraq, since the constitution of its federal system in 2005, the Kurdish region, known as Basur or Iraqi Kurdistan, gained a certain degree of autonomy. This led to the formation of the Kurdistan Regional Government, which has its own parliament and even manages its own international relations, as well as its own Ministry of Education. The KRG's education system has numerous shortcomings in terms of underfunding, outdated curricula, lack of classrooms, lack of qualified teachers, as well as poor quality pre-school education (Ali et al., 2021). Besides, Iraq has a large IDP population, resulting in overcrowded schools for IDPs and very low quality and funding. In addition, different communities share these school spaces, which, if well managed, can foster respect and tolerance for other languages, religions and cultures. However, as Shanks (2019) argues, if not addressed positively, if these issues are denied, or neglected, it can lead to an escalation of conflict.

A particularly harsh situation suffered by many women and girls in countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa that cannot be ignored is female genital mutilation, which is a blatant violation of their rights. The Kurdistan Region in particular has been campaigning against this practice since 2007 and, although the prevalence in some regions is still very high, it is generally decreasing (Shabila, 2021). We must be aware of the importance of education as a tool to combat this practice, not only for women but also for men, in order to eliminate the gender biases on which it is based.

Article 4 of the Iraqi Constitution (Republic of Iraq, 2005) establishes Arabic and Kurdish as official languages of the country, both of which should be used in the institutions of the Kurdistan Region. Despite this, the situation is not ideal, and the Kurdistan Teachers' Union is concerned about the loss of identity that comes with the Kurdish language being virtually ignored in the education system, as it is an important mechanism of social cohesion. It therefore calls on its government to promote the use of

Kurdish as a mother tongue at all levels of education, including universities, and also draws attention to the importance of knowledge and study of Kurdish history (Education International, 2023).

In Iran, the Kurdish population, like all other ethnic minorities, are restricted in their access to education, housing and employment by discrimination that leads them to live in poverty and marginalisation (Amnesty International, 2023). As in the case of Turkey, there is no official population census that surveys ethnic distribution, although its Kurdish population is estimated at 10 million, 12% of the total Iranian population (Kurdish Foundation-Paris Institute, 2017).

The only official language and script recognised in Iran is Persian, as established in its Constitution (Islamic Republic of Iran, 1979) and although it includes some recognition of linguistic diversity, the reality shows a repression of the Kurdish language in education and the media, with Persian being the only language used in education (Amnesty International, 2023). The social and political struggles in Rohjilat are aimed at overcoming this repression so that the Kurdish language can be used in schools, in the government and in the media.

This territory in eastern Kurdistan possesses important oil, mineral and water resources, but these resources are exploited by the Iranian government, leaving the Kurds aside of the administration of these resources, leaving them in an economic position of dependence and disadvantage towards the central power (Férez, 2020). And, although there is a province in Iran called Kurdistan, it does not have autonomy nor does it cover all the territory where the Kurdish population lives.

It is a country where many rights are denied to the population, especially women and girls, who suffer great oppression, inequality and discrimination. It has been a year since the death of Mahsa Jina Amini at the hands of the morality police, when she was arrested, for not wearing the hijab correctly. This was the trigger for numerous protests and riots in Iran and Kurdistan, where women and men demanded the Iranian government not to impose the hijab and many have stopped wearing the veil in protest. However, the government continues to tighten measures, including announcing that schools will not teach students who do not wear the hijab (EFE, 2023). The wearing of the hijab has been compulsory since 1983, and must be worn from the age of seven. Those who do not wear it or do not wear it correctly face arrest, fines, imprisonment or lashes.

The situation of the Kurdish people in Syria, at the turn of the century, was different from that in Turkey, because the region was under French protectorate, so that "Kurdish exiles from Turkey quickly became involved in Syrian Kurdish society, becoming part of the social, cultural and political fabric" (Kajjo and Sinclair, 2011). However, after Syrian independence the situation took a turn, and the Kurdish population suffered deportations and repression as a result of Syrian nationalism, which reversed all previous progress. In the 1960s, the government took away the Syrian nationality of part of the Kurdish population, who were considered foreigners, or even had no legal status at all, and found themselves in a situation of social, cultural and political exclusion. Furthermore, the government promoted the displacement of the Arab population to the territories where there was a larger Kurdish population,

banned the Kurdish language, and outlawed their associations and parties, as they were considered by Syria as a threat to the project of Arab unity (Schmidinger, 2020).

The current Syrian Constitution continues to maintain that Arabic is the only official language (Syrian Arab Republic, 2012), without taking into account that there are other populations in its territory, such as the Kurdish population, which in 2014 was estimated at just over 3 million, almost 15% of the country's total population (Kurdish Foundation-Paris Institute, 2017). With the Rojava conflict and the ongoing Syrian civil war, the Kurdish territory in north-eastern Syria formed the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria (AANES) as an independent region, albeit without recognition by the Syrian government and with strong opposition from Turkey. Since independence, the celebration of the Kurdish New Year, the use of the Kurdish language and the study of the Kurdish language has become possible. People like Mazhar Cheijo, 40 years old, are realising the dream of learning their mother tongue (AFP Agency, 2015).

The number of displaced people and refugees due to fighting and wars is growing all over the world, and many of them are living in camps. One such camp in Kurdistan is the Martyr Rustem Cûdî camp in Makhmur, northern Iraq, which was established in 1998 by Kurds who had fled Turkey in 1994 because of Turkish military attacks against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and passed through various refugee camps during those years. Around 12,000 people live there. Since then, Kurdish language classes have been held in the hope of improving education in their mother tongue. With a total of 3,000 students in the camp, they have established four primary schools, two secondary schools and a high school, as well as plans for higher education, according to Bêrivan Kaya, spokesperson for the Education Council. However, the policies to repress them, through embargoes, prevent them from having the necessary materials to carry out their work and, furthermore, to be able to include university education (Colemêrg, 2022).

The organisation within these camps is based on the ideology of confederalism, which aims to fight against consumerism and the capitalist system. Thus, they promote a social organisation in the camps, in order to subsequently transfer them to a future free society outside the camps, in which the participation of all men and women is equal. This organisation is based on a system of self-government in which all people participate through popular assemblies to determine how to build their society, based, above all, on the liberation of women, the struggle for the environment and the elimination of the ideas of individualism, consumerism and capitalism.

Within education, in addition to schools and institutes, they have created an institution in which people, regardless of their age, can be trained in work occupations (Parera, 2018), and in which the fact that the teaching materials are created by these same people stands out, because they have no support or recognition, being the only way to preserve their culture and way of life. We find it very shocking how they have created an educational system in a refugee camp, with the economic and resource shortages they have, and without the support of the countries that have oppressed and repressed them.

## **THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN ROJAVA**

After the outbreak of the Syrian conflict, Rojava, a region in north-eastern Syria with a majority Kurdish population, began a process of social revolution. Since 2012, as another way out of the options of positioning themselves either on the side of the regime or in the opposition, they implemented democratic confederalism, an autonomous political practice based on communalism, environmentalism and gender equality (Hernández, 2022). Moreover, the participation of the different peoples that form part of this territory is paramount, as recognised in the Social Contract of the Democratic Federation of Northern Syria (Rojava Azadi, 2016). Two years later, this Federation was renamed as the Autonomous Administration of Northern and Eastern Syria (AANES), made up of seven cantons, whose autonomy is not recognised by the Syrian Arab Republic.

After the revolution in Rojava, there was a change in Kurdish education. It was forbidden to teach in the Kurdish language, and classes were held underground, something the Kurdish women were not prepared to do, and they were the first to break down the doors of the schools to teach in their mother tongue, despite the great repression they suffered from the Syrian regime, which even closed the schools to them. Once again, it was women who brought about a real revolution in a male-dominated world, and as Menal Mihemed Emîn (Kurdistan Latin America, 2020) points out, it was the mothers who literally broke down the doors in order to start regional education in Kurdish schools. In addition to having to fight against this traditional and cultural machismo that, as Shabila (2021) points out, mutilates their genitals, which is a clear violation of the rights of women and girls and a profound discrimination against them. It is incredible how, in spite of everything, these women found the strength to fight for the education of girls and boys who are not to blame for having been born where they were born or for the decisions of their elders.

In education, the Rojava revolution has meant that the system does not exclude any of the people of northern Syria, since Kurdish, Arab and other children of the different nationalities that make up the region can learn in their different languages, without any prohibition, forming a multicultural and multilingual education. They have moved away from the nationalist education of the Syrian regime to present an education in which women play a major role, in order to achieve not only educational but also social change. They work with the idea of building knowledge through dialogue between teachers and students, without the need for exams that only measure knowledge, where teachers are exposed to student evaluation, where there is no hierarchical relationship between them, and where criticism and self-criticism are fundamental. This is how they are based on the education that John Dewey advocated "to create thoughtful people who participate ethically as citizens in a democratic community; and that education should thus be a force for social improvement" (Biehl, 2015, para. 18).

On the other hand, the role of women is fundamental in education and in the social change that is taking place among the Kurdish people, since, in addition to taking up arms in defence of their people, they have regained the power they should have in society, taking a leading role by being a great asset in the economy and in social organisation. As Kurdish leader Öcalan (2012) argues, for a real revolution to take place, women's participation must take place, and for the revolution to begin, women's liberation must come first and foremost, in order to create a free country. This will be impossible if capitalism,

which promotes the oppression and exploitation of women, is maintained, and sexism is "an ideological product of the nation-state and power" (Öcalan, 2012, p. 17).

Thus, in Rimelan's academy, students are taught to use women's assemblies and communes, neighbourhood assemblies, mixed groups with 40% representation of women and women-only groups, their main objective being equality between men and women, making women's role in history visible. They also promote the ideas of using power, not as a repressive agent, but as a means to debate and build, in which there is no marked hierarchy between teachers and students, but rather an open class where experiences are shared to enrich everyone. At the end of the session there is a platform where each member participates and presents their points of view to contribute possible improvements to the community.

In the words of Dorsîn, a professor at the academy:

Our dream is that women's participation and development of society will change men, and a new kind of masculinity will emerge. The concepts of male and female are not biological; we are against that. We define gender as masculine, and masculinity in connection with power and hegemony. Of course, we believe that gender is a social construct (Biehl, 2015, para. 26).

It is striking how a stateless people coming from ancient times have never been able to develop their own culture and have been subjected to the empires of each era. The educational ideas they promulgate are aimed at fighting against the repression of oppressive nationalist and dictatorial states, as well as the hypocrisy of the capitalist countries that pretend to defend them but in reality they only seek to enrich themselves by stealing their oil and mineral resources.

A people with ideas of equality, anti-capitalist and that allows citizen participation in decision-making to improve their society, is an advanced people, in our opinion, and it would be good if the Western world and dictatorial states took note of this. Because, although it may seem that we live in a free world, we are subjected to the designs of a ruling class that uses us as it pleases, and where meritocracy, capacities and credentials are the basis of our society.

Political parties fill us with promises that seek equality, freedom and the possibility of climbing the social classes through education, but none of this actually happens in our society. That is why we must get to know other cultures and educational systems that can help us to improve our society, and not to think we are superior and undervalue others, thinking that ours is the best and that it should be a reference for other cultures.

In short, education must be free, autonomous and capable of making decisions in contexts that constantly change (Fernández, 2016), and that is why we must move towards an inclusive education, which respects the existing multicultural world, everyone's culture, and fights all those manifestations that seek, through education, a return to dark pasts of segregation and exclusion of individuals according to their ethnicity or place of origin.

## CONCLUSIONS

In modern Western societies, social movements that defend equality between men and women in all aspects of our daily lives have recently been emerging. The role of women in capitalist societies, has been secondary to that of men, something that is fortunately changing, so it would be good if we could look to other cultures, such as the Kurdish, and learn how fundamental it is for women to have the same opportunities as men, and to abandon the idea that they are secondary and that they are there to serve men. If we want to build a better society, we have to generalise the social movement started in Rojava, and the education we provide in our schools is key to this. We must give visibility to other points of view, we must not believe that we are superior, because the stages of the white man's colonisation must be left in the past. The future, is written within the collaboration between all cultures equally, and we must move away from the belief of cultural domination imposed by the western world.

A society that promotes equality between men and women, protection of the environment or an economy based on community support for the disadvantaged is a better society. We must banish those policies that only seek productivity and the greatest economic benefit, without caring about the means to achieve them, abandoning to their fate those people who are not productive, as this is a type of society that does not fit in our future. It is necessary for schools to teach values of solidarity, respect and tolerance that will change our current unjust, segregating and excluding capitalist state. It would not be bad to learn from a stateless and millenary people, who are achieving social changes, as in the region of Rojava, giving women the place they deserve in society, and in which they have created a participatory school that gives great weight to the opinions of the students, abandoning the traditional authoritarian school. Dialogues and joint evaluations between teachers and students enrich school life and give all members of the school the possibility to improve, since the aim is to learn and not to seek numerical marks that stigmatise students.

It is conceivable that a social movement such as the one in Rojava could serve as an inspiration for a larger movement that reaches out not only to other Kurdish regions for independence that will lead them to live with dignity and justice, but also to more distant societies that require major transformations to achieve greater social equity.

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