

## 2. Women's movement and feminism

Kurdish Women's Movement  
REPAK (Iraqi Kurdistan),  
KJA (Turkey), Yekitiya Star (Rojava)  
Women's league Courage (Germany)

1 - Throughout history, women like Cleopatra, Zenobia, Rosa Luxemburg, Clara Zetkin, Leyla Kasim, Zerifa, Zada Sultan, and Kara Fatma have played key roles in leading women's revolutions around the world, and that leading spirit is continuing in the Kurdistan Liberation Movement, where Kurdish women such as Zilan, Viyan, Shilan, and Sara, have been pioneering the peaceful cause of women's freedom, while serving as a true example for thousands of Kurdish women to come.

2 - Today, in the Middle East, the ancient mentality of male authority has continued to deny the very existence of women, and it's this denial that has led the women of the Middle East to rise up in rebellion, with the uprising in Rojava being particularly known as a woman's revolution. Here, the woman of Rojava have mobilized and established themselves with social, organizational, political, and most famously, military institutions.

3 - The origins of the Kurdish women's army started with small units within the ranks of the People's Defense Units (YPG), but whose successful efforts with increasing female recruits, would eventually lead to an all women division, and on April 4, 2013, the Women's Protection Units, or YPJ, was officially announced and immediately began rewriting the lost history of women as warriors, able to defend themselves in the face of constant threats. But the YPJ is not just a military force, it is a new paradigm, a new philosophy, designed to change the repressive, patriarchal attitude of an ancient mindset, into a more inclusive, and democratic society for women.

4 - And women continue to be a bright spot in the horrific Syrian war. Women now form nearly half of the leading core of the Syrian Democratic Council, as well as the military efforts in the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), and their struggle to realize a future with freedom in a pluralistic society continues in full force.

5 - In just a few years, the women warriors of the YPJ have set a precedent for other armies and societies around the world not just by their participation in battles against a true evil, but by also showing the confidence needed to work equally with men, and it's this confidence that has inspired a developing behavior in the women across the region. The YPJ has also become more beautiful and bigger with the participation of women from around the world. Women like Roksan, Ivana, and Sarya, who have shared the concept that "A country can't be free unless its women are free." And the names of our fallen comrades, Silava, Berivan, Arin, Rewan, Zehra, Viyan, and Destina, who are the examples of unity in the quest for freedom for all four parts of Kurdistan. An inspiration that now sings the names of our heroines in the songs of our children, and the stories of their sacrifice told by our mothers.