

Iran: Feminist Revolution!

Dear Asta people,

as a German-Iranian student of the University of Bremen, who has been following the courageous feminist struggle of my sisters in Iran for a month now with a mixture of admiration, concern, pain and anger, I would like to get a few points off my chest in this way, as I no longer live in Bremen and therefore cannot attend the meeting tomorrow in the Glashalle in person. I ask you to make these thoughts public by proxy (be my voice and such..)and hope that as many people as possible will gather tomorrow, but fear that unfortunately it will not be so...

### Terminology

1) I was quite surprised to see that the Asta chose a, let's say, very vague formulation in its mail: "Solidarity with the Iranian Protest". Aha. This formulation denies the genuinely feminist character of this movement and denies its symbolism. Just because students are involved (in large numbers) does not make it a student protest. This is not Germany 1968. Their participation is quite important, quite right, especially against the background of what happened in Sharif University and subsequently in Evin Prison. But not characterizing (btw the majority of students are....female).

Much more remarkable in this context, however, is the participation of underage schoolgirls, who deliberately put themselves in mortal danger in large numbers. On Tuesday, videos showing teenage pupils at Elnaz's school and others across the country waving their headscarves in the air and shouting defiant protest slogans went viral. Many Iranians have been shocked to see schoolgirls emerging as a powerful force of protest.

(<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/oct/09/iran-protests-schoolgirls-videos-khamenei>)

This is also shown by the direct solidarity of Afghan schoolgirls demanding their right to education. The citizens are all united in their cause (against the mullahs, against the regime, for the freedom of all), young to old, women, men, all ethnicities.

But make no mistake, in the front line, women and girls are standing, running, fighting. To simply omit, ignore or keep quiet about this genuinely feminist character of this revolution is disrespectful to the risk to life and limb and the sacrifice that all these women and girls are making, the danger they are exposing themselves to by simply taking off a piece of cloth, let alone expressing their opinions freely. These are women who are cutting their hair from Afghanistan to France. They are women and girls who know that if they are arrested, they will be particularly affected by the bestial inhumanity of the Basiji; before they are beaten to death, they will be raped. Especially when the stumbling block is the equality and VISIBILITY OF WOMEN in public, it is strange when such a verbal full body veiling takes place.

Make them visible. Honor them, as the Asta writes. Say their names. ZAN, ZENDEGI, AZADI.

WOMAN - LIFE - FREEDOM. Not student life freedom, not Iranian life freedom.

For Jina Mahsa, for Nika, for Sarina, for too many....

2) "Let the world know this is no longer a **protest** - we are calling for a **revolution**. "\*\*\*

This is not about a criticism to change something within the system. It is not about political differences. It is about the whole. It is about nothing less than the abolition of the whole system. The slogan that is heard most is "Marg bar dictator" and "Marg bar Khamenei" - death to the

dictator. This is not called protest (as in Fridays for Future, for example), this is called revolution. Whether it fails or not we will see (if forecasts were worth anything, Ukraine would have fallen within a week...). Nobody can see into the future, but one thing is for sure, every revolution needs attention and symbols. We already have the symbol. The headscarf is a cornerstone of the Mullah dictatorship. Now we need attention. Again, call a spade a spade and don't dovetail the radical nature of what is happening there right now, what people are doing there. People are not being murdered indiscriminately and en masse in a protest. What more does it take to call it a revolution?

To conclude this paragraph, I would like to refer to Werder's Ultras, whose wording I would also have liked to see from the Asta:

"Down with the patriarchy, down with the mullah regime.  
Long live the feminist revolution in Iran!" (Shout-out to IY)

\*\*<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/oct/18/iranian-schoolgirl-beaten-to-death-for-refusing-to-sing-pro-regime-anthem>

### **What to do? Silence is Violence...**

Since you want to discuss what can be done: Create attention. That's it.\*\*\* That's all the people in Iran are asking for. No one is calling for weapons deliveries or a military invasion. Just for visibility. "Be our Voice," I've been reading for a month. Over and over again. In a country where the internet is regularly cut and communication to the rest of the world radically restricted, especially during visible dissent and turmoil, it is all the more essential to become an outside observer to an outside participant. Shout it into the mic/megaphone tomorrow: Tweet until your fingers bleed!

It is always said that social change is not achieved at the keyboard. True. People there have the streets. But here, all that's left is the keyboard. Use social media for something meaningful. Show that it doesn't have to be just a toxic virtual space for hate propaganda. Show that it can also be one of many tools, and in this case probably the only tool outside of Iran, that any person with an account can use.

When there were demonstrations in solidarity in many cities around the world two weeks ago, it was felt in Iran as well. There was a push, there is strength that is desperately needed when you take to the streets every day. It really means a hell of a lot to people. And it makes the people in power in the regime nervous. They're scared as hell. You can feel it. Basijis need to sleep, too. What people need is staying power. And every tweet and retweet is a breath of fresh air. People need your attention and your platforms. It's not too much to ask, is it? In Iran, too, people took to the streets for Black Lives Matter. And there the situation with Corona was even more difficult....

Silence makes the Oppressor more cruel, was written on one of the \*protest\* signs back then. The silence is deafening. And we can hear it very clearly. And it hurts like hell. I expect nothing else from Anna-Lena and co. But where are all the real left anti-sexists and super feminists all of a sudden? I've been going out on the streets for all people since I was a teenager and you guys are right where now?

"We want the clerics to get lost. Our mothers didn't have the internet to tell the world what was done to them, but we do. I am here for Nika and for all other Iranian sisters who lost their lives but haven't made the news," Elnaz says (<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/oct/09/iran-protests-schoolgirls-videos-khamenei>).

Baraye Nika. Baraye Sarina. Baraye Minoo. Baraye Asra. Baraye Jina Mahsa.  
Baraye Azadi.

\*\*\*The only thing that might be of interest student-specifically: pointing out the hypocrisy of the mullahs and Iranian elites who, while sending their own kids to European and American universities where they are so not subject to mullah rules, are massacring Iranian students at their Iranian universities (meanwhile, the NYT is tweeting onion soup recipes...different topic...).

Note by the AStA:

This was the Text sent by the AStA one day prior:

About: Solidarity with the Iranian Protest: 19.10. 14:00 Glashalle

Date/ Datum: 19.10. 14:00Place: Glashalle/ Uni Bremen central area

Dear Students,

since weeks there are on-going protests in Iran. Students protest and strike. The repression by the regime is brutal. We want to honor the call for Solidarity from the Iranian People. To share our thoughts and discuss, what can be done, we want to meet at Wednesday at 2 p.m. in the Glashalle. Join us there or send your contact info to [vernetzung\[et\]asta.uni-bremen.de](mailto:vernetzung[et]asta.uni-bremen.de) to stay tuned!