

SHENGAL BETWEEN THE JAWS OF THE ANNIHILATION

Six years after the genocide and
femicide on the Yezidis



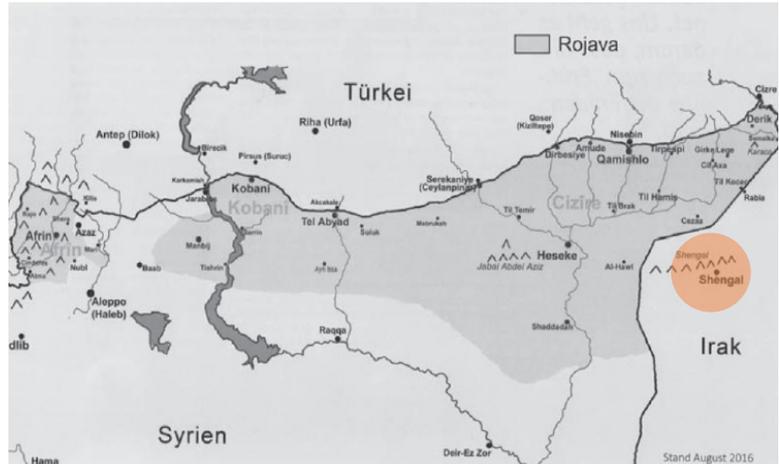
KONGRA STAR
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Introduction

Shengal is located in Southern Kurdistan, the Iraqi part of Kurdistan, 80 km away from the Syrian border. The Yezidis accounted for 70% of the local population.

Historically, and to this day, Yezidi are mainly found in the geographical Kurdish region of Iraq and Syria. According to statistics of the United Nations, the number of the population is about 550.000 people. There is also a Yezidi minority in Turkey and in northern Syria.



Shengal. Source: Medico International (01/2018)

Since the 1980s the population has declined sharply due to extensive emigration to Europe and especially to Germany, where more than 40,000 Yezidi now live.

Why did the Islamic State (ISIS) terrorist target the Yezidis in Iraq and create the suffering of the Yezidi women?

Throughout history, Yezidis have been subjected to numerous massacres, beginning in the nineteenth century, ranging from the Anfal operation to the Sinjar massacre. Throughout their long history, they have been subjected to seventy-three genocides, the last of which was committed by the terrorist organisation ISIS. It was described as genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Yezidis. This genocide took place after the war between ISIS and the Kurdistan region in northern Iraq began. On August 3, 2014, the organization stormed the Shengal region to expand their area of influence, after the Peshmerga forces withdrew suddenly and without any resistance, leaving its people facing their inevitable fate, where tens of thousands of people were forced to flee to Sinjar for fear of the ISIS brutality and were trapped there for several days, where many of them died there because of hunger, thirst, and disease while the rest fell at the hands of ISIS. The ISIS insurgents also took men, women, and children to the school-yards, isolated the men and killed them (in the Kujo village massacre alone, in the district of Shengal, 500 men were shot dead), and nineteen women in Mosul



Yezidi flee Shengal. Source: ANF (18/07/2018)



were burned to death in cages amid international and Arab silence. Many more were arrested and transported them to the Tal Afar district, then onto Mosul, Iraq, and from there to the city of Raqqa in Syria, until they were liberated by the Syrian Democratic Forces.

Every Yezidi woman or girl was sold in the slave market several times, and were subsequently raped and tortured by ISIS elements, forced to remain with their captors until they got bored of them, then sold them or guided them to another, and so on... The Yezidi captives would be bought and sold several times, while the minors had suffered traumatic childhood experiences, infused with injustice, cruelty and suffering. The ISIS Terror Organisation denied the Yezidi children of their most basic rights to a safe and healthy childhood.

Statistics of the genocide of the Yezidi people:

- 550.000 Yezidi people living in Iraq
- 360.000 displaced Yezidis
- 2.745 orphaned children
- 6.417 kidnapped Yezidis, including:
 - 3.548 women
 - 2.869 men
- 3.530 released Yezidis, including:
 - 1.199 women
 - 339 men
 - 1.041 girls
 - 951 boys
- 1.293 dead in the first days
- 2.877 people still detained by ISIS - their fate is unknown:
 - 1308 women
 - 1569 men
- 81 mass graves, in addition to dozens of individual graves
- 68 destroyed shrines by ISIS



The role of women's protection units in Shengal in liberating Yezidi women

In retaliation for the suffering of Yezidi women and with the aim of liberating the abducted women, the Women's Protection Units and the People's Protection Units participated in the Shengal campaign to liberate the city of Raqqa, the alleged capital of the ISIS caliphate. The Euphrates Fury Campaign began on November 10, 2016, during which the city of Tabqa was liberated to reach the city centre of Raqqa. The campaign to liberate Yezidi women continued over the next years, with the campaign of Storm Al-Jazeera in Deir Al-Zour, during which the women's protection units played a leading role in liberating more than three-thousand kidnapped women and children from the Yezidis out of 6,417 previously captured. They were brought to the Yezidi Center, the Women's Commission in Al-Jazeera province and psychological support was provided to the freed women. The women's commission would return the Yezidis to their normal lives and help them integrate back into their community, and they were later taken under the care of the Shengal Women's Council who reunited the freed



YJŞ and YPJ in Raqqa. Source: greenleft.org.au (23/09/2017)

women back to their families. The Women of Shengal movement took the initiative to help women and children get rid of fear and depression, in addition to treating children psychologically in order to get rid of the dark ideas that ISIS mercenaries had cultivated in their minds, returning them to their normal lives and integrating them back into Yezidi society.

In this regard, the joint chairperson of the Yezidi Center in the Cizire region, Leila Ibrahim, said: "After this horrific massacre of our people and the injustice we have suffered at the hands of ISIS, we have organized ourselves and are striving to provide all kinds of support to freed Yezidi women and helping them out of fear and depression that they were subjected to and the negative effects that this left on them during their stay under the oppression of ISIS. And we have become the will and strength, and with this we formed the Women's Protection Forces, the formation of the Shengal Council and the Women's Council, and all these organizations in order not to repeat such massacres and extermination against our people, and despite all that has happened, many of the displaced Yezidis have returned to protect their lands.

Laila Ibrahim criticized the great negligence on the part of the Iraqi government and its failure to perform its duty towards the Yezidis and said: "Until now the Iraqi government has failed to give the Yezidi their rights. Because Shengal is considered part of the state of Iraq, the state is obliged to carry out its legal duty towards the Yezidis. However It did not provide them with any support, nor did it perform its duty in documenting the number and names of the missing".

These violations are still continuing against the Yezidis despite the formation and organization of their civil and military councils, and their leaders such as Zaki Shankali and Zardakat Shankali were targeted by the drones of the Turkish state, which insist and claim to destroy the project of the democratic nation, the brotherhood of peoples, and peaceful living in the region.



The international position on the Yezidi people and the demands of the Yezidi people

Despite the holding of dozens of international meetings calling for human rights, no one has recognized the Shengal massacre and the genocide that its people were subjected to, and no international tribunal was held to hold the perpetrators of these inhuman crimes. Or to hold to account the countries that contributed to the commitment of this genocide. Appeals have been made to human rights organizations but to no avail. Therefore we call upon all states to recognize the Yezidi people as a peaceful people with a history and culture spanning thousands of years within the region, living alongside all sects on the basis of the brotherhood of the peoples, and to recognize the autonomy of Shengal.

We also demand justice and an international court to hold perpetrators of these crimes accountable and to hold the countries that supported them accountable.

Kongra Star

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Demonstration of Yezidi women. Source: ANF (29/03/2018)



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