

# **The Turkmen of Iraq**

Underestimated, Marginalized and  
Exposed to Assimilation

Dr. Sheth Jerjis



Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights  
Research Foundation - The Netherlands

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The Iraqi Turkmen Human  
Rights Research Foundation  
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To my dear friend Yaşar Cengiz  
In the first anniversary of his departure

---

He was born in "Musalla" Neighborhood of Kerkuk, Iraq in 1954; studied the primary school in Hassa Primary School, and the secondary school in "Musalla Senior School. He was qualified from the faculty of literary, Department of Turkish literary, Baghdad University in 1979. He worked for a while in the Turkmen department, at Baghdad Radio. He completed his compulsive military service in the Iraqi Army. Then joined to Post-graduate study in the same department which he had had his basic degree.

He was arrested by Ba'ath Regime and was life sentenced in 1988, released at 9<sup>th</sup> April 2003. He died in car accident at 08.12.2005

He devoted his life for his people.

Before his death he was in charge of the following posts:

- Member of Turkmen council
- Secretary of Turkmeneli party
- Head of the association of the Turkmen political prisoners and martyrs.
- Liaison member between the Turkmeneli Party and Turkmen council and the united Turkmen Front and the General Election Commission.



**Yaşar (Ömer Emin) Cengiz**  
**(01.07.1954 – 08.12.2004)**

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Publication of



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“Underestimation of the Turkmen population size by the United Kingdom in the 1920s (during discussions of Mosul Issue in the Lozano Negotiations and League of Nations) established a base for successive Iraqi governments and now for the USA and the Kurdish authorities to violate the Turkmen Human Rights and marginalize them”

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## Preface

I was working on a book, in English, about the Turkmen of Iraq; their history, geographical distribution and main cities, population, long exposure to assimilation policies, organizations and publications; Iraq was occupied by the USA and English troops.

The new state of affairs and the aggressive policy of the USA authorities against the Turkmen, which in many occasions reached to the degree of ethnic cleansing, required hard work to introduce the Turkmen of Iraq into the western community and to inform western community, particularly, the decision making authorities about the violation of Turkmen Human Rights.

The great lack of information about the Turkmen of Iraq in the western literature and media was an additional factor which rendered the mission more difficult.

The intensively and lengthily engagement of western politicians, press, civil organizations and even academics in the Kurdish issue, as if there are no other ethnic or sectarian factions in Iraq or Middle East, can be considered one of the important factors which deprived the other ethnic groups in Middle East from western awareness.

The lack of communication and inadequately functioning Turkmen organizations and absence of Turkmen media, added further burden on the labor to reach to the reliable information about the events taking place in Turkmen regions. These factors are still not sufficiently improved to bring the great difficulties of the large Turkmen community on the international agenda.

The following activities had been achieved:

- Publication of weekly Arabic electronic Journal of the Iraqi Turkmen (<http://www.turkmen.nl/index75.html>) at 5 October 2003
- Arrangement of meetings with the European politicians, civil society organizations, Parliamentarians and press to discuss the Turkmen of Iraq, which is greatly unknown for the western communities, and the difficult situation under occupation.
- Attending the international conferences
- Preparing reports, speeches and statements on the major issues concerning Turkmen

- Launching the Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation Website ([www.turkmen.nl](http://www.turkmen.nl)) to publish reports

Transliteration of the Arabic and Turkish words is written in a well recognized system.

Many kind friends played important role in reviewing the contents for the English language: Mofak Salman, Ayoub Bazzaz, Orhan Ketene and Imad Saqi. Mohammed Kelenchy translated one of the longest articles and reviewed several others for English language.

The intensive review of the first report on the Ba'ath period by English teacher MMB Goverde-Lips have been invaluable. The contributions of Hassan Aydenly and Merry Fitzgerald have been great in both the field of language corrections and important comments.

It can not be denied that the sharpness of the temper in the eastern nature and the acuteness of the conflict between different sections of the Iraqi community had been involuntarily echoed in the lines of this book. The best has been done to keep on objective presentation and to give the independent references when needed.

Dr. Sheth Jerjis  
08 December 2005