

MAKHMUR ISLAND

by Alba Cambeiro

Freelance photojournalist born in Galicia (Spain) and now based in Istanbul. After finishing her Media Communication Bachelor Degree, she studied a Master in Photography and a postgraduate degree in Photojournalism at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Her work covers themes at the forefront of Middle East politics with a special focus on social and gender issues.

In 1994 thirteen thousand people from Bakur (Turkish Kurdistan) were forced to cross the border into Iraq. Since 1998 they live in a settlement located 60 kilometers from Erbil, capital of the Kurdistan Regional Government. This political refugee camp has survived 20 years with hardly any international help, and now there is already a third generation of young stateless people who were born in the desert. The settlement is located between the current jurisdictions of the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, and is managed by the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party). Makhmur is also the birth place of Democratic Confederalism, a democratic system whose pillars are cooperative economics, feminism and ecology, and works through a People's Assembly, executive body that obeys the decisions taken in the different neighborhood communes, and Committees that are responsible for different areas of the camp's management.