



From Fatwā to Genocide

**Historic and Contemporary Manifestations
of the Islamic Genocide against the Yezidis**

Qader Saleem Shammo

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of the Islamic Genocide against the Yezidis

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Umschlagabbildung: *Swarê bi Tinê* (meaning *The Lonely Knight*) located in Rikava Village, Duhok Province, Iraqi Kurdistan Region, taken in December 2021 by the author.

This book emerges from the results of my postdoctoral research, conducted at the Chair of Prof. Dr. Andreas Kaplony at the Institute of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) Munich, Germany, between March 2017 and the summer of 2021.

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Author's Note

This book stems from my postdoctoral research, conducted between March 2017 and the summer of 2021 at the Chair of Prof. Dr. Andreas Kaplony, Institute of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) Munich, Germany.

More than five years after the manuscript was completed and prepared for publication, unforeseen research developments, together with my engagement in new projects closely related to this study, required a postponement of its publication. This interval allowed for minor structural revisions, which are reflected in the version now presented.

A substantial portion of the original material has been omitted. In particular, sections concerning the fatwās of Arab scholars on the Yezidis, initially part of my first postdoctoral project, have been excluded, as they were published in my book: *After the 2014 Genocide: Islamic Scholars' Perception of the Yezidis and Yezidism* (2025). This decision avoids duplication and maintains the coherence and distinctiveness of the present work.

Similarly, the full translations and transcriptions of interviews with Yezidi survivors of ISIS captivity, which were a key component of my postdoctoral project were removed. These interviews capture the authentic voices of Yezidi survivors and serve as a vital historical record and research resource. For this volume, I have omitted the full interviews but retained numerous direct quotations relevant to other sections of the study.

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Firstly, I am deeply grateful to Prof. Dr. Andreas Kaplony for welcoming me to the Institute of Near and Middle Eastern Studies at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München and for providing me with a workspace that enabled me to carry out my postdoctoral research. This opportunity opened wide academic doors for me, placing me in a rich and stimulating scholarly environment and offering opportunities that inspired me to continue and complete further research studies. I am especially thankful for his close attention to my postdoctoral topic and for his extremely valuable advice. His recommendations and comments were instrumental in the development of this work and had a clear and significant impact on the present research.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation to Prof. Dr. Sebastian Maisel (University of Leipzig) for his willingness to review this book and to write its foreword. I am especially grateful for his invaluable advice, comments, and remarks, which greatly contributed to the development and clarification of my ideas.

The efforts of my very dear friend Mr. Robert Leutheuser, the American Photographer and longtime guest, friend, photographer, and student of Yezidis, who accompanied me through every step of writing this topic, are greatly appreciated. He provided many photographs that published in this study. He was not only the editor but also the first foreign reader of my work. Therefore, his comments and notices were very helpful for clarifying many points of this work. For this kindheartedness, I want to express my sincere gratitude to him.

I also express my deepest thanks to my brother Dilgash Saleem Shammo for conducting and video recording many interviews with Yezidi survivors of ISIS. His efforts provided me much time to use it in other aspects for developing this study.

Finally, I hereby express my thanks to all people those I made interviews with them and kindly dedicated their time to answer my questions with open hearts.

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Foreword

The history of the Yezidi religion reaches far beyond the written sources and archaeological findings of Mesopotamia. According to Yezidi belief, God created the earth as a pearl and placed the Peacock Angel in charge of its destiny. For generations, Yezidi women and men have lived according to the tenets of their faith and culture, which include the prayer: May God first protect the 72 nations before He protects us. Yet other nations, religions, and peoples did not always allow the Yezidis to practice their religion and coexist peacefully with them. Instead, 74 *fermans* documenting persecution and genocide are recorded in the Yezidi collective memory, with the genocide committed by the so-called Islamic State in August 2014 being the most recent.

What have we learned from this long history of persecution and genocide? What do we truly know about this small community that is known for its peaceful character, yet has so often been the victim of repeated attempts at destruction? In their homeland in present-day Iraq, particularly in the Sheikhan region and on Sinjar Mountain, the Yezidis struggled but nevertheless managed to survive in a hostile environment. Here, “hostile” refers not only to harsh weather conditions and the scarcity of water, but also to the hostile attitudes of neighboring communities. Historians trace the presence of the Yezidi community back to the period when the Seljuks, Mongols, and other Muslim groups controlled northern Mesopotamia, an area well known for its ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity. Subsequent rulers, such as the Safavids, the Ottomans, and various Arab Bedouin tribes, continued policies of attacking the Yezidis, forcibly converting them, killing the men, enslaving the women, and destroying villages. This historical pattern of persecution has continued into the modern era, and radical militants of the Islamic State wrote another tragic chapter in 2014 when they committed these very acts against the Yezidi community.

This raises an important question: why?

The answer can be found in the writings, documents, and sources produced by Islamic leaders, clerics, and activists over centuries. Legal and spiritual “justifications” for violence against the Yezidis, as well as guidance on how such acts should be carried out, appear in the fatwas of Islamic scholars, clerics, and officials beginning in the sixteenth century. It appears that contemporary genocidal campaigns often employ strategies similar to those used in earlier centuries, including the incitement of mobs and the mobilization of violence against peaceful neighbors through religious propaganda. As happened five hundred years ago – and again in more recent decades – the mob, often composed of former neighbors, colleagues, and fellow citizens, listened to such calls and proved willing to participate in acts of violence.

These documents reveal the mindset and attitudes of the communities in which they were produced, their collective self-image, and the distorted perceptions of the “other.” Misinformation, rumors, lies, and radical or intolerant interpretations of religious doctrine have shaped the perception of the Yezidis in many Muslim societies. The consequences have been dramatic and traumatic. Then, as now, cyclical campaigns of indoctrination and radicalization were followed by periods of military attacks and genocidal violence.

At this point, history offers an opportunity for reflection and learning. Qader Saleem Shammo’s book *From Fatwā to Genocide: Historic and Contemporary Manifestations of the Islamic Genocide against the Yezidis* provides readers with a valuable tool for examining the historical mindset that contributed to hostility toward the Yezidi community and for uncovering evidence of anti-Yezidi beliefs and actions. Dr. Shammo painstakingly and meticulously analyzes historic documents, handwritten manuscripts, and other sources in search of answers to a painful question: where does this hatred originate? He has located, edited, and examined fatwas written for the explicit purpose of legitimizing the elimination of the Yezidis. At the same time, the reader learns about the authors of these fatwas, their worldview, and the historical circumstances in which these texts were written, spanning a period of more than five hundred years. With this information, Dr. Shammo skillfully illustrates both the Islamic

self-image of the time and the distorted image constructed of the Yezidi “other.” In doing so, he enables readers – especially those directly affected by this long-standing conflict – to better understand how these developments occurred and what must be done to ensure that such tragedies are never repeated.

At the same time, this book should also be read by a wider audience of actors and stakeholders: local communities, politicians, community leaders, religious authorities, decision-makers, and ordinary citizens who may easily be misled by misinformation and prejudice. There is an urgent need to circulate this type of knowledge among both Muslim and Yezidi communities in order to challenge long-standing prejudices and to begin the difficult but necessary process of reconciliation. We owe this effort to the victims and survivors of these genocides.

by Prof. Dr. Sebastian Maisel, Leipzig University

Introduction

The invasion of ISIS¹ (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) in August 2014 was not the first assault carried out under the banner of Islam against the Yezidis. Throughout their history, the Yezidis have endured numerous genocidal campaigns, each justified in the name of Islam and carried out using similar religious and political reasoning. The patterns of these assaults have remained remarkably consistent, forced conversion from Yezidism to Islam, mass executions (particularly of Yezidi men and elderly women), captivity and enslavement (especially of younger women, girls, and children), the destruction of temples and shrines, and the looting of property.

As with many earlier Islamic authorities, ISIS did not recognize Yezidism as a legitimate religion. In its official statements and online publications, particularly in the magazine *Dabiq*, ISIS asserted that *šarī'a* (Islamic law) and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) permit the enslavement of Yezidi women, girls, and children, as well as the killing of Yezidi men. This stance was justified by categorizing the Yezidis as polytheists or pagans, a religious classification deemed even worse than apostasy. By contrast, Christians and Jews were considered “People of the Book” and, under ISIS’s interpretation, could be granted conditional protection² if captured.

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- 1 ISIS is also known as IS (Islamic State), ISIL (Islamic State in the Levant), and Dā'ish in Arabic.
- 2 For example, in Raqqa and Mosul, the Islamic State issued documents regarding to the Christians status in the Islamic State. One of those documents entitled “The text of the covenant of safety, which the Islamic State gave to the Christians of Raqqa in exchange for their commitment to the provisions of the *dimma*”, includes twelve provisions which were given to Christians in exchange for avoiding the Islamic State evil, or “protection” as the document mentions. However, it considered the Christians as “People of the Book,” subject to paying *jizyah* provisions and restrictions. A second document entitled “Statement” issued in Mosul includes an explanation about non-compliance of Christians to attend an appointment previously set for them by the Islamic State to declare their decision in Nineveh province, and three points (judgments or provisions) that they offered to the Christians: to convert to Islam, or to pay *jizah*, or to die by sword. (Sievert 2015: 75–77).

ISIS's proclamations provoked considerable debate within Muslim circles concerning Islam's position toward the Yezidis. Some Muslims endorsed ISIS's religious justification, while others rejected it, though few took meaningful action against the ISIS. Meanwhile, the Yezidis themselves argued that the atrocities committed by ISIS in 2014 merely represented a continuation of the long history of persecution they had suffered under Islamic rules. From their perspective, the recent genocide was not an isolated event, but rather the modern expression of an enduring pattern of violence and oppression.

Muslim scholars and writers were never unified in their views regarding Yezidism, particularly concerning the origins of the religion. Over time, some have modified their positions, producing works that reflect both traditional and more contemporary understandings influenced by recent conflicts. Nevertheless, many Muslim authors continue to deny Yezidism the status of an independent faith. Others describe Yezidis as "devil worshippers," "unbelievers," "pagans," or as a heretical sect that broke away from Islam – apostates. This last view remains the most prevalent within Islamic religious discourse and among the general Muslim population, particularly in Iraq.

The stance of official Islamic and governmental authorities in Iraq has also evolved over time. Yezidism was formally recognized as an independent religion under the Iraqi Constitution of 2005. In contrast, in Turkey, the Yezidis are still labeled *dinsiz* meaning "godless" or "irreligious." However, Iraq's constitutional recognition has not been translated into equal rights or adequate protection for the Yezidi community. The ISIS invasion, which occurred a decade after the constitution's ratification, tragically demonstrated that legal recognition alone is insufficient to safeguard a vulnerable minority from religious extremism and state neglect.

As long as no serious measures are taken to protect the Yezidis and to confront the ideologies that fuel religious extremism, the threat of renewed persecution remains. The future safety of the Yezidi people depends not only on political recognition but on a sustained moral and legal commitment to defend them from the violence that has haunted their history for centuries.

Structure of the Study

This study is structured into an introduction and two main parts that form the core of the research. Each part is divided into several chapters, and each chapter comprises a number of principal sections or subsections. The study concludes with a general conclusion, an appendix, a photographic album, and a bibliography.

The Introduction provides a brief presentation of the topic and outlines the overall structure of the research. It also describes the methodology and approach adopted in this study.

Part One, entitled “Historical and Contemporary Islamic Fatwās Issued against Yezidis,” analyzes Islamic fatwās directed against the Yezidis from historical times to the present which issued by Islamic State’s *muftis* and clerics. The purpose of this part is to investigate these fatwās in order to derive Islamic jurisprudential perspectives toward the Yezidis, to explain how the Yezidis and their beliefs were described in these fatwās, and to clarify the Islamic legal rulings regarding how to deal with them based on what is stated in those fatwās, as well as the motivations behind their issuance.

The first Chapter of this part, explores common patterns found in fatwās and in Islamic campaigns or raids against the Yezidis throughout history and into the contemporary era, which were carried out under the banner of Islamic religion. Additionally, it traces the roots of Islamic hostility and examines the treatment of Yezidis by Muslim communities and authorities throughout history.

ISIS’s invasion of the Yezidi heartland in northern Iraq and Syria is a central focus of this research. The first part of the study, titled “ISIS Genocide of Yezidis: The Present Face of Historical Islamic Invasions against Yezidis,” also introduces key points relevant to the entire study. Two other key sections are “What is a Fatwā” and “Who has the Right to Issue a Fatwā.”

Chapter Two of this part examines the core of Islamic fatwās, particularly those issued by Kurdish scholars and mullās against or concerning Yezidis throughout history. The section “Historical Fatwās against Yezidis” investigates fatwās, including their historical context and the reasons for their issuance.

The next chapter focuses on contemporary Islamic fatwās against Yezidis, with an emphasis on examining the ISIS fatwās issued against them.

Part Two, of this study is entitled “Islamic Hostile Attempts to Destroy and Exterminate Yezidi Religion and Community.” In this part, I compare the ISIS campaign with other historical Islamic campaigns against Yezidis. Due to their large number and in order to avoid the repetition of historical events, I use a selection of past campaigns to establish their similarities to those of ISIS.

I have also organized Part Two into several core divisions or chapters. In a chapter I search for the roots of the Islamic ideology of enslavement of Yezidi women. The other essential aspect that I address in this division is that of Yezidi captives in the Islamic slavery and slave markets (*Sūq al-Ṣabāyā*) historically and present. I explore the historical background of Yezidi captives in the Islamic slavery and slave markets particularly during the Ottoman eras. Then, I shift my focus on the examination for present Islamic enslavement of Yezidis, especially the process of purchasing Yezidi captives in slave markets of ISIS. I explore the types of ISIS slave markets – the live slave markets, and the virtual internet slave markets. Additionally, I inspect the enslavement of Yezidis under ISIS, ISIS rules governing slavery markets and the resale of Yezidi women, girls, and children. Lastly, I investigate the role official institutions of ISIS concerning the slavery and enslavement in the ISIS Governorates.

The other chapter of Part Two is entitled “Attempt to Annihilate Yezidi Religion and Community.” It looks at Islam’s historical and contemporary attempts to obliterate the existence of the Yezidi religion and society through several main ways. The aspects that are explored in this division are the destruction of Yezidi religious sites and symbols of worship as well as acts against Yezidi through their invasions such as looting of property, mass killings, and forced conversions of Yezidis to Islam. Furthermore, this division gives attention to subject of the indoctrination of Yezidi children into the radical Islam of ISIS.

The following chapter from Part Two is entitled “The Unknown Future Awaiting Yezidism and Yezidi Survivors.” It addresses the impact of the 2014 ISIS invasion on the Yezidis – their society, their religion, and their future. This division is divided into two main sub-sections, the first, entitled “The Fate of Yezidi Victims of Women and Children of ISIS Invasion,” explores the

fate of Yezidi survivors from ISIS, their position among the Yezidi community, and Islamic religious principles and state laws that impact the survivors' status. It also describes the suffering of the survivors in the captivity, and the psychological challenges facing them following their returns.

The second sub-section of this division is entitled "Captives and Children of ISIS Rapists." The Yezidi women and girls' captives were subjected to many types of sexual enslavement and rape. Many of the women and girls became pregnant and gave birth in captivity or upon their release. I discuss the core points concerning these children, including their position in the Yezidi society and the Islamic opinions on them.

The final section of the body text of this study is the Conclusion which outlines the results of this research.

In the Appendix, I include copies of some of the most important documents I discovered while conducting this research to further support the core conclusions of this study. Similarly, there is an album of photographs documenting some of the ISIS destruction of Yezidi shines and religious places, mass graves, and Yezidi homes and villages. They are the valuable evidence for documenting part of this Islamic invasion against Yezidi in the 2014 and the following years. Finally, the bibliography contains information of all documents and references that used as sources of information.

Methodology

I depend on numerous sources for this study published in multiple languages including Arabic, English, Kurdish, German, French, Turkish and Persian³. These resources included: Historical and modern Islamic sources; ISIS documents; personal interviews with Yezidi ISIS survivors; the confessions (which made in the courts) and the statements of ISIS jihadists; official government statements, academic research; published international journalist

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3 For those sources in French, Persian, and Turkish I depended on translation assistance from my colleagues Kianoosh Sadigh, Sabrina Zahren and Hüseyin Mutlu at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München Munich.

reports; human rights and NGO reports, internet videos; and, my personal observations and experiences.

I obtained documents and resources from many different sources and libraries. For the written sources, I primarily relied on Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (BSB) and on the university libraries of LMU München and Goethe Universität Frankfurt am Main, as well as my personal library. Additionally, I have accessed information from the digital sources from Internet.

On August 3, 2014, ISIS captured thousands of Yezidi women, girls, children, and men. Many of them survived and escaped, while others remain in the captivity of ISIS or in the hands of Muslim families supporting ISIS's extreme interpretation of Islam. Still others are missing, their fates unknown. The testimonials of these survivors have become crucial evidence exposing the actions of ISIS, particularly regarding forced conversion, mass killings, sexual slavery, and the operation of ISIS's slave markets.

Many survivors recount similar experiences, which helps to provide additional detail about the events while independently substantiating the accuracy of the accounts. Despite the relatively small number of interviews, their content aligns with numerous other interviews conducted by researchers outside this study. They also reflect the experiences of the majority of Yezidi captives during their time in ISIS slave markets and prisons.

The interviews with Yezidi captive survivors were the primary source of information for the analysis of this study. I want to point out that although I was able to accurately transcribe more than 30 interviews, I was not able to communicate their emotional feelings which revealed the profound depth of their suffering at the hands of ISIS jihadists. During the interviews when they were explaining their situations during the periods of captivity, they anguished and frequently started to cry. So, although I might document the events, I cannot convey the reality of the cases of ISIS *jihadists'* inhumane treatments of Yezidi captives. The interviewed persons were of both genders and of different ages: children, young, and old, with most being younger-to-middle aged women.

My brother, Dilgash Saleem Shammo, and I conducted the documentation of the interviews by videotaping most of them and audio-recording the remainder. All recordings are preserved in my personal archive in the form

of CDs and digital files. Later I carefully watched and listened to them and translated narratives from Kurdish (*Kurmānjī* dialect) to English. It must be noted that I was careful to make sure that the translations were in their true voices, only making grammatical changes as necessary.

Most of the interviews were free flowing in open conversations. In every interview I followed-up with questions as needed to more clarification. The interviews were conducted from January 2015 through January 2019.

Through all the interviews, the survivors used the Arabic word “*Daʿīsh* داعش” when referring to ISIS members or jihadists. I elected to use the term “ISIS jihadist” (Arabic term, *muḡāhid*, plural *muḡāhidūn*) for them because those who belonged to ISIS were Sunni Muslims from many different regions and nationalities, and the common goal that gathered them together was jihad – *jihad*.

As an editorial note, I have omitted brief portions of the recorded interviews, denoting these omissions with “[...]”. These omissions were made either due to the repetition of information or because the information provided was very vague or general.

Although I recorded the names and other information of those interviewed, I have been very careful to protect their privacy/identities. Therefore, I have avoided to include the full names of the interviewed victims in the text, the references, and the bibliography of this study.

This study also draws on the confessions of ISIS jihadists, many of whom were arrested by Iraqi intelligence agencies. Interviews conducted by official Iraqi television stations with these individuals provided additional key insights. ISIS’s own publications, particularly its online magazine *Dabiq*, offered further documentation of its campaign against the Yezidis.

Between 2015 and 2020, I conducted multiple extended visits to Iraq, where I spent time with Yezidi survivors and carried out interviews. Beyond the information these interviews provided, personal observations offered unique insights into the experiences of survivors and the broader impact of the ISIS invasion.

Historical Islamic sources on the Yezidis are limited. Muslim authors only began addressing Yezidism more systematically in the mid-twentieth century, often producing works riddled with inaccuracies and misunderstandings.

These errors, however, are themselves revealing of broader Islamic attitudes toward the Yezidis.

International media, both print and digital, as well as academic research on the ISIS invasion were also instrumental, providing diverse perspectives on events.

The main obstacle I faced researching this subject was the difficulty in obtaining copies of the original *fatwās*, especially those issued during the Ottoman era. Even the original copies or manuscripts that I was able to locate usually did not contain clear information as to the authors, and often they did not carry a clear date.

PART I:
HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY
ISLAMIC FATWĀS ISSUED
AGAINST YEZIDIS

1 A History of Religiously Justified Violence against the Yezidis from Early Islamic Conquests to ISIS

Throughout history and into contemporary times, the Yezidi community has subjected to continuous persecution arranged by Islamic authorities, often with the active collaboration of Muslim communities, and with the blessing of Muslim religious leaders. These leaders have issued fatwas and religious decrees against the Yezidis, regularly legitimizing acts of violence and genocide. Such acts have included the killing of Yezidi men, the captivity of their women, the plundering of their property, and other heinous acts. The Yezidis' distinct religious identity has been a focal point, serving as the primary justification for these invasions and acts of oppression.

Therefore, talking about the genocides that occurred against the Yezidis and understanding the reasons that provided an appropriate (a conducive) environment for committing such brutal acts against them, is only possible by investigating the Islamic religious discourse towards the Yezidis. This examination is crucial for understanding the underlying motivations and justifications for the continuous persecution faced by this community.

1.1 Global and International Recognition of the 2014 Yezidi Genocide

The ISIS crimes against Yezidis fully meets the United Nations definition of genocide⁴, and accordingly it has been widely recognized as such. The international communities including United Nations institutions, and many national parliaments have recognized that ISIS's crimes against the Yezidis

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4 About the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, see, International Criminal Court 2011: 3. Shirinian 2017: 61.

constitute genocide. The following are some of those states, entities, and international organizations that have recognized the Yezidi genocide: The United Nations⁵, the US Holocaust Museum⁶, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament⁷, US House of Representatives on March 14, 2016⁸, UK House of Commons April 20, 2016⁹, Canadian House of Commons on June 16, 2016¹⁰, French National Assembly December 8, 2016¹¹, Armenian Parliament January 16, 2018¹², Scottish Parliament March 23, 2017¹³, Australian Parliament on February 26, 2018¹⁴, Portuguese Parliament on November 27, 2019¹⁵.

There has also been recognition of the genocide at the local level: The Iraqi Council of Ministers did so in 2014¹⁶; and on August 3, 2019, the Kurdistan Regional Government's parliament did so¹⁷. The positions of Muslim countries and Islamic international organizations¹⁸, is like the position of Muslim communities towards ISIS – they avoid the recognition of the acts of ISIS against Yezidis as genocide¹⁹.

Moreover, on May 13, 2021, Karim Khan, head of UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by the Islamic State against

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- 5 Vajda and Vidlička 2019: 19. Human Rights Council, Thirty-second session agenda item 4 (15 June 2016): 1. UN News (16 June 2016).
 - 6 Petrou 2019: 298.
 - 7 European Parliament (March 12, 2015). Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 220–221.
 - 8 114th Congress (2015–2016).
 - 9 UK Parliament (20 April 2016).
 - 10 Canadian House of Commons on June 16, 2016.
 - 11 ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE (08 décembre 2016).
 - 12 ARMENPRESS (January 16, 2018).
 - 13 Scottish Parliament (March 23, 2017).
 - 14 Australian Parliament (February 26, 2018).
 - 15 Comissão de Negócios Estrangeiros e Comunidades Portuguesas (November 27, 2019).
 - 16 Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 218. Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR) 2018: 6.
 - 17 Bārzānī (August 3, 2019).
 - 18 Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 221.
 - 19 Ibid., 221.

Yezidis, declared: “Based on the synthesis of all material collected, UNITAD’s independent evidence, based investigations has now concluded that there is clear and convincing evidence that the crimes committed by ISIL against the Yezidi community constitutes the crime of genocide²⁰.”

The process of international recognition has progressed gradually. On July 6, 2021, the Netherlands House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer) voted unanimously to recognize the Yezidi genocide²¹. Shortly thereafter, on July 15, 2021, the Belgian Parliament, through its Foreign Relations Committee, officially recognized the atrocities committed against the Yezidi community as genocide²². Most recently, on December 17, 2024, the Swiss Parliament also unanimously recognized the acts perpetrated by the Islamic State (ISIS) against the Yezidis as genocide²³.

The recognition by Germany, home of the largest Yezidi diaspora group, however, carries particular significance for the Yezidi community. On January 18, 2023, the German Bundestag officially recognized the 2014 Yezidi genocide and voted unanimously in favor of the petition. While largely symbolic, the decision reflected the commitment of the German government and people to support the Yezidi community in their pursuit of justice. Unlike previous recognitions, Germany’s resolution incorporated detailed provisions demonstrating a concrete commitment and demands to supporting the community and fostering improved conditions for its future²⁴.

The Bundestag recognized that the crimes committed by ISIS in 2014 constitute genocide under the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Parliamentarians called on the German government to continue supporting international and national mechanisms for investigating the genocide, including strengthening the mandate of UNITAD, the UN Investigative Team for ISIS Crimes. The motion further emphasized that the prosecution of ISIS perpetrators in Germany

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20 UNITAD Iraq (May 13, 2021): Documentary: YouTube.

21 Tweede Kammer (July 1–6, 2021).

22 LA CHAMBRE:BE (July 15, 2021).

23 The Federal Assembly – The Swiss Parliament. (December 17, 2021).

24 Deutscher Bundestag (January 19, 2023).

should continue consistently and be expanded, including through reinforced cooperation with Eurojust and the establishment of a dedicated legal assistance unit²⁵.

Germany also urged the Iraqi government to sign and ratify the Rome Statute and to reform its criminal code so that genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes can be prosecuted beyond terrorism-related offenses. Additional measures highlighted by the Bundestag included increased financial support for evidence collection in Iraq, assistance in locating abducted or missing Yezidis, and aid for rebuilding destroyed towns and villages to facilitate the return of the 300,000 displaced members of the community²⁶.

Furthermore, many Yezidis who have sought refuge in Germany continue to face challenges related to their residence status. The Yezidi community hopes that this official recognition by Germany will help address these issues and ensure a more stable future for them in the country, given their unique humanitarian and social circumstances that set them apart from other refugee groups.

Although the Yezidi genocide by ISIS has become widely known, and efforts by the Yezidi community for its recognition have produced some acknowledgment in recent years, the victims of this genocide have still not received justice, and the perpetrators have not been held accountable. Consequently, the Yezidis continue their struggle to achieve legal and international recognition and pursue global justice for the crimes committed against their community.

1.2 Historical Roots of Anti-Yezidi Violence in Islamic Thought and Practice

The arrival of Islam in the Yezidi heartland located in what is now northern Iraq and southeastern Turkey, also known as Dasin Land or Dasnāyē, which was ruled by Dasinian princes in the 7th century and onwards, marked the

.....
25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

beginning of the Yezidis' transformation into a religious minority in the region, and eventually into a cultural minority as well, thereby shaping their *socio-religious identity*.

In 640/641, Muslim troops conquered the Yezidis and seized control of their region²⁷. According to Ibn al-Aṭīr (died in 630 A.H./1232 C.E.), many Yezidis were killed, and many others were captured²⁸. Islam does not recognize Yezidism as a religion, and the Yezidis are considered to be outside the community of Islam. They did not – and still do not – enjoy the rights and protection extended to the so-called *Ahl al-Kitāb* “People of the Book,” such as Jews, Christians, and even Zoroastrians.

Exacerbating Islamic hostility toward the Yezidis was, and remains, the Yezidi belief in one God who is the source of both *good* and *evil*. This doctrine denies the existence of the devil as a separate entity, leading some Muslims to associate the Islamic Iblis or devil with Ṭāwusī-Melek (the archangel in Yezidi belief). Consequently, the Yezidis were labeled as devil worshippers and unbelievers (*kāfir* – *kuffār*). Moreover, Muslims have often regarded Yezidis as pagans and/or apostates from Islam.

These factors became the main reasons for issuing numerous Islamic fatwās, religious edicts prepared by Islamic legal and religious scholars, and for launching campaigns against the Yezidi community. It is worth noting that, instead of preventing such fatwās, which incited Muslims to persecute Yezidis, the Islamic authorities not only supported those scholars but, in some cases, even requested the issuance of such fatwās.

Moreover, the unclear early history of Yezidism and its origins helped both Islamic religious and political authorities label the Yezidis with names that served (and continue to serve) their own aims.

We do not know much about the Yezidis and their religion prior to the 12th century and the arrival of Šayḥ ‘Adī in Lalish, the main temple of the Yezidis worldwide. It is not known exactly how Šayḥ ‘Adī became connected with the Yezidi dogma, which existed before his arrival in their land in the

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27 Ibn al-Aṭīr 1987: 6/57–58. al-Balāḍūrī 1901: 339.

28 Ibn al-Aṭīr 1987: 6/58.

12th century, but there is no doubt that he played a critically important role in creating a new era in the Yezidi community.

This influence became especially significant after his death in the second half of the 12th century, when his followers formed a mystical order within the Yezidi community that continues to this day. Since that time, Lalish and many Yezidi religious ceremonies have been associated with Šayḥ ‘Adī and his tomb buried there. This renewed Yezidi community was met with considerable hostility from the authorities of Šarī‘a and Islamic law, which led to tensions with the surrounding Islamic community.

Consequently, the Islamic attacks against the Yezidi community were re-energized. In 1254, the mayor of Mosul, Badr al-Dīn Lu‘lu’, led a large army of mainstream Muslims and attacked the Yezidis, killing many of them²⁹. He also sent men to exhume Šayḥ ‘Adī’s remains from the Lalish temple and burn them³⁰. The attacks continued, and in 1414, after the Yezidis had rebuilt the Lalish sanctuary, it was once again destroyed by Ğālāl al-Dīn Yūsuf al-Ḥalawānī al-Šāfī‘ī, with the support of Kurdish leaders, and was subsequently rebuilt again³¹.

Throughout history, but especially during the Ottoman Empire (1453–1918), the Yezidis were subjected to similar attacks at the hands of Ottoman (Sunni Muslim) authorities³². They suffered persecution and injustice because of their religious beliefs. The Yezidis were often forced to choose between conversion to Islam and death by the sword.

On August 3, 2014, the militant forces of the Islamic State (IS), also known as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), or in Arabic *Da‘iṣ* (داعش), attacked the town of Sinjar, along with other Yezidi areas in the Sheikhan (Šayḥān) district on August 7, 2014, in the Nineveh Province. These assaults were followed by additional and continued brutal attacks against the Yezidis in the Sinjar region and beyond. As the militants stormed through these areas, they demanded that the Yezidis convert to Islam or face death.

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29 Ibn al-Fūṭī 1997: 315. al-Kukubī 1973: 1/335. al-Ġassānī 1975: 2/601. Guest 1987: 21.

30 Ibn al-Fūṭī 1997: 315. al-Kukubī 1973: 1/335. al-Ġassānī 1975: 2/601. Guest 1987: 21.

31 al-Maqrīzī 1997: 6/370. al-Ḥanafī 1984: 2/18. al-Ḥanafī 2002: 1/277–278.

32 For details about the Ottoman military campaigns, see, Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 27–184.

ISIS jihadists committed horrific acts against Yezidi communities in Iraq and Syria during the August 3, 2014 attack and in the subsequent years, continuing until the end of their political authority. They systematically captured Yezidi women, girls, and children – often separating them from their families – conducted mass killings, sold, gifted, and raped female captives whom they held in domestic and sexual slavery, forcibly converted Yezidi captives to Islam³³, and destroyed Yezidi religious shrines and sites³⁴.

All these acts by ISIS against the Yezidi community make it clear that ISIS's intention was to destroy the Yezidis as a group³⁵. These crimes were committed against the Yezidis solely because of their religious identity³⁶.

Regarding the atrocities committed by ISIS against the Yezidis, the United Nations Human Rights Council also reached the same conclusion, stating in its 2016 report³⁷:

ISIS has sought to destroy the Yazidis through killings; sexual slavery, enslavement, torture and inhuman and degrading treatment and forcible transfer causing serious bodily and mental harm; the infliction of conditions of life that bring about a slow death; the imposition of measures to prevent Yazidi children from being born, including forced conversion of adults, the separation of Yazidi men and women, and mental trauma; and the transfer of Yazidi children from their own families and placing them with ISIS fighters, thereby cutting them off from beliefs and practices of their own religious community, and erasing their identity as Yazidis. The public statements and conduct of ISIS and its fighters clearly demonstrate that ISIS intended to destroy the Yazidis of Sinjar, composing the majority of the world's Yazidi population, in whole or in part³⁸.

.....
33 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 6. Petrou 2019: 298.

34 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 6.

35 Ibid., 6.

36 Ibid., 6.

37 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 1.

38 Ibid., 1.

As a result of this ISIS campaign, between 4,000 and 5,000 Yezidi children, women, and girls were captured by ISIS jihadists and sent to other areas, many of whom were subjected to sexual slavery. Additionally, more than 300,000 Yezidis from Sinjar (known as “Shingal” in the region) fled their homes to escape ISIS militants. Many of them entered Syria, hoping to reach more secure Kurdish-controlled areas. Around 10,000 Yezidi men, women, and children remained on Mount Sinjar since August, having fled the advance of ISIS into their area. Furthermore, ISIS destroyed many shrines and other holy sites of the Yezidi religion.

After about a year of ISIS control, Kurdish Peshmerga forces defeated the ISIS militants in Sinjar town, west of Mosul, on November 13, 2015³⁹. Subsequently, many mass graves of Yezidis captured by ISIS were discovered in the Sinjar region. Almost all of the victims were men and elderly women, as ISIS had taken the women and children captive.

Historically, and continuing to this day, Islamic fatwās were generally issued prior to military campaigns against the Yezidis. The main aim of these fatwās was to legitimize the Islamic military attacks in religious terms, regardless of their social and political purposes. The fatwās also served to mobilize and recruit Muslims for these campaigns. The primary motivation for the general Muslim population to obey these fatwās or proclamations was a combination of religious and worldly benefits, such as performing jihad and securing a place in paradise (according to their understanding), capturing Yezidi women and girls, looting their possessions, and seizing their lands, etc.

These fatwās issued by Islamic jurists against the Yezidis have contributed significantly to their portrayal as a pariah sect. All of these fatwās describe the Yezidis as outcasts.

In addition to the fatwās, there were publications written about the Yezidis by Muslim authors, which also stigmatized the Yezidi community. These works described the Yezidis, their religion, and their culture in unattractive and odious terms.

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39 NBC News (November 13, 2015).

1.3 What is a Fatwā?

The fatwā (plural: fatāwā) constitutes one of the most significant and widely practiced religious acts in Islam, exerting considerable influence within Muslim communities. Fatāwā may be issued regarding social and religious matters affecting Muslim populations, as well as in relation to non-Muslim communities.

A fatwā⁴⁰ is the legal opinion of an expert in Islamic law⁴¹ on questions involving the interpretation and application of religious law⁴² to civil and religious matters⁴³. The term fatwā is not necessarily limited to a scholar's reply to a specific question; it may also be an entire document prepared by the scholar⁴⁴. A fatwā can be either spoken or written⁴⁵. It may be issued directly to the general Muslim public⁴⁶, to private individuals, to magistrates in the exercise of their duties, or to any other authorities⁴⁷.

Moreover, a fatwā can be issued extra under the name of fatwā, Message, or includes in a book which issued by a person who has the authority to issue an Islamic fatwā, as discussed in the following section.

Fatwās issued during the period of the Ottoman Empire (1453–1922) usually did not carry the date of their issuance⁴⁸. In addition, most fatwās of the Ottoman Şayḫu-l-Islām were written in Turkish, although a few were written in Persian⁴⁹. A considerable number were also written in Arabic, particularly those from the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire⁵⁰.

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40 For more information about the components of a *fatwā* and the description of its formulation, see, Verskin 2013: 3–6.

41 Gerber 1994: 79. Punar (August 2015): 4. Verskin 2013: 3.

42 Gerber 1994: 79. Verskin 2013: 4. Stiles (1991): 83.

43 E. Tyan 1965: Vol. II: 866. Verskin 2013: 4–5.

44 Heyd (1969): 37.

45 Calder 2010: 116. Punar (August 2015): 4.

46 E. Tyan 1965: Vol. II: 866.

47 Calder 2010: 168. E. Tyan 1965: Vol. II: 866.

48 Heyd 1969: 38.

49 Ibid., 46.

50 Ibid., 46.

1.4 Scholarly Authority in Issuing Fatwās

The person who prepares a fatwā is a Muslim religious scholar, or a *mufti*⁵¹. In the Ottoman Empire, the mufti of Istanbul was called the Şayḥ al-Islām⁵². He was the principal head of Islam in the empire⁵³ and a person of great esteem and reverence, as he represented justice and the image of God⁵⁴. The Şayḥ al-Islām, or the grand mufti of Istanbul, was appointed by the Sulṭān⁵⁵. There were also provincial muftis, known as *kenārmüftileri*⁵⁶.

Moreover, in contemporary times, Islamic fatwās have been issued against and concerning the Yezidis by official Islamic legal authorities in countries governed by Muslim administrations. For instance, such fatwās have been issued by national religious institutions in Egypt and Jordan. These fatwās are commonly published on their official websites.

Furthermore, the fatwās issued by ISIS represent the most significant Islamic fatwās against the Yezidis in the 21st century. They are issued by the highest authority within ISIS, the “Commission of Research and Fatwās,” as well as by local ISIS commanders or mullās.

Recently, social media have become an important platform for many Muslim clerics, particularly in Iraqī Kurdistan, to issue fatwās and religious statements directed at both Muslims and non-Muslims. These mullās often use their personal social media accounts and live broadcasts to express their Islamic religious views. Such platforms have increasingly become more influential than mosques in shaping Muslim attitudes toward the Yezidis.

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51 Gerber 1994: 79. E. Tyan 1965: Vol. II: 866. Verskin 2013: 3.
52 Kreiser und Neumann 2003: 152. Stiles 1991: 83.
53 Gerber 1994: 80. Stiles 1991: 83.
54 Stiles 1991: 83. Calder 2010: 127.
55 Ibid., 83.
56 Heyd 1969: 39.

1.5 Common Patterns in Islamic Fatwās and Invasions Against the Yezidis

All Islamic invasions against the Yezidis, both historically and in contemporary times, have been executed under the banner of religion, with Islamic authorities often acting in coordination with broader Muslim communities. The Yezidis' religious identity has consistently been the primary factor motivating these persecutions, shaping both the nature and intensity of the violence they have endured throughout history.

There are several underlying religious, political, economic, social, and cultural factors that contribute to why many Muslims become jihadists in response to fatwās and participate in attacks that often result in the capture and rape of Yezidi (or other non-Muslim) women, as well as the looting of property and other forms of violence. These conditions apply to Muslim men, whether or not they become jihadists, both in modern and historical contexts, not just to ISIS fighters. Although the specific reasons and circumstances behind the issuance of each fatwā against the Yezidis often differ, the ultimate aim has consistently been the same, as will be demonstrated throughout this study.

The most fundamental and striking commonality in all Islamic fatwās against the Yezidis is that, in the eyes of Islam, the Yezidis have been and continue to be regarded as infidels (*kāfir*), apostates, devil worshippers, or labeled in other ways that, according to these interpretations, give Muslims the right to attack and conquer them. Consequently, the killing and capturing of Yezidi women and children are considered *ḥalāl* – religiously justified or sanctioned for Muslims⁵⁷. Furthermore, Yezidi lands are regarded as *Dār al-Ḥarb* (Land of War), and their property, including land, is treated as booty according to Islamic principles, as emphasized in those fatwās⁵⁸.

They also encourage Muslims to engage in jihad (jihad) against the Yezidis as a religious duty, presenting it as a divinely sanctioned obligation.

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57 For example, see fatwā, Abū l-Su'ūd in Part One of this study.

58 For example, see fatwā of Mulla Ṣāliḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī in Part One of this study.

Historically, throughout all Islamic invasions against the Yezidis, the capture of defeated populations allowed for sexual enslavement⁵⁹. ISIS also practiced this form of enslavement as a means of addressing the needs of financially poorer jihadists. Muslims who could not afford the ordinary cost of a dowry were encouraged to participate in jihad to acquire a captive as a wife, concubine, or domestic servant⁶⁰.

Another key feature of fatwā-driven invasions is that the Yezidis were typically a civil society without formal military forces, whether under Muslim rule or facing invading powers. As a result, their subjugation by these forces was relatively easy⁶¹.

Furthermore, Islamic fatwās and Muslim societies have historically – and, to some extent, continue to – hold a starkly hostile view of the Yezidis. Both historically and during the ISIS invasion in 2014, the general Muslim population often ignored or denied the Yezidis’ longstanding traditions of hospitality and neighborliness. Testimonies from Yezidi survivors indicate that many Sunni Muslims, including neighbors and *krīvs* (blood-brothers), joined jihadists in acts of genocide against them, the capture of Yezidi women and children, and the seizure of their property as spoils of war.

Overall, Islam has maintained a consistently strict and severe stance toward the Yezidis as a religious group, shaping fatwās that support their persecution. The content of these fatwās and the actions they justified have remained largely consistent across different historical, political, and social contexts.

.....
59 For example, see: Part One of this study.

60 Ibid., 31–32.

61 For example, during the invasion of the Ottoman Melek Ahmed Paşa, Yezidis in Sinjar Mountain in 1640, Evliyā Çelebi writes: Although the Sinjar Yezidis had not good rifles, but they were fierce fighters and brigands. (Evliyā Çelebî 2001: 4/51). Also, when ISIS invaded Yezidis in the Sinjar region in August 2014, the Yezidis had no military. They were a civil powerless community under the role of Muslim authority.

2 Historical Fatwās against Yezidis

Throughout different historical periods, a number of Islamic fatwās were issued against the Yezidis. The content of some of these fatwās can be examined in detail, whereas tracing the details and substance of others is difficult due to the scarcity of information available in historical sources or the inaccessibility of the original texts of those fatwās.

According to my research, the first documented Islamic fatwā directed against the Yezidis dates back to the period between the second half of the 13th century and the first half of the 14th century. The phenomenon of issuing Islamic fatwās against the Yezidis increased during the 16th century and has continued to the present. It is important to note that most of the fatwās issued against the Yezidis were issued by Kurdish Sunni Muslim muftis and mullās.

2.1 Great Commandment (al-Waṣīyah al-Kubrā) of Ibn Taymiyyah⁶² (1263–1328)

Ibn Taymiyyah is one of the most well-known Islamic scholars, who lived during the second half of the 13th century and the first half of the 14th century. His books and writings remain among the most important sources of Islamic *fiqh*⁶³ (Islamic jurisprudence)⁶⁴.

.....
62 Taqī-al-Dīn Abū-l-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn 'Abd al-Salām Ibn Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī.

63 For example, see, Rohe 2015: 76, 95, 185.

64 There is not accepted conclusion about the definition of *fiqh* among the Islamic jurists and scholars. While the most popular definition is that the term of *fiqh* refers to the science of understanding the provisions of Islamic law (*Ṣarī'a*) and drawing them out by detailed evidences from the *Qur'ān* and *Sunna* in all aspects of practice life of Muslims, including the acts and worship entrusted to it. It is the science that decides the status of the thing in question, whether it is ḥalāl (something that is lawful according to Islam principle), or ḥarām (unlawful or taboo), obligation, delegation, and hatred. (Ibn Ḥaldūn (1988): 563) al-Ṣiṭrī (2010): 1/32).

He wrote a message concerning the Yezidis. This message is known in historical sources as *al-Waṣiyyah al-Kubrā* (Great Commandment)⁶⁵, but it has also been documented under the names *al-Risāla al-Sunniyyah ilā al-Ṭāʾifa al-ʿAdawiyyah*⁶⁶ and *Risālat al-Imām Ibn Taymiyyah ilā ʿAdī/Uday b. Musāfir*⁶⁷.

The book entitled *Maḡmūʿat al-Fatāwā li-Ṣayḥ al-Islām Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī* includes Ibn Taymiyyah’s message addressed to the Yezidis. This message appears in a subchapter titled *Faṣl: fī ṭanāʾ al-Imām Ibn Taymiyyah ʿalā Al-Ṣayḥ ʿAdī wa-Atbāʾuhū*⁶⁸, which is part of the chapter *Faṣl: fī anna al-Anḥirāfʿan al-Waṣṭi fī akṭar al-Amūr fī Aḡlab al-Nās*. The subchapter spans approximately 12 typed pages⁶⁹ and 48 manuscript pages, with the first 10 pages specifically devoted to the Yezidis⁷⁰.

In his message, Ibn Taymiyyah considered the Yezidis to be a group close to the Sunni Muslims (Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-ḡamāʾa – “The Creed of the People of the Sunna and the Majority”), but who had strayed from the principles of Islam and the Ṣarīʿa. He explained the main principles of Islam based on Qurʾānic verses and recommended that the Yezidis renounce their beliefs and return to true Islam.

It is worth noting that there are only very small differences between the manuscript and the typed text of this message as published in his book; however, these do not change the meaning of the message. In the typed version, we can find a few simple words that are not present in the manuscript.

The message begins, after the phrase “In the name of God,” as follows:

65 For example, see al-Damlūḡī (1949): 426.

66 al-ʿAdawiyyah is a label derived from the name of al-Ṣayḥ Uday bn Mussāfir. This label was used by many scholars referring to Yezidis as followers of Ṣayḥ Uday bn Mussāfir’s especially after his death in second half of 12th century. For example, see (Ibn al-Fūṭī 1997: 315. al-Kukubī 1973: 335. al-Ṣafādī 2000: 19/352. Abū al-Fidāʾ 1966: 12/243. al-ʿUmarī (2010): 8/112–114. al-Ḍahabī 1996: 20/342–344).

67 Ibn Taymiyyah: ([1997] 2005): Vol.3/271. also, see Appendix number (1).

68 Ibid., Vol.3/226–236.

69 Ibid., Vol.3/226–236.

70 See manuscript (5 Dī-al-Ḥiḡḡa1308/ 11 July 1891).

From Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyyah to who reaches him this book from the Muslims affiliates to the al-Sunna wa-al-ḡamā'a, that belonging to the group of Al-Šayḥ al-'arif al-quḍwa 'Adī bn Mussāfir al-Amawī [means Yezidis ...], God succeed those who to follow his path, and help them to obedience of ['Adī bn Mussāfir] and prophet [...], and make them worshipers in His strong mountain [means the mounting of Lāliš⁷¹ ...], and avoid them from the path of people of misguidance and warp [...].⁷²

After this short phrase, Ibn Taymiyyah explains the main principles of Islam, particularly in accordance with the Sunni orientation. Then, in the subchapter, which forms the main section addressing the Yezidis, he recommends that the Yezidis return to true Islam. This reads, in part:

And you – God reconcile you – May God consider to affiliate to Islam, which is a true religion, God forgive you from afflict to whom have gone out of Islam from the idolaters and the people of the Book⁷³. [...] God forgive you by affiliating you to the Sunna from the most delusive innovations, such as many innovations of al-Rawāfḍ, al-ḡahmīyah, al-ḥawāriḡ and al-Qadariyah⁷⁴ [...]

In addition, Ibn Taymiyyah praises al-Šayḥ 'Adī as one of the devout Islamic figures who adhered to the principles of Islam that he sought to promote, as we see in this part of the message:

Among you are pious Patrons of Allāh [Pious worshippers of God ...], such as šayḥ al-Islām Abī al-Ḥasan'Alī [...], al-Šayḥ'Adī bn Mussāfir al-Amawī, and those who follow their path, in them the virtuous, righteousness and followers of the Sunna⁷⁵ [...].

71 See manuscript (5 Dī-al-Ḥiḡḡa1308/ 11 July 1891).

72 Ibid. Ibn Taymiyyah: ([1997] 2005): Vol.3/226.

73 Ibid., 7. Vol. 3/233.

74 Ibid., 7–8. Vol. 3/233.

75 Ibid., 8. Vol.3/234.

Al-Šayḥ ‘Adī – God sanctified His Spirit – was one of the virtuous of Pious worshippers of Allāh, and the most honorable appellants sheikhs [...]. Those sheikhs did not go out in the principles of greatest [sheikhs] from the principles of “al-Sunna wa-al-ḡamā’a”, but they had excitement in the principles of Ahl al-Sunna, pray for them, and careful to spread them⁷⁶ [...].

I conclude that Ibn Taymiyyah addressed his message to the Yezidis, not to al-Šayḥ ‘Adī, contrary to some sources that claim this letter was directed to the latter. My first reason for this conclusion is that al-Šayḥ ‘Adī had died long before Ibn Taymiyyah wrote this message. Second, Ibn Taymiyyah uses the plural form throughout his writing and praises al-Šayḥ ‘Adī in the past tense. Accordingly, the manuscript title corresponds more accurately with the content of Ibn Taymiyyah’s message. Moreover, he praises al-Šayḥ ‘Adī as one of the virtuous Islamic figures who remained within the tradition of Ahl al-Sunna wa-al-ḡamā’a, while believing that his followers, the Yezidis after al-Šayḥ ‘Adī’s death, deviated from the principles of Islam.

Ibn Taymiyyah also advised the Yezidis to return to true Islam, without labeling them as unbelievers, devil worshippers, or similar groups. Furthermore, it is evident from Ibn Taymiyyah’s message that he regarded the Yezidis as apostates; nevertheless, he did not incite Muslims to kill them, capture their women and girls, or plunder their possessions.

Reasons for Addressing ibn Taymiyyah’s Message to the Yezidis

During the period in which this message was composed, profound doctrinal differences existed among the Yezidis themselves concerning their beliefs, to the extent that mutual accusations of disbelief were common. This internal division resulted in persistent strife within the community, ultimately leading to its fragmentation and decline⁷⁷. Furthermore, intense religious tensions prevailed between Yezidi and Muslim leaders during this era. For instance,

.....
76 Ibid., 8. Vol. 3/234.

77 al-Damlūḡī 1949: 426.

Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu'⁷⁸, the ruler of Mosul, was well known for his hostility toward the Yezidi faith; he ordered the execution of the Yezidi religious leader al-Šayḥ Ḥasan⁷⁹ and the massacre of a large number of Yezidis.

Another possible reason that prompted Ibn Taymiyyah to address his message to the Yezidis was their deep veneration of al-Šayḥ 'Adī. In his message, Ibn Taymiyyah criticizes the Yezidis for what he perceives as deviation and exaggeration in their reverence toward al-Šayḥ 'Adī, which he regarded as a departure from the principles of true Islam⁸⁰.

2.2 Fatwā of Abū l-Su'ūd⁸¹ (1490–1574)

From the beginning of the 16th century until 1918, sixteen muftīs held the position of Šayḥ al-Islām, who simultaneously served as the Muftī of

78 Badr-al-Dīn Lu'lu' Abū-l-Faḍā'il Lu'lu' al-Atābikī was an Armenian Mamlūk of Nūr-al-Dīn Arsalān Šāh, the ruler of Mosul. After the death of Nūr-al-Dīn Arsalān Šāh, Badr-al-Dīn Lu'lu' took this opportunity and took over the power of Mosul. (al-Mawšilī 1966: 7). In 631/1233, the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustansir appointed the Mamluk Badr-al-Dīn as the ruler of Mosul and conferred on him the title of al-Malik al-Raḥīm. (Patton 1991: 79. Rice 1950: 627, 634. Ibn al-'Ibrī (1983): 435, 484–486). Accordingly, he became the ruler of Mosul until his death in 657AH/1258. (al-'Umārī 2010: 27/135–136, 248–249. al-Ġassānī 1975: 2/457). In the year 652AH/1254, a fight took place between the Yezidis and Badr-al-Dīn Lu'lu', because the later was asking much tax money from them and the Yezidis refused to surrender to his financial orders. Therefore, Badr-al-Dīn Lu'lu' led a large Muslim army and attacked the Yezidis, killing many of them. He then sent men to dig up Sheikh 'Adī's bones in Lalish Temple and buried them. (Ibn al-Fūṭī 1997: 315. al-Kukubī 1973: 1/335. al-Ġassānī 1975: 2/601. Guest 1987: 21). For more details about the attack of Badr-al-Dīn Lu'lu' against Yezidis, see: (al-Ruwayšidī 1971: 31–36. Patton 1991: 79–101).

79 Maisel 2017: 77, 79.

80 Also, see *Ibid.*, 79.

81 Šayḥ al-Islām Abū l-Su'ūd, was born on December 30, 1490, and passed away on August 23, 1574 (Schacht 1960, 1/152; Imber 1997, 10, 18). His full name was Muḥammad b. Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Mušafā al-'Imādī (Schacht 1960, 1/152). He is widely known as Abū l-Su'ūd Afāndī, and this is the name under which he issued legal decrees and fatwās (Repp 1986, 272; Imber 1997, 8). Scholars who have delved into the life of Abū l-Su'ūd encounter ambiguity regarding the meaning of his family name, al-'Imādī. Despite the comprehensive exploration of his background, there remains an absence of consensus on the precise meaning of this familial identifier (Imber 1997, 8). Divergent views emerge when examining Abū l-Su'ūd's nickname and origin. Many Kurdish and Arabic references

Constantinople⁸². The Šayḥ al-Islām occupied the highest and most influential religious position in the Ottoman Empire.

Abū l-Su‘ūd served as the Muftī of Constantinople for thirty years⁸³ (1545–1574⁸⁴). He belonged to the Ḥanafī *madḥab*⁸⁵ (school of law), which was the official doctrine of the Ottoman Empire⁸⁶. During his tenure, the authority of the Šayḥ al-Islām as chief muftī reached its zenith⁸⁷, and his fatwās attained unprecedented importance⁸⁸. One of the most striking features of Abū l-Su‘ūd’s fatwās is their strong critique of Sufism⁸⁹. Consequently, it is not surprising that Abū l-Su‘ūd, in his fatwā, also launched a vigorous attack on the Yezidis.

identify him as al-‘Amādī or al-Āmādī (For instance, see al-Damlūġī 1949, 428; al-Aḥmad 1971, 204). Some sources propose a potential link between al-‘Amādī and al-‘Amādiyah, a small city in northern Iraq-Kurdistan, approximately 20 km north of Duhok. Similarly, al-Āmādī is compared to the city of Āmad in Turkey, also known as Diyarbakir. However, these references fail to establish a definitive connection between these cities and Abū l-Su‘ūd’s origins. Consensus prevails regarding the location of his birth, which refers to a village near present-day Istanbul known as Mūderris or in İskilib, situated to the west of Amasia in northern Anatolia (Zāda 1975, 440; Schacht 1960, 1/152; Imber 1997, 10; Repp 1986, 274). Accordingly, Abū l-Su‘ūd al-‘Imādī’s association is not linked to either of the Kurdish cities ‘Amādiyah and Āmad, refuting claims that suggest he may have had a Kurdish origin. Abū l-Su‘ūd received his early education from his father, who, having earned the favor of Sulṭān Bayezid II, and was given a Sufi *zāwiya* built for him in Istanbul (Imber 1997, 9–10; Repp 1986, 272). Beginning his career as a teacher, Abū l-Su‘ūd was later promoted to one of the “Eight Madrasas.” In 1533, he assumed the role of Qāḍi-Judge in Bursa, followed by his appointments as Qāḍi ‘Askar, the Military Judge of Rumelia, and subsequently in Istanbul in 1537. By 1545, Abū l-Su‘ūd ascended to the position of Grand Mufti, or Šayḥ al-Islām, in Istanbul, a role he held until his passing (Schacht 1960, 1/152).

82 ‘Idwān (February 2011): 264.

83 Ibid., 264.

84 J. Schacht 1960: Vol. 1: p. 152. R. C. Repp 1986: 272–274. Imber 1997: 18. Kreiser und Neumann 2003: 152–153.

85 Khoury 1997: 100.

86 For more details about this topic see, Imber 1997: 67, 94–95. Lapidus 2014: 342–343.

87 Karakaya-Stump 2020: 283.

88 Ibid., 283.

89 Ibid., 283–284.

This was primarily due to their veneration of al-Šayḥ ‘Adī ibn Musāfir⁹⁰, who served as a mystical mediator figure for the Yezidis.

There are differing opinions among scholars regarding the original language in which Abū l-Su‘ūd’s fatwā was written. According to Dawūd al-Ġalabī⁹¹, the fatwā was issued at the order of Sulṭān Sulaymān al-Qānūnī (1520–1566)⁹². Even if it was not issued directly at the sultan’s request, it was closely connected with the administrative and religious policies pursued during Sulaymān’s reign⁹³. Al-Ġalabī states that the fatwā was originally published in Turkish (i.e., Ottoman script) and later translated into Arabic by Amīn Beg b. Ayūb Beg⁹⁴ al-Ġalīlī⁹⁵. However, al-Damlūġī⁹⁶ notes that when Ottoman governors (*wulāt*) were dispatched from Constantinople to Baghdad, they were provided with the fatwā translated into Turkish to facilitate their understanding⁹⁷.

A manuscript of Abū l-Su‘ūd’s fatwā is preserved in the Süleymaniye Archive in Istanbul, catalogued as Yezidan-ı melunân hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye

90 The Yezidis venerated al-Šayḥ ‘Uday after his death in 1162. Therefore, the label of “al-‘Adawīyah”, which derived from his name, was used by many scholars referring to Yezidis as al-Šayḥ ‘Uday’s followers. For example, see (Ibn al-Fūṭī 1997: 315. al-Kukubī 1973: 335. al-Šafadī 2000: 19/352. Abū al-Fidā’ 1966: 12/243. al-‘Umārī 2010: 8/112–114. al-Ḍahabī 1996: 20/342–344).

91 Dawūd b. Muḥammad Salīm b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ġalabī was a scholar and historian from Mosul. He was born in 1879 and died in 1960. He is one of the first modern historians who studied manuscripts in Mosul. For more details about Dawūd al-Ġalabī, see (al-‘Allāf (June 20, 2011).

92 al-Ġalabī (1927): 264.

93 Karakaya-Stump 2020: 283.

94 al-Ġalabī (1927): 264.

95 Amīn b. Ayūb Beg al-Ġalīlī was born in 1864 and died in 1925. He was from the famous family of al-Ġalīlī, which ruled Mosul during (1726–1834). He collected many books and manuscripts in his personal library in Mosul and translated some of them from Turkish to Arabic. (al-Ġalabī 1927: 263–264). (al-‘Allāf (July 4, 2018).

96 Šadiq b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Damlūġī was an Iraqi administrative, political and historical figure. He was born on March 7, 1880 in Mosul and died in 1958. He served as deputy mayor (*qā’im-maqām*) of Sinjar. He had a very good relationship with Yezidis and their leaders, which led him to write his book entitled *al-Yazidiyah* published in 1949. Al-Damlūġī stayed among the Yezidis for 20 years and this stay became main source for his aforementioned book. (al-‘Allāf (February 11, 2013).

97 al-Damlūġī (1949): 433.

KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript Ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no. 694/4⁹⁸. The manuscript is entitled: “Copy of the enlightened judicial opinion issued in the exalted words of Abū l-Su‘ūd Efendi on the cursed Yezīdī, who are without religion, belief, and of corrupted rite.” Written in Ottoman script, it does not include a date, as is typical with Ottoman fatwās. According to the title, the fatwā was copied from the original manuscript and was authored by Abū l-Su‘ūd, although the copy was undoubtedly made after his death.

The scribe is identified in the final line as “Aḥmad al-Āmadī bin ‘Umar Efendi al-Mārdīnī,” suggesting that the manuscript was likely copied in the Diyarbakir region. The manuscript appears incomplete, consisting of only three pages. The last page, written in Arabic, contains a paragraph that does not correspond to the fatwā’s content, suggesting it probably does not belong to the original manuscript. Typically, an Ottoman fatwā comprises three main parts: the question, the answer, and the signature⁹⁹. In contrast to the Arabic copy, the signature is missing from the Ottoman manuscript, indicating that an error may have occurred when the pages were assembled and later stored in the Süleymaniye Archive.

Minor differences exist between the Ottoman manuscript and its Arabic translation. For example, the Ottoman manuscript begins by mentioning the Ḥanafī and Shāfi‘ī Imāms, while the Arabic version adds two more: Mālikī and Ḥanbalī. It is worth noting that the main text of Ottoman manuscript also refers to the “four doctrines.” However, whether the fatwā was originally composed in Ottoman or Arabic does not alter its impact on the Yezidis. The fatwā explicitly names the Yezidis¹⁰⁰, cursing their beliefs and Ṭāwūsī Melek (the archangel in Yezidi beliefs)¹⁰¹, and explains the role of al-Şayḫ ‘Adī ibn Musāfir in Yezidi beliefs¹⁰².

.....

98 For the original copy of this document see, Appendix number (2-A).

99 Imber 1997: 57.

100 See Yezidan-ı melunân hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no: 694/4.

101 Ibid. al-Aḥmad 1971: 205.

102 Yezidan-ı melunân hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no: 694/4. al-Aḥmad 1971: 205.

Because of its distinctive format¹⁰³, there is no doubt that the fatwā was authored by the Šayḥ al-Islām during the early Ottoman period. Its structure requires the author to first pose a specific question and then provide an answer in accordance with Islamic law, based on the teachings of the Qurʾān and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, while supporting the response with references to Qurʾānic verses and the opinions of the most prominent Islamic jurists.

The Arabic text of this fatwā is approximately 760 words¹⁰⁴. Abū l-Suʿūd examines specific aspects of Yezidi beliefs, followed by supporting arguments from the Šāfiʿī, Mālikī, Ḥanafī, and Ḥanbalī schools of Islamic law¹⁰⁵. Through this reasoning, Abū l-Suʿūd legitimizes acts against the Yezidis.

According to al-Damlūġī, Abū l-Suʿūd’s fatwā was the first issued against the Yezidis, and all subsequent fatwās regarding the Yezidis, including those calling for their killing, were based upon it¹⁰⁶. Al-Damlūġī also notes that if Abū l-Suʿūd issued his fatwā as Šayḥ al-Islām and according to the sultan’s order, later scholars issued their fatwās to their rulers in order to legitimize similar actions¹⁰⁷. In practice, the fatwā would have functioned as a religious duty to be observed.

In the fatwā, Abū l-Suʿūd confirmed that the Yezidis were infidels, justified their killing, and declared the capture of Yezidi women and children permissible (*ḥalāl*).

The fatwā begins with the question:

What is the behest of our Imāms, Ḥanafī, Šāfiʿī, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī, and what is their response for the Muslims military when they invaded the Yezidis a damned sect? Is killing them legally [according to the Islamic

103 For the formula of fatwās written by Šayḥ ul-Islām in the Ottoman Empire, see, Heyd 1969: 39–42.

104 For the complete Arabic text of Abū s-Suʿūd’s fatwā, see, Appendix number (2-B), also, in: al-Damlūġī (1949): 429–432. al-Aḥmad 1971: 204–207.

105 Yezidan-ı melunân hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no: 694/4. See al-Damlūġī 1949: 429–432; al-Aḥmad 1971: 204–207.

106 al-Damlūġī 1949: 428.

107 Ibid., 428.

Šarī'a] permitted (ḥalāl)? When one of the Muslims is killed at their hands, is the one who fights them [the Yezidis] to be a gāzī [muğāhid] and who is killed a martyr (šahīd)?¹⁰⁸

In response to this question, Abū l-Su'ūd begins with the phrase, “al-ğawāb wa-Allāhu a'lambi-ş-şawāb” (“God knows best what is right”). He then continues:

*[...] who fights them [Yezidis] is a holy warrior (gāzī), and who is killed is a martyr (šahīd); because doing jihad against them [Yezidis] is the biggest jihad and glorious martyrdom. Therefore, their killing and capturing their women and children is permitted (ḥalāl).*¹⁰⁹

This fatwā not only grants legal justification for the atrocities committed against the Yezidis by Ottoman rulers, leaders, and governors, but also encourages them to kill Yezidi men, enslave their women and children, and sell them in Islamic slave markets, as explicitly stated in this part of the fatwā, which reads:

[...] they [Yezidis] are infidels more than the original infidels, and their killing is permitted (ḥalāl) according to the four doctrines [meaning the above-mentioned doctrines], doing jihad against them is righteous and most appropriate than the religious devotions, and dispersing them, dispersing their crowds, and directly killing them and their superiors are religious duties, the rulers of the time and the governors who are authorized to kill them [Yezidis], incited to fight them, and want their captivity [...]. They [the Muslim rulers and governors] are permitted to kill their [Yezidis] men, take their offspring and their women, and sell them in Muslim markets as prisoners of all other infidels. It is also

.....
108 See: Yezidan-ı melunân hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no: 694/4 in Appendix number (2-A). al-Damlüği 1949: 429. al-Aḥmad 1971: 204.

109 See: Yezidan-ı melunân hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no: 694/4in Appendix number (2-A). al-Damlüği 1949: 429. al-Aḥmad 1971: 204.

*permitted for them to dispose of their firstborn women and their wives [...].*¹¹⁰

It also states that the Yezidis are not among the seventy-two sects (*fıraq*¹¹¹), but should be regarded as apostates (*murtaddūn*) from Islam. He states:

*[...] this mentioned sect [Yezidi religion] is not within the seventy-two sects (fıraqa) which are Islamic sects, but they [Yezidis] are apostates (sing. murtadd) from Islam and outside of all Islamic sects (milal) [...].*¹¹²

Abū l-Su'ūd also considers the Yezidis to be followers of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyah¹¹³, the Umayyad caliph (680–683)¹¹⁴, whose army killed al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, the grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad¹¹⁵, revered by the Shiites. The fatwā reads, in part:

Also, by the consensus of the scholars of other places such as Yemen, Qarabā, and Tatār, they wrote fatwās that allowed killing them [Yezidis], and the enslavement of their women and their offspring [...]. Thus, Fahr al-Dīn al-Rāzī¹¹⁶ in several places of his al-Taḥṣīn al-Kabīr proved the

110 See: Yezidan-ı melunân hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no: 694/4 in Appendix number (2-A). al-Damlūġi 1949: 430. al-Aḥmad 1971: 205.

111 The 72 sects (*fıraq*) is a term that the scholars deduced from the Prophet's narratives (*ḥadīth*) saying that the Islamic community will be divided into 73 sects, seventy-two of them will go in the fire or hell and only one will be in paradise. For example, see al-Tirmizī 2015: 517.

112 See: Yezidan-ı melunân hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no: 694/4 in Appendix number (2-A). al-Damlūġi 1949: 430. al-Aḥmad 1971: 206.

113 Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyah b. Abī Sufyān b. Ḥarb b. Ummayā b. 'Abd Šams b. 'Abd al-Manāf b. Quṣayy al-Quraṣī al-Umawī al-Dimašqī was born in Damascus in 25/645. (al-Ḍahabī 1996: 4/35–36. al-Ḍahabī 1991: 1/35. Ibn Kaṭīr 2010: 8/320. al-Şafadī 1983: 102,114. al-Suyūṭī (2013): 339). He died in 64/683 in Humḍ or in a village near Dimašq. (Ibn Kaṭīr 2010: 8/320. al-Mas'ūdi (2005):3/64. Ibn al-'Imād 1986: 1/286. Ibn Manzūr 1989: 28/29).

114 Ibn Kaṭīr 2010: 8/320.

115 Ibn Manzūr 1985: 7/145. al-Mas'ūdi 2005: 3/57.

116 Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-Tayyīmī al-Rāzī, nicknamed Fahr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, was born in 544/1149 in Rayy in Ṭabarstān. He was a Sunni theologian from the Şāfi'ī Maḏhab. He wrote about 200 books on medicine, physics, astronomy, literature, history, law

permissibility of cursing Yazīd [b. Mu‘āwiyah, the Umayyad caliph ...], likewise did al-Imām Aḥmad¹¹⁷, al-Imām Abū Layṭ al-Samarqandī¹¹⁸, and Mawlāna ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġāmī¹¹⁹, all of them wrote fatwās that give right to dispose them [the Yezidi women and their offspring], especially Sa‘d-al-Dīn al-Taftarānī¹²⁰ [correct al-Taftazānī] in his Explaining of the Doctrines stated the permissibility of cursing Yazīd, and his followers and supporters as well as al-Sayyid Šarīf al-Ġurġānī,¹²¹ and more scholars stated permissibility of cursing Yazīd [...].¹²²

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- etc. He died in 606/1209 in Herat. (Ibn Ḥalākān 1948: Vol.3/381. Ibn al-‘Imād 1991: Vol.7/40. Ibn Kaṭīr 2004: Vol.2/716,721. Ibn al-Aḫīr 2003: Vol.10/350. Ibn al-‘brī 1986: 249).
- 117 al-Imām Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal al-Šaybānī al-Dḥlī was born in 164 AH/780 in Baghdad. He was a Sunni *faqīh* and *muḥaddiṭ*. He wrote several books. The most famous of them was *al-Musnad* in which he collected a very large number of Muḥammad’s narratives. Imām Aḥmad died in 241/855 in Baghdad. (al-Ḥaṭīb al-Baġdādī 2001: Vol. 6/90–91,102. Abī-Ya‘lā (no date): Vol. 1/4. Ibn al-Gawzi 1988: 549–551).
- 118 Although there is no exact information on Abū Layṭ Naṣr b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb al-Samarqandī’s he was probably born in the first half of the 4th/10th century. He was a Sunni *faqīh* and *muḥaddiṭ* from the Ḥanafī *maḏhab*. He wrote several books on the interpretation of the Qur‘ān, Islamic Sufism, narratives of Muḥammad, etc. There is a difference between scholars about the date of his death, they referred to that he died in 393/1002, 375/985 or 373/983. (al-Adnawī 1997: 91–92. al-Dahabī 1996: 16/322–323. Muḥya-al-Dīn 1993: Vol. 3/544–545. al-Dāwūdī 1983: Vol. 2/346).
- 119 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, known as Nūr al-Dīn al-Ġāmī was born in 817/1414 in al-Ġām in the eastern present-day Iran. He was interested in mysticism (*taṣawwuf*) and reached the rank of master of the Ṭarīqa al-Naqšabandīyah. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġāmī was also one of the most famous of poets of the 15th century. He died in 898/1492 in Harāt in Afghanistan. al-Hindī (1324/1906): 86. al-Ġāmī 2003: 3–4.
- 120 Sa‘ad al-Dīn Mas‘ūd b. ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Taftazānī was born in 712AH/1312 in the Taftazān village in Khurāsān territory. He was a Sunni *faqīh* from the Ḥanafī Maḏhab. He wrote many books on Arabic grammar, meanings, rhetoric, logic, interpretation, etc. al-Taftazānī died in 792/1390 in Samarqand. (Ibn al-‘Imād 1992: Vol. 8/547,549. Ibn Ḥaġar al-‘Asqalānī (no date): Vol. 4/350. al-Sīwaḫī 1965: Vol. 2/285. al-Hindī (1324/1906): 130,134).
- 121 ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, known as al-Sayyid Šarīf al-Ġurġānī was born in 740/1339 in Ġurġān. He was a Sunni *faqīh* and scholar from the Ḥanafī Maḏhab. He was also known as al-Taftazānī and one of the main muftis and scholars on whom Tīmūr-Lang depended. al-Sayyid Šarīf al-Ġurġānī died in 816/1413 in Šīrāz. al-Hindī (1324/1906): 125–126, 134.
- 122 See: Yezidan-ı melunān hakkında fetva, Süleymaniye KÜTÜPHANESİ, manuscript ottoman, H. Hüsnü Paşa, no: 694/4 in Appendix number (2-A). al-Damluġī 1949: 431. al-Aḥmad 1971: 206.

It is important to note that some of the scholars cited by Abū l-Su‘ūd in his fatwā did not, in fact, issue rulings against the Yezidis; in this respect, Abū l-Su‘ūd was mistaken. For instance, Sa‘d-al-Dīn al-Taftazānī discusses Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiyah, the Umayyad caliph, in his *Šarḥ al-‘Aqā’id al-Nasafīyah*, addressing Yazīd’s followers and supporters and the permissibility of cursing him because his army killed al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī¹²³. However, al-Taftazānī does not reference the Yezidis as a distinct religious community. This illustrates a historical misconception: the Yezidi religion has no connection to Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiyah.

There are two reasons that may have prompted Abū l-Su‘ūd to portray the Yezidis as followers and supporters of Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiyah. First and foremost, he sought to motivate and unify the Islamic community to support the Ottoman military campaigns against the Yezidis. Second, it may have been due to his limited knowledge of Yezidism.

Support for the first reason is evident in the final paragraph of his fatwā, where he emphasizes the religious duty of Muslims to act against the Yezidis. The text reads:

*Since cutting the corruptions of this sect from the face of the earth is a legal (al-Šar‘īyyah) obligation, I have therefore edited this fatwā and proved its legality, quoting and diligence, and handed it over to the hands of people of ḡihād and piety in order to reach their ardency on the book of God [the Qur‘ān ...]*¹²⁴.

Abū l-Su‘ūd was among the most influential muftīs of his era, occupying the highest judicial office in the Ottoman Empire. The issuance of a fatwā against the Yezidis by such a prominent legal authority indicates that the Yezidis possessed notable political influence and that their activities were perceived as a significant challenge to Ottoman authority. This underscore both the perceived threat posed by the Yezidi community and the role of religious-legal authority in legitimizing state action during this period.

.....

123 See al-Taftazānī (no date): 124.

124 See al-Damlūġī 1949: 432. al-Aḥmad 1971: 207.

In sum up, this fatwā classified the Yezidis as unbelievers, followers of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyah, and not among the seventy-two recognized sects of Islam, further designating them as apostates (*murtaddūn*). The fatwā provided religious and legal justification for Ottoman rulers, officials, and military forces to kill Yezidi men, capture their women and children, and sell them in slave markets. It emphasized that these actions were sanctioned under Islamic law and framed their execution as a religious duty incumbent upon Muslims.

Understanding the Rationale Behind Abū l-Su'ūd's Fatwā

The Yezidis experienced notable periods of religious and political influence during the Islamic eras. In both the pre-Ottoman and early Ottoman periods, their religious and political authority was vested in Yezidi princes (*dāsin*¹²⁵), with the Lalish Temple in present-day northern Iraq (Kurdistan region) serving as the central seat of their leadership.

By the early 16th century, the Yezidis constituted an influential and relatively cohesive community under the authority of their own princes¹²⁶. For instance, according to al-Bidlīsī, the Dāsinīyah sect controlled Duhok¹²⁷ Castle and several surrounding territories under the leadership of their Dāsinian prince, Ḥusayn Beg al-Dāsinī, during this period¹²⁸. This demonstrates that the Yezidis maintained both political and territorial influence, which likely contributed to their visibility and interactions with the Ottoman authorities.

Yezidi tribes dominated large areas of eastern Anatolia, northern Iraq, and Syria until the beginning of the 16th century¹²⁹. They were concentrated in the provinces of Diyarbakir, Mosul, Aleppo, Van, Bitlis, Urfa, Midyat, Nusaibin,

.....
125 For the term *Dāsin* and *Dāsinian* people, see Shammo 2018: 24–29.

126 For the political influence of the Yezidis during the Ottoman Empire, see Çelebi 2009: 418–419, 449. al-Bidlīsī [1958] 2006: 137. Açıkyıldız [2010] 2014: 128. Maisel 2017: 80.

127 Nowadays, most inhabitants of Duhok City are Muslim Kurds. Others are small numbers of Yezidis and Christians, as well as some other ethnicities who have settled there recently, escaping violence in other areas of Iraq. The name of *Duhoka Dasiniya* is still used to describe the original settlement of Duhok, which confirms that the city originally belonged to the Dāsinian people, who presently are Yezidis.

128 al-Bidlīsī [1958] 2006: 137.

129 Çelebi 2009: 418–419, 449. Khoury 1997: 40. Gölbaşı 2008: 31–32.

Viranşehir, and Mardin, while a smaller Yezidi population lived in the province of Erzurum, near Kars and Bayezid¹³⁰. Moreover, according to the Ottoman tax registers (*Defter-i Yasahā-i*) from Mardin in 1518, trade caravans passing through the region were required to pay tribute to the Yezidis¹³¹. This indicates that the Yezidis were not only present in these areas but also exercised political authority over them.

During the Ottoman-Safavid conflict at the beginning of the 16th century, the Yezidis, along with most Sunni Kurds, supported the Ottoman forces against the Safavids. This alliance was largely motivated by opposition to the perceived Shiite fanaticism of the Safavids¹³². As a result, Sulṭān Selīm I (1512–1520) extended Ottoman authority further into Kurdistan¹³³, and by 1516, most of the region, including the Sinjar area and nearly all territories inhabited by the Yezidis, came under Ottoman control¹³⁴.

To secure the loyalty of the Yezidi community, the Ottomans established agreements with Yezidi princes and leaders, granting them gifts, fiefs, and lands¹³⁵. Šaraf Ḥān al-Bidlīsī, the foremost Kurdish historian of the 16th century, confirms that in 1534 Sulṭān Sulaymān granted the rule of the Muslim Kurdish principality of Sorān to Ḥusayn Beg al-Dāsinī, the Yezidi prince of Šayḥān¹³⁶. Consequently, in addition to governing the Sheikhan (Šayḥān) principality – a Yezidi territory – Ḥusayn Beg al-Dāsinī also became the prince of Sorān and the governor of Mosul¹³⁷, consolidating both Yezidi and Ottoman political authority in the region.

However, another Sunni Kurdish claimant from the previous ruling family of Sorān, Sayf ad-Dīn b. Ḥusayn b. Pīr-Bodāq, contested Ḥusayn Beg al-Dāsinī's authority over Sorān. He was able to rally a group of local residents and

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130 Gölbaşı 2008: 31–32.

131 *Defter-i Yasahā-i Liva-i Mardin 1518*, *Defter No. 840*. In: Barkan 1943: 159.

132 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 32.

133 Stiles 1991: 24. Imber 2002: 45–46. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 32–33.

134 Stiles 1991: 24. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 32–33.

135 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 33.

136 al-Bidlīsī [1958] 2006: Vol. 1: 266. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 34.

137 *Ibid.*, 34–35.

marched on Erbil, the center of the Sorān principality¹³⁸. Ḥusayn Beg al-Dāsini advanced to Erbil to confront Sayf ad-Dīn, but after fierce battles, Ḥusayn Beg was defeated, and more than 500 of his troops were killed¹³⁹. Sayf ad-Dīn returned to Sorān, ruled it independently, and successfully defended his authority against further attempts by Ḥusayn Beg to reclaim the principality¹⁴⁰.

When news of Ḥusayn Beg al-Dāsini's defeat reached Sulṭān Sulaymān, he summoned Ḥusayn to Constantinople and had him executed¹⁴¹. The execution of the Yezidi prince prompted a rebellion by the Yezidis against Sulṭān Sulaymān, who subsequently invoked religious authority (*jihād*) to suppress their uprising¹⁴². In this context, a significant and influential fatwā was issued against the Yezidis by al-Muftī Aḥmad ibn Muṣṭafā Abū l-Su'ūd¹⁴³. This event marked a turning point in the deterioration of relations between the Yezidis and the Ottoman Empire and set the stage for continued military campaigns against the Yezidis throughout Ottoman rule, lasting until the empire's collapse in the 20th century.

Abū l-Su'ūd's fatwā not only served as the precedent for subsequent Islamic fatwās targeting the Yezidis but also functioned as a principal instrument for Ottoman authorities to mobilize Muslim populations. It was employed to achieve both religious and secular objectives, legitimizing the killing of Yezidi men, the looting of their villages, and the enslavement and sexual subjugation of Yezidi women and children, acts carried out by Ottoman forces following their military victories. For example, al-Damlūḡī reports that Ṭayār Pašā, the governor of Mosul, was provided with Abū l-Su'ūd's fatwā during his military campaign against the Yezidis in Sinjar in 1846, illustrating how the fatwā continued to serve as a tool of state-sanctioned violence well into the 19th century¹⁴⁴.

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138 al-Bidlīsī [1958] 2006: Vol. 1: 266.

139 Ibid., Vol. 1: 266–267.

140 Ibid., Vol. 1: 267.

141 Ibid., Vol. 1: 267.

142 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 35–36.

143 al-Aḥmad (1971): 83.

144 al-Damlūḡī (1949): 433.

2.3 The Fatwā of Mullā Şālih al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī¹⁴⁵ (980AH/1572)

The fatwā¹⁴⁶ of Malā (Mullā) Şālih al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī, a high-ranking Sunni cleric from the Şāfiī madhhab, was published in the sixteenth century¹⁴⁷. The manuscript of this fatwā, dated Muḥarram 980 / January 1572, is kept in Qum, in present-day Iran¹⁴⁸. This fatwā was entitled “From the Collection of Fatwās of the Most Kind Instructor, Our Lord Şālih al-Hakkārī, Muftī of Kurdistan¹⁴⁹, on the Declaration of the Yezidi Sect” (*min ġumlat fatāwā mawlā al-muḥaqqiq al-barr al-mudaqqiq mawlānā Şālih al-Hakkārī muftī Kūrdistān fī bayān madhhab al-Ṭāʾifah al-Yazīdiyyah*)¹⁵⁰. It is written in Arabic, and the entire text¹⁵¹ contains approximately 850 words¹⁵².

According to Dehqan, a text of this fatwā is preserved in the Sulaymāniyah Library in Constantinople¹⁵³. Incomplete copies of the manuscript also exist in the Collection of Ismāʿil Ḥaqqī Beg İzmīrī, likewise in Constantinople, and

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145 Şālih al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī was a Kurdish mullā from Hakkārī territory. He was a great Islamic Mufti of Kurdistan in the Ottoman Empire during the last period of sixteenth century. There is no information on the life of Şālih al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī from the available sources at my hands. The only minor note that he was known as enemy of Şeyh ‘Adī. Dehqan 2008: 140.

146 Muştafā Dehqan is the only author who published the whole text of the original copy of the fatwā of Mulla Şālih al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī, translated it into English and published it in the Journal of Kurdish Studies.

147 Dehqan 2008: 140. Aykan 2016: 205.

148 Dehqan 2008: 140.

149 Although the available sources do not refer to such an office as a *Mufti* of Kurdistan in the Ottoman Empire, the manuscript of this fatwā which was published by Dehqan includes explicitly the name of *Şālih al-Hakkārī* as the *Mufti* of Kurdistan. (See, Dehqan 2008: 143). The Ottoman *deFTER made in year 1527* states that there was an Ottoman Vilayet called Kurdistan. (TSA D.5246. VII, (1527): In: Kunt 1978: 130). Also, the *deFTER* of Diyarbakir made in 1578–1588 confirms that there was an Ottoman Viyalet called “Kurdistan” belonging to the Ottoman Administrative. (BOA. KK 262, s.115, (1578–1588). In: Kunt 1978: 163. He was probably the *Mufti* of that Kurdistan administrative territory.

150 Dehqan 2008: 143.

151 The whole text of the fatwā includes 74 lines. Every line contains between 12 and 13 words.

152 Dehqan 2008: 140. For the original copy of this document see Appendix number (3).

153 *Ibid.*, 142.

in the Mar'aṣī Library in Qum, Iran¹⁵⁴. In addition, according to Dehqan, the manuscript of *Ḥusn al-Taṣarruf* by 'Alā'-al-Dīn al-Qūnawī contains the only nearly complete text of the first part of Malā Ṣāliḥ's fatwā¹⁵⁵.

I obtained two manuscripts of this fatwā, which were published by the Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo, on internet websites¹⁵⁶. Both manuscripts explicitly contain the name "Mawlānā Ṣāliḥ," written at the end of the fatwā's text. Their contents are identical, although the handwriting differs. One of the manuscripts is dated 1155/1742, and the second is dated 1269/1853. The latter was most likely written in Diyarbakir, as indicated by the title of the volume in which the manuscript is preserved. The texts of these manuscripts completely match each other and correspond with the text of the manuscript published by Dehqan.

The text of this fatwā has been published by Arab Iraqi scholars such as 'Abbās al-'Azzāwī, Ṣadīq al-Damlūḡī, and Sāmī Sa'īd al-Aḥmad, who attributed it either to Kurdish Malā 'Abd Allāh al-Rabatki or Ḥasan al-Ṣīfki¹⁵⁷. However, the manuscripts indicate in their final line that it is affiliated with Malā Ṣāliḥ¹⁵⁸. Moreover, their text contains some words that are not found in the above-mentioned manuscripts, which are generally accepted as the standard edition. Nonetheless, the minor differences in the formalities at the beginning and end of the fatwā do not affect its overall meaning.

Malā Ṣāliḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī, in this fatwā, explored specific beliefs of the Yezidis, relying on his own experiences or on what he had heard from others. Indeed, the stated beliefs do not come from scholarly sources and actually have little to do with the Yezidi religion¹⁵⁹. He discussed the Islamic stance on each specific Yezidi belief, based on the Qur'ān and other books of Islamic *fiqh*,

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154 Ibid., 142.

155 Ibid., 142.

156 See copy of this manuscript in Appendix number (4-A and 4-B).

157 al-'Azzāwī 1935: 84–89. al-Damlūḡī 1949: 434–439. al-Aḥmad 1971: 208–212. The manuscript in Appendix number (5).

158 Dehqan 2008: 162. Also, see Appendix number (3).

159 For example, see al-Damlūḡī 1949: 434.

particularly from the *Šāfiʿī*, *Mālikī*, and *Ḥanafī madhabs*, such as the *Kitāb al-Muttafiq wa-l-Mukhtaliḥ*¹⁶⁰.

However, the fatwā's discussion of the origins of the Yezidis and their position within Islamic communities is especially important. Malā Ṣāliḥ was highly respected by the Sunni community in the region, and even if his fatwā does not represent the opinion of all *Šāfiʿī* Sunnis in the area, it certainly had a significant influence on their perception of the Yezidis¹⁶¹.

The main text of fatwā starts with phrase: *Allāhuma Alhamnā al-ṣwāb wa-faṣl al-ḥiṭāb wa-ḡanibnā al-ʿammā wa-aulḡiyah al-irtīyāb, wahaba lanna min ladnuka raḡmatan inaka anta al-wahāb. Imā ba'd fa-hāḡihi kalimātun fī Bayān Maḡhab al-Ṭā'fa al-Yazīdīyah wa-Ḥukmihum wa-Ḥukm Amwālihum al-Amwāl al-Kā'ina fī aydīhim*.¹⁶² It means "Oh God inspire us the right and the decisive decision, avoid us from blindness and distrust, and grant us of your Mercy, you are (God) the Bestower." Further, these words are declaration of the Yezidi sect, and judgment on themselves and on the money that in their hands.

When describing Yezidi beliefs, Malā Ṣāliḥ begins his sentence with *wa-minhā* in parentheses, followed by a colon, which means "such as," referring to the Yezidi beliefs. Continuing and still referring to these beliefs, he writes:

*Such as (wa-minhā): they deny the Qurʾān and the Šarīʿa, claiming that the Qurʾān is a lie [...]*¹⁶³.

He frequently uses this formula (*wa-minhā*), and then proceeds to give his opinion or judgment, saying:

It seems that the origin of their [the Yezidi's] Maḡhab- as I extrapolated and examined it devolves to reincarnation of souls (al-ḡulūl), that they are loyal to the Christians and that they consent to some of their beliefs. [...] Accordingly, they are the original Infidels. [...] Therefore, their [the

160 al-ʿAzzāwī 1935: 86. al-Damlūḡī 1949: 436, 437. al-Aḡmad 1971: 208–210.

161 Aykan (2016): 205.

162 See Deḡqan 2008: 143–144.

163 See the manuscript of this fatwā, in Appendix number (3). Deḡqan 2008: 144.

Yezidis'] *land has become the Land of War (Dār Ḥarb, [i.e., not part of the Land of Islam]), [...] and it is permitted to booty their treasury.*¹⁶⁴

It is not clear under which conditions or for what reasons Malā Ṣālīḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī issued this fatwā against the Yezidis. Fatwās against the Yezidis were usually issued to mobilize and recruit Muslims for military campaigns against them. Therefore, it is most likely that Malā Ṣālīḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī's fatwā was issued for the same purpose, suggesting that it was published in the second half of the sixteenth century during the conflict between the Yezidis and the Ottomans.

2.4 The Fatwā of Muḥammad al-Barqal'ī al-Kurdī¹⁶⁵

There is a significant paucity of information regarding Muḥammad al-Barqal'ī al-Kurdī and his fatwā against the Yezidis. The only contemporary study that addresses this topic is the essay by Muṣṭafā Dehqan, published in Nūbihar Akademî¹⁶⁶. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that Muḥammad al-Barqal'ī was a Kurdish Sunni scholar who actively opposed all non-Sunni Kurds, including the Yezidis¹⁶⁷.

.....
164 al-'Azzāwī 1935: 86. al-Damlūḡī 1949: 436. Al-Aḥmad 1971: 210. Dehqan 2008: 148. Also, see the manuscript of this fatwā, in Appendix number (3).

165 According to *al-Ṣarafnāma*, Muḥammad al-Barqal'ī al-Kurdī was one of the famous Islamic scholars in al-Jazīra region. See (Al-Bidlīsī ([1958] 2006): 152). According to Ġa'fariyān and 'Azīziyān, Muḥammad al-Barqal'ī was a Kurdish Sunni scholar of 16th century. (Ġa'fariyān and 'Azīziyān (Winter 1390/2012): 687–688, 690). While other references stated that he was living at the end of 14th century, they seem incorrect. For example, see (Šīwa 1364: 111). Muḥammad al-Barqal'ī had entered the court of Badr 'Alī Beg, the ruler of al-Jazīra, as a scholar, which was during the reign of Sulaymān I (1520–1566). Muḥammad al-Barqal'ī was an influential scholar in the al-Jazīra area and probably the private secretary of Badr Beg. (Dehqan (December 28, 2015): 140). Further, Badr 'Alī Beg had good relations with the Ottoman rulers during the first half of 16th century; therefore, he was assigned by the Ottoman authority to manage the administration of Mosul in 1518. ('Alī 2011: 103–104).

166 Dehqan (December 28, 2015): 137–150.

167 Ibid., 139–140.

Although I have been unable to locate the original copy of al-Barqalī's fatwā, there are several sources attest that he indeed issued such a scholarly ruling against the Yezidis. 'Abd al-Salām al-Mārdīnī (d. 1843)¹⁶⁸ confirmed in his own fatwā concerning the Yezidis that Muḥammad al-Barqalī al-Kurdī had previously issued a similar ruling, which he used as a reference for his own¹⁶⁹. Al-Mārdīnī stated that al-Kurdī had declared the Yezidis to be unbelievers and, consequently, that their killing and the confiscation of their property were lawful (*ḥalāl*) for Muslims¹⁷⁰. Finally, Dehqan identified a manuscript by Muḥammad al-Barqalī, dated August 24, 1596, written in Anatolia and preserved as part of a maḡmū'a (Mashhad, Ar.14292/3)¹⁷¹.

Moreover, I obtained two manuscripts from online sources published by the Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo¹⁷², on which the following remarks are based. Both manuscripts explicitly contain the name of Muḥammad al-Barqalī at the end of the fatwā text. Their contents are identical, although the handwriting differs. One of the manuscripts is dated 1155/1742, and the other 1269/1853, and both were most probably written in Diyarbakır, as indicated by the title of the manuscript volume in which they are preserved¹⁷³. It is noteworthy that the text of the fatwā in both manuscripts corresponds almost entirely to one another¹⁷⁴, with only very minor variations. Despite these slight differences, the texts also closely match the version published by Dehqan¹⁷⁵. It is important to note that these variations do not alter the core content or meaning of the fatwā.

One of the most significant statements made by Muḥammad al-Barqalī regarding the Yezidis was:

.....

168 See, al-Mārdīnī 2002: 8.

169 Ibid., 50.

170 Ibid., 50.

171 For this manuscript, see Dehqan (December 28, 2015): 138.

172 See, copy of this manuscript in Appendix number (4-A and 4-B). Also, the copies of this manuscripts which were downloaded from the Internet website is kept by the author.

173 See, Appendix number (4-A).

174 See, Appendix number (4-A and 4-B).

175 Dehqan (December 28, 2015): 141–148.

*I say: I do not deny their [Yezidi] infidelity, and there is no doubt in that, but the dispute is over defining its kind*¹⁷⁶.

Concerning the issue of the Yezidis' unbelief, Muḥammad al-Barqalī based his fatwā primarily on the fatwā of Mullā Šāliḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī (discussed previously), as well as on Qur'ānic verses and various works of fiqh.

In sum, Muḥammad al-Barqalī held a viewpoint similar to that of other Islamic muftīs regarding the Yezidis.

2.5 Fatwā of ‘Abd Allāh al-Rabatī¹⁷⁷, or of Ḥasan al-Šifkī¹⁷⁸ (1724)

Although there is no consensus among scholars regarding the precise text of the fatwā addressing the Yezidis, it is generally accepted that such a fatwā was composed, most likely in the year 1724, by either ‘Abd Allāh al-Rabatī or Ḥasan al-Šifkī.

While the exact wording of the fatwā attributed to ‘Abd Allāh al-Rabatī remains uncertain, scholars agree that it was issued around 1724¹⁷⁹. They also confirm that the fatwā was published under the title “*fī bayān maḍhab al-*

176 See, Appendix number (4-A and 4-B).

177 al-Šayḥ ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Zizī al-Rabatī was born in 1650 in Rabatke village in Šayḥān township in northern Iraq. (al-Ġalabī 1927: 274, al-Damlūġī 1949: 433, Zakī 1947:41, al-Diwaġī 1974: 224, 234). He was a Kurdish *faqīh* – jurist who lived in Mosul and was educated there. (al-Damlūġī 1949: 433). He is famous as a teacher, because he spent most of his life in the job of teaching in the religious schools in Mosul. (al-Damlūġī 1949: 433, Zakī 1947:41, al-Diwaġī 1974: 226). Al-Rabatī wrote many books, one of them titled *Risāla fī Bayān al-Kufr al-Ṭāi’fa al-Rāfiḍa wa-Bayān inna Dārihum Dār Ḥarb*. For more details about his works, see: al-Ġalabī 1927: 274–275, 132. He died in 1746, and was buried in al-Makāwī quarter in Mosul. (Zakī 1947:41, al-Diwaġī (1974): 224, al-Mawšilī 1966: 103). For more details about al-Rabatī, see: (al-Diwaġī 1974: 223–238).

178 According to al-Ġalabī, and Aḥmad his name is Ḥusayn al-Šifkī and not Ḥasan al-Šifkī as confirmed by some authors. He wrote a book titled *Risāla fī Bayān Maḍhab al-Ṭāi’fa al-Yazīdiyāh wa-Ḥukm Amwālīhim*. (al-Ġalabī 1927: 274). It is kept in the Public Awqāf Library in Mosul under the group name Maġmu’a -Q- 30 x 21 -w- 76. (See: Aḥmad 1977: 260).

179 al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 84–89. al-Damlūġī 1949: 433–439. al-Aḥmad 1971: 208–221.

*Ṭāʾifah al-Yazīdiyyah wa-ḥukmihim wa-ḥukm al-amwāl al-kāʾina bi-aydihim*¹⁸⁰,” meaning “on explaining the doctrine of the Yazidi sect, their judgment, and the judgment of their property in their possession.”

In his 1927 work *Kitāb al-Maḥṭūṭāt al-Mawṣil*, Daūd al-Ġalabī refers to a treatise bearing a similar title, “*Risālah fī bayān madḥab al-Ṭāʾifah al-Yazīdiyyah wa-ḥukm amwālihim*¹⁸¹” (“A Message on Explaining the Doctrine of the Yazidi Sect and the Judgment of Their Property”), authored by Ḥusayn al-Šifkī¹⁸², rather than Ḥasan al-Šifkī, as claimed by al-ʿAzzāwī and al-Damlūġī¹⁸³.

This discrepancy may explain why al-ʿAzzāwī and al-Damlūġī hesitated to definitively attribute the authorship of this fatwā to either ʿAbd Allāh al-Rabatkī or Ḥasan al-Šifkī¹⁸⁴. At the same time, al-Ġalabī discussed the works of ʿAbd Allāh al-Rabatkī¹⁸⁵ without mentioning any such treatise attributed to him, which had been cited by al-ʿAzzāwī and al-Damlūġī¹⁸⁶.

In his 2008 essay, Dehqan argued that the fatwā in question was authored neither by ʿAbd Allāh al-Rabatkī nor by Ḥasan al-Šifkī, but rather by Mullā Šāliḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī¹⁸⁷, as noted earlier in this study. The divergence in accounts concerning the text and authorship of this fatwā appears to result

180 See: al-ʿAzzāwī 1935: 84. al-Damlūġī 1949: 434. al-Aḥmad 1971: 208.

181 This book is kept in the Public Awqāf Library in Mosul under the group named Maġmuʿa -Q- 30 x 21 -w- 76. See: Aḥmad 1977: 260.

182 See: al-Ġalabī 1927: 274. Also see: Aḥmad 1977: 260.

183 al-ʿAzzāwī 1935: 84–89. al-Damlūġī 1949: 434.

184 See, the text of fatwā in Appendix number (5).

185 See: al-Ġalabī 1927: 132, 275.

186 According to al-ʿAzzāwī, Naʿym Beg Āl Bābān presented ʿAbd Allāh al-Rabatkī’s *fatwā* to Ismaʿil Ḥaqī Beg al-Azdamīrī. Al-ʿAzzāwī also confirms that he had seen the original copy of al-Rabatkī’s *fatwā* which was kept under number 116 in the Sulaymāniyah Library in Istanbul. (al-ʿAzzāwī 1935: 84). al-Damlūġī emphasized that al-Rabatkī published his *fatwā* against the Yazidis in 1724. (al-Damlūġī 1949: 433). While at the same time al-Damlūġī also stated that he doubted the validity of the affiliation of this *fatwā* to al-Rabatkī. (al-Damlūġī 1949: 433–434). However, al-Diwaġī confirmed that al-Rabatkī issued a *fatwā* against Yazidis titled *Fatwā fī wuġūb muḥārabat al-Yazīdiyyah* (*fatwā* on the obligation of fighting the Yazidis). (al-Diwaġī 1974: 232). This *fatwā* was written in Arabic and contained about 900 words. (al-Damlūġī 1949: 439).

187 Dehqan 2008: 140.

from the practice among Muslim scholars of drawing upon earlier fatwās when formulating their own legal opinions.

Irrespective of its precise authorship, what remains most significant is that the fatwā was indeed issued and that its content had enduring implications. Given the absence of a definitive version of the text, the following summary reflects its generally acknowledged core elements.

The fatwā delineates the Islamic position toward distinct Yezidi beliefs, grounding its reasoning in the Qurʾān and classical works of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). It characterizes the Yezidis as unbelievers (*kuffār*), defines Yezidi territory as Dār al-Ḥarb (“abode of war”), and deems their property legitimate spoils (*ghanīma*) according to Islamic legal principles.

2.6 Fatwā of Muḥammad Amīn al-ʿUmarī¹⁸⁸ 1784¹⁸⁹

Al-ʿUmarī composed his fatwā in 1784, which was later included in his comprehensive work encompassing research on various issues¹⁹⁰, including a discussion on the takfīr of the Yezidis¹⁹¹. In formulating his position on the Yezidis, al-ʿUmarī drew extensively upon the fatwā of Abū l-Suʿūd, which served as the primary basis for his argument¹⁹².

Al-ʿUmarī’s fatwā states:

.....

188 Muḥammad Amīn bn Ḥēr-llah al-Ḥaṭīb al-ʿUmarī was born 1738 in Mosul. al-ʿUmarī was a *faqīh* and *ṣūfī*, initiated into the *Naqṣabani and Qādrī* tariqas. In 1766, he became the *ḥaṭīb* (orator) of the al-ʿUmarī Mosque-Madrassa. In the following year, he was appointed teacher of the school of *al-Yāsīn*. Muḥammad Amīn al-ʿUmarī was also the first teacher to be appointed at the *Ziwānī* School, founded in 1779. Finally, he was appointed mudarris of the al-ʿUmarī School. al-ʿUmarī has been written about different topics such as religious sciences, language, literature, arithmetic, and history. He died in Mosul in 1788/1203, and he was buried in the al-ʿUmarī Mosque in Mosul. (al-Qis 1928:2/205), (Kemp (Jul., 1983): 350–352, Kemp (Jul., 1981): 310–311).

189 al-Damlūǧī (1949): 441.

190 Ibid., 441.

191 Kemp (Jul., 1983): 351.

192 al-Diwaǧī (2003): 213.

*I know there is in our country a sect which is called [both] al-Dāsiniyah and Yezidis. They reside in villages and prairies [plains], and in the township of Aleppo and al-Šām [Syria], and other [places]. They prostrate to the sun and worship Satan, they believe in the divinity of Šeh̄ ‘Adī (Shaykh Adi), and they allow adultery [...].*¹⁹³

He continued:

*[...] it is certain that they are polytheists, the Muslims have recognized their parents [ancestors] as such. [...], they have more infidelity than the al-Rāfiḍa (Rafidite)¹⁹⁴ due to their polytheism of worshiping the sun and Satan. And the answer concerning them is the answer as to Rafidite: Be killed or convert to Islam; not to be enslaved, and not to be allowed to be admitting their apostate beliefs among the Muslims.*¹⁹⁵

Then al-‘Umarī continued by referring to the al-Šar‘ (Shar‘ia) rulings concerning the Yezidis. He cited a point from Abū l-Su‘ūd’s fatwā against the Yezidis and developed his own argument, stating that:

[...] At every assessment, killing them [Yezidis] is not only allowed, but rather it is the duty [of Muslims] particularly some of them are bandits like the people of Sinjar, and it is possible it [this land] became Dār Ḥarb [Land of War] due to the appearance of polytheism adjudications based on their [Yezidi’s] words. We have not examined if their origins are Muslims and they became apostate, or they were originally infidels, therefore it is the duty of Muslims to cooperate in the invasion against them, kill them, remove, and exterminate them from their origin [strain]. As for those [Yezidis] who [live] in the villages of Mosul under the obedience of governors and their counterparts, if they are original infidels it is allowed

.....
193 al-Damlūġī (1949): 441.

194 *al-Rāfiḍa* is the label that was launched on a group of Shiites. See, Ibn Taymiyyah (1986): 35.

195 al-Damlūġī (1949): 441.

to take al-Ġizzyah from them, and if they are apostates [Muslims] must apply the adjudications of apostates against them¹⁹⁶.

In sum, in the first two paragraphs of his fatwā he explicitly characterizes the Yezidis as both apostates and polytheists, implying they were once Muslim, left Islam, and subsequently worshipped multiple deities, while in later paragraphs he admits uncertainty about whether they were originally infidels or apostasized from the Islam; in either case, however, he calls on Muslims to attack and kill them.

2.7 Fatwā of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī¹⁹⁷ (1802)

According to al-Damlūġī, the fatwā of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī was preserved by a Muslim scholar in Erbil¹⁹⁸. While the exact date of its issuance is unknown, based on al-Ġalī’s biography and the historical context, it likely dates to 1802, as I will explain.

The fatwā, written in Arabic, is a brief text of approximately 80 words. Al-Ġalī stated that it was grounded in the books of Islamic fiqh (the body of Islamic law) and in the ḥadīth literature of Ibn al-Ḥaġar¹⁹⁹, including works such as *Fatḥ al-Mubīn bi-Šarḥ al-Arbaʿīn*²⁰⁰ with its footnotes²⁰¹.

.....
196 al-Damlūġī 1949: 441–442.

197 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān bin Mulla ‘Abdullah (Awal) bin Mulla Muḥammad (Mulla-Zāda) was a Kurdish scholar from village of Ġalī located near to Koye (Koy Sanjaq) in north eastern Iraq. It is important to mention that ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Paša al-Bābānī, the Pasha of Baban Kurdish principality, built a mosque and a school here. He later brought Mulla ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī from his village to Koye and entrusted the administration of this religious school in Kuesnġaq township to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī. Accordingly, he was the imam of that mosque, as well as a teacher until his death in 1217AH/ 1802. Šiwa 1364: 275–276, al-Damlūġī 1949: 440. al-Mudarris 1983: 268–269).

198 al-Damlūġī 1949: 440.

199 Šahāb-al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥaġar al-Miṣrī al-Hayṭamī al-Sa’dī was a *šāfiʿī* scholar, born in 1503 CE in Egypt, and died in 1565CE in Makka. (Ibn al-‘Imād 1993: 10/541–543).

200 This book explains the *aḥadīṭ* according to al-Nawawī.

201 See: the text of fatwā in al-Damlūġī 1949: 440. Also, see: Appendix number (6).

Notably, al-Ġalī employs the historical term al-Dāsniyah referring to the Yezidis²⁰². The fatwā opens with a question concerning the Yezidis, followed by a response, indicating that someone was seeking information about the conditions of al-Dāsniyah. The fatwā reads:

*Then that dear brother asked [...] about al-Dāsniyah conditions, and the conditions of their Amwāl (property.)*²⁰³

‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī responds:

*I answered him that they [Yezidis] are Apostates, their judgment and the judgment of their assets is the judgment of Apostates*²⁰⁴[...]

Despite living near a Yezidi community, al-Ġalī appears to have had limited knowledge about the Yezidis. He continued his response by stating:

*[...] after I looked into the books of al-fiqh and creeds, and into the authorized explanations books of al-Ḥadīṭ of scholar and worshipper ibn al-Ḥaḡar, in his book Fatih al-Mubayin likewise his Footnotes by al-Mudābġī, I retreated from the first answer and I judged that al-Dāsniyah [are] original infidels. [They are] more ungainly than the French, and their judgment and the judgment of their assets is the judgment of infidels*²⁰⁵[...].

The text of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī’s fatwā indicates that he initially classified the Yezidis as apostates but subsequently revised his position, regarding them as infidels and asserting that Muslims should treat them in the same manner as other infidels, such as the French. Notably, the French had conducted religious

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202 See: the text of fatwā in al-Damlūġī 1949: 440. Also, see: Appendix number (6).

203 See: the text of fatwā: Ibid., 440. Also, see: Appendix number (6).

204 See: the text of fatwā: Ibid., 440. Also, see: Appendix number (6).

205 See: the text of fatwā: Ibid., 440. Also, see: Appendix number (6).

campaigns against Muslims during the Middle Ages, and Muslims considered them original infidels and among the most formidable enemies of Islam.

Historical Contexts Behind the Issuance of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī’s Fatwā

‘Abd al-Raḥmān Pasha al-Bābānī, the ruler of the Kurdish principality of Bābān in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, regarded Mullā ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī as a highly respected religious authority. Al-Ġalī also served as the imam of the mosque in Kuesnğaq, the principality’s administrative center, and may have acted as its mufti²⁰⁶.

In 1802, ‘Alī Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Baghdad (1802–1807), planned a military campaign against the Yezidis in Sinjar²⁰⁷. Before launching the campaign, he consulted with his allies, including Pasha al-Bābānī, who considered the campaign a religious duty²⁰⁸. Consequently, troops rallied under his command²⁰⁹, motivated by the belief that they were undertaking jihad against the Yezidis, whom they regarded as infidels²¹⁰.

The strong religious fervor of Bābān’s troops and their eagerness to engage in jihad were likely prompted by a religious fatwā, as Muslim campaigns against the Yezidis were typically sanctioned by such decrees, which framed the Yezidis as unbelievers. Since no other fatwā addressing the Yezidis from this period is recorded, and given ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ġalī’s close association with Pasha al-Bābānī, it is reasonable to conclude that al-Ġalī issued the fatwā that inspired the troops’ zeal most likely in 1802.

.....
206 Šiwa 1364: 275–276, al-Damlūġi 1949: 440. al-Mudarris 1983: 268–269.

207 For more details about this campaign, see: Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 77–83.

208 Nāzım Beg 2001: 175.

209 Ibid., 176.

210 Ibid., 175.

2.8 Fatwā of Mullā Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭī al-Kurdī²¹¹ (1832)

Mullā Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭī was the muftī of the Kurdish Soran principality, headquartered in Rawānduz²¹². According to multiple sources²¹³, he issued a fatwā against the Yezidis at the instigation of Mullā Yaḥyā al-Mizūrī²¹⁴.

Although the text of the fatwā itself has not been preserved, contemporary sources describe the circumstances leading to its issuance. They indicate that it permitted Muslims to attack and kill the Yezidis and act against them at will²¹⁵, without providing further details on its content.

Based on the historical context, the fatwā was likely issued in 1832, reflecting a pattern similar to earlier Islamic fatwās directed against the Yezidis.

Motivations Behind Mullā Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭī's Fatwā

Since Mullā Yaḥyā al-Mizūrī was behind Mullā Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭī's fatwā, a key question arises: why did he seek to kill the Yezidis?

Mullā Yaḥyā al-Mizūrī belonged to the al-Mizūrī tribe, one of the largest Kurdish clans in what is now northern Iraq/Kurdistan. His tribe had a long-

.....
211 Mulla Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭī al-Kurdī was one of the greatest Muslim scholars of the nineteenth century. (al-Mudarris 1983: 512–513. al-Baḡdādī 1998: 144). He was born in 1785. (Nabaz 2003: 63). The sources do not refer to the date of his death.

212 al-Damlūḡī 1949: 463.

213 For example, see: Ibid., 462–463. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 146.

214 Mulla Yaḥyā bin Ḥusayn “or Ḥālid” al-Mizūrī was a Kurdish Šāfi scholar and faqīh from the al-Mizūrī tribe. He taught at the school “Madrasah al-Ġām’ al-Kabīr” in the town of al-‘Amadiyah. (al-Ġalabī 1927: 250–251. al-Brifkānī 1983: 27,28. Šīwa 1364: 351). In 1804, he left al-‘Amadiyah and lived in Mosul until his death. (Zakī 1947: 2/222. While other sources confirm that he taught and died in Baghdad. Also, there are differences between scholars regarding his date of his death. al-Ġalabī states that he died about 1844, (al-Ġalabī 1927: 250–251). According to another source he died about 1829 in Baghdad and was buried there next to the tomb of ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ġaylānī. (al-Bayṭār 1964: 3/1591. While another sources state that he died in 1834. See: al-Mudarris 1983: 622. Mardam Bag (1971): 185. al-Brifkānī 1983: 27.). For more information about him, see: al-Baḡdādī (1998): 136–144. al-Mudarris 1983: 621–623).

215 For example, see: Nabaz 2003: 66.

standing enmity with the Yezidis, particularly in Šehān territory²¹⁶. Sources indicate hostility between the Yezidi Mīr (prince) ‘Alī Beg and certain al-Mizūrī tribal leaders, notably ‘Alī Āġā Bālatay, the Ārkūšī tribal leader²¹⁷. Consequently, al-Mizūrī’s scholars and Mullās considered the killing of Yezidis both a religious jihad and a tribal duty²¹⁸.

This was compounded by tensions between ‘Alī Āġā Bālatay, Mullā Yaḥyā’s uncle, and al-Amīr Muḥammad Sa’īd, the Muslim prince of the Bahdīnan Kurdish principality. Al-Amīr Muḥammad Sa’īd maintained good relations with Mīr ‘Alī Beg²¹⁹ and awaited an opportunity to eliminate ‘Alī Āġā Bālatay.

In 1832, Yezidi Mīr ‘Alī Beg invited ‘Alī Āġā Bālatay to his home for the special ceremony of his son’s circumcision. At the instigation of Bahdīnan prince al-Amīr Muḥammad Sa’īd, ‘Alī Āġā Bālatay, his son, and some of his companions were killed by the Yezidis in Mīr ‘Alī Beg’s home²²⁰. Following these events, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, Mullā Yaḥyā’s son, was also killed, either by Yezidis in the mountains²²¹, according to al-Bayṭār, or under al-Amīr Muḥammad Sa’īd’s direction, according to other sources²²².

In response to these murders, Mullā Yaḥyā al-Mzūrī leveraged his religious authority to seek revenge against the Yezidis and their ally, al-Amīr Muḥammad Sa’īd²²³.

After the governor of Mosul refused to help Mullā Yaḥyā al-Mzūrī, he went to Baghdad and complained to Riḍā Pashā, the governor of Baghdad, about what had happened to his uncle and son, as well as about the general treatment of Muslims by the Yezidis. The governor of Baghdad provided Mullā Yaḥyā al-Mzūrī with a letter to Mīr Muḥammad Rawāndozi, the Prince of Sorān (known

.....
216 For more details about the enmity between Yezidis and al-Mizūrī clan, see al-Damlūġī 1949: 461–463. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 135–149.

217 For example, see al-Damlūġī 1949: 461. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 139.

218 see Ibid., 461–463.135.

219 Farḥān and Šammo (2009): 138–139.

220 al-Damlūġī 1949: 461–462. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 139–142.

221 al-Bayṭār 1964: 3/1590–1591.

222 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 144.

223 al-‘Azzāwī (no date): 7/32–33. al-Damlūġī 1949: 462. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 144. Nabaz 2003: 66.

as Mîre Kora – the “Blind Prince”), in which he recommended that the Prince support them against the Yezidis²²⁴.

Mullā Yahyā al-Mzūrī was warmly welcomed by the Blind Prince, his counselor, and Mullā Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭī, the muftī of the principality in Rawāndoż²²⁵. Mullā Yahyā al-Mzūrī convinced the Blind Prince of Sorān to attack the Yezidis. Before leading the campaign against the Yezidis, Mullā Yahyā al-Mzūrī asked Mullā Muḥammad al-Ḥaṭī to issue a fatwā against them in order to mobilize Muslim forces²²⁶, which he did²²⁷. Some sources state that Mullā Yahyā al-Mzūrī himself issued the fatwā²²⁸; however, this is a weak claim and it was most likely issued by al-Ḥaṭī due to his position as muftī of the Kurdish Sorān principality. Regardless of who issued the fatwā, it played a significant role in mobilizing Muslims against the Yezidis²²⁹. Jongerden notes that in 1831–1832, a local muftī issued a fatwā declaring Muḥammad Rawādożī’s campaign against the Yezidis to be jihad, confirming that the fatwā was indeed issued during this period²³⁰.

Accordingly, the Blind Prince of Sorān led a large army of approximately 40,000 to 50,000 troops, first toward the Yezidi areas in Sheikhan, and later to Sinjar²³¹. During the campaign, his forces killed a large number of Yezidis and captured about 4,000 men and women, including their prince, ‘Alī Beg. After pillaging and destroying many Yezidi villages, they brought the prisoners to Rawāndoż. The Yezidi prince was later executed after refusing to convert to Islam²³².

.....
224 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 144–145.

225 Ibid., 145.

226 Nabaz 2003: 66. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 144–147.

227 Nabaz 2003: 66.

228 Ibid., 66.

229 Ibid., 66. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 144–147.

230 Jongerden 2012: 254.

231 Nabaz 2003: 66. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 144–147.

232 For more details about this campaign against Yezidis, see: Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 133–158. Nabaz 2003: 66.

2.9 Fatwā of ‘Abd-al-Salām al-Mārdīnī (1785–1843)²³³

I was unable to obtain an original copy of ‘Abd-al-Salām al-Mārdīnī’s fatwā; however, in a chapter of his book entitled *Tārīḥ Mārdīn* (History of Mardin), written in 1842, he discusses the origin of the Kurds and their land and also includes his fatwā against the Yezidis²³⁴.

Written in Arabic and approximately 380 words long, the fatwā cites Quranic verses to justify his position and contains numerous inaccuracies regarding Yezidi beliefs²³⁵.

The fatwā in the book begins with the following phrases:

Most Kurds are from “Ahl al-Sunna wa-al-Ġamā’a”, on the Maḍhab (doctrine) of Muḥammad bn Adrīs al-Šāfī²³⁶, which includes a Sect which is called Yezidis that emerged in al-Šām during the period of Banī Umayyad [...]. And then they returned to their homeland in which they showed their doctrine. They regarded themselves as followers of Šayḥ ‘Adū bn Musafir who is from the series of Marwānī successors.²³⁷

‘Abd-al-Salām al-Mārdīnī continues to describe certain beliefs that he attributed to the Yezidis, and at the end he states:

.....

233 ‘Abd al-Salām bin ‘Umar bin Muḥammad bin ‘Umar bin Ibrāhīm bin Muḥammad al-Mārdīnī was a *faqīh*, Scholar, muḥaddaṭ, and Ḥanafī muftī. He was born and died in Mārdīn in modern-day Turkey. He was the Muftī of Mārdīn and is the author of several books. (al-Baġdādī (1951): Vol. 1, 572). (al-Ziriklī 2002: Volume 4, 6–7). (al-Mārdīnī 2002: 6). (al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 79). (al-Kurdī 2008: Vol. 3, 111).

234 See al-Mārdīnī 2002: 45.

235 See, *Ibid.*, 48–51.

236 Muḥammad bin Idrīs al-Šāfī was born in Gaza in 150 AH /767 CE, and died in 204 AH / 820 CE, in Egypt. (al-Bar (no date): 66–67, al-Ḍahabī 1996: 10/5–6, Abū Zahra (No. Date): 14, 29). Al-Šāfī was an Arab Muslim theologian, scholar and *Faqīh*, who founded a new Islamic path (*ṭarīqa*) is (al-*ṭarīqa al-Šāfīyah*). He is the third *Imām* of the fourth Islamic Imāms of *al-Ahl al-Sunna wa-al-Ġamā’a*. (Abū Zahra (No. Date): 24–30).

237 See al-Mārdīnī 2002: 48.

*And the conclusion that they [Yezidis] neither have book nor religion, they are infidels; by agreement [Muslim's Scholars and Muftīs] their money and their blood are ḥalāl for the Sultān [for the Islamic authority] until they turn back from their deviancy, as Muḥammad al-Barqalī al-Kurdī and other scholars given fatwās on that. They [Yezidis] are one of the stray Islamic sects.*²³⁸

It is clear from the text of 'Abd-al-Salām al-Mārdīnī's fatwā that he regarded the Yezidis as a stray group that split from Islam. He emphasized that the Yezidis are unbelievers and that their killing and the seizing of their property are ḥalāl for Muslims.

2.10 Fatwā of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Afandī²³⁹

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Afandī issued a fatwā²⁴⁰ against the Yezidis between 1860 and 1876 under the title *Kitāb Farīda al-Sunnīyah fī Kašf al-'Aqā'id al-Yazīdiyyah*²⁴¹, which was also called *al-Risāla al-Ḍahabīyah fī al-Radd 'alā al-Yazīdiyyah al-Mārḡīn 'an al-Ummah al-Muḥammadiyyah*²⁴². A manuscript copy of this fatwā is available in the Public Endowment Library in Mosul under collection 50/16, q18×11-w64²⁴³. Another copy is preserved at the Center of King Faisal for Research and Islamic Studies in al-Riyāḍ under series 103663/

.....
238 See, Ibid., 50.

239 Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Afandī al-Ḥayāt died in 1868. (al-Mawṣil 2018: 18), (al-'Azzāwī 1935: 155), al-Diwaḡī (2003): 213). He was one of Mosul's scholars and the owner of the well-known Mosque-Madrassa called *al-Ḥayāt* in Mosul. (al-'Azzāwī (1935): 155. (al-Diwaḡī (2003): 213).

240 The sources also named this fatwā "Message." Whatever the name of this *fatwā*, it does not change its content. For example, see al-'Azzāwī 1935: 155). (al-Diwaḡī 2003: 213).

241 al-Mawṣil 2018: 18, al-Diwaḡī 2003: 213.

242 Aḥmad 1977: 5/125. al-'Azzāwī (no date): 4/301.

243 Aḥmad 1977: 5/125.

ğ88²⁴⁴. For the preparation of his fatwā, Aḥmad Afandī relied on the fatwā of Abū l-Su'ūd²⁴⁵.

This fatwā consists of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. In the introduction, he explains the nullity of Yezidi beliefs based on his interpretation of Qur'ān verses and the Prophet's narratives (ḥadīth)²⁴⁶.

The book (*Tārīḥ al-Yazīdiyyah wa-Aṣl 'Aqīdatuhum* – “The History of the Yezidis and the Origin of Their Faith”), authored by 'Abbās al-'Azzāwī, is the only reference that includes the main part of Aḥmad Afandī's fatwā²⁴⁷. Al-'Azzāwī also took the text of this fatwā from the book (*Tbādat Iblīs*²⁴⁸ – “Satan Worshippers”), authored by Nūrī Beg²⁴⁹. Additionally, a handwritten copy of this fatwā was rewritten by Dawūd al-Ġalabī in 1940 and kept in his library in Mosul²⁵⁰.

The fatwā begins with:

*I began to reveal the covers of ignorants of Muslims [Yezidis], and the heinous acts of the infidel mother of apostates, and Satan worshippers [Yezidis] by writing a Message which contains the explicit purposes and rules of legitimacy [...].*²⁵¹

Further, the fatwā states that the Yezidis are followers of Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya, the Umayyad caliph²⁵². It also considers the Yezidis apostates (murtaddūn) and

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244 al-Maktaba al-Šāmila.

245 al-Diwaġī 2003: 213.

246 al-'Azzāwī 1935: 155. Also see Nūrī (1328/1910): 52–62.

247 al-'Azzāwī 1935: 155–160.

248 See: Nūrī 1328/1910: 52–62.

249 al-'Azzāwī 1935: 155–160.

250 Dabdūb ([1967] 1997): 3/ 12.

251 al-Diwaġī 2003: 213.

252 al-'Azzāwī 1935: 156.

therefore asserts that Muslims must fight them²⁵³. The fatwā further declares it ḥalāl (permissible) for Muslims to kill Yezidis and to seize their possessions²⁵⁴.

Reason for Aḥmad bn Muḥammad Afandī Issuing his Fatwā

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Afandī issued his fatwā during the reign of Ottoman Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Maḥmūd (1860–1876)²⁵⁵. The Sultan sought to impose conscription²⁵⁶ on the Yezidis, as he did for all Muslim communities²⁵⁷, effectively treating them as an Islamic sect²⁵⁸. The Yezidis strongly opposed this and requested that the Ottoman government treat them like other non-Muslim communities, Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians²⁵⁹, allowing them to pay a tax in lieu of military service (*bedel-i askeri*) instead of serving in the army²⁶⁰.

The Ottoman government, however, rejected the Yezidis’ request and insisted on taking action against them, even if it required the use of force. To carry out this task, it commissioned Mīr Ālāī Arkān al-Ḥarb (Commander-in-Chief of War) Muḥammad Ṭāhir²⁶¹. In 1872, he sent a commission to the Yezidis

.....
253 al-Diwaḡī 2003: 213.

254 al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 156.

255 al-Diwaḡī 2003: 213.

256 During the Ottoman *Tanzimat* period (1839 to 1876), the Ottoman government’s reorganization of its army included new laws regarding the conscription system. Accordingly, the *ḡizīyah* was replaced by a commutation tax (*bedel-i askeri*), which paid the cost of keeping one soldier for a year. This law was applicable only to those considered *Ahl al-Kitāb*. (Fuccaro 1997: 567). The Ottomans never recognized the Yezidis as a *millet*, or community, or religion, or even a sect, (Gölbaşı 2008: 3, 40, 41) therefore, they always tried to impose a Muslim identity upon Yezidis. (Beşikçi 2012: 127). They also treated the Yezidis as Muslims in matters concerning conscription. (Fuccaro 1997: 567). The major attempts of Ottomans for bringing Yezidis by force into military conscription failed, because of Yezidis rejection claiming that military service was against their religious faith. (Beşikçi 2012: 127). But the fact is that the Yezidis feared losing their religious identity as well as their autonomous lifestyle. The Yezidis thought if they were conscripted, they would be converted to Islam while in the army, would lose their distinct and relatively autonomous lifestyle. (Beşikçi 2012: 127). For more details about issue of Yezidi conscription into the Ottoman army, see: (Gölbaşı 2008: 53–80)

257 al-Diwaḡī 2003: 213.

258 al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 155.

259 Ibid., 155–156, al-Ġalabī 1927: 252. Fuccaro 1997: 567. Beşikçi 2012: 127.

260 al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 155–156, al-Ġalabī 1927: 252. Fuccaro 1997: 567. Beşikçi 2012: 127.

261 al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 156.

to secure their approval for military conscription²⁶². The Yezidis again refused and, later that year²⁶³, submitted a petition consisting of fourteen articles, signed by Yezidi Mir (prince) Mīr Ḥusayn Beg, *Ṣayḥ* Nāṣir (the community's religious leader), and other senior tribal leaders²⁶⁴. The petition, written in Arabic, French, and Turkish, was sent to the Ottoman Porte in Istanbul²⁶⁵. The Yezidis explained that their rejection of conscription²⁶⁶ was grounded in religious principles²⁶⁷.

Al-'Azzāwī notes that Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Afandī issued a fatwā expressing his opinion on the fourteen articles included in the Yezidi petition of 1872²⁶⁸. Al-Diwaḡī adds that the fatwā was delivered to Mīr Ālāi Muḥammad²⁶⁹ Ṭāhir²⁷⁰, reflecting a common practice: fatwās against the Yezidis were often issued before military campaigns to legitimize action against them and to mobilize Muslims in support of such campaigns.

In 1875, the Sublime Porte responded to the Yezidi petition. The response reaffirmed the Yezidis' exemption from obligatory military service, as had been the case in 1866²⁷¹. Instead, they paid a monetary tax, like other non-Muslim communities considered *Ahl al-Kitāb*, or "People of the Book²⁷²". This outcome also supports the idea that the fatwā was issued before the Yezidi petition was written. In other words, the Ottoman authorities ultimately accepted the Yezidis' demand for exemption from conscription, rendering any opposing fatwā unnecessary.

.....

262 Ibid., 156.

263 Joseph 1919: 77. Gölbaşı 2008: 64. Beşikçi 2012: 127.

264 For the content of this Yezidi petition, see: (Joseph 1919: 77–82). (Gölbaşı 2008): 65–68).

265 al-'Azzāwī 1935: 156. Gölbaşı 2008: 64.

266 al-'Azzāwī 1935: 156.

267 Ibid., 156.

268 Ibid., 156.

269 Information about the life of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Afandī is limited. However, I located a reference indicating that he died in 1868 (al-Mawṣil 2018: 14, 18) which would mean that his *fatwā* was written *before* the Yezidi petition of 1872. If so, this fatwā still could have been used by Mīrālāi Muḥammad Ṭāhir to mobilize his troops against the Yezidis.

270 al-Diwaḡī 2003: 213.

271 Gölbaşı 2008: 68–69.

272 Joseph 1919: 82.

3 Contemporary Fatwās against Yezidis

Today, the global context has fundamentally changed compared to historical times, due to advancements in technology, the establishment of human rights organizations, and the enactment of international laws aimed at protecting human rights. Despite these developments, Islamic fatwās continue to be issued against the Yezidi community, and analogous Islamic practices and positions targeting Yezidis persist.

3.1 ISIS Fatwās Against the Yezidis Since 2014

Following the invasion by ISIS on the Yezidis in the Sinjar region and other Yezidi villages in Naynawā (Mosul) province, ISIS formalized its stance toward the Yezidi community through the issuance of official fatwās and related publications. In this context, dedicated ISIS bodies were established to produce and disseminate fatwās, notably the *Dīwān al-Buḥūth wa-l-ʿIftāʾ* (Commission of Research and Fatwās) and the *Hayʾat al-Buḥūth wa-al-ʿIftāʾ* (Corporation of Research and Fatwās) in Wilāyat Raqqā, Syria, following the declaration of the Caliphate. These organizations issued a range of fatwās, which were systematically printed, distributed among ISIS fighters, and made publicly accessible via the Internet. Through these religious and legal publications, the Islamic State defined Islam's stance on the Yezidis, their status among Muslims, and how Muslims should treat them.

3.2 The Fatwā entitled “The Revival of Slavery Before the Hour”

One of the most significant fatwās issued by ISIS against the Yezidis was published in October 2014 in its official online magazine, *Dabiq/Dābiq*²⁷³, issue number 4, on pages 14–17²⁷⁴. This fatwā followed the capture of thousands of Yezidi women, girls, and children in August 2014. It delineated which individuals could be taken captive and prescribed the manner in which they were to be treated in accordance with Islamic Sharīʿa.

This fatwā is entitled “The Revival of Slavery Before the Hour.” The full text comprises approximately 2,200 words and was written in English. Although it does not mention the name of any muftī, I infer from the content and its publisher that it was issued by the highest authority of ISIS for the following reasons. First, the fatwā is composed in a scholarly format typical of Islamic legal opinions, indicating that it was written by Islamic experts. Second, it was published in the English version of the professional online magazine *Dābiq*, produced by the al-Ḥayāt Media Centre, a branch of ISIS’s Ministry of Media²⁷⁵. This suggests that any article, particularly those without attributed authors, published in this magazine represents the official position of ISIS.

The fatwā’s rulings against the Yezidis are primarily based on interpretations of Qurʾān verses and the Prophet’s narratives (Ḥadīth), referencing widely respected Islamic scholars and sources, such as: al-Buḥārī, Muslim, Ibn Raḡab al-Ḥanbalī, and Al-Nawawī, among others. At its outset, the fatwā describes the Yezidis as a pagan (mušrikūn – polytheists) religious minority residing in

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273 *Dabiq* – *Dābiq* is the title of a monthly official magazine of the Islamic State, which is published online in several languages, including English, French, German and Russian. Some issues were published in the Arabic language. Since its first appearance in Ramaḍān 1435 / July 2014 until Šawāl 1437 / July 31, 2016, fifteen issues of *Dābiq* magazine have been published. The journal includes between 40 and 66 pages. To see or download most numbers of this magazine see: <http://jihadology.net/category/dabiq-magazine/>. al-Sakrān.

274 See *Dabiq* – *Dābiq* (Dhul Hijjah 1435/ October 2014: Number 4: 14–17. Also see, Appendix number (8).

275 See Milton (October 2016): 15.

regions of Iraq and Syria²⁷⁶. It then raises the question of why the Yezidis have continued to exist until the present day, stating, in part:

Upon conquering the region of Sinjar in Wilāyat Nīnawā, the Islamic State faced a population of Yazidis, a pagan minority existent for ages in regions of Iraq and Shām [Syria]. Their continual existence to this day is a matter that Muslims should question as they will be asked about it on Judgment Day, considering that Allāh had revealed Āyat al-Sayf (the verse of the sword) over 1400 years ago. He [... Allāh] said, and when the sacred months have passed, then kill the mušrikūn [polytheists] wherever you find them, and capture them, and besiege them, and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give zakah [obligatory Muslim donations to the poor], let them [go] on their way. Indeed, Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful. [Al-Tawbah: 5].²⁷⁷

According to the quotations above and below, ISIS considered the Yezidis to be *mušrikūn* (polytheists/idolaters) and therefore subject to treatment in accordance with Islamic law. Moreover, as indicated below, this fatwā emphasizes that Yezidi women should be captured, enslaved, and distributed among ISIS jihadists. The fatwā supports this position by drawing on Islamic Sharī'a and the interpretations of the majority of fuqahā' (Islamic jurists). Another quotation from this fatwā reads:

Accordingly, the Islamic State dealt with this group as the majority of fuqahā' [Islamic scholars] have indicated how mušrikūn should be dealt with. Unlike the Jews and Christians, there was no room for ḡizyah [tax on non-Muslims, only on those who regarded as "Ahl al-Kitāb or People of the Book"] payment. Also, their women could be enslaved unlike female apostates who the majority of the fuqahā' say cannot be enslaved and can only be given an ultimatum to repent or face the sword. After capture, the Yazidi women and children were then divided according to

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276 See Dabiq – *Dābiq* (Dhul Hijjah 1435/ October 2014: number 4: 14.

277 See *Ibid.*, 14.

*the Sharī'ah amongst the fighters of the Islamic State who participated in the Sinjar operations, after one fifth of the slaves were transferred to the Islamic State's authority to be divided as khums [spoils of war tax].*²⁷⁸

From this fatwā, it can be understood that ISIS jihadists captured and sold Yezidi women and children because, according to the fatwā, “the Companions” of the Prophet Muhammad²⁷⁹ had done the same with the *mušrikūn*. The fatwā further states that slavery is mentioned as one of the signs of “the Hour” (the final hour of divine judgment) and as one of the causes of *al-malḥama al-kubrā* (the battle of Armageddon before the Hour), as referenced by the Prophet himself. It also asserts that the enslavement of Yezidi families at the time of its writing was likely the first large-scale enslavement of *mušrikūn* families since the abandonment of this Sharī'a law²⁸⁰.

Moreover, the fatwā frames ISIS's actions as a revival of the practices of the Islamic religion, as is evident from the following citation:

*May Allāh bless this Islamic State with the revival of further aspects of the religion occurring at its hands.*²⁸¹

*And all praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.*²⁸²

Although ISIS jihadist troops carried out mass killings of Yezidis, destroyed their sacred religious sites, and seized their land, money, and possessions, particularly in the Sinjar region, this fatwā addresses only the enslavement of Yezidi women and children, ignoring the other atrocities. It is also noteworthy that ISIS, in its publications, portrayed the Yezidis not only as polytheists/idolaters but also as devil worshipers or Satanists²⁸³.

.....
278 See *Ibid.*, 15.

279 About the enslavement and rape of women by the Prophet Muhammad and his followers, see Spencer 2018: 31–32, 36.

280 See *Dabiq – Dābiq* (Dhul Hijjah 1435/ October 2014): Number 4: 15.

281 See *Ibid.*, 17.

282 See *Ibid.*, 17.

283 For example, see *Dabiq – Dābiq* (Šawwāl 1435/ August 2014): number 3: 18,35. Moubayed 2015: 138. Gerges 2017: 31. Freamon 2019: 474.

3.3 The Fatwā on the Legal Status of the Yezidis (August 9, 2014)

The fatwā issued by the Dīwān al-Buḥūt wa-al-Iftā' (the Research and Fatwā Office of the Islamic State) on August 9, 2014, titled “*Ḥukm al-Izīdīyah – Legal Status of the Yezidis*,” explains the position of the Yezidis in Islamic jurisprudence and prescribes how Muslims should deal with them. Numbered (011), the fatwā seeks to determine whether the Yezidis are to be regarded as original infidels or apostates, forming the basis for its legal rulings.

The fatwā begins by posing the question:

Are the Yezidi Sect (Yezidis) in Iraq original infidels or apostates?

The answer states that:

the Yezidis are original infidels; they are neither People of the Book nor in possession of any form of scripture, they are *waṭānīyūn* (pagans/polytheists).²⁸⁴

This text makes it clear that the fatwā mandates the application of the Islamic Šarī'a rulings pertaining to pagans and original infidels to the Yezidis and instructs Muslims to treat them on that basis.

The fatwā categorically rejects any views that link Yezidism to Islam or that associate the origins of Yezidi religion and beliefs with Islam. In this context, the fatwā notes that some contemporary studies suggest that the Yezidis have an Islamic origin. It states, however, that this view has not been substantiated by sound evidence²⁸⁵.

Further, the fatwā offers an example by comparing the Yezidis to the Rafidites, noting that the Rafidites claim to be Muslims, profess their creed, despite their practice of some principles that are inconsistent with Islam. The fatwā observes that, accordingly the Rafidites are considered apostates.

.....
284 See the whole text of fatwā in Appendix number (7).

285 Ibid.

Regarding to the Yezidis it emphasizes that unlike the Rafidites, the Yezidis are entirely outside Islam and do not profess its creed. Rather, they assert adherence to an ancient, distinct religion²⁸⁶.

The text of fatwā further clarifies that Yezidism has no connection to Islam, stating that:

The fact that the Yezidis perform some rituals similar to those of Muslims, but this matter does not affect the ruling on them, since many al-milal wa-al-niḥal (sects and communities) – whether of divine or earthly origin – have rituals resembling those of Muslims. This does not lead us to attribute apostasy to them²⁸⁷.

In conclusion, the fatwā delivers the Islamic legal ruling regarding the Yezidis, stating:

Therefore, we hold that the rulings pertaining to original disbelievers, as set forth in their respective sources in the jurisprudential books, should be applied to this pagan sect. And God knows best²⁸⁸.

Beneath the fatwā appears the Islamic State's stamp and declaration, noting that it was issued by the head of the Dīwān al-Buḥūt wa-al-Iftā'²⁸⁹.

In short, the fatwā classifies the Yezidis as entirely outside the fold of Islam, rejecting any connection between Yezidism and Islam, and noting that superficial similarities in rituals do not alter their status. It categorizes them as original infidels and pagans, thereby mandating the application of Islamic rulings pertaining to pagans and disbelievers to them.

.....

286 Ibid.

287 Ibid.

288 Ibid.

289 Ibid.

3.4 The Fatwā by the Commission of Research and Fatwās, October 2014

In October 2014, ISIS's "Commission of Research and Fatwās" (*Dīwān al-Buḥūth wa-l-Iftā'*) published a fatwā concerning captured women and enslavement. The fatwā was issued as a booklet entitled *Su'āl wa-ḡawāb fī al-sabī wa-l-riqāb* ("Question and Answer on Captivity and Slaves"). It consists of a cover and five numbered pages and contains answers to 32 questions. The fatwā addresses only female sex slaves and instructs ISIS jihadists on when and how they may rape captured women and girls²⁹⁰. For example, the first question reads:

s1 [question]: *What is Captivity?*

ḡ1 [answer]: *The Captivity is what Muslims took of the women of the People of War*²⁹¹.

Although the fatwā does not explicitly mention the Yezidi people by name, it designates the areas inhabited by Yezidis, particularly the Sinjar region, as Dar al-Harb (Land of War) and the Yezidis as the People of War. Following the capture of thousands of Yezidi women, girls, and children, ISIS jihadists treated them in accordance with the instructions provided in this fatwā. They systematically distributed Yezidi women and girls among their fighters, enslaved them, and engaged in their sale and purchase. Furthermore, another question and answer in the fatwā explicitly sanctioned the buying and selling of all captured women and girls.

s6: *Is it permissible to sell al-sabīyah [captured women or girls]?*

ḡ1: *It is permissible to sell, buy and donated al-Sabāyā [plural form, captured women or girls] and enslaved, as they are pure money, can deal with – without destructive or damages*²⁹².

290 For the whole text of this booklet, see: Appendix number (9). Also see: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BytTI1JvfBuyTTVQNkppcC1EVWs/view?pli=1>

291 For the whole text of this booklet, see: Appendix number (9), p.1.

292 For the whole text of this booklet, see: Appendix number (9), p.1.

3.5 The Fatwā of ISIS muftī, Šifā' ‘Alī Bašīr al-N‘mma nicknamed Abū ‘Abd-Allāh al-Bārī

Šifā' ‘Alī Bašīr al-N‘mma²⁹³, also known as Abū ‘Abd-Allāh al-Bārī, served as the Imam and Ḥaṭīb of the al-Šahīd Māzin Mosque and as Director of the al-Yaqīn Center in Mosul²⁹⁴. He also delivered sermons at the al-Muftī Mosque in Mosul, which was reportedly affiliated with the ISIS office of ‘Iftā’²⁹⁵. Prior to joining ISIS, he was a member of the “Muslim Scholars Association – Hay’at al-‘Ulamā’ al-Muslimīn²⁹⁶.”

Šifā' ‘Alī Bašīr al-N‘mma studied Islamic law and dogma and graduated from the Islamic University of Madinah in Saudi Arabia in 1984²⁹⁷. He subsequently issued numerous fatwās²⁹⁸ and became one of the most prominent early leaders of ISIS²⁹⁹, serving as its Muftī³⁰⁰. In addition, he held the position of president of the Šarī’a Court affiliated with the Judiciary and Ombudsman Dīwān in Mosul³⁰¹.

On January 16, 2020, he was apprehended by a regiment of the Iraqi police in Mosul³⁰². According to Mosul court investigations and media reports, he admitted in his confessions to being responsible for issuing numerous special fatwās during ISIS’s rule³⁰³.

.....

293 Šifā' ibn ‘Alī Bašīr ibn Muḥammad Ġarġīs ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥalaf ibn Ḥamza ibn Muḥammad ibn N‘mmat-llah. He is from one of the most famous Islamic religious family in Mosul. In 2007, he traveled to Mecca to perform the Umra. Also, in the same year, he traveled to Mecca to perform the Ḥajj-pilgrimage. al-Marġa’ (Report: 18.01.2020). al-Šabāḥ al-‘Arabī (Report on 22.01.2020).

294 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Šabāḥal-‘Arabī (Report: 22.01.2020).

295 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Šabāḥal-‘Arabī (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Marġa’ (Report: 18.01.2020).

296 al-Marġa’ (Report: 18.01.2020).

297 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Quds al-‘Arabī (22.01.2020).

298 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Quds al-‘Arabī (22.01.2020).

299 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Quds al-‘Arabī (22.01.2020).

300 al-Marġa’ (Report: 18.01.2020).

301 Al-Šabāḥal-‘Arabī (Report on 22.01.2020).

302 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Quds al-‘Arabī (22.01.2020).

303 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Quds al-‘Arabī (22.01.2020).

Although I am not able to obtain an original copy of the fatwās issued by Šifā' 'Alī Bašīr al-N'mma, according to his confessions to the investigating judge in Nineveh (Mosul), he also issued fatwās against the Yezidis³⁰⁴. He [Šifā' 'Alī Bašīr al-N'mma] says:

“[...] I have issued other fatwās concerning to the *Sabāyā* (captured women and girls) of Yezidis. In which [I] give permission to the members of ISIS to take them (Yezidi women and girls) as *Sabāyā* for themselves, sold them, and to kill the Yezidi men³⁰⁵ [...]”

3.6 The Fatwā of ISIS Corporation of Research and Fatwās/ Wilāyat Raqqa Center

This fatwā³⁰⁶, numbered 29, was issued by the ISIS Center for Fatwās, called the “Corporation of Research and Fatwās/Wilāyat Raqqa,” in Syria³⁰⁷. The full text of this fatwā is only about 20 words and is written in Arabic. In the upper right corner of the fatwā, there is the ISIS logo; in the center, the name of the ISIS Center for Fatwās; and in the left corner, the location along with the phrase “Center for Fatwās.” Directly beneath this is the phrase “Rulings on Slavery and the Slave (Aḥkām al-Riq wa-al-'Abīd)” enclosed in parentheses. In the lower left corner, there is the ISIS stamp. The text of this fatwā begins with the question:

(29) *What is the rule of “Saby Nisā' al-Nuṣayriyyah wa-l-Kuffār” [regarding the] capturing women of Christians and Unbelievers?*³⁰⁸

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304 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Quds al-'Arabī (22.01.2020).

305 Mawāzīn Nīuz (Report: 22.01.2020). al-Šabāḥ al-'Arabī (Report on 22.01.2020). al-Quds al-'Arabī (22.01.2020).

306 See the text of this fatwā in appendix (10).

307 Al-Tamimi (September 25, 2015). Al-Tamimi (December 4, 2015). See the text of this fatwā in appendix (10).

308 See the text of this fatwā in appendix (10).

Although the question does not refer to Yezidis by name, the answer does, as follows.

Answer: It is allowed to take as al-saby women from all of the following:

- al-Nuṣayriyyn [means Christians]*
- Disbelievers who have no allegiance pact*
- Yezidis*
- Shi'a*
- Those who are not people of the Book³⁰⁹*

Accordingly, this fatwā legitimizes the capture of Yezidi women and girls by ISIS.

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309 See the text of this fatwā in appendix (10).

PART II:
ISLAMIC HOSTILE ATTEMPTS
TO DESTROY AND EXTERMINATE
YEZIDI RELIGION AND COMMUNITY

4 Islamic Sexual Enslavement of Yezidis

Throughout history and into the modern era, the Yezidis have been subjected to continuous persecution and genocidal campaigns in the name of Islam and its legitimization. Despite the collateral objectives and privileges that sometimes accompanied these campaigns, the targeting of the Yezidis throughout history and culminating in the genocide perpetrated against them by the Islamic State in 2014, clearly demonstrates that the primary aim was to destroy their distinct religious identity. This objective manifested in attempts to erase Yezidism and eradicate their beliefs entirely, whether by forcibly converting them to Islam or by killing and eliminating them altogether.

These policies and actions included the killing of Yezidi men, the enslavement of their women, the looting of their property, forced conversions, and the destruction of their material and cultural heritage, including their shrines and holy places of worship, along with a host of other egregious violations and atrocities.

Throughout history, and across all campaigns targeting the Yezidis in the name of Islam, the enslavement of Yezidi women and their sale in Islamic slave markets has been a fundamental characteristic, and often a primary motivation for many Muslims to participate in these campaigns under the banner of jihad, primarily to acquire spoils of war, especially captive women. This is what has occurred historically and what the Islamic State has demonstrated in modern times.

4.1 The Islamic Justification for the Enslavement of the Yezidis

The Islamic ideology of enslaving Yezidi women, girls, and children has historical roots grounded in Islamic religious principles. Almost all historical Islamic fatwās issued against the Yezidis not only granted legitimacy to Muslim troops, rulers, leaders, and governors to enslave Yezidi women and children and sell them in Islamic slave markets³¹⁰, but in some cases even allowed Muslim troops to take young Yezidi men for sexual purposes³¹¹.

Similarly, ISIS, through its official fatwās and publications, emphasized that Yezidi women should be captured, enslaved, and distributed among ISIS jihadists. It justified this position by relying on Islamic *ṣarīʿa*, interpretations of Qurʾānic verses, the Prophet's narratives (*ḥadīth*), and the writings of well-known and authoritative Islamic scholars and sources³¹². For instance, ISIS's chief theologian and ideologue, Turkī al-Bin 'Alī, stressed:

One should remember that enslaving the families of the [nonbelievers] and taking their women as concubines is a firmly established aspect of Shariʿa, that if one were to deny or mock, he would be denying or mocking the verses of the Qurʾan and the narrations of the Prophet³¹³.

Articles in ISIS's English-language online magazine *Dabiq* not only admit to the selling of Yezidi women for sexual slavery but also justify it according to the theological rulings of early Islam³¹⁴. ISIS has publicly acknowledged this practice, stating in *Dabiq* that, unlike Jews or Christians³¹⁵, there is no room

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310 For more details see Part One of this study.

311 Dankoff 1991: 173.

312 For more details see Part One of this study.

313 Quoted in Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 202.

314 Spencer (October 13, 2014).

315 In the 7th century, when the Muslim troops invaded Iraq, Syria, and Persia, they applied on the indigenous religious groups who considered the People of the Book, the Islamic religious provisions, which were conversion, pay the *jizyah* or face war, (Spencer 2018: 52–57).

for ġizzlyah (poll tax)³¹⁶. Accordingly, ISIS considers captured Yezidi women and girls to be spoils of war and systematically forces them into slavery³¹⁷.

The Qur'an allows this practice. It states that in addition to wives, "two, three, or four," Muslim men may also enjoy the "captives of the right hand³¹⁸ – *Mulk al-yamin*." Moreover, ISIS maintains that it is permissible to buy, sell, or give away female captives and slaves as gifts, since they are regarded merely as property that can be disposed of³¹⁹.

The ultimatum given by ISIS to Yezidi captives was to convert to Islam or die. They were not considered "People of the Book," as mentioned in the Qur'an, and therefore were not afforded any protections such as the option to leave or to pay a tax (ġizzlyah – ransom)³²⁰.

Further, during the 2014 ISIS invasion, many statements issued by ISIS ideologues sought to justify these acts of enslavement based on interpretations of Islamic texts and the opinions of Muslim jurists who had written extensively on slavery in earlier periods of Islamic history³²¹. Likewise, ISIS jihadists emphasized that the enslavement of Yezidis was consistent with their interpretation of Islamic principles.

For example, an ISIS jihadist who raped a 12-year-old Yezidi girl explained that before he raped her,

... what he was about to do was not a sin. Because the preteen girl practiced a religion other than Islam, the Qur'an not only gave him the right to rape her³²² — it condoned and encouraged it, he insisted³²³.

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316 Dabiq – *Dābiq* (Dhul Hijjah 1435/ October 2014): 4/15. Also see, Petrou 2019: 295. Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 203.

317 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 2. Gerges 2017: 30–31. Ghandour 2019: 37. Spencer 2018: 365.

318 Spencer 2018: 365.

319 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 2. Gerges 2017: 31.

320 USCIRF, Annual Report (2015): 97. Petrou 2019: 295.

321 Freamon 2019: 3. Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 202.

322 For details about slavery in the Qur'an, see, Freamon 2019: 122–139. Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 202–206.

323 Lima (August 13, 2015): The New York Times.

Moreover, when the girl asked the jihadist to stop raping her because it hurt, he continued and told her that:

According to Islam he is allowed to rape an unbeliever. [The Yezidi girl said] ...that by raping me, he is drawing closer to God³²⁴

Also, Ğalilā, a 30-year-old Yezidi survivor from Koço, stated that when ISIS jihadists captured them in the village of Qinë in the Sinjar region, they admitted that they would convert them to Islam by raping them or by forcing them into marriage. Ğalilā said:

They [ISIS jihadists] told us, “Do not be afraid. We will do nothing to you. We only will get you married and make you pure.”³²⁵ Then one of them sat on a tanaka [box] and read words from the Qur`an to us in Arabic, and filmed us.³²⁶

Similarly, Na`imā, a 35-year-old Yezidi woman and survivor from Şölağ, stated that when she was sold in Deyr al-Zor, Syria, her jihadist buyer, called Abū Fāris, told her that by raping her, she would be converted to Islam³²⁷. She said:

In the evening, he told me: “Go, wash yourself.” He tried too much but I did not go. At that night, he did not let me to sleep, and he did not sleep too. He told me: “You will not be converted to Islam until I rape you.”³²⁸

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324 These words are narrated by a Yezidi girl, who was captured by ISIS for 11 months, in an interview for The New York Times. For more details see *ibid*.

325 According to Islamic *Shar`ia* law, there are clear principles for Muslims who engage in sexual intercourse with or marry a non-Muslim. For Muslim men it is possible to marry women who are “People of Book,” such as Christians and Jews. She can keep her religion. (Qur`an *sūrat al-Mā`idah*, verse 4). However, when a Muslim man marries a *muşrika* (polytheist woman), she must convert to Islam. (*Sūrat Al-Baqarah*, verse 221).

326 Interview with Ğalilā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

327 Interview with Na`imā (in Şāriyā Camp in September 2016).

328 *Ibid*.

Islam is a proselytizing religion, and within its historical framework, slavery was often regarded as an avenue for the conversion of non-believers³²⁹. Consequently, one of the master's perceived religious duties was to provide instruction in Islam to his female slave or concubine³³⁰. ISIS jihadists, as well as some local Sunni collaborators who enslaved Yezidi women, portrayed themselves as devout Muslim men. Many reportedly performed prayers before or after committing acts of sexual violence³³¹. In numerous cases³³², perpetrators rationalized their crimes by claiming that they were "saving the victim's soul by making her Muslim through sex rather than through her voluntary conversion³³³."

The systematic capture and coercion of Yezidi women and girls into sexual slavery or forced marriage constituted a central component of ISIS's broader strategy to subjugate, convert, and ultimately annihilate the Yezidi community as both a religious and social group³³⁴.

A report by Amnesty International³³⁵ corroborates these practices, documenting that Yezidi women and girls, some as young as twelve, were separated from their parents and older relatives and compelled to marry ISIS jihdistis and their supporters³³⁶. The report further notes that many victims were subjected to torture, rape, and other forms of sexual violence, and were simultaneously pressured to convert to Islam³³⁷.

One survivor, Ḥalīma, a 23-year-old Yezidi woman from Ḥātmiyyah, was captured on August 3, 2014, and released on May 3, 2015. During her captivity, she was sold seven times among ISIS jihadists. Her testimony reveals that forced marriage was employed as a mechanism of religious conversion, serving

.....
329 Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 204.

330 Ibid., 204.

331 Ibid., 204.

332 As evidence for such cases, I have addressed some testimonies of Yezidi female survivors in this study.

333 Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 204.

334 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 12.

335 Amnesty International Ltd 2014: 4.

336 Ibid., 4.

337 Ibid., 4. Also, see, Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 204. Murad mit Krajieski 2017: 167.

the dual purpose of domination and Islamization of Yezidi women and girls. In part of her testimony, she describes:

In Syria [...] they [ISIS jihadists] came among us, making fun of us, laughing at us, and they said, “We have bought you. You will read our Qur’an. You will convert to Islam. And every one of you who does not convert, we will hit you and take your children.” They cursed our religion, and said such things as, “Tāwsī-Malak is nothing.” They gave each of us to one of them by force [...]. They told me, “Read the Qur’an. We will forcibly get you married.” They took my daughter from me for two days. And they told me, “You have to get married, or you will never see your daughter again.” Because of this threat to my daughter, I told them would be no problem. I would marry them³³⁸ [...].

In addition to the religious rationale for captivity within certain interpretations of Islam, financial and biological incentives also played a significant role in motivating Muslim jihadists to abduct non-Muslim women and girls.

While the Islamic State repeatedly asserted that its actions against the Yezidis were consistent with Islamic principles, the broader Muslim community did not issue a clear condemnation of these genocidal practices. An open letter, signed by more than 120 Muslim scholars on September 24, 2014, affirmed that slavery had been universally abolished³³⁹. However, beyond this statement, there were few, if any, public demonstrations or statements denouncing ISIS or expressing solidarity with the Yezidi victims. By contrast, Muslim communities worldwide mobilized rapidly in response to the publication of cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad by the French “Charlie Hebdo” magazine, highlighting a notable disparity in reactions.

.....
338 Interview with Ḥalīma (in Qādīyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

339 Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 201–202.

4.2 Yezidi Captives in Islamic Slavery and Slave Markets (*Sūq al-Sabāyā*)

Historically, and continuing into the present, slavery, particularly the enslavement of girls and women (*sabāyā*), has been a persistent practice within certain Islamic communities³⁴⁰. The enslavement and sale of non-Muslims in Islamic slave markets is explicitly sanctioned in numerous *fatwās*³⁴¹, as noted above. In historical Islamic states, and notably during the period of ISIS from 2014 onwards, a legal framework existed for the establishment of slave markets (*Sūq al-Sabāyā*), which regulated the processes of distribution, purchase, and sale of slaves within the Islamic community.

4.3 Historical Background of Yezidi Captivity in Islamic Slavery and Slave Markets

The captivity, enslavement, and sale of Yezidi women and children represent some of the most well-documented and tragic aspects of Islamic campaigns against the Yezidis. According to available sources, one of the earliest recorded campaigns occurred in 841, when the Muslim army under the Abbasid commander Itākh attacked the Yezidis³⁴², who were then referred to as al-Dāsinīyah. During this campaign, Itākh's troops captured Yezidi women from their villages in the Dāsin Mountain region³⁴³.

Yezidi women and children continued to be captured, enslaved, and sold repeatedly by Muslims throughout the Ottoman era, from the 16th century until the empire's collapse in 1918. These acts were frequently sanctioned by

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340 Seedat 2016: 29–35. Erdem 1996: 1–66. Hutson (Spring 2002): 49–67. Lovejoy 1988: 245–266. Zilfi 2010: 100–106. Salau 2009: 91–97. Freamon 2019: 88–302. Also see: Part One and this Part of this study.

341 For example, such those *fatwās* see Part One of this study.

342 Ibn al-Aṭīr 1987: 6/57–58.

343 In the 12th century, Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī mentions that the al-Dāsinīyah was one of the Kurdish sects which inhabited an area north of Mosul and east of the Tigris. (al-Ḥamawī 1956: 2/432).

official Islamic fatwās, as discussed in Part One of this study. In the mid-16th century, the Grand Mufti of Istanbul (Şayḥ al-Islām), Abū l-Su‘ūd, issued a fatwā authorizing Sultan Sulaymān al-Qānūnī and his military to capture Yezidi women and children³⁴⁴, a practice Ottoman soldiers carried out following their military victories.

The enslavement of Yezidis was not limited to the Ottoman forces. The Safavid Empire, a Shiite Islamic state to the east, also conducted campaigns against the Yezidis. In 1632, Shah ‘Abbās dispatched a military expedition to Sinjar (Shingal), resulting in the capture of numerous Yezidi women and children³⁴⁵.

Evliyā Çelebi reports that in 1640³⁴⁶, the Ottoman commander Melek Ahmed Pasha mobilized a force of 80,000 fighters from Diyarbakir and surrounding areas to attack the Yezidis in Sinjar Mountain³⁴⁷. During this campaign, Melek Ahmed Pasha enslaved more than 1,800 Yezidi women, girls, and children, distributing them as concubines and servants among his troops³⁴⁸. Çelebī provides detailed accounts of the allocation of Yezidi captives, illustrating the systematic nature of their enslavement and the centrality of this practice to the military campaigns of the period. He writes:

*[...] Certainly, each tent got five or ten lovely lads and lasses and other captives.*³⁴⁹

Evliyā Çelebī also describes the manner in which these Yezidis were transported³⁵⁰. He writes that Melek Ahmed Pasha and his troops chained all the Yezidi captives together and brought them to Diyarbakir and its slave market³⁵¹.

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344 For very more details about Abū l-Su‘ūd’s fatwā see Part One of this study.

345 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 37.

346 Dankoff 1991: 173.

347 Evliyā Çelebī 2002: 6/82.

348 Evliyā Çelebī 2001: 4/51.

349 Ibid., 4/51. Dankoff 1991: 173.

350 Evliyā Çelebī 2002: 6/82.

351 Ibid., 6/82.

In the mid-17th century, the Yezidi prince Mīrza Beg al-Dāsīnī³⁵² was appointed to the rank of Pasha and installed as the governor of Mosul by the Ottomans³⁵³. This post was granted in recognition of his meritorious service as a sipāhī during the Ottoman campaign against the Qizilbaş³⁵⁴. However, the Ottoman authorities later accused him of mismanagement³⁵⁵ in Mosul and removed him from office in 1651. According to al-ʿUmarī, al-Dāsīnī held the position during the years 1650–1651³⁵⁶.

Whatever the reasons, in the spring of 1651, Mīrza Beg al-Dāsīnī, accompanied by 40–50 of his men, traveled to Constantinople to petition the central authority for his reinstatement, as well as that of other local Begs in Mosul³⁵⁷. He met with officials in an effort to secure an audience with the Sultan, but his efforts were unsuccessful³⁵⁸.

Therefore, Mīrza Beg al-Dāsīnī then turned back towards Mosul³⁵⁹. The Ottoman authorities, however, were keenly aware of his disappointment and anger³⁶⁰, fearing that he might rise against them³⁶¹. They were particularly concerned that he would join Ḥasan Agha³⁶², the Abaza Emir in the Erzurum

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 352 Evliyā Çelebi describes Mīrza Beg al-Dāsīnī as one of the great princes ruling Yezidis in Duhok and Mosul. He had 10,000 combatants. (Evliyā Çelebī 2001: 5/3). Similarly, Kātip Çelebi states that he was one of the most famous beys at that time. (Çelebi 2016: 2/1043.). Also, according to Naīmā Muşţafā Efendi, Mīrza Beg al-Dāsīnī was a brave warrior who killed many Qizilbaş on that campaign. (Naīmā 2007: 3/1315.)

353 Ibid., 3/1315. al-ʿUmarī 1955: 74.

354 Naīmā 2007: 3/1315. Also see Usta 2011: 99–100.

355 There were two main causes which pushed the Ottoman authority to remove Mīrza Beg al-Dāsīnī from his post in Mosul was financial aim. According to the Ottoman documents of that time Mīrza Beg paid (16 x100,000) Akçeas taxes to Istanbul. But the Agha Baktashi in Istanbul plundered the money, and it did not arrive to the Sultan's treasury. (Naīmā 2007: 3/1395). And the second reason was due to the local Muslim opposition to the Yezidi prince in his position. Farḥān and Şammo 2009: 39.

356 al-ʿUmarī 1955: 74. Naīmā 2007: 3/1315

357 Naīmā 2007: 3/1315. Çelebi 2016: 2/1043.

358 Naīmā 2007: 3/1315.

359 Ibid., 3/1316

360 Çelebi 2016: 2/1043.

361 Naīmā 2007: 3/1316

362 Çelebi 2016: 2/1043.

region of eastern Anatolia, who had been in constant rebellion between 1622 and 1659³⁶³. Determined to prevent this, the Ottomans resolved to eliminate Mīrza Beg al-Dāsini³⁶⁴.

According to Kātip Çelebi, Mīrza Beg al-Dāsini and his companions halted for the night in a field at Lefke, near Aski-Shahir in the province of Bilecik, southeast of Constantinople³⁶⁵. As evening fell, they removed their horses' saddles in preparation for rest³⁶⁶. Ottoman forces under Šāh Sulaymān Muştafā³⁶⁷ launched a surprise attack on the encampment³⁶⁸. Mīrza Beg al-Dāsini fought fiercely³⁶⁹, reportedly killing many Ottoman soldiers, including Šāh Sulaymān Muştafā himself, as noted by both Naīmā and Kātip Çelebi³⁷⁰. Nevertheless, all of his men were eventually killed³⁷¹.

Mīrza Beg al-Dāsini surrendered when his horse became mired in a swamp³⁷². He was arrested and placed under escort for Constantinople³⁷³. However, near Maltapa, close to the city, an order arrived for his execution³⁷⁴. Evliyā Çelebi provides a differing account of the final moments of Mīrza Beg al-Dāsini's life³⁷⁵.

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363 Naīmā 2007: 4/1819. Çelebi 2016: 2/601–602.

364 Çelebi 2016: 2/1043.

365 Ibid., 2/1043.

366 Ibid., 2/1043.

367 According to Naīmā, Šāh Sulaymān Muştafā was an Ottoman official. He was in Baghdad during the campaign against the Qizilbaş, and the Yezidi prince Mīrza Beg al-Dāsini knew him. When they were in *Lefke*, before the fighting, Mīrza Beg al-Dāsini wanted to avoid the fight. He reminded Šāh Sulaymān Muştafā that he has helped him when they were in Baghdad. Mīrza Beg al-Dāsini also was wondering why Šāh Sulaymān would fight him now? Šāh Sulaymān Muştafā responded that he had an order from the supreme authority in Istanbul to fight him. (Naīmā 2007: 3/1317)

368 Çelebi 2016: 2/1043.

369 Ibid., 2/1043.

370 Naīmā 2007: 3/1317. Çelebi 2016: 2/1043.

371 Naīmā 2007: 3/1317.

372 Ibid., 3/1317. Çelebi 2016: 2/1043.

373 Ibid., 3/1317. 2/1043.

374 Ibid., 3/1317. 2/1043.

375 See: Çelebi 1999: 3/159–163.

After the killing of Mīrza Beg al-Dāsīnī, the Yezidis continued to resist Ottoman rule and refused to pay taxes³⁷⁶. In response, Sultan Muḥammad IV ordered a punitive campaign against them³⁷⁷, assembling a large military force from Van and Diyarbakir to march into Yezidi territories. During this campaign, many Yezidis were killed in the mid-17th century³⁷⁸.

The brief period of amicable relations between the Yezidis and the Ottoman authorities in the early second half of the 17th century thus came to an end. The Yezidis became a source of Ottoman resentment and were increasingly marginalized. The term “Yezidi” itself acquired a derogatory connotation among Ottoman officials, and accusations of being Yezidi were often used as a pretext to destroy Kurdish settlements, kill men, and enslave women and children³⁷⁹.

In 1715, Ḥasan Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Baghdad, led a military expedition against the Yezidis in Sinjar³⁸⁰. This campaign was among the most devastating Ottoman assaults on the Yezidis during the 18th century³⁸¹, resulting in widespread killings, plunder of the Sinjar region³⁸², and the capture of a significant number of Yezidi women, girls, and children³⁸³. As Yāsīn al-‘Umārī recounts:

[... the military of Ḥasan Pasha] *spoiled from them [Yezidis] a good booty, possessed their sheep and captured their children and women [...]*.³⁸⁴

.....
376 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 39–40.

377 Ibid., 40.

378 Ibid., 40.

379 Ibid., 40.

380 al-Mawṣilī 1968: 177. al-Swaydī 1962: 1/65. al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 115–118.

381 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 43.

382 al-Mawṣilī 1968: 177.

383 al-Swaydī 1962: 1/61. al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 117. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 44–45.

384 al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 117–118. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 45.

Concerning the Ottoman assault on the Yezidis during this campaign, the 18th-century Iraqi author ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Swaydī wrote:

[... as a result of this campaign] *the Muslims got the revenge, captured of women and children [...], and sold their [Yezidi] women, girls and enslaved them [...]*.³⁸⁵

In 1752, Silemān Pasha, famously known as Abū Laylā, the Ottoman governor of Baghdad, launched yet another military campaign against the Yezidis³⁸⁶. Like previous campaigns, one of its defining features was the captivity and enslavement of Yezidi women, girls, and children. According to some sources, the number of captives during this campaign was exceptionally high. Rasūl al-Karkūklī, who died in 1824, records that Silemān Pasha’s troops captured women and children³⁸⁷. Similarly, Yāsīn Ḥayrullāh al-‘Umarī, a Mawṣilī Iraqi author who died around 1816, notes that Silemān Pasha’s forces seized their women and children³⁸⁸. Most of the captives were reportedly from Sinjar³⁸⁹.

Ottoman forces, supported by Arab clans in Mosul, such as al-‘Ubayd, Albu Ḥamdān, and Ṭayy, also captured numerous Yezidi women and children during a military campaign in the Sheikhan (Šayḥān) region in 1798³⁹⁰.

The campaigns against the Yezidis continued into the nineteenth century. In 1809, Silemān Pasha al-ṣaḡīr, the Ottoman governor of Baghdad, led a campaign in Sinjar, during which many Yezidi women were again taken captive, as noted by Rasūl al-Karkūklī³⁹¹.

In the summer of 1837, Ḥāfiẓ Pasha conducted another campaign against the Yezidis³⁹². Sources report that his troops captured thousands of Yezidi

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385 al-Swaydī 1962: 1/61.

386 al-Mawṣilī 1968: 183. al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 118. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 45.

387 al-Karkūklī (no date): 125.

388 al-Mawṣilī 1968: 183.

389 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 49.

390 al-‘Azzāwī 1935:126. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 59.

391 al-Karkūklī (no date): 245.

392 Forbes 1839: 415. Parry 1895: 358. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 98.

women and girls, whom they transported to Mosul and surrounding areas for sale³⁹³. Guest notes that some of the captives were sold in the Mardin slave market for prices ranging from \$4.50 to \$30³⁹⁴.

A German eyewitness, Helmuth Karl Bernhard von Moltke³⁹⁵, who visited Ğazīrat ibn ‘Umar in May 1838, documented the atrocities committed by the Ottoman army during Rašīd Pasha’s campaign. Moltke reported that Yezidi women and children were captured and enslaved in the region, which is part of present-day southeastern Turkey. He wrote that:

*[...] after the conquest here [Ğazīrat ibn ‘umar] was terribly destroyed, almost all the men were cut down, the women and children carried away in slavery, because they were Yezidis or devil worshippers [...].*³⁹⁶

Likewise, Elisée Reclus confirms that Yezidi women in Sinjar were sold into slavery in 1838³⁹⁷. He further notes that the autonomous Yezidis of Sinjar were nearly exterminated that same year, when those who had sought refuge in the caves were asphyxiated by smoke from fires³⁹⁸ deliberately set by their attackers. Since that time, no Yezidi community has maintained political independence³⁹⁹.

In 1844, under the leadership of Badr-ḥān Beg, the Kurdish prince of Botān⁴⁰⁰, Yezidi children of both sexes were captured and sold in the principal towns of the region⁴⁰¹. A year later, the Ottoman mayor of Mosul, Muḥammad Pasha Krdīlī Oĝlo, carried out a similar campaign against the Sinjar Yezidis, targeting the captivity of both women and children⁴⁰².

.....

393 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 99.

394 Guest 1987: 71.

395 Helmuth Karl Bernhard von Moltke was the general staff and an engineer officer from Persia. He was on a tactical assignment to help the troops of ḤāfızPaša in 1838. Guest 1987: 72.

396 Moltke 1979: 237.

397 Reclus 1876: Vol. IX.178.

398 Ibid., 178

399 Ibid., 178

400 Badger 1852: 133; Von Oppenheim 1900: 152; Lescot 2007: 221.

401 Layard 1867: 181.

402 Farḥān and Šammo 2009:104.

The enslavement, captivity, and sexual abuse of Yezidi women and girls by Ottoman forces persisted over the decades. During the Ottoman attempts at forced conversion between 1890 and 1893, the British traveler E. A. Wallis Budge, an eyewitness, reported that a large contingent of soldiers was sent under the command of Ayūb Beg to Sinjar. Budge described in detail the brutal actions of these troops toward the local population. He wrote:

*They [Ayūb Beg's soldiers] waited until the men [Yezidi men in Sinjar] had gone to look after their flocks down in the plain, and then they went to the houses and raped the little girls [...].*⁴⁰³

During the 1892–1893 campaign of Farīq' Umar Wahbī, Ottoman forces under his son 'Aṣm Beg captured Yezidi women and children in the Sheikhan region⁴⁰⁴. Farīq' Umar Wahbī ordered the Yezidis to convert to Islam or face death⁴⁰⁵. His son commanded the soldiers to kill the men and take women and girls as captives for marriage, resulting in the deaths of approximately five hundred men. Many Yezidis, including Mīrzā Beg of a prominent civil chief family, converted to Islam out of fear, leading to a significant decline in the Yezidi population⁴⁰⁶.

According to Parry, who visited the region in 1892, Yezidi men in the villages of Ba'šīqa and Baḥzānē who refused conversion were killed, while women and girls were captured⁴⁰⁷. He further reports that Osman Pasha, commanding Ottoman forces in the area, learned that some girls were hiding in olive groves and ordered the area set on fire, killing them all⁴⁰⁸. In one instance, a young pregnant girl who had fled to a Syrian church was discovered and killed by the soldiers within the sanctuary⁴⁰⁹.

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403 Budge 1920: 216.

404 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 121.

405 Parry 1895: 257.

406 Von Oppenheim 1900: 153; Parry 1895: 254–257; Sachau 1900: 131; Joseph 1919: 208–209.

407 For more about this case, see Parry 1895: 259.

408 Parry 1895: 259.

409 Parry 1895: 259.

4.4 Yezidi Captives in ISIS's System of Slavery and Slave Markets

ISIS jihadists had premeditated the invasion of Sinjar and the systematic targeting of the Yezidi population prior to their attack on the region on August 3, 2014. Muḥammad Rašīd Sahab Mušliḥ⁴¹⁰ (alias Abū Humām al-Shar'ī) was a prominent ISIS commander involved in this invasion. He abducted Yezidi women under the justification of Islamic *sabāyā* concept, in accordance with ISIS ideological interpretations, with the explicit aim of capturing and trading women and girls alongside other ISIS operatives⁴¹¹.

Abū Humām al-Shar'ī was subsequently interviewed on Al-Iraqia TV channel in the presence of one of the Yezidi women he had received as a reward for his participation in jihadist activities, who had been enslaved for seventy-seven days⁴¹². During the interview, he detailed the manner in which ISIS forces invaded Sinjar and systematically captured and enslaved Yezidi women.

The ISIS invasion of Sinjar constitutes one of the most systematic and large-scale instances of sexual slavery in the twenty-first century⁴¹³. These atrocities were carried out under religious and ideological justifications propagated by ISIS⁴¹⁴. The ISIS's official online magazine, *Dābiq*, asserted that the enslavement of Yezidi families by ISIS jihadists represented arguably the largest-scale enslavement of *mušrikūn* (polytheist) families in Islamic history⁴¹⁵.

.....
410 Muḥammad Rašīd Sahab Mušliḥ: he is an ISIS jihadist who was arrested by Iraqi intelligence. He was born in 1984. He joined ISIS in 2014 as "Ash-shar'ī". Then he got another rank which is "Ash-shar'ī invasion of Shingal". After that ISIS invaded many different places in Iraq and Syria because of that Abu Humām was promoted to many higher ranks. At the end he became the Amīr of Katiba Zubayr Bin 'Awwām in Baguz in Syria, which is why he was considered as one of the most important ISIS jihadist leaders. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39M1Sa1DZDA>). On March 2, 2020, the Al-Karkh Criminal Court at the Presidency of the Baghdad issued a death sentence against Abu Humām. (Almada Paper (March 2, 2020).

411 Interview with ISIS jihadist called Muḥammad Rašīd Sahab Mušliḥ, al-Iraqia TV Channal.

412 Ibid. Almada Paper (March 2, 2020).

413 Sherlock (April 15, 2015).

414 Ouassini and Ouassini 2019: 56.

415 See Dabiḳ – *Dābiq* (Dhul Hijjah 1435/ October 2014): Number 4: 15.

According to statistics on Yezidi victims published by the Office of the Rescued Yezidi Abductees in Duhok on September 13, 2020, ISIS jihadists captured a total of 6,417 Yezidis, including 2,869 women and girls⁴¹⁶. Although ISIS has been defeated in Iraq and many captives have been liberated, as of the date of this report, 2,880 Yezidis remained in captivity, including 1,304 women and girls⁴¹⁷.

The enslavement of Yezidis by ISIS began with the occupation of Yezidi areas in the Sinjar region on August 3, 2014, and continues to the present. The slave trade was carried out systematically and strategically to maximize profit⁴¹⁸. The process typically began with the capture of victims, followed by their separation, and subsequent transfer to halls, prisons, and other holding facilities guarded by ISIS jihadists. Women and girls were frequently subjected to sexual violence before being sent to slave markets, where they were sold either individually or in groups⁴¹⁹. Eyewitness accounts indicate that some captives were first raped by Abū Bakr al-Bağdādī, the self-declared caliph of the Islamic State, as well as by other ISIS jihadists, before being presented in the slave markets⁴²⁰.

Abū Surāqa⁴²¹, an ISIS operative who participated in the genocide of the Yezidis in Sinjar, provides a firsthand account of how ISIS jihadists captured and sexually assaulted Yezidi women and girls during the invasion of the al-Qaḥṭānīyah (Tell Ezer) compound in the Sinjar region. He says:

.....
416 The statistics of Office of the Rescued Yezidi Abductees in Duhok published on September 13, 2020.

417 Ibid.

418 Sverdlov (Spring 2017): 339.

419 Sverdlov (Spring 2017): 339, 340.

420 al-Dayel (February 4, 2020): 14.

421 Abū Surāqa was born in 1989 to Iraqi parents and was living in Nineveh province. He was arrested by intelligence efforts and was under the direct supervision of the investigative judge in Nineveh who was competent in terrorism cases. On July 2, 2014, he went on his own to join ISIS because he believed in their ideas, as he stated. Nineveh Investigation Court confirmed his statements in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2005, which he confessed before the judge. (Shafaq News (October 20, 2019).

[...] *After the siege of the compound [al-Qaḥṭānīyah/Tel-Ezer], young Yezidi women were captured and taken as captives. [...] the women were distributed to the members of the organization to be raped inside the residential houses in al-Qahtaniyah compound.*⁴²²

Muḥammad Rašīd Sahab Muşliḥ, the ISIS jihadist previously mentioned, stated that they separated young women, elderly women, and children from the men. Vehicles then transported the Yezidi girls, with some taken to Syria and others to Mosul. Elderly women and those with children were gathered in Koço and Tel Afar, in line with the ISIS *sabāyā* system⁴²³.

ISIS consistently divided Yezidi women and girls into three groups: married women with children, married women without children, and unmarried women, young women, and girls⁴²⁴. Elderly women were killed⁴²⁵ and buried in mass graves (many discovered after the liberation of Sinjar⁴²⁶), likely because they were deemed too old for sexual enslavement, forced labor, or childbearing⁴²⁷. Younger women and girls were held in designated locations⁴²⁸ to prepare them for enslavement and sale⁴²⁹.

The captives were then registered on slavery lists according to their age, beauty, virginity, and other characteristics.

.....
422 Shafaq News (October 20, 2019).

423 Interview with ISIS jihadist called Muḥammad Rašīd Sahab Muşliḥ, al-Iraqia TV Channal.

424 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 1. Interview with Dilvīn: (in Šāriyā on September 2, 2016). Interview with Ġalilā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016). Interview with Ḥalwā (in Kabartū 2 Campon 29/2/2016). Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016). Interview with Na'imā (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016). Interview with Hiyām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.02.2016). Interview with Wārīdā (in Šāriyā camp on 02.10.2016).

425 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 1. al-Dayel (February 4, 2020): 13.

426 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 1. Interview with Şafwān (January 11, 2019).

427 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 1.

428 Ibid., 1. Interview with Gulē (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.09.2016). Interview with Na'imā (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016). Interview with Hiyām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.02.2016). Interview with Wārīdā (in Šāriyā camp on 02.10.2016).

429 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 2,7.

According to instructions given by Amīrs, the local commanders of ISIS jihadists, the jihadists inspected Yezidi women and girls, some as young as 11 years old, to evaluate their beauty, perform full-body searches⁴³⁰, and force them to undergo gynecological examinations to determine whether they were virgins⁴³¹. When ISIS jihadists took photos of Yezidi captives or offered them for sale, they often made them wear short dresses that revealed their bodies, applied makeup to their faces, and removed their headscarves⁴³². Jihadists kept track of their female captives by numbering them or recording their names on lists⁴³³.

Yezidi women, referred to as “mothers,” were generally purchased along with their younger children, including girls under the age of nine and boys under the age of seven, in the Islamic slave markets⁴³⁴. At the same time, ISIS sold some Yezidi female children, aged one to twelve, separately from their families⁴³⁵.

ISIS established numerous slave markets, commonly referred to as *Sūq al-Sabāyā* (“Market of Slave-Women”), in the territories under its control in Iraq and Syria, where captives were systematically sold in public auctions⁴³⁶.

Owing to the large number of Yezidi women, girls, and children taken captive, ISIS created a dedicated department for the administration of “war spoils.” One of its primary functions was to manage slavery⁴³⁷ in accordance with the principles of historical Islamic law⁴³⁸.

.....
430 Ibid., 2.

431 Ibid., 2. Interview with Ğalilā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016). Interview with Nūrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

432 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

433 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 2.

434 Amnesty International Ltd (2020): 14.

435 RT Arabic (December 11, 2018).

436 Freamon 2019: 3. Qināwī2014: 71.

437 Landay (December 29, 2015). Ghandour 2019: 37.

438 Spencer (13 October 2014). Ghandour 2019: 37.

Following their capture, Yazidi women, girls, and children were allocated among ISIS jihadists in accordance with Islamic legal provisions⁴³⁹. One-fifth (*hums*⁴⁴⁰) of the captured Yazidi women and girls was sent to the ISIS leadership as a tax on war spoils, while the remainder was distributed among the ISIS combatants who had participated in the operations⁴⁴¹.

This practice is documented in a 2016 report by the United Nations Human Rights Office, which notes in part:

*Captured Yazidi women and girls are deemed property of ISIS and are openly termed sabāyā or slaves. ISIS made eighty percent of the women and girls available to its jihadists for individual purchase, the apportioning being drawn directly from religious interpretation. ISIS sells Yazidi women and girls in slave markets, or souk sabāyā, or as individual purchases to jihadists who come to the holding centers. In some instances, an ISIS fighter might buy a group of Yazidi females in order to take them into rural areas without slave markets where he could sell them individually at a higher price. The remaining twenty percent are held as collective property of ISIS and were distributed in groups to military bases throughout Iraq and Syria. In Syria, Yazidi females have been held at bases in Al-Shaddadi and Tel Hamis in Hasakah; Al-Bab and Minbej in Aleppo; Raqqa and Tabqa cities in Raqqa; Tadmur in Homs; and in various locations including al-Mayadin and Konica gas fields in Dayr al-Zawr.*⁴⁴²

.....
439 Spencer (13 October 2014). See: Dabiq – *Dābiq* (Dhul Hijjah 1435/ October 2014): Number 4: 15. Jinan mit Oberlé 2016: 94.

440 *hums* means one fifth of what the jihadists occupied through the jihad's war which consider as the "war spoils" should go to the State, Islamic authority, or leaders who lead the war. There is also a verse in Quran which emphasizes this act. See: Quran, Sūrat al-Anfāl, Āya (41).

441 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 2. Dabiq – *Dābiq* (Dhul Hijjah 1435/ October 2014): Number 4: 15.

442 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 12.

After purchasing Yezidi captives, ISIS jihadists had full control over them, treating them as property⁴⁴³. They could rape, sell, give away, or force them into domestic servitude. Most captives were treated brutally, often traded as if they were objects⁴⁴⁴. Some were given as gifts, while others were sold to local or foreign jihadists⁴⁴⁵. Many women and girls were raped repeatedly before being sold again⁴⁴⁶.

ISIS operated various types of slave markets. Some were highly organized and monitored by authorities, while others took place in private homes or military headquarters. Women and girls were also exploited wherever they were collected, including during transport on buses.

ISIS-operated slave markets in Syria were considerably better organized than those in Iraq. According to Yezidi survivors and a Human Rights report, ISIS established multiple slave markets across Syria. One of the principal markets was located at “the farm” in Raqqa city⁴⁴⁷; others operated in buildings in al-Bāb, al-Šaddādiyāh, al-Mayādīn, Tadmur⁴⁴⁸, Dayr al-Zūr⁴⁴⁹, and additional cities and towns within Rif Ḥalab al-Šamāl al-Šarqī, as well as in Rif Raqqa and al-Ḥas⁴⁵⁰. Women and girls were also detained at several Syrian military-base holding sites, including Til-Ḥuṣṣ, Manbiğ, Ṭabqā, among others⁴⁵¹.

.....

443 Ibid., 13. Amnesty International Ltd (2020): 14. al-Dayel (February 4, 2020): 6.

444 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 2.

445 Ibid., 2. Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 199. Qināwī2014: 71.

446 The Human Rights and Gender Justice (HRGJ) Clinic of the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law (November 8, 2017): 33. Also almost all those interviewed survived Yezidi women and girl affirm that jihadists behavior with them. For example, see, interview with Ğalīlā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016). Interview with Mahayā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.02.2016). Interview with Nisrīn (in Qādiyā Camp). Interview with Na’imā (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016). Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

447 Interview with Interview with Intiṣār (in Qādiyā Camp 03.07.2016). Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 13.

448 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 13. Interview with Wārīdā (in Šāriyā camp on 02.10.2016).

449 FIDH/KINYAT (October 2018): 23. Interview with Na’imā (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

450 Qināwī 2014: 71.

451 al-Dayel (February 4, 2020): 9.

A central committee within ISIS oversaw the buying and selling of slaves and was responsible for organizing the Yezidi slave markets⁴⁵². The establishment of new markets in a particular town fell under the authority of this central committee, which occasionally delegated some responsibilities to local committees or commanders⁴⁵³.

ISIS jihadists seeking to purchase Yezidi captives would attend these markets. Captives were required to stand on a raised platform, remove their headscarves so their hair could be inspected, and open their mouths for a dental check before being sold⁴⁵⁴.

Tel Afar's al-Zahrā' School: The First and Largest ISIS Slave Market for Yezidis

Eyewitness testimonies from surviving Yezidi women and girls indicate that the first and largest slave market for Yezidi captives was a school in Tel Afar, Ninewa Province, Iraq. Known as the Secondary School of al-Zahrā', the two-story building became the initial and largest site where Yezidis abducted from the Sinjar region were gathered. In a short period following the invasion of Sinjar, ISIS assembled thousands of Yezidis, particularly girls, women, and children, at this school, from where jihadists began purchasing them.

An ISIS operative known as Ḥaḡī Mahdī was responsible for overseeing the captives, though a Yezidi male survivor revealed that his real name was 'Abbās⁴⁵⁵. Other jihadists were also involved in managing the captives, according to the interviews conducted.

.....
452 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 13.

453 Ibid., 13.

454 Ibid., 13.

455 Interview with Ziyād (in Šāriyā/ the village of Gire-pan 29.01.2016)

One survivor, a young Yezidi woman, published a photo of an ISIS jihadist nicknamed Abū ‘Alī⁴⁵⁶ on her Facebook account in 2017⁴⁵⁷, writing above the image:

Nicknamed Abū‘Alī!!!

This person who bought and sold me for more than one time!!!

I can never forget his face; he was responsible for selling and buying all Yezidi [captured] women in Tel Afar⁴⁵⁸[...]

ISIS appointed a 34-year-old Yezidi man from Sinjar as the mullā of a mosque in Tel Afar. According to Zīyād, he stated that the jihadist responsible for the buying and selling of captives in Tel Afar was known as Abū ‘Alī. He also provided additional information regarding Abū ‘Alī and other ISIS leaders operating in Tel Afar⁴⁵⁹ by saying:

On 26 April, they [...] came to me in the mosque and asked me to do a call in the mosque for gathering all men in the mosque. I did the call three times and said that every man who 14 years and older should come to the mosque. They gathered us in the mosque. Their Wālī [religious and political leader] came. His name was Dr. Sayif or Sayif ‘Abdo. He was from Tel Afar. He was a former teacher of Islam education. He was a former translator. He came and their military commander, a Russian, called him ṣahrāwī Also three officials from Tel Afar came there. One of them was called Abū ‘Alī or Abū Iqtīṣādiyāh. He was responsible for purchasing girls and women. His real name was ‘Azīz, and was also called ‘Azīz Murād, because he was from the Murād tribe.⁴⁶⁰

.....
456 Abū ‘Alī, his name is ‘Abd al-Wahāb Ḥatmayar. He was the Minister of Public Security in the first cabinet of Abū Bakr al-Baġdādī which was formed in July 2014. (Moubayed 2015: 110).

457 See Appendix number (18) that includes the photo with comments taken from Ivānā Waleed’s Facebook account.

458 See Ibid.

459 Interview with Zīyād (in Šāriyā/ the village of Gire-pan 29.01.2016).

460 Ibid.

A 30-year-old female survivor confirmed that when ISIS jihadists transferred them from Şölağ village in the Sinjar region, many Yezidi women and girls were held at a school in Tel Afar. She further stated:

The next day at evening time they began to transfer the women to Tel Afar by buses. They transferred first group of women in two or three buses. [...] When we reached there, there was a school which was full of women and girls. There was no place to straighten our legs. It was very crowded; we were sittingsleeping on each other.⁴⁶¹

According to the testimony of another 30-year-old Yezidi female survivor from Koço, Ğalilā, she stated:

In Tel Afar they [ISIS jihadists] put us in a school called “tānawiyata al-Zahrā’ [the secondary school of al-Zahrā’]”. They brought many, women, girls, and children to this school⁴⁶² [...].

In addition, Gawrē, another female survivor who was among the Yezidi captives in Tel Afar, stated:

We stayed three days in a school [the secondary school of al-Zahrā’] at Ḥayy al-Ḥaḍrā’ in Tel Afar, and on the fourth day all around us became full of ISIS. Throughout thosefour days, they were coming among us and were taking every woman that they liked [...]. They took all women out of the school after taking the ones that they wanted.⁴⁶³

She went on to say:

They [ISIS] stood at the door of the school in Tel Afar [...], and separated the girls to one side, and they put the old women andchildren into the

.....

461 For example, see Interview with Intişār (in Qādiyā Camp 03.07.2016).

462 Interview with Ğalilā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

463 Interview with Gawrē (in Şāriyā Camp in September 2016).

*school. They took them by force, hitting them with sticks and pipes and pulling their hair and pushing them. They were also hitting the mothers who refused to give them their daughters.*⁴⁶⁴

An 18-year-old Yezidi female captive from Sinjar was also transferred to the school in Tel Afar. She further stated:

*We stayed about ten days in the school of Tel Afar. [...] we were about six cars full of girls, women, and children. They began to separate all girls who are over 9 years old, and every woman that do not had children. They took three buses full of girls who had been selected from those who were in Tel Afar and took all for themselves*⁴⁶⁵[...].

Torē, another female survivor, further stated:

*Thenthey gathered us in a school in Tel Afar. We stayed five days in that school, where they began to take the children by force. They took many children up seven years old. They took my oldest son who was 13 years old. They selected about 150 women and 400 children in that school, and told us, “We will send you to Syria to sell you.”*⁴⁶⁶ [...]

Also, Na'imā, a 35-year-old Yezidi woman, was among the captives taken by jihadists to the school in Tel Afar⁴⁶⁷. She further stated:

[...] When we were in the school [in Tel Afar], they [jihadists] were coming into among us every evening, and they were taking everyone who they think that she is a girl. In the front of my eyes, they beat a woman and told her: “You are lying; you are a girl [virgin] but saying I am a woman.”

.....

464 Ibid.

465 Interview with Hiyām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.02.2016).

466 Interview with Torē (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 02.04.2016).

467 Interview with Na'imā (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

She put herself into among us and she was crying. One was hitting her by gun and saying: "I will kill her or take her."⁴⁶⁸[...].

Ḥalīma, a 25-year-old Yezidi woman from Ḥātmiyyah, was held in captivity for nine months. She was among the Yezidi women transferred to Shiite villages near Tel Afar. She further stated:

We stayed 21 days there. Then they took us to a Shiite village where we stayed for about one and a half months [...]. During that one and a half months, every day they came to us and took the beautiful women by force for themselves. [...] There was a Saudi named "Ḥalīfa". When he found any girl he liked, he brought four or five ISIS members with him, and took those girls to Tel Afar. He was giving [selling] everyone a girl. He was selling them for himself there.⁴⁶⁹

Likewise, Hiyām, an 18-year-old Yezidi woman survivor from Sinjar, stated that ISIS took her, along with many other Yezidis, to Tel Afar and distributed them among Shiite households there, as the ISIS jihadists told them that they had converted to Islam⁴⁷⁰.

They [ISIS jihadists] putflyer writing the names of every family in it. They were putting the name of man of the family. Then, they were coming to the village and taking girls and every beautiful woman for themselves.⁴⁷¹

Yezidi Enslavement in the Prisons and Jails of ISIS

The prisons operated by ISIS served as additional sites for the systematic rape and enslavement of Yezidi women and girls. Bādūš Prison, located northwest of Mosul, functioned as one of ISIS's slave markets. According to the testimony of Ğalilā, a 30-year-old Yezidi woman from Koço:

.....

468 Ibid.

469 Interview with Ḥalīma (in Qādīyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

470 Interview with Hiyām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.02.2016).

471 Ibid.

[...]in Bādūš prison, our number became about 5 to 6 thousand⁴⁷² [although she might overstate the number, it indicates the huge number of Yezidi captives] Yezidi captured women, girls and children. [...] We stayed about three to four days in Bādūš. Then they came and took the 6-year-old children from their mothers. They put the children in buses and took them. They also took every girl that they liked. They were buying and raping them⁴⁷³. [...].

Similarly, Ḥisnā, a 24-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir-Ezer, testifies about the large number of Yezidi captives held in Bādūš Prison:

[...] They took us to Bādūš. In Bādūš, they took girls and children. We were about 3000 persons in that prison⁴⁷⁴.

Ḥalwā, a 20-year-old Yezidi survivor from Tel-Banāt, was among the captives whom ISIS jihadists transferred to Bādūš Prison. She recounts:

In Bādūš, they separated the beautiful girls and young women and took them to Mosul. They were also taking the children from their mothers. We stayed a week in Bādūš and then they took us again to Tel Afar.⁴⁷⁵

Furthermore, Ḥalīma, a 25-year-old Yezidi woman from Ḥātīmīyah, testifies:

In Bādūš, they selected all children who were between 7 and 13 years old, and took all of them from us. They took them by force. One of my sons was bigger than this one [she pointed to a son at her side]. I hid him three times under my ğamik [dress] so they would not take him. In

.....
472 According to the testimonial of Ḥisnā, a 24-year-old Yezidi survivor woman from Gir-Ezēr, who assures that in the prison of Bādūš were about 3000 Yezidi persons. Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

473 Interview with Ğalilā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

474 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

475 Interview with Ḥalwā (in Kabartū 2 Campon 29/2/2016).

*the evening they took the children and put them in a place enclosed by barbed wire. My mother-in-law went and took my son by force and we hid him again*⁴⁷⁶.

Samīrā, another 20-year-old Yezidi survivor from Tel-Banāt, was among the many Yezidi captives transferred to Bādūš Prison. She recounts:

*We stayed about 20 days in Bādūš prison. [...] Almost every day they came among us. The beautiful females were hiding themselves. They were coming and taking our females*⁴⁷⁷[...].

Likewise, ISIS prisons and detention facilities in Syria functioned as slave markets for the purchase and enslavement of Yezidi captives. In an interview conducted in a Syrian prison following his capture, an ISIS defector recounted his experience within the group, describing how jihadists bought Yezidi women and girls inside ISIS jails. He stated:

In a prison, there were 475 sabāyā [captives], [they were] Yezidis, Iraqis and some were wives of Iraqi army soldiers. When I was in the corridor [of that jail] I was shocked by seeing these women. Some of Yezidi girls would cry. I would ask why? They said we have small children, one or two years and you have taken us, why? “This is your Islam?” [...]. When [the jihadists] got news that they would get sabāyā, I could hear them cheering in the corridor. They were happy. [The jihadists] came and the prison warden would bring ten foreign [jihadists] at a time. Because they were too many, they could not bring them all in one time. We would guard the doors and they would go in and choose a sabīyah, then he would take her by the hand and leave. This went on for three days, each was taking one by one. They told us if anyone take any word to outside of prison [it means their act of taking women should be absolute secret and they threatened to behead him]. They [the jihadists] had told the prisoners

.....
476 Interview with Ḥalīma (in Qādīyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

477 Interview with Samīra (in Qādīyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

[Yezidi captivities] *that they were kuffār [infidels] and they all would be slaughtered [or raped and converted to Islam]. This made them think that [to go with the jihadists and rape them] much better than being slaughtered*⁴⁷⁸ [...].

The jihadist went on to recount:

*Before I left [defected from ISIS] there was an incident where a Sudanese [jihadist] picked a fifteen-year-old girl, I swear he raped her. She started bleeding badly. An ambulance came and took her. The girl had internal bleeding and died from the injuries. When they took her outside, they told her, “Do not speak.” The sabāyā are sabāyā [slave women are slave women] and do as you please with them [...].*⁴⁷⁹

The Slave Markets in Raqqa

According to the eyewitness testimonies of escaped Yezidi women and girls, “the farm” near Raqqa city was the first and largest slave market operated by ISIS in Syria. At that farm, the purchase of Yezidi women and girls followed a systematic process. It served as the first stage for gathering Yezidi captives in Syria after their transfer from Iraq.

ISIS jihadist sentinels guarded the farm to prevent captives from escaping. Their duties also included organizing the process of purchasing Yezidi captives. A jihadist known as a shaykh (Šayḥ) acted as the broker responsible for selling Yezidi women and girls at the farm.

After the Yezidi captives were brought to the farm, they were taken to a special room to have their personal information re-registered, including their names, ages, and the number of children. Some of the Yezidi captives were then taken daily to another slave market in Raqqa city.

.....
478 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRiw8YHTAlw&feature=youtu.be>.

479 Ibid.

The United Nations Human Rights Council, in an official report published on June 15, 2016, confirmed that the Islamic slave markets in Syria were held at “the farm” in Raqqa city⁴⁸⁰.

A 30-year-old Yezidi woman from Koço was among the captives taken by ISIS jihadists to this slave market in Raqqa. She recalls:

In Raqqa they put us in an agricultural field. There were three guards guarding us. We were the first group in that field. After three days they brought 53 other girls, all from Koço⁴⁸¹ [...].

She continues her testimony:

In Raqqa, ISIS [jihadists] were always coming to us. They were waking us up and everyone was selecting a girl that he wanted for himself. When they selected any one of us and if she refused to go with him, he would hit her and drag her behind him, taking her by force and putting her in the car⁴⁸² [...].

Ĝalilā is a Yezidi woman who was assigned by ISIS to oversee the Yezidi captives at the farm due to her proficiency in Arabic. She assisted the captives whenever they required medical attention or other forms of help. She reported that, at times, dozens of captives would collapse from fear, and she would take them to a doctor and ensure they received the necessary medications⁴⁸³.

She states:

When one of them [ISIS jihadists] bought one of us, I was forced help. Some of us were bought four times, others five times, some six, seven times, and others ten times. They were walking among us and raising 5,000 Iraqi dinars [about 3 USD], telling us that is what we were worth. They bought

.....

480 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 13.

481 Interview with Ĝalilā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

482 Ibid.

483 Ibid.

all those girls. When one of them liked a girl, he would take her. He slept with her for a night and after raping her, he sold her again if anyone gave him one dinar more [than he paid]. If other one gave the second owner 1–1/2 more dinar, he also sold her again. The 40 and 50-year-old of ISIS jihadists were taking the 7 or 8-year-old girls and raping them [...]. All of these cases happened to us. I have seen this with my own eyes. They sold all those girls⁴⁸⁴ [...].

A 35-year-old Yezidi woman from Şōlağ was also among the Yezidi captives taken by ISIS to Syria. She provides her testimony regarding the enslavement of Yezidis, stating:

At first in Syria [Raqqa], they put us in an agricultural field. They had written the name of all of us for themselves. They entered among us and took everyone that they liked her. Everyone who they read her name; they were taking her by force. [...] I was on the second floor in that agricultural field. Then, they took ten of us together to a house of one of their şayh. There were more than 400 Yezidi women⁴⁸⁵. [...].

A Yezidi woman from Koço village was also an eyewitness. She says that ISIS transferred the Yezidi women and girls of Koço village from Galaxy Hall in Mosul to Raqqa in Syria. There, ISIS had already established slaves' markets and jails for women.⁴⁸⁶ She says: A Yezidi woman from Koço village was also an eyewitness and provided further details about the process of Yezidi enslavement by ISIS in Syria. She stated that ISIS transferred the Yezidi women and girls from Koço village from Galaxy Hall in Mosul to Raqqa in Syria, where ISIS had already established slave markets and jails for women⁴⁸⁷. She reports:

.....

484 Ibid.

485 Ibid.

486 Otten 2017: 111.

487 Ibid., 111.

When we got to the farm [near Raqqa] four of five buses full of ISIS members with long hair and beards, [...] They were like animals. On first day they came among us and started picking girls for themselves. Two or three of them would catch the girls, blindfold them, and take them by force into a car. The girls were crying and shouting and wailing but they didn't care⁴⁸⁸.

Testimonies of surviving Yezidi women continue in this regard. Another Yezidi woman from Koço narrates her story of enslavement during her stay at that farm:

[...] They put us into a farm in Raqqa, Syria. There were in the farm many other Yezidi women not only from Koço. The farm became full of the Yezidi women. We stayed about 20 days in that farm. The one who was called Hatāb, from Libya, Abū Fū'ād from Syria, and other one from Saudi Arabia, (we knew from their dialects), gathered us at the ground floor. They told us that if we [any of us] gave our name and age incorrect they would kill her. They took each of us in a room alone, [and wrote her] name and age, then they told her go upstairs. After they registered our data, they told us, "Every day, a person called šayḥ (sheikh) will come to you and read the some of your names. You have to obey šayḥ's order. If you reject his order, we will kill you⁴⁸⁹".

A 35-year-old Yezidi woman from Sībā-Šēhidrē in the Sinjar region survived after being captured along with other members of her family on August 3, 2014. She was transferred, along with approximately 150 other Yezidi women and 400 children, from a school in Tel Afar to Syria⁴⁹⁰. She was among the Yezidi women sold in the slave markets of Raqqa. She provides the following account of how Yezidi girls and women were purchased in these slave markets:

.....
488 Ibid., 112.

489 Interview with Intiṣār (in Qādiyā Camp 03.07.2016).

490 Interview with Torē (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 02.04.2016).

*They [ISIS jihadists] took us to a field in Raqqa in Syria. From midnight until early morning, they were beating us, beating our children, etc. From the fear we were not able to sleep. They took every girl that they liked*⁴⁹¹.
[...]

According to the testimonies of interviewed Yezidi women and girls who survived, in addition to the agricultural farm near Raqqa that served as a slave market, the most famous and organized slave market in Raqqa was a large building within the city itself. Some of the Yezidi captives from the farm were taken there to be sold. On the days when Yezidi captives were individually offered for sale, jihadists crowded the building. A jihadist would read aloud the name and other detailed information about each woman or girl being offered. He would then instruct the captive to remove her headdress and some of her outer clothing. She would walk in front of the jihadists so they could inspect her. An interested jihadist would raise his hand to indicate a purchase. Captives who were not sold were returned to the farm and offered for sale at a later time. Women with children were sold together with their children.

An official report by the United Nations Human Rights Council discusses the Islamic slave markets in the city of Raqqa. The report contains testimonials from Yezidi women and girls who survived ISIS captivity⁴⁹². It mentions a Yezidi woman who was sold at a slave market at ‘the farm’ in Raqqa; she says:

*“After six days, the fighters moved us to a big white hall that was next to the river. ISIS would buy and sell girls there. [...] There were maybe 200 Yazidi girls there. The youngest was between seven and nine years old. Most were quite young*⁴⁹³ [...].”

The Yezidi woman from Koço continued to narrate her story, describing her experiences between that farm and another slave market in Raqqa, saying:

.....

491 Ibid.

492 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 13.

493 Ibid., 13.

Every day, šayḥ (who spoke Arabic) came among us and took two or three of us. Sometimes when the women came back again, we would ask them what they have done with them. Those women said, “They [the jihadists] asked us to take our headdress and some other clothes off. We then walked in front of them and they looked at us. They took the ones that they liked, and turned back the ones they did not like.” Therefore, we were terrified, and so on every time they took some of us.⁴⁹⁴

Likewise, a Yezidi survivor from Sībā-Šēḥidrē recounted her experiences of enslavement at the slave market in Raqqa:

They [ISIS jihadists] came at night and put girls and women into the cars until they were filled, and took us to a big hall full of ISIS members. Two of them took the girls in the middle of hall surrounded by ISIS members, and other ISIS members were sitting in chairs. They were like pigs. They took the headdresses off the heads of girls, and took our coating [outer dress] off. Then two of them grabbed our shoulders and walked us around the hall in order to have one of them take us. They were purchasing us. One time from the 42 women and girls in the hall, all were sold except three of us with our 10 children. We stayed alone in the hall crying. Finally, an Arab came upstairs. Two of his brothers were in the hands of the PKK [Kurdistan Workers Party]. He sympathized with us and told us, “I am like your brother. I will buy you.” He bought us (three women and 10 children, and took us to his home. He was an Arab called Abū Silēmān. He did not belong to ISIS. He was very kind with us⁴⁹⁵. [...]

Additionally, in Raqqa, there were several large houses used by jihadists as slave markets for the purchase of Yezidi women and girls. Ḥalwā, a 20-year-old Yezidi survivor from Tel-Banāt, was among these captives. She provides an account of these slave houses:

.....
494 Interview with Intiṣār (in Qādiyā Camp 03.07.2016).

495 Interview with Torē (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 02.04.2016).

In Raqqa they put us in a prison. It was a house consisting of four floors. Seven or eight of them [ISIS jihadists] came together and took girls and women for themselves. Each took one for himself and left. There were two ISIS men guarding us, and others were coming to us. They brought a person who they called šayḥ. When he told someone to stand up, even if she did not stand up, he took her. When she refused, he killed her. They killed two of them using a small “werwere as Shingali call it – pistol”. Everyone selected one of us and took us. They brought black dresses with them, and dressing the one that they already had chosen for themselves⁴⁹⁶.

Also, Nasīmā, a 15-year-old Yezidi girl survivor from Tell Qasab, was among the Yezidis purchased in the slave houses. One jihadist, known as Abū Brā’a, bought her and two of her cousins and took them to Raqqa⁴⁹⁷. She describes what happened next:

[...] He [Abū Brā’a] put us in a prison in Raqqa. It was a small room. We were three in that room. We stayed for a day there. And we were very afraid because there was not any other Yezidi there. The next day, one came and told us: “I will buy Dalāl.” He bought my uncle’s daughter. She was one year older than me. She was 16-years old. I do not know for how much money he bought her. They were not telling us the price⁴⁹⁸.

One of the survivors said that she asked the jihadists about the reason for their cruel treatment of the Yezidi captive women and girls. She recounted the jihadists’ response regarding the reasons that motivated them to enslave the Yezidis, as follows:

They were telling us that. “The Yezidis are kuffār [unbelievers].” [...] One of them said, “You deserve that. You are kuffār⁴⁹⁹.”

.....

496 Interview with Ḥalwā (in Kabartū 2 Campon 29/2/2016).

497 Interview with Nasīmā (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.2.2016).

498 Ibid.

499 Interview with Ḥalwā (in Kabartū 2 Campon 29/2/2016).

Suhām, a 26-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik, was one of the Yezidi women sold in the ISIS slave markets in Syria⁵⁰⁰. She recounts her story of enslavement in Raqqa, saying:

They [ISIS] took us to Raqqa. We stayed about a month there. We were in a prison. They were treating us exactly like sheep. From there they took us to a[basement]underground home. Then they took a group to Dayrazor and another group to Tadmur, and the third group remained in Raqqa. Every group consisted of three big buses. They took us and put us into the home of an officer. We stayed there about 20 days [...]. It was a big apartment. It was an underground home. There were many jihadists and their big bosses. Every one of them had a pen and paper in his hand. They removed our headdresses and walked us in front of them. Everyone who was interested in a one [of us] wrote her name [...]. One named Zimrāwī from Saudi Arabia bought me and six others. He took one of our friends for himself and sold the others⁵⁰¹.

Suhām also provides some information about the price of Yezidi captives when they were offered in the ISIS slave markets. According to her, the price of the captives depended especially on their beauty⁵⁰², she recounts:

The price depended on the beauty of the female. Some were sold for 200 Dollars, 150 Dollars, and others for 300 Dollars. There were bosses on one side [of the room] and the jihadists on the other side. When someone was interested in buying one [of us] he would go to the boss and tell him, “I would like to buy this one.” The bosses were writing by themselves, and then they gave them money when they were buying women. Our names were registered in a ledger by their big Amīr. For each one of us, when they removed our head dress, they read our name and gave our data, the number of children, and price. Every woman was sold together with her

.....
500 Interview with Suhām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.2.2016).

501 Ibid.

502 Ibid.

*children. My price the first time was 300 Dollars. And next time one of them gave me to his friend called Yūsuf al-ʿIrāqī, as a gift*⁵⁰³[...].

ISIS Slave Markets in Tadmur

The slave market in Tadmur (Palmyra, Syria) was also one of the largest Islamic slave markets, according to Yezidi survivors. It was a highly organized market housed in a large building with multiple rooms and a spacious hall⁵⁰⁴. ISIS jihadists purchased Yezidi women and girls there, supplied by nearby detention buildings for female captives⁵⁰⁵.

The buying process involved several steps⁵⁰⁶. First, groups of Yezidi women and girls were brought from the detention buildings to the slave market building, where they were placed in a designated room⁵⁰⁷. Before being presented in the main hall for sale, the captives' names were recorded, and their headdresses were removed. Then, the captives were brought into the hall⁵⁰⁸. In the hall, information about each woman, such as her age and the number of children she had, was announced. Buyers indicated their interest by raising a finger⁵⁰⁹. If a woman or girl was not sold during the first round, she could be brought back to the market repeatedly until she was sold⁵¹⁰.

Ḥisnā, a 24-year-old Yezidi survivor from Gir Zerik who was held by ISIS for about a year, was one of the women sold at the Tadmur slave market. She recounts her experience:

*[...] they [ISIS jihadist] brought buses and took 42 of us women with our children to Tadmur*⁵¹¹.

.....

503 Ibid.

504 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

505 Ibid.

506 Ibid.

507 Ibid.

508 Ibid.

509 Ibid.

510 FIDH/KINYAT (October 2018): 23.

511 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

In Tadmur they put us in two buildings beside each other. We stayed there also about a month. Then they came wrote our names again and took 21 of us to the [slave] market. They put us in a room in a big hall. It was full of ISIS [jihadists] – more than 1000 of them⁵¹².

They took off our headaddresses and read our names. When they read our names, they took us into the hall. There they read the information about the woman, such as her age, and the number of children. Then they asked who wanted to buy her. Everyone who wanted to buy was raising his finger⁵¹³.

Similarly, the United Nations Human Rights Council recorded the account of a Yezidi woman who witnessed these events, in one of its reports, it read in part:

When the fighter in charge of the slave market called her name, jihadists entered, took off her headscarf, and escorted her into a larger room of seated ISIS jihadists. She was made to “walk through the room like a catwalk”. She continued, “[I]f any of the men chose us he would raise his hand. The seller from ISIS had paper with our name and the price for us on it. They would give it to the man who raised that hand. Then he would take the woman, or women, to his car and he would go⁵¹⁴.”

The Yezidi survivor Ḥisnā, from Gir Zerik, concluded her description of how she was sold in the slave market with the following statement:

A Saudi bought me. He looked at my two children and said, “Her children are beautiful. I will buy this one for myself.” [...] This Saudi called Abū Hāġer bought me for himself and took me to his home⁵¹⁵.

.....

512 Ibid.

513 Ibid.

514 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 13.

515 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

The story of Yezidi enslavement in the ISIS slave markets in Tadmur continues. Gawrē, a 39-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik, was also sold at the Tadmur slave market. She recalls her experience:

They took 42 women of us [from Tel Afar] to Tadmur [...]. We stayed about 20 days in a home. After those 20 days every evening at 8 o'clock the bus came and took 10 to 12 women to an underground building [basement] that consisted of two or three floors. It was in Tadmur too. It was a [slave] market. It was very dark. They put us into a room where there were ISIS men sitting in chairs and there were tables in front of them. There was another one with a paper in his hand. There were also laptops in front of them. They were responsible for us. The one who brought food for us and the one who bought us were walking in front of us and reading our names. There was one standing in the door called Abū Ḥusayin. He was from Iraq. He was blind in one eye. He read each of our names and said, "Bring your children and come"⁵¹⁶.

Gawrē continues to describe the process of her purchase in that market, providing more specific details in her testimony:

We were going and he [Abū Ḥusayin] said, "Take your headdresses off." We took our headdresses off. It was exactly like a fashion show. We took the hands of our children and walked along the room and turned back. It was a long room. We were crying, shaking, and walking in front of them. They were calling, "This one has those children, her age is that, who wants to buy her?"⁵¹⁷

When someone wanted to buy one of us, he stomped his foot on the floor from his chair. They understood each other. Then they stood us to a side. The buyer would come to her and say, "Come I have bought you"⁵¹⁸.

.....
516 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

517 Ibid.

518 Ibid.

Concerning her sale at the Sabāyā Market, Gawrē went on to describe:

*They brought me to the [slave] market. It was the Sabāyā Market as they called it. I walked with my two children in the market. One came and bought me. His name was Abū Yāsir. He took me to his home with his wife in Tadmur*⁵¹⁹.

Ashti, a 26-year-old returnee, similarly experienced enslavement at the Sabāyā Market in Tadmur. She recounts her ordeal and says:

*I was sold for the first time in an underground sabāyā market in Tadmur (Syria). I was taken there twice as the first time no one bought me. The second time, I was bought with my children by a Saudi man. The market was a big hall with a passage in the middle and chairs on both sides. We had to walk the passage with our children while uncovering our heads*⁵²⁰.

The stories of Yezidi enslavement in the Islamic State's slave markets are endless. Each girl and woman have a story as harrowing as the next. Nūrē, a 26-year-old Yezidi survivor from Tell Ezer, said that during her captivity, ISIS jihadists sold her eight times among themselves⁵²¹. Regarding the process of purchasing Yezidi captives in the Tadmur slave market, she recounts:

*They [ISIS jihadists] were every evening taking us to the market. There was a ledger in the hand of an old man with white and long bread. He was reading the name of women and giving information and the price of everyone. Whoever liked one of us, was raising his finger and saying: "This one I would take." They were making us to walk in front of them. One of them was taking our headdresses and jackets off. So, they were purchasing us*⁵²²[...].

.....

519 Ibid.

520 FIDH/KINYAT (October 2018): 23.

521 Interview with Nūrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

522 Ibid.

Furthermore, Wārīdā, a Yezidi survivor from Khanasor in the Sinjar region, was another woman offered for sale in the Tadmur slave market. She states that ISIS jihadists gathered many Yezidi women and girls in a school near Raqqa and then moved them in groups to different cities for sale. She points out:

They [ISIS jihadist] took 40 to 50 [of Yezidi women and girls from] to Dayrazor. They took a similar number to ḥalab, Raqqa, ṭabqā, and Tadmur. [...] They took 40 of us to Tadmur⁵²³.

Wārīdā further described the process of how Yezidi women were sold in the slave market, stating:

They put us into a Christian villa in Tadmur for 20 days. They were coming to us for four evenings and every time taking 10 of us. Our scream reached to the sky. There was a market [slave market] underground. It was big like three tents. Every evening, they were putting us into the back of KIA [it is a type of cars] or other cars and every time were taking 10 of us to that market⁵²⁴.

Wārīdā elaborates on her experience during her purchase at the slave market. She provides more specific details about the treatment of Yezidi women and the process of selling them, saying:

There were about 200 to 300 jihadists and they were looking like dogs in that market. There were internet and computers. They were filming us. They have written the name and price of every one of us on a piece of paper. The jihadist raised the paper and walked in front of us. They said: “Walk until the end of market and turn back.” Whenever they were taking us by their cars, they were honking on the streets and yelling: “These are the Yezidi Sabāyā⁵²⁵.” [...]

.....
523 Interview with Wārīdā (in Šāriyā camp on 02.10.2016).

524 Ibid.

525 Ibid.

If any one of them said: “I want this one.” He was giving the paper and the price. They would give the money to their Amīr called Abū Hāšim. He was the one who was raising the papers. Through those four evenings, they distributed [sold] all those 40 women. The prices and names of all women were written on papers. [...] They sold some for 50 Dollars, other for 25 Dollars, 60 Dollars and 70 Dollars. Two women, one called Šērīn and other called Nisrīn were sold for 25 Dollars. I had just given birth to child. They returned me back to that home⁵²⁶ [the Christian villa ...].

In addition to the official Islamic slave markets, jihadists who purchased Yezidi captives often sold them again outside these markets. Gawrē, a 39-year-old Yezidi survivor from Gir Zerik, was first sold in the Tadmur slave market to an ISIS jihadist named Abū Yāsir. After 16 days, Abū Yāsir sold her to a friend. She recounts the story:

... He [Abū Yāsir] took me to his home with his wife in Tadmur. ... We stayed 16 days with him. After then they took photos of us. He said to me, “We will visit my two friends.” We went and got into the car. There were two others in it. One was the driver and another one was sitting in the front of car. When we got into it, they locked the door. Me and my two children cried. I asked them, “Where are you taking us?” The other one said, “Do not cry. I have bought you.” He took us. We stayed 40 days with him. He took me to a village between Ṭabqā and Tadmur⁵²⁷.

In her testimony, Gawrē notes that the process of selling Yezidi women outside the official slave markets closely resembled the procedure within the markets, stating:

[...] I was wearing Islamic dress, but when they took photos of us, they made us wear short dresses that showed our bodies put makeup on us, and took off our headdresses. But when they took us out, they do not want

.....
526 Ibid.

527 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

to see anyone us – they made us wear [Himār] qimārs [headdresses that fall over the shoulders], ‘abā [long Islamic robes], gloves and stockings. When they prepared us for sale, even when we were in their houses, they made us wear the first style; but when we were going out with them, we wore the second style⁵²⁸ [...].

Similarly, Na‘īmā, a 35-year-old Yezidi woman from Şōlağ, was repeatedly raped by a jihadist named Abū Fāris. After a month, he sold her to another jihadist, Abū Muqātil, from Ḥalab in Syria⁵²⁹. She recounts one of the instances when she was sold among the ISIS jihadists, saying:

[...] I was inside of room, and he [Abū Fāris] was outside at door. He opened the door and called me: “Come.” I said: “What?” I had a headdress on my head. He became angry and told me: “Take it off. What are you wearing?” By his hand he took my headdress off. I told him: “Why you are doing this to us.” He told me: “You are a sabīyah, and whatever we want we will do with you.” After then, the other one, who called was Abū Muqātil from Ḥalab, took me for himself⁵³⁰ [...].

The Slave Markets in Dayrazor

In Dayrazor, ISIS jihadists bought Yezidi women and girls, just as they did in other cities. According to women who survived, the Islamic slave market in Dayrazor was smaller than those in Raqqa and Tadmur. It was not a grand market, but rather a single room in a home where ISIS fighters gathered groups of Yezidi female captives. A jihadist known as Şayḥ oversaw the process of buying and enslaving the women and girls.

Na‘īmā, a 35-year-old survivor from Şōlağ, was one of the women sold in Dayrazor⁵³¹. She recalls her experience:

.....

528 Ibid.

529 Interview with Na‘īmā (in Şāriyā Camp in September 2016).

530 Ibid.

531 Ibid.

[from Raqqa] they took us to Dayrazor. We stayed there for three days. Every evening three to four of them, were coming together to see us. They were making us sit in a room, and walking in front of us. Everyone that they were interested in, they were taking her for themselves. [...they took all other women] we stayed only four women. Three men came, they took a friend of mine called 'Amšā 'Ibrāhīm. Two of them remained and one of them told me: "Stand up and come with me." I told him: I will not stand up. He went to the šayḥ and told him: "I would like to take that one, but she is not standing up. And I do not want to beat her." Šayḥ said, "Do you want her to go with you?" He said, "Yes." He came and told me: "You must go with him if you want or not." So, they took us. They took every of us to a home⁵³² [...].

Likewise, Randa, a 28-year-old Yezidi returnee, shares her experience of the slave markets in Dayrazor, saying:

Before taking us (the women) to Syria, they took away all the beautiful and very young women and girls. They took the rest of us, the older and less beautiful ones, to an underground prison in Raqqa, Syria. We were about 500 women in a poorly ventilated prison, we felt like we would die. After 10 days, they divided us into sub-groups of 25 women and took us to a house in Dayrazor where our names were registered. We stayed in that house for about 25 days, after which they took us to a market that looked like a military camp or a deserted airport. There were groups of ISIL militants who came to buy us. They made us uncover our faces and walk in a straight line then stand still for the men to look at us. The men could look at us, but touching or talking was not permitted by the man running the market. He was not Iraqi nor Syrian, he was probably a Tunisian. We stayed there from the morning until noon, until we were sold. I was bought with my daughter and another Yazidi woman by a Tunisian fighter⁵³³.

.....
532 Ibid.

533 FIDH/KINYAT (October 2018): 23.

ISIS Slave Market in Qaşṭala in Syria

In the village of Qaşṭala in Syria, ISIS jihadists used apartments and homes as sites for the enslavement and sale of Yezidi girls and women. 'Intiṣār, a 30-year-old Yezidi survivor from Koço, was transferred to Qaşṭala and witnessed these events firsthand. According to her, jihadists would gather groups of Yezidi girls and women in a single home or apartment, and other jihadists would regularly come to purchase them. In this regard she says:

There were about six to seven other Yezidi women from Koço, Ḥardān and Tell Banāt [two other Yezidi villages]. We asked them, “What are you doing here?” They said that we would stay here and every day they would come and take who they like of us. [...] We became about 15 women and girls. They came regularly and took who they liked⁵³⁴.

'Intiṣār continues to say:

Later another one came [...] was called Abu Nūr from Syria. He took me with my children by his car which had dark glass. He drove us about two hours. He brought me into a mağārra (underground room) under the ground⁵³⁵.

Enslavement of Yezidis in the ISIS Military Headquarters

In addition to the official Islamic slave markets established in areas under ISIS control, the military “headquarters” of ISIS jihadists also served as sites where Yezidi women and girls were enslaved and subjected to sexual violence, according to survivor testimonies.

Randa, a Yezidi survivor, was only 16 years old when she was captured by ISIS. She told Amnesty International that she was confined in a building used as an ISIS military headquarters, along with approximately 150 girls and five women⁵³⁶.

.....
534 Interview with Intiṣār (in Qādiyā Camp 03.07.2016).

535 Ibid.

536 Freamon 2019: 471–472.

Similarly, Samīrā, a 20-year-old Yezidi survivor from Tell Banāt, was captured on August 3, 2014, and released on February 24, 2016. She recounted that:

They put two or three of us into their headquarters. Every day one of the ISIS [jihadists] came to see us. As one left another one came. We were afraid. They were taking our photos and laughing at us. [...] They hit and raped us in that headquarters. After they raped us, they gave us to another one⁵³⁷.

Nisrīn, an 18-year-old Yezidi survivor from Koço, reported that, following the capture of their community in August 2014, ISIS jihadists forcibly transferred approximately 200 Yezidi girls from Koço to Mosul. She described the process as follows:

They loaded us into three buses and took us to Mosul. They put us into the big palace of Şaddām. We stayed for a night there. Next day, they came and took 35 of us, and put us in a [ISIS military] headquarter in Mosul. They were coming to us every day and every one of them was choosing one of us for him. In the evening, they were coming and saying to us: “You must wash yourself. If not none of them [jihadist] will take you⁵³⁸.”

In an effort to escape the sexual violence inflicted by the Mujahideen, or at least to find ways to resist or reduce the injustices they faced, Yezidi women tried to make themselves appear unattractive. Nisrīn explained that, in order to avoid being chosen by the jihadists, they deliberately altered their appearance so they would not look beautiful:

We were going into the bathroom, but we were not washing ourselves, we were making only our hair wet and coming out from bathroom. And

.....
537 Interview with Samīrā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

538 Interview with Nisrīn (in Qādiyā Camp).

*we were changing our clothes. They [ISIS jihadists] thought that we had washed ourselves*⁵³⁹.

Nisrīn further elaborates on her testimony:

*In the evening, they would come and each [jihadist] took one of us for himself. They took five, and the others remained. The next day, they came and took all of us. They all took one for himself. One of them took me too for himself. He took me to a hotel in Mosul. He was called Abū Batār. He was from Mosul. At 12 o'clock, he came and took me to a room in the hotel. I had a material with me; I hit his head with it. His head was wounded. He tied my hands, legs, and then he takes my clothes off and raped me. After he finished, he told his guards to rape me again. So, they did. Next day, he took me to his house*⁵⁴⁰.

For further insight, 'Intīṣār, a 30-year-old Yezidi survivor from Koço, recounts her experience when ISIS jihadists abducted her and transferred her, along with other Yezidi captives, from a farm in Raqqa, Syria, to the slave markets. She said:

*One time they [the jihadists] took seven of us, and transferred us by bus to another building "headquarter". There they brought food and tea for us. Then, came ten men, and they took only one, a Yezidi woman called Layla, because she was very beautiful*⁵⁴¹.

'Intīṣār further elaborates on her experience of enslavement, stating that a jihadist named Abu Nūr from Syria purchased her and took her, along with her children, into a Maḡārra (underground chamber). This chamber also functioned as the jihadist's military headquarters in Syria. She confirmed the

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539 Ibid.

540 Ibid.

541 Interview with Intīṣār (in Qādiyā Camp 03.07.2016).

existence of two additional tunnels, each housing approximately 50 jihadists⁵⁴². She reported:

After about two months, Abu Nūr told me that he would like to sell me. [...] He sold me to Abū ‘Abdullah, who was also from Syria. His home was in Ṭabqā. He took me to Ṭabqā. At first, he stayed with me for three or four days, and then brought me to his home with his wife. Actually, he raped me and forced me to get married with him. I had no any other choice except death⁵⁴³.

Furthermore, Zhūra, a 28-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar, was captured along with numerous other Yezidis in August 2014. ISIS jihadists forcibly transferred her and her children to Syria, where she remained in their custody until December 2015, when she managed to escape. She is among the Yezidi women who were taken to ISIS military headquarters and subjected to enslavement. She reported:

They [ISIS jihadists] took us to Syria. They took us to Raqqa. We were in a big hall for eight days. After eight days, they put five women into each car, and took them to their headquarters. They took me and four other women like me to Ḥomṣ [Homs City in Syria]. It was their headquarters. It was very far away. We stayed three days there. In the headquarters we were in a room and never got out. After three days, each ISIS [jihadist] took one of us into their family, and they told us, “You have to convert to Islam⁵⁴⁴.”

.....
542 Ibid.

543 Ibid.

544 Interview with Zuhūr (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 28/1/2016).

4.5 Digital Slave Markets of ISIS: Websites, Applications, and Social Media

ISIS established online slave markets on websites, mobile applications, and social media platforms, with names such as “Caliphate’s Market,” “The Great Mall of the Islamic State,” “Souk Okaz,” and “al-Muwahhideen Market⁵⁴⁵.”

In these digital markets, as well as in the traditional slave markets of Homs, ISIS operatives employed encrypted applications to distribute photographs of captured Yezidi women and girls, accompanied by information on their age, marital status, current location, and assigned price⁵⁴⁶. An illustrative example of online slave marketing is:

Deflowered slave for sale, age 13, [...] Body: slim, tall. Price: \$9,000⁵⁴⁷.

Additionally, social media platforms and messaging applications such as WhatsApp, Telegram, and Facebook were used to trade and sell Yezidi women and girls as sex slaves and to conduct slave auctions⁵⁴⁸. For example, on May 5, 2016, a German ISIS jihadist in Syria, who called himself Abu Assad Almani, offered a Yezidi captive woman for sale in a Facebook post on his account⁵⁴⁹, publishing her photograph with the following caption:

To all the bros thinking about buying a slave, this one is \$8,000⁵⁵⁰.

Another example of a sex slave advertisement appeared on the popular encrypted Telegram app, written in Arabic, which read:

.....
545 FIDH/KINYAT (October 2018): 26. Also see, examples of those apps in Appendix number (17).

546 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 12.

547 Amara (July 11, 2017): Channel: SBS.

548 Cockayne (July 13, 2017): Channel: SBS. Warrick (May 28, 2016): The Washington Post.

549 Warrick (May 28, 2016): The Washington Post.

550 Ibid.

“Virgin. Beautiful. 12 years old ... Her price has reached \$12,500 and she will be sold soon⁵⁵¹.”

Similarly, ISIS jihadists were not always selling Yezidi captives for money; they also exchanged them in their online slave markets for other women or girls, or for a range of items, from cars and weapons to everyday goods such as shoes⁵⁵². In one online marketplace, “The Great Mall of the Islamic State,” a man with the ISIS flag in his profile picture wrote:

“my brothers, I am not joking nor being sarcastic, but following the example of Companions [of Prophet Muhammad], if anyone wants to swap a sabīyah with an Adidas shoes, message me privately⁵⁵³.”

A minute after the advertisement was published, a person responded:

“what shoesize?⁵⁵⁴”

After approximately half an hour, another person responded:

“If anyone wants to swap a sabīyah with shoes, I will give him two pairs of Adidas ... with socks too⁵⁵⁵.”

For the Homs slave markets, ISIS jihadists interested in a Yezidi woman or girl offered for sale online were required to pre-register if they wished to attend the market and to specify their method of payment⁵⁵⁶. Bids were submitted in

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551 Associated Press (July 5, 2016). Read (July 5, 2016) (Daily Caller News Foundation). SOFREP (July 6, 2016).

552 FIDH/KINYAT (October 2018): 23–26. Also see, examples of those apps in Appendix number (17).

553 Ibid., 26. Also see, examples of those apps in Appendix number (17).

554 Ibid., 26. Also see, examples of those apps in Appendix number (17).

555 Ibid., 26. Also see, examples of those apps in Appendix number (17).

556 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 13.

sealed envelopes at the time of purchase, and the highest bidder was obligated to buy her⁵⁵⁷.

4.6 Regulations and Characteristics of Yezidi Enslavement under ISIS

A jihadist who bought a captured Yezidi woman or girl had full ownership rights: he could resell her, give her as a gift, or keep her as a slave⁵⁵⁸, and could rape her at will.

The sellers and buyers of Yezidi women and girls in ISIS slavery markets were Muslim jihadists from various countries, including Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Sudan, Belgium, Uzbekistan, and Australia⁵⁵⁹.

ISIS imposed specific rules on the sale of Yezidi women and girls: they could not be sold between brothers, had to have completed their menstrual cycle, and could not be sold to non-ISIS members, to prevent their return to Yezidi families⁵⁶⁰. Members attempting to sell captives back to their families were punished⁵⁶¹. ISIS also maintained a database of personal information and photos of Yezidi captives, shared with checkpoints, to enforce these rules⁵⁶².

The price of each Yezidi woman or girl was based on factors such as marital status, age, number of children, and perceived beauty, ranging from 200 to 1,500 USD⁵⁶³. Prices later increased, particularly after Yezidis began re-buying family members through smugglers, despite this being forbidden under ISIS slave market rules.

.....
557 Ibid., 13.

558 Ibid., 13.

559 Ibid., 13. Interview with Zuhūr (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 28/1/2016).

560 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 15. Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 207–208.

561 Revkin (July 2016): 24.

562 Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 208.

563 Human Rights Council, Thirty-second session Agenda item 4 (15 June 2016): 13.

ISIS jihadists occasionally documented these markets in videos released online. One such two-and-a-half-minute video, posted in early November 2014, showed dozens of jihadists in a large hall discussing the *Sūq al-Sabāyā*, the “female slave market” in Arabic⁵⁶⁴. The jihadists bantered among themselves, with one commenting:

Today is the day of Sūq al-Sabāyā or the female slave market [...]. Today is the distribution [war spoils, or Yezidi women and girls]. Everybody is free, who wants to sell, who wants to gift [Sabāyā – captured woman or girl], everyone will take his portion [...].

Another one demanded:

*Where is my Yezidi girl?*⁵⁶⁵

The discussion among the jihadists grew increasingly eager as they debated the purchase of captured Yezidi women and girls. The first jihadist then resumed speaking, stating:

Who wants to sell his Sabāyā? I want to buy her. And to gift her to me I accept with more satisfaction.

Among the group, one jihadist called out loudly, asking, “*Who wants to sell?*”⁵⁶⁶

The jihadists also discussed the prices. One called out, “*How much?*” to which others responded, “*300 USD ... 500 USD, a pistol, a watch [...].*” The first jihadist added, “*If she has blue eyes, it is different,*” indicating a higher price. In the video, another jihadist could be heard saying, “*Yezidi, Sabāyā, [...]*”⁵⁶⁷

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564 YouTube (November 2, 2014).

565 Ibid.

566 Ibid.

567 Ibid

The prices of the women and girls reflected various factors. A document released by ISIS around October 2014 outlined some of these values⁵⁶⁸:

Children aged from one to nine years old – about 260 USD⁵⁶⁹;
10 to 20-year-old girls – 130 USD;
20 to 30-year-old women – 85 USD;
30 to 40-year-old women – 65 USD;
And 40 to 50-year-old women – 45 USD.

A strong and widespread demand for female captives contributed to a gradual increase in their prices over time.

A July 11, 2015, ISIS document⁵⁷⁰ from the *Dīwān al-Qaḍā' wa-al-Maẓālim* (Office of Judiciary and Grievances) in *Wīlāyat Nineveh* details sales regulations and the pricing of female children. It states in part:

1. A *sabīyah* (female captive) may only be sold through the Islamic court in *Wīlāyat Nineveh* and under the supervision of a court judge.
2. Produce the records (documents) of possession (*Mulk al-Yamīn*) in the Islamic court.
3. These female captives may only be sold to brothers who were previously (old-timers) recommended by the Islamic court.
4. The buyer must take her (the *sabīyah*) to his home and family for a proper Islamic education.
5. It is not permissible to sell her before she reaches the age of menstruation. After that, the buyer has the right to keep her as his property, sell her, or present her as a gift.

.....
568 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/ United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq – Human Rights office (August 2016): 14–15.

569 Prices were posted in Iraqi dinar. Values given are approximate conversions to US dollars at 1 USD = 1,160 IQD (approx. 2014/15 value).

570 See the copy of this document in Appendix number (14).

6. The buyer must write a covenant confirming the points mentioned above. Any violator will be subject to a reinforcement penalty (confiscation of the captive)⁵⁷¹.

Regarding the prices of the female child captives, the document states: Note: prices are determined by ages

1. From one year to 5 years for 500 Dollars.
2. From 6 years to 10 years for 1000 Dollars.
3. From 11 years to 12 years for 1500 Dollars.⁵⁷²

Furthermore, the document specifies that only jihadists originating from Turkey, Syria, and the Gulf States were authorized to purchase more than three captives or slaves⁵⁷³.

Abū ‘Abd-llah, a former Syrian ISIS jihadist defector, was interviewed in Turkey by the International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism (ICSVE). He recalled: “Once, by chance, I passed by the markets [ISIS slave markets] and saw women being sold. They were from Iraq⁵⁷⁴.” He admitted that the price of each woman or girl depended on certain characteristics; for instance, those who were considered beautiful and sweet were sold for higher prices⁵⁷⁵.

Şaddām ‘Umar al-Ġumalī⁵⁷⁶, a Syrian ISIS leader, provided further details about the enslavement of Yezidis by the Islamic State. He explained that ISIS jihadists were buying Yezidi captives from each other. Emphasizing that, in

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571 RT Arabic (December 11, 2018).

572 Ibid.

573 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/ United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq – Human Rights office (August 2016): 15. Also, see Jinan mit Oberlé 2016: 94. Also, see: Appendix number (12).

574 Speckhard (ICSVE) (May 25, 2017).

575 Ibid.

576 He was one of the most important leaders of ISIS. He was born in 1978. He appeared in several videos of ISIS propaganda. In an exclusive interview for NAS, he confessed that ISIS enslaved Yezidis. (NAS (November 19, 2018): Video in YouTube).

the Wilāyat al-Furat, ISIS distributed Yezidi sabāya along with their children to jihadists. “Even when they told me to take one, I refused,” he recalled. He added, “According to ISIS, there were 5,000 Yezidi captives. I observed that Saudi jihadists were the most eager to buy them, paying between 8,000 and 10,000 USD per captive⁵⁷⁷.”

ISIS also distributed Yezidi women and girls to their jihadist as part of their salaries. The British newspaper “The Telegraph” reported the confessions of Muḥammad Aḥmad⁵⁷⁸, an ISIS jihadist who took part in the Yezidi genocide in Sinjar. Standing before the Nineveh Investigations Court in Mosul, Aḥmad appeared unrepentant as he admitted to four counts of kidnapping and raping Yezidi women and ten counts of murdering Yezidi men⁵⁷⁹.

He recounted how, after ISIS captured Sinjar on August 3, 2014, he and other jihadists rounded up dozens of Yezidi men and boys at a local primary school⁵⁸⁰. Aḥmad said that his commander, an ISIS emīr, then ordered him to take the prettiest girls from the town back to Mosul⁵⁸¹. There, they were sold into slavery and circulated among senior ISIS members⁵⁸². He added that he was presented with four girls, ranging in age from 22 to 30⁵⁸³. Aḥmad admitted and openly said:

They were part of my salary, I received 60,000 dinars (£450) a month and the women as a bonus. I kept the four girls in an abandoned house. Each night I would have sex with a different one. Sometimes they seemed scared, but they never said no. They were all virgins when I got them and more beautiful than you can imagine⁵⁸⁴.

.....

577 Ibid.

578 Muḥammad Aḥmad is a 40-year-old ISIS jihadist who was arrested by the Iraqi forces. He was investigated at the Nineveh investigations court. (The Telegraph (July 31, 2017).

579 Ibid.

580 Ibid.

581 Ibid.

582 Ibid.

583 Ibid.

584 Ibid.

Furthermore, The Telegraph reported that the judge asked Aḥmad, ‘What did you do when you were done with them?’ He replied:

*I gave them to another fighter in return for \$200 each*⁵⁸⁵.

Zārā, a Yezidi woman from Koço village who had been captured by ISIS, recounted that the women and girls from her village were moved from Galaxy Hall in Mosul to Raqqa in Syria, where ISIS had set up slave markets and prisons for women⁵⁸⁶. She continued her account:

*Compared to married women with children, single women were moved at greater speed through ISIS markets that favored more saleable slaves*⁵⁸⁷.

The prices for Yezidi women, girls, and children were not fixed. Eyewitnesses⁵⁸⁸ reported that ISIS jihadists sold them at varying rates, with some exceeding 10,000 USD for those returned to Yezidi families.

A document released by Wilāyat Ḥuṃṣ, titled “Ta‘mīm – Statement for Distribution,” numbered 1 and dated 28 Ša‘bān 1436 AH (c. June 15, 2015)⁵⁸⁹, detailed the procedures by which jihadists could acquire slaves. The statement read in part:

*The brothers who desire to buy sabāyā [sex slaves] must register their names with the admin official of the battalion or sector.
As for the brothers [Murābiṭūn] performing on the front lines, coordination will be done with the [commander] of the battalion with their coming*

.....
585 Ibid.

586 Otten 2017: 111.

587 Quoting Otten 2017: 111.

588 For example, Interview with Suhām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.2.2016). Interview with Wārīdā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.10.2016). Interview with Torē (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 02.04.2016). Interview with Ḥalwā (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29/2/2016).

589 Specimen 13Y: Notice on buying sex slaves, Homs province, 28 Ša‘bān 1436 AH /c. June 15, 2015. For original copy of this document see: Appendix Number (15)

*down at the defined time that we will subsequently convey to the admin official within ten days at most from the date of this announcement. And whoever does not register his name has no right to attend the 'slave trade market [Sūq al-Naḥāsa]. And the bid is to be submitted in the sealed envelope at the time of purchase, and the one who wins the bid is obliged to purchase*⁵⁹⁰.

Iraqi intelligence recovered documents left behind by ISIS jihadists after their defeat in Mosul (al-Sāḥl al-Ayman)⁵⁹¹, which detailed the prices of Yezidi and Christian women captured by the group⁵⁹². One document indicated that the price of a single female captive (*sabīyah*) did not exceed 800 USD, while another referred to the sale of four *sabāyāh* for 3,200 USD⁵⁹³.

ISIS also used captured Yezidi women and girls as prizes for jihadists who won Qur'an memorization contests. During Ramadan in June 2015, ISIS issued an statement titled *Ilān* (announcement) addressed to its jihadists, all Diwans (*dawāwīn*)⁵⁹⁴, and the sectors of Wīlāyat al-Baraka (Ḥasaka) in Syria⁵⁹⁵. The announcement read in part:

*To Islamic State solders and all Dawāwīn and Sectors in Wīlāyat al-Baraka [...]. The Dīwān of Da'wawa al-Masāḥd/Advocacy and Mosques announce to begin a contest for memorization of verses from Allāh's Book*⁵⁹⁶ [the Qur'an...].

.....
590 Specimen 13Y: Notice on buying sex slaves, Homs province, 28 Ša'bān 1436 AH /c. June 15, 2015. For original copy of this document see: Appendix Number (13).

591 'Awāḡil Press (March 30, 2017).

592 Ibid.

593 Ibid.

594 *Dawāwīn*: ISIS had fourteen Diwans in their state. They were places for protecting rights and were under the supervision of the Delegated Committee. They had offices in every *wilaya* that assumed the maintenance of public interests and protected the people's religion and security. (Ingram 2020: 237–238).

595 About the original copy of this announcement, see: Appendix number (13). It had published in several Internet websites. For example, see: Variyar (Jun 23, 2015). International Business Times.

596 About the original copy of this announcement, see: Appendix number (13).

The announcement stated that contestants would be tested from 21 Ramaḍān 1436 (July 8, 2015) to 27 Ramaḍān 1436 (July 14, 2015), and the distribution of prizes would take place on the first day of the Ramaḍān Feast⁵⁹⁷. According to the document, the first-, second-, and third-place winners would be offered a female captive, while the winners ranking fourth through tenth would receive cash prizes ranging from 100,000 to 50,000 Syrian Lira (SYP), approximately 530 to 265 USD, instead of sex slaves⁵⁹⁸.

The ISIS jihadist Muḥammad Rashīd Sahab Muṣliḥ described the systematic distribution of Yezidi women and girls as *Sabāyā*, assigning them among ISIS jihadists who had participated in the invasion of Sinjar. Some of these women and girls were given as gifts, while others were sold for relatively small sums, ranging from 100 to 300 USD⁵⁹⁹.

The allocation process involved drawing lots: the names of the Yezidi girls were written on pieces of paper and placed in a small container. In the Sinjar village of Rambusi, the jihadists gathered approximately five Yezidi girls and conducted a lottery to determine their distribution among themselves⁶⁰⁰. Muḥammad Rashīd Sahab Muṣliḥ was among those who participated in this process said:

A 14-year-old [Yezidi girl] *sabīyah* called “Ashwaq” became my allocation by lot. I took her in the same night. She prevented me from raping her; I beat her and raped her by force on the second day. On the third day, I took her to the judge in order to register her in my name⁶⁰¹.

Nadīma is a Yezidi woman from Koço who was captured by ISIS. She recounted her experiences of captivity in ISIS detention facilities and slave markets. According to her account, she was raped by the ISIS Wālī (governor) of Raqqa and subsequently sent as a “gift” to an ISIS Amīr (commander) in

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597 About the original copy of this announcement, see: Appendix number (13).

598 About the original copy of this announcement, see: Appendix number (13).

599 Interview with ISIS jihadist called Muḥammad Rašīd Sahab Muṣliḥ, al-Iraqia TV Channal.

600 Ibid.

601 Ibid.

Manbiğ (Manbij), a city in northeastern Syria near the Turkish border. The Wālī reportedly told the Amīr, “She is a gift. You are free to do as you wish with her⁶⁰².” The Amīr then confined her to an apartment and subjected her to repeated sexual abuse⁶⁰³.

A Human Rights report dated June 15, 2016, documented another case in which a Yezidi woman was purchased by an Algerian jihadist who was an ISIS commander in northern Syria. He later gave her as a gift to his nephew⁶⁰⁴.

Furthermore, when a jihadist owner of a Yezidi woman or girl died, she would be taken by the local Wālī and become the collective property of ISIS. The Wālī would then set a new price for her resale⁶⁰⁵.

A Yezidi woman from Koço, captured in August 2014, has shared her harrowing story of enslavement under the Islamic State (ISIS) and how she was repeatedly sold by Muslims. She was sold multiple times to different ISIS members across various locations in Iraq and Syria. On one occasion, she was sold by a Muslim named Muḥammad, who was her family’s *krīv*⁶⁰⁶, to an ISIS jihadist for 1,500 USD.⁶⁰⁷

Another unmarried Yezidi woman in her early twenties was held captive by ISIS for over a year, during which she was sold nine times.⁶⁰⁸ An 18-year-old Yezidi girl, also enslaved for more than a year, reported being sold eight times and raped hundreds of times.⁶⁰⁹ Yet another woman, held by ISIS jihadists in Iraq and Syria for 15 months, was sold five times.⁶¹⁰

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602 Otten 2017: 118.

603 Ibid., 119.

604 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 13.

605 Ibid., 13–14.

606 *Krīv* or *Krīvê-Hūnê* “Blood-Brotherhood” is a traditional relationship between two Yezidi families, or between a Yezidi family and a non-Yezidi family. This lifelong relationship is established through the rite of circumcision of a young Yezidi boy where the *Krīv*, either Yezidi or non-Yezidi, is chosen and becomes like a godfather to the circumcised boy. This establishes lifelong relationships between the two families. For details about this subject, see Nicolaus 2016: 325–341.

607 Otten 2017: 129–131.

608 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 14.

609 Ibid., 15.

610 Ibid., 14.

Ḥisnā, a 24-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik, was held by ISIS jihadists for about a year. Her experience mirrored that of many other Yezidi captives: she was repeatedly raped and sold across Syria. One of the most harrowing episodes occurred in al-Bāb, a city in Syria's Aleppo Governorate. A jihadist named Abū Sulaimān bought Ḥisnā from a Saudi jihadist in Raqqa. She remained with Abū Silēmān for about a month, during which he tied her hands and legs and repeatedly raped her, as she narrated.⁶¹¹

To prevent Yezidi captives from escaping, ISIS held them in various locations across Syria, including family homes, abandoned apartments, makeshift shelters near frontlines, and gas fields.⁶¹² Many women and girls were not provided with abayas (traditional Islamic robes covering the body and head), which all females over ten were required to wear in public in ISIS-controlled areas.⁶¹³ This made it easy to identify and capture any captive attempting to flee.⁶¹⁴

Yezidi women who attempted to escape from ISIS detention, slave markets, or their captors were often subjected to gang rape⁶¹⁵. Similarly, those who resisted being raped, were punished through gang rape⁶¹⁶, beatings, and having their hands bound⁶¹⁷.

Sometimes, the punishment for captive mothers who attempted to escape was the killing of their children. One Yezidi woman, held in northern Syria, reported that her jihadist captor killed her children after she unsuccessfully tried to escape⁶¹⁸. Likewise, starvation was another form of punishment for Yezidis who tried to escape or resisted rape⁶¹⁹. Moreover, ISIS jihadists killed many Yezidi men after recapturing them following escape attempts. Gawrē is

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611 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

612 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 14.

613 ISIS were forced women to wear black from head to toe. They must wear the length skirts and the thickness of veils when they went on the streets. (Moubayed 2015: 129, 132–133).

614 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 14.

615 Otten 2017: 123.

616 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 14.

617 Interview with Bušrā (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 02.04.2016).

618 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 14.

619 Ibid., 15.

a 64-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinūnē who survived. ISIS took her to Qasr Miḥrāb near Tel Afar⁶²⁰. She said:

[...] They [ISIS jihadists] killed all of men who tried to escape, and if she was a woman, they disgraced her. Therefore, we did not escape. When we were in Qasr Miḥrāb, it was very easy to escape, but from fear we did not⁶²¹.

Likewise, Nūrē, a 26-year-old Yezidi woman from Tell Ezer, survived captivity in Ḥayy al-ḥaḍrāʾ in Tel Afar. She recounted:

[...] After short time, the families began to escape. They [ISIS jihadists] gathered the men into a mosque and told them: “If you try to escape, we will wear you orange clothes and slaughter you, and take your wives for us⁶²².”

Moreover, Yezidi women and girls over the age of nine were subjected to systematic and brutal sexual violence. They were raped daily by their ISIS captors. During these assaults, the victims were frequently handcuffed behind their backs or had their hands and legs bound to the corners of beds⁶²³. In some cases, women were raped in the presence of their children⁶²⁴. Furthermore, ISIS jihadists celebrated each sexual assault as spiritually beneficial and even virtuous⁶²⁵. A rescued Yezidi woman reported that her captor showed her an ISIS-issued document stating that if ten different ISIS jihadists raped a captured Yezidi woman, she would be considered Muslim⁶²⁶.

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620 Interview with Gawrē (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.02.2016).

621 Ibid.

622 Interview with Nūrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

623 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 14.

624 Craw (October 11, 2017): New York Post.

625 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 3.

626 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 3.

‘Ammār Husayn, a 21-year-old ISIS jihadist, was captured by Kurdish Peshmerga forces in Kirkūk. During a face-to-face confrontation with Shireen, a 23-year-old Yezidi woman who had been held captive in Mosul for three years and routinely raped, ‘Ammār Husayn, who had kept three women as sex slaves, admitted to raping 250 women and girls across Sinjar, Sinune, Kasik, Baghdad, and Huayja⁶²⁷.

ISIS jihadists exploited Yezidi women and girls not only for sexual slavery but also as concubines and domestic servants, forcing them to clean and wash the clothes of their captors and their families⁶²⁸.

Şafwān, a 5-year-old Yezidi boy from Sinjar, was captured along with his mother and other family members on August 3, 2014. He remained in captivity for two years in the Mosul region and Syria. He explained his experience during the captivity period by saying:

[In Syria], at evening they put us in a locked room. And at early morning we woke up, and they threw food to us, and my mother went to the roof of the house in order to hang up their [washed ISIS jihadist’s] clothes. The skin on the hands of the wife of my brother was rubbed off due to too much washing⁶²⁹.

In addition, the jihadists forced captured Yezidi women and girls to work in the kitchens of their military headquarters and to care for their paralyzed individuals. ‘Intiṣār recounted her experience of enslavement in Qaşṭala village in Syria, stating that jihadists frequently came to the village to purchase Yezidi girls and women. Regarding her own experience of being sold, she said:

One day they [jihadists] came and read my name and asked me about my information and children. The next day they sent one of their friends. He said to me, “There is a paralyzed person that you will serve, and he

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627 Dooley (February 7, 2018: BBC Three). Mail Online: Video. Dooley (February 7, 2018): Video, twitter.

628 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 15.

629 Interview with Şafwān (January 11, 2019).

will do nothing with you.” I agreed and thought it would be better than marriage with others [jihadists]. But next day he came back again and told me that the man disagreed to take me and that my children would disturb him. My children were with me all that time because I had asked the man who had bought me to let my children stay with me⁶³⁰.

ʿIntiṣār further explained that in the village of Qaṣṭala, Syria, a jihadist named Abū Nūr purchased her to serve in the kitchen of the jihadists’ military headquarters, and said:

Later another one came and told me he would take me for his kitchen. [...] He brought me into a Mağārra (underground room) under the ground. There were also two other underground rooms. In each underground room there were about 50 jihadists. I served all those ISIS. I was making food, tea, washing dishes and their clothes. They told me those were my duties. [...] I stayed about two months⁶³¹.

Also, Ğalilā, a 30-year-old Yezidi survivor from Koço, was among the women captured by ISIS and taken to Syria. She explained that she and her uncle’s daughter were brought to a residence in Raqqa to serve the wives of foreign ISIS jihadists whose husbands had been killed in the war. She stated:

[...] They took both of us to a home. It was full of ISIS’s wives from different countries. They were about 300 women. I never did understand their languages⁶³².

They told us, “You will serve these women. You will cook food for them, and wash their toilets and bathrooms.” We responded okay; we will be here, but only what we want is that they do not marry us. [...] Four days we stayed by those women. Those women were the wives of foreign ISIS [Jihadists] who were killed in the war. The Islamic State was caring for

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630 Interview with Intiṣār (in Qādiyā Camp 03.07.2016).

631 Ibid.

632 Interview with Ğalilā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

*them and their children. They were laughing at us because of our dresses. And they were always waking us up for prayers*⁶³³[...].

Moreover, the Yezidi abductees often suffered torture at the hands of the jealous wives of their jihadist captors. Due to the mistreatment of Ğalilā and her uncle's daughter by these women, an ISIS Amīr relocated them to another residence at Ğalilā's request. They continued to serve ISIS jihadists there. She stated:

*The Amīr sent one to us. He was an ISIS too. He took us to his home. We served the Islamic State men there. We stayed there for 15 days*⁶³⁴[...].

Gawrē, a 39-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik, stated that one of her jihadist captors, named Abū Yāsir, took her to his home in a village located between Ṭabbqā and Tadmur, about half an hour from Tadmur. She said:

[...] *Nine days I was with his wife [Yāsmīn]. I was taken to serve his wife. I was serving his wife [...]. I was doing massages for her. I was washing their clothes. I washed dishes [...]. I was doing all her work. And she was beating me too*⁶³⁵[...].

Na'īmā, a 35-year-old Yezidi woman from Şölağ, recounted that in Syria, a jihadist from Saudi Arabia purchased her with the purpose of serving his wife. The jihadist informed her that his wife was pregnant and that he had brought Na'īmā to assist in attending to her needs⁶³⁶.

Another observed practice was that certain ISIS jihadists changed the real names of Yezidi captive children to Islamic names in an effort to conceal their original identity or to ensure that they would eventually forget it. According to the testimony of Suhām, a 26-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik, her

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633 Ibid.

634 Interview with Ğalilā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

635 Interview with Gawrē (in Şāriyā Camp in September 2016).

636 Interview with Na'īmā (in Şāriyā Camp in September 2016).

jihadist captors assigned Islamic names to her children in place of their real ones.

They [ISIS jihadists] changed the names of my children. They made the name of my oldest son Umer, the name of my middle son they made Yusuf, and the youngest, Abū Bakir. The last one has born in the school in Tel Afar⁶³⁷ [...].

In this regard, Nūrē, a 26-year-old Yezidi woman from Tell Ezer, reported that ISIS jihadists assigned an Islamic name to her newborn child and changed the names of her other children, replacing them with Islamic ones. She said:

The last one was an Egyptian man called Abū 'Inis [...]. I was pregnant when they captured me. I gave a birth to a son in prison. They made his name Moḥammad. [...] the one who bought me changed the names of my children to Ḥadīḡā, Miryam, 'Ā'īšā, Fāṭimā, Abū Bakir, Abū Moḥammad, Abū ṣalāḡ al-Dīn. [After we were released] I changed the name of Moḥammad to Šuḡā', because Abū Šuḡā' has saved us⁶³⁸.

Likewise, Hayām, an 18-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar, was five months pregnant when ISIS jihadists captured her⁶³⁹. She said:

I gave a birth to son in the hospital of Tel Afar. When I had pain, one of them [ISIS jihadists] whowas called Abū Mālik, came and told me: "I will take you to the hospital." [...] he took me to hospital, named my son Moḥammad⁶⁴⁰.

.....

637 Interview with Suhām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.2.2016).

638 Interview with Nūrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

639 Interview with Hiyām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.02.2016).

640 Interview with Hiyām (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.02.2016).

4.7 The Role of ISIS Šarī‘a Courts (al-Maḥākīm al-Šarīyah) in the Enslavement of Yezidis

ISIS established official courts known as the Courts of Šarī‘a (*al-Maḥākīm al-Šarīyah*) within its governorates (“Wīlāyah,” plural “Wīlāyāt”). These courts functioned not only as instruments to educate the public about the rules of the ISIS system⁶⁴¹ but also as official platforms for the buying and selling of Yezidi women, girls, and children.

These courts relied on ancient Islamic religious sources to formulate their rules and laws, which provided justification for reviving the practice of the slave trade⁶⁴². The primary justification cited was an Islamic law permitting Muslim jihadists to enslave people who had been defeated in a legitimate jihad and taken as spoils of war⁶⁴³. According to the provisions of these courts, the spoils of war included only those captured individuals who could be classified as *Mušrikūn* (pagans), which did not include the “People of the Book⁶⁴⁴.” ISIS classified Yezidis as part of the *Mušrikūn* group due to their alleged polytheistic beliefs, and accordingly, their women and girls could be enslaved. This stood in contrast to women and girls from Jewish and Christian communities, who were considered “People of the Book⁶⁴⁵” and could be subjected to taxes or other legal punishments, but not enslavement⁶⁴⁶.

Further, the courts drafted, notarized, and issued sales contracts for slaves⁶⁴⁷, as well as documents related to bequeathing, disposing of, and freeing them. They also imposed restrictions on the transfer of slaves within ISIS to ensure that slaves remained spoils of war⁶⁴⁸ and were not sold outside the ISIS group.

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641 Revki (23, July 2016): 25.

642 Sverdlov (Spring 2017): 338.

643 Ibid., 338.

644 Ibid., 338.

645 Ibid., 338. Gerges 2017: 31–32. Ghandour 2019: 35.

646 Sverdlov (Spring 2017): 339. Gerges 2017: 31–32. Ghandour 2019: 35.

647 Gerges 2017: 31. Murad mit Krajeski 2017: 183.

648 Sverdlov (Spring 2017): 339. Also see original copy of the document in Appendix.

Under this law, ISIS jihadists could not transfer slaves to non-ISIS individuals, nor were brothers permitted to transfer slaves between themselves⁶⁴⁹.

The courts further established that only those who personally conquered an individual could claim ownership of that person as a slave. Consequently, non-ISIS jihadists who did not participate in the fighting against the Yezidis were prohibited from owning Yezidi slaves⁶⁵⁰.

Nonetheless, some female captives were sold to local Sunni populations and to civilians from Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, Tunisia, and other countries⁶⁵¹. Eyewitnesses reported that certain residents of Mosul and Tell Afar, though not ISIS members, maintained favorable relations with ISIS and were able to obtain Yezidi women or girls and register their marriages in the local Sharī'a court⁶⁵². One Mosul resident informed Amnesty International that he was aware of at least two such cases, he reported:

They are local business men, not fighters. I don't know if they bought the girls or what the arrangements are to get the girls but they registered their marriage in the local Shari'a court⁶⁵³ [...].

Also, a resident of Tell Afar, who supported ISIS told Amnesty International that, he personally knew some of the local Muslim men who have married those Yezidi girls⁶⁵⁴.

Additionally, according to the laws issued by ISIS courts, slaves were not freed if their owner died. In such cases, slaves reverted to the common ownership of ISIS and could once again be placed on the market⁶⁵⁵.

Also, the Courts of Šara' drafted laws concerning the permissibility of sex with slaves. According to these laws, masters were not allowed to have sexual

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649 Sverdlov (Spring 2017): 339.

650 Ibid., 339.

651 Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 199.

652 Amnesty International Ltd (2014): 9.

653 Ibid., 9.

654 Ibid., 9.

655 Sverdlov (Spring 2017): 339.

relations with a pregnant slave, nor with both a mother and her child. They were, however, permitted to have sex with children who had reached puberty⁶⁵⁶ and were over eight years old. Likewise, fathers and sons were not allowed to share slaves⁶⁵⁷.

Each Wilāya maintained its own Šarī'a Court of, which included an office responsible for the forced marriage of Yezidi women and girls. For instance, a document entitled "Document of Ownership – *Huğat mulkīyah*", issued by the Office of Marriage Contracts at the Šarī'a Court of of Wilāyat Nineveh (Mosul) on August 16, 2016, records that Abū Zubayr purchased a 20-year-old Yezidi *sabīyah* named Nağma from Abū Mun'im for the sum of 1,500 USD⁶⁵⁸.

In addition to the Šarī'a Courts of, ISIS maintained a "Research and Fatwā Department," which issued guidance on slavery⁶⁵⁹. The group published documents specifying proposed prices for slaves and instructions for buyers and sellers⁶⁶⁰. According to a pamphlet from this department, sexual intercourse with non-Muslim slaves, including minors, was permitted, and jihadists were allowed to beat and trade them⁶⁶¹. The pamphlet also endorsed the capture of non-Muslim women, a practice it claimed was undisputed among Islamic scholars⁶⁶². It further stated that female captives could be bought, sold, or given as gifts, as they were considered property⁶⁶³. Additionally, it suggested that sexual activity with prepubescent female slaves was permissible if deemed "fit for intercourse⁶⁶⁴" allowing the owner to exploit them through oral and anal acts.⁶⁶⁵

.....

656 Ibid., 339.

657 Reuters (December 29, 2015).

658 See original copy of the document in Appendix number (11).

659 News.com.au (December 30, 2015).

660 Freamon2019: 3.

661 News.com.au (December 30, 2015).

662 Ibid.

663 Ibid.

664 Ibid.

665 Nance 2016: 248.

5 Genocidal Measures to Annihilate Yezidi Religion and Community

As we have indicated elsewhere in this study, one of the fundamental goals of those genocidal campaigns against Yezidis was to erase their religious identity. Therefore, it is not surprising that the invaders targeted the material and non-tunable heritage religion and culture of Yezidi, viewing it as one of the main pillars of their distinct religious identity. Without destroying it, they could not achieve their goal, which was to wipe the Yezidis out of existence.

5.1 Destruction of Yezidi Religious Heritage

Although the Yezidis possess numerous holy sites across their inhabited regions⁶⁶⁶, both within and beyond the borders of Iraq, the most significant among them is the Lalish Temple⁶⁶⁷. Situated approximately 65 kilometers northeast of the city of Mosul, in the Şayhān district of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Lalish constitutes the spiritual center of the Yezidi faith. It encompasses several shrines and tombs of highly venerated historical figures who hold cosmological significance within Yezidi religious thought, as well as two sacred springs, Zimzim and Kaniya Spî (White Spring⁶⁶⁸), along with other physical features imbued with cosmological meaning.

Yezidi shrines, particularly those characterized by their fluted spires, stand as iconic symbols both for and of the Yezidi people, serving as vital expressions

.....
666 For more details about the Yezidi shrines, mausoleums, and other their religious holy Sites and their locations, see: Açıkyıldız (2014 [2010]): 115–195.

667 For a further detailed study of Lalish Temple, its name, its historical events, and its sacredness in Yezidi mythology, see Khalil 2009: 18–25.

668 Shammo 2018: 75.

of their collective identity⁶⁶⁹. While various local terms⁶⁷⁰ are used to refer to these structures, the most commonly employed is *mazār*⁶⁷¹. These shrines are dispersed throughout the Yezidi homeland and are regarded by adherents as inherently sacred⁶⁷². In contemporary contexts, they function not only as emblems of Yezidi identity but also as sites of profound spiritual significance within the community's religious framework⁶⁷³. Moreover, these shrines play a crucial role in reinforcing the Yezidis' social cohesion and emotional connection to their home villages and communities, whether they continue to reside there or live in diaspora⁶⁷⁴.

In addition to their sacred sites, the Yezidis also possess a range of other religious symbols and ritual objects that hold profound spiritual significance. Among the most revered of these are the Sanjaqs, standards surmounted by a copper or brass figure of a peacock. According to Yezidi tradition, there were originally seven Sanjaqs; however, as a consequence of repeated persecutions (Fermans – genocidal campaigns) throughout history, most of them were lost⁶⁷⁵. At present, only one Sanjaq survives, preserved in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq⁶⁷⁶.

The eradication of Yezidi existence and faith has been a central objective of ISIS and of earlier Islamic campaigns against the community. Consequently,

.....
669 Ibid., 41.

670 For example, the Yezidi inhabitants of collective town of Šāriyā in Iraqi-Kurdistan, usually use the term *Hās* or *Šahs* for their local religious spaces and shrines.

671 Shammo 2018: 41.

672 Ibid., 41–42.

673 Ibid., 75.

674 For more details about this subject and the importance of these religious sights and symbols for Yezidis, see Ibid., 41–43.

675 According to Empson's narrative, a peacock resembling a *Sanjaq* was stolen by Ottoman leader Reshîd Pâshâ in 1837. It was the fourth one to be taken. This *Sanjaq* was brought into an antique shop in Baghdad and kept by a Muslim man named Ali, who sold it a few years later to a rich Christian called Futhu-'llah Abbud. Empson points out that there are two others which were outside of the Yezidi shrine (it seems that he meant Lalish Temple). One was in the possession of Mr. J. W. Dowden of Edinburgh, and the other was in the State Museum of Jeypore (Jaipur) in India. Empson 1928: 9.

676 Shammo 2018: 43–44.

the destruction of Yezidi religious symbols and sacred sites has constituted a recurrent strategy in these assaults, with the Lalish Temple often serving as a primary target. Historical sources record that in 1254, Badr al-Dīn Lu'lu', the ruler of Mosul, led a substantial force of mainstream Muslims in an attack against the Yezidis. During this campaign, his troops reportedly exhumed and burned the remains of Šayḥ 'Adī at the Lalish Temple⁶⁷⁷, Šayḥ 'Adī being the most venerated historical and spiritual figure within the Yezidi religious tradition.

The Yezidis rebuilt Šayḥ'Adī's tomb, only to have it destroyed again approximately 150 years later. According to al-Maqrīzī, Kurdish troops from Botān, Šarānš⁶⁷⁸, and Ḥuṣn-Kefā, under the leadership of 'Izz al-Dīn al-Buḥtī, the prince of the Kurdish Botān Principality, and Tukul al-Kūrdī, the prince of Šarānš, occupied the Lalish Temple in 817/1414⁶⁷⁹. They destroyed the dome that had been constructed over Šayḥ 'Adī's mausoleum and once again exhumed and desecrated his grave⁶⁸⁰. This campaign against the Yezidis was legitimized by a fatwā issued by the Šāfi'ī scholar Ġalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥalawānī⁶⁸¹. The temple was subsequently rebuilt by the Yezidis shortly after the attack⁶⁸².

Later, Farīq 'Umar Wahbī Pasha⁶⁸³ occupied most of the Yezidis' sacred sites, including the Lalish Temple, which he converted into an Islamic religious school for twelve years. He also plundered the temple, transferring many of its sacred objects to Mosul⁶⁸⁴. Among these items were five bronze Sanjaqs; a

677 See, al-Ġassānī 1975: 2/601. Ibn al-Fūṭī (1997): 315. Guest 1987: 21. Patton 1991: 65. Açıkyıldız (2014 [2010]): 144.

678 It was a fortress in the northeast area of the Zakho district Iraq.

679 al-Maqrīzī 1997: 6/370.

680 Ibid., 6/370.

681 Ibid., 6/370. al-'Azzāwī 1935: 113.

682 al-Maqrīzī 1997: 6/370. al-Maqrīzī 1997: 113. Kreyenbroek 2009: 36.

683 Farīq 'Umar Wahbī Paşa was an Ottoman Lieutenant-General. On May 9, 1892, Sultan 'Abdulhamīd II appointed him as the commander of a Reform Force, or Fırka-i İslahiye, (also Fırka-i Seyyare-i Nizamiye or Kuvve-i İslahiye), and he was given the rank Nişan-ı Osmanî on June 13, 1892. In the same year, he was sent to Mosul to ensure that the Yezidis corrected their religious beliefs (tashih-i itikad), to convert them to Islam. For detail about this topic, see, Gölbaşı 2008: 2, 17, 22–23, 90–98. Shammo 2018: 84–86.

684 Gölbaşı 2008: 101.

bronze image in the shape of a ram; the bronze rod of Moses; a cast bronze snake; the *Shahrur* (a cast bronze nightingale); a rosary of Sayyid Aḥmad al-Badawī; a comb belonging to al-Junayd of Baghdad; a wooden staff of Ṣayḥ ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Gaylānī; and a bronze cup dedicated to the Prophet Sulaymān⁶⁸⁵. In his account, Nūrī Pasha notes that these sacred materials were later transported from Mosul to the army headquarters in Baghdad, though he was unaware of their exact location⁶⁸⁶. The items remained hidden in Baghdad and were not returned to the Yezidis until 1914, when Süleyman Nazif Pasha served as the governor of Mosul⁶⁸⁷. Farīq ‘Umar Wahbī Pasha also targeted other Yezidi areas, including the villages of Ba‘šīqa and Baḥzānē, where numerous shrines were demolished by Ottoman soldiers⁶⁸⁸.

Additionally, the traveler Hubbard, who visited the region in 1914, confirmed that only a few years prior, the Wālī of Baghdad had led a campaign against the Yezidis during which he confiscated a *Sanjaq* and sent it to Constantinople⁶⁸⁹. Hubbard further noted that the object was eventually believed to have been returned to the Yezidis⁶⁹⁰.

Until 1892, it is understood that no *sanjaq* had ever been stolen or lost. However, a rumor circulated at that time that the principal *sanjaq* had been removed from Lalish by a Kurd and taken to Mosul, where it was later discovered and reportedly returned to Lalish. Another account from the same period suggests that when the Ottoman Turks attempted to convert the Yezidis living near Lalish to Islam, they seized five *sanjaqs*. The Yezidis, however, have consistently maintained that these were replicas rather than genuine sacred standards⁶⁹¹.

.....
685 Ibid., 101. Guest 1987: 131.

686 Gölbaşı 2008: 101–102. Guest 1987: 131.

687 Gölbaşı 2008: 102.

688 About the name of those demolished Yezidi shrine in the villages of Ba‘šīqa and Baḥzānē, see Parry 1895: 258–259. Gölbaşı 2008: 101–102.

689 Hubbard 1917: 220.

690 Ibid., 220.

691 Empson 1928: 141.

The Iraqi author Şadiq al-Damlūjī reports that ‘Āşim Beg, the son of Fariq ‘Umar Wahbī Pasha, who had led the Ottoman army during his father’s campaign against the Yezidis, plundered the palace of the Yezidi prince in Ba’adrê, the political center of the Yezidi community. ‘Āşim Beg’s forces also occupied several Yezidi holy sites, destroying the spires of shrines at the Lalish Temple and looting many sacred objects⁶⁹².

Similarly, John S. Guest records that ‘Āşim Beg’s troops attacked the Yezidi towns of Ba’şīqa and Baḥzānē, near Mosul, where they likewise destroyed numerous Yezidi shrines and sacred places⁶⁹³.

In more recent times, the destruction of Yezidi shrines by Saddam Hussein’s Ba’athist regime, and later by ISIS, has diminished the perceived sanctity of these sites, particularly among the younger generation⁶⁹⁴. Although many of the shrines have been reconstructed, they are often viewed as having lost some degree of their spiritual significance.

The contemporary destruction of Yezidi shrines at the hands of Saddam Husayin’s Ba’athist regime, and later by ISIS, has decreased their sacredness, especially in the eyes of the younger generation.⁶⁹⁵ Although many of the shrines have been rebuilt, they have lost some measure of their sanctity.

In its campaign to sever the Yezidis’ religious and historical connections, the Ba’athist regime demolished numerous Yezidi shrines and mausoleums⁶⁹⁶. This policy was intended to facilitate the narrative that the Yezidis had historically been Muslims and ethnically Arab⁶⁹⁷. It is noteworthy that, although the Ba’athist actions against the Yezidis and their religious symbols mirrored earlier Islamic campaigns in intent and method, they did not involve looting, the enslavement of Yezidi women, or mass killings.

.....
692 Farḥān and Şammo 2009: 122. Gölbaşı (January 2013): 6.

693 Guest 1987: 132. Farḥān and Şammo 2009: 122.

694 Shammo 2018: 67.

695 Ibid., 67.

696 Ibid., 170.

697 Ibid., 170.

5.2 Erasing Yezidi Sacred Heritage under ISIS

At the outset of the ISIS invasion of Yezidi areas in the Sinjar region and Yezidi villages in the north and northeast of Mosul in August 2014, ISIS jihadists systematically targeted Yezidi religious temples, shrines, and sites of worship. The Islamic State (ISIS) was fully aware of the significance of these cultural and spiritual sites, as part of its deliberate strategy to destroy the Yezidi community by eradicating both its physical and spiritual heritage⁶⁹⁸.

According to statistics published on September 13, 2020, by the Office of the Rescued Yezidi Abductees in Duhok, ISIS jihadists destroyed a total of 68 Yezidi shrines and religious sites⁶⁹⁹.

In the Sinjar region, ISIS destroyed notable shrines, including those of Šayḥ Mand in Ğadāla village, Mahmad-Rašan in Sōlağ, Šayḥ Ḥasan in Gābārā, and Malik Fahr al-Dīn in Skēnīyē⁷⁰⁰.

Human rights reports indicate that shortly after the occupation, ISIS militants destroyed the Yezidi shrine known as “Qubā Šayḥ Ḥasan” in the village of Gābārā, west of Sinjar town, using two rocket-propelled grenades in August 2014⁷⁰¹.

In the broader Sinjar region, ISIS destroyed numerous shrines on both the southern and northern sides of Sinjar Mountain⁷⁰². On the southern side of Sinjar Mountain, the destroyed sites included Āmādīnē Šamsā, Pīr Mahmad-Rašan, Šayḥ Ḥasan, Šayḥ Mand Pasha, Ismā’īl Bēg (commonly referred to as “Kičik Lāliš” or “The Little Lalish⁷⁰³”), Šayḥ ‘Abdul-‘Azīz, Šayḥ ‘Abd al-Qādir

698 For more details about the destroying of shrines and their cultural heritage, see: Rashid (August 2019).

699 The statistics of Office of the Rescued Yezidi Abductees in Duhok published on September 13, 2020.

700 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 19.

701 Human Rights (May 1–October 30, 2015): 16.

702 Examples of photographs of these shrines are provided in the “Photographs” section at the end of this study.

703 It is a common name used by some Sinjaris.

Gaylānī (also known as Raḥmānī), and Malik Faḥr-al-Dīn (Šayḥ Faḥr-al-Dīn)⁷⁰⁴.

On the northern side of Sinjar Mountain, ISIS destroyed the Yezidi shrines of Šayḥ Rūmī and Šayḥ Maḥamā, located near Bārā village⁷⁰⁵.

These attacks reflect a deliberate effort by ISIS to erase the religious and cultural heritage of the Yezidi community in the Sinjar region.

ISIS carried out similar actions in other Yezidi areas under its control. In the town of Bābīrē, ISIS also targeted four Yezidi shrines and religious sites: Šaḥssē-Bātē⁷⁰⁶, Nīšānā Bilāl Ḥabašī, and Ğmāyē in Bābīrē village, Šayḥ Muḥfī in Ğagānā village, and Malik-Šayḥ-Sin (Šayḥ Ḥasan) in Mušrifē village.

Similarly, in Baḥzānē and Ba'šīqa, ISIS carried out systematic destruction of Yezidi religious shrines, domes, and symbols⁷⁰⁷. In Baḥzānē, the demolished domes included Šayḥ-u Bakir, al-Ḥafīr, Šayḥ 'Abdl-Qādir, Šayḥ Mand, Šē-Šm (Šayḥ Šams), Šayḥ Nāsr-Dīn, Šayḥ Suḡādīn, Šayḥ Ḥasan, Šayḥ Mahmad al-Bāṭnī, Sit-Ḥaḡīḡī, Sit-Nafisā, Mahmad-Rašān, Pīr Būb al-Baḥzēnī, al-Sī'ad, Šayḥ Bābk, Ḥasan Frdos, 'Abdē Raš, mazār Šayḥ 'Abdl-'Azīz, Šayḥ Ğafūrē Rēyā, and mazār Ğābat al-Sāsī⁷⁰⁸.

In addition, ISIS destroyed numerous Nīšānās (religious symbols) in Baḥzānē, including Nīšānā Abū Rīša, Bayt al-Sit-Ḥabībī, Bayt Barē-Šbākē, Nīšān Bāb al-Kahf, Nīšān Kanī-Zrkī, Nīšān Pīr Bnūk, Nīšānā Stiya Bilḡān, Nīšānān Pīrē Ğarwān, Nīšānā 'Abdē Raš, Nīšānā Danūn Msrī, Nīšānā Ḥḡrat Karmk, Nīšānā 'Abdl-'Azīz, Nīšānā Stiya 'ēs, Nīšānā Šayḥ 'Abrūs, Nīšānā Qubāt al-'Imāra, Nīšānā Qubat Abū Rīša, Qubat Gāvānī Zarzī, Nīšānān Ēzī, Nīšānān Taslīm al-Ṭa'ūs, and Nīšānān Mūsa Šor⁷⁰⁹.

In Ba'šīqa, ISIS demolished the Yezidi shrines of Nāsr-Dīn, Malik Mīrān, al-Šītk, al-Šahīd, Šayḥ Mahmad, Šaraf-al-Dīn, and Yūsuf al-Qarīnī. The Nīšānās

704 Leutheuser, Robert (August 28, 2020): personal communication/email.

705 Ibid.

706 Examples of photographs of these shrines are provided in the "Photographs" section at the end of this study.

707 Examples of photographs of these shrines are provided in the "Photographs" section at the end of this study.

708 Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch (July 20, 2020): (communication WhatsApp).

709 Ibid.

destroyed in Baʿšīqa included Kursī Suġādīn, Kuġkī Koġak Ğm, Nīšānā Sit-Nafīsā, Nīšānā ʿAbdē Raš, Nīšānā Faqīr Mūs, and Nīšānā Mahmad-Rašān⁷¹⁰.

These attacks demonstrate a deliberate effort by ISIS to erase the physical and spiritual heritage of the Yezidi community, targeting both sacred structures and symbols of religious identity. The Yezidis themselves are fully aware that the ISIS invasion was not the first assault aimed at eradicating their religion and culture. Throughout history, they have continually struggled yet always managed to survive and preserve their religious identity. The same resilience was evident following the ISIS invasion.

After the liberation of Yezidi areas from ISIS, the community quickly began rebuilding their destroyed worship sites and shrines⁷¹¹. Yezidis from local families, internally displaced persons, and those in the diaspora contributed funds for reconstruction. Volunteers, both young and old, worked tirelessly to remove debris and remained resolutely committed to restoring their sacred sites⁷¹².

Following the liberation of the Yezidi town of Bābirē, residents launched a campaign to rebuild the Šaḥsē-Bātē shrine, which was completed in two years. The shrine was reopened for worship with a large celebration on February 15, 2017⁷¹³. More than 150 million Iraqi Dinar (approximately 125,000 USD) was spent on the reconstruction, entirely funded by the Yezidi community⁷¹⁴, without any contributions from government institutions⁷¹⁵. All workers involved in rebuilding the shrine were volunteers⁷¹⁶. At the rededication ceremony, a speaker remarked:

.....
710 Ibid.

711 al-Shahid (August 11, 2017). The Baghdad Post (June 10, 2017).

712 al-Shahid (August 11, 2017).

713 Rudaw (February 15, 2017).

714 Interview with Bibo Krēt (October 5, 2018).

715 Ibid.

716 Ibid.

*By rebuilding the shrine, we want to send a message that we survived and won't abandon our faith*⁷¹⁷

It is worth noting that, although the location remained the same, the design of the rebuilt Şahsê-Bâtê shrine differs significantly from the original⁷¹⁸. In Ba'şîqa and Baḥzânê, Yezidis collected 220 million Iraqi Dinar (approximately 185,000 USD) for the reconstruction of a total of 23 holy sites and shrines destroyed by ISIS⁷¹⁹. The shrine of Şayḥ Ḥasan in the Sinjar region has also been reopened in a ceremony attended by spiritual leaders and lawmakers⁷²⁰.

Rebuilding the destroyed shrines and religious sites is one challenge, but reconstructing a nearly shattered community is far more difficult. The Yezidis have restored their places of worship while continuing the arduous work of rebuilding and strengthening their community.

5.3 Historical and Contemporary Appropriation of Yezidi Property by Muslims

The appropriation of Yezidi property by Muslims was a persistent feature of both historical and contemporary campaigns against the Yezidis. During the Ottoman era, Muslim troops and jihadists routinely looted Yezidi possessions during military operations. Such property, when captured in the course of campaigns, was regarded as spoils of war and frequently documented by Ottoman chroniclers. The following examples illustrate historical instances of property theft perpetrated against the Yezidis.

Evliyâ Çelebî, who accompanied the 1640 campaign, reports that Melek Aḥmad Pasha sacked Yezidi villages and seized numerous valuables, including money, gold, copper vessels, muskets, bales of silk, several hundred bales of

.....
717 Rudaw (February 15, 2017).

718 The photograph of this shrine is provided in the “Photographs” section at the end of this study.

719 al-Shahid (August 11, 2017).

720 The Baghdad Post (June 10, 2017).

gunpowder, mules, and a wide array of precious textiles⁷²¹. Regarding these acts of looting, Evliyā Çelebî provides detailed accounts of the Ottoman troops' seizures of Yezidi property. He writes:

[...] All the multitudes of troops from the provinces of Van and Diyarbekir and Mardin who came to the aid of Melek Ahmed Pasha, all the Kurdistan soldiery who participated in plundering money, food, drink, copper vessels, household furnishings and the like which emerged over ten days from the Saçlı Dağı [Sinjar Mountain] caves, could not carry away more than a drop in the sea and a mote in the sun⁷²².

The plundering of Yezidi property was legitimized; Evliyā Çelebî notes that Melek Aḥmad Pasha's seizure of Yezidi property was regarded as spoils of war⁷²³, he stated:

To conclude: Malik Aḥmad Pasha got as royal ti the of the booty 1,060 purses of silver, 11 purses of gold, 3,000 muskets, 300 bales of silk, several hundred bales of gunpowder, 300 mules [...], and countless precious cloth items⁷²⁴.

Although Evliyā Çelebî often exaggerated the number of Yezidi victims and dramatized events, his accounts nonetheless attest to the substantial losses the Yezidis suffered at the hands of the Ottomans. In 1655, Muştafâ Pasha Fîrârî, the mayor of Diyarbekir, led a military campaign against the Yezidis in Sinjar⁷²⁵, during which he reportedly seized all Yezidi property as spoils of war⁷²⁶.

In 1715, Ḥasan Pasha, the Ottoman mayor of Baghdad, and his troops looted Yezidi villages in Sinjar. According to the 18th-century Iraqi author

.....
721 Evliyā Çelebî 2001: 4/51. Dankoff 1991: 173.

722 Ibid., 4/49. 173.

723 Ibid., 4/51. 173.

724 Ibid., 4/51. 173.

725 Evliyā Çelebî 2001: 4/48. Farḥân and Şammo 2009: 42.

726 Evliyā Çelebî 2001: 4/48.

Yāsīn al-‘Umarī, the Ottoman forces captured significant booty, including livestock⁷²⁷. Al-‘Umarī also states that Ottoman troops killed about 45 Yezidi men and looted 15 villages of the Šayḥān in 1799⁷²⁸. Likewise, the Ottoman troops plundered the villages of the Yezidi Dunādiya (Dunā) clan in the region in 1801, as al-‘Umarī mentions⁷²⁹.

This violence persisted into the early 19th century. Rasūl al-Karkūkī records that in 1809, Ottoman forces attacked Sinjar, looting Yezidi villages and their livestock⁷³⁰. Eyewitness accounts from the late 19th century confirm that this pattern of plunder continued. He stated, in 1828, the wālī of Mosul, Muḥammad Amīn Pāšā Ğalīlī, murdered and robbed the inhabitants of Šayḥān⁷³¹.

The British traveler E. A. Wallis Budge observed Ottoman soldiers under Ayūb Beg looting Yezidi houses in Sinjar between 1890 and 1893⁷³². Budge wrote:

*... they [Ayūb Beg’s soldiers] went to the houses ... and tore the clothes off the old women to see if they had money tied up in the corners, and then drove them out naked into the streets.*⁷³³ [...].

Ottoman attacks against the Yezidis continued until the fall of the Ottoman Empire, with the last major campaign taking place in 1917–1918 during World War I. This operation in the Sinjar region was led by Ibrāhīm Pāsha. The pattern remained consistent: many Yezidis sought refuge in the mountains while their villages were looted and destroyed⁷³⁴.

.....
727 al-‘Azzāwī 1935: 117–118. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 45.

728 al-Mawṣilī 1968: 195.

729 Ibid., 202.

730 al-Karkūkī (No date): 245.

731 Budge 1920: 229.

732 Budge 1920: 229.

733 Ibid., 216–17.

734 al-Mawlā 2000: 51–55.

These events represent documented examples of the systematic plundering of Yezidi villages by Muslim forces over more than six centuries. Similar patterns of violence have persisted into the twenty-first century with ISIS. The acts of looting carried out by ISIS jihadists closely resemble, if not mirror, those perpetrated by historical Muslim forces, both in method and purpose; the primary difference lies in the availability of more comprehensive contemporary documentation.

Beginning in August 2014, ISIS jihadists systematically looted Yezidi villages in Sinjar, Baʿšīqa, Baḥzānē, Bābīrē (the collective town of Bābīrē), and other Yezidi settlements in Ninawa province that fell under ISIS occupation.

Following the ISIS invasion of the Sinjar region on August 3, 2014, Yezidi villages were targeted, and houses were marked with symbols to distinguish them from those of Arab villagers⁷³⁵. ISIS jihadists subsequently looted these homes, destroying some entirely⁷³⁶ and partially damaging others⁷³⁷. Witnesses and ISIS documents indicate that all personal property, including cars, money, gold, and mobile phones, was confiscated during the capture of Yezidis by ISIS jihadists.

An official ISIS document dated April 15, 2015, issued by the *Dīwān al-Zukāt wa-al-Ṣadaqāt / Maktab al-ġānīb al-aysar fī wilāyat Naynawā* (Diwan of Zakat and Charity / Office of the Left Side of Mosul), details the appropriation of Yezidi assets. It reports the confiscation of 83,668,750 Iraqi dinars and 200 US dollars from a Yezidi individual, emphasizing that these funds were to be deposited exclusively in the Muslim treasury⁷³⁸.

Ġānē is a Yezidi woman from Sinjar City. She was captured along with other members of her family by ISIS jihadists on August 3, 2014. She described the

.....
735 Human Rights Council, Thirty-second session Agenda item 4 (15 June 2016): 19. Isakhanand Shahab2020: 12.

736 A report of Human Rights and (UNAMI) confirms that in early October 2014, ISIS destroyed around 20 Yezidi houses in Skēnīyah village located in south of Mount Sinjar, including part of the town's cemeteries. It also states that, ISIS demolished houses in Koço village in December 2014. Human Rights and (UNAMI) (December 15, 2014): 16. Also, see, Isakhanand Shahab2020: 12.

737 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 19.

738 About the content of this document, see: Appendix number (22).

plundering of their property by ISIS, saying that when the jihadists caught them, they first asked them to give their money and gold. She said:

It was morning between 9 to 10 o'clock. We ran towards my son's home. The brother of my husband came with his car and told us to get into the car. [...] We drove for very short time. They [ISIS jihadist] stood in front of us in the street. [...] They stopped us, and opened all four doors of our car and told us to get out, so we did. Then they separated males from females. Then they put a "werwere" [pistol] to the head of my husband. They sat us [women and children] beside a wall and asked us to give them our money and gold. I covered the ears of my daughter who was in my lap. I was afraid that they would pull hard on her earrings which would tear her ears. They took all of our money and gold⁷³⁹.

Similarly, Ḥisnā is a Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik who escaped after being held by ISIS for one year. She said that when the ISIS jihadists captured them in Sinjar territory, they first took the captives' jewelry, money, and mobile phones⁷⁴⁰. She continued her account, describing how the jihadists stole their remaining possessions. After they were taken to Mosul, the jihadists finally took her young daughter's earrings. She said:

For one month, we were in a hall in Mosul. They came regularly to check on us. The ear of my daughter was pierced and they took her small earring⁷⁴¹ [...].

Gawrē, another Yezidi woman captured from Gir Zerik, said that after she was captured, the ISIS jihadists⁷⁴²:

.....
739 Interview with Ğānē (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 02.01.2016).

740 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

741 Ibid.

742 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

*...they took everything that we had such as money, gold, and mobiles. We had two cars; they took them*⁷⁴³ [...].

Other Yezidi women who were captured reported similar experiences: their jewelry and gold were immediately seized by the jihadists upon capture⁷⁴⁴.

Şafwāna, an 8-year-old Yezidi girl from Sinjar city, was taken by ISIS jihadists on August 3, 2014, and remained in captivity for two years in the Mosul region and Syria. She recalled:

*When, ISIS captured us, they took the gold earrings from my small sister*⁷⁴⁵.

Nūrē, a Yezidi woman from Tell Ezer, described how ISIS jihadists transported her and other captives using both ISIS-owned vehicles and cars they had stolen from Yezidis⁷⁴⁶. In another account, a woman explained that ISIS fighters looted the remaining jewelry and belongings that Yezidis had hidden in Mosul. She said:

*ISIS [jihadists in Mosul] came again and searched for our remaining jewelry. When they found toberik*⁷⁴⁷, *they threw them away. My cousin and I hid every toberik that we found. An ISIS [jihadists] removed the earrings out of my sister's and my ears and took them. They took about 40 boxes full of money, jewelry, and toberik. ISIS took all those things.*⁷⁴⁸

Another Yezidi survivor, from Khanasor in the Sinjar region, asserted:

.....
743 Ibid.

744 Interview with Dilvîn: (in Şariyā on September 2, 2016). Interview with Nūrē (in Şariyā Camp in September 2016). Interview with Rudayna (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 02.04.2016). Interview with Nisrîn (in Qādiyā Camp).

745 Interview with Şafwān (January 11, 2019).

746 Interview with Nūrē (in Şariyā Camp in September 2016).

747 *Toberik* or *berat*: is a sacred object made from sand or soil and water in Lalis. It can also be a small stone or pebble taken from a Yezidi shrine or *mazār* for a good fortune, staying away from evil eyes, which the Yezidis carry with them.

748 Interview with Rudayna (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 02.04.2016).

In Šadādīyah in Syria, they took everything from us: our money, gold, cars, mobiles, ID cards, passports, deeds and everything else that we had. Even they took my earrings and my children's earrings⁷⁴⁹.

Moreover, the jihadists looted Yezidi cattle, sheep, cows⁷⁵⁰, and all other animals, which were the main source of livelihood for Yezidis in the Sinjar region. The community lost many thousands of such livestock, particularly sheep.

Dilvīn, a Yezidi woman from Duholā village on the north side of Sinjar Mountain, was a member of one of the Yezidi families that ISIS jihadists forced to settle in Tel Afar to tend to flocks of grazing sheep that ISIS had stolen from the Yezidis. She testified, saying:

[...] We went to graze sheep. We were grazing 1,500 sheep in Ḥayy al-Ḥaḍrā' which is located outside Tel Afar City. We were milking the sheep, and they came and took the milk. Our men were shepherders, so they were taking their sheep to pastures. Every day at one o'clock, a car with two men in it came and took the milk. Those sheep belonged to piteous and poor Yezidi people. They gathered all of the sheep and took them into their possession. There were 12 families grazing sheep. Each had about 1,000, 700, or 800, and so on⁷⁵¹.

5.4 Massacres and Forced Conversion of Yezidis to Islam

The forced conversions and large-scale killings constitute two fundamental Islamic practices directed against the Yezidis throughout their history, and these acts are intrinsically interconnected. During each Muslim campaign against the Yezidis carried out in the name of Islam, Muslim troops and

.....
749 Interview with Wārīdā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.10.2016).

750 Murad mit Krajeski 2017: 90.

751 Interview with Dilvīn: (in Šāriyā on September 2, 2016).

jihadists presented the Yezidis with a stark choice: conversion to Islam or death by the sword. This binary ultimatum consistently resulted in massacres and genocidal acts targeting the Yezidi community. Accordingly, it is both logical and necessary to examine these two phenomena together.

The large-scale massacres of Yezidis that accompanied each genocidal campaign were directly linked to the Muslim demand for their forced religious conversion to Islam, as will be discussed in this section.

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the second decade of the twentieth century, the Yezidis had already endured seventy-two campaigns of persecution, known among Yezidis as *ferman*, which were ordered by Muslim rulers and have remained deeply embedded in Yezidi public memory. These campaigns represented systematic attempts to annihilate the Yezidi population, who were frequently portrayed by their persecutors as devil worshippers, infidels, or apostates. However, little is known about pre-Ottoman Islamic attitudes toward the Yezidis, particularly prior to the twelfth century, owing to the general scarcity of historical sources addressing this period. Nevertheless, an examination of the documented assaults and discriminatory acts committed against the Yezidis provides sufficient insight into the magnitude of their historical persecution and contextualizes the genocidal atrocities perpetrated by ISIS against the Yezidis in 2014.

5.5 Historical Islamic Methods of Forced Conversion towards Yezidis

Throughout history, attacks against the Yezidis in the name of Islam were frequently characterized by a stark ultimatum: conversion to Islam or death by the sword. This approach constituted the primary method employed by Islamic military forces during campaigns against the Yezidis. As Joseph notes, the historical experience of the Yezidis under Muslim rule was largely defined by persecution.⁷⁵² Unlike other non-Muslim communities, the Yezidis were

.....
752 Joseph1919: 205.

not recognized as having a formal treaty (*dhimma*) with Muslim authorities,⁷⁵³ rendering them particularly vulnerable to coercion and violence. Consequently, they were repeatedly confronted with the binary choice between conversion and extermination.

In 1640, Melek Ahmed Pasha, then the Ottoman governor of Diyarbakir, led a significant military campaign against the Yezidis of Sinjar, resulting in the killing of thousands of men, the enslavement of women, and the destruction of numerous villages.⁷⁵⁴ Evliyā Çelebî, who accompanied the campaign, reports that Melek Ahmed Pasha assembled approximately 80,000 troops from Diyarbakir and its surrounding regions.⁷⁵⁵ According to Evliyā Çelebî, the *ġāzīs* or *muġāhidīn* advanced upon Mount Sinjar from seventy to eighty different directions.⁷⁵⁶ The ensuing confrontation between the Yezidis and Ottoman forces lasted approximately seven hours⁷⁵⁷, during which thousands of Yezidis were slain.⁷⁵⁸ Evliyā Çelebî further notes that Melek Ahmed Pasha pursued those who had sought refuge in the mountains,⁷⁵⁹ ordering his soldiers to set fire to the caves and kill all occupants.⁷⁶⁰

Similarly, the German eyewitness Helmuth Karl Bernhard von Moltke observed that during the campaign led by Mehemet Reshid Pasha, nearly all Yezidi men in Ġazirat ibn ‘Umar were killed.⁷⁶¹

In 1715, Ḥassan Pasha, then the governor of Baghdad, directed a substantial military expedition, including allied Muslim Kurdish tribes, into the Yezidi stronghold of Sinjar. This campaign resulted in the mass killing of Yezidis, particularly members of the Smōqī and Qirānī tribes. The events of this

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753 Ibid., 205.

754 Guest 1987: 47; Dankoff 1991: 170, 173. Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 37–38.

755 Evliyā Çelebî 2002: 6/82.

756 Evliyā Çelebî 2001: 4/49. Dankoff 1991: 170.

757 Ibid., 4/49. 170.

758 Ibid., 4/49. 170.

759 Ibid., 4/49. 171.

760 Ibid., 4/50. 171.

761 Moltke (1979): 237.

campaign have been commemorated in Yezidi oral traditions and popular songs, reflecting the enduring historical memory of these atrocities.⁷⁶²

According to the book *Yezidi Tragedy*, more than thirteen campaigns or massacres were carried out against the Yezidis in the 19th century alone.⁷⁶³ One of the most notorious of these campaigns (1831–1832) was led by the Muslim Kurdish prince of Rawāndiz/Rawāndož, Muḥammad al-Rawānduzī, during which several thousand Yezidis were killed.⁷⁶⁴ Muḥammad al-Rawānduzī and his forces perpetrated widespread slaughter,⁷⁶⁵ massacring Yezidis indiscriminately.⁷⁶⁶ Regarding this massacre, Parry writes:

*They [Yezidis] suffered cruelly at the hands of the famous Kurdish Beg of Ruwanduz, when the mounds of Nineveh opposite Mosul gained the name of “Kuyunjik” (The Slaughter of the Sheep), from the horrible massacre which he there inflicted on them.*⁷⁶⁷

Muḥammad al-Rawānduzī arrested the Yezidi prince, ‘Ali Beg ibn Ḥasan Beg, and executed him.⁷⁶⁸ He also took ten thousand Yezidi women and girls’ captive, leading them to his capital, Rawāndož.⁷⁶⁹ The Yezidis continue to refer to this campaign as “Fermana Mîrê Kore”,⁷⁷⁰ or the Genocide of the Blind Prince.

The inhabitants of Sinjar were subsequently subdued by Mehemet Reshid Pasha in 1836, and again shortly thereafter by Hafiz Pasha in 1837.⁷⁷¹ On both

.....
762 al-Mawlā 2000: 12–13; Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 43–45.

763 Farḥān and Šammo 2009: 77–160.

764 Badger 1852: 133; Parry 1895: 358; Ainsworth 1861: 14–15; Budge 1920: 229.

765 Ainsworth 1861: 15.

766 Badger 1852: 133.

767 Parry 1895: 358.

768 Ainsworth 1861: 14.

769 Ibid., 14.

770 Laurie, who in 1839 visited the Yezidis, writes that Mohammed was usually called “Koor Bey” (blind chief) because he had only one eye (Laurie 1853: 221).

771 Joseph 1919: 207.

occasions,⁷⁷² massacres occurred.⁷⁷³ Many Yezidis sought refuge in caves, where they either suffocated due to fires set at the entrances or were killed by cannon fire.⁷⁷⁴

A second major campaign against the Yezidis in the 19th century, carried out by Muslim Kurdish forces, took place in 1844 under Badr-ḥān Beg, the prince of Botān.⁷⁷⁵ His troops attacked Yezidi villages in Torabdin (present-day southeastern Turkey), employing force to compel conversion to Islam⁷⁷⁶. Those men and women who refused to convert were slaughtered mercilessly.⁷⁷⁷

Rev. Thomas Laurie, a 19th-century missionary in the region, documented the actions of Badr-ḥān Beg against the Yezidis, noting that Badr-ḥān Beg:

*He had left no alternative to the Yezidees but the Koran or the sword*⁷⁷⁸.

In 1890, the Ottoman authorities focused all efforts on converting the Yezidi population to Islam, initially through administrative and missionary measures and later through military campaigns.⁷⁷⁹ Sultan ‘Abd-l-Hamid dispatched an “Advice and Persuasion Commission” (*Heyet-i Tefhimiyye*) to Mosul, which reached Sheikhan at the end of April 1890. The Commission was tasked with informing the Yezidis about Islam, encouraging them to accept military conscription, and persuading them to convert.⁷⁸⁰ When this attempt proved unsuccessful, the Ottomans once again resorted to persecution and military action against the Yezidis.

On this occasion, the eyewitness Budge recorded:

.....

772 Due to the occurrence of the two campaigns in close time to each other, sources confuse their incidents with each other.

773 Joseph 1919: 207.

774 Layard ([1850]1867): 93, Ainsworth 1861: 15.

775 Badger 1852: 133; Von Oppenheim 1900: 152; Lescot 2007: 221. Budge 1920: 229.

776 Badger 1852: 133; Gölbaşı 2008: 47.

777 Layard 1867: 181.

778 Laurie 1853: 329.

779 For details about the Ottoman efforts and methods of force conversion of Yezidis during the late nineteenth century, see Gölbaşı (January 2013): 3–23.

780 Gölbaşı 2008: 83–84.

*An infamous official Ayûb Beg had been sent by the Porte with a considerable number of soldiers to compel the Yazîdis to embrace Islâm. This Ayûb Beg had gone on to Balad Sinjâr leaving soldiers to carry out his instructions in every town and village where there were Yazîdis*⁷⁸¹.

Budge further elaborates on the Ottoman attempt to forcibly convert the Yezidis, noting:

*In 1890–91, as we have seen, Ayûb Beg was in the Sinjâr “converting” the Yazîdis to Islâm by the methods*⁷⁸² *which I have described.*⁷⁸³

Budge further reported that several Yezidis who refused to embrace Islam were subjected to torture in the town of Sinjar, while others were executed by shooting.⁷⁸⁴

In the summer of 1892, the Ottoman government assigned Farîq (Lieutenant-General) ‘Umar Wabhî Pâshâ as commander of the Forces of Reform and sent him to Mosul to carry out the forced conversion of the Yezidis.⁷⁸⁵ Farîq ‘Umar Wabhî was brutal in his systematic oppression, forcing Yezidis to obey his orders.⁷⁸⁶

Farîq ‘Umar Wabhî prepared a new military campaign against the Yezidis in the Mosul region (Fermana Frîkî, as the Yezidis call it) during 1892–1893⁷⁸⁷. The witnesses von Oppenheim and Parry, who were in the Mosul territory in

.....
781 Budge 1920: 216.

782 He meant by force and persecution, such as choice between Islam and death, raping the Yezidi women and girls, etc. For more details about methods of forced conversion of Yezidis by Ayûb Beg and his soldiers, see: *Ibid.*, 216–219.

783 *Ibid.*, 229.

784 *Ibid.*, 217.

785 Parry 1895: 253. Deringil (May 15, 2014): 17–18.

786 Deringil (May 15, 2014): 18. Gölbaşı (January 2013): 5–6.

787 He is known among the Yezidis as Ferik Pasha. Von Oppenheim 1900: 153–54; al-Damlûğî 1949: 508; al-Mawlâ 2000: 43–44.

1892 and 1893, wrote that Kurdish Muslims also participated in the campaign against the Yezidis⁷⁸⁸.

Fariq ‘Umar sent an army to Yezidi villages, giving them the choice between Islam and the sword. His son, ‘Umar Beg, commanded the soldiers to slaughter the men and take the attractive women and girls as captives for forced marriage. He killed about five hundred men. Many Yezidis converted to Islam out of fear, including Mīrzā Beg, a member of the Yezidi civil chief family⁷⁸⁹.

Parry, a contemporary source who was in the region in 1892, states that Osman Beg, the Ottoman military commander, visited the villages of Ba‘šīqa and Baḥzānē⁷⁹⁰. He gathered the chiefs of the Yezidi villages and threatened them: if anyone refused conversion, their house would be plundered, the honor of their family, including their wives and daughters, would be violated, and they and their sons would be killed⁷⁹¹. Parry confirms that the next day, the son of Fariq ‘Umar Wahbī began forcing the Yezidis to convert to Islam⁷⁹², taking their declarations one by one and compelling them to renounce the Yezidi faith⁷⁹³. Their children were placed with a mullā in the mosque to learn the Muslim faith⁷⁹⁴, and they were forced to pray five times daily⁷⁹⁵.

According to Parry, despite torture and threats, the Yezidi Mīr ‘Alī Beg and many others refused to convert to Islam⁷⁹⁶. The Ottoman soldiers executed Mīr ‘Alī Beg near Istanbul, along with others, and captured their women and girls⁷⁹⁷.

On August 20, 1892, Fariq ‘Umar Wahbī sent a detailed telegram to Istanbul reporting his “success” with the Yezidis. This reads in part:

.....

788 Von Oppenheim 1900: 154, Parry 1895: 259.

789 Von Oppenheim 1900: 153; Parry 1895: 257; Sachau 1900: 131; Joseph 1919: 208–209.

790 Parry 1895: 257.

791 *Ibid.*, 257–258.

792 *Ibid.*, 258.

793 *Ibid.*, 258.

794 *Ibid.*, 258.

795 *Ibid.*, 258–259.

796 *Ibid.*, 259.

797 *Ibid.*, 259.

After repeated unsuccessful attempts through the centuries to bring them back to the true path, eighty villages of the Yezidis and thirty villages of the Shi'a have acceded to the honour of the True Faith. Yesterday their leaders, with total freedom of conscience, accepted my invitation to come to Mosul and become Muslim. This morning, as the military band played the Hamidiye march, and ranks upon ranks of the ulema intoned the holiest of prayers proclaiming the One True God, a great crowd of notables and military personnel gathered around the municipality offices. As a guard of honour stood to military salute, the Müftü asked each one if he accepted Islam of his own free will. Upon each confirmation the crowd shouted, 'Long Live the Sultan!' (Padişahim Çok Yaşa)⁷⁹⁸.

The telegram confirmed that the Ottoman authorities had persecuted the Yezidis and made extensive efforts over centuries to force them to convert to Islam. It also stated that, eventually, Fariq 'Umar Wahbi succeeded in converting many Yezidis to Islam.

According to numerous historical sources, due to the repeated military campaigns, widespread oppression, and massacres over the past 200 years, the Yezidi population had been reduced by three-fourths⁷⁹⁹.

5.6 Forced Conversion and Mass Killings by ISIS

The ISIS invasion of Yezidi communities in Iraq and Syria is regarded as one of the most horrific campaigns of the 20th and 21st centuries. ISIS jihadists perpetrated widespread atrocities against the Yezidis, including forced conversions, mass killings, and extreme acts of brutality, with some victims reportedly buried alive in mass graves around the Sinjar region⁸⁰⁰.

Yezidis who were captured by ISIS were subjected to a systematic process of forced conversion from Yezidism to Islam. Men were typically presented

.....
798 BBA Irade Dahiliye 53, Telegram from Ömer Vehbi Pasa to Sublime Porte 7 August 1307/20 August 1892. Quoting from: Deringil (May 15, 2014): 18.

799 For example, see Layard 1867: 181. Empson 1928: 66–9. Ainsworth 1861: 15. Joseph 1919: 207.

800 Rasheed (August 10, 2014).

with the ultimatum of conversion or execution⁸⁰¹, while women and girls who resisted conversion faced the threat of sexual violence, including gang rape⁸⁰².

A video released by ISIS on social media around August 20, 2014, documented the forced conversion of a group of abducted Yezidi men to Islam⁸⁰³.

Abū Surāqa, an ISIS jihadist involved in the attacks on Yezidis in Sinjar, provided a firsthand account of the invasion of the Yezidi compound al-Qaḥṭānīyah (Tell Ezer) in the Sinjar region, detailing the killings and atrocities committed against the community. He stated:

We were carrying a variety of weapons to enter the compound at dawn without fighting. After the siege of the compound, young Yezidi women were captured and taken as captives. Young men, old men and women were killed, and children over the age of three years and above were killed. [...] children under the age of three were left outdoors without food or drink while their mothers were taken as captives to die of hunger and thirst and this was issued by his battalion⁸⁰⁴ [...].

Similarly, Muḥammad Aḥmad was another ISIS jihadist involved in the August 2014 ISIS invasion of the Yezidis in the Sinjar region. He confessed before the Nineveh Investigations Court in Mosul that he had killed Yezidi men and boys in a primary school in Sinjar⁸⁰⁵. He stated:

I shot them there in the school hall. I think I killed 10 or 12 of them, including some children⁸⁰⁶.

.....
801 Amnesty International Ltd (2014): 18.

802 al-Dayel (February 4, 2020): 6.

803 Amnesty International Ltd (2014): 18.

804 Shafaq News (October 20, 2019).

805 The Telegraph (July 31, 2017).

806 Ibid.

One of the most well-documented and horrifying instances of ISIS’s “convert or die” campaign against the Yezidis took place in the village of Koço, on the southern slopes of Sinjar Mountain. On the afternoon of August 3, 2014, ISIS jihadists invaded Koço, seizing control of the village and its inhabitants. Initially, they confiscated all weapons from the residents. Two days later, on August 5, the jihadists issued an ultimatum: the Yezidis had to convert to Islam or face execution⁸⁰⁷. The villagers were given only three days to decide⁸⁰⁸.

After careful discussion, the Yezidis unanimously chose to remain faithful to their religion. In response, the jihadists extended the deadline by one week, but the villagers remained steadfast⁸⁰⁹. On August 15, ISIS returned to Koço and forcibly gathered all the inhabitants in the village school⁸¹⁰. A Yezidi witness recounted hearing a Da’esh/ISIS member tell Aḥmad Jāso, the village leader (*muḥtār*), “If all of you convert to Islam, we will not order you to do anything.” Aḥmad Jāso replied, “If I speak for myself, I will not become Muslim, but let me ask my people.” In unison, all the men of Koço declared, “We will not become Muslim⁸¹¹.”

ISIS separated the men from the women and girls and began killing the men in six groups at four main mass-killing sites surrounding the village, in the east, southeast, southwest, and north⁸¹². When the men chose to remain Yezidi, they were driven in groups of ten to fifteen outside the village, lined up in ditches, and shot⁸¹³. Some men survived by pretending to be dead, lying beneath the bodies of those already killed. ISIS jihadists stood over them,

.....
807 Nāif Jāso the brother of Aḥmad Jāso (the Kojo village’s leader or *muḥtār*, who was killed by ISIS jihadists); Also see, Rasheed (August 10, 2014). Murad mit Krajeski 2017: 83.

808 Nāif Jāso. Murad mit Krajeski 2017: 106.

809 *ibid*: 106.

810 A photograph of the school is provided in the “Photographs” section at the end of this study.

811 UNITAD Iraq (May 13, 2021): Documentary: YouTube.

812 Nāif Jāso. UNITAD Iraq (May 13, 2021): Documentary: YouTube. Murad mit Krajeski 2017: 130–134.

813 Otten 2017: 107. Shand 2018: 204–205.

checking twice and shooting anyone who still moved⁸¹⁴. Over five hundred men and boys from Koço were executed that day⁸¹⁵.

A 16-year-old Yazidi girl, who had been held by ISIS for seven months, said:

After we were captured, ISIS forced us to watch them beheading some of our Yazidi men. They made the men kneel in a line in the street, with their hands tied behind their backs. The ISIS fighters took knives and cut their throats⁸¹⁶.

Ziyād, a 34-year-old Yazidi male survivor from Sinjar, said that the ISIS jihadists committed mass killings in Koço. In this regard, he stated:

We were about 500 people and more. [...] After about a month they moved us [from Tel Banāt] to Koço. They had killed the people of Koço. There were dead bodies around and it smelled bad. We told them that we smelled the bad odor. They used a loader [heavy equipment] to put sand over the dead bodies. There were many dead bodies. I could not count them⁸¹⁷[...].

According to Zārā, after ISIS executed the men, they moved the women to the building of the Technical Institute in Şōlağ, east of Sinjar⁸¹⁸. There, they divided

.....
814 Otten 2017: 107. Shand 2018: 205.

815 Otten 2017: 108.

816 Citation from: Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 8.

817 Interview with Ziyād (in Şāriyā/ the village of Gire-pan 29.01.2016)

818 Also, see Murad mit Krajeski 2017: 137. Sara mit Mercier 2017: 95.

the women and girls by age. The younger women and girls were transported by bus to a wedding hall in Mosul called “Galaxy⁸¹⁹ Hall⁸²⁰.”

On August 16, more than 80 elderly Yezidi women from Koço were massacred behind the technical institute⁸²¹.

Earlier, on the morning of August 4, 2014, ISIS jihadists captured the Yezidi village of Solāğ, near Sinjar⁸²². They gathered the villagers and, that evening, demanded that they convert to Islam or face death⁸²³. About 50 people refused to abandon their Yezidi faith. Of these, 30 elderly villagers were executed in front of the others⁸²⁴. The remaining individuals who refused to convert were locked in a room and given only dirty water, with no food, causing all of them to die after 16 days⁸²⁵.

The experiences of the people in other Yezidi villages captured by ISIS were tragically similar. Jihadists systematically forced conversions to Islam and carried out killings, either with firearms, by burning individuals alive, or through mass executions.

‘Abbās, a Yezidi man from Sībā-Šēhidrē who survived a mass killing, recounted his experience during the ISIS invasion of his township. According to him, the jihadists gathered the villagers who had failed to escape⁸²⁶. While surrounding the captives and pointing their weapons at them, the ISIS commander sat at the head of the group and addressed them⁸²⁷:

.....

819 Galaxy Hall was a wedding hall in the Iraqi city of Mosul. ISIS turned it to a place for enslavement of Yazidis. Hajji Abdullah was an ethnic Turkman from Tel Afar. He was a religious judge at the time and labeled one of the architects of the militant group’s enslavement of Yazidi, who rose to become deputy to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. He was in charge of enslavement of Yazidis in Galaxy Hall. (Associated Press, Middle East (May 21, 2020).

820 Otten 2017: 108.

821 Ibid., 108.

822 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/ United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq – Human Rights office (August 2016).

823 Ibid.

824 Ibid.

825 Ibid.

826 Shand 2018: 44.

827 Ibid., 44.

*There is only one way for you to go. You must convert, here, now. If you do not we will kill you*⁸²⁸.

An elderly Yezidi man fixed his gaze on Ṭalāl Ḥamdī ‘Alī Qāsim⁸²⁹, who was sitting beside an ISIS commander, and declared, “We will not convert⁸³⁰.” In response, the jihadists pulled five Yezidi women from the group and began massacring the men⁸³¹.

Gulē, a survivor from Tell Ezer, was captured along with 25 of her family members and relatives. They were taken to Sībā-Šēḥidrē⁸³², she recounted, bearing witness to the horrors they endured. She said:

*[...] in Sībā-Šēḥidrē, they [ISIS jihadist] had captured many young people of the Qīrānī tribe [a big Yezidi tribe in Sinjar region] there. They [ISIS] burned many of them in rooms there. They also burned a girl there*⁸³³ [...].

When ISIS jihadists captured Gulē, she had been with her family in an agricultural field near Tell Ezer⁸³⁴. She continued recounting the horrors she had witnessed, the killings of her relatives and other Yezidis, and said:

*In the location where they arrested us they killed 11 of my relatives [...]. They killed all of them. They beheaded some of them and killed others with guns. Besides my relatives, they killed many others*⁸³⁵ [...].

.....

828 Ibid., 44.

829 Ṭalāl Ḥamdī ‘Alī Qāsim was an Arab neighbor of Yezidi villagers. He belonged to the ISIS jihadists and contributed to the killing of Yezidis in August 2014. Ibid., 44.

830 Ibid., 44.

831 Ibid., 44–45.

832 Interview with Gulē (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.09.2016).

833 Ibid.

834 Ibid.

835 Ibid.

The Yezidi residents of the villages Sakenīyah and Ḥayālī, located at the far western foothills of Sinjar Mountain, suffered genocidal attacks similar to those in Sībā-Šēhidrē⁸³⁶. According to survivors, ISIS jihadists, many of whom were Arabs from neighboring villages, committed mass killings⁸³⁷.

In the northeast of the mountain, near the village of Ḥardān, ISIS carried out one of its most brutal massacres⁸³⁸. Many Yezidi men were executed, and ten were beheaded⁸³⁹.

On August 3, 2014, ISIS invaded the northern Yezidi villages of Sinjar Mountain. Families unable to escape were captured and transferred to checkpoints and towns such as Khanasor and Sinūnē. Men and adolescent boys were separated from women and children. Those who refused to convert to Islam were executed, most by gunshot to the head, others by throat-cutting, with families often forced to witness the killings⁸⁴⁰.

Men and older boys who were forcibly converted were held as captives and transported to sites in Tel Afar, Mosul, and Ba‘āğ⁸⁴¹, where they were forced into labor, including construction, street cleaning, tending livestock, and agricultural work⁸⁴².

Samīrā, a 20-year-old Yezidi woman from Tel-Banāt, recalled that ISIS captured her family along with other Yezidis in Qinē.

Samīrā, a 20-year-old Yezidi woman from Tel-Banāt said that ISIS came and captured her family with other Yezidis in Qinē. She gave her testimony about how they were killed, saying:

*They took us and put us into a house. They separated our men from us.
They took the men behind of a hill and shot them. They killed a half of*

.....
836 Shand 2018: 47.

837 Ibid., 48.

838 Ibid., 75.

839 Ibid., 75.

840 Also, see: Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 8.

841 Amnesty International Ltd (2020): 13.

842 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016). Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 9. Amnesty International Ltd (2020): 13.

*them and we do not know what they did with the second half of them. We asked them: What you did with our men? They said: “We killed all of them.”*⁸⁴³

Also, a report by UNAMI and Human Rights confirms that ISIS perpetrated a mass killing of approximately 67 male members of the Yezidi community in the village of Qinē, in the Sinjar district, in mid-August 2014⁸⁴⁴. Sahirā, an 18-year-old Yezidi woman survivor from Sinjar, said that the jihadists threatened them if they refused to convert to Islam⁸⁴⁵. She stated:

*They took us to Rambūsi. They put men into one room, and the children and women into a separate room. We were 7 girls among us – four of us sisters, two girls of my uncle, and the sister of my aunt. We all registered as married women. There was an Arabic woman translator. She knew Kurdish. She told us, “Say that you will convert to Islam. If you do not say so, they will separate you, kill the men and take the girls”*⁸⁴⁶.

Regarding the forced conversion of Yezidis, Lamiyā, a Yezidi girl survivor from Qābūsi in Sinjar, said that the men obeyed the orders of the jihadists and agreed to convert to Islam. She pointed:

*They took us to Rambūsi by an agricultural field. On the first day, they told us, “You have to convert to Islam, and to pray.” The men said, “Okay”*⁸⁴⁷.

Historically, and during the ISIS invasion, both male and female Yezidi captives faced the same choice, convert to Islam or be killed, but they were treated differently. Women who refused to convert, even under threat of death, were often forced through rape or marriage. If they still refused, they were kept for

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843 Interview with Samirā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

844 Human Rights and UNAMI (December 15, 2014): 16.

845 Interview with Sahirā (in Kabartū 1 Campon 02.04.2016).

846 Ibid.

847 Interview with Lamiyā (in Šāriyā in September 2016).

sexual enslavement without being converted. Older women (perhaps over 60) who were unsuitable for marriage or sexual enslavement were treated like men: no exceptions. This suggests that the primary goal of capturing Yezidi women and girls was sexual enslavement, with conversion to Islam being secondary.

Fawziya, an 18-year-old Yezidi survivor, stated in her testimonial to Amnesty International:

In the first 10 days we were not molested, the men brought us food and left us alone. Then we were told each of us must choose a husband or else men will choose us. At that time we were kept together, many of us, more than 100. Then we were split in groups, six girls per group, and each group was taken to a different house in Rambūsi (near Mount Sinjar). In the house where I was held each girl was with a man from Da'esh; these men were aged between 30–40 years; we were aged between 15 and 20. The man who took me as his wife was about 30 and was from Mosul. He used me as his wife for four days in that house and then took me to Mosul to his family home. [...] His parents did not interfere, but they said that if I did not convert to Islam he should give me away or sell me, and get a Muslim wife instead. He took me and his wife and children to Rambūsi and said he was going to give me back to the emir [commander]. There were other girls in houses nearby and I eventually managed to escape with some other girls⁸⁴⁸.

Nawāf, a 25-year-old male survivor from Kāniyā 'Ido in Sinjar, reported that on August 3, ISIS captured him along with about 60 other people in Şōlağ⁸⁴⁹. He said:

About 10 of [our group] were young boys, and others were men, old men, and a Shiite family. They put us in four rooms [in Şōlağ]. Whoever converted to Islam they would let him go. But those who did not convert

.....
848 Amnesty International Ltd (2014): 9.

849 Interview with Nawāf (in Şāriyā Camp on 28.02.2016).

to Islam they would kill.⁸⁵⁰ About 10 of us converted to Islam. They took us to the side. They distributed sweets to us⁸⁵¹ [...].

Nawāf continued his narrative about those Yezidis who refused to convert to Islam, saying:

They tied the hands of those who did not convert to Islam and killed them by shooting them in their heads. While they were killing them, they were saying Allāh-u Akbar [God is greater]. The Kurmānj [Muslim Kurds] of Sinjar were with them. They were ISIS too. They said: “Even if you converted to Islam, you are still infidels, and we would kill you⁸⁵².”

Nūrē, a 26-year-old Yezidi woman from Tell Ezer, pointed out that after looting the Yezidis’ property, the second significant focus of ISIS jihadists was forcing conversion from the Yezidi religion to Islam. She said:

On the way [to Tel Afar], they [jihadists] told us: “You have to convert to Islam⁸⁵³.”

In a school in Tel Afar where many Yezidis had been taken, ISIS jihadists separated the men from the women. They were transferring the women at night to another school in Tel Afar⁸⁵⁴. Nūrē says that ISIS jihadists told them:

If any men convert to Islam, we will bring them to you, and those who do not, we will kill them⁸⁵⁵.

.....

850 It appears that ISIS killed those Yezidi men who refused to convert to Islam, because after the liberation of Sinjar region from ISIS, mass graves were found in Şölağ. About the mass graves, see section “The Yezidi Mass Killings (Graves) by ISIS” of this study.

851 Interview with Nawāf (in Şāriyā Camp on 28.02.2016).

852 Ibid.

853 Interview with Nūrē (in Şāriyā Camp in September 2016).

854 Ibid.

855 Ibid.

After 12 days, ISIS jihadists allowed the women to meet with their men⁸⁵⁶. Nūrē continues, relating what the men told the women:

“They [ISIS] have not killed many of us because most of us have said that we would convert to Islam.” My husband said me: “There was a man standing behind us. He was like a bear and he carried a sword.” He asked us: “Would you like to convert to Islam, or not?” A guard pointed out with his hand [and told us that] if we did not accept, he will slaughter us. We said: “We will convert to Islam”⁸⁵⁷.”

Ḥisnā, a 24-year-old Yezidi survivor from Gir Zerik, provided an account of ISIS’s treatment of Yezidi captives during their detention in Mosul. She stated that:

We stayed three months in ḥayy al-ḥaḍrā’. They were taking our men [who pretended that they have converted to Islam] for work as sweepers inside of Mosul. We women were used to take care of the trees⁸⁵⁸ [in the gardens].

Regarding this matter, Gawrē also stated that ISIS sought to convert them to Islam, she said:

In Tel Afar [...], they [ISIS jihadists] told us: “You have to convert to Islam; we will kill everyone who does not convert” We said: “We will follow what our men decide”⁸⁵⁹.”

She continued her account of the forced conversion to Islam:

.....

856 Ibid.

857 Ibid.

858 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

859 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

[...] they [ISIS jihadists] took us to Qasr Mihrāb. We stayed about three months in Qasr Mihrāb in houses with brothers of my husband. They told us, “Your husbands have converted to Islam, and you too will become Muslims and you have to pray and read the Qur’an. You have to convert to our religion. You are our brothers, and we will not tell you anything.” We said that it was no problem⁸⁶⁰.

Gawrē provides more details about the process of the forced conversion of Yezidis by ISIS, stating that they were forced to go to the mosque and pray every day. She recounted:

*We left and they put us into houses. My children were going with their uncles to the mosque five times every day to pray. They also told us that we had to learn to pray at home. That was by force. We prayed too*⁸⁶¹.

Moreover, the jihadists compelled the captive Yezidis to learn about Islamic principles and practices, including reciting Islamic prayers, growing their beards and hair, and adhering to other religious directives as interpreted and imposed by the terrorist group⁸⁶².

In certain instances, ISIS utilized previously Shiite-inhabited villages as detention sites for forcibly converted Yezidis. For example, by late August 2014, ISIS transferred groups of Yezidi families to the villages of Qasr Mihrāb and Qizil-Qayo, located southwest of Tel Afar. These villages had been abandoned by their Shiite residents months earlier following ISIS’s takeover of the region⁸⁶³.

It is clear from a document issued by the Islamic State on September 27, 2014 that the process of verifying the conversion of Yezidi captives was monitored and formed part of the responsibilities of the Dīwān al-Qaḍā’ wa-al-Mazālim in Islamic State⁸⁶⁴.

.....
860 Ibid.

861 Ibid.

862 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 9.

863 Ibid.

864 See, Appendix number (16).

By April 2015, ISIS asserted that the Yezidis in these Shiite villages who claimed to have converted to Islam were deceitful and had not genuinely embraced the religion⁸⁶⁵. Consequently, ISIS separated these Yezidi families, relocating women, children, and boys under the age of twelve to various detention sites⁸⁶⁶. By May 2015, these villages were vacated of the forcibly converted Yezidis⁸⁶⁷. It is widely believed that the men and older boys were summarily executed⁸⁶⁸.

To pressure Yezidis who were still held at the Tel Afar and Bādūš prison sites to convert to Islam, ISIS jihadists recorded videos of reunited Yezidi families in Qasr Miḥrāb and showed them to those who had not yet converted. They also relocated some of the forcibly converted families to the al-ḥaḍrā' neighborhood of Tel Afar⁸⁶⁹.

Ziyād, a 34-year-old Yezidi man from Sinjar who survived captivity, reported that ISIS forced him to serve as the mullā of a mosque in Tel Afar⁸⁷⁰.

According to a report by the Human Rights Council, ISIS immediately executed men and older boys who refused to convert to Islam⁸⁷¹. Most of those killed were shot in the head, while others had their throats slit⁸⁷². In many cases, family members were forced to witness the executions of their male relatives⁸⁷³.

The 50-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar, previously quoted, provided further testimony regarding the forced conversions:

[...] They took us to Tel Afar [...]. After 11 days, they [ISIS jihadists] asked us, "Who of you will convert to Islam?" I did not say anything. They frequently asked [the same question.] Eventually, the women from

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865 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 9

866 Amnesty International Ltd (2020): 13.

867 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 9.

868 Amnesty International Ltd (2020): 13.

869 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 9.

870 Interview with Ziyād (in Šāriyā/ the village of Gire-pan 29.01.216)

871 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 8.

872 Ibid., 8.

873 Ibid., 8.

fear said, “If you bring our men to us, we will convert.” They sat down on the door and wrote the names of everyone who accepted to convert to Islam. From fear, all of us said. “We will convert”⁸⁷⁴[...]”

Another survivor went on to describe the process of forced conversions in Tel Afar:

They showed the photos of Yezidi men who had accepted to convert to Islam, to their wives, and let them [the women] talk with their husbands in order to take them to their men⁸⁷⁵.

ISIS jihadists seemed aware that the Yezidi captives were converting to Islam solely to escape persecution. Consequently, they frequently questioned the captives to determine whether their conversion was genuine. Ziyād recounted:

In Tel Afar, they [ISIS jihadists] told us: “We have become brothers [You, Yezidi captives who have converted to Islam]. We will not deal with you as before.”... They made a mosque for us. The mullāwas from them and we were the listeners. When sometimes someone was delayed to attend to the mosque, they would investigate us and ask, “Why were you not coming to the mosque? Where were you? What were you doing? It is not possible to not come to the mosque. It is dangerous for your life. Later do not say that you have not told me”⁸⁷⁶.”

Ziyād continues to narrate what he witnessed in this context, saying:

One time they told me: “You have to be the mullā of mosque.” I accepted. My Arabic was a little bit good. They told me: “You have to Performing the call to prayer”⁸⁷⁷.”

.....

874 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā in September 2016).

875 Ibid.

876 Interview with Ziyād (in Šāriyā/ the village of Gire-pan 29.01.2016)

877 Ibid.

He pointed out that:

When they were there, they were doing the call for prayers, but when they were not there, I was performing the call to prayer. They had given me a calendar of prayers. I was performing the call to prayer according to that calendar. It was a house that they made into the mosque for us. It was in a location called Ḥayy al-Ḥaḍrā'. It was beside Tel Afar. I was a mullā for about 20 days⁸⁷⁸.

Gawrē also said that ISIS jihadists regularly asked them whether they had truly converted to Islam and threatened them if they had not. She recounted:

They [ISIS jihadists] said to us, "If you do not convert to Islam we will kill you. If you do not pray we will kill you"⁸⁷⁹.

Even Yezidis who were forcibly converted to Islam could later be killed⁸⁸⁰. Gawrē the 39-year-old survivor from Gir Zerik, noted that the jihadists did not recognize the Yezidi captives who accepted forced conversion as true Muslims. In this regard, she said:

Even when we said that we had converted to Islam, they did not release us. The girls said that they had converted to Islam, but they took them, raped them, and sold them to each other. All of them, eventhose who converted, when they doubted them, they blindfolded them, tied their hands, and took them⁸⁸¹.

Gawrē added that the jihadists were aware of Kurdish television reports on Yezidis who had escaped, which indicated that their conversions to Islam had been made solely to preserve their lives, noting:

.....

878 Ibid.

879 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā in September 2016).

880 Petrou 2019: 298.

881 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā in September 2016).

[...] [During about four months in Ḥayy al-Ḥaḍrā' in Tel Afar] *that time many escaped to Kurdistan. They [the escapees] were shown on TV saying, "We are going to Lalish and we are still Yezidis." They [ISIS] said to us: "You are lying to us. You are escaping. Today you are at home and tomorrow you are on TV." That TV destroyed our home*⁸⁸².

Similarly, Mahayā, a 35-year-old Yezidi woman from Khanasor, noted that even after accepting conversion, ISIS jihadists did not treat them as Muslims. She reported:

*We said them, "You have taken our girls and our youth. What would you like to do more than that with us? It is enough, let us go." They said, "You said that you have converted to Islam." We said, "If we are Muslims, you have to respect us not degrade us." They said, "No, you are still hostile to [our] religion. You are lying*⁸⁸³.

It is important to note that forced conversions did not protect the Yezidis from persecution by ISIS jihadists; they did not attain the same status as other Sunni Muslims⁸⁸⁴. Every day, men and boys over the age of twelve were taken from their villages and compelled to perform various forms of labor in nearby towns and cities. Similarly, ISIS regularly raided villages to seize unmarried women and girls, as well as married women without children. In addition, Yezidis held in Qasr-Miḥrāb, Qizil-Qayo, and Ḥayy al-ḥaḍrā' were frequently insulted and labeled "kuffar," or infidels⁸⁸⁵.

According to Ḥisnā, a twenty-four-year-old Yezidi woman survivor from Gir Zerik, ISIS jihadists told them that, while held captive in Tel Afar:

.....
882 Ibid.

883 Interview with Mahayā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.02.2016).

884 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 9.

885 Ibid.

We [ISIS jihadists] will take you [Yezidi captive women and girls] for us, and we will take your children too. We will convert your men to Islam. We will never liberate them. They must become Muslims⁸⁸⁶.

She continued to narrate:

They were transferring us much. They took us to a school in Tel Afar for a week. They told our men to convert to Islam. They converted them [Yezidi men], and brought them to us⁸⁸⁷ [...].

Regarding the mechanism of ISIS's forced conversion of Yezidis, abducted Yezidi women were compelled to convert to Islam, pray in Arabic daily⁸⁸⁸, and memorize the Qur'an. Ḥisnā stated that a Saudi jihadist named Abū Hāğir purchased her from the slave market in Tadmur for himself. He raped her and forced her to memorize verses of the Qur'an. Regarding the deal this jihadist made with her, she said:

He brought a big page from the Qur'an and told me: "You have to memorize this." I told him: I have been never gone to school. I cannot. He told me: "You have to memorize it. If not, I will kill you, or I will take your son from you⁸⁸⁹."

Ḥisnā was sold multiple times, and each of her jihadist captors compelled her to memorize at least some verses of the Qur'an. Having never attended school, she was unable to read or write; yet, her captors insisted that she commit even individual phrases of the Qur'an to memory. She went on to recount the story of a jihadist, saying:

.....

886 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

887 Ibid.

888 Nicolaus and Yuce (June 2017): 204. Murad mit Krajeski 2017: 200.

889 Interview with Ḥisnā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.11.2016).

I stayed 10 days with this man. He was taking my son from me, and said to me, “If you can or not, it is mandatory that you have to read the Qur’an.” Forcibly, I memorized some verses, but I was not able to memorize more of it⁸⁹⁰.

Ḥalīma, a twenty-five-year-old Yezidi woman survivor from Ḥātīmīyah, recounted her experience of forced conversion in Syria, noting:

We were forced to read the Qur’an. When we did not read it, they hit us. This is my daughter [she pointed to her daughter next to her]; they did not let her speak a Kurdish word. They taught the Qur’an to my daughter, and told her that she had to pray⁸⁹¹ [...].

Mahayā, a thirty-five-year-old Yezidi woman survivor from Khanasor, stated that after her capture, ISIS jihadists transferred her and others to a school in al-Ḥasakā, Syria, where they were forced to convert to Islam⁸⁹². In this regard, she recounted her testimony, saying:

An Iraqi [ISIS jihadist] came to us and told us, “You have to change your religion, or we will kill you.” We said, “We will not decide anything [conversion to Islam] without our men.” They said, “Your men have said that they have converted to Islam. Only you remain.” They were laughing at us, and said, “You will convert despite your will.” Then they told the men, “Yallah. Pray now.” They told women too, “Pray.” Then they said, “There is no woman to teach you pray. When we take you to Iraq, there will be a woman to teach you⁸⁹³.”

She went on to describe the process by which Yezidi captives were forcibly converted to Islam at the school in al-Ḥasakā:

.....

890 Ibid.

891 Interview with Ḥalīma (in Qādīyā Camp on 03.07.2016).

892 Interview with Mahayā (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.02.2016).

893 Ibid.

*An Egyptian came and to teach the men the Quran, how to pray, and other Islamic principles*⁸⁹⁴.

Laylo, a fifty-year-old Yezidi woman survivor from Ḥardān, described her experience in a school in Raqqa:

*[...] We became 306 persons. It became dark and they drove us to Syria. At 1 o'clock at night, they put us into a school that consisted of three floors. They said that it was in Raqqa. [...] They separated men from us [women]. They separated the young children too. And they kept the women and children to one side. Then they put us into rooms and locked the doors. They said, "We will kill all the men." We stayed that night there*⁸⁹⁵.

She further described ISIS's behavior toward them and the forced conversion process, explaining:

*The next day, one of them came and said, "Come to register your names, each family separately." He registered every family and said, "You will convert to Islam." We said, yes. [...] They spoke Arabic. [...] After five days, and on the sixth day, about 100 members of ISIS came among us. They made the men stand in a line and said, "We will kill the men." They separated the women, and said [to the men], "Convert to Islam. Whoever said I become Muslim, he is our brother, and whoever does not, he is not our brother and we will behead him immediately"*⁸⁹⁶.

*[...] They separated the young children from us. We were even afraid to cry. An Egyptian came and read [the Quran] to them for about an hour*⁸⁹⁷.

.....

894 Ibid.

895 Interview with Laylo (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 28.01.2016).

896 Ibid.

897 Ibid.

Continuing her account, Laylo explained that ISIS jihadists demanded they recite the Islamic creed, emphasizing:

They said to us, “Convert to Islam and give your [proclamation to convert to Islam.]” We all gave our šahāda⁸⁹⁸.

ISIS jihadists also separated Yezidi children, typically eight to fifteen years old, from their mothers and moved them to different sites in Iraq and Syria. They then forced these Yezidi captives to convert to Islam in groups by making them recite the *šahāda*⁸⁹⁹, the Islamic creed⁹⁰⁰.

Nasīmā, a 15-year-old Yezidi girl survivor from Tell Qasab, also said that ISIS jihadists forced Yezidi captives to recite the *šahāda* as a proclamation of conversion to Islam. She testified:

In Mosul, [...] they took us into a big palace which consisted of three floors. It was also full of Yezidi women, children, and girls. We stayed for a day there. The next day, they told us, “All of you come from second floor to downstairs.” We all went to downstairs. They put girls in a room. They told us: “You all have to give your šahāda, and convert to Islam.” None of us gave the šahāda. They told us: “If you do not give your šahāda, we will kill you all.” We were very afraid. None of us dared to say: I will not convert to Islam. [...] Some of us gave šahāda, and others did not⁹⁰¹.

As Nasīmā recounted in her interview, although ISIS jihadists threatened to kill Yezidi women captives if they did not recite the *šahāda*, they did not carry

.....
898 Interview with Laylo (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 28.01.2016).

899 The common principle of Islam emphasizes that, when a non-Muslim gives the Islamic *šahāda*, she/he will become a Muslim. The *šahāda*, the first pillar of Islam, is the simple declaration, “There is no deity but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God.” Once spoken by a “non-believer,” he or she is considered to have converted to Islam.

900 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 5.

901 Ibid.

out these threats⁹⁰². Instead, the captives were subjected to sexual enslavement and forced “marriage,” while also being pressured to convert to Islam.

Gawrē, a 64-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinūnē, recalled that when ISIS jihadists captured them in the foothills of Sinjar Mountain on August 3, 2014, there were thirteen captives. The jihadists demanded that they convert to Islam by reciting the *šahāda*⁹⁰³.

In Syria, the jihadists took young Yezidi boys to local mosques for prayer⁹⁰⁴. Moreover, according to testimonies from numerous rescued Yezidi captives, the ISIS jihadists forced women and girls to convert by confining them in a single room with a religious leader. There, they were told they were infidels and compelled to recite the *Šahāda* or read from the Qur’an, after which they were collectively declared to have converted⁹⁰⁵.

A 13-year-old Yezidi girl reported being held in a house in Mosul alongside other girls aged 10 to 15. She said:

[...] *They made us convert to Islam and we all had to say the [Šahāda]. They said, ‘You Yazidis are kufar [infidels]. You must repeat these words after the leader.’ They gathered up all in one place and made us repeat after him. After we said the [Šahāda], he said you have now been converted to our religion [Islam] and our religion is the correct one*⁹⁰⁶.

Warīdā, a Yezidi woman from Khanasor in the Sinjar region, survived ISIS captivity. She recounted that shortly after their capture, ISIS transferred her and other Yezidi families to Syria. The jihadists confined around 300 families in a school in Šadādiyāh⁹⁰⁷. After seven days, ISIS militants came among them

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902 Ibid.

903 Interview with Gawrē (in Kabartū 2 Camp on 29.02.2016).

904 Human Rights Council, thirty-second session agenda item 4 (June 15, 2016): 14.

905 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 5.

906 Ibid.

907 Interview with Warīdā (in Šāriyā camp on 02.10.2016).

and asked, “Will you convert to Islam or not?”⁹⁰⁸ Warīdā recalled that the men agreed to convert to Islam, and recounted her testimony as follows:

*The men were upstairs, and the women were downstairs. After they said that they will convert to Islam, they prayed with them [ISIS]. They forced the men to pray and to give the šahāda*⁹⁰⁹.

Gawrē, a 39-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik, described how their jihadist captors forced Yezidi women and their children to follow Islamic traditions and principles while in captivity⁹¹⁰. She recounted her time in the home of a jihadist named Abū Yaḥyā, one of her captors in Syria. She said:

*I stayed 20 days with Abū Yaḥyā. I served his wife. They were teaching us the Quran and how to pray. We were praying five times a day*⁹¹¹ [...].

5.7 Yezidi Mass Graves: Memory and Consequences of the ISIS Genocide

In December 2014, the Kurdish Peshmerga, with U.S. airstrike support, broke ISIS’s siege of Sinjar Mountain. During the operation, mass graves containing Yezidi victims were discovered⁹¹². Nearly half of the Yezidis were executed, by gunshot, beheading, or being burned alive, while the rest died from starvation, dehydration, or injuries sustained during the siege⁹¹³.

According to UNAMI/OHCHR, based on Iraqi authorities’ data, as of November 6, 2018⁹¹⁴, 202 Yezidi and non-Yezidi mass grave sites had been

.....

908 Ibid.

909 Ibid.

910 Interview with Gawrē (in Šāriyā Camp in September 2016).

911 Ibid.

912 USCIRF, Annual Report (2015): 97.

913 Dearden (Independent) (May 9, 2017).

914 UNAMI/OHCHR (November 6, 2018): 1,7.

documented across Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, and Anbar provinces. Ninety-five of these were in Ninewa Province, primarily in the Sinjar region, home to a large Yezidi population⁹¹⁵. Estimates suggest that 4,000–10,500 victims were buried in the Ninewa mass graves⁹¹⁶.

By March 2019, over 70 mass graves had been identified in the Sinjar region⁹¹⁷, and the number continued to rise. As of July 12, 2020, 82 Yezidi mass graves, along with dozens of individual graves, had been documented, according to KRG figures confirmed by the United Nations⁹¹⁸.

According to statistics published by the Office of the Rescued Yezidi Abductees in Duhok on September 13, 2020, ISIS killed 1,293 Yezidis⁹¹⁹. By that date, the Office had identified 83 Yezidi mass graves in Sinjar and surrounding areas⁹²⁰, including Zummār (northwest of Mosul), al-Ġadda (a neighborhood of Mosul), the Şōlaġ area (east of Sinjar), Ḥardān and Koço⁹²¹ (Sinjar district), and Qine Ruke (southwest of Sinjar)⁹²².

Notable discoveries include:

- On September 9, 2014, the first mass grave containing remains of victims of ISIS was discovered in the village of Bardi in Ninewa Governorate, on the road to the Mosul Dam.⁹²³ It contained the bodies of 14 Yezidi civilians (10 men, three children and one woman).⁹²⁴
- On February 25, 2017, the mass grave of Khasfa sinkhole in the desert along the Baghdad-Mosul highway was uncovered. It contained the

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915 Ibid., 7.

916 Ibid., 7.

917 The Daily Star (Middle East) (March 16, 2019).

918 Wali (Rudaw) (July 12, 2020).

919 The statistics of Office of the Rescued Yezidi Abductees in Duhok published on September 13, 2020.

920 Ibid.

921 According to the UN until June 2019, 16 confirmed grave sites around Koço had been found. (Middle East Online (meo) (June 6, 2019).

922 UNAMI/OHCHR (November 6, 2018): 8.

923 Ibid., 7.

924 Ibid., 7.

remains of around 4000 bodies including some Yezidis victims⁹²⁵. Witnesses recalled having watched blindfolded Yezidi men being driven to the edge of the hole and then rolled over the edge.⁹²⁶

- A new mass grave of Yezidi victims was found in al-Ba'aj town in the Sinjar District on November 28, 2017. It contained the bodies of 340 Yezidis.⁹²⁷
- On December 3, 2017, Iraqi paramilitary forces uncovered two more mass graves containing the bodies of 140 Yazidi civilians, including women and children, in Sinjar region.⁹²⁸ One mass grave with the bodies of 20 women and about 40 children, was in the village of Qābūsī, south of Sinjar and the second one with 80 other bodies was in the Ġazīra residential complex, also south of Sinjar.⁹²⁹
- On July 12, 2020, a Yezidi family discovered a burned mass grave in the yard of their home. The mass grave was discovered in the Tell Ezer subdistrict near Sinjar. According to the family members, the four buried in the grave are the bodies of four elderly relatives, three women and one man, aged between 60 and 80 years.⁹³⁰
- Moreover, on February 19, 2020, a large ISIS mass grave was discovered in a sinkhole in Tel Afar.⁹³¹ It contained the remains of at least a thousand people, Shiites, and Yezidis, who were killed by ISIS jihadists between 2014 and 2017.⁹³² According to an official from the Tel Afar Mass Graves Affairs Office the sinkhole contained the bodies of at least 30 Yezidis from Sinjar.⁹³³

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925 The News Arab (February 25, 2017). Moore (MailOnline) (February 25, 2017).

926 The News Arab (February 25, 2017).

927 Arutz Sheva 7 (November 28, 2017). The Baghdad Post (November 29, 2017).

928 Arab News (December 3, 2017). Al Arabiya English (December 3, 2017).

929 Arab News (December 3, 2017). Al Arabiya English (December 3, 2017).

930 Wali (Rudaw) (July 12, 2020).

931 Wali (Rudaw) (February 19, 2020).

932 Ibid.

933 Ibid.

On March 15, 2019, the first Yezidi mass graves in Koço were officially opened by United Nations forensic teams, following Yezidi religious ceremonies. Delegations from the Iraqi central government, the Kurdistan Regional Government in Erbil, the United Nations, and other organizations attended⁹³⁴.

In June 2019, the head of Baghdad's Forensic Office announced that DNA testing would be used to identify the 141 bodies found in the grave⁹³⁵. On February 27, 2020, the names of 62 Yezidis were published as the first group to be buried⁹³⁶. After DNA tests identified 104 Yezidi men killed by ISIS, their remains were reburied in a special cemetery in Koço on February 6, 2021⁹³⁷.

On October 24, 2020, under Yezidi religious rites and the supervision of UNITAD head Karim Khan, exhumation began at a mass grave in Şölağ, Sinjar region, in the presence of the mass graves team⁹³⁸. This grave, located near the Technical Institute, contained the remains of about 75 women over 40 years old, including pregnant women⁹³⁹, who had been buried there in 2014⁹⁴⁰.

5.8 From Captivity to Radical Islam: The Indoctrination of Yezidi Children by ISIS

ISIS jihadists abused captured Yezidi children and disciplined them according to their radical interpretation of Islamic ideology⁹⁴¹. In addition to forcing them to convert to Islam, compelling them to read the Qur'an, taking them to mosques for prayers, and teaching them Islamic religious principles,

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934 Voanews (March 15, 2019). Arabnews (March 16, 2019).

935 Middle East Online (meo) (June 6, 2019). Al Arabiya English (June 10, 2019).

936 Republic of Iraq Ministers Council General Secretariat (March 4, 2020). Ezidi24 (February 27, 2020).

937 See, al-Manar (February 6, 2021).

938 Rudaw TV (October 24, 2020).

939 Ibid.

940 Ibid.

941 Elbagir, CNN (October 18, 2017).

the children, and sometimes their mothers, were sold and bought in slave markets⁹⁴². In some cases, children were even sold for organ harvesting⁹⁴³.

Sources confirm that ISIS sold Yezidi orphans to Sunni Muslim families. For instance, a 5-year-old Yezidi boy named Ayman was sold by ISIS for \$500 to a Muslim couple⁹⁴⁴ who were unable to have children⁹⁴⁵. According to Middle East Eye (MEE), when a middle-aged Sunni couple from Mosul learned about the sale of Yezidi orphans, they decided to take one in⁹⁴⁶. They changed his name to Ahmad, taught him to memorize the Qur'an, and enrolled him in a local school. For 18 months, until his eventual rescue, they raised him as their own son⁹⁴⁷.

Similarly, a 10-year-old Yezidi boy from Sinjar was initially placed in an ISIS training camp⁹⁴⁸ and later sold to a Syrian family in Raqqa for 70,000 Iraqi dinars (approximately \$60)⁹⁴⁹. In another case, a 10-year-old Yezidi girl was purchased from the slave market in Mosul by an ISIS-affiliated family⁹⁵⁰. She was taken to Raqqa in northern Syria⁹⁵¹, where she lived in the household of an ISIS Russian woman⁹⁵². At the age of 14, she was forced to marry a 32-year-old jihadist⁹⁵³.

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942 The Global Justice Center (December 17, 2015): 9. Human Rights Council, Thirty-second session agenda item 4 (15 June 2016): 14.

943 al-Dayel (February 4, 2020): 7.

944 Ayman was 4 years old when he was kidnapped by ISIS with 11 relatives, including Ayman's parents and brother, all from the Yazidi village of Hardan, are all who are still missing. He was released on January 28, 2017. For more details about this subject, the rescue of Ayman by Iraqi army and his reunification with his Yezidi grandmother in Iraqi Kurdistan, see Free Burma Rangers (February 5, 2017). Stoter (MEE) (December 18, 2018).

945 Stoter (MEE) (December 18, 2018).

946 Ibid.

947 Ibid.

948 Ibid.

949 Ibid.

950 ANF News (April 27, 2020).

951 Ibid.

952 Ibid.

953 Ibid.

Yezidi children were subjected to military training and extreme Islamic indoctrination, including beheading⁹⁵⁴, weapon use⁹⁵⁵, and planting explosives⁹⁵⁶. They were also exploited as household servants and frontline combatants⁹⁵⁷. Trained boys often served as checkpoint guards, handling ammunition and weapons such as knives, grenades, and Kalashnikovs⁹⁵⁸, and performed logistical tasks like fetching water and supplies⁹⁵⁹. Both children and women were trained to carry out suicide attacks⁹⁶⁰.

This indoctrination occurred in training camps, schools, and mosques⁹⁶¹, with ISIS claiming to operate hundreds of such sites⁹⁶². Training lasted 8 to 10 hours daily for 3 to 7 weeks, combining physical exercises, weapons drills, Qur'anic studies, and Arabic language lessons to enable the reading of the Qur'an⁹⁶³.

Ḥalwā, a 20-year-old Yezidi woman and survivor from Tell Banāt, was captured along with her children and subsequently transferred to Raqqa, Syria. She provided testimony describing the treatment of her children by the jihadists, noting:

*They asked us to convert to Islam. They were taking my children from morning until evening and forced them to speak only Arabic. They were taking them at 7 o'clock at morning and returning them at 4 o'clock at evening*⁹⁶⁴.

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954 Barbarani (July 25, 2015).

955 Interview with Şafwān (January 11, 2019).

956 Amara (July 11, 2017).

957 Elbagir (October 18, 2017).

958 Al-Dayel (February 4, 2020): 7.

959 Ibid., 7.

960 AHT staff (August 05, 2016).

961 Associated Press (20/7/2015).

962 Ibid.

963 Ibid. Snyder (June 15, 2017). al-Dayel (February 4, 2020): 15.

964 Interview with Ḥalwā (in Kabartū 2 Campon 29/2/2016).

Likewise, Mahayā, a 35-year-old Yezidi woman from Khanasor who was captured along with her five children, provided testimony regarding her experience, said:

*[...] they [ISIS] took our children in Qayārā. There was a big hall. They were doing military training in it. They were gathering children and training them there. They were teaching them the Qur'an and prayers*⁹⁶⁵.

Moreover, jihadists employed various methods to force Yezidi children to adopt their ideology as quickly as possible. The children were subjected to beatings, torture, and threats of decapitation or amputation if they resisted during weapons training⁹⁶⁶, as they later recounted to their mothers.

Şafwān, an 8-year-old Yezidi boy from Sinjar City, was captured along with his mother and other family members by ISIS on August 3, 2014. He remained in captivity for two years in the Mosul region and in Syria. About this subject, he narrated his experience, saying:

*They [ISIS jihadists] took us to Qizil [Qasr] Mihrāb [the village located southwest of Tel Afar]. And then we lived in Mosul city with an ISIS family in their house. Then, they transferred us to Syria. They killed a person in the front of us in order to intimidate us*⁹⁶⁷.

He also described his indoctrination, saying:

*They [ISIS jihadists] gave us guns and told us to play with them. [...] They give us guns and told us, you must kill Peshmerga and blow ourselves up among them. I have killed a person and my brother killed two others through training. They trained us in the evening [...]. They taunted us and hit us with a wood stick and a belt*⁹⁶⁸.

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965 Interview with Mahayā (in Şāriyā Camp on 02.02.2016).

966 Snyder (June 15, 2017). Interview with Şafwān (January 11, 2019).

967 Interview with Şafwān (January 11, 2019).

968 Ibid.

Similarly, the jihadists sometimes used psychological tools to encourage the children to behave well during training. They separated the children from their mothers after killing the fathers, and from other adults in their families. Because the separations lasted so long, the children missed their families, especially their mothers. The jihadists would promise to let them meet their mothers if they showed progress in becoming good soldiers⁹⁶⁹.

One report described the training program as follows. The children had to wake up early in the morning at 4:00 a.m. They had to wash and pray⁹⁷⁰. Another step was ideological training and Qur'an recital, followed by weapons training. During the day they were also shown jihadi videos⁹⁷¹. There were also special tests about their understanding of Islam that the children had to pass⁹⁷².

According to a Yezidi child who was trained in al-Farouq Camp, they received lengthy lessons on reciting the Qur'an and on the origins of the Islamic faith before going through military training for the rest of the day⁹⁷³.

The timing of lessons for Yezidi children differed from camp to camp. A 12-year-old Yezidi boy who trained in Raqqa⁹⁷⁴ said they had to wake up at 4:00 a.m. to pray and then went back to sleep until 8:00. From 8:00 to 9:00 they had breakfast and then were given lessons on the Qur'an until 12:00, the time of lunch. According to him, after lunch they were trained on weapons until 5:00 p.m. To simulate suicide bombs, they wore a black piece of cloth with a white piece underneath that could be pulled to "detonate" the bomb⁹⁷⁵.

Akram, a 7-year-old Yezidi child, was captured by ISIS jihadists and remained in their custody for two and a half years⁹⁷⁶. According to him, his "lessons" began with pictures illustrating how to behead an enemy, referred to

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969 Snyder (June 15, 2017).
970 Amara (July 11, 2017).
971 Feldman (June 7, 2017).
972 Hussein (January 11, 2018).
973 Kassem (November 10, 2015).
974 Hussein (VOAnews: June 20, 2016).
975 Ibid
976 Snyder (Fox News: June 15, 2017).

by the jihadists as an unbeliever⁹⁷⁷. After completing these drawing exercises, he was moved on to practical training. On one occasion, the jihadists took him to a town square⁹⁷⁸, where he witnessed an actual beheading⁹⁷⁹.

‘Adil, an 8-year-old Yezidi boy from Tell Ezer and a survivor of ISIS captivity, recounted his experiences in Syria during an interview, he pointed out:

From Ḥayy al-Ḥadrā’ [in Tel Afar], they [ISIS] took me to Syria. [...] One time one came and took me. There were two others in the car. We drove for a while and we got out. And they slaughtered one. He was wearing orange dress. They put a cover over his head and beheaded him. There was a cameraman who was recording the case. They beheaded him in the middle of city. There were many people gathered there. This was in Tadmur [Syria]. Another time too, they took me, and they also brought an 11-year-old boy and killed him⁹⁸⁰.

‘Adil was trained alongside many other Yezidi children in a military camp in Homs, Syria. He recounted further details, saying:

In Homs [Syria], they brought me to training. It was a military camp It was in the streets. They trained me. They forced me to run. They did not give us weapons yet. There were many children [...]. My clothes were a military thobe. They also give us a cloth for two days and told us, “Put it around your head⁹⁸¹.”

.....
977 Ibid.

978 Public executions and decapitations were common in the territories controlled by ISIS. In Raqqa’s main square, ISIS executed those who were considered infidels, spies, doubters, ISIS’s deserters, and prisoners of war. (Moubayed 2015: 134–135).

979 Snyder (Fox News: June 15, 2017).

980 Interview with ‘Adil (in Šāriyā Camp on 13.02.2016).

981 Ibid.

Şafwān, an eight-year-old Yezidi boy from Sinjar City, was captured by ISIS on August 3, 2014, and remained in captivity for two years in the Mosul region and Syria, said:

*At the morning we woke up and washed our faces, and then we went to pray. They taught us the Qur'an, and we prayed*⁹⁸².

The jihadists focused their lessons for Yezidi children on cultivating enthusiasm for waging jihad⁹⁸³. Some instructors used large-screen televisions to teach these lessons, showing specific films that depicted black-clad jihadists “liberating” cities from *kuffār* (non-believers), as well as graphic scenes of beheadings followed by celebratory gatherings⁹⁸⁴.

In cases where the children made mistakes or failed to memorize their lessons, they were punished, often through beatings with electric cables⁹⁸⁵. During physical training sessions, jihadists would sometimes fire their guns near the children’s feet to force them to run faster⁹⁸⁶.

ISIS occasionally documented the training of Yezidi children and disseminated these recordings online. One such video portrays young Yezidi boys undergoing military training in a camp⁹⁸⁷, receiving Islamic religious instruction, and later joining an ISIS jihadist camp in Syria, where they were eventually included on a list of the group’s suicide [jihad] bombers⁹⁸⁸.

‘Adil, an eight-year-old Yezidi boy from Tell Ezer, provided further details about this period of captivity, said:

They told us we were infidels, and we had to say “al-ḥamdu-li-llah.” We converted to the clean religion [meaning Islam]. And they told us that we

.....
982 Interview with Şafwān (January 11, 2019).

983 D’agata (July 29, 2017).

984 Feldman (June 7, 2017).

985 Amara (Channel SBS: July 11, 2017).

986 Ibid.

987 Arkandi (2017-10-17).

988 Ibid.

were fighting for the way of God [...]. They showed us a video of children killing people [...]. It was a short part of the video, when [that part] was finished, they replayed it frequently. They told us [they showed it to us] in order that we do the same [...]. In the military camp, there was a child about 8 years old, who was calling for prayer as Mullā at times of prayers. He was praying and we too prayed behind him. We were praying five times per day⁹⁸⁹ [...].

According to a 12-year-old survivor who was trained at the al-Farouq camp, approximately 150 Yezidi children were held and trained there⁹⁹⁰. An ISIS propaganda video from the al-Farouq camp in Raqqa depicts Yezidi boys dressed in camouflage uniforms performing calisthenics and chanting slogans⁹⁹¹. In the video, an ISIS fighter stated that the boys had studied *jihād* so that “in the coming days, God Almighty can place them on the front lines to battle the infidels⁹⁹².”

The promise of attaining paradise after death served as one of the primary motivating factors for jihadists to carry out suicide operations. A Yezidi boy who escaped ISIS captivity recounted that the jihadists intentionally starved the children while telling them: “In paradise, you will be able to eat whatever you want. But first, you have to reach paradise, and you do that by blowing yourself up⁹⁹³.”

The military training of Yezidi children consisted of a variety of exercises. ISIS-released footage shows children participating in drills⁹⁹⁴ that included crawling under barbed wire, moving through narrow tunnels, and training with assault rifles⁹⁹⁵.

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989 Interview with ‘Ādil (in Šāriyā Camp on 13.02.2016).

990 Kassem (November 10, 2015).

991 Associated Press (20/7/2015).

992 Ibid.

993 Fisch (May 10, 2017).

994 Akbar (Daily Mail: June 16, 2015).

995 Ibid.

Upon completing their military training, the captured Yezidi boys were integrated into a group that ISIS referred to as the Cubs of the Caliphate⁹⁹⁶ (*Ašbāl al-Ḥalīfa*).

Wārīdā, a Yezidi woman from Khanasor in the Sinjar region, is one such survivor. She was captured by ISIS along with her children on August 3, 2014, and was released in September 2015. During her captivity, she and her children were transferred to Syria. Her Egyptian captor sent her sons for military training under the direction of his Amīr, identified as Abū Hāšim from Libya⁹⁹⁷. She said:

He was taking my sons, later he took the daughter too. My sons told me: “They were tying our mouth and then catching our leg and putting our head into the water in the lake. They were beating our back and stomach with military boots.” When they were bringing them back from [military] training, they were taking them for [religious] teaching again⁹⁹⁸.

She went on to describe her experience, saying:

My sons were saying that they told us: “To stand on our head, break the stick by hitting the breast of each other”⁹⁹⁹[...]. My oldest son said: “They were training them to use weapons too. They were giving him drugs during the training. They were giving us a capsule¹⁰⁰⁰.”
He said: “When I was taking it, I was not feeling pain when they were hitting me¹⁰⁰¹.”

Due to the systematic and programmatic nature of ISIS’s educational framework and the prolonged duration of captivity, many Yezidi children inevitably internalized the ideological indoctrination and became profoundly influenced

.....
996 Hussein (January 11, 2018).

997 Interview with Wārīdā (in Šāriyā camp on 02.10.2016).

998 Ibid.

999 Ibid.

1000 Ibid.

1001 Ibid.

by the radical doctrines of ISIS¹⁰⁰². Some of these children eventually joined the jihadist ranks and participated in military operations in Syria¹⁰⁰³. Others, even after being liberated from ISIS control, refused to return to their Yezidi families¹⁰⁰⁴, having developed hostility not only toward the Yezidi community and religion but also toward their own relatives¹⁰⁰⁵.

Moreover, a considerable number of Yezidi children were toddlers at the time of their abduction. Their jihadist captors originated from diverse national backgrounds, including Turkey¹⁰⁰⁶, Russia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan¹⁰⁰⁷, several Arab countries, Germany, and Great Britain¹⁰⁰⁸. Among them were also Muslim Kurds affiliated with ISIS, particularly from the Khatuni, Tata¹⁰⁰⁹, and Gargari tribes¹⁰¹⁰. During their captivity and training within ISIS camps, Yezidi children were prohibited from speaking their native language¹⁰¹¹, the Kurmānjī dialect of Kurdish¹⁰¹². Consequently, many acquired the languages of their captors and, in some cases, forgot their mother tongue entirely. This linguistic loss further complicated their reintegration into post-captivity life and their re-identification with the Yezidi community.

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1002 Kassem (al-Hayat Newspaper: November 10, 2015).

1003 Ibid.

1004 Ibid.

1005 Ibid. Elbagir (October 18, 2017). D'agata (July 29, 2017).

1006 Elbagir (October 18, 2017).

1007 Clarion Project (November 14, 2017).

1008 On December 28, 2019, the United Nations released ISIS jihadists numbers according to their nationalities who participated in the killing, rape, displacement, and absenteeism in Iraq. They were from 46 countries. 750 of them were from UK and 600 from Germany. (al-'Aṭwānī (December 28, 2019).

1009 Interview with Gawrē (in Šariyā in September 2016).

1010 On April 1, 2015, ISIS released a video clip entitled "Nineveh clans renew allegiance and prepare to confront." The duration of the video is more than eleven minutes. In which shows thirty sheikhs from the major tribes of Nineveh. They were sting in a big hall while the ISIS representatives reading the names of those clans that renew allegiance to ISIS, included the name of Kurdish Gargari tribe. See video in YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOAX-Z3MMuA>. Shamdeen (Nov 03, 2015).

1011 It should also be noted that an increasing number of Yezidis now maintain that their language is not Kurmānjī Kurdish, but rather Ezdiki.

1012 Kassem (November 10, 2015): (al-Hayat newspaper).

Ayhām is an eight-year-old Yezidi child from the village of Tell Banāt in the Sinjar region. At the age of four, he was captured by ISIS jihadists together with his brother and mother. Their first captor in Tel Afar was a militant known as Abū Ğandal. Following his separation from his family, Ayhām was sold to an American member family of ISIS in Syria. He remained in captivity until late August 2017. During this period, he acquired proficiency in English¹⁰¹³ while retaining his mother tongue, Kurmanji¹⁰¹⁴.

Also, when a Yezidi survivor child named Ayman¹⁰¹⁵ was reunited with his grandmother, he had no memory of his real parents, Middle East Eye (MEE) reports¹⁰¹⁶. Ayman’s grandmother told Middle East Eye (MEE):

[...] *He did not speak a word of Kurdish anymore, only Arabic*¹⁰¹⁷ [...].

Sīpān, a Yezidi survivor who was only four years old when captured by ISIS, was released in 2017. At the time of his rescue, he spoke only Turkish and had to re-learn Kurmānjī¹⁰¹⁸. After spending several years with a Turkmānī Iraqi couple from Tel Afar, Sīpān barely remembered that his parents were Yezidis, or that his real name was not “Dawud,” the name given to him by the couple who had purchased him from ISIS¹⁰¹⁹.

Ronya, a ten-year-old Yezidi girl, recounted to ANF: “We were not allowed to speak Kurdish either, otherwise they would have killed us¹⁰²⁰.” After six years

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1013 I conducted a part of the interview with him in English. He was speaking very good English, but also Kurdish. He confirmed that he has learned English from that American family in Syria. He stated that the members of that American family were talking only English.

1014 Interview with Ayhām (January 11, 2019).

1015 He is a Yezidi child from Sinjar, who was four years old when he was captured by ISIS in 2014. ISIS sold him to a local Sunni couple from Mosul for \$500. In January 2018, the Iraqi forces obtained information that a couple was keeping a Yezidi child in their home. The Iraqi forces, accompanied by US soldiers, went to the house, and took him to his relatives in Kurdistan region. (Stoter (MEE) (December 18, 2018).

1016 Ibid.

1017 Ibid.

1018 Interview with Sīpān (in Šāriyā in December 2019).

1019 Stoter (MEE) (December 18, 2018).

1020 ANF News (April 27, 2020).

in ISIS captivity, she became fluent in Russian and Arabic, but nearly lost her mother tongue, Kurmānjī¹⁰²¹. According to ANF News, only a few Kurdish words remained in her vocabulary¹⁰²².

Zuhūr, a 28-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar, was captured in August 2014 and released on December 2, 2015¹⁰²³. In her interview, she explained that ISIS jihadists and their families forced her children to speak only Arabic. Although she did not speak Arabic herself, they threatened to kill her if she spoke Kurdish to her children¹⁰²⁴. As a result, her children learned Arabic¹⁰²⁵, and her five-year-old daughter forgot her mother tongue. In this regard she recounted:

She [5-year-old daughter] could not speak Kurdish at all. She has already learned a little bit of Kurdish [after being released]. She was speaking only Arabic [during the captive period]. They did not let her to speak Kurdish. One time the man [Zuhūr's ISIS ownerin Ṭabqā in Syria] came to me and said to me, "If we find that you are speaking in Kurdish with your children, we will slaughter you. You have to speak in Arabic with them"¹⁰²⁶.

She continued to describe the situation by saying:

[...] They were teaching them [her children] the Qur'an. I did not care to learn it [Qur'an]. They said to me, "It is right that you are praying, but your heart still does not believe. You are still unbeliever." His [Zuhūr's ISIS owner] daughters were teaching the Qur'an to my daughter. They said to me, "You are unbeliever. We want to teach her"¹⁰²⁷.

.....
1021 Ibid.

1022 Ibid.

1023 Interview with Zuhūr (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 28/1/2016).

1024 Ibid.

1025 Ibid.

1026 Ibid.

1027 Ibid.

6 The Unknown Future Awaiting Yezidism and Yezidi Survivors

Although the recent genocide committed by the Islamic State against the Yezidis has ended, it has left enduring consequences that threaten the future of Yezidi religious identity and jeopardize both the social and religious structures of their community. This is primarily due to the atrocities committed by Islamic State jihadists against Yezidi female and the devastating consequences of the sexual violence they inflicted upon them.

6.1 The Fate of Yezidi Women and Children Victims of ISIS Invasion

ISIS perpetrated genocide against the Yezidis, aiming to annihilate the Yezidi community through an organized and systematic campaign. This campaign included mass killings, forced conversions, rape and other forms of sexual violence, as well as the forced indoctrination of Yezidi children into the group's radical Islamic *jihad* ideology. These actions have left deep scars, affecting not only the current lives of Yezidis but also shaping the uncertain future of their individuals, community, and faith.

As of September 13, 2020, a total of 3,537 Yezidis who had been captured by ISIS were rescued¹⁰²⁸. Among them were 1,201 women, 339 men, 954 boys, and 1,043 girls¹⁰²⁹. However, the fate of many Yezidi women, men, and children remains unknown. On the same date, approximately 2,880 individuals – 1,304

.....
1028 The statistics of Office of the Rescued Yezidi Abductees in Duhok published on September 13, 2020.

1029 Ibid.

of them female – were still unaccounted for, either remaining in the hands of ISIS militants or hidden among families in displaced persons' camps¹⁰³⁰.

Meanwhile, some Sunni Arabs, particularly in Mosul, who had supported ISIS, continue to conceal kidnapped Yezidi children¹⁰³¹. Many wives of ISIS jihadists are also hiding the identities of hundreds of abducted Yezidi children, whom they took with them to prisons and displaced persons' camps in Iraq¹⁰³² and Syria. In a single month, fifteen kidnapped Yezidi children were discovered living with ISIS women and Arab families in Mosul¹⁰³³; their ages ranged from four to seven years old¹⁰³⁴.

According to eyewitnesses, in the city of Tal 'Afar alone, approximately 300 Yezidi boys were subjected to training and indoctrination in Islamic State ideology at a local school¹⁰³⁵.

Furthermore, one of the major effects of the ISIS invasion on the Yezidis is that it left behind a large number of widows and orphans within the community. There are Yezidi families in which only a single member has survived, while all others were killed or executed by ISIS jihadists. According to one unofficial statistic, the ISIS invasion resulted in more than 2,700 Yezidi children being orphaned¹⁰³⁶. Likewise, many Yezidi children were deprived of education for more than four years, particularly in the Sinjar region and the Mosul area. Even after their liberation, many of them were not given the opportunity to resume their education for various reasons, in addition to those mentioned above. To this day, they continue to live in refugee camps under harsh living conditions. This indicates that ISIS has irrevocably damaged the future of thousands of Yezidi children. As mentioned earlier, some of the Yezidi children who were

.....
1030 Ibid.

1031 Rudaw TV (Jul 26, 2020): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dROM6nm9bNE&feature=youtu.be>

1032 Clarion Project (November 14, 2017).

1033 Ibid.

1034 Ibid.

1035 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/ United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq – Human Rights office (August 2016).

1036 Interview with Šammāl Salīm Šammo (in Šāriyā on 23.02.2020).

liberated had been thoroughly indoctrinated with ISIS ideology, while others had forgotten their mother tongue, Kurmānjî.

Yezidism is not only a non-proselytizing (non-missionary) religion, but it also does not permit conversion into the faith, regardless of one's previous beliefs; only those born to Yezidi parents are considered Yezidi. Moreover, a Yezidi who converts to another religion cannot return to Yezidism. Historically, a girl who lost her virginity to a non-Yezidi, even those captured during the historical Islamic invasions, was considered to have been cast out of the Yezidi community. This has been the case for nearly all Yezidis who were forcibly converted to Islam during past invasions, except for one incident that occurred during the campaigns of Farîq 'Umar Wahbî, which was discussed earlier in this study.

The international community initially paid considerable attention to the Yezidi situation at the beginning of the ISIS invasion, attention that had never been extended during earlier historical Islamic assaults on the Yezidis. Consequently, many Yezidis believed they would not be left alone to face these dire circumstances.

Yezidis around the world organized public demonstrations, calling upon the United States, European nations, the United Nations Security Council, and the international community at large to assist them and rescue their women and girls from ISIS jihadists. However, no substantial assistance was forthcoming. Even after the territorial defeat of ISIS, meaningful help remained limited, despite the Yezidis and the global public having witnessed, through media coverage, the brutal treatment of Yezidi women and girls in the Islamic "slave markets."

After realizing that there were no serious efforts by the international community or Iraqi local authorities to rescue the captives, the Yezidis turned to their own resources. The most practical method for rescuing Yezidi captives was to pay smugglers to purchase them from their ISIS jihadist "owners" and return them to their families. The cost for each rescued captive generally

ranged from 6,000 to over 10,000 USD, with some reports indicating prices exceeding 12,800 USD for multiple family members¹⁰³⁷.

ISIS had its own strategy for retaining Yezidi captives as war spoils¹⁰³⁸; consequently, buying back captives from ISIS jihadists was initially extremely difficult. However, after ISIS lost significant economic resources, particularly oil production in Mosul and Raqqa, due to the combined military campaigns of US-led coalition air forces and Kurdish ground forces, ISIS jihadists sought alternative methods to sustain their economy¹⁰³⁹. One of these methods was selling kidnapped Yezidis¹⁰⁴⁰. Simultaneously, the military campaigns prompted a significant retreat of ISIS forces in Iraq and Syria, leading dozens of jihadists to sell abducted Yezidi women and children in order to secure their own escape, sometimes even facilitating their movement to Europe or other safer areas¹⁰⁴¹.

Despite these opportunities to reclaim captives, the cost was prohibitively high for the Yezidi refugees themselves. This process was far from easy; rescuing even a single survivor required substantial financial resources¹⁰⁴². Many Yezidis had already lost all their property during the ISIS invasion and were still living under harsh conditions in refugee camps, making these rescues a tremendous economic burden.

In 2014, the KRG created the “Office of the Rescued Yezidi Abductees” in Duhok, spending millions to buy captives from ISIS, though the cost per person remains undisclosed¹⁰⁴³.

Once liberated, Yezidi captives faced numerous psychological challenges. To address this need, by early 2016, the Federal Republic of Germany sponsored

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1037 Interview with Ḥalīma (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016). Interview with Gulē (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.09.2016). Interview with Zuhūr (in Kabartū 1 Camp on 28/1/2016). Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (15 June 2016): 15.

1038 Also, see, Petrou 2019: 300.

1039 Arkandi (Online Suwar Magazine: 2017-10-17).

1040 Ibid.

1041 Ibid.

1042 Ibid. Also, for example, see: Interview with Ḥalīma (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016). Interview with Samīrā (in Qādiyā Camp on 03.07.2016). Interview with Gulē (in Šāriyā Camp on 02.09.2016).

1043 Elbagir (October 18, 2017).

a program that relocated over 1,000 Yezidi women and children, survivors of ISIS captivity who had been held as sex slaves, to the Stuttgart region (Baden-Württemberg, Germany) for psychological treatment, including trauma therapy¹⁰⁴⁴. On August 7, 2019, the German Federal Foreign Office published an article on its official website summarizing Germany's support for Yezidi victims of ISIS persecution, stating in part:

Measures to help the internally displaced deal with trauma are being funded, mainly in the Dohuk areas. Among other things, a training course for trauma therapists at the local university has been set up with the support of Baden-Württemberg. In refugee camps, the German Government is supporting not only medical but also psychological care for severely traumatized women and children who were abducted by IS but were able to flee¹⁰⁴⁵.

The article notes that Germany's most significant support for the Yezidis lies in projects documenting ISIS crimes against them. This effort to gather evidence may provide important material for the future recognition of the Yezidi genocide. The article continues:

One key focus of German support are the projects on documenting the human rights violations and crimes against humanity committed by IS in Sinjar, including projects run by the Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA) and the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP). Their work is helping the search for the missing, evidence-gathering and the exhumation of mass graves – with the aim of making it possible to prosecute IS crimes at a later point in time. Moreover, the German Government is supporting the efforts of the

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1044 Also, see: Human Rights Council, thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (15 June 2016): 33. Feldman (The Daily Beast) (May 16, 2017). Shirin mit Cavelius und Kızılhan 2016: 315–344.

1045 Federal Foreign Office[of Germany] (August 7, 2019).

*United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) in Iraq*¹⁰⁴⁶.

Similarly, in December 2018, as part of the Humanitarian Admissions Program launched by President Emmanuel Macron¹⁰⁴⁷, France received the first group of Yezidi women and their children liberated from ISIS. This group included 16 Yezidi families, totaling 83 individuals¹⁰⁴⁸. On May 22, 2019, a second group of 28 families departed from Erbil International Airport for Toulouse, France¹⁰⁴⁹. On August 7, 2019, a third group of Yezidi families was received by the French Ministry of the Interior. All women and children were victims of ISIS jihadists in 2014¹⁰⁵⁰. The Ministry stated that the French state would provide protection, security, education, and medical and social support for the families¹⁰⁵¹.

Likewise, since 2015, the Australian government, under the Offshore Humanitarian Program, has focused on resettling Yezidi women, children, and families from Iraq and Syria, particularly survivors of ISIS¹⁰⁵². From July 1, 2015, until February 2019, Australia granted offshore humanitarian visas to 2,738 Yezidis, who are now beginning new lives in the country¹⁰⁵³. Moreover, in March 2018, the Australian House of Representatives formally recognized the ISIS attacks against the Yezidi community, passing a motion acknowledging the genocide perpetrated against the Yezidis in Iraq¹⁰⁵⁴.

In December 2014, the Yezidis began establishing six local schools, called *Kānīyā Spī* (White Spring)¹⁰⁵⁵ Schools, in refugee camps in the Kurdistan

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1046 Ibid.

1047 International Organization for Migration (Report on May 22, 2019).

1048 Europe1 (August 8, 2019).

1049 International Organization for Migration (Report on May 22, 2019). Europe1(August 8, 2019).

1050 Europe1 (August 8, 2019). Ezidi24 (August 7, 2019).

1051 Europe1 (August 8, 2019).

1052 Australia Government: Department of Home Affairs (February 4, 2019).

1053 Ibid.

1054 Hutchinson (March 8, 2018).

1055 The name of these schools comes from the holy spring called “White Spring” located in Lalish temple.

region of northern Iraq for refugee children¹⁰⁵⁶. Many rescued Yezidi children attended these schools, where they learned Yezidi religious principles, studied their native language, and explored Yezidi history¹⁰⁵⁷. For these children, the schools played a crucial role in countering ISIS propaganda¹⁰⁵⁸.

By the time the *Kānīyā Spī* schools were closed in September 2019 by the Kurdistan Regional Government, due to not being officially sanctioned¹⁰⁵⁹, more than 700 rescued orphans had attended¹⁰⁶⁰.

In addition, after Yezidis began escaping ISIS captivity, a new psychological rehabilitation center was opened in the city of Dohuk specifically for Yezidi children who had been used as child soldiers¹⁰⁶¹. The center aims to rehabilitate these children and facilitate their reintegration into their families, communities, and culture¹⁰⁶².

Several other projects, funded by the Yezidi community themselves, also assist in reintegrating rescued children, particularly orphans. One such initiative is the Juveen Charity Orphanage House¹⁰⁶³, which provides education and support to help surviving children return to a normal life disrupted by the ISIS invasion¹⁰⁶⁴. Juveen operates with more than 40 volunteers caring for approximately 140 orphaned children¹⁰⁶⁵.

However, a significant concern remains regarding programs to treat and reintegrate rescued children into Yezidi society. There is no comprehensive, professional program addressing this issue, either by internal or external government institutions. On the contrary, the matter has often been exploited

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1056 Rudaw TV (September 9, 2019).

1057 Yazidi. Info (September 12, 2019).

1058 Rudaw TV (September 9, 2019).

1059 Rudaw TV (September 9, 2019).

1060 Yazidi. Info (September 12, 2019).

1061 al-Shahid (April 3, 2018).

1062 Ibid.

1063 The Yezidi businessman Basheer Koreih funded the project of Juveen Charity Orphanage House for Yezidi orphans.

1064 Interview with Šamāl Salīm Šammo (in Šāriyā on 23.02.2020).

1065 Ibid.

for political and economic interests by local governments in Iraq, NGOs, journalists, and the media.

6.2 Captives and Children of ISIS Rapists

ISIS jihadists subjected many Yezidi women and girls to systematic sexual violence. The forms of abuse included forced rape, gang rape, and the killing of children when women refused sexual advances. Many of the women and girls were held captive for prolonged periods, some for as long as five years, and others remain in captivity to this day.

A consequence of these assaults was that many women and girls became pregnant, giving birth either during captivity or after their release. These pregnancies occurred despite attempts by their captors to impose birth control through pills and injections¹⁰⁶⁶. Some mothers gave their infants away under circumstances that remain unclear¹⁰⁶⁷. Among those rescued, some Yezidi women integrated these children into their families, while others left the children with their captors, sometimes personally delivering them to orphanages in Syria before returning to Iraq¹⁰⁶⁸. According to members of the committees overseeing these orphanages, some mothers remain in close contact with their children¹⁰⁶⁹.

The identities of the fathers of many of these children remain unknown. This uncertainty arises from several circumstances: some women were gang-raped, making paternity impossible to establish; others were sold and raped by multiple jihadists over short periods; and in some cases, the fathers were killed during the conflict.

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1066 Human Rights Council, Thirty-second session, agenda item 4 (15 June 2016): 15.

1067 *Ibid.*, 15. Shirin mit Cavelius und Kızılhan 2016: 263–264.

1068 There are 41 children in an orphanage in northeastern Syria born of Yezidi mothers and ISIS jihadists. Arraf (npr) (June 6, 2019).

1069 *Ibid.*

This tragic situation raises profound social, ethical, and humanitarian questions regarding the experiences of the captives, the welfare of their children, and the broader implications for the Yezidi community:

- What fate awaits these children?
- Is it possible for Yezidi families to raise these children alongside their biological children?
- What about those children who were left with the jihadists? Legally, whose children are they?
- What are the official and community positions of the Yezidis toward these children?
- What is the Islamic perspective regarding these children?

All of these questions need careful consideration. Yezidis live in various countries in the region, including Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, where constitutions and personal status laws are based on *Šarī'a* and other principles of Islam. Courts in these countries make decisions according to these principles, which also apply to Yezidis.

Additionally, Yezidis who were forced to convert to Islam by ISIS have often returned to Yezidism. These individuals emphasize that they only *pretended* to convert to Islam to avoid severe punishment, without abandoning their religious beliefs.

However, regardless of the forced nature of the conversion, Islamic principles hold that anyone who declares the *šahāda* is considered a Muslim. Furthermore, those who later return to their original religion are considered apostates (*murtaddūn*). The situation for individuals labeled as apostates is complicated, and Islamic principles prescribe severe consequences¹⁰⁷⁰.

According to the “Islamic Personal Status Law¹⁰⁷¹,” which is applied in Iraqi courts, the children of ISIS perpetrators are considered Muslims. Chapter

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1070 About the fate of who is regarded an apostate or *murtad* in Islam, see for example: Şaḫīḫ Muslim 1991: 3/1302–1303. Şaḫīḫ al-Buḫārī 2002: 1712.

1071 Personal Status Law is a branch of the law which is used in the court for civil issues such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, marital rights, dowry, taboos, etc., and all other issues

Five, Article 21, Section 3 of the Muslim Personal Status Law, No. 65 of 1972, emphasizes that minor children follow the religious conversion of their parents¹⁰⁷². Similarly, Chapter Five, Article 45 of the Iraqi Juvenile Welfare Law, No. 76 of 1983, references the same principle¹⁰⁷³.

The Islamic Personal Status Law was subsequently replaced by another statute containing largely identical provisions. Despite objections from representatives of non-Muslim communities in the Iraqi Council of Representatives, the new legislation, known as the National Card Law, was approved on October 27, 2015. It came into force on February 1, 2016, under Law No. 3 of 2016¹⁰⁷⁴.

Article 26, paragraph 2 of the law stipulates: “Children who are minors follow the religion of whichever parent embraces Islam.” This provision dictates that not only are children born to Muslim parents automatically considered Muslim, but also that all minors under the age of eighteen must convert to Islam if either parent adopts the faith¹⁰⁷⁵.

In addition, Iraqi law mandates that every child born to an unknown father must be registered as Muslim¹⁰⁷⁶. The legislation also precludes the registration of children under their mother’s name; legal registration is permitted only under the father’s name¹⁰⁷⁷. These provisions create significant difficulties, particularly in the context of children fathered by ISIS jihadists, whose identities are often unknown or impossible to verify.

Moreover, the law prohibits non-Muslims from adopting children considered Muslim. Consequently, Yezidi women who wish to adopt children born as a result of sexual violence perpetrated by ISIS face legal barriers, as these children are automatically deemed Muslim under Iraqi law.

belonging to a specific group that has its own culture, traditions, and religion. The main sources of this law are culture, traditions, and religion.

1072 See Iraqi Personal Status Law No. (65) of 1972.

1073 See Iraqi Juvenile welfare law No. (76) of 1983.

1074 National Card Law, No. (3) of 2016.

1075 National Card Law, No. (3) of 2016.

1076 Iraqi Personal Status Law No. (65) of 1972, Chapter Six, Article 32, Section 2.

1077 See, Iraqi Personal Status Law No. (65) of 1972, Chapter Four: Article 15.

On February 6, 2015, the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council issued a formal statement¹⁰⁷⁸ regarding the reintegration of Yezidi women survivors and their children who had been abducted by ISIS. The Council highlighted the genocide inflicted upon the Yezidi community and the severe hardships endured by Yezidism as a result of the ISIS invasion. Concerning the kidnapped individuals, the Council affirmed that the rescued Yezidis remain faithful to Yezidism and that their beliefs cannot be altered against their will. The statement concluded with an appeal to all members of society to assist the returnees in resuming normal lives and achieving full reintegration into their communities.

Likewise, on April 24, 2019, the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council issued a statement signed by the deputy of the Yezidi prince and the head of the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council¹⁰⁷⁹ regarding Yezidi captive women, girls, and their children. The statement contains a brief explanation and four points, summarized below.

The explanation notes that, in recent times, many questions have arisen concerning the opinion of the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council regarding the surviving women and their children. In response, the Council issued the following clarifications:

1. The Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council issued a decision accepting all survivors, persons who have returned to the Yezidi community, because what they suffered was beyond their control.
2. After the elimination of ISIS, the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council sent a delegation of Yezidi religious leaders to Syria to follow up on the issue of Yezidi captives, to locate them, and to facilitate their return.
3. The Council emphasizes to the international community that the Yezidis have been victims throughout history, and it will treat survivors with honor, humanity, and transparency, insofar as the matter falls within the Council's authority.

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1078 The whole text of this statement, see: Appendix number (19).

1079 The whole text of this statement, see: Appendix number (20).

4. The Council calls on the international community and all relevant organizations to cooperate in reintegrating survivors through specialized programs.

Although the content of this statement does not directly address the question of whether children of ISIS perpetrators should be accepted into the Yezidi community, it became the most important and controversial topic among the Yezidis themselves. Various opinions emerged within the community. According to my observations, the most prevalent viewpoint was that, although the children are innocent, they should remain outside the Yezidi community and religion. Supporters of this position argue that Yezidism is not a missionary religion seeking to convert others, and, in this case, the children, and that the traditional structure of the Yezidi faith clearly states that only those born to Yezidi parents can be Yezidi.

Another perspective emphasizes that Iraqi state laws are based on Islamic Šarī'a law and other principles of Islam, which consider the children of ISIS perpetrators to be Muslims. Therefore, there is no guarantee regarding the future religious affiliation of these children. For example, if a child is raised by Yezidis as a Yezidi, it would still theoretically be possible for the biological ISIS father to later reclaim the child and raise them within Islamic society and religion. For this reason, Yezidis have requested that Iraqi state laws be modified to prevent such occurrences. To date, the Iraqi government has not responded to this request.

Another possibility is for these children to be openly accepted and reintegrated into the Yezidi community, recognizing that the children are innocent and themselves victims.

A further option is for the Iraqi state to care for the children of ISIS perpetrators in special orphanages or residential centers until they reach the age of eighteen, at which point they could decide their own religious affiliation.

Perhaps most importantly, some Yezidi mothers are unwilling to be separated from their children born of rape¹⁰⁸⁰; they wish to bring these children back into the Yezidi community. In this scenario, and in addition to the

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1080 Kohnavard (BBC News: August 1, 2019). Arraf (npr) (June 6, 2019).

previously mentioned options, there are two main possibilities regarding the fate of these mothers: first, the mothers could remain within the Islamic faith of their children; or second, the state could care for both mothers and children until they are able to return to normal life, at which point the mother could choose either to remain with her children or to leave them and return to her Yezidi community and religion. However, their ability to make such a decision may be compromised, as many have been psychologically traumatized and brainwashed during their captivity.

The prevailing opinion within the Yezidi community was to refuse the reintegration of children of ISIS perpetrators into the community. Consequently, the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council issued a further clarification of its earlier statement three days later.

On April 27, 2019, the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council issued an explanation¹⁰⁸¹, which stated in part:

To explain to the Yezidi popular opinion, the content of our Statement issued on 24.4.2019, regarding to the decision of survivor women and their children, it does not apply to those children that born as a result of rape. [The Statement] refers to the children were born from the Yezidi parents who were captured during the ISIS invasion of Sinjar City on 3.8.2014. What has been discussed recently about Yezidis refusing to receive women survivors and their children is having a negative effect on the Yezidi issue, therefore, we have decided to issue this explanation on our previous decision considering receiving Yezidi women survivors and their children which was issued on February 6, 2015. And what has been published by some medias was distortion and misinformation of facts. It also is completely opposite to the principles and pillars of Yezidi religion and Yezidi social customs.

Accordingly, the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council's explanation states that, according to Yezidi religious principles and pillars, it is not possible to

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1081 The whole text of this statement, see: Appendix number (21).

reintegrate the children of ISIS perpetrators into the Yezidi community. The Council emphasizes that only those born to Yezidi parents can be Yezidi.

Historically, within Yezidi religion and society, it was not possible for a Yezidi who had left the faith to return and become Yezidi again. Moreover, according to Yezidi cultural and social traditions, sexual relations or marriage with non-Yezidis are not permitted. Although such actions are not formally sanctioned¹⁰⁸², they are considered shameful and typically result in banishment from the Yezidi community.

Yezidi religious leaders and the wider community, however, still consider the women who survived captivity to be Yezidis. Many women and girls who escaped ISIS captivity have married Yezidi men. Some have brought their children, born in captivity, into the Yezidi community, although these children are not universally accepted. The Yezidis hold great respect for those who survived.

Nevertheless, fundamental questions remain unanswered: Are these women to be considered Muslim, apostates, or Yezidis? And what is the status of their children?

It is my opinion that ISIS's invasion of the Yezidis on August 3, 2014, destroyed the old system of both the Yezidi religion and community. The impacts of this devastation are still being felt today and will continue to be felt far into the future.

Another question arises here. None of the available historical sources provide evidence of flexibility in the Yezidi stance toward forced conversion. Why, then, during historical Islamic genocides against the Yezidis, did Yezidi religious leaders and communities not officially adopt a flexible approach, such as the one demonstrated during the ISIS invasion, toward those Yezidis who were forcibly converted and subjected to sexual violence?

This can be explained as follows. First, today's Yezidi community is better educated than that of the past. Second, unlike earlier periods when Yezidi leadership primarily responded to political pressures, the educated class of Yezidis today plays an important role in the community and exerts influence

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1082 A Yezidi marrying a non-Yezidi is socially tolerated in some of the diaspora communities, for example, in Georgia and Germany.

on the Yezidi mīr (prince) and religious leadership in decision-making, particularly on issues affecting the broader community. Third, due to historical persecution and the strict cultural and religious endogamy embedded in Yezidi society, the Yezidi population has steadily declined. Recognizing this, the community, especially after the ISIS invasion, pressures its leadership to adopt more flexible approaches in order to avoid further decline or potential extinction. Finally, the absence of a so-called “holy book,” such as those found in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, or even Zoroastrianism, provides additional context for the Yezidis’ capacity for a more adaptive response to extraordinary events.

7 Conclusion

The ISIS genocide against the Yazidis stands out because it is far more thoroughly documented than all former massacres, which remain only partially recorded. Yet, a comparison between these historical events and ISIS's actions reveals the true nature of those earlier atrocities, perpetrated against the Yazidis in the name of Islam, and shows that the current violence is not an isolated occurrence, but part of a long-standing pattern of systematic persecution against this community. All with similar objectives: forced conversions, mass killings, enslavement, the capture of women and children, destruction of religious sites, and the seizure of property. Each campaign sought the same goal, to erase the Yazidis and their faith.

Yezidism has never been recognized as a legitimate religion in Islam, and Yazidis have consistently been denied the rights and protections afforded to Muslims and even to other "*Ahl al-Kitab* – People of the Book," such as Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians. These patterns reveal a long history of persecution aimed at the very survival of the Yazidi people and their ancient faith.

ISIS, like various Islamic authorities throughout history, has regarded the Yazidis as adherents of an unrecognized religion, assigning them labels that served to justify their persecution according to scholarly interpretations, such as polytheists (pagans), unbelievers (*Kuffār/Kāfir*), or devil worshippers.

The revelation of the historical genocides committed against the Yazidis in the name of Islam by ISIS, along with the group's justifications for their atrocities based on their interpretation of Islamic texts, has sparked intense debate about Islam's stance toward the Yazidis and their beliefs. Even within the Muslim community, opinions vary regarding the actions of ISIS jihadists against them. Meanwhile, the Yazidis maintain that ISIS's campaign represents a continuation of the historical violence and persecution their community has endured. Accordingly, the recent genocide perpetrated by ISIS against the Yazidis can be seen as a contemporary manifestation of a long history of violence targeting them during Islamic conquests.

The early Islamic legal and theological engagement with the Yezidis, exemplified by Ibn Taymiyyah's 14th-century fatwā, presents a markedly different approach from the later, more violent interpretations that emerged during the Ottoman era and beyond. Ibn Taymiyyah recognized the Yezidis' proximity to Sunni Islam and, rather than condemning them as heretics or idolaters, sought their return to what he considered "true Islam" through guidance rather than coercion. He refrained from advocating for violence, the capture of women and children, or the seizure of property, practices that would tragically characterize subsequent persecutions.

The fatwās subsequently issued during the Ottoman Empire and the following eras reflect a markedly more hostile perspective than that of Ibn Taymiyyah.

By contrast, the fatwās issued during the Ottoman period, from the 16th century until the Empire's decline in the early 20th century, exhibited a starkly adversarial attitude toward the Yezidis. The most prominent of these was the fatwā issued by Shaykh al-Islām Abū l-Su'ūd, the influential Grand Mufti of Constantinople. This fatwā was likely issued with the consent of, or in consultation with, Sultan Suleyman, who sought to employ religious authority to suppress Yezidi resistance in the first half of the 16th century. While political considerations clearly played a role in its issuance, however, the fatwā drew upon Islamic legal principles and the interpretation of religious texts, thereby expressing an officially sanctioned religious stance toward the Yezidis.

Abū l-Su'ūd's fatwā subsequently served as the basis for many other fatwās issued against the Yezidis, often by Kurdish Sunni muftis and mullās. Collectively, these decrees granted Ottoman rulers, governors, military forces, and the general Muslim population the religious legitimacy to kill Yezidi men and capture their women and children for sale in Islamic slave markets, as well as plunder of their property under the name of war spoil.

In this context, historical Islamic perspectives on the Yezidis bear a striking resemblance to contemporary attitudes, illustrating a continuity in the ways religious authority has been invoked to justify violence against this community.

In the contemporary period, particularly during and even after ISIS's 2014 genocide against the Yezidis, the issue of Islamic fatwās directed toward the Yezidis has reemerged with alarming force. These modern pronouncements

reflect prevailing attitudes within Islam, particularly among Sunni Muslims living alongside Yezidis, as well as the extreme interpretations propagated by many Muslims.

Although ISIS does not represent the entirety of the Islamic world, its fatwās against the Yezidis and their religion echo historical patterns. Since the onset of the ISIS genocide in 2014, no fatwās have openly declared ISIS un-Islamic or that its members as non-Muslims. At the same time, these fatwās avoid making explicit statements on Islam's stance toward the Yezidis as a religious community, effectively failing to condemn the atrocities committed against them.

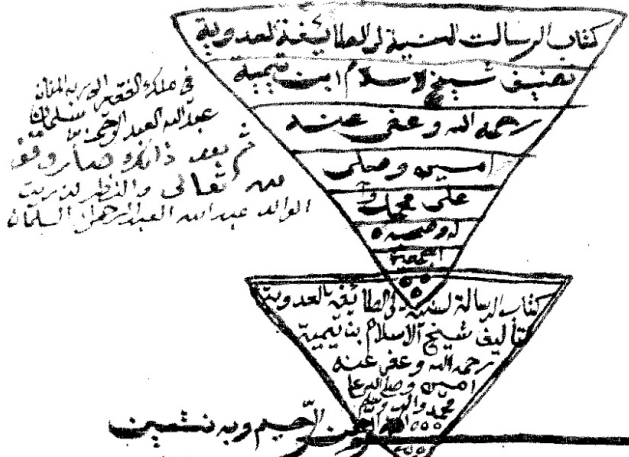
The contemporary violence perpetrated by ISIS jihadists against Yezidi community mirrors historical invasions in both scale and method: Muslim authorities and communities coordinated campaigns in which muftīs issued religious edicts to mobilize the population for jihad, resulting in massacres, abductions, and enslavement of Yezidi women and children, and were bought and sold them in the Islamic slave markets, known as *Sūq al-Sabāyā*. Captured Yezidis were divided among jihadists according to Šarī'a law, while homes, fields, religious sites, and cultural symbols were systematically looted and destroyed.

Forced conversion and mass killings have consistently been central to genocidal campaigns against the Yezidis. In every historical and contemporary one, Yezidis were presented with a stark choice, convert to Islam or face death, ensuring widespread massacres and the destruction of Yezidi society. Furthermore, local Muslim populations often denied or disregarded long-standing neighborly relationships with Yezidis, joining in attacks or abetting jihadists, as seen during both historical invasions and the 2014 ISIS genocide in Sinjar.

Taken together, the ISIS invasion of the Yezidis in August 2014 represents one of the largest Islamic genocidal campaigns against the Yezidi community recorded in history. It severely affected the core pillars and principles of the Yezidi religion. Unlike earlier historical invasions, the explicit intention of the ISIS assault was to destroy the traditional structures of Yezidi religious and communal life.

APPENDICES

Appendix No. 1: Excerpt from The Great Commandment (al-Waṣīyah al-Kubrā) by Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328) with information on the Yazidis
 (Source: al-Maktaba al-Zāhriyah)



أحمد ابن تيمية الذي وصل اليه هذا الكتاب من المسلمين المنسب إلى السنة
 جماعة المنتهين إلى متابعت الشيخ العارف القدير عدي ابن مسافر إلا
 في رحمة الله عليه ومن فاضلهم وفتح الله تعالى سلوك سبيله وأعانهم
 ملائحته وطلعت رسوله صل الله عليه وسلم وأجابه مخلصين بحبل النبي
 فتدبيره لصلواته المستقيم طرطالذي نافع عليهم من النبي والصدقين وكشف
 صالحين وجنهم طريق أهل الضلال والأعوجاج الحار جبرئيل
 من الله رسول من كسنة والمنهاج حتى يكونوا من أعظم الله عليه
 هتابة الكتاب والسنة سلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته فاننا
 اليكم الذي لا اله الا هو وهو الحمد اهل وهو على كل شيء قدير
 سألته ان يصح على خاتم النبيين وسيد ولد آدم وأكرم الخلق على
 محمد بن علي رضي وعظم الله اليه درجة محمد عبده ورسوله صل الله
 عليه وسلم لما بعد فان الله سبحانه وتعالى بعث محمد صل الله عليه
 وسلم في دين الحق لظهوره عالمه دينه وكفى بانه شهيد وانزل

Appendix No. 2-B: The Arabic text of the fatwā issued by Abū l-Su'ūd (1490-1574)

(Source: al-Aḥmad, Sāmī Sa'īd, 1971: 205-207)

ملاحق

ملحق ١

فتوى مفتي السلطنة الشهابية أحمد بن مصطفى أبو السعود الهادي عن
اليديين :
ما قول أئمتنا الحنفية والشافعية والمالكية والحنبلية ، وما جوابهم عن
صكر المسلمين اذا غزوا هؤلاء الطائفة الطائفة وقتلهم ، او تمتل احد من
المسلمين بالديهم ، هل يكون قاتلهم غازياً ، ومقتولهم شهيداً ؟ افوزنا ماجورين
مشايخ :

الجواب ، والله اعلم بالصواب ، يكون قاتلهم غازياً ، ومقتولهم شهيداً لأن
جهادهم قاتلهم جهادهم اكبر وشهادتهم عظيمة ، وفي هذه الحالة لا يتسبب قاتلهم وسبب
حل سعي ناسهم وذرائعهم ، او السبب فيهم ، لخصر الايمانين الهامين الكاملين
التيين القتيين العبيدين النبيين الامام ابي عميد الحسن السبط ، والامام
ابي عبد الله الحسين سيدي شباب اهل الجنة ، وعداوتهم المتقتضية لاستئصال
قتلهم وقتل اولادهم من بيت النبوة ايقاضة لجدعم الرسول عليه الصلوة
والسلام ، او السبب في ذلك يقتضيه لخصر قعدة الاولياد معدية العلم الخليفة
الرايع علي الرضين ابن عم المصطفى صل الله عليه وسلم المتقتضي بغضه بغض الله
ورسوله وتبغيطه عليه وقرايته من رسول الله صل الله عليه وسلم ، او لسبب
استئصالهم قتل السلمة الفاطنين ، او استئصال قتل المسايخ الكاملين ، وقتل
رؤساء الدين المبين ، والاشبهاء بكلام الله المجيد ، وبالكتب الفرعية

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والتعاسير والاحاديث وانكار يوم القيامة والحشر والنفر ، وانكار اركان الدين
الجمعة ، او السبب الموجب لتعلم اعتقادهم في (عدي بن مسافر) الاموي انه
الغريك الاغلب لخصرة رب العزة جل شانه في تعامله في ذلك علواً كبيراً ،
او السبب بحميم التامة مع العيطار اللعين وانقادهم فيه انه طائوس
اللائكة معاقبة لاخصار الله عز وجل ، او السبب في ذورب قتلهم قطع
طريق عباد الله واجاعة ابناء النبيل بسلك الدماء ونهب الاموال على الدولام
بلا انتفاع أخذاً من قوله عز وجل (اما جزاء الذين يحزبون الله لرسوله
ويسعون في الارض فساداً ان يقتلوا او ينصلبوا او تقطع ايديهم وارجلهم من
خلاف) الآية ، او السبب : اياهم عن عقود الكفر من انفسهم وانما
ينفوضون عقودهم الى رأي رئيسهم الفاجر ، او السبب في ذلك غير هذه الوجوه
المذكورة اقتوزنا الجواب الصحيح تكونوا ماجورين .

الجواب ، نعم اسباب حل قتالهم هي جميع الوجوه المذكورة ، ومع
اشد كترأ من الكفار الاصليين ، وقتلهم حلال في المذاهب الاربعة ، وجهادهم
اصوب واوثب من العبادات الدينية وتبغيت شملهم وتمزيق جوارحهم ،
والمباشرة في قتلهم وقتل رؤسائهم من الواجبات الدينية ، وحكم الوقت
والوالة الدين يرخصون في قتلهم ويحرمون على قتالهم ويحرمون في سببهم
شكر الله سمعهم واطاعتهم وساعدتهم على مقاصدهم وايدهم بنصره العزيز .
فلهم ان يقتلوا رجالهم ويستأروا ذريتهم ونساءهم ويديهم في اسواق
المسلمين كاسارى سائر الكفار ، ويحل لهم ايضاً التصرف في اياكلهم ووزجارتهم
بعد الاستيلاء بملك اليمين على ما عليه الفتيوى . من القول الاقوى ، فتتحقق
حقيقتا كترهم وجواز لعنهم ، فاما امتناع الامام الشافعي رضي الله عنه عن
لعن (يزيد) لعنه الله فليس بثابت كرواية عنه ، ولئن ساءم بثبوت عدده ،
فاقتناعه انما كان لأجل عدم كون ذلك اللعين من عبدة الاوثان ، لا لأجل
كونه عنده مؤمناً ، لأن بعض الاولياء المقربين ، اخذوا عنه الحشر بحسب

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بأبياعهم . قال ذلك على منبره خطيباً مصرحاً بتحقق موته على الكفر، وقال:
 إلا ان لوياذ الله وأحبابه، وصالحى خلقه اعداء هذا المينى وانضبه . نقبل
 ذلك القول عنه محققو اصحابه في كتابه المسمى بالوسطى . حتى قال ان قتال
 هذه الطائفة الضالة اهم من قتال الكفار الاصليين لسراية اضرارهم للناس
 حتى يروى عن علي كرم وجهه انه لما رجع من قتال الجواجم مغموراً قال:
 يا ايها الناس ان كل من عادى اولادى، وامل بنتى الظالمين وأهلبهم تكأماً
 بغض رسول الله وأهوان الخلقاء الكرام وهو عند الله فاجر ملعون، ومن بعد:
 تكلم من كان مؤمناً موحداً لا ينتمي لا يتردد في اهانتهم وقائم واستخفافه
 اظفالمهم واموالهم . والاهانة لولاء الخلفاء اكراماً للانبيا، والايراد والخلفاء
 وتفرغ يلبقى بروحي بعدي . إذ قطع فسادات هذه الطائفة عن وجه الارض
 من الواجبات الشرعية فلأجل ذلك حررت هذه الفتوى وابنتها نقلاً وشرعاً
 واجتهاداً وسلمتها بأيدي اهل الجهاد والفتوى حتى تصل اليهم الفتية على كتاب
 الله المبين، وتحصل لاسم الدعوة على الدين المبين، ولا اعلم الذيب وسيلم
 الدين ظلموا الي منقلب يتقلبون . انتهى .

المنى من روحه الشريفه ومن مرقدته العالى . وقد اخفقوا في عالم الرؤيا اخباراً
 صحيحة في تجرير اللمن على يزيد ، وقد قال الامام نعمان بن ثابت ابو حنيفة
 الكوفي عليه رحمة الربى في يزيد : ملعون ، ووقع هذا اللعن منه في جواب
 الامام ابي يوسف عليه الرحمة . وهذه الطائفة الطاغية ليست من الاتيين
 وسينين فرقة من الفرق الاسلامية بل هم مرتدون عن اسلام شارحون عن
 الملل كلها لامهم من كينون في الدوام الفسق والنمور ، ومبينون الاعمال
 القبيحة والعمور ، ومعنادون على قطع السبيل على عباد الله وعلى سفك دماهم
 وغصب اموالهم وبمجموعهم من قبيل اولاد الزنا وايضاً باجتماع علماء الامم
 كلهم كعلماء اليمن وقربانغ وعلماء ائتاتار ائتوا بجل قتلهم ، واسترقاقى وسبي
 نساءهم وفترتهم بالتأكييد البليغ ويبيّن ان قاتلهم يتال ثواب الدارين وداخراً
 جنات النعيم حتى مولانا الامام فخر الدين الرازى في اماكن متعددة من
 تفسيره الكبير اثبت جواز اللمن على يزيد مستدلاً على الجواز بدلائل عقلية
 ونقلية واثبت حل قتلهم ، وحصول اجر الفزاة لقاتلهم ، وثواب الشهداء
 لمقتولهم ، واثبت حل التصرف بملك اليمينين في ابركاهم وزوجاتهم وإباحة
 اسر نساءهم وذرياتهم وجواز بيعهم شرعاً ، وقال ذلك في تفسير بعض السور
 القرآنية ، وكذلك الامام احمد ، والامام ابو الليث السمرقندي ومولانا عبد
 الرحمن الجامي ، ائتوا كلهم بجواز التصرف بهم حتى ان مولانا المذكور كتب
 في الاباحة المذكورة رسالة فتوى واثى وادتها عياناً بخطه ولا سيما سعد الدين
 الفتخار اثنى في شرح عقائده صح بجواز اللمن على يزيد وعلى انصاره واعوانه
 وكذلك السيد الشريف الجرجاني ، والاثر الملمس، صرحوا بجواز اللمن على
 يزيد والتصديق على قاتلهم من غير افعال وعدوا افعال قاتلهم مندوباً ولا
 سيما حضرة الشيخ عبد القادر الجيلي قدس الله سره العزيز فقد قال في وعظه
 الشريف في بغداد : اسمعوا يا معاشر العلماء والمؤمنين ان يزيد بن معاوية
 ملعون، وعمله باطل ، واعوانه ضالون ، وانصاره باغتون ، يدخون النار معه

**Appendix No. 3: The fatwā issued
by Mullā Şāliḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī**

(Source: Journal of Kurdish Studies, vol. 6, pp. 140–162)

THE FATWĀ OF MALĀ ŞĀLIḤ AL-KURDĪ AL-HAKKĀRĪ

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْغُيُوبِ وَنُصَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَنُحَيِّسُ الْعَيْنَ وَالْأَرْسَابَ وَنُحَيِّسُ الْوَجْهَ وَالْأَرْسَابَ وَنُحَيِّسُ الْوَجْهَ وَالْأَرْسَابَ
أما بعد فهذه كلمات في بيان من ذهب الطائفة النورية و حكمهم و حكم الاموال الكاسية في يد من علم انهم
متفقون على ابطال من عقائد و اقاويل كلها مما هو جيب الكفر العنيد و الضلال البعيد فمن انهم يتكلمون في الزمان
والمشرب و يزعمون ان كذب وان مثل هذا بان لا يخرج من غير المعتمد عليها و التي يجب ان تكون في هذا
بعادون على الدين و يفتضون انهم يوافقون انهم يشكروهم باشتغالهم في كل حال و وقع عندهم ان وقت
الكتب الاسلامية بايديهم بلقونها في القادورات بل يفتقرونها و يتقوون و يقولون علمها و ذلك في كل مورد
لا يستوي و منها انهم يحلون الزنا اذا جاز بالمرء من اجرة من انما يجزى و ان ذلك مطورا و كتاب لهم
بشعره انما يشيخ الله في سبوتهم و منها انهم يفضلون العدى على رسول الله صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم بل يقولون
ان الامانة بدنيا و منها انهم يفضلون الله في حقايق الاخير على كالاكل و الشراب و الفساق و العقود
و عندها و منها انهم يحلون حكايات في شان الله و رسوله و عدله و مشتغل على ذلك في الله و رسوله
بين يدي عدى و على حقهم و شانهم و الاستهزاء و بها و تفجيره عن سردها الله و استغناء عن محبتها
و ملاقاتها و عندهم ذلك مما يجب تنزيه الله و رسوله عنه و منها انهم يحلون في يوم خرم من زواجهم و محارم
و يستحلون ذلك بل يتعبدون و منها انهم يبرحون بان لا فائدة في الصلوة و لا بالاسنة و تركها و هي ليست
بواجب بل الواجب طهارة القلب و صفاءه و منها انهم يعتقدون في ان الله لا يفتل من الكعبة و ان
الاقامة في زمانه انما سبب في ان الله لا يفتل من الكعبة و منها انهم يعتقدون في ان الله لا يفتل من الكعبة و ان
حضورها العلم العبد فانهم يدعون ان من لا يسجد له كافر و معلوم ان هذا السجود كسجود النصارى و المشركين
بل هو سجود كالكسجود و بين من العلماء و الامراء و المشايخ فانهم يفتل و جهس دون هذا و انكاره و منها
مكابرة في ظاهرة و منها انهم يعتقدون ان العدى يحل اتمه يوم القيمة في طبع و كحلهم على راسه و
عندهم ان من يجب عليه ان يسجد على راسه و ملائكة فرشته و من يفتل من الكعبة و منها انهم يعتقدون ان الله لا يفتل من الكعبة

وقد تواترت عند من خالطهم واستخبروا حواشيهم ثم انما سمعت عشرة واحد عننا استكثف مضمرات عدوهم
تكتيبيته بقولهم ثلث فروع احدها ما خلاهم الذين قالوا ان عدلهم من مسافر هو ادق ونائبتهما الذين
يقولون انهم انما سمعوا الله في الا لوسب في كل السما بيادهم وحكم للارض بيده ونائبتهما الذين يقولون
ان لسان الله وليس لسانه شريك له ولكن عند الله بمنزلة الوزر الكبير لا مصدر من الله فكذلك امرهم بالامور
الابرار مشورين ثم قولوا ببول الله والظان اصل من سبهم على الاستفوت ونفخت ليلوا الى الظلول و
لكذلك بالورد النصارى ويستعملون بعضا حقا داتهم ولا يخفوا ان هذا المذكورات كلها مما جرت
اشياء الكفر والفتنة فهم اذن الكفرة اصلية كما نقل عن بعض كتب الذوب ونسب الاصل الذوب فان
نقل عن كتاب المنفق والمخسفة ان الا من مذوب ماله ان يظهر احكام الكفر في بلدة تصردار
عرب وهو مذوب الشافعي واحد وانفقوا على ان تعتموا امرهم وذا التمشير لانه انما ينطق بالاول
مرتبون وبالظن الكفار اهل بيوتهم واما مرتدون بارتابا قوم الاولون بقوا على ذلك وقتا بعد قرن
ومن لم يكفر بهم فما جعلهم بما لهم فعدوهم وشفا بالحق السؤال والاعدام التمسك اسباب الكفر واليان
او فخرتهم او طبع في ايدىهم لم يرضوا بجد سبهم اهل عجل علمه قاهر ولا يخفى في قانون الشريعة
ثم انهم قد ظهر من الاسلام ويتلفظون بالشهادتين ويصلون نعتهم وسمو المذاهب عندهم
يبالون به من اهل الطعن فهل يصبرون بمجرد ذلك مسلمين ويعصمون به امامهم ام لا بد من الرجوع على
اعنته وامس الا باطيل كلها والندامة عليها والافار يبطلانها الجواب ان الكلفن القوم من عبارة الفقهاء
في باب نوب المردة واسلام الكافر اعتباريا وعدم قبول التوبة به ونها قاله الا ان نوبه نوبه والاداء
الكافر ان يشهد بالاله الا الله وان محمدا رسوله وينتزم كل دين يخالف الاسلام ويرجع
من حال اعتقاد هو كفر هذا ونفع انهم لواجبوا هذا كرهوا واوعدوا بكل حكمه وان لم يتبوا عن معتقدتهم
حين مدى ويرزق ولا الضع وعقر ذلك من شعوبهم ومن ارادتهم على انهم انما القوا الذين امنوا قالوا

ائنا واذا اخفوا المشيا طمئنا قالوا انما مصلكم و يؤيد من هذا ان لا يقبله و يجب قاله في العصف و
 علمه مالك و احمد و ابو حنيفة و اهدر و ابيته قاله في الروضة قال الزوايا في اطلت و العود على هذا و على
 التقديرين في النزاع في حرمة من اكلهم و اكلهم في حرمهم و تغرسهم في الدنيا بالاسلام بالجزية
 و عندها و مباشرة الكحة و في وجوب قتلهم و مقاتلتهم حيث لهم شوكة و في اصدار ما منهم و غير
 ذلك و لما حكم الاموال الكانية بيديهم فانه قلنا انهم كفرة اصليون فعلى ما نقل من المنفق
 و المخلفين و ان قلنا باسنادهم تلقاه صاخرهم عن كابرهم بالموت فهو قتل لا نوارث بينهم
 كما لا يخفى و اما ما كتبه في المعاملات من البيع و الشراء و الاجارة و غيره باو بالقبض و النهب و
 السرقة و نحوها فان كانت هذه الصفقات صادرة منهم مع بعضهم و هو تفرق اما في النج و اما
 في مال الضابيع اذ ما في ايديهم لا يخلو عن مدين العثمانيين كما سنكشف و ليس لهم الموقوفات
 و ان كانت صادرة منهم مع المسلمين و الذميين فاعرف الماخوذ منه و يجب رده اليه عند الكفاية
 لفساد معاملاتهم كما تقر في باب الردة و ان لم يعرف الماخوذ منه فهو من الاموال الضابعية
 فعلم ان لا يتصور لهم مال في الغالب يحتمل ان يجعل موقفا على رجوعهم او قتلهم و اما
 ما اشتره في الكتب من ان مال المردة موقوف فذلك بصورته مذكور في مسلمانا و حصل
 بيده حال اسلامه مال مموله بحكم اليد و القابلة ثم شق و قطع الاسلام فان نال ستملكه
 و الامان او قتل على كبره صار قبا و اما الذي يخزن بصددهم فليسوا كذلك فانهم لو فرض اسلامهم
 و حسن حالهم كان حاكم الاموال الكانية بيديهم على ما ذكره في حال امرارهم على كفرهم
 و هذا مما لا ينبغي ان يتناقض و قد عند الانصاف و شركة اللاء فان قد صيانهم محكوم عليهم بالاسلام
 فما حصل لهم من الاموال حال صيانهم و يجب ان يكون موقفا فلم قلت لا يتصور انهم ان يكون
 موقفا قلت القول باسلام صيانهم مرجوح زيق صاحب الروضة و جزم بانهم ان يضامه تدون كتاباتهم

ويتقدّر به التسليم كون نفاقهم الفاضل لكونهم غير مكلفين والاولا لهم يكفرهم من النفاق
 بالبيع والشراء وغيرهما او يفرق لهم او يقبل لهم شيئا بالارتباب والوصية وعند ذلك وحال ارتبابهم
 كمن ذكره فلا يفتور لهم انفسه ما يجعل موقفا كالباقيين واما القول بانّه يحتمل ان يكون منهم من
 ليس منهم من المسلم والذميين او يكون بايديهم مال مسلم بغضب او غضبا وعند ذلك وبان مال
 الفتي والغنيمة يجزي قسمته والمال الضاريه يجب ان ينظر عند الامام فتسلم لا يتكفره احد كنته غير متفقين
 ايدى هؤلاء ولا يؤخذ منهم اذ يتصور ذلك في سائر الكفا لطريقين مثلا يمكن ان يكون في الكذب اسلام وكونه
 بايديهم مال مسلم بل هو واقع فان اوجب ذلك الكلف عنهم وعما في ايدى حواجب الكلف عن المسلمين و
 عما يديهم ولا فاق بل على ان الكلام عنهم مسلمة من غير تركه او جوب قسمته الفتي والغنيمة ووجوب نظر
 الامام في المال الضاريه ان اوجب الاءاضن عما يديهم او جوب الاءاضن عن المال المأخوذة من اهل
 الزمة من زناها هذا فانها اما لا ضاريه او فرع مع ان لا يبيع في قسمه اصلا ولا ينظر الا في زمانها بوجوب
 للتظلم اذ انها تؤخذ بالبطل مع انواع التظلم واكثر فقهاء النواحي لا يبيحون من تعاطفها ولا يجوزون
 عن انما كلف اخذت وعن اخذت وعما ارجه اخذت بل لا يظفرق ببالهم بشبهة في ذلك فضلا عن المودة
 واذا سئلوا عن اموال هؤلاء للمشركين فتارة يقولون ان كفهم عن ثبات وتارة يقولون انهم مسلمون
 اذ يتكلمون بكلمة الشهادة وتارة يقولون اموالهم موقوفه على قتلهم الا عند ذلك من الاعتقادات
 الباردة الصادرة من عشر تامل واعمال روية والمال انما هو موروث بان يقول الحق اينما كنته ولو في
 في انه لومة الله لا يم وفتنا الله لا يجب ويرضى انه ضلوه ففتن والحمد لله رب العالمين ثم فقولوا
 العالم العالم يعلم مثلا صالح الكندي يقدره الله بغير انه يحق محمد واله

...

...

Appendix No. 4-A: The fatwā issued by Muḥammad al-Barqalī al-Kurdī and Mullā Ṣālīḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī
 (Source: Nos. 99999, 2406. <http://ricasdb.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp>)



Appendix No. 4-B: The Arabic text of the fatwā of Muḥammad al-Barqalī al-Kurdī and Mullā Ṣāliḥ al-Kurdī al-Hakkārī
 (Source: Nos.99999.2283: <https://al-mostafa.info/data/arabic/depot3/gap.php?file=m002547.pdf>)



Appendix No. 5: The fatwā of ‘Abdallāh al-Rabatki (1724/1137 AH)
 (Source: al-‘Azzāwī, ‘Abbās (1935), pp. 84–89)

وان وقت الكتب الامامية بايديهم ياتونها في التاورات والقرآن ويتقربون
 ويقرنون عليها وذلك مشهور لا سعة به .
 (ونبها) : انهم يجادلون ائمة الاطا جري بالاراضي . الخيرة من اتق خيرة انه
 رأى ذلك مستطرا في كتاب لهم يسمى به (جدة) بتسمية الشيخ عدي .
 (ونبها) انهم يعاملون عدليا على رسول الله ﷺ . بل يقولون انه لا
 مناسبة بينها .
 (ونبها) : انهم يعادون الله بعصاة الاجسام كلاكه والشرب والتب والتبوا القرد
 وشبهها .
 (ونبها) : انهم يحكون ككليات في شأن الله تعالى بوسيلة ﷺ وعدي يستل على
 ذكر نزال الله تعالى بوسيلة بين عدي وعلى اختيار شأنه الاستبراء بها .
 وتضجره عن زودها بها اليه واستنائه عن صحتها ولاقاتها وغير ذلك ما يجب
 تنزيه شأنه تعالى ورسوله عنه .
 (ونبها) : انهم يحكون شيوخهم من رؤسهم وعلمهم ويستحلون ذلك يقتدون
 به خوفاً .
 (ونبها) : انهم يصرحون بان لا فائدة في الصلوة ولا بأس في تركها وهي ليست
 واجبة على الواجب طهارة القلب وصفاؤه .
 (ونبها) : انهم يقتدون ان لاش افضل من الكعبة ، واه لا فائدة في زيارتها
 بل يقدر على زيارة الاش .
 (ونبها) : انهم يحسدون الاش ولا يحل كل من عرفهم ويحرمه مخصوماً لهم (الاشخ)
 عدي فاتهم يدعون ان من لا يحسد له كافر . وسلم ان هذا السجود كسجود الصم
 والسمن بل هو لا كالسجود بين يدي الامراء والملك والشيخ فانه يجعل وجهين

«بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وبه تقي»
 اللهم اذنا الصواب ونصل الخطاب جدينا النبي والي الاوتاب وعب لنا من
 نيك رحما انك انت الوهاب .
 اما بعد فهذه كانت في بيان منخب الطائفة الزيدية وحكمهم وحكم الاولاد
 السكاة عليهم .
 اعلم انهم يقتدون على الجليل من عقائد وتواويل كلها بما يجب الكفر السببه
 والشاغل الببده . (نبها) انهم يتكبرون القرآن والشرع ويعتقون انه كتب وان
 مثل حديثك الشيخ نخرعي المتمد عليها والتي يتسبان ان يمسك بها ولهذا يبادون
 علماء الدين ويقتدرونهم بل ان ثلثوا بهم قلوبهم بالفتح قول كما وقع غير مرة ؛

كفار اصليون ولما مرتدون لارصاد آيهم الاولين وبقوا على ذلك قرآ بعد قرن
 ومن لم يكفرهم لم يكفرهم اما لجله يحلم فمذنب وشقا العي السؤال ، ولما علم
 النبي من اسباب الكفر والايمان ، او طريقه منهم ، او طبع فبا في ايديهم ، او
 رضاء بينهم ، او لراء جبل عليه ، فصر ان يحلهم في قانون الشرع .

ثم انهم قد يظهرون الاسلام ويتظاهرون بالشهادتين ، ويصون تيقه وسرا للمؤمن
 عند اهل الحق قبل يصيرون مجرد ذلك مسلمين ويصومون ويحلمون اما لابد من
 الرجوع عما اعتقدوا من الاباطيل كلها والنداءة عليها والاقرار بطلانها .
 والجلوب ان الظاهر من عبادة التتواء في باب توبة الرد والاقرار بالاسلام الكافر
 اعتناؤها وعدم قبول التوبة بدونها .

قال في الاقار : « توبة الرد والاسلام الكافر ان يشهد ان لا اله الا الله وان محمدا
 رسول الله ويتبنا من كل دين يخالف الاسلام ويضع من كل اعتقاد هو كافر ، هذا
 ومعلم انهم لم يجربوا واكروها وادعوا بكل مكره لم يجربوا عن معتقدهم في
 عدي وزياد ولاش وغير ذلك من شيوعهم ، ومنه رأيتهم على انهم زانقة توبة
 الردنق لا تحيل في وجه . (واذا لقوا الذين آمنوا قالوا آمنا واذا خلدوا الى خصيتهم
 قالوا اتانا مسك) الآية .

قال في الصبور : « عليه مالم ياعد وازاد حيرة في احد واليد . قال في الردية
 مل الروابي في الحاية والعمل على هذا .
 وفي التفسيرين لا نزاع في حرية منا كعهم واكلى ذبيحتهم وتقريرهم في الديار
 الاسلامية بالجرة وغيرها وبالمسرة الكعهم وفي وجوب قتلهم ومقاتلتهم حيث
 لهم شركة في اعداء مسلم وغير ذلك .

والا مسك لاجلال المسكاة في ايديهم فان قولنا انهم كفرة مسلمون غلط لا تال

درون هذا وان كان هذا مكبرة ظاهرة .
 (وتبنا) : انهم يعتقدون ان عدوا يجعل انا يوم القيامة فيسحق ويجهل على راسه
 ويذهب به الى الجنة على رغم الله وملائكته .

فهو في نفس اقوالهم القضيعة والاعالم التبيحة وقد تازر عدي من عاظمهم
 واستنبتهم احراقهم .
 ثم اني سمعت غير واحد من استكثف معصرات صدرهم الخبيثة يقولون انهم
 ثلاث فرق :

احداها : غلامهم الذين قالوا ان عدي بن مسافر هو الله نفسه .
 وثانها : الذين يقولون انه سالم الله في الالهية تحسك السماء بيده الله مالك ومك
 الارض بيده .

وثالثها : هم الذين يقولون ليس الله وليس شريكا له ولكنه عند الله بمنزلة الويزر
 الكبير لا يصدر من الله امر من الامور الا بزيارته ويشورته فقولاه ووقولاه كلهم
 متفقون على الكفر الشديد والاعلال البيوت .

والظاهر ان اصل مدعيهم على ما استقرت وتخصت يقول الى الجلال وذلك
 يوازن الصاروي ويستصوبون بعض اعتقادهم .

ولا يخاف ان هذه الذكورات كلها مما يجب اشغ الكفر واقبحه فهم اذن
 كفرة اصبايا كما قل عن بعض كتب المنهب ونسب الى اصل المنهب فانه قل
 عن كتاب المنقب والختلف ان الظاهر من منهب مالك ما اذا ظهر احكام
 الكفر في تيدة تصوير دار حروب وهو مذنب الشافعي واحد (رض) وانفقا على
 امرالم .

وفي الصغبر عن ابي حنيفة (رض) ان البطل الاول مرتدين والبطل الثاني

ويعرف لهم أو يقبل لهم شيئاً بالإنجاب والوصية وبغير ذلك ومثل أنهم كما ذكر فلا يتصور لهم أيضاً مال يجمل موقوفاً كالباقيين .

وما التورث بأنه يجمل أن يكون فيهم من ليس منهم من المسلمين والذين أو يكون بإيهم مال مسلم ينصب أو يسبب غير ذلك وقادة يقال مال النبي والقبيلة يجب قسمته والمال الصانع يجب أن ينظر فيه الإمام فسلم لا ينسك واحداً كبنه غير شخص ما في أيدي هؤلاء ولا ما يؤخذ منهم أن يتصور ذلك في سائر الكفار الخريجين مثلاً يمكن أن يكون في الكفر مسلم أو يكون بإيهم مال مسلم بل هو واقع فإن اوجب ذلك الكفر وعدم بإيهم اوجب الكفر عن الخريجين وعدم بإيهم ولا قال به على أن الكلام فيمن علم أنه منهم وكذا اوجب قسمة النبي والقبيلة ووجوب نظر الإمام في المال الصانع أن اوجب الاعراض عما بإيهم اوجب الاعراض عن الاموال المأخوذة من أهل الذمة في زماننا هذا فانها اما مال صانع وما في مع أنه لا يقع فيها قسمة اعداء ولا ينظر الآية فيها كما هو حتى النظر ثم انبأ يؤخذ بالباطل بل مع انواع الظلم وأكثر قهرها التواخي لا يتماشون من تعاملها ولا يعجزون عنها انها كيف اخذت ومن اخذت وعلى اي وجه اخذت بل لا يتطرق إليهم شيء في ذلك فضلاً عن الحرمة وإذا استلوا عن حكم هذه الاموال بالاموال المثلهم من الشركيين فإذرة قلوبهم لم يزلوا يتكلمون بالصادقين ولاة يقدون امورهم وموقوفة على قيام الئ غير ذلك من الاعتبارات السائدة الصادقة من غير تأمل وتعامل وروية . والحال اننا نمؤمن بان قول الحق لئى كنا ولا نختلف في الله لونه لائم وقتنا الله لا يجب ويرضى . ٤٠ هـ

من التعلق بالخراف ، وان قلنا بل يتصورهم فانذاه صيرهم عن كثيرهم بلوث فهو في اذ لا تورث بينهم كما لا يخفى ، وما اكتسبه بالملات من البيع والشراء والاجارة وغيرها وبالنصب والتب والسرقة ونحوها فالت كانت هذه التصرفات صادرة منهم غير تصرف ما في النبي واما في المال الصانع اذ ما في ايهم لا يتخلو عن هذين التسميين كما سيتكشف ، وليس لهم التصرف فيما وان كانت صادرة منهم مع المسلمين والذين فاعرف المأخوذة منه ووجب رد اليه عند القدرة لفساد مملاتهم كما تقر في باب الردة . وان ا يعرف المأخوذة منه فهو من الاموال الضامة .

فعل انه لا يتصور لهم مال في الغائب ويعمل ان يجمل موقوفاً على رجوعهم او قتلهم .

واما ما اشتهر في الكتب من ان مال المريد يكون موقوفاً فذلك ؛ روي في مرثه كان مسلماً زماناً وحصل يده حال اسلامه مال هو له يحكم اليد والقبالة ثم شقي او قطع الاسلام فان تاب استمر مسلماً بان مات او قتل على كثره صار مؤثراً او ضامياً .

واما الذين نحن بصدهم فليسوا كذلك فانهم لو فرض اسلامهم وحسن حالهم كان حكم الاموال الكفاية بإيهم على ما ذكر كيف حال اصراره على كثرهم ومعدا عما لا ينبغي ان يناقش فيه عند الاضفاف . نريد البراء .

فان قيل صيانتهم حكم عليهم بالاسلام فاحصل لهم من الاموال حال صيانتهم يجب ان يكون موقوفاً فلم قلت لا يتصور لهم مال يكون موقوفاً فذا التورث بالاسلام صيانتهم يوجب فيه صاحب الرخصة وجزم بإيهم انصافاً تدبر كاليهم ويتقدم التسليم يكون تصرفاتهم ايضاً باطلة لكفرهم غير مكلفين ولا ولي لهم يحكمهم من التصرفات

Appendix No. 6: The fatwā of ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Ġalī
(Source: al-Damlūjī (1949), p. 440)

من علماء الأكراد وهو الشيخ عبد الرحمن الجلي (بفتح الجيم) وهي قرية من نواحي كويسنجق) يذهب الى أنهم كفار أصليون وحكمهم وحكم أموالهم حكم الكفار وأموالهم فقد وقفت علي رسالة عند احد العلماء في أربل جاء فيها :

« ثم سألت ذلك الأئخ العزيز من الحقيير عن احوال الداسنية (أراد بهم البيزيدية) وأحوال اموالهم فأجبتهم بأنهم مرتدون وحكمهم وحكم أموالهم حكم المرتدين علي ما ظننت لأنني رأيت من منقول مكتوب علي ظهر كتاب من ان الداسنية مرتدون، وأني ظننت ان الاسلام يحصل بقول لا إله إلا الله (باهال كلمة) أشهد منها . ولكن لما نظرت في كتب الفقه والمقامد وفي بعض شروح كتب الحديث المعتمد عليه للعالم والعايد ابن حجر في كتابه فتح المبين وكذا حاشيته للمدائني رجعت عن الجواب الأول وحكمت بأن الداسنية كفار أصليون أغلظ من الفرنجيين وحكمهم وحكم أموالهم حكم الكفار وأموالهم علي ما بين في كتب الفقه . . » الى آخر ما قاله .

وفهم من عرض كلامه انه قد أساء الفهم في حقيقة أصل هذه الطائفة حيث ذهب الى أنهم كفار ولم يدينوا بالاسلام مع كونهم يلفظون الشهادة باهال كلمة (أشهد) منها وأفتى بأن حكمهم وحكم أموالهم حكم الكفار وأموالهم وذلك عطفاً علي ما جاء في الفتح المبين لابن حجر وحاشيته للمدائني وسواء أكان البيزيدية كفار أصليين - أغلظ من الفرنجيين - ام مرتدين ، فالافتاء يجعل حكمهم وحكم أموالهم حكم الكفار وأموالهم قاعدة

Appendix No. 7: A fatwā issued by the Dīwān al-Buḥūt wa-al-Iftā' of the Islamic State from August 9, 2014, regarding the Yezidis and the prescribed Muslim conduct toward them
(Source: Teiner 2021, 57)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

لا إله إلا الله

فتوى رقم: (011)

1435/ 10/ 13 هـ

حكم البيزيدية

السؤال:

هل طائفة البيزيدية الموجودة في العراق كفار أصليون أم مرتدون؟

الجواب:

إن البيزيدية كفار أصليون، ليسوا من أهل الكتاب، وليس لهم شبهة كتاب، ولكنهم وثنيون. وأما ما ذهبت إليه بعض الدراسات للعاصرة من أن منشأهم إسلامي، فهذا لم يثبت بإسناد صحيح. وعلى فرضية ثبوت ذلك -محدلاً- إلا أنهم تحولوا من الردة والزندقة إلى الوثنية، والراجح عند أهل العلم أن من انتقل من دين أدق إلى أعلى فإنه يقر على ذلك التحول. والبيزيدية على خلاف الرافضة -مستلماً- فإن الرافضة يتسبون للإسلام وتلقضون بعقده، مع اتهامهم بعدد من نواقضه، فهم مرتدون. أما البيزيدية فلا يتسبون للإسلام أصلاً، ولا تلقضون بعقده، بل يدعون أنهم ديانة قديمة.

وتكون البيزيدية باتون بعض الشعائر لتشابهة لشعائر المسلمين، فهذا أمر غير مؤثر في الحكم عليهم، إذ أن كثيرًا من الملل والنحل -سواء كان أصلها سماويًا أم أرضيًا- فيها شعائر تشابه شعائر المسلمين، فلم يجعلنا ذلك على نسبتها للردة.

وعليه؛ فإننا نرى إزال أحكام الكفار الأصليين للبيئية في مطلقها من كتب الفقه على هذه الطائفة الوثنية. والله أعلم

ديوان البحوث والإفتاء

الذمة الإسلامية

ديوان البحوث والإفتاء

Appendix No. 8: ISIS fatwā against the Yazidis in their magazine Dabiq

Source: Dabiq – Dābiq Magazine (Dhu’l-Hijjah 1435 / October 2014, number 4, pp. 14–17)

ARTICLE

THE REVIVAL OF SLAVERY BEFORE THE HOUR

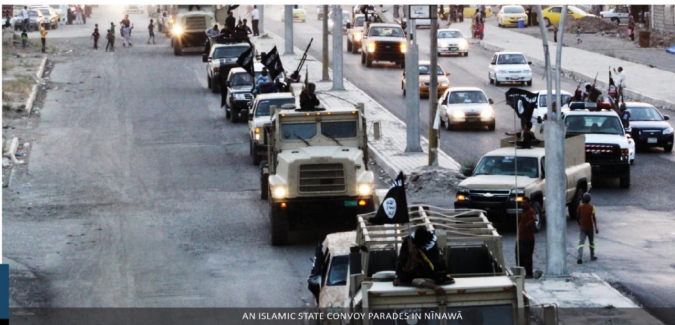
Upon conquering the region of Sinjar in Wilāyat Nīnawā, the Islamic State faced a population of Yazidis, a pagan minority existent for ages in regions of Iraq and Shām. Their continual existence to this day is a matter that Muslims should question as they will be asked about it on Judgment Day, considering that Allah had revealed Āyat as-Sayf (the verse of the sword) over 1400 years ago. He ta’ālā said, {And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the mushrikīn wherever you find them, and capture them, and besiege them, and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give zakah, let them [go] on their way. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.} [At-Tawbah: 5].

The Yazidis present-day creed – as it has changed over history – entails the worship of Iblīs who they consider to be a fallen but forgiven angel amongst the angels who were ordered to prostrate to Ādam! He alone refused to prostrate to Ādam, and they consider this arrogant disobedience of Allah to be his noblest deed! They consider him to be misunderstood by mankind! They consider him to be good and enlightened, and claim that Allah will openly forgive him on

Judgment Day after already forgiving him beforehand for crying tears of piety over a period of thousands of years! So they have made Iblīs – who is the biggest tāghūt – the symbolic head of enlightenment and piety! What arrogant kufr can be greater than this?

Their creed is so deviant from the truth that even cross-worshipping Christians for ages considered them devil worshippers and Satanists, as is recorded in accounts of Westerners and Orientalists who encountered them or studied them. It is ultimately ironic that Obama sites these devil worshippers as the main cause for his intervention in Iraq and Shām, as he sides with the peshmerga – gangs of mercenaries related to the Marxist PUK and allied with the Marxist PKK – a “terrorist” organization according to the tāghūt laws the West “believes” in.

Prior to the taking of Sinjar, Sharī’ah students in the Islamic State were tasked to research the Yazidis to determine if they should be treated as an originally mushrik group or one that originated as Muslims and then apostatized, due to many of the related Islamic rulings that would apply to the group, its individuals, and their fam-



AN ISLAMIC STATE CONVOY PARADES IN NINAWA

ilies. Because of the Arabic terminologies used by this group either to describe themselves or their beliefs, some contemporary Muslim scholars have classified them as possibly an apostate sect, not an originally mushrik religion, but upon further research, it was determined that this group is one that existed since the pre-Islamic jāhiliyyah, but became “Islamized” by the surrounding Muslim population, language, and culture, although they never accepted Islam nor claimed to have adopted it. The apparent origin of the religion is found in the Magianism of ancient Persia, but reinterpreted with elements of Sabianism, Judaism, and Christianity, and ultimately expressed in the heretical vocabulary of extreme Sufism.

Accordingly, the Islamic State dealt with this group as the majority of fuqahā’ have indicated how mushrikīn should be dealt with. Unlike the Jews and Christians, there was no room for jizyah payment. Also, their women could be enslaved unlike female apostates who the majority of the fuqahā’ say cannot be enslaved¹ and can only be given an ultimatum to repent or face the sword. After capture, the Yazidi women and children were then divided according to the Shari’ah amongst the fighters of the Islamic State who participated in the Sinjar operations, after one fifth of the slaves were transferred to the Islamic State’s authority to be divided as khums.

This large-scale enslavement of mushrik families is probably the first since the abandonment of this Shari’ah law. The only other known case – albeit much smaller – is that of the enslavement of Christian women and children in the Philippines and Nigeria by the mujāhidīn there.

The enslaved Yazidi families are now sold by the Islamic State soldiers as the mushrikīn were sold by the Companions (radiyallāhu ‘anhum) before

them. Many well-known rulings are observed, including the prohibition of separating a mother from her young children. Many of the mushrik women and children have willingly accepted Islam and now race to practice it with evident sincerity after their exit from the darkness of shirk.

Rasūlullāh (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “Allah marvels at a people who enter Jannah in chains” [reported by al-Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Hurayrah]. The ḥadīth commentators mentioned that this refers to people entering Islam as slaves and then entering Jannah.

Abū Hurayrah (radiyallāhu ‘anh) said while commenting on Allah’s words, {You are the best nation produced for mankind} [Āli ‘Imrān: 110], “You are the best people for people. You bring them with chains around their necks, until they enter Islam” [Sahīh al-Bukhārī].



After this discussion and as we approach al-Malhamah al-Kubrā (the greatest battle before the Hour) – whenever its time comes by Allah’s decree – it is interesting to note that slavery has been mentioned as one of the signs of the Hour as well as one of the causes behind al-Malhamah al-Kubrā.

Rasūlullāh (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) mentioned that one of the signs of the Hour was that “the slave girl gives birth to her master.” This was reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah and by Muslim on the authority of ‘Umar.

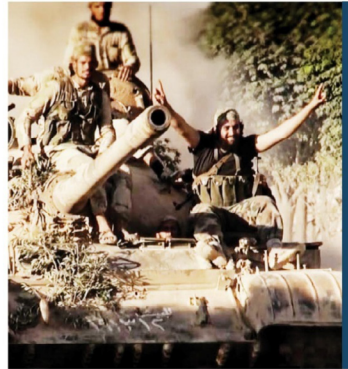
¹ The enslavement of the apostate women belonging to apostate groups such as the rāfidāh, nusayriyyah, durūz, and ismā’īliyyah is one that the fuqahā’ differ over. The majority of the scholars say that their women are not to be enslaved and only ordered to repent because of the ḥadīth, “Kill whoever changes his religion” [Sahīh al-Bukhārī]. But some of the scholars including Shaykhul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and the Ahnāf (Hanafīs) say they may be enslaved due to the actions of the Companions during the Wars of Apostasy where they enslaved the apostate women. This opinion is one also supported by evidence, wallāhu ‘alam.

The scholars mention a number of interpretations for this, some of them drifting away from actual slavery because it already was existent and common in their eras. The following excerpts are from commentaries indicating that actual slavery is a likely interpretation. This becomes more so the case after the abandonment of slavery since the rise of tāghūt law and the desertion of jihād.

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbalī said while explaining this hadīth, “The scholars differed over what is meant by this. It has been stated that the conquests of the lands of kufr multiply as well as enslavement, and thereby concubines increase in numbers, until the slave women give birth to their masters, this is because the child of the master has the status of the master [meaning he is a free man like his father], and thereby she has given birth to her master from this angle. [...] It has also been stated that ‘the slave girl gives birth to her master’ indicated the increased conquests of the lands of kufr and the taking of slaves, until a girl is taken from the land of kufr at a young age, then she is freed in the land of Islam, then her mother is brought in as a slave after her, and this girl buys her mother and uses her in her service, ignorant of the fact that the slave is her mother. This has occurred in the Islamic era. This interpretation is like the one before it, indicating that one of the signs of the Hour is the increased conquests and bringing in of slaves from the lands of kufr. [...] It has also been stated that the meaning of the slave girl giving birth to her master is that people turn away from marriage sufficing with concubines alone. And Allah knows best” [Fathul-Bārī].

Ibn Rajab also said, “This indicates the conquest of lands and the high occurrence of taking slaves until concubines and their children increase in numbers. The slave girl becomes a slave to her master while his children have the status of her master over herself. This is because the child of the master has the rank of the master, and thereby the child of the slave girl has the

status of her owner and master” [Jāmi’ al-Ulūm wal-Hikam].



An-Nawawī explained the hadīth by saying, “The majority of scholars say that this foretells the increase of concubines and their children in numbers, because the child of a concubine has the status of her master” [Sharh Sahīh Muslim].

Ibn Hajar commented on this interpretation saying, “But this suggested interpretation is questionable, because a slave girl giving birth was an occurrence that existed in the era when the statement was made. Also, most of the conquests of the lands of shirk, the enslavement of their families, and the taking of their women as concubines, occurred at the beginning of the Islamic era” [Fathul-Bārī].

Again, it appears that those who drift away from the literal interpretation of slavery do so because it was already existent and common in their era in such a manner that they found it hard to understand it as referring to actual slavery. But after the abandonment of slavery by Muslims and its subsequent revival, this literal interpretation becomes much more plausible.

Additionally, a hadīth that one should reflect over is the long hadīth of Dābiq reported by Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah. In the hadīth it is mentioned that the Romans say to the Muslims after the Romans have lined up in ranks near Dābiq, “Leave us and those who were enslaved from amongst us so we can fight them.” The Muslims then respond, “Nay, by Allah, we will not abandon our brothers to you.” The bloody, final battle begins after this short discussion.

An-Nawawī commented on this hadīth saying, “It was reported in two forms, ‘those who enslaved some of us’ and ‘those who were enslaved from amongst us.’ Al-Qādī said in ‘Al-Mashāriq,’ ‘Those who were enslaved from amongst us’ is the report of the majority and it is the correct one.’ I [an-Nawawī] say that both of them are correct, because they are enslaved first [as kuffār] and then enslave the kuffār thereafter. This occurrence exists in our times. Rather the majority of the Islamic armies in Shām and Egypt were originally enslaved [as kuffār] and now they enslave the kuffār, walhamdulillāh. They have enslaved them numerous times in our era. They enslave in just one occasion thousands of the kuffār. All praise is due to Allah for having strengthened and honored Islam” [Sharh Sahīh Muslim].

After this, it becomes clear where Shaykh Abū Muhammad al-Adnānī ash-Shāmī (hafidhullah) gets his inspiration from when saying, “And so we promise you [O crusaders] by Allah’s permission that this campaign will be your final campaign. It will be broken and defeated, just as all your previous campaigns were broken and defeated, except that this time we will raid you thereafter, and you will never raid us. We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted. This is His promise to us; He is glorified and He does not fail in His promise. If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it, and they will sell

your sons as slaves at the slave market” [Indeed Your Lord Is Ever Watchful].

Before Shaytān reveals his doubts to the weak-minded and weak hearted, one should remember that enslaving the families of the kuffār and taking their women as concubines is a firmly established aspect of the Shari’ah that if one were to deny or mock, he would be denying or mocking the verses of the Qur’ān and the narrations of the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa salamu), and thereby apostatizing from Islam.

Allah ta’āla said, {Successful indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers, and who shun vain conversation, and who are payers of the zakāh, and who guard their modesty except from their wives or the [female slaves] that their right hands possess, for then they are not blameworthy, but whoever craves beyond that, such are transgressors}

[Al-Mu’minūn: 1-7].

Finally, a number of contemporary scholars have mentioned that the desertion of slavery had led to an increase in fāhishah (adultery, fornication, etc.), because the shar’ī alternative to marriage is not available, so a man who cannot afford marriage to a free woman finds himself surrounded by temptation towards sin. In addition, many Muslim families who have hired maids to work at their homes, face the fitnah of prohibited khalwah (seclusion) and resultant zinā occurring between the man and the maid, whereas if she were his concubine, this relationship would be legal. This again is from the consequences of abandoning jihād and chasing after the dunyā, wallāhul-musta’an.

May Allah bless this Islamic State with the revival of further aspects of the religion occurring at its hands.

And all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Appendix No. 10: Fatwā number 29 issued by the ISIS Center Corporation of Research and Fatwās, Raqqa governorate, Syria
(Source: al-Tamimi, September 25, 2015; al-Tamimi, December 4, 2015)

ولاية الرقة
مركز الإفتاء

فتوى البحوث والفتاوى
رقية ٢٩

لا إله إلا الله
رسول الله
محمد

﴿ أحكام الرق والعبيد ﴾

(٢٩) ما حكم سبي نساء النصيرية والكفار ؟
الجواب

يجوز سبي نساء كل من :

- النصيريين
- والكفار غير ذوي العهد
- والأزديين
- والشيعية
- غير أولي الكتاب

الجمهورية العربية السورية
مركز البحوث والفتاوى
الرقية

Appendix No. 12: Islamic State (ISIS) document showing the prices for the sale of slaves from captive Yezidi women and children

المعدد / ١٧٨
التاريخ / ٢١ ذوالحجة ١٤٣٥ هـ





بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
م / اسعار بيع الغنائم

وردنا ان سوق بيع النساء والغنائم قد شهد انخفاضاً كبيراً وهو ما يؤثر على ايرادات الدولة الإسلامية وتمويل صولات المجاهدين فيها. ولذلك فقد ارتأت هيئة بيت المال وضع الضوابط والأسعار بخصوص بيع النساء والغنائم وتزعم جميع المزاوئين لهذا العمل بالالتزام بها وبخلافه سيتم اعدام كل مخالف:

<u>الاسعار</u>	<u>التضامعة</u>
٧٥.٠٠٠ الف دينار	للمرأة البالغة من العمر ٣٠-٤٠ سنة / ايزيدية / مسيحية
١٠٠.٠٠٠ الف دينار	للمرأة البالغة من العمر ٢٠-٣٠ سنة / ايزيدية / مسيحية
١٥٠.٠٠٠ الف دينار	للمرأة البالغة من العمر ١٠-٢٠ سنة / ايزيدية / مسيحية
٥٠٠.٠٠٠ الف دينار	للمرأة البالغة من العمر ٤٠-٥٠ سنة / ايزيدية / مسيحية
٢٠٠.٠٠٠ الف دينار	لجميع الاطفال من ١ سنة الى ٩ سنة / ايزيدية / مسيحية

لا يسمح لأي شخص بشراء اكثر من ثلاث غنائم ويستثنى من ذلك الاجانب من الاتراك والسوريين والخليجيين.



٢١ ذوالحجة ١٤٣٥ هـ

Appendix No. 13: Islamic State (ISIS) flyer for a Qur'an memorization contest held in Wilāyat al-Baraka (al-Ḥasaka), Syria, on June 2015

(Source: Kinyat Organization for Documentation, October 2018, 19)

ولاية البركة
إعلان
الدولة الإسلامية
لا إله إلا الله
محمد رسول الله

لجنود الدولة الإسلامية وكافة الدواوين والمفاصل في ولاية البركة
نمننكم بحلول شهر رمضان المبارك وتقبل الله منا ومنكم الصيام والقيام
وجعلنا الله وإياكم من المتقاة من النار
يملن ديوان الدعوة والمساجد عن البدء بمسابقة حفظ سور من كتاب الله
وهي:

سورة الأنفال ، سورة التوبة ، سورة محمد ، سورة الفتح
من تاريخ ١/رمضان/٤٣٦هـ إلى تاريخ ٢٠/رمضان/٤٣٦هـ
ولمن يريد المشاركة عليه بالتسجيل عند أئمة الجوامع التالية:

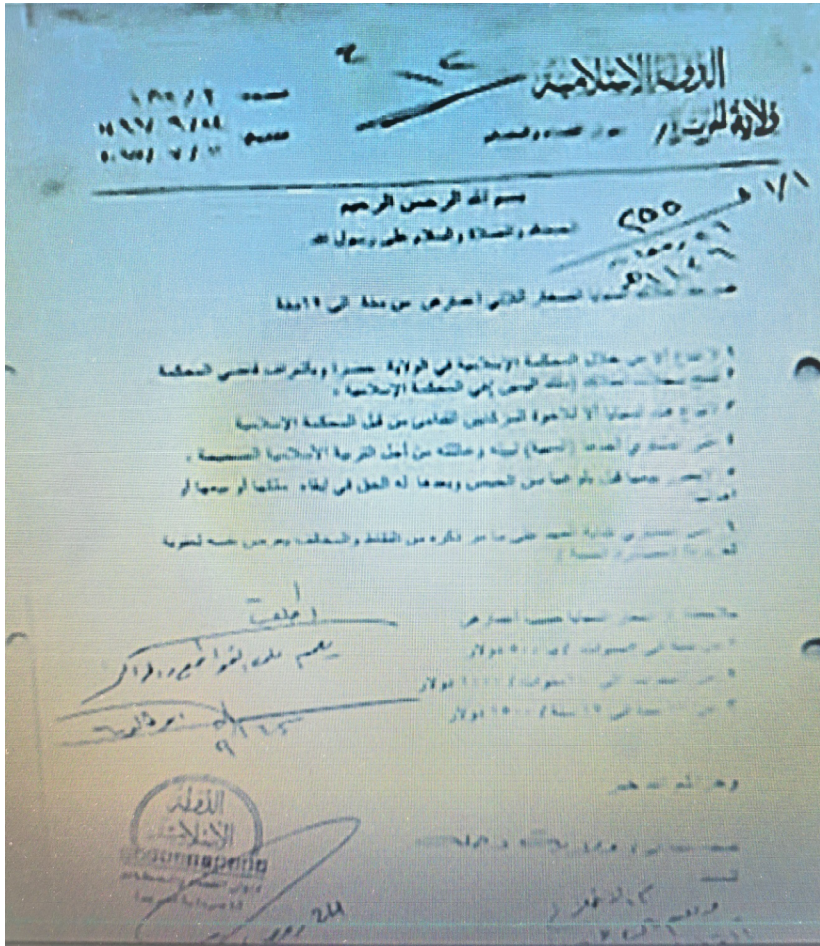
جامع أبو بكر الصديق ، جامع أسامة بن لادن ، جامع أبو مصعب الزرقاوي ، جامع التقوى
وسوف يتم بإذن الله فرز واختبار المتسابقين من تاريخ ٢١/رمضان/٤٣٦هـ
حتى تاريخ ٢٧/رمضان/٤٣٦هـ
ويكون توزيع الجوائز في أول أيام عيد الفطر المبارك بإذن الله
وجوائز هذه المسابقة هي:

- الفائز في المركز الأول ((سبئية)) ، الفائز في المركز الثاني ((سبئية))
الفائز في المركز الثالث ((سبئية))
- المركز الرابع جائزة مالية بقيمة ((100,000 ل.س))
- المركز الخامس جائزة مالية بقيمة ((90,000 ل.س))
- المركز السادس جائزة مالية بقيمة ((80,000 ل.س))
- المركز السابع جائزة مالية بقيمة ((70,000 ل.س))
- المركز الثامن جائزة مالية بقيمة ((60,000 ل.س))
- المركز التاسع جائزة مالية بقيمة ((50,000 ل.س))
- المركز المباشر جائزة مالية بقيمة ((50,000 ل.س))

نسال الله العظيم أن يبسر لكم أمركم ويوفقكم لما يحبه ويرضاه
مراتب الدعوة والمساجد
SITE

Appendix No. 14: ISIS document from the Office of Judiciary and Grievances (Dīwān al-Qaḍā' wa-al-Maẓālim) in Wilāyat Naynawā, released on July 11, 2015, containing regulations on the sales and prices of female child captives according to their ages

(Source: RT Arabic (December 11, 2018))



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

المستطير والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله ...

٥٥٥
٤٤٤
٣٣٣
٢٢٢
١١١

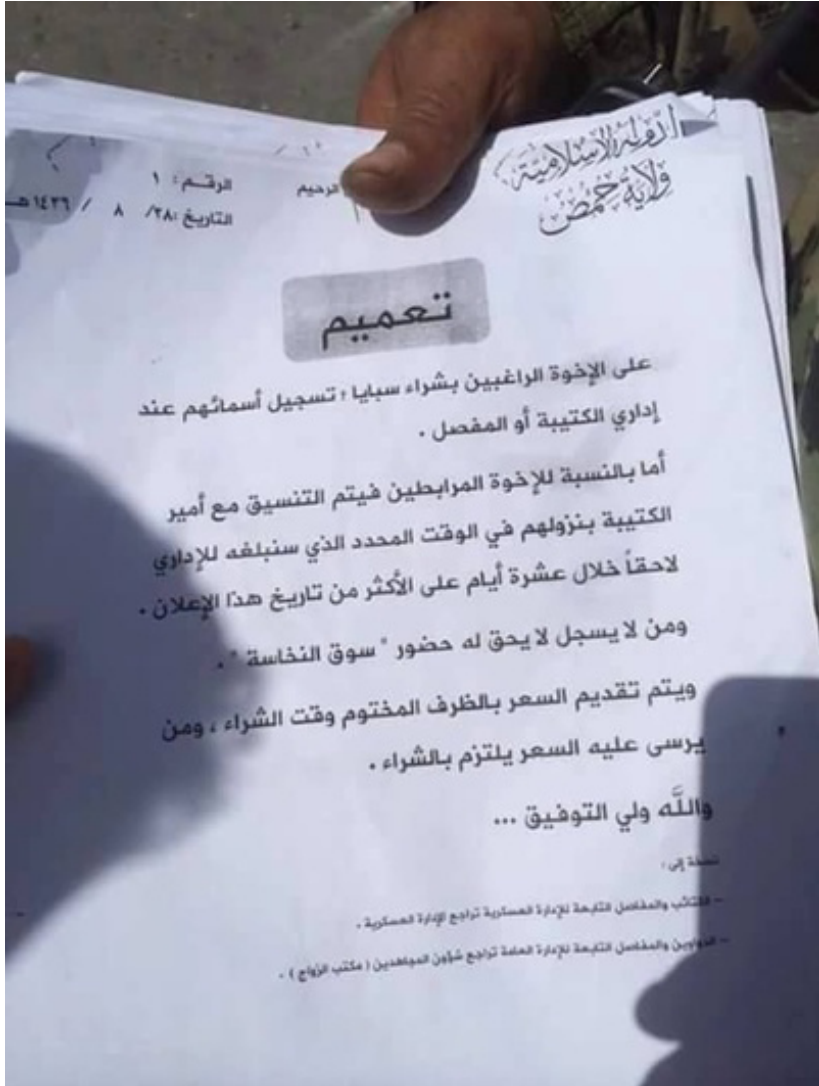
صحة ذلك حسبها السفر الثلاثي أصارهن من سنة إلى ١٢ سنة

- ١. الاتباع إلا من خلال المحكمة الإسلامية في الولاية حصرا وبإشراف قاضي المحكمة
- ٢. فتح سجلات امتلاك (ملك المدين) لدى المحكمة الإسلامية .
- ٣. إتباع هذه السجلات إلا للاخوة المراكبين القادمين من قبل المحكمة الإسلامية .
- ٤. غير الشترى أخذها (السبية) لبيته وعائلته من أجل التربية الإسلامية الصحيحة .
- ٥. لا يجوز جمعها قبل بلوغها من الحيز وبعدا له الحق في إبقاء ملكها أو بيعها أو هبتها
- ٦. غير الشترى كتابة العهد على ما مر ذكره من النفاذ والمخالف يعرض نفسه لعقوبة تعزيرية (مماثلة السنة)

أجلت
بسم الله أقرا جميع المراكبين
بسم الله

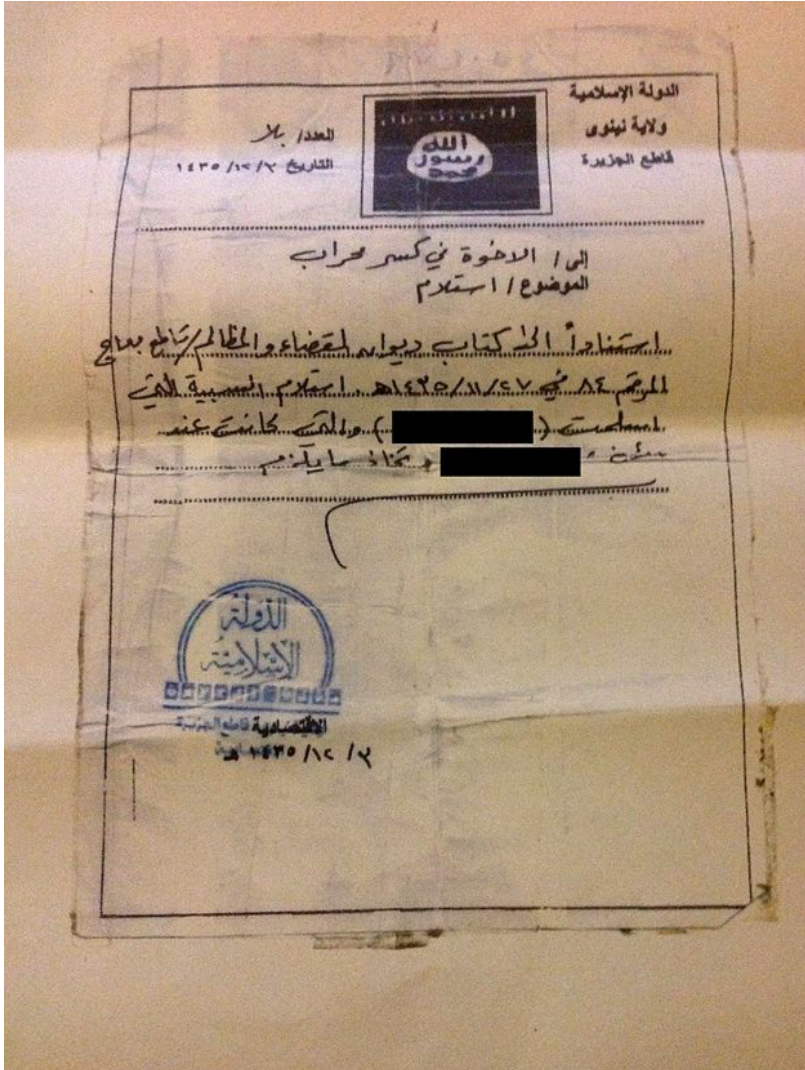
- ملاحظة / أسعار السجلات حسب أصارهن
- ١. من سنة إلى ٥ سنوات / ٥٠٠ دولار
- ٢. من ٥ سنوات إلى ١٠ سنوات / ١٠٠٠ دولار
- ٣. من ١١ سنة إلى ١٢ سنة / ١٥٠٠ دولار

Appendix No. 15: Notice on buying sex slaves, Homs province (Wilāyat Ḥims), from 8 Sha'aban 1436 AH [c. 1 2015]
(Source: al-Tamimi, January 11, 2016)



Appendix No. 16: ISIS document addressed to the jihadists in Qasr Mihrāb with the receipt of a captive converted to Islam, dated 27 September 2014

(Source: Gardner, Frank. August 3, 2016)



Appendix No. 17: Samples from Internet websites, applications, and social media used as slave markets by ISIS

(Source: Kinyat Organization for Documentation, October 2018, 24–26)



A redacted screenshot from an ISIS online sales group called "The New Caliphate Market", which at the relevant time, consisted of 164 members. The screenshot shows a group member looking to buy a *gholam* – a term used to refer to enslaved boys, particularly the Yazidis – for a "good price" or in exchange for a car.



A redacted screenshot from another ISIS online sales group called "The Great Mall of the Islamic State" which, at the relevant time, consisted of 754 members. The screenshot shows a group member offering a "virgin *sabyyya*" for sale with the following specifications: 12-year-old, pubic hair started to grow (inferred through the common use of the term "she has grown"), excellent, beautiful, for a special price.



A redacted screenshot from a third group called "The Public Market" with 176 members where a group member is offering his gun for sale (listing all its specifications and condition) and listing the possibility of exchanging it with a *sabyyya*.

As these extracts reveal, when an ISIL member posts about the woman or children they want to sell, they describe the “specifications” such as: age, virginity status, and how many times has the woman or girl been bought before. Additional behavioural descriptions such as: “sexually pleasant”, “talkative”, “obedient”, and the Arabic speaking level would be added. Postings sometimes included pictures but, often, these were shared privately with the interested buyer. The FIDH delegation learned that ISIL captors would force their captives to pose with revealing clothing and nightwear, to further tempt potential buyers. In most cases, ISIL members would not specify an asking price on their posting, but rather, a starting price from which bidding would start.

Yazidi boys that were separated from their families were also gifted or sold to ISIL fighters. While most of them appear to have been taken to indoctrination and recruitment camps, testimonies and extracts from online conversations collected by the Kinyat Organization and reviewed by the FIDH delegation show that boys had been kept by ISIL members and forced to carry out household chores, such as making tea and coffee. The online sale of boys was also observed. In one online marketplace, the following request was made by an interested buyer:



A group member in the online selling group of 'The Great Mall of the Islamic State' writes: 'A boy slave (gholam) wanted, for an injured brother. Urgently needed'

Other ISIL fighters selling Yazidi boys would specify their skills:



A screenshot from a Telegram selling group where a member posts: 'a boy slave for sale. Knows how to make coffee, how to clean, (...), Listens and obeys greatly. The bidding reached \$2500.'

Sexual and gender-based violence committed against Yazidi boys remains largely undocumented and was outside the scope of the FIDH missions. Yet, sale postings with descriptions that include “beautiful” or “lean” suggest that sexual crimes may also have been committed against them.

Exchanges in kind

Women, girls and boys were not always sold for money. At times, their ISIL captors also exchanged them with other women or girls or with a range of different things from cars and weapons to everyday items such as shoes.



In one online marketplace (The Great Mall of the Islamic State), a man carrying the ISIL flag in his profile picture wrote: “my brothers, I am not joking nor being sarcastic, (...) if anyone wants to swap a sabiyya with an Adidas shoes, message me privately.” A minute later, a person responds: “what shoe size?”



Another person responded: “if anyone wants to swap a sabiyya with shoes, I will give him two pairs of Adidas... with socks too.”

Appendix No. 18: A message and photo of an ISIS jihadist nicknamed Abū'Alī, published on August 21, 2017, by Ivana Waleed, a young Yazidi woman and survivor of ISIS captivity, from her Facebook account



Ivana Waleed

21. August 2017 um 21:42 · Facebook for Android · 🌐

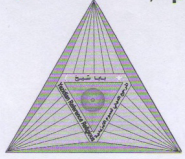

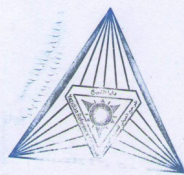


المكنى ابو علي !!!
هذا الشخص اشتراني وباعني اكثر من مرة !!!
لا يمكنني نسيان وجهه ابدأ، كان مسؤولاً عن بيع وشراء جميع الايزيديات في
تلعفر
ظهر على روداو ويجب معاقبته انا والكثير من الناجيين والناجيات نعرفه جيداً
ومستعدة ان اقف بوجهه واقول له كل الافعال التي فعلها بي وبالناجيات
الاخريات لذلك نطلب من الحكومة التحقيق الجيد معه لان اغلب الناجيات كانوا
بتلعفر وهو يعرف اين هم الان وماذا حدث لهم
وهناك المئات من الدواعش الذي فروا بين العوائل؛ الرجاء التحقيق مع الجميع
...فهم يعرفوا اين النساء الباقيات

[Übersetzung anzeigen](#)



Appendix No. 19: Statement by the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council, issued on February 6, 2015, with their formal position regarding the reception of Yezidi women survivors and their children from ISIS captivity

Yezidian Reference	بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْاَحَدِ	المرجع الديني لعموم
Religious		الاييزيدية في العالم
		العدد : ٢٨
	مەرجە عیبا نایینی گشت ئییزدیان	التاريخ : ٢٠١٥/٢/٦
الى / من يهمة الامر		
الموضوع / بيان		
<p>يُمر الایزیدية في الوقت الحاضر في ظروف صعبة ومعقدة جدا، حيث تعرضوا الى عملية ابادة منظمة، وفقدوا الكثير من الضحايا بعدما قامت (داعش) بغزوة سنجار – شنكال في الـ ٣ من شهر آب ٢٠١٤ اذ قاموا بخطف الالف النساء والاطفال والرجال، وتعرضوا الى ممارسات تنافي كل القيم الانسانية، واجبروا على اعتناق الديانة الاسلامية، وكون هذا الموقف يعد موقفا صعبا يواجه الایزیدية نرى في المرجعية الدينية أن هؤلاء قد اجبروا على ممارسات شعائر دينية تنافي الديانة الایزیدية تحت الضغط والاكراه والقوة نعلن ، وبعدما بذلت وتبذل جهودا لاعادة العديد من هؤلاء المخطوفات والمخطوفين لنؤكد بأن هؤلاء الناجيات والناجين يبقوا ايزديين انقياء وليس لأحد ان يمس عقيدتهم الایزیدية بشيء لأن ما تعرضوا له امر خارج ارادتهم . لذلك ليس لأحد ان يقرر مصيرهم او هويتهم الدينية بل العكس علينا جميعا ان نمد لهم يد المساعدة كي يعودوا الى ممارسة حياتهم الطبيعية ليتجاوزوا المحنة التي مروا بها ... ولذلك ندعو الجميع ان يتعاونوا مع هؤلاء الضحايا ويدعموهم لكي يعودوا الى ممارسة حياتهم الطبيعية ويندمجوا مع المجتمع .. والجميع مطالب بأنجاح هذه المهمة ولكم مني الشكر والعرفان والتقدير .</p>		
		
الباباشيوخ		
خرتو حاجي أسماعيل		
الأب الروحي والمرجع الديني لعموم الایزیدية في العالم		

Appendix No. 20: Statement of the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council, issued on April 24, 2019, regarding Yezidi women, girls, and their children held captive by ISIS

المجلس الروحاني الأيزيدي الأعلى
Ezidi supreme spiritual council
جفتا روحانيا بلندا يا ئيزيديان

بيان

في الاونة الاخيرة تعددت التساؤلات حول رأي المجلس الروحاني الايزيدي الاعلى بخصوص النسوة الناجيات واطفالهن لذلك ارتابنا اصدار التوضيح التالي

١- اصدار المجلس الروحاني الايزيدي الاعلى قرارا (فتوى) بقبول جميع الناجين واعتبار ماتعرضوا له خارج ارادتهم .


٢- اوفد المجلس الروحاني الايزيدي الاعلى وفدا من رجال الدين الى سوريا لمتابعة موضوع المخطوفات والمخطوفين بعد القضاء على تنظيم داعش وذلك لغرض البحث عنهم واعادتهم .

٣- نوكد للمجتمع الدولي بان الايزيديين كانوا وعبر التاريخ ضحايا ونحن نتعامل بكل فخر واعتزاز وانسانية وشفافية مع الناجين بقدر تعلق الامر بنا .

٤- ندعو المجتمع الدولي وبكافة هيئاته لغرض التعاون معنا لتاهيل هؤلاء الناجين وعبر برامج خاصة .

مع فائق التقدير والاحترام
وكيل الامير / جمال تحسين سعيد
رئيس المجلس الروحاني الايزيدي الاعلى
٢٠١٩/ نيسان ع

Appendix No. 21: Clarification statement of the Yezidi Supreme Spiritual Council concerning Yezidi survivors of ISIS, issued on April 27, 2019




المجلس الروحاني الأيزيدي الأعلى
Ezidi supreme spiritual council
جڤاتا روحانيا بلندا يا ئيزيديان

توضيح

نوضح للرأي الأيزيدي، بان ما جاء في متن البيان الذي أصدرناه بتاريخ ٢٤/٤/٢٠١٩، بخصوص قرار قبول الناجيات وأطفالهن لم يكن يعني بتاتاً الأطفال الذين ولدوا نتيجة الاعتصاب، بل المعنيين هم الأطفال المولودون من أبويين ايزيديين والذين تم اختطافهم أبان غزو داعش لمدينة سنجار في ٣/٨/٢٠١٤.

ما تم تداوله في الآونة الأخيرة حول رفض الأيزيديون استقبال الناجيات وأطفالهن الأيزيديين ينعكس سلبا على القضية الأيزيدية، لذا قررنا إصدار هذا التوضيح على قرارنا السابق الصادر بتاريخ ٦/شباط/٢٠١٥ حول قبول الناجيات وأطفالهن الأيزيديين.

وان ما تم نشره في بعض وسائل الإعلام هو تشويه وتضليل للحقائق ويتعارض تماما مع مبادئ وأركان الديانة الأيزيدية والأعراف الاجتماعية..



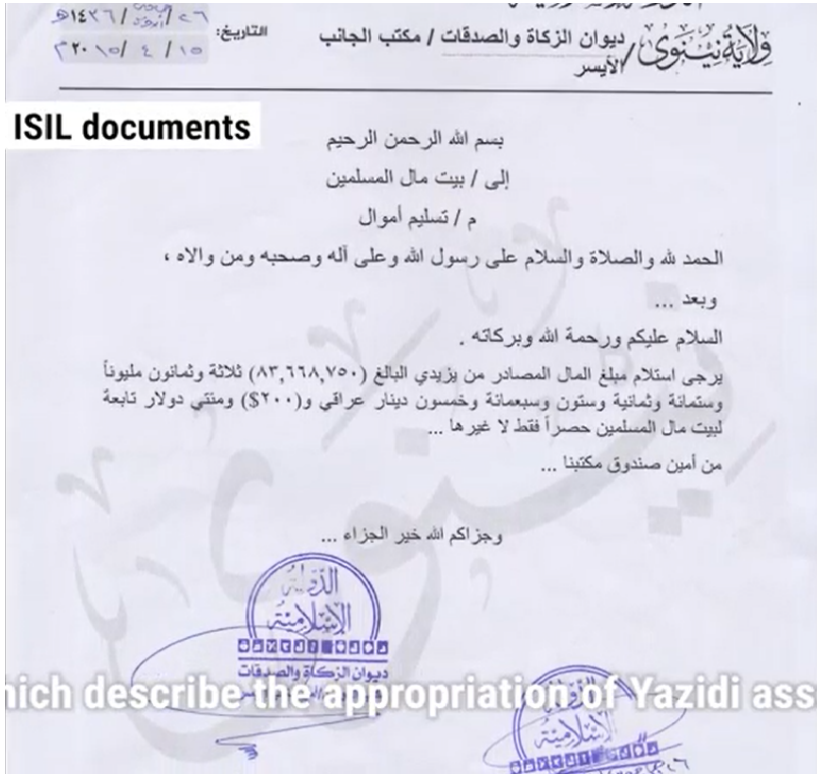
وكيل الأمير/حازم تحسين سعيد
رئيس المجلس الروحاني الأيزيدي الاعلى
٢٠١٩ / نيسان / ٢٧

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Tel. 07517930633

Appendix No. 23: ISIS document, dated April 15, 2015, from the Diwan of Zakat and Charity / Office of the Left Side of Mosul (Dīwān al-Zakāt wa-l-Ṣadaqā – Maktab al-Jānīb al-Aysar fī Wilāyat Naynawā), detailing the appropriation of Yazidi assets by the Islamic State
(Source: UNITAD Iraq Archive)



PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1: Sinjari Yazidis fleeing from ISIS in August 2014.
(Source: Picture-alliance/AA/E. Yourulmaz)



Photo 2: Displaced Yazidi families cross Iraq's border with Syria on August 13, 2014, fleeing ISIS. (Source: Ahmad al-Rubaye, AFP)



Photo 3: The shrine of Ismā'il Bēg on the south side of Sinjar Mountain before ISIS destruction. (Source: Leutheuser in 2012)



Photo 4: The shrine of Ismā'il Bēg after ISIS destruction. (Source: Leutheuser in 2017)



Photo 5: Mahmad-Raşan shrine on the south side of Sinjar Mountain
(Source: Leutheuser in 2014)



Photo 6: Mahmad-Raşan shrine after the destruction (Source: Leutheuser in 2017)



Photo 7: The shrine of Šayḥ Rumī on the north side of Sinjar Mountain before ISIS destruction. (Source: Leutheuser in 2017)



Photo 8: The shrine of Šayḥ Rumī after its destruction (Source: Leutheuser in 2017)



Photo 9: Šayḥ Mand Pasha shrine on the south side of Sinjar Mountain (Source: Leutheuser in 2012)



Photo 10: Šayḥ Mand Pasha shrine after its destruction (Source: Leutheuser in 2017)



Photo 11: Šayḥ Ḥasan shrine on the south side of Sinjar Mountain
(Source: Leutheuser in 2017)



Photo 12: The rebuilt of Šayḥ Ḥasan shrine in new form in the collective town (compound) of Bābīrē. It was reopened for worshipping with a large celebration on February 15, 2017. On the right side of shrine are the remains of the destroyed one by the ISIS jihadists in August 2014 is still visible. (Source: Author on October 5, 2018)



Photo 13: Author with the micêwir (guardian) of Šahsê Bâtê at the shrine on October 5, 2018 in the collective town of Bâbirê. (Source: Author)



Photo 14: The rebuilt dome (quba) of the Malik Šeh-Sin (Ĥasan) shrine in the collective town of Bâbirê. (Source: Author on October 5, 2018)



Photo 15: The destroyed Yezidi shrine of al-Sī'ad in Baḥzānē.
(Source: Archive of Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch)



Photo 16: The destroyed Yezidi shrine of Gābat al-Sāsī in Baḥzānē.
(Source: Archive of Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch)



Photo 17: The destroyed Yezidi shrine of al-Ḥafir in Baḥzānē.
(Source: Archive of Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch)



Photo 18: The destroyed Yezidi shrine of Šayḥ Bābik in Baḥzānē.
(Source: Archive of Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch)



Photo 19: Rebuilding of the religious site Nīšān Kanī-Zirkī in Baḥzānē, which was destroyed by ISIS. (Source: Archive of Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch)



Photo 20: The destroyed Yezidi shrine of Bayt al-sit-Ḥabībī in Baḥzānē. (Source: Archive of Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch)



Photo 21: The destroyed Yezidi shrine of Šayḥ Ḥasan in Baḥzānē.
(Source: Archive of Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch)



Photo 22: Rebuilding the religious site of al-Sī'ad shrine in Baḥzānē,
which was destroyed by ISIS. (Source: Archive of Lalish Center Baḥzānē Branch)



Photo 23: The Yazidi spiritual leader, Sheikh Kato together with other clerics, commemorates the opening of the first mass grave in Koçj, by releasing white doves from a box. Survivors and families of the victims of the genocide gathered on this day. Around 70 mass graves are to be excavated for the exhumation of the bodies in Sinjar. (Source: Mamo, Alessio /Al Jazeera)



Photo 24: Members of the Yazidi minority search for clues that might lead them to missing relatives in the remains of people killed by the IS jihadist group, a day after Kurdish forces discovered a mass grave near the Iraqi village of Sinuni, February 3, 2015. (Source: AFP)



Photo 25: Locals search a mass grave for remains of their family members.
(Source: kurdistan24)



Photo 26: Members of a technical team on June 27, 2019, exhume Yezidi victims' remains from a mass grave discovered in Sinjar district. [Photo courtesy of the Iraqi Martyrs' Foundation] (Source: al-Taie, Khalid (August 5, 2020)



Photo 27: About 100 women wearing face masks gathered, waiting for a ceremony marking the start of exhumation of a mass grave of ISIS victims in Şölağ, Sinjar region on October 24, 2020. (Source: Fazel Hawramy (Rudaw TV (October 24, 2020)))



Photo 28: Karim Khan, head of UNITAD, speaks during a ceremony ahead of commencing exhumation of a mass grave of Yazidi victims of ISIS in Şölağ, Sinjar region on October 24, 2020. (Source: Fazel Hawramy (Rudaw TV (October 24, 2020): webpage))



Photo 29: In Koço on February 6, 2021, the burial ceremony of the remains of the 104 Yezidi men from Koço who were killed by ISIS in 2014. (Source: al-Manar)



Photo 30: Eleven Yezidi children gather in an area held by the US-backed Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), in the eastern Syrian province of Deir Ezzor, after fleeing the Islamic State group's embattled holdout of Baghouz, on February 23, 2019. They were rescued by US-backed forces from IS's last sliver of territory in the village of Baghouz near the Iraqi border. (Source: AFP)



Photo 31: On August 15, the ISIS jihadists gathered all Yazidis of village of Koço in this school. They separated the men from women and girls, and they started to kill the men after the refused to convert to Islam. (Source: UNITAD Iraq Archive)



Photo 32: The Camp of Shingali refugees of ISIS on Mountain of Sinjar. (Source: Leutheuser in 2017)



Photo 33: The Camp of Shingali refugees of ISIS in Shariya collective town near to Duhok city. (Source: Author, April 23, 2015)



Photo 34: A part of destroyed Yezidi houses by ISIS in Sinjar. (Source: Leutheuser in 2017)

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Human Rights Reports

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THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER JUSTICE (HRGJ) CLINIC OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY) SCHOOL OF LAW, MADRE: The Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI) (November 8, 2017): Communication to the ICC Prosecutor pursuant to article 15 of the Rome Statute requesting a preliminary examination into the situation of: gender-based persecution and torture as crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq. <https://www.madre.org/sites/default/files/PDFs/CUNY%20MADRE%20OWFI%20Article%2015%20Communication%20Submission%20Gender%20Crimes%20in%20Iraq%20PDF.pdf>.

USCIRF (2015): Annual Report of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. <http://www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/USCIRF%20Annual%20Report%202015%20%282%29.pdf>.

Interviews

INTERVIEW WITH 'ADIL ĒZDĪN (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP ON 13.02.2016): He is a survived 8-Year-old Yezidi boy from Tell Ezer.

INTERVIEW WITH AYHĀM (IN ŠĀRIYĀ: January 11, 2019): Ayhām Taḥsīn Ilyās is eight years old Yezidi child from Tell Banāt village in Sinjar region. He was captured by ISIS on August 3, 2014 and stayed in captive until August 26, 2017. He was also shown in propaganda video of ISIS.

INTERVIEW WITH BĪBO KRĒT, the *micêwir* (the server of) Şaḥssê Bâtê shrine (Bâbirê October 5, 2018).

INTERVIEW WITH BUŞRĀ (IN KABARTŪ 1 CAMP ON 02.04.2016): She was born in 2002. She was captured by ISIS jihadists on August 3, 2014, and is from village of Qābūsī south of Sinjar.

INTERVIEW WITH DILVĪN (IN KABARTŪ 1 CAMP ON 01.01.2016): She is a 17-year old Yezidi girl from Sinjar city.

INTERVIEW WITH DILVĪN (IN ŠĀRIYĀ ON 02.09.2016): She is a 30-year-old Yezidi woman from Duholā village located in the north side of Sinjar Mountain. She was released on April 25, 2015.

INTERVIEW WITH ĞĀLĪLĀ (IN QĀDĪYĀ CAMP ON 03.07.2016): She a Yezidi woman about 30 years old from Koço. On August 3, [2014], she was captured by ISIS jihadists.

INTERVIEW WITH ĞĀNĒ (IN KABARTŪ 1 CAMP ON 02.01.2016): She is about 50-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar city. She was captured by ISIS jihadists on August 3, 2014.

INTERVIEW WITH GAWRĒ (IN KABARTŪ 2 CAMP ON 29.02.2016): She is a 64-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinūnē.

INTERVIEW WITH GAWRĒ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP IN SEPTEMBER 2016): She is a 39-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik.

INTERVIEW WITH GAWRĒ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ IN SEPTEMBER 2016): She is a 50-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar.

INTERVIEW WITH GULĒ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP ON 02.09.2016): She is a 17-year-old Yezidi girl from Tell Ezer.

INTERVIEW WITH ḤĀLĪMA (IN QĀDĪYĀ CAMP ON 03.07.2016): She is a 25-year-old Yezidi woman from Ḥātimīyah. She was captured on August 3, 2014 by ISIS jihadists, and was released on May 3, 2015.

INTERVIEW WITH ҲАЛWĀ (IN KĀBARTŪ 2 CAMP ON 29/2/2016): She is from Tell Banāt and was born in 1994. She was captured by ISIS jihadists on August 3, 2014.

INTERVIEW WITH HİYĀM (IN KĀBARTŪ 2 CAMP ON 29.02.2016): She is a 18-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar.

INTERVIEW WITH ҲИСNĀ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP ON 02.11.2016): She is from Gir Zerik and was born in 1992. She was in the hands of ISIS for one year. They captured her on August 3, [2014], and she escaped on July 30, [2015].

INTERVIEW WITH INTIŞĀR (IN QĀDĪYĀ CAMP ON 03.07.2016): Intişār ‘Agāb Qāsim was born in 1985. She is a Yezidi woman from Koço. She was captured with 7 other members of her family by ISIS jihadists on August 3, 2014.

INTERVIEW WITH ISIS JIHADIST CALLED MUḤAMMAD RAŞĪD SAHAB MUSLIḤ, AL-IRAQIA TV CHANNAL. SEE THE INTERVIEW IN: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39M1Sa1DZDA>

INTERVIEW WITH LAMIYĀ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ IN SEPTEMBER 2016): She is a Yezidi girl from Qābūsi in Sinjar.

INTERVIEW WITH LAYLO (IN KĀBARTŪ 1 CAMP ON 28.01.2016): She is a 50-year-old Yezidi woman from Ḥardān.

INTERVIEW WITH MAHAYĀ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP ON 02.02.2016): She is a 35-year-old Yezidi woman from Khanasor.

INTERVIEW WITH NA‘ĪMĀ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP IN SEPTEMBER 2016): She is a 35-year-old Yezidi woman from Şōlağ.

INTERVIEW WITH NASĪMĀ (IN KĀBARTŪ 2 CAMP ON 29.2.2016): She a 15-year-old Yezidi girl from Tell Qasab.

INTERVIEW WITH NAWĀF (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP ON 28.02.2016): He was born 1989. He is a Yezidi young man from Kāniyā ‘Ido village in Sinjar.

INTERVIEW WITH NISRĪN (IN QĀDĪYĀ CAMP): She was born in 1996. She is a Yezidi woman from Koço.

INTERVIEW WITH NŪRĒ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP IN SEPTEMBER 2016): She is a 26-year-old Yezidi woman from Tell Ezer.

INTERVIEW WITH RUDAYNA (IN KĀBARTŪ 1 CAMP ON 02.04.2016): She is a 11-year-old Yezidi girl from Sinjar.

INTERVIEW WITH ŞAFWĀN (IN ŠĀRIYĀ: January 11, 2019): an 80-years old Yezidi man from Shingal (Sinjar) city, who stayed in captivity by ISIS for two years.

- INTERVIEW WITH SAHĪRĀ (IN KABARTŪ 1 CAMP ON 02.04.2016): She is a 18-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar.
- INTERVIEW WITH SAMĪRĀ (IN QĀDIYĀ CAMP ON 03.07.2016): She is a 20-year-old Yezidi woman from Tel-Banāt. ISIS captured her on August 3, 2014. She was released on February 24, 2016.
- INTERVIEW WITH ŠAMMĀL SALĪM ŠAMMO (IN ŠĀRIYĀ ON 23.02.2020): She is assistant manager of Juveen Charity Orphanage House in Šāriyā.
- INTERVIEW WITH SĪPĀN (IN ŠĀRIYĀ IN DECEMBER 2019): He is a Yezidi boy from Sinjar region.
- INTERVIEW WITH SUHĀM (IN KABARTŪ 2 CAMP ON 29.2.2016): She is a 26-year-old Yezidi woman from Gir Zerik.
- INTERVIEW WITH TORĒ (IN KABARTŪ 1 CAMP ON 02.04.2016): She was born in 1979 and is from Sībā-Šēhidrē in Sinjar region. She was captured by ISIS jihadists on August 3, 2014.
- INTERVIEW WITH WĀRĪDĀ (IN ŠĀRIYĀ CAMP ON 02.10.2016): She is a Yezidi woman from Khanasor in Sinjar region.
- INTERVIEW WITH ZUHŪR (IN KABARTŪ 1 CAMP ON 28.1.2016): She is a 28-year-old Yezidi woman from Sinjar. She was captured in August 2014, and released on December 2, 2015.
- INTERVIEW WITH ZIYĀD (IN ŠĀRIYĀ / GIRE-PAN ON 29.01.2016): He is a 34-year-old Yezidi man from Sinjar.
- LALISH CENTER BAḤZĀNĒ BRANCH (JULY 20, 2020): The names of Yezidi shrines demolished by ISIS in Ba'šīqa and Baḥzānē. (communication WhatsApp)
- LEUTHEUSER, ROBERT (AUGUST 28, 2020): The names of Yezidi shrines demolished by ISIS in Sinjar. (Personal communication/email).

Abstract

This book offers a comprehensive examination of both the historical and contemporary ISIS scholarly interpretations and the broader dimensions of Islamic hostility toward the Yezidis. Particular attention is devoted to the historical role of Kurdish Muslim scholars and mullās in shaping religious discourse concerning the Yezidi community. By analyzing the theological, political, and social foundations of anti-Yezidi sentiment within Islamic thought, the study investigates a wide range of historical and modern fatwās of ISIS and other religious edicts issued towards the Yezidis. It further assesses the enduring repercussions of these decrees for Yezidi society, highlighting their impact on communal identity, interreligious relations, and collective memory.

A central focus of this book is a comprehensive study of Islamic fatwās and religious statements concerning the Yezidis, their origins, forms, and procedures, as well as the motivations behind and effects of issuing them. The research traces the continuity and transformation of these fatwās from the early Islamic period through the Ottoman era to the Islamic State (ISIS) era during its the genocide of the Yezidis in 2014.

Another major component of this research is its investigation of the 2014 ISIS invasion of the Yezidi heartland in northern Iraq and Syria. The book compares the ideological and operational aspects of the ISIS campaign with earlier Islamic invasions against the Yezidis, revealing striking continuities. It devotes substantial attention to the fate of Yezidi captives within Islamic slavery systems, historically during the Ottoman period and, more recently, under ISIS rule, drawing on over thirty first-person survivor testimonies. These accounts offer direct detailed insights into the realities of imprisonment, sexual enslavement, and the slave markets (*Sūq al-Sabāyā*) of ISIS, exposing the brutality and depth of the genocide. Sensitive issues such as the status of children born to Yezidi women enslaved by ISIS jihadists, and the societal and religious responses to them, are examined in detail.

YEZIDI STUDIES

- Vol. 1 Rick Latham Lechowick: I won't let them be like me. Ezidi Women's Agency and Identity after the Sinjar Genocide. 428 pages. ISBN 978-3-7329-1017-5
- Vol. 2 Qader Saleem Shammo: After the 2014 Genocide: Islamic Scholars' Perception of the Yezidis and Yezidism. 244 pages. ISBN 978-3-7329-1129-5
- Vol. 3 Rawan Fouad Abdi: Frozen in the Past. Survivor stories from the 2014 Yezidi genocide. 328 pages. ISBN 978-3-7329-1145-5
- Vol. 4 Qader Saleem Shammo: The Yezidis in Kurdish Nationalist and Islamic Discourses after the 2014 Genocide. 282 pages. ISBN 978-3-7329-1240-7
- Vol. 5 Qader Saleem Shammo: From Fatwā to Genocide: Historic and Contemporary Manifestations of the Islamic Genocide against the Yezidis. 346 pages. ISBN 978-3-7329-1242-1

What is the history and the present-day reality of the Yezidis? Are there enduring patterns of discrimination and persecution by Islamic communities and political authorities? And how did and do they affect women and children? In his research, Qader Saleem Shammo pays particular attention to the enslavement of Yezidi women and children and to the *sûq al-sabâyâ*, the slave markets established for their sale. He presents detailed eyewitness accounts of the occurrences, thus documenting events which have been so far largely absent from existing scholarship. This includes highly sensitive issues, such as the fate of children born from the rape of Yezidi women or the application of Islamic law by the states in which the Yezidis reside.

From Fatwâ to Genocide synthesizes dispersed and often hard-to-access material and provides a clear and compelling account of the Yezidis' lived reality within Muslim communities. The author also situates the ISIS atrocities of 2014 within a broader historical framework and demonstrates how these crimes were committed under the banner of Islam and how fatwâs issued by Islamic clerics legitimized them.

Dr. Qader Saleem Shammo is a specialist in Modern History, Politics, and Minority Issues, with a particular focus on Yezidi history, identity, and heritage. His research examines the Yezidi genocide perpetrated by ISIS, as well as the community's position within state policies and Islamic religious contexts.

He earned his PhD from Goethe University Frankfurt and has held positions at the University of Duhok (Iraq), LMU Munich, and Leipzig University (Germany), where he co-founded the Yezidi Studies Center.

