

Arising from The Ashes

A Multiple Case Study of
Post-genocide Situation of Yezidi Women
In Kurdistan And Germany

By: Golala Kamangar



Spring 2019
30 sp.

Master thesis in Middle East and North African Studies
Department of Culture Studies and oriental languages

THE UNIVERSITY OF OSLO
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Acknowledgment

I would like to begin expressing my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor professor Berit S. Thorbjørnsrud for encouragement, invaluable guidance and for providing constructive criticism. I'm very grateful for all her time that she spent in discussing the various subjects of this thesis, and for going through the numerous versions of this dissertation. I also wish to thank her for showing me the beauty of conducting research. I take this opportunity to express my thankfulness and appreciation to the entire teaching and non-teaching faculty of department of culture studies and oriental languages of Oslo university for providing me an affable and healthy atmosphere during my study.

I would like to extend my thanks to Ms. Ida Sletta and Ms. Trude Lind advisers of Middle East Studies for their help and support. My special and heartily thanks to my friend Dr. Said Morad Babaheidari, for reviewing the text, assisting with the technical aspect of my research and for his constructive recommendations. I also thank my dear friend Ava Homa for proofreading the final version of the text. I want to give my sincere thanks to Mr. Hatab Omar, the head of Ezidi Academia in Hannover, for his useful advices and support. My grateful thanks are also extended to these people and organizations:

The Ezidi House in Celle; The Ezidi House in Oldenburg; The Office of Baba Sheykh in Sheykh; Mr. Sahap Dag, the head of Oldenburg Ezidi House; Mr. Mohammad Salih Qaderi, representative of Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan in Erbil; and Mr. Seida Khidher, for accompanying me and providing guidance; and for all Yezidi scholars and leaders who helped me either directly or indirectly in this research.

I am also deeply thankful to my informants. Their names cannot be disclosed, but I want to acknowledge and appreciate their help and transparency during my research. Their useful information helped me conduct this thesis. Finally, I wish to acknowledge and pay the utmost respect for Yezidi Kurdish people who have bravely survived despite what they have gone through.

Abstract

This thesis investigates the post-genocide situation of Yezidi women who were captured by ISIS in 2014 to address the process of reintegration and challenges of their current life in Kurdistan Region and Germany. More precisely, the role of two determinant factors of religious rites and the religious leadership in the process of reintegration and the consequences of transferring survivors to Germany are evaluated. To achieve this objective, the passage rite theory and the social identity theory have been used as the theoretical framework. The method which has been used in this research is qualitative approach by conducting 16 interviews among survivors and other related key persons. The results of this research show that religious leadership has played a central role in the process of survivors' social reintegration. Given the traditional structure of such religious community, the victims may face new challenges by transferring to countries like Germany, due to factors such as separation from the relatives and the origin community.

Keywords:

Yezidi Women, Sexual Slavery, ISIS War Crimes, Yezidi Community, Yezidi Genocide, Religious Rites, Religious Leadership, Social Identity Theory, Kurdistan Regional Government.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 The Recent Genocide of Yezidis and the International Reactions	1
1.2 Who are the Yezidis	4
1.3 Declaration and religious ritual.....	5
1.4 Research questions and arguments	6
2.Theoretical framework.....	7
2.1 Social identity theory and the concept of belonging	7
2.2 Passage rite theory	9
3. Method	10
3.1 Self-expression and building relations	11
3.2 Gatekeepers	12
3.3 Gatekeepers' challenges	13
3.4 Interview	14
3.5 Data collection	16
3.6 Ethical questions	17
3.7 Background information of the respondents.....	17
3.7.1 Avin	17
3.7.2 Dalia	18
3.7.3 Sewa.....	18
3.7.4 Vian	18
3.7.5 Mona.....	18
3.7.6 Nesrin	18
3.7.7 Naze	18
3.7.8 Bahare	19
4. Yezidi Studies	20
4.1 Travellers and missionaries	21
4.2 Scholars	22
4.3 Research of Yezidi genocide in 2014	23
5. Reintegration process	25
5.2 The body of Declaration	26
5.3 Religious rituals called Helal Kirin	27
5.4 Helal Kirin and definition of Helal and Heram	27
5.5 Helal and Heram related to sexual acts and endogamy	28
5.6 Honour and Shame related to Yezidi community.....	29

5.7	Passage rite, Helal Kirin, as a strategy to rebuild suspended society membership	30
5.8	Legitimizing Ceremony (Helal Kirin)	31
5.9	Restoration of dignity	33
5.10	The taboo words; content of declaration	35
5.11	Motherhood and social acceptance.....	37
6.	Post-genocide situation in Kurdistan and Germany.....	39
6.1	Victimized women and their needs and rights	39
6.2	Social needs of assaulted women and the concept of belonging	39
6.3	Yezidi assaulted women and their present life	40
6.4	Living in Kurdistan: resettlement in camps, living in uncertain and hard situations	41
6.5	Psychotherapy	42
6.6	International volunteer aids, advantages and challenges.....	43
6.7	Living in Germany	46
6.8	Housing	46
6.9	Education and job opportunities	47
6.10	Psychological treatment and challenges.....	49
6.11	Cultural gaps between survivors and their therapists	50
6.12	Losing family and community relations	52
6.13	receiving integration opportunities and effects on rehabilitation process.....	53
7.	Conclusion	55
8.	References.....	57
9.	Appendixes	62
9.1	Acronyms	62
9.2	Pictures.....	63

1. Introduction

1.1 The Recent Genocide of Yezidis and the International Reactions

In 2014, the Yezidi community encountered an unprecedented catastrophe. Although this religious community has had a long history of suffering, banishment and pressure under the rule of Muslim governors, what happened during the year 2014 onwards, was recognized by the United Nations as a genocide. When the Jihadist militia, or the so-called the "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria" (henceforth ISIS) attacked Northern Iraq, one of the main objectives of this terrorist organization was to attack the regional government of Iraqi Kurdistan. After the fall of the strategic town of Mosul, most of the Nineveh governate went under the control of ISIS. Yezidis are ethnically Kurdish but what made them a primary target for ISIS is their syncretic religion which they have managed to maintain for centuries. The rapid advancement of ISIS militants in Iraq and Syria, weakened the central government of Iraq. Thus, during a matter of a few days, ISIS was heading toward the areas controlled by the Kurdish Peshmerga forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The Peshmerga forces in coordination with their Western allies managed to stop ISIS forces from further advancements into Kurdish areas. But the Yezidis areas with its main town of Shingal were captured by ISIS forces. Consequently, the Yezidis were targeted for systematic mass killing, kidnapping, rape, and extermination. It was from here that these areas that the first phase of mass killing of Yezidis took place. Within the few days of the ISIS emergence in both Iraq and Syria, many considerable vast areas of Syria and the Sunni-Dominated area of Iraq fell into their full control. ISIS started a systematic mass killing in the non-Muslim, and non-Sunni areas of Iraq. In addition to the Yezidis who were the prime target of ISIS, some other religious minorities such as Christians, Shabaks, and Shiite-Turkmen were also targeted in these cleansing operations. However, the community of Yezidis had paid the highest price for Islamic State's dramatic advances through the north. The Islamic jurisprudence has divided the religious minorities into two main groups. The first group is *Dhimmi* including Christians and Jews

Dhimmi has been defined as “the people of the book”¹, they can convert to Islam or pay *Djizya* (i.e., specific *Dhimmi* tax) to the Islamic rulers/government. The second group is the rest of Non-Muslims, who don’t have to pay taxes. They must either be converted into Islam or be killed. Therefore, Yezidis who were out of *Dhimmi* definition encountered a massacre.

The genocide started from August 3 in Al-Qahtani., Armed-to-teeth ISIS attacked Sinjar on August 4 and continued village by village while no forces were there to protect the civilians. A group of Yezidis fled to Sinjar mountains and the rest into the safe Yezidi areas in the Kurdistan Region. The number of casualties is uncertain because of contradictory reports and due to the large number of missing people. However according to the lists compiled by local authorities and human rights organizations, between 2,000 and 5,500 Yezidis were killed and more than 6,000 were kidnapped during these current massacres². The horrible reports of humanitarian crisis among the women and children who were kidnapped as sex slaves showed the vastness and deepness of disaster, which drew the global attention. The united nation human rights panel issued a report on ISIS crimes committed against Yezidis and labelled these crimes as Genocide³.

After three months of the Islamic State group's atrocities against the Yezidi minority, ISIS lost control of some occupied areas. Thus, some tortured, abused, and raped women could return to their community while most of them had lost the male members of their families during the genocide. One the one hand, they were broken down physically and mentally and thus deeply traumatized with profound sorrow. Carrying obvious results of psychological and physical tortures, sex slavery, missing family members, this group needed acute medical care. On the other hand, they had to encounter unpredictable social reactions as honour-lost females in an honour-based culture. In the Middle East, due to several factors such as climate, economy, religious and

1. “The people of the book” is an Islamic term implying the people who possess monotheistic scriptures and referring mainly to Jews and Christian, the term was later extended to other religious communities that fell under Muslim rule. They had to pay yearly tax for living in Muslim land governed by Islamic law. Look at encyclopaedia of Islam, second edition, *Djizya* and *Dhimmi*.

2. “Mortality and kidnapping estimates for the Yazidi population in the area of Mount Sinjar, Iraq, in August 2014: A retrospective household survey”, *PLOS medicine*, may 9, 2017. <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002297>.

3. “UN human rights panel conclude ISIL is committing genocide against Yazidis”, UN news, 16 June 2016, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/06/532312-un-human-rights-panel-concludes-isil-committing-genocide-against-yazidis>.

political insecurity, the flexibility and durability of kinship relations remain valuable⁴ and *honour*, as the ability of a group to enforce and control marital/reproductive boundaries⁵, has been considered as one of the central notions of kin-based communities. In these communities, committing or being suspected of committing illicit sexual acts could justify different kinds of honour-based violence so called honour crimes⁶. Murderous reactions due to honour case against women among Yezidis have put the future life of survivors into a complicated and worrisome situation. Based on this information, the Yezidi women survivors were considered the first priority for all local and international agents including Yezidis and non-Yezidis, which worked to handle the current situation of Yezidi community.

Besides the basic supports which have been provided for all Internally Displaced Persons (Hereafter IDPs), in temporary camps, survivors needed specific psychological treatment to overcome the trauma. Hence some local and international organizations started to transfer them to the psychological clinics inside Iraq or abroad to receive psychotherapy. This was, and still is, the psychological treatment of the case. The other part for completing the rehabilitation process was the reintegration process which was managed mainly by Yezidi activists and religious leadership who tried to work toward rebuilding the social status of these women. As Kumar has mentioned, rehabilitation is a process aimed at enabling an impaired person to reach the optimum mental, physical and/or social functional level, thus providing the individual with the tools to change her or his own life⁷. So, the social dimension is a necessary part of psychological treatment in addition to two levels of Maslow hierarchy. According to Maslow hierarchy, each person has five levels of needs. First, biological needs like food, air, drink, and shelter. Second, safety needs like security, stability, freedom, and law. Third, social needs like relationships and belonging. Fourth level is esteem needs, like independence, respect, status, and prestige. Fifth and final level, self-

4. Joanne L. Payton, "For the Boys in the Family: An Investigation into the Relationship Between "Honor"-Based Violence and Endogamy", *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, Vol. 32 (2017): 1349.

5. Ibid, 1348.

6. Stefanie Eileen, Nanes, "Fighting honour crimes: evidence of civil society of Jordan", *Middle East journal*, Vol. 57, No,1(2016): 177.

7. Kumar, Ashvin, "Disability, rehabilitation and social control: A Foucauldian perspective", *international journal of human science*, Vo. 8, Issue. 2 (2011): 402.

actualization, seeking personal growth and fulfilling personal and potential social accepting⁸. Third and fourth stages of Maslow hierarchy; *social needs* and *esteem needs*, which could be covered/addressed by the process of reintegration. Therefore, official responses and ceremonies to formalize the process of reintegration steered by religious leadership could be considered as a part of the process of rehabilitation. Based on this background, the Yezidi leadership made a unique decision in Yezidi history for conducting a formal reintegration ritual for survivors including publishing a declaration, which works like Fatwa⁹ and necessarily should be followed by Yezidi community as a religious duty, and practical ritual for re-purification of the women.

1.2 Who are the Yezidis

Yezidis, or in the original Kurdish pronunciation Ezidis¹⁰, are an ethno-religious group who inhabited in the North part of the land called Kurdistan throughout the history. In the past, their territory included Van, Hakkari, Mardin and Diarbakr in Turkey, Qamishli and Halab in Syria, and Sinjar and Sheykhani in Iraq. A considerable number of them moved from their land to Caucasus, today's Georgia and Armenia, due to unbearable pressures from Othman empire during the 19th and 20 centuries¹¹. In the nineteenth century, the political and ideological boundaries drawn by

8. McLeod, S. A. (2007). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
<http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

9. Fatwa is an Islamic term refers to opinion on a point of Islamic law which covers all civil or religious matters. Look at Encyclopedia of Islam, second edition.

10. Most western scholars now hold that the word derives from the name of yazid b. Muawiya, a derivation from old Iranian yazata "divine being", was once widely accepted by many Yazidi/Yezidi/Ezidis. However, the Kurdish appellation generally used by the community itself is Ezdi, with a variant Yezidi (P.G. Kreyenbroek, encyclopedia of Islam, second edition). The old appellation remained from the Muslim scholars and they were not familiar with the etymology of the original word they relegated the word to Yazid b. Muawiya and this justification accepted by the western scholars, even though the content of this religion doesn't show strong dependency to Yazid b. Muawiya and Yazid is not a main holy character, I would prefer to use the common name Yezidi and not the original appellation in this research only because of ease accessibility in online searching and being knit to the other researches has been filed under the title of Yezidi and Yezidism.

11. Kreyenbroek, Philippe G., *Yezidism in Europe Different Generations Speak about their Religion*, (Harrassowits, Verlag, Weisbaden, 2009),11.

Turkish ruler placed the Yezidi Kurds at the very margins of the political, social and moral orders supported by the Ottoman state¹².

The other mass moving in the modern time began after the World War II. In the 1960s and early 1970s, immigration policy of Germany, and the other European states, opened the way for Yezidi to come to the West¹³. Therefore, Yezidis who were held in contempt as a religious minority and as Kurds under the nationalist and chauvinistic policy Domlenated the region, started to leave their land, heading to European countries. The first wave of Yezidi immigrant came from Turkey and was joined by coreligionist from Syria and Iraq during the 1980s and 90s¹⁴.

Today densely Yezidi population in their origin land, namely Kurdistan, has been limited to Sinjar and Sheykh and the villages around these areas. Their population has been estimated around one million people or less overall the world¹⁵ and roughly 400,000 were lived in Sinjar in 2014¹⁶.

1.3 Declaration and religious ritual

As mentioned above, the reintegration process had two formal phases namely publishing declaration and conducting rituals. Declaration has been prepared by a group including religious leaders and scholars¹⁷ and after being singed by the highest-level leader, Baba Sheykh, it was published on February 6, 2015. The Declaration after expounding the current situation of Yezidi community after ISIS attack and what the Yezidi captures have been forced to do against their will/belief, clarifies that all survivors both male and female will remain pure Yzidi and nothing

12. Nelida, Fuccaro, “communalism and the state in Iraq: the Yezidi Kurds”, *Middle eastern studies*, 35:2 (1999): 3.

13. Kreyenbroek, Yezidism, its background, 43.

14. Ibid, 43.

15. Robert Langer, “Yezidism between Scholarly Literature and Actual Practice: From ‘Heterodox’ Islam and ‘Syncretism’ to the Formation of a Transnational Yezidi ‘Orthodoxy’”, *British Journal of Middle eastern studies*37, (2010): 3. And: Yezidi truth, <http://www.yeziditruth.org>

16. Cetorelli V, Sasson I, Shabila N, Burnham G “Mortality and kidnapping estimates for the Yazidi population in the area of Mount Sinjar, Iraq, in August 2014: A retrospective household survey”. *PLoS Med* 14(5), (2017): e1002297. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1002297>

17. Khidher ,Domle, interview, Duhok, April 2018

can tarnish or affect their belief. The Yezidi community has to help them get back to normal life and it is obligatory for everybody.

This declaration was held in common with a practical aspect, the purification or reintegration ritual, in order to be more visible and objectivize for the Yezidi community. The ritual is being conducted in the holly shrine of Yezidis located in a holly village called Lalish. The second religious leader, Baba Chawush steers the ritual and survivors are being considered as pure innocent Yezidis after this ritual which transformed them from their uncertain situation into acceptance situation by community.

Although both religious reintegrating and transferring to the other countries could heal two the social and psychological aspects of damages, no one could be sure how effective they have been. This thesis will examine both social and psychological aspects of the rehabilitation process of the female survivors of the Yezidi community.

1.4 Research questions and arguments

The main objective of this thesis is to explore how religious rituals could influence the process of social reintegration, as a part of the psychological rehabilitation of the Yezidis. Moreover, it explores what challenges of the survivors' rehabilitation process in the Iraqi Kurdistan, and Germany.

To address these questions, I'll first discuss why a formal reaction, including declaration and ritual are considered necessary decisions among Yezidi religious leaders and how Yezidi survivors find these proceedings. I will argue that Yezidis history and their previous experiences of genocide have convinced them to be sure about the necessity of having a formal declaration to rebuild the social coherence of Yezidi community. According to Dr. Pir Mamo, the head of the Institute for Psychotherapy and Psychotraumatology (IPP) in Duhok, one of the aims of kidnapping women and abusing them as sex slaves by ISIS was destroying the structure of Yezidi community because they assume any kind of sexual relationship with non-Yezidis would be unforgettable and serious socio-religious taboo and therefore committing such a crime in the widest aspect could irreparably damage the structure of community seriously. Thus, Yezidis decided to overcome this challenge by a formal declaration and religious ritual which break the former traditional rules in the case of current genocide survivors¹⁸.

18. Dr. Mamo Osman, interview, Duhok, April 2018.

Secondly, I will discuss how this religious ritual influence the psychological rehabilitation of Yezidi survivors. I will argue that in the semi-tribal Yezidi community that honor has been considered as the base of social dignity, any kind of suspension in this case may cause anxiety and increase the post-traumatic disorder. This formal religious support could raise their concerns and thus contribute to making them feel safe and worthy of living.

Thirdly, I will discuss how the new life in a foreign country, Germany, has influenced the mental health of Yezidi survivors by analyzing both positive and negative effects of immigration and separation of the traumatized women from their community during the process of rehabilitation. I will argue considering the concept of belonging and the rural background of most of the survivors, living alone without any support from the male members of family or relatives and separation from their kindred and neighbors, whom they were regularly in touch with, may cause new level of psychological consequences.

2.Theoretical framework

2.1 Social identity theory and the concept of belonging

Identity is the pivotal concept linking social structure with individual action. Social identity theory attempts to explain the social bases of the self-concept, and considers self as constituted by society while examining the individual role related to behaviour in the society¹⁹. According to Stets and Burke, “one’s Identity are composed of the self-views that emerge from the reflexive activity of *self-categorization* or identification in terms of membership in particular groups”²⁰. So, having a particular social identity means being with a certain group, being like others in the group, and seeing things from the group’s perspective²¹. Self-categorization highlights the similarities between the self and other in-groups and as the same time emphasizing perceived differences

19. Michael A., Hogg, Deborah J. Terry, and Katherine M. White, "A tale of two theories: A critical comparison of identity theory with social identity theory", *Social psychology quarterly* (1995):255.

20. Jan E., Stets, Peter J., Burke, “Identity theory and social identity theory”, *social psychology quarterly*, Vol.63, N 3(2000): 226.

21. Ibid, 226

between the self and out-groups. In other word, self-categorization means feeling belonging to the in-groups and separation from out-groups.

Dividing between in-groups and out-groups always lead the in-group to be judged positively and the out-group to be judged negatively. Therefore, when self, identify him/herself as in-group and as a member of group he or she could enjoy that positive judgment and self-esteem enhance by this kind of evaluation²². As Hogg emphasizes, “people have a basic need to see themselves in a positive light in relation to relevant others”²³.

Indeed, *Social identity theories* regard the group as collective of persons all of whom identify themselves with each other, see themselves and each other in similar way, and hold similar views, all in contrast to members of out-groups²⁴. Much of social identity theory deal with intergroup relations and the components of a structured society; how people come to see themselves as members of a common group, how they categorize themselves in the social structure, how they identify themselves against the other groups and how belonging to a certain society determine individual values and roles, which are some aspects that social identity theory discusses.

There are several approaches to framing the relations between social structure and individual behaviour and researcher place more emphasize on one aspect of depending on her/his study questions. The concepts that will be used as the basis of my analysis of Yezidi women’s current situation is the concept of belonging and the influences of self-categorization as a member of group and getting the positive feedback from the other members in shaping the self-esteem. As Stets and Buke point out, “people derive their identity or sense of self largely from the social categories to which they belong”²⁵

Individuals identify themselves through the social roles that have been defined for them. Satisfactory enactment of roles not only confirms and validates a person’s status as a role member, but also reflects positively on self-evaluation and self-esteem²⁶. The concept of community

22. Stets, Identity theory,225.

23. Hogg, A tale of two theories, 260.

24. Stets, Identity theory, 226-227.

25. Ibid, 225.

26. Hogg, A tale of two theories, 257.

belonging related to the structure of a specific society could be linked with a chain of notions that determine the role of individual and the social expectations regarding several factors.

Therefore, community belonging and the consequences of being separated from the community are main concepts that I have used to examine the current situation of Yezidi survivors both in Kurdistan and in Germany.

2.2 Passage rite theory

The term “rite of passage” was used for the first time by Arnold Van Gennep to explain a set of rituals representing changing social position and passing from one status to the other new one. According to Gennep, “all passage rites demonstrate a kind of transition from group to group and from one social situation to the other, which is often more advanced than the former group or situation”²⁷. Gennep has shown that all rites of passage or transition are marked by three phases, which are: separation, liminality, and incorporation. Turner explains these three phases briefly as: the first phase includes symbolic behaviour significantly the detachment of the individual or separation, during the liminal period of the characteristic of ritual subject (the passenger) which is ambiguous.

The passage passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. In the third phase (i.e., reaggregation or reincorporation), the passage is consummated. The ritual subject, individual or corporate, is in a relatively stable state²⁸. Baptizing, puberty, confirmation, marriage and any other ceremony which shows change in situations and transition from one social state to the other could be categorized under the title of “the rite of passage” for every one of these events there are rituals whose essential purpose is to enable the individual to pass from one defined position to another.

According to Lynne, who has worked on rite passages, from illness to health in some passage rites are necessary for insuring the new healthy situation, without this ceremony the individual will not heal or ultimately will be ill again²⁹. Through the passage rite, especially

27. Arnold Van Gennep, *The rites of passage*, trans. Monika B. Vizesom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), 3.

28. Victor Turner, *The ritual proses*, (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1969), 94-95.

29. Lynne A. Texter and Jannine M. Mariscotti, “From chaos to new life: ritual inactemnt in the. Passage from illness to health”, *Journal of religion and heath*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (1994): 333.

related to recovery or reintegration, the individual has been transferred from illness, contamination, and guiltiness to healthiness, purity and irreproachability. After this ritual, the individual who has been separated from the society and loses her/his former social status, due to illness or sin, will be eligible to live again as a normal society member. Thus, the rite effects on both individual's life by rebuilding the social status and protecting the social cohesion by reidentification of the suspended members and put them again in their structure.

In the case of Yezidi survivors, all three phases of passage are notable meaning they have been separated from their society in captivity, they lost their social statues and their situation was ambiguous when they returned. Their previous status and identity as Yezidi women were suspended during captivity and especially sexual abuse, then they reincorporated and achieved their former status as healthy, non-guilty Yezidi via the purification ritual.

Indeed, passage rite works as a mechanism for donating a new social identity to an individual with suspended identity.

3. Method

The aim of this study is to evaluate the current status of survivor Yezidi women and understanding the role which religious rites play in their reintegration. To achieve this objective, the research approach used in this study is qualitative. Besides literature research, I've conducted 16 interviews, and participatory observation in activities, I've used different online and printed archives.

I started with available online sources by searching for keywords such as Yezidi/Ezidi women, Yezidi genocide and raped women by ISIS, in English and Kurdish. I figured out quickly that online materials in Kurdish language were very few and therefore I had to rely on printed material in the field, which means I focused on materials written in English. All conducted interviews were semi-structured. Specially, performed interviews with the survivors were open-ended.

Before I go further into discussing data collection, data analysis and thereafter the generated results, I'd like to talk about the literature part as it is one of the relevant techniques which I've chosen to complete the method section of my study.

That being said, my plan was to start with seeking for theories about: (1) identity, (2) society and individual relations, (3) purification rites, (4) violence against women during the war, and (5) community belonging while checking different reports about Yezidi women after 2014. Additionally, besides reading online material during February, I contacted Pir Hatab Omar, the head of Ezidi Academia in Hannover, Germany. I was fortunate to be accepted by this key figure. Access to organization is often described as difficult, however, *Ezidi Academia* greeted me very warmly. So, it was a successful start in the field. I introduced myself and my project to Hatab who helped me to have access to the academia's archive, once a week on Wednesdays. Thanks to his useful information and practical guidance, I attended some seminars on Yezidis in Hannover. He accompanied me during one every one of those seminars, and also linked me to the head of Yezidi house in Oldenburg. When considering the importance of networking during the research period, I had additionally come in contact with a Yezidi woman who offered me to live in her house during my stay in Germany.

3.1 Self-expression and building relations

In the first round of introduction to my research participants, I introduced the aspects of identity, nationality, religious belonging, and the life experiences which made me closer to participants. For conducting interviews and other forms of ethnographic research, there is a need to build trust with key members of the local community³⁰. My Kurdish background and being a non-Muslim, helped me to build trust in the field and positioned me as a trustworthy researcher. Although national identity does not per se designate the researcher as an 'insider' or 'outsider', and the concept of belonging is not always reducible to national identity in the case of Kurdish, because of the specific political situation, Kurds often have some sort of sympathy to each other even when they are from different parts of Kurdistan, or elsewhere.

Research is often strongly affected by the position of the researcher. This is partly determined by how others react to the researcher, which is always unpredictable and often surprising. Thus, research is not just a question of following a set of rules, it's rather the methodology which is always being refined and reworked as part of the improvisation view

30. Yasir, Suleiman, and Paul Anderson, "Conducting Fieldwork in the Middle East: Report of a Workshop held at the University of Edinburgh on 12 February 2007", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (2008): 151.

positioned Kurdish nationality and my Kurdish cultural background positioned me partly as insider. In addition, I play Tambur, the old Kurdish instrument for religious songs in Yarsan³¹ which Yezidis have also used, the musical instrument helped me create a closer bond with Yezidis. In fact, one of the gatekeepers said they regarded me as a cousin! In the fieldwork the simple attributes or abilities could help the researcher to develop her/his network and improve the level of trust among the case group.

Though some personal features located me as an insider but there were other things that positioned me as outsider like my dialect. I speak Kurmanji, the dialect of Yezidis, but my mother dialect is Sorani and sometimes the interviewees and I had to explain certain words or expressions to understand each other.

Other personal feature that helped me to build trust and make better relations with the key members of the field community was empathy. It was not only that I'm a serious person rather, I wanted to make better relationship in the field and show my sympathy for the women and Yezidi community. A similar argument is put forward by anthropologists from various field locations³² that having a harmonic behavior with the field participants is important to make better relationship, in the community that is still in mourning after a horrible genocide, commiseration could improve the relationship.

3.2 Gatekeepers

The key gatekeepers for my research in Germany, Hatab from *Ezidi Academia* and my hostess, had different backgrounds. Hatab was a Yezidi educated Pir³³ who had wide knowledge about Yezidism both from traditional and academic sources. When I met him, I tried to highlight my knowledge of the religion, and connecting with him through discussing the religion, religious heritages, nation, the Kurd's political situation, etc.

31. Yarsan is other minority religious group in Kurdistan with considerable similarities to Yezidism, they have been called as Ahle-i Haqq and Kakai also. Look at Encyclopaedia of Islam second edition, *Ahl-i Hakk*.

32. Mona, Abdel fadil, "*Living the massage and empowering Muslim selves: A behind the screens study of online Islam*." PhD theses, university of Oslo, 29.

33. the Pirs constitute one of the most important casts of the Yezidi community, [they] can perform most of the duties of a Sheykh if the latter is not available. Look at: Philip.G, Kreyenbroek, Yezidism, its background, 131.

The other main gatekeeper was the woman from whom I rented a room in her house. She was an active Yezidi woman who had extensive relations with the Yezidi community in Celle and therefore I could visit Celle *Ezidi house* via her relations and conducted some of my interviews through her links, each of them led me to the other gatekeepers or participants. I tried to focus on some daily conversations, talking about myself and my family, participation in housework, while I had almost independent flat in her house, cooking Iranian foods and asking about her children. I found out very soon that she liked to talk about all these.

As Sanghera and Bjorkert say, gatekeepers could be official or self-appointed, and needed to be approached in different ways.³⁴ In my research, Hatab was approximately an official gatekeeper. However, my hostess in Germany and the other host in Kurdistan were self-appointed and each one could link me to the field or the other possible gatekeepers as they did.

In Kurdistan, the gatekeeper was a Yezidi police officer who lived in Sheykhan. One of my Kurmanj friends introduced me to him. His family hosted me during my stay in Sheykhan and he linked me to Yezidi leaders as well as scholars while he accompanied me. I visited all important authorities in Sheykhan and Lalish with him and then I went to Duhok for visiting Khanke camp and two Yezidi scholars.

3.3 Gatekeepers' challenges

One of the important challenges in the qualitative research is the ambiguous and even contradictory role that gatekeepers play when they position themselves vis-à-vis the researcher. They sometimes attempt to control who does research on what topic, who you speak to, and the research findings. They may give permission without the knowledge or consent of those to be studied³⁵. It was the challenge that I faced sometimes in the field especially in Kurdistan.

In Hanover, the first gatekeeper was Hatab Omar. Hatab as the first and the main gatekeeper in Germany tried to give me every kind of information even about the works which have been published by anti-Yezidi Muslim writers. He knew about the nature of the research so didn't try to shape or manipulate my understanding or my knowledge about Yezidism. However, in Kurdistan

34. Suleiman, conducting fieldwork, 155.

35. Gurchathen. S Sanghera, Suruchi Thapar-Björkert, "Methodological dilemmas: gatekeepers and positionality in Bradford," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (2008): 543-562.

and with the Yezidi gatekeeper, I noticed certain attempts to control the direction of my work. The gatekeeper connected me to Baba Chawush, the administrator of the holy temple, and three Yezidi scholars in Duhok and Sheykhan. He accompanied me in some of the interviews and tried to link me only with scholars while I was looking for survivors as the first priority. Finally, I could conduct some interviews via one of the Yezidi activists.

The research process is influenced not only by the respondents, but also by the presence of gatekeepers who could facilitate, constrain or transform the research process and the production of the data³⁶. Thus, researcher must be careful about the probable controls and restrictions in accessing information applied by the gatekeepers. The important lesson I learned was seeking the new gatekeepers and extending the network during the work rather than relying solely upon one or two people. One person can link the researcher to others, the field network is shaped by the chain of key members and gatekeepers and this is the possibility of the field that researcher must use to cover more perspectives of the field.

3.4 Interview

I've used interview as one of my qualitative methods to conduct this study. It has been used mainly for gathering data from respondents. The total number of the performed interviews during the fieldwork, in both Germany and in Iraqi Kurdistan, is 16. Of this total number, eight interviews were with the survivor women, one with a religious leader, three with Yezidi scholars, and four with Yezidi and non-Yezidi activists. I divided the participants into two main groups. One group was made of people who had worked on Yezidi survivors, and the second group was the female survivors themselves. I used different interview strategies for each of these groups.

I sketched different questions for each group and chose different strategies for conducting the interviews. When I was talking with a survivor, I applied more of an open and flexible approach because they were traumatized, and I didn't want to remind them of all the pains. In Germany, each interview took two or three hours. I talked with them during the weekends and we were talking about their daily life while drinking tea and having some short talks with children in order to become more familiar and thus changed the atmosphere from a formal visit to an informal and friendly style. I acquired permission to record the interviews. I positioned the recorder in a way to avoid unnecessary attention and thus reducing distraction. Then I explained my project and asked

36. Sanghera, Methodological dilemmas, 554.

them to tell me about themselves, their family backgrounds, children, husband, their life in Iraq and then the 2014 events.

Moreover, how long they were in captivity and what happened after their rescue. I asked them to explain this part of open-ended questions with more details. Since the purification ritual is carrying out similar to a customary pilgrimage, they only mentioned it as *Ziaretu Shekh Adi*, pilgrimage to Shekh Adi shrine, and I asked them to describe it more and they did. I gave them my WhatsApp number and we were and are still in touch after those meetings. In some cases, I complemented my information via some voice messages.

Although interviews took more time this way, interviewees felt freer to express themselves. They explained what they experienced, and I tried to lead them to my specific questions and have more focus on the past slavery period and I tried to avoid asking about their experiences as slaves. We talked about their present life and the purification ritual in Lalish. They considered this part as the best part of their stories and they were happy when they talked about that. However, in Kurdistan because of accompanying the gate-keeper I didn't have enough time and interviews were shorter, each taking about 25-35 minutes.

For other interviews I used more formal approach and tried to cover all aspects of Yezidi life in Germany, Kurdistan, and in the camps by posing different questions and different types of interviews.

The questions were:

How did those women and the other new immigrants perceive the Yezidi survivors? Who changes the understanding of social norms in diaspora? How does leadership make decision to welcome back the raped women? What challenges do face the female survivors if they are pregnant or have children and so on? These were the questions which I tried to find answers for during the interviews.

I used my cell-phone as a recorder in most of the interviews, especially with survivors and used note book and handwritten note in some of them. Although my Kurdish dialect is Sorani and it differs from the Yezidis dialect, I spoke in their dialect and all interviews with Yezidis people were conducted in Kurmanji without any need for getting help from any translator. Only four interviews with Dr. Amy L. Beam, American researcher, Khidher Domle, a Yezidi activist and scholar, Backy Thompson, an American activist, and Dr. Mamo, a Yezidi scholar, have been conducted in English.

3.5 Data collection

Although the main strategy for data gathering was semi-structured interviews, I used two additional methods which are observation and the use of archives.

During my staying in Celle, I regularly went to *Ezidi Academia* during Wednesdays to access the archive including books and articles mostly in Arabic, several magazines from Lalish Centre, and the other Yezidi Centres, I borrowed two books or magazines per week. Besides the Ezidi Academia, I went to the Leibniz university in Hannover's library to study some English resources there.

There were several seminars about Yezidis during my stay in the field. One was held in the "Stadt bibliothek Garbesen" by an organization called *House of Religions*. There were two Yezidi activists and one German theologian who talked about the history of Yezidism and their status in Germany. The seminar was held in Germany and Hatab translated the key points in Kurdish to me. Three other seminars were held by Ezidi Academia for different researchers or religious characters. Seminars were good opportunities to know people, extend my network and closely observe the relation between different social and religious classes and casts among the Ezidi community. *Celle Ezidi house* was the other place that I could visit and participate in some activities, Yezidi women have a monthly potluck there in *Ezidi house*; every woman provides and brings some food; they have a nice time eating together and talking about their activities like music and dance courses for children, religious and Kurdish language courses, etc.

In the Iraqi Kurdistan, I was staying in the house of a Yezidi police officer who was the close friend of one of my Kurmanj friends in Kurdistan, he and his family were living in Sheykhhan and he accompanied me to the house and office of Baba Sheykh, the higher-ranking Yezidi religious leader. I visited him and the other Yezidi key figures including Pirs. Pir is a high-ranking religious title, which can be interpreted as one of the most important casts of the Yezidi community. Pirs can perform most of the duties of a Sheykh if the latter is not available. It was very important to be hosted by a Yezidi parliament member and Baba Shekh family members. We also went to Lalish, the holy Yezidi village near Sheykhhan where all holly temples and shrines were located. For seeing the Ceremony of *Charshama Sor*³⁷, Yezidi new year feast, and I could

37. Charshemma Sor in literal term means The Red Wednesday, Sor in Kurdish use for feasts and parties too, so Charshamma Sor could be translated as The Happy Wednesday. Which according to Syriac calendar is the first Wednesday of Nisan, 18 April, and Yezidis believe the world has been created in this day. Look at: Davoud, Khetari, Lalish temple, 166.

conduct interview with Baba Chawoush there. The gate-keeper drove me to Khetar, a village where one of the Yezidi scholars lives and who linked me with the other scholars who are active in the city of Duhok. In Duhok, I conducted three interviews with those activists and scholars then I could access Khanke camp located in suburb of Duhok and could interview the survivors who still live in camps.

3.6 Ethical questions

Doing research among genocide survivors is always a sensitive and challengeable work. All Yezidi women whom I interviewed in Germany and Kurdistan had went through horrible experiences of losing family members, slavery, rape, several physical, and mental harms. I knew that they were traumatized, and the risk of recalling trauma was a particular concern. So, after discussing the issue with my gatekeepers, especially Hatab who was a psychologist, I decided to contact only the women who were not in psychological clinics and didn't need specific treatment any more. In the next step, I avoided asking any question about the slavery period and instead kept my focus on religious rites. After this type of exceptions/criteria, if they wanted to talk about slavery as well, I didn't stop them and let them feel free. I asked interviewees about recording and neither of them objected to my use of digital recorder during the interview.

I keep all survivors anonymous and use alias Kurdish names because they shared their personal information, feeling and experiences with me. However, other interviewees presented themselves completely and weren't concerned with remaining anonymous, most of them were social activists, scholars or authorities who had done several interviews with different newspapers and TVs about the same subject, so I used these types of respondent's real name.

3.7 Background information of the respondents

As it has been mentioned previously, due to maintaining anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, all names mentioned here are not real names. In other words, I've used alias for all survivors.

3.7.1 Avin

Avin is a 32-year-old from Kojo. Her entire family has been captured or missed, which comprises of 25 siblings, nephews and nieces. She doesn't have any news on their whereabouts. She and her

four children survived. She was captive for 7 months and has lived in Germany for two years and a half with her sister in-law.

3.7.2 Dalia

Dalia is a 36-year-old from Khane sohri village who has gotten married to Avin's brother in Kojo and has two children she lives with them in Germany. One of her sisters and sister in-laws were in captivity, but the rest of her family remained in Kurdistan, and now they live in Shekhan camp. She was in Iraq during the captivity, jailed in a house in Tal Afar with her children and tree other women and their respective children. They were in a military site for 8 months until Kurdistan army kicked ISIS out of the region. Now she lives with Avin.

3.7.3 Sewa

Sewa is a 19-year-old girl from Sinjar, has four brothers younger than herself, and they all live with their mother in Germany. Her father has been killed in ISIS attack. She was a slave for tree month and half, held in a house in Raqqa with six other girls. They could escape by the help of human smugglers. The human smugglers, indeed, offer such services after being paid by family or relatives.

3.7.4 Vian

Vian is a 24-year-old girl from Herdan, a village which was destroyed during 2014. She was captured for four months in Tal Afar and Mosul. Now she lives alone in Khanke camp while studying and working as the camp staff. Her mother and sisters have moved to Germany.

3.7.5 Mona

Mona is 24-year-old from Herdan who was enslaved for four months in Tal Afar. She, her mother and sisters fled but lacked information about the whereabouts of her father and three brothers. She works with an NGO and lives with her family in Khanke camp.

3.7.6 Nesrin

Nesrin is a 35-year-old from Tal Benat and was captive for one year in Syria and her relatives bought her for \$4000. All members of her family were captured unless her husband. She was with two young children aged 3 and 6 during the captivity period. One of her sons, 15, and one of her daughters, 19, who were separated of her are still missing. At the time of attack, her husband was at work in Dohuk. They were reunited after a part of family could be released. Now she lives with her husband and three children in Khanke camp.

3.7.7 Naze

Naze is Nasrin's daughter and was captured for 3 years. She is 17 now and was 14 when captured. She had been separated from her mother and was in Syria during captivity and her family payed for her release. Only after this deal, she could join her family and now is living with them.

3.7.8 Bahare

Bahare is a 38-year-old woman from Sinjar. She was held captive in Iraq for four months. Now she lives with two sons aged 15 and 12. They still live in a camp in Germany, actually a hotel that has been used as a campsite for four years.

4. Yezidi Studies

Yezidi community was illiterate for a long time, only religious casts, Sheykhs Pirs and Qawals, had the right to literacy in the past. Therefore, all information about them has come out through the researches or only simple observations made by outsiders who were Muslims in the past and Christians in contemporary history. Yezidis have been often considered as a heterodox sect both by Muslims and Christians and frequently have been labelled as Devil-worshiper³⁸ and that was the main reason causing all miseries and persecutions which they were suffering from.

Only in recent decades, some scholars, like Khalil Jindi, Khidher Sleman, with Yezidi background started to write about their origin and beliefs. These authors wrote down and translated their religious texts to the other languages, which helped the foreign researchers to be able to use those materials in their researches³⁹. The ideas about Yezidi etymology, world view and the origin of beliefs are still vague. Some Muslim scholars like Said Al-Diuji claimed Yezidis stems from the Umayyad caliph Yazid ibn Mu'awiya, as the 'reformer' of Yezidism and most of European orientalist have accepted this etymology⁴⁰ Shahrestani in his famous work *al-Milal wa al-Nihal* which is about different religions, groups, schools and stream of thoughts over all the world, mentioned the name of Yezidis, and labelled them as a branch of al-Ibadiyya⁴¹ sect⁴². However, Yezidis never have introduced themselves as Muslim and have emphasised their independent

38. Peter, Nicolaus, "the serpent symbolism in the Yezidis religious tradition and the snake in Yerevan", *Iran and the Caucasus*, Vol.15, No 1,2 (2011): 53.

39. Christine Allison, "unbelievable slowness of mind: Yezidi studies from nineteenth to twenty-first century", *The Journal of Kurdish Studies*, Volume VI, (2008): 15.

40. Langer, Yezidism between literature and practice, 394.
and
Rashad, Miran, *Rewshi Aeini le Kurdistanda (ethno-confessional situation in Kurdistan)*, (Stockholm: Mansur printing :1993), 90.

41. Al-Ibadiyya is a Islamic sect appeared in 65/684, as a branch of Khawridj extremists heterodox who went out Ali, fourth calipha,'s Army because he accepted the arbitration in the battle with Muawiya while Khawaridj believed that "the judgment is for God alone", they regarded all non-Kharidji Muslim as apostates and refused the title of believer to anyone who has committed a moral sin and regarding him as a Murtadd (apostates). Look at Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second edition, Al-ibadiyya and Kharidjites.

42. Mohammad Abdulkarim, Shahrestani, *Al-Milal wal-Nihal* (Tehran: Sharife Razi Publications), 77.

religious identity that caused several Fatwa from famous Muslim Imams like Ahmad Hanbal, and frequent Farman⁴³, genocide, during the history⁴⁴. All their religious traditions contrasted with Islam. They pray three times a day in front of sun in sunrise, noontime and sunset. They have a three-day fast in December instead for Ramadan and their Haj also take place in Lalish during October. All their religious ceremonies are different from those of Islam. They drink wine and making wine is an old tradition among them⁴⁵.

These differences and finding qualify Yezidis to be considered as having another Indo-Iranian root. “Yezidi” highlighted the other definition of Yezidism that considered it as a pre- Islamic religion. Sheref-Name, “The book of Honour”, one of the main sources on Kurdish history, of Sheref Khan Bitlisi (the prince of Bitlis 1543-1599) characterises them as pre-Islamic lawless and heathen people that he calls Yazdaniye and describes how and why some Yezidi tribes converted to Islam at 16th century⁴⁶. Yezidology could be divided in two parts; the works and reports from travellers and missionaries, and the researches which has been conducted by scholars.

4.1 Travellers and missionaries

The major part of information in previous centuries have been provided by Muslim travellers or European missionaries.

Evliya Çelebi, a well-known traveler from Othman Empire, who encountered them in 1655-6, presents them as exotic people with strange customs and highlights their valor in battle⁴⁷. European

43. Ferman is a Kurdish word which has been used by Yezidis during the history referring to all aspect of attacks that today calls Genocide including systematic massacres, kidnap and rap.

44. Sami Said Ahmad, *Al-Izadiya: Ahwaluhum we Mu'taqidatihim* (Baqdad: Jame'a Publisher, 1971),45.

And

Kiumars, Azimi, *The history of Sheism in Kurdistan* (Sulemaniye: Suhrawardi house Publishing,2016), 555.

45. Miran, ethno-confessional situation in Kurdistan,132 ,136 and 150.

46. SharafKhan, Bitlisi, *Sharaf-Name* (Tehran: Asatir Publication, 1996),156.
and

47. Allison, unbelievable slowness,5.

missionaries like Carmelite Pere Jean-Marie de Jesus in 1672 CE onwards, documented their encounters with Yezidis, and often underlines their friendly attitude towards Christians⁴⁸.

In the mid-nineteenth century G.P. Badger, an Anglican missionary, accepted the idea that Yezidis came from Zoroastrian origin⁴⁹. However, he genuinely believed that the Yezidis ‘venerate the Evil Principle’.

4.2 Scholars

Studying Yezidism as an ethno-religious group and not for missionary aims refers to the current century. Scholar’s approach among Yezidis was more flexible and with more sympathy than missionaries. However, some of them also had their Christian framework as background and evaluated Yezidis according to that framework and they actually continued using the stereotype produced by Muslim traveller and writers like Sheref Khan and Evlia Chalabi, who considered Yezidis as heterodox Islamic sect or devil worshiper.

A. H. Layard, the other Christian scholar, who had much more prominent role in Yezidi history than Badger, was fascinated by their culture and behaviours. He too did believe the Yezidis were devil-worshippers⁵⁰. Vladimir Minorsky, a Russian orientalist (1877-1966), suggested a multiple origin for Yezidis that has shaped from Manichaeism, old Assyrian religions, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam and one can find some element from all these believes in Yezidism⁵¹. In this approach the word Yezidi derived from the old Iranian word Yazata, and Pahlawi Yazda means “Divine being” this definition was once widely accepted and still preferred by many Yezidis⁵².

In 1979 Khidher Silêman and Khalil Jindy Rashow, two young university graduates from the Pir and Sheikh caste wrote a book *Ezdiyati (Yezidism)*, which contained a number of sacred

48. Ibid, 6.

49. Ibid, 15.

50. Alisson, unbelievable slowness, 9-10.

51. Vladimir Minorsky, *Kurd* trans Habibollah Tabani (Tehran: Gostareh publication, 2000), 113.

And
Azimi, *Shiite History*, 552.

52. Encyclopaedia of Islam, second edition, Yazidi.

hymns transcribed from the oral tradition. That was the first work which has been done by Yezidi scholars. Their transcription of their own sacred scripts helped the other scholars to enhance their knowledge of Yezidism.

The most comprehensive and detailed works on Yezidis has been done by Phillip G. Kreyenbroek in several articles and books. In his book “Yezidism: its background, observances and textual tradition”, he demonstrates the different nature of oral tradition and written scriptures. Thus, this approach enabled him to interpret Yezidi explanations of religion more flexible. As Alison mentions, we can divide the history of Yezidi studies into two stages of pre- and post- 1990s and pre- and post- Kreyenbroek.

Despite the different ideas about Islamic or pre- Islamic origin of Yezidism, all scholars or travellers among Yezidis were unanimous that Yezidis were “pagans” and “heathen.” Indeed, the religious outsider, with Muslim or Christian background, often seek to make Yezidism fit into their own conceptions of what a religious system ought to be⁵³. A normal religious system in these scholars understanding necessarily needed to have a God, an Evil as anti-God, a prophet and believers who can be connect to God via the prophet and through a vertical line that led them to the summit of religion while the worldview system is completely different in Yezidism.

4.3 Research of Yezidi genocide in 2014

There has been very limited research on Yezidi women’s situation after the latest genocide. A considerably large body of research on Yezidis are about Yezidism, their religious heritage, culture and history. The few articles which have been written on Yezidi women have focused on their ordinary social and domestic roles or their situation during the captivity. Gokhan Dalyan and Cabir Dogan have evaluated various aspects of Yezidi women during the 19th century, including their class position in family structure, marriage, and divorce roles, traditions, social presence, wearing and appearance and so on⁵⁴. The other work about Yezidi women has been done by Victoria

53. Alison, unbelievable slowness, 15.

54. Murat Gokhan Dalyan, and Cabir Dogan, “An Overview of 19th Century Yezidi Women”, *Asian Social Science*; Vol. 9, No. 7, Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education (2013): 114.

Arakelova in 2000. She figured out the marriage roles especially polygamy and its condition among Yezidis by analysis a traditional text, in Kurdish Beyt, which is a mourning song⁵⁵.

Related to the current genocide Vian Dakhil, Yezidi parliament member, with three researchers has published an article about the legal process of determining ISIS act against Yezidis as genocide. After a brief introduction of Yezidis, they enlisted all the heinous acts ISIS committed like killing, physical and mental harms, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to destroy the Group, planed rape and torture through some real stories of captives⁵⁶.

The other research by Mahruk Ali, a Norwegian journalist and researcher, has almost the same framework. She has mentioned the Islamic and Quranic background of crimes which ISIS has committed by referring to their own websites and comparing with victim testimonies⁵⁷.

55. Victoria Arakelova, "Bayt'ā Gilāvīyē - A Lament for a Noble Woman. Or Evidence for Polygamy among the Yezidis", *Iran & the Caucasus*, Vol. 3/4 (1999/2000), 135-142.

56. Vian Dakhil, Aldo Zammit Borda, and Alexander R. J. "Calling ISIL Atrocities Against the Yezidis by Their Rightful Name': Do They Constitute the Crime of Genocide?", *Human Rights Law Review*, (2017), 17.

57. Mahrokh Ali, "ISIS and propaganda, how ISIS exploit women", *Reuters Institute Fellowship Paper University of Oxford*,(2015).

5. Reintegration process

The main post-genocide challenge for Yezidi community regarding survivors was their psychological and social condition. After a couple of months some enslaved Yezidi women could escape or were released and Yezidi activists were looking for in an effective way to help them and reintegrate them in the society. There were established several help centres for offering psychological treatments but the challenge in the beginning, as Domle says, was how to convince the families that these women need help and they should talk not remain silent at home⁵⁸. So, a group of activists went to visit the highest religious leader, Baba Sheykh, to find a kind of solution⁵⁹. Domle describes Baba Sheykh's answer:

He said anything that helps those women return home and engage with their family I will sign without looking.

Then Domle wrote the first draft of declaration, after being approved by Baba Sheykh and other religious and political authorities they published only the outline of declaration in medias to see the reactions and then the official declaration came out⁶⁰.

Baba Chawush, the second religious leader, in the case of declaration says:

mîr û civata rûhanî ev qerar pêdayn helal kirin helal kirina wane û heram kirina jî wane her çîstê le destê wane mîr û babe şêx qerar pêdayn ke herkes azade vegeê av jê bô xatirê vê dînê wan serê wan hatiye em jî mecbûr em qabûl kirin⁶¹.

Mir [highest political authority] and the religious commission have decided for that, they can make Halal and they can make Haram, everything is in their hand [...] Mir and Baba Sheykh decided that everyone is free to return [to Yezidism] they were suffered because their religion, so we have to accept them.

The final official declaration came out on 06.02.2015 and published in all local and governmental medias. This was the first formal step to reintegrate the Yezidi survivors and the ritual came after as the second phase.

58. Khidher, Domle, interview, Duhok, April 2018.

59. Davoud Khetari, interview, Khetar village, April 2018.

60. Khidher Domle, interview, Duhok, April 2018.

61. Baba Chawush, interview, Lalish, April 2018.

5.2 The body of Declaration

To whom it may concern

The Ezidis are currently experiencing very difficult and complicated situation because they were exposed to systematized genocide as consequences of which they fell victims in large numbers. After ISIS, on August 3rd, 2014, invaded Shingal, thousands of Ezidy women, children, and men were held captive who went through circumstances contrary to all human values such as being forced to convert to Islam. Because this situation faced by Ezidies is considered tough, we as the Ezidy Religious Reference (Clergy) understand that they under the pressure and compulsion recited religious verses and slogans that do not accord with those of Ezidism thus we hereby announce and confirm, by virtue of the efforts that were exerted and are still being put into saving them, that those survivors both male and female will remain pure Ezidies and nothing could tarnish nor effect their belief in Ezidism for they performed those exercises against their will. Therefore, none is entitled to decide their destiny and religious identity. To the contrary, we all have to extend them a helping hand to help them get back to normal life and reintegrate into the community. The success of this mission is, of course, everybody's obligation.

Babe Sheikh

Khirto Haji Ismail

The Spiritual Father and Clergy of All Ezidies in the World.

With my appreciated and respect to all.

5.3 Religious rituals called Helal Kirin

“Malê xwedê ava, em niha gelek bi qedirtirin li paşî”

“*Thanks God, we receive more respect and attention then before*”

This is the main statement made by Yezidi women demonstrate their new status in Yeizid community. The expression of all survivor women consists of feeling deep joy and satisfaction when they talk about *Helal Kirin* and what happened for them after returning home. But what does the act of Helal Kirin mean and how it works?

5.4 Helal Kirin and definition of Helal and Heram

The word *Helal Kirin* is composed of the noun part *Helal* and auxiliary verb *Kirin*. *Helal* is an Islamic term vs *Heram* and both define religious judgments about what is prohibited and what is licit. Although Islamic jurisprudence defines *Helal* and *Heram* as divine boundaries being determined by God, religious leaders could use Fatwa, religious command or opinion on a point of law, in order to change some of these laws. Through the Fatwa, they define some *Helal* subject as *heram*, this act called *Tehrim* means make something *Heram*. Although Fatwa is not necessarily a political act, but it could be a kind of protestation too and religious leaders use their high socio-religious status for mobilizing people to play a socio-political role in the society. It means when political authority want to act independently from religious authority. On the contrary, the religious leadership could use their power, Fatwa, to lead the people in opposite way. Depending on the people's obedience to religious authority, they could stand above any other laws by *Tehrim* or make something *Haram*.

The opposite situation means changing some religious *Heram* to *Helal* is not very common, However, what we see in current Yezidi case works in the same way, the religious leaders use their authority to change a *Heram* to *Helal*. Although Yezidism differs from Islam and their laws are sometimes completely contradict, the Islamic structure has influenced public convention and other religious traditions in the region and the terms *Helal* and *Heram* and the mechanism of shifting from one to other have been used by other religions to recognize accepted from unaccepted.

Helal is legally permitted⁶² and lawful, accepted, legitimate or permissible act and *Helal kirin* means legitimizing, make some prohibited object legitimate and lawful.

5.5 Helal and Heram related to sexual acts and endogamy

In regard to the two gender relations, the notion of *Heram* is a relationship, specifically sexual relationship, which does not have religious legitimacy, and *Helal* is opposite meaning a matrimony which have been solemnized by clergy. Each religion has own laws and traditions for matrimony which are not necessarily accepted by other religions. A Christian marriage is not accepted for a Muslim and vice versa. The marriage laws are very different and fully-described depending on religions and religious schools. For instance, Maliki school did not approve Muslim marrying *dhimmi*, Christian or Jew, while Shafei school approves this law only for Muslim men⁶³. So, some degree of boundaries for out-group marriage exists in all religions. Religions often suggest different mechanisms like converting to make an out-group marriage legitimate. However, some religions with restricted structure and without feasibility for converting doesn't offer any other way for out-group marriage.

In these religions, like Yezidism, any sexual relations out of believer community consider as un-legitimized or *Heram*. This restriction and lack of flexibility in marriage demonstrate specific social structure form called Endogamy. Endogamy⁶⁴, means practice marriage within a limits of a local community, is characteristic of the caste systems, a social structure based on class hierarchy. Ladislav Holy identifies endogamy as a method of maintaining the solidarity and patrimony. Related to the Kurdish regions he notes that particularly valuable strategy within an environment of intertribal contestations and in Kurdish regions, seminomadic Kurds with any kind of religion or believes, more likely to have greater needs for solidarity than those with a way of life based in sedentary farming⁶⁵.

62. "Ḥalāl", in: Encyclopaedia of Islam, First Edition (1913-1936), Edited by M. Th. Houtsma, T.W. Arnold, R. Basset, R. Hartmann. Consulted online on 24 September 2018 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-871X_ei1_SIM_2699 First published online: 2012.

63. A. S Triton, "Non-Muslim subject of the Muslim state", *the journal of royal Asiatic society Great Britain and Ireland*, Cambridge university press (1942), 38.

64. the word consist from indo means within plus Greek word gamos means marriage. Endogamy, Oxford dictionary.

65. Ladislav Holy, *Anthropological perspectives on kinship*, (London: Plutp Press, 1996).

In addition to patriarchy, religious features and importance of maintaining the “holy lineages” in Yezidism caused a rigid tribal kinship system. Organizing relations and connections between the “priestly caste” and the laity has shaped a hierarchy with another inner endogamy system⁶⁶ in sense of every religious class permitted getting married only with a person from his or her class.

So, endogamy determines the boundaries between Yezidis and non-Yezidis on one hand and between the Yezidis different religious classes on the other hand due to preserving and enhancing solidarity as well as domestic discipline. This hierarchical endogamy has always mixed with extended household which provides a site of strong domestic patriarchy and has the main role in political and economic life⁶⁷. Deniz Kandiyoti argued that the patrilocally extended household is the key to the reproducing what she called the “classical patriarchy” as a political and economic system in the area from north Africa through the middle east and south and east Asia⁶⁸. Both the general classical patriarchy, with extended family as its core, and Endogamy system are related to the specific traditional definition of female being and the role of matrimony and sexual relations in the society which lead us to the concept of Honour and Sham.

5.6 Honour and Shame related to Yezidi community

For understanding the Yezidi kinship system, or any other kinship systems, one should perceive that *family honour* is on the line in every public interaction. Family honour has been defined by the special role of men and women in the family and plays a Domlenant role in public life. A man should be able to defend the chastity of women under his Domlenance and protection, if they lost their chastity it implied shame for the family as the whole. ⁶⁹ At the same time, women have to preserve their chastity as well as their obedience to the male head of the family. Female members should be subordinate to their father families until marriage and to their husbands thereafter. As

and
Payton, For the Boys in the Family, 1346.

66. Longer, Yezidism between Literature and Practice, 394-395.

67 . Kenneth M., Cuno, Kenneth, “*Modernizing marriage (family, ideology, and law in nineteenth and early twentieth century Egypt)*”, Syracuse University Press, (New York: 2015), 61.

68 . Deniz ,Kandyoti, “bargaining with patriarchy,” *Gender and Society* 2, No 3 (1988), 278.

69. Halver Moxnes, “Honour and sham”, *the social sciences and new testament interpretation* (1993): 21.

Holy says the male members have both presume right and responsibility over the body of a woman to the kinship collective which has been defined under the title of *Honour*⁷⁰. These rights and responsibility is not only for the father family, but due to the kinship system and in-group marriage all relatives men who could be candidate for marriage have a grade of right and responsibility over their tribe's women "if a girl or woman is suspected of any premarital relationship, it may not be perceived as an indiscretion, but as an *adulterous* act against a group of men who have strong expectations that she will ultimately be married to one of their number, and as a threat to patrilinear stability"⁷¹. Indeed, the woman's body and her chastity has been assumed as the corner stone of kinship tribal system which in the case of Yezidis should maintain both patriarchy and religious structure of the society.

From this perspective, ISIS attacks and targets the Yezidi women which has been considered by Yezidi leaders as an attack to decompose and fragmentize the structure of Yezidi community and they decided to rebuild their solidarity.

5.7 Passage rite, Helal Kirin, as a strategy to rebuild suspended society membership

According to Yezidi belief, individual who gets married or has any kind of sexual relation out of community could not be considered Yezidi any more, minimum consequences for this sin is losing community membership. Thus, Yezidi women had lost their previous social status as Yezidi members when they returned home, since their current suspended situation is related to the definition of their socio-religious identity they needed to pass through a formal socio-religious ceremony to reach a new formal Yezidi identity and be accepted again as members of Yezidi community.

Indeed, *Helal Kirin* or make Yezidi women legitimate means transcending them from an unclean *Heram* position to a clean and *Helal* one, and accepting them as members of community who prepare for a *Helal* Yezidi matremony. Therefore, it could be considered a passage rite for helping individual to transmit from an unaccepted state to accepted one.

A person who has illegitimazed sexual relations is not a clean or pure person in the religious understanding and needs to pass the purification ritual to become a clean person who is prepared

70. Holy, nthropological aspects, 1346.

71. *ibid*, 1346.

for a normal Yezidi life or specifically having legitimized sexual relation with a member of believers community. Yezidi women like every passengers of passage rites and as Gennepe determined, have gone through three phases; 1) separation, during captivity, 2) liminal, when they returned 3) reincorporation, reintegration ceremony in Lalish.

Passage rite sometime is a mechanism for achieving a normal situation after an abnormal situation, when someone gets sick or pregnant always experience a dangerous condition, rite ceremony celebrate their reliving and stabilize their new life. As Lynne mentioned passage rites for illness has been considered necessary for insuring the new healthy situation⁷².

Although we cannot find any direct reference about sexual issue in *Helal Kirin's* ceremony, which is considered as returning to the religious community, the meaning of words *Helal* and *Heram* leads us to the sexual ground of the subject. The Yezidi women were in *Heram* position in captivity with captors and *Helal Kirin* is the opportunity to make them prepare for *Helal* sex with their ex-spouses or other Yezidi men who they will marry them in the future.

Therefore *Helal Kirin* should be understood as a part of the Yezidi socio-sexual contract which has own specific definitions, rules and boundaries for marriage and legitimize sexual relation. This act, *Helal Kirin*, besides the formal declaration by Yezidi religious leadership, are efforts to rebuild the specific socio-sexual structure and membership of Yezidi women.

5.8 Legitimizing Ceremony (Helal Kirin)

The ritual of "*Helal kirin*", take place in Lalish and Baba Chawuosh is the director of ritual. It is like the baptism called "mor kirin" in Yezidism, for Mor Kirin the rite should take place at the Kaniya Spi where the Sheykh takes the child into the chamber of the well immerses it three times and then places his left hand on the child's head and prays⁷³. There is the same ritual for *Helal Kirin* including praying by Baba Chawush while he places his left hand on the woman or girl's head, then baptizing three times with water of Kaniya Spi, the White Spring not by immersing but only anointing with three fist of Kaniya Spi⁷⁴. Baba Shykh appease them and make them sure they have been accepted by their community and they kiss his hand.

72. Lynne A, Texer, Janinne, M Mariscotti, "From chaos to new life: ritual inactemnt in the. Passage from illness to health", *Journal of religion and heath*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (1994), 333.

73. Kreyenbroek, Philip.G., "*Yezidism, its background, observances and textual tradition*", The Edwin Mellen Press, Queenston, (Ontario: 1995),159.

74. Yezidi girls, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrBYPBBia9Y&t=21s>

Baba Chawush says:

def û şebab li bo rêweresmên dînî tenê têne gotin, me bo wan jî hîsab kir wekû çitekê pîroz hate gotin, ji ber kû zorîya lê hatîye kirin lewê derê herkes hatin bi rastî bi qedirtir bûn li wan jî nehatîye girtin, me qedrê wan dana, mor kirina kanîya sipî û zezem û zîyaret û her çit hatîye kirin... paşan qurbanî çê diken, gelek carî me bo wan çê kirin, gelek carî ew bo xwe çê diken û gelek carê û civata rohanî li bo wan çê kirîye⁷⁵.

Daf and Shabab [religious music instruments] which are only used in religious ceremonies are played for them. We consider this event as a holy event because they were captured and have been forced, actually every one of those women get more respect from the other women. Baptizing in Kania Spi and Zamzam and pilgriming, these all religious rituals have been conducted. Thereafter, they offer sacrifices, many times and we do offer sacrifice for them, many times they do it and sometimes Mir [political Yezidi leadership] and religious leadership do it.

Avin tells her story in Lalish with smile:

Babe şêx got çî hatibûye serê we me qebûle û ev şitêkî ne ser xwe bû ye, heta dinê hûn seray keç û xwîşkî meyne û wî çîştê qebûl dekeyne ser xwe da, ev cebr bû ke kiça êzîdî biben ji xwe ra bizewicînin û zarû yê wan bînin hebs biken, bes ev cebr bû.

Babeshekh said you are still our daughter and sister, what happened for you was against your own will and we accept you like before. The ISIS took Yezidi girls and forced them into marriage and jailed their children ⁷⁶.

They wear new dresses and in many cases family of survivor women sacrifice an animal, calf or sheep, in front of Shekh Shams shrine and when the family cannot afford to sacrifice, Lalish management take the responsibility. Dalia says:

Xweş bû eşqa me hatê û eşqa wan hatê, li gel malbatê xwe çûm, zebîhekî kuştin û xwarin çê kirin, hemdilah gelekî xweş bû.

They [her family] were very happy. They took me to Shekh Adi Shrine and scarified a *Zabih* [animal] and we cooked meal, thank God that was very nice⁷⁷.

75. Baba Chawush, interview, Lalish, April 2018.

76 Avin, interview, Celle, March 2018.

77. Dalia, interview, Celle, March 2018.

All Survivors who were interviewed in this research were delighted when they talked about this part of their stories and called it as the only nice event after those awful days. Sewa had almost the same experience:

Em çûne ba babe şêx, babe şêx serê me maç kir, gote me herin almanîya, hûn vêndirê nekarin bi'eyşin, herin wêderê heyatekê dî biken ta hûn çikekê saq bibin, got herçê keçekî êzîdî hat herçê xwedan nekird ezê xwedan dikem, got hûn ne bi keyfa xwe ketîne destê wan, got em ji brê wî bitir qedrê wê girin.

They took me to Lalish first, Babashekh kissed my head and told me it is better to go to Germany for treatment. He mentioned that captivity was not our choice and what we did under the pressure will be forgotten. He said we will revere you more than before⁷⁸.

5.9 Restoration of dignity

The ritual of *Helal kirin* could be considered a judiciary issue for clarifying and redefinition. *Helal* and *Heram*, as mentioned before, from this view it is a sort of transforming an un-legitimate act to a legitimate one, from an anthropological aspect it is a purification ritual in the passage rites category, and from a social perspective, it means welcoming back ceremony. regardless of what we interpret it, *Helal kirin* had a message for Yezidi community about survivors that they should be embraced and supported by the entire Yezidis. The highest religious authority declares they are innocent and should enjoy their former position in their family, tribe and community as wife, sister and daughter. Nasrin is one of those women who returned to her husband after one year. She said:

Em birine laleş û ba babe sêx û babe çawîş û hemdela, û ev ne bidestê me bû, zelumê min qenc bû, û em ji wan da biqedir tirin, yenî niha her yek şitekî bîjê bi hikûmeta wêderê dibêjîn, em ji wanî dî helal tirin û elhemdila.

After arriving to Kurdistan, I went to Lalish and visited Babe Sheykh and Babe Chawish for *Helal kirin* and thanks God that today we have more respect than before and more than the other women. No one can rebuke or blame us. We tell the governors. My husband was happy and embraced me, thanks God⁷⁹.

The other interviewees expressed almost the same, Vian said:

78. Sewe, interview, Oldenburg, March 2018.

79. Narsin, interview, Khanke, April 2018.

Hemî çîstekî î'êtîyadîye, mocteme tiqebila me kird û adîye... ji birê wî tir me hişmet ken û qedrê me girin... [wan] vegeran ba zelumê xwe.

Everything is normal, society has accepted us again and we live like before and even with more respect than before, [...] [the women who survive] live with their ex-husbands as before.⁸⁰

The high number of frequently used words and phrases shared by survivors aimed at explaining their present status are “*more respect than before*” and “*unwilling*” sin. In ordinary cases and in regard to the concept of *honour*, any illegal sexual relation may destroy at least the social respect of woman⁸¹. Other punishments depend on the type of relation could be including cutting relation with family, banishing, or have been victims of so-called ‘honor killing’⁸². Religious authorities tried to control these common reactions and change the Yezidi community’s judgment by purification rite and emphasizing the “*unwilling*” sin as the centre of their argument. Indeed, *Helal Kirin* does not change the usual understanding of premarital relationship and honour but exclude this specific case by accentuate the role of “*will*”. The main argument is that “these women were not *Willing* to do that, so they still deserve *Respect*”. They repeat these two phrases in formal declaration and every single purification ceremony to stabilize them in the collective mind and this is one of the main functions of rituals, As Bouyer says, rituals could work magically through a series of techniques to control reality with a tendency for the word to be over objectivize⁸³.

Although it is not easy to predict the future and say how long the social effect of *Helal Kirin* could work and remain effective, now and after four years, the survivor women and the rest of Yezidi community are in compliance with the religious leadership still use that main argument about unwilling sin. The Yezidi survivors are satisfied, and their community support them by respect and compassion.

80. Vian, interview, Khanke, April 2018.

81. Payton, For the Boys in the Family, 1343

82. Dakhil, Calling ISIL Atrocities Against the Yezidis, 273.

83 . Bouyer, Lois, *rite and man: the sense of the sacral and Christian liturgy*, (London: Burns & Oates, 1963), 57-58.

5.10 The taboo words; content of declaration

The efforts for achieving a formal religious support started from the last days of August 2014 when the first captured women could escape from ISIS. Finally, a consultant team including 12 members of Yezidi activists, academicians, religious leaders and political Yezidi leaders provided a declaration which had been signed by the highest leader Baba Sheikh at 06.02.2015.

Most of reports and comments by Yezidi activists have considered the religious declaration a unique and significant move made ever taken by religious authority during the history of Yezidism. This is because converting to another religion even under coercion were considered as sin in the past⁸⁴ Khidher Domle, Yezidi activist and academic says:

In the last genocide, the Yezidi community composed of activists and leaders decided to follow a protective strategy. The religious statement was the result of understanding the necessity to protect our society and was a great transition in Yezidi history⁸⁵.

While other Yezidi history scholars mention some historical evidences about the past Yezidi genocides that he documented in his book,⁸⁶ he noted:

In 1837 we experienced the same situation, 10,000 people were killed, and women were captured, after two- three years some of them returned and in some cases, they brought their children, there was not any other alternative and they were accepted⁸⁷

According to Khetari and his documents, the Yezidi community has found ways to rebuild itself during the history, and the laws and rules could not be so rigid in difficult circumstances. However, there is no evidence about such a formal reaction of the religious authority in the past. Indeed, the rebuilding process has changed from informal sporadic reactions to an official consciously response which want to clear specifically the situation of women survivors and encourage the society to embrace them.

84. George, Susannah, “Yezidi women welcome back to the faith”, 15.06.2015. <http://tracks.unhcr.org/2015/06/yazidi-women-welcomed-back-to-the-faith/>

85. Khidher Domle, interview, Duhok, April 2018.

86. Khetari, Dawud, *khemse we themanun wethiqet othmaniyet aan measat alYezidiye: eighty five Ottoman documents about the Yezidis misery*, Khani Publishing, (Duhok: 2013), 38.

87. Dawud, Khetari, interview, Khetar village, April 2018.

Although the declaration directly refers to the situation of women who escaped and returned, the content of the text has been generalized to the whole Yezidi community and has remained silent about the specific situation of the women who have been raped.

It is stated in the text:

“[...] thousands of Ezidy women, children and men were held captive who went through circumstances contrary to all human values such as being forced to convert to Islam.”

Here to explain the crimes which ISIS has committed against the captives, the only thing that has been mentioned is “forced converting” while the rape as a big crime against body deserves to be considered and must be given fair attention. Words that refer to sexuality are often taboos in the regions that highly value concepts such as *honour* and shame.

The religious leader declaration tries to keep the distance from some concrete and clear words related to the situation of Yezidi survivors like “rape”, “sex slave” or “farced sexual relation”. The phrase that probably describes these words has been combined in the vague word “Exercise”. the word in Arabic and Kurdish version of declaration is *Mumarisat* ممارسات. “[...] they performed *those exercises* against their will.”⁸⁸ By the word “*those exercises*” they cover both sexual side of ISIS crimes, rape, and the religious side, forced conversion. The phrase *has been forced to “those exercises” against their will* sounds like the words that Baba Sheikh tells the survivors in *Helal Kirin* ceremony.

This kind of expression, using vague words for rape and avoiding clear words, is recognizable in the women conversations as well. Nasrin avoided the use of any word that refers to sexuality, she used the word “*that job*” “*Wan şughla*” or gave up her sentence and tried to complete the meaning by the face and hands gestures. She told a story about a mother and her daughters while telling the story of captivity:

Jinekî hebû heft keçikî hebû pênc hev xwe ra bir bû, emrê keçikê yekê neh sal bû û yekê heşt sal, birdina meqer 28 zelama ev şughla bi cebr pê kirin.

There was a woman with her five daughters, they took youngest girls, one 9-year-old and other 8-year-old to the militia site where 28 men did that job with them by force ⁸⁹

She used the same way when she talked about her daughter:

88. The body of declaration

89 . Khanke, interview, April 2018

Ev li min cuda kirin l iMûsil... li Reqe bu... hemî çiştêkir bûn.

They separated her from me when we were in Mosul. She was in Raqqa and they forced her to everything...⁹⁰

Avin also used the same expression when she talked about the situation of Yezidi women in captivity:

Em dît wecebekî em firotine 60 keçik û jinê... her bisilmanî û da'iîş ji xwe ra birin, yekê wî ji bo xidamîyê malê xwe ra û yekê pêrekê bi zar we ji bo xulamîyê xwe ra û yek ji bo her çiştêkir... wisa kirin

I witnessed that they sold 60 women to Syria some for work at houses, some women with children for servant and some for other things... they did so.

5.11 Motherhood and social acceptance

Although religious declaration and rituals convinced the Yezidi community to embrace the survivors and accept them and the women were also delighted about being accepted again, for some women returning to the family was not easy. Those who were captive for several years and have had children with ISIS terrorists, encountered an emotional dilemma after liberation. They must leave their children if they wanted to return.

Ido Babeshekh the former Yezidi parliament member said:

Ger jinêk dû yan sê mang le hemlî çû bê ewe le xestexane laydeben, gerîş mange kotayîyekanî bê duway le dayik bûn dûrî dexenewe û deydenebe be binemaley bawkekey yan darol eytamî xoyan.

If the woman is two or three months pregnant, she has an abortion. If she is in the last months of pregnancy, they take the baby away as soon as it is born⁹¹.

Vian was the only one who closely knew one of these mothers and told me:

Yek jin wan. ez nas dikem, hat û zarokê xwe da ew mala wî li Mûsil, zewicî û niha dîsa bi zaroye.

I know one who was pregnant from her captor, she left the child in Mosul, she married after liberation and now has another child⁹²

90 . ibid

91. Ido Babesheykh, interview, Sheykh, April 2018.

92. Vian, interview, Khanke, April 2018.

The religious declaration is silent about children or pregnant women; nevertheless, the Yezidi community believe that these illegitimate children from enemies should be abandoned to their fathers. Indeed, in all patriarchal societies, where membership of a group is determined by the identity of the father, when a woman is impregnated by a man of another group especially through rape or any other illegal sexual relation, her child will consequently not belong to its mother's group⁹³. Dawud Khetari, the Yezidi scholar who has worked on Yezidi genocides during the history, believes that other than the Yezidi community sensitivity, the Iraqi law is another reason for rejecting these children. He said:

Em zaroka qebûl naken... li rastî da destûrê Êraqê destûrekî Îslamiye û naxwazêt eger Musilmanê bê biçête ser dînekî dî, ew zaroke çûnke babê wî musilmane eve hene li destûrî da dibêjêt ev kes debê bimênêt musilman, û bavê wî jî biray me kuştîne, yenî civakî jî nayête qebûl kirdin, wek yasayî jî nayête qebûl kirdin.

We don't accept children because here is a Muslim country with Islamic law which does not allow a child from a Muslim father be Yezidi. And on the other hand, the fathers of these children have killed our brothers and our society cannot accept them. It is only natural⁹⁴.

While some of the Yezidi women are eager to hand over children who remind them of their captors, there are several reports about women who had difficulty leaving their children behind and now follow them via the orphanage staff by asking to send them photos⁹⁵. These women know that insisting on keeping their children may be interpreted as showing some sort of satisfaction with captivity and its outcome. Also desiring their children does not completely match the conditions of acceptance. Therefore, they prefer to struggle with their emotions than to be banished from family and society.

93. Dakhil, Calling ISIL Atrocities Against the Yezidis, 274.

94. Dawud, Khetari, interview, Khetar village, April 2018.

95. Arraf, Jane, "Kidnapped, abandoned children turn up at Mosul orphanage as ISIS battle ends", December 27, 2017. <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/12/27/569396126/kidnapped-abandoned-children-turn-up-at-mosul-orphanage-as-isis-battle-ends?t=1538153079895>

6. Post-genocide situation in Kurdistan and Germany

6.1 Victimized women and their needs and rights

Although genocide targets the entirety of a community, the most vulnerable groups are always women and children. Women often endure difficult experiences like losing male member of their family or being separated from their children in war. However, besides these pains, they have suffered from different kinds of physical and mental tortures like raping, beating and humiliation.

Genocidal rape often takes place with the highest level of violence and humiliation. Victimized women sometimes refuse to discuss the rape because of the shame and humiliation associated with it, as well as the stigmatization from family, friends and the community while some survivors continue to seek the opportunity to speak out. Needless to say, survivors deserve to be listened to and treated with respect⁹⁶. Their psychological needs and safety needs as their basic needs must be understood and met. For this aim, their problem and needs first of all should be identified by using some frameworks such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a very useful tool in recognizing long-term needs and checking the level of survivors' needs.

6.2 Social needs of assaulted women and the concept of belonging

Rape is the worst crime against human body and leaves a direct impact on self-esteem of the victims. Additionally, the physical and mental disorders in personal aspect are intertwined with social life. According to Ruth Seifert, "[a] violent invasion into the interior of one's body represents the most severe attack imaginable upon the intimate self and the dignity of a human being⁹⁷." So, on the one hand, rebuilding the social dignity and self-esteem should be considered as one of the most important needs of survivors. On the other hand, genocidal rape is an act against

96. Philomène, Uwamaliya, and Grahame Smith, "Rehabilitation for survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda: what are the lessons learned?", *Issues in mental health nursing* 38.4 (2017): 365.

97. Todd A. Salzman, "Rape Camps as a Means of Ethnic, Cleansing: Religious, Cultural, and Ethical Responses to Rape Victims in the Former Yugoslavia" *Human Rights Quarterly* 20.2 (1998): 355.

a group therefore it has a social nature. Genocidal rape is not random acts carried out by a few soldiers, rather it is a planned strategy for ethnic cleansing and has been considered a tool of war⁹⁸. In genocide agents' understanding, female is reduced to her reproductive capacities because the male determines a child's ethnic identity⁹⁹ so the group that could take over the female body of the enemy group could destroy them and fragmentize their social structure. Indeed, the act of genocidal rape is linked with both the social structure and the social status and also the dignity of the individual.

According to the third and fourth levels of Maslow's hierarchy, one needs love, ability to hold relationship and friendship, feel belonging, feeling acceptance and respect. These two levels could be categorised related to social identity. Social identity is shaped through self-categorization and feeling belonging to a specific group and separation from others. According to Hogg, this division between in-group and out-group and feeling belonging to in-groups cause a kind of positive self-evaluation because in-groups always judge themselves positively¹⁰⁰. So, losing dignity will influence the social identity and individual encounters some kind of suspended identity.

The raped and traumatized women who have lost their dignity and honour need to rebuild their dignity among their society and being in touch with other in-group members, friends and relatives and enjoy the psychological benefits of social belonging. Reintegration in the society and rebuilding damaged dignity and self-esteem help the victimized women to overcome the trauma easier and separation from their community and relations may increase the severity of trauma.

6.3 Yezidi assaulted women and their present life

After ISIS attacked Yezidis on 3 August, the first aid team was formed by the Centre of Lalish in Khanke on 4 August¹⁰¹. All regional and international efforts had been made for covering the basic needs like providing food and shelter. Displaced persons and refugees from Syria and other regions

98. Sherrie L. Russle- Brown, "rape as an act of genocide", *Berkeley J. Int'l L.* 21 (2003): 325.

99. Salzman, Rape camps in the former Yugoslavia, 365.

100. Hogg, A tale of two theories, 260.

101. Shamo, Shekho and others, "Kariset Shengal: Shengal disaster", Hawar publishing,(Duhok: 2016), 100.

of Iraq had been resettled temporary until finishing the war or finding a solution. However, the major part of the temporary camps still exists, and the Yezidi people are living there for more than four years. Providing psychological helps started from the first months in Kurdistan. However, a considerable group of survivors have been transferred to other countries for getting treatments. In this chapter I have evaluated the different aspects of the current life of survivors who still live in Kurdistan and those who have been brought to Germany.

6.4 Living in Kurdistan: resettlement in camps, living in uncertain and hard situations

Contemporary camps have been established by international and regional aid organizations which work under the umbrella of a mother organization called B.R.H.A, Board of Relief and Humanities Affairs, there are 27 camps mainly around Duhok and 38 organizations are active there¹⁰² for offering different services like health, education and daily needs. In most of these camps people still live in tents. Water and food have been brought from the city, electricity coming through a bunch of sloppy moving wire and the lack of sewage system means the area stinks even in the cold seasons of year. Nasrin who lives in Khanke camp with her family for three years after escaping from ISIS slavery said:

Ev jîyanê me ye, ne aw heye, ne kareba heye, jîyanekê gelekê te'ebe, bi xwedê me bi heqê xwe çadir kirîye, ger misa'ida me biken qence bes nîne, gelek bi serê me hatîye, malê me hemû xerap bû, gelek nexweşîye me dî¹⁰³.

This is our life that you see. No water. No electricity. It is a really hard life. We bought this tent ourselves. They should help us, but they don't. We have suffered much pain. Our houses have been destroyed. I have seen too much hardship.

When I asked her about the possibility of returning to Sinjar she said:

Be xwedê çavê min bi Şîgalê naye, rojeka em çûne Şîngalê bes çavên min pê ra navin bi Şîngalê dilê mi nayê biçim, me navê xwe tescil kirîye û dixazîn derkevîn welatekê Ewropî

I swear to God I won't see Shengal anymore, one day we went to Shengal but couldn't see what I saw. I can't go there. We registered our name as refugees and want to go somewhere in Europe¹⁰⁴.

102 Information kit, No 14, 52.

103 Nesrin, interview, Khanke, April 2018.

104. Nesrin, interview, Khanke, April 2018.

The other interviewees have almost the same demand, although some have returned to their cities and villages in Shingal, the major part who still remain at camps don't like to go back there. Mona says:

Li gundê me herdan nêzîkê heft meqbera cema'î hene, ez nizanim bi zebt çene, dilê me nebû biçim bes dibêjin nêzîkê heftên ,nêzîkê pênc meha herdan li destê Da'îiş da bû, bes hêdî hêdî Pêşmerge û ceş çûn û xelas kirin xelkê henekî vegeran, bes dilê me niye biçim.

There are almost seven mass graves in our village Herdan. I don't know how many exactly because I won't like to go there but people say it's seven. Herdan was occupied by ISIS for five months, before the Kurdish Peshmerga and the Iraqi army forces liberated the area and some of the population returned but I don't like to go¹⁰⁵.

Women are engaging with daily household life which they did before, while some of young girls are studying or work as the camp staff. All of them prefer to go abroad but the girls who have busy days in camp and school, seem little healthier and more satisfied compared to others. I asked Vian, who live alone in camp, that is it difficult to stay alone here, she said:

Bi xwdê mala me hemî li Almanîye bes ez bi tenê vêderême, ger bibe û bikarim hez dikem biçim ba wan bes niha ke neçûme ne zehmete, ez çime medresê, deşughlim û gelek cara ger fe'alîyetê çîstêk hebê û ostad Xidir bêje me ez çim.

All of my family live in Germany and I'm living alone here. I like to join them but my life here is not unbearable. I'm going to school, working and helping out with anything sir Khidhr asking me¹⁰⁶.

6.5 Psychotherapy

One of the main tasks of aid organizations is providing both physical and mental health services. Every camp offers health service which is open to public. Besides the international aid organizations, Yezidi academics started to establish a centre for social helps by collaboration with camps and international health centres and establishing scientific institutions for research, teaching and practice in order to build the currently non-existent psychotherapy services infrastructure with a focus on trauma called IPP, Institute of Psychotherapy and Psychotraumatology, which works on long-term PTSD, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. One of the most important aspects of this project is intertwining psychotherapy with transcultural transfer. They also encourage people to visit psychotherapists and speak about their problems.

105. Mona, interview, Khanke April 2018.

106 Vian, interview, Khanke, April 2018.

Dr. Mamou Farhan Othman former Iraqi Minister and the head of the institute is a Yezidi Pir who emphasized that:

Not only captured women need psychotherapy but the whole community needs therapy, and psychotherapy here means a new awareness that our society is undergoing. Giving the psychotherapy treatments is usual in Europe but it used to be taboo here. Nowadays the Yezidi survivors are breaking that taboo; they go and talk about their bad experiences¹⁰⁷.

This institute worked on psychological and cultural aspects of the matter to result in a better solution. The aim overview accentuates that different cultures have developed different coping strategies to deal with the multiplicity of different stresses. In general, these strategies often represent the most important resource for integration into a society that will remain successful in the long term. Especially, in a culture characterised by collectivist values such as that of Iraq, the individual can hardly be understood without looking at the community. In this society, especially in rural areas, relationships with the people in one's closest social circles are particularly important, including the relationships with the treating doctor and therapist¹⁰⁸. It means a doctor and therapist with a common cultural background could work more effectively than a stranger doctor. The IPP centre follows this strategy.

6.6 International volunteer aids, advantages and challenges

As well as the international organizations, several individual and group volunteer activists from around the world have started to help the IDP and refugees in camps with regard to their profession and skills. Most of them are active in education section such as English teachers. Becky Thompson from the US who has started her activities from 2016 independently as an English teacher and opened an educational centre in Shingal and started working with a psychological treatment organization called the Restoration Act, said:

The idea is helping people to get back to living a healthy and strongly life. We have done sewing projects. We provided sowy things and they made stuffed animals and such at the IDP steads. We give them something to do and something creative and something social, then we give them to the children who were released from Daesh¹⁰⁹.

107. Dr. Mamo Osman, Duhok, interview, April 2018.

108. <http://web.uod.ac/ac/institutes-and-centers/ipp-institute/about/> IPP institute website.

109. Duhok, interview, April 2018.

The main aim of this activities is to bring hope through different creative activities, teaching languages and helping them to get medical assistance. When I asked Becky about her early motivation and why she thought she should travel from the US to an unknown dangerous area in the Middle East she replied:

Actually, God guided me. God guides that how we love. I always liked to help people and God opened this way to me.

Although Becky doesn't work as a formal missionary, the Christian missionary activities are one of the challenges in Yezidi community after 2014. Some Western evangelical groups have made little effort to disguise a proselytizing motive underlining their humanitarian missions in Iraq's Kurdistan. Some groups identified the Yezidi refugee influx into Kurdistan as a "golden opportunity" for conversion [...] U.S.-based non-profit Christian Aid Mission highlighted in one report on its website how Yezidis were "once inaccessible to native Iraqi missionaries, as members lived reclusively in distant mountains near the border with Turkey" but once Islamic extremists stormed their strongholds last summer forcing them to flee, missionary work became easier¹¹⁰ It has been shown that in a video report that they deliver their aids in the name of Jesus¹¹¹. A Christian missionary website acknowledged that many Yezidis, who they counted as Muslim, have converted to Christianity because of understanding the difference between Islam and Christianity¹¹². It seems this website has assumed Yezidis as Muslims.

Vian Dakhil, the Yezidi parliament member of Iraqi parliament, and some other Yezidi lawyers expressed their concern about this case for the first time. She declared that attached with humanitarian aid the evangelical groups distribute bibles and pamphlets containing information

110. Dettmer, Jamie, "Yazidis say they are being targeted for Christian conversion" July 2015, <https://www.voanews.com/a/yazidis-say-they-are-begin-targeted-for-christian-conversion/2872137.html> .

111. Christian video TV report, "Iraqi Muslims Converting to Christianity Because Of ISIS Atrocities" <http://www.christianvideotv.com/iraqi-muslims-converting-to-christianity-because-of-isis-atrocities/>

112. Koome ministries, <http://www.koomeministries.com/index.php/about/faq/newsfeedtest01/26-news/truth/the-beautiful-truth/1853-iraqi-yazidi-muslims-converting-to-christianity-because-of-isis-atrocities>.

about Christianity¹¹³. Vian mentioned that Khalid Jamal Albert, director of the Kurdistan region's office of Christian affairs, says there were some unauthorized organizations that have distributed some headphones and flash memory containing recorded bibles¹¹⁴.

One of the Christian charity missionary groups claim that some 80 large families have converted to Christianity¹¹⁵. The average size of a Yezidi family is between seven and 10, suggesting that Christian Aid Mission alone may have converted as many as 800 Yezidis. It concerns the elites of Yezidis who finds their community at risk of conversion throughout the history.

Although the missionary groups say conversion took place due to understanding the difference between Christianity and Islam, it seems they consider Yezidism as a branch or sect of Islam. There are some evidences which show other motivations for conversion. Indeed, it is impossible to determine the real motive of the inner affairs as belief change or conversion. However, this is a common thinking among the Syrian and Iraqi refugees that Christians have a better chance of securing visas and this belief has been shaped under the influence of some news about the activities of Christian conservative groups in America and Europe, which have started to campaign for Christian refugees from the Mideast to be given priority when it comes to resettlement¹¹⁶ Shamo, a new converted from Yezidi to Christianity interviewed by CNB, asks the Christian community to pray for Yezidis to be Christian and help them and take them out from the country¹¹⁷.

Indeed, these volunteer Christian aid organizations offer several educational and psychological help for raising hope among survivors. However, they indirectly encourage survivors to leave their country and this kind of immigration, by converting to other religion and not for accessing treatment, may cause increasing trauma in abroad.

113 . Rudaw report, "Yezidi MP: Christian groups are proselytizing", Jun 2105, <http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/110620152> .

114 ibid.

115 Dettmer, Ibid.

116. Dettmer, Jamie, "Yazidis say they are being targeted for Christian conversion" July 2015, <https://www.voanews.com/a/yazidis-say-they-are-begin-targeted-for-christian-conversion/2872137.html> .

117. Christian video TV, TV report, "Iraqi Muslims Converting to Christianity Because Of ISIS Atrocities"<http://www.christianvideotv.com/iraqi-muslims-converting-to-christianity-because-of-isis-atrocities/>

6.7 Living in Germany

When the Yezidi women arrived at Germany, they were divided and transferred to different cities. Since the main German transferring project was approved in Baden Wurttemberg parliament, the large number of Yezidi survivors who has been strongly traumatized were transferred to this state while the other groups were transferred to the cities with highest possibility to have contact with the Yezidi community.

The aim of transferring was to provide treatments and help to overcome the trauma. However, evidence show that trauma is not completely over and in some cases separation from the origin society and relatives have made them feel isolated.

The current situation of assaulted women in Germany depends on various factors like age, job, educational opportunities, and living with others or alone.

6.8 Housing

Although resettlement covered the basic needs for all, it was not equal. Criteria for getting house are different from city to city. Some women could receive housing instantly and start their independent life under regular treatment and psychotherapy while many others who have resettled in camps, still remain in camps waiting to start a normal independent life. Bahare lives with her children in a room when I asked her about her present life, she said:

Bes tişteki nexweş le Almanîya min aciz kirê, ewe sê salîme ez û zaroke xwe le Almanîya de ghurfekî dayne, emrê kurê min yek panze sale û yek jî diwanze sale... me hewiceyî bi xaniyeke mezin heye.

The only thing which makes me feel depressed here in Germany is our place. Now is for three years that I and my two teenage sons live in a single room, one of my sons is 15-year and another is 12-year... We need a larger place, a house or an apartment¹¹⁸.

Although living in a safe place is the first priority, condition of the place could impact mental health and feeling safety and stability. Bahare described her life in this way:

Ez li metbexê xarin çî dikem kû çar malbatên din jî li vêderêne, piştê çê kirinê ez mecbûrim xwarinê li ghurfê bikem. Her ew qurfa têda ronîştina me ye, şuştina me, veşuştina me, xwarina

118. Bahare, phone interview, Freiburg, March 2018.

me vexwarina me, nivistina me hemû ew ghurfeye , eve sê sale ev halê me ye, mûşkila min bes male. Em mêna bê malîn. Ez ji xwera digirim û ez pirsî ji dikem, lê bi xwedê be des mê nakevî.

I should go to a common kitchen that we share with four other families; after cooking I should bring the dish to the room. Eating, washing, sitting and sleeping, all in one small room with two teenagers is quite difficult. After three years we live still like wanderer. I'm searching and asking but cannot find an answer¹¹⁹.

In the other city, survivors could receive private house only with their children or sharing with the other survivors. Avin and Dalia live together with their six children in a rather old and large three-bedroom house. They don't have any specific problem with their house excepts considering the duration of contract. They say:

Eqdê ev malê li hawînê xelas dibe, em ji alîye xwe ve cihêkî din bibîn.

The contract will expire in summer and we should find another place on our own¹²⁰.

For these women who came from the culture which divides the outside and inside responsibilities between husband and wife, searching for house has been defined as men responsibility so they encounter some difficulties in these situations.

6.9 Education and job opportunities

Providing a house, free education, and in the case of exposed people, medical treatment are common parts of refugee welcome program in Germany. The main purposes of welcoming or the integration programs especially for exposed people are empowering and improve abilities for confronting the new life, living on their own and employed ¹²¹. The first step in this process is learning German. All the interviewee in this research have gotten free language course and depend on their age and personal situation have enjoyed this opportunity. Sewa who could achieve the normal German high school is very satisfy with her situation. She has enough time and good opportunities to reach her dreams in the future. However, Avin after passing language course level A2, has stopped. She says:

119. Ibid

120. Avin and Dalia, interview, Celle, March 2018.

121. Empowering asylum seekers, developing good practice, Adult Education Centres Kansalais- ja työväenopistojen liitto KTOL - Medborgar- och arbetarinstitutens förbund MAIFry. P.15. http://www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk/files/good_practice.pdf.

se'atî wan dayne min jî medresey ra ez çûme wan se'atê û me ew se'at xelas kirim û ez niha li malim ne wan gotîye me hîç here medresê , ne şughlekî bike û ne me gotîye wan ezê şughlekî dekem, ez li malême û karê zarûyê xwe dikim, ez wan berme ber dextura û ez xwarina wan çê dikim û şûştina wan, ez jî nasekinim.

They offered me language class which I completed. After that, they didn't ask me to continue the course, nor offered me a job, and I didn't ask them either. I'm busy with my household tasks, taking care of children, taking them to the doctor, cooking for them, bathing them... so I'm not inactive¹²².

As she used to do in Kurdistan, she views her current household tasks as her main duty. She is not familiar with the new life and the support system. While Bahare's experience is different, she lives in an uncomfortable situation in a refugee camp in Germany. However, she is satisfied about the other aspects of life. She says:

Ev du sal û nîvîye ez diçime korsê ziman û şhadêha ayins biru nacîh bûm ez niha bî ayins dixwînim û hî şhadê bî ayins nebire, û ez levera diçim, ez xwe te'elimînime salonê li bo salekê ez qibelê hikûmetê, saleka ez her ro ez sibêyekî deçime medrese û di nîvero se'at yek heta şeş ez diçime salonê. Li vê ra şhadêkê didene min û ez karim wê şhadê jî ez biçme kî salonê Almanîya û têda bişughlim.

it's been two and a half year that I go to a language school. I passed A2 and started with B1. It is almost a year that I have a practice course in a saloon. I mean government and social office pay me. I study at school from morning until 13.00 and then go to saloon until 18, when I finish my practice, I could receive a diploma and search for job¹²³.

Of course, we cannot generalize the situation of Avin and Bahare and say settlement in camp or in the independent houses always has this kind of outcomes. However, there are some considerable differences in getting facilities and educational opportunities. In some cases, the survivors have been offered free programs which besides learning new skills, help them to overcome trauma while in other cases they have gotten only some facilities and educational opportunities and therefore they couldn't overcome the trauma and found their current life difficult or even unbearable.

122. Avin, interview, Celle, March 2018.

123. Bahare, phone interview, Freiburg, March 2018.

6.10 Psychological treatment and challenges

The main aim of transferring survivors to Germany was the psychological treatment and psychology team decided which victims should be transferred¹²⁴.

The women who were severely traumatized and needed daily medical and psychological treatment were transferred to psychological clinics mainly in Stuttgart, after getting necessary treatments and being prepare for independent life, they could receive unknown safe housing and the other facilities. Treatment times are various based on the needs of women, it is at least 10 to 15 times and for some women still continue, it has been effective in many cases. Awas says:

Di despêkê de ez hemî hefteyekî li ber derman û saykotirapî bû û îlac dan min , piştê ew ez biçkê baş bû bes me'ide min li wan îlac alêrjî bû. Niha bes yek car li mehêkî duxturî saykotirapî dê ba min. Ew gelekê başe û gelekî harîkarîya min kirîye û ez kîm tir difikre û aciz dibe.

In the beginning I received therapy every week and was on perscription medicine for a while, but later I gradually felt better and developed allergies to the drugs, so I stopped. Now I have monthly psychotherapy which helps me to keep myself far away from stress and pain¹²⁵.

Sewa answered the same question in this way:

Ez çen caran hatime îlacandan, deh an yazde car, piştê ez baş bûm û nehewce bû li îlacên zêdetir, ez çûme medresê Almanî û niha jî çime medresê, sefa nihme û gelekê başe li bo min.

I got has about 10 or 11 therapy sessions and they were beneficial, but I didn't need more. I started school in an ordinary German school and now I am grade nine and this has really helped me¹²⁶.

However, in some cases, treatment process has faced more complexity. Kizilhan as the head of Special Quota Project admits that despite providing long hours of therapy, creating an effective counselling program is still the greatest challenge for psychotherapy consultants¹²⁷. Avin who has gotten 15 therapy sessions in her first year says:

124. Shali, Ali, "German state takes in Yezidi victims of ISIS for emotional treatment", august 2015 <http://www.rudaw.net/english/world/12082015> .

125. Celle, phone interview, March 2018.

126. Sewa, interview, Oldenburg, March 2018.

127. Prince-Gibson, Eetta, in German sanctuary Yezidi women being to face the aftermath, women's news, September 14, 2016 <https://womensnews.org/2016/09/in-german-sanctuary-yezidi-women-begin-to-face-the-aftermath/>

Sala berî em birne ber duxture nefsi pazde car bes îlac nedane me heta niha jî îlacek nedaneme, em her du heftîya care kê çûne ba duktur dor bîst û pênc deqîqe, nîv si'atê me ra di'axift û digot çî li dilê we da heye, hûn çî lo diken û em biçkê baş bûn... bi xwedê ve du sale neçûyne ber duxturekî nefsi û ne mes'ûl û mitercimî dêne ba me, rastîne me te'ebîne.

I got 15 sessions of therapy the first year I arrived here, but they didn't prescribe medication. We went to the clinic once every two weeks for half an hour where they asked me to speak about everything that I liked, what was in my heart, how things were going... and that helped me to feel better, but in the past two years I haven't received any therapy or assistance. No one cares about us anymore. We are really tiered¹²⁸.

Her psychotherapist had probably found her in a satisfactory situation when he or she had stopped the psychotherapy sessions. However, her trauma has relapsed with more complexity due to specific challenges of migration or refugee life in Europe. Survivor's pre-immigration situation before captivity and after that, cultural differences between the land of origin and new country, and conditions of receiving integration opportunities, all these may influence or even disrupt the process of psychological treatments. Realizing these challenges are necessary for understanding the process of psychological rehabilitation in other country and its probable obstacles.

6.11 Cultural gaps between survivors and their therapists

Different understanding of human values and meaning of life between European psychotherapists and Middle Eastern patients are two main reasons that could disrupt the treatment process. According to Dr Kizilhan, a great deal of psychotherapy is based on Western ideas and values including individualism and individualistic understanding of the person.¹²⁹ Yezidis value collective cultures and social living. Huntington as one of the scholars who distinguished cultures by individual values and collective values, predicted that the difference between individualist Western cultures and collectivist non-Western cultures would constitute major cleavages in the future¹³⁰. In this approach, West, Europa and America, as the origin of modernity has specific values and ways of understanding the world which are different from the rest of the world. These

128. Avin, interview, Celle, March 2018.

129 Prince-Gibson, Eetta, in German sanctuary Yezidi women being to face the aftermath, women's news, September 14, 2016 <https://womensnews.org/2016/09/in-german-sanctuary-yezidi-women-begin-to-face-the-aftermath/>

130. Kwang-II Yoon, "Political Psychology of Individualism and Collectivism", *Journal of International and Area Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2014): 52.

values have also been argued to be associated with the cultural orientations of pre-industrial and industrial economies¹³¹.

Nevertheless, current cross-cultural studies criticize this kind of generalization. Oysman posits that although Americans are individualist, as defined by their response to individualism scales and the way they defined themselves, they are clearly relational and feel close to group members, seeking their advice and all of which represent the collective aspect¹³². Although the discussion between different theories about individualism and collectivism have different outcomes related to the scholars hypotheses and their field studies, the matter that should be considered, as Hofstede argued, is that cultures are wholes and not individuals and their internal logic cannot be understood in the personality dynamics of individuals¹³³. There are cultural and educational systems in a society that shape an almost common understanding for individuals of that society.

In the case of German therapist and Yezidi patients some grades of misunderstanding and disruption in code exchanging due to different cultural background is undeniable. Therapists offer the solutions which are outcomes of their culture and specialization; these solutions may not make any sense for a person from a completely different culture.

As we can recognize in the case of Avin, therapists may think the treatment has been completed and patient has a satisfactory situation, but patient finds the therapy sessions as only an opportunity to speak without reaching the next level of treatment which is approaching to a solution and better mental situation. Avin describes her treatment sessions in this way:

Me ra di'axift û digot çi li dilê we da heye, hun çi lo diken û... em biçkê baş bûn.

They asked me to speak about everything that I liked, what exists in my heart, how is it going... and this helped me to feel better¹³⁴.

She mentions only to the possibility of speaking and confabulation. Indeed, due to the lack of family- and close friends' active supporting role, relational-cultural therapist functions as the

131. David A Ralston, and others, "Societal-Level Versus Individual-Level Predictions of Ethical Behavior: A 48-Society Study of Collectivism and Individualism". *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 122, No. 2 (June 2014): 286.

132. Yoon, *Political psychology*, 57.

133. *Ibid*, 58.

134. Avin, interview, Celle, March 2018.

only pair of ears for to victims. Thus, such therapeutic channel becomes like a pair of ears to the victim. Ears which listen to the victim, but at the same time; the victim forgets the upcoming treatments because she needs such channel to open her hearts meaning talking about her feelings.

6.12 Losing family and community relations

Kirmayer, transcultural psychiatry, has listed factors related to premigration, migration, and post-migration, which are determining factors affecting mental health. His list includes: economy; educational and occupational status in the country of origin. Additional factors are: trauma; political involvement as a part of premigration factors; unemployment; loss of social status, loss of family; community social supports; concern about family members who are left behind; possibility for reunification; difficulties in learning new language; and acculturation (e.g. change in sex roles) as post-migration factors¹³⁵. Considering the situation of victimized, traumatized Yezidi women, who mostly came from rural areas with extended family structure, losing those big family and tribal networks could cause feeling of isolation in other countries. For Avin who used to have daily contact with relatives and neighbours, losing all those relations and staying alone at home was a new burden in her new life. She says:

Bixwedê kesek nehatîye ba me û kesek nayê bame, ev du salin beşerê xwedê ji derê me nehatîye, em hemû bimrin kesek nayê bêjin hûn saxin, mayne, mirîne, ebed, beşerê xwedê nîzikî me nabê.

No one comes to visit us. It is now two years that no one has knocked our door. If all of us die, if we need something, there is no one who would come to say: are you okay, or not? Are you still alive here or not, no one never visits us¹³⁶.

Lack of social life seems to be her main concern. She has been deprived from the basic social needs, like receiving love and attention, being able to make friends and feel belonging, all which are necessary for her rehabilitation process as a raped woman. Of course, she has received attention and has been listened by therapists and social workers in Germany, but therapists could not give her love or compassion that she could get from her kin and close relatives.

Despite being in touch with Yezidi community in Germany and participating in Yezidi House, *Mala Ezidian*, activities, the newcomers feel some distance between themselves and the older

135. Laurence J. Kirmayer et al, “common mental health problems in immigrants and refugees: general approach in primary care”, *CMAJ*, Canada, Sep 201, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3168672/>.

136. Avin, , interview, Celle, March 2018.

Yezidi immigrants who mainly came from the Northern and the Western parts of Kurdistan, in Turkey, and Syria. When I asked Avin about knowing the other Yezidis in her city and her probable relationship with them, she replied:

Gelek Êzîdî li vir jî hene bes nayên ba me, meger wisa ji derve yek û du bibînin û pêk ra di'axivin bes nayêne ba me.

In here, many Yezidis live, but they don't come to visit us. We may meet each other outside in the street and there we can speak together but they don't come to visit¹³⁷.

When I wanted to understand the relationship between old Yezidi immigrant and the newcomers, I asked a woman, who is living in Germany for 40 years about the number of participants of newcomer Yezidis in the celebration of Yezidi new year ceremony, while she drove me to the Yezidis House named "*Mala Ezidian*". She said:

Wan Êraqîyên zehmetin, em xwaz bi hev ra dîlanê çarşema sor bike û bi wan got, lê wan gotin çarşema sor bes debe li çarşema bibe, em jî dizanin, bes çarşemê li vir rojekî ne fêrîye alemê dişughlê û nekare ber bide. Em mecbûr li rojekî yekşem berî yan jî piştî çarşema sor dîlan û şayî bike. Wan şughlekî naken û le ser cob senterin û hewceyen ev jlyanê li vir hene nizanin.

Iraqis are difficult! We intended to have a common celebration and invited them, but they insisted on celebrating the feast exactly matching the traditional calendar. "Charshamma Sor" should be on Wednesday I know but Wednesday is not a holiday here, it is a work day and people cannot get away from their work. So, we must celebrate on a Sunday before or after. They are unemployed and therefore have to live on social benefits and don't understand here is the reality of life¹³⁸.

It seems that requirements of living in other country have big impact on the older Yezidi migrant's ways of fulfilling the religious duties and this issue has shaped a sort of invisible cultural gap between Yezidis.

6.13 receiving integration opportunities and effects on rehabilitation process

As I mentioned earlier, free education, improving individual competencies, and job opportunities can be viewed as three personal development facilitating factors which have been offered to all refugees including Yezidi survivors through welcoming programs in Germany.

137. Ibid

138. X, interview, Celle, March 2018.

These personal development facilitating factors could directly influence survivor's mental health and help them to overcome trauma. The contrast between the situation of Bahare, who enjoys both language and hairdressing courses and Avin, who has finished her language course and have been given up at home, is considerable.

Bahare describes her work experience by these words:

Gelek fêde le min bûye û gelek murtah bûme, ji mira xweştire ji malî ye'enî ji xwe ra bişughlim, bes wek ma ne hewcey bişughlîn ji niha heta çar salî dî, bes eger ez li mal bim ez gelek tefkîra kem û ez gelek êciz bim û ca ez keyfa min gelekê şughlê min tê, ez xwe te'elimînme heta ez bikarvim ji şughlekî xwe qenc pê bikem, haka sala me xelas bibe û şehade bibem dikarim bişughlim ji xwera¹³⁹.

I really like it and feel very comfortable at work. It is more comfortable to be there than stay at home. I could stay at home for 4 years and working is not obligatory, but I like to be busy. When I stay at home, sorrowful thoughts bother me. So, I'm happy with my volunteer position although I cannot earn money. I hope to get my diploma soon and find a job.

While Avin, who stays at home and doesn't have any specific task to do, thus she is feeling alone and frustrated, she says:

Bi xwedî jiyaneke zehmete, ev kurê diçin kîndirgartin û dibêjin çima babêfilanî hatibû, bavê me kengê dê û çî ra em naçîne Êraqê, bes levê der roj li roj çitek pîs tir çê debe.

What life? It is too hard to bear! Our life was good in Iraq before Daesh, [here] children can go to school and they don't care, but for me it's like a jail, I count hours, days and months to reach the end of this life. Life is difficult. My son who goes to the kindergarten says the other child are picked up by their fathers, where is my father, why we can't go back to Iraq?

139 . Bahar, interview, March 2018.

7. Conclusion

In this research the Yezidi women who survived the genocidal rape are investigated from two related perspectives. One as victims of sex slavery, and the other whose social identity is reshaped in their new home. Such categorization is a key factor in order to investigate the victims' new situation in the Iraqi Kurdistan and Germany.

From these two perspectives the thesis explored how the highest Yezidis' religious authority influenced the process of social reintegration for assaulted women; how they used the religion capacities and their social statues to convince the Yezidi community to embrace the survivors. Additionally, the thesis explored how the religious rituals were conducted as a rite of passage for victims. All interviewees in this research were satisfied with the process of religious purification and were proud of themselves. However, it is not easy to predict if their views would change in future. As such, the efforts made by the religious authorities had a considerable role in survivors' social reintegration and their psychological recovery.

Additionally, this thesis investigated the challenges of the survivors' rehabilitation process in the Iraqi Kurdistan, and Germany. These two parallel processes have been parts of the psychiatric rehabilitation of the Yezidi women who were rescued after being used as sex slaves by ISIS. Social identity theory and the concept of belonging were used as analytical lenses through which the research questions have been addressed. Specially, to explain the situation of women who have been transferred to Germany. During conducting the interviews, I found out while a country like Germany had offered to help in many ways such as giving them refugee status and many opportunities to live a good healthy and happy life, some of these women were homesick and have faced several challenges due to their new situation and separation from their community. For Yezidis and specially for those women who have survived, both living in unhealthy contemporary camps in the Kurdistan Region and living alone in a foreign country like Germany, means facing difficulties.

Although a considerably large number of local and international aid organizations work to find a permanent solution for Yezidis survivors' situation, the efforts are still dissimilar and follow different agendas. While some organizations try to find a regional solution, some other Yezidi and non-Yezidi organizations try to transfer all survivors to other countries. This study provides a close description of the current situation of Yezidi women, who were victims of physical and sexual assault by the Islamic State fighters, both in Kurdistan and Germany. The findings can help the

agent organizations to have a clear view towards the consequences of choosing whatever agenda they might have.

The final concluding remark to be mentioned in this part is my contribution to the research community. I argue I've illustrated the complexity of studying the multi-faceted challenging situation of the Yezidi women when the issue of choosing available relevant research theories and rigorous Approaches/methods is always a challenge for new researchers.

8. References

- Abdel fadil, Mona, "Living the message and empowering Muslim selves: A behind the screens study of online Islam." PhD theses, university of Oslo
- Aberbach, Joel D., and Bert A. Rockman. "Conducting and coding elite interviews." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35.4 (2002): 673-676.
- Açıkyıldız, Birgül. "The sanctuary of Shaykh 'Adī at Lalish: Centre of pilgrimage of the Yezidis." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 72.2 (2009): 301-333.
- Al-Ali, Nadje, and Nicola Pratt. "Conspiracy of near silence: violence against Iraqi women." *Middle East Report* 258 (2011): 34-48.
- Ali, M. "ISIS and propaganda: How ISIS exploits women." *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism* (2015): 10-11.
- Allison, Christine. "Unbelievable Slowness of Mind": Yezidi Studies, from Nineteenth to Twenty-First Century." *Journal of Kurdish Studies* 6 (2008): 1-23.
- Arraf, Jane. "Kidnapped, abandoned children turn up at Mosul orphanage as ISIS battle ends". December 27, 2017. Access May 4 2018, <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/12/27/569396126/kidnapped-abandoned-children-turn-up-at-mosul-orphanage-as-isis-battle-ends>
- Arakelova, Victoria. "Bayt'ā Gilāvīyē-A Lament for a Noble Woman. Or Evidence for Polygamy among the Yezidis." *Iran & the Caucasus* (1999): 135-142.
- Azimi, Kiumars. *Mejuy Shiegeri le Kurdistanda (The history of Sheism in Kurdistan)*. Sulemaniye: Suhrawardi house Publishing, 2016.
- Bitlisi, SharafKhan, *Sharaf-Name (The book of hounor)*. Tehran: Asatir Publication, 1996.
- Bouyer, Louis. *Rite and Man: Natural Sacredness and Christian Liturgy*. Vol. 7. University of Notre Dame Press, 1963.
- Cetorelli, Valeria, et al. "Mortality and kidnapping estimates for the Yazidi population in the area of Mount Sinjar, Iraq, in August 2014: a retrospective household survey." *PLoS medicine* 14.5 (2017): e1002297.
- Christian video TV report, "Iraqi Muslims Converting to Christianity Because Of ISIS Atrocities" . access July 3, 2018. <http://www.christianvideotv.com/iraqi-muslims-converting-to-christianity-because-of-isis-atrocities/>

- Cuno, Kenneth M. *Modernizing marriage (family, ideology, and law in nineteenth and early twentieth century Egypt)*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 2015.
- Dalyan, Murat Gokhan, and Cabir Dogan. "An overview of 19th century Yezidi women." *Asian Social Science* 9.7 (2013): 114.
- Dettmer, Jamie. "Yazidis say they are being targeted for Christian conversion". July 2015. access July 12, 2018. <https://www.voanews.com/a/yazidis-say-they-are-begin-targeted-for-christian-conversion/2872137.html>
- Douglas, Mary. "The Contempt of Ritual I." *New Blackfriars*(1968): 475-482.
- Driver, G. R. "The religion of the Kurds." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 2.2 (1922): 197-213.
- Durkheim, Emile, and Joseph Ward Swain. *The elementary forms of the religious life*. Courier Corporation, 2008.
- Eliade, Mircea. *The sacred and the profane: The nature of religion*. Vol. 144. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1959.
- Empowering asylum seekers, developing good practice, Adult Education Centres Kansalais- ja työväenopistojen liitto KTOL - Medborgar- och arbetarinstitutens förbund MAIFry. P.15. access May 2018.http://www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk/files/good_practice.pdf
- Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second edition.Brill online reference works.
<https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2>
- Encyclopaedia of Islam, First Edition (1913-1936), Edited by M. Th. Houtsma, T.W. Arnold, R. Basset, R. Hartmann. First published online: 2012.Consulted online on 24 September 2018. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-871X_ei1_SIM_2699
- Field, Henry. *The anthropology of Iran, Part 1, Number 2. The lower Euphrates- Tigris Region*. Chicago: Field Museum, 1949.
- Fontana, Andrea, and James H. Frey. "Interviewing: The Art of Science." *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London: Sage(1998): 361-76.
- Fuccaro, Nelida. "Communalism and the state in Iraq: the Yazidi Kurds, c. 1869–1940." *Middle Eastern Studies* 35.2 (1999): 1-26.
- Galambos, Colleen. "Community healing rituals for survivors of rape." *Smith College Studies in Social Work* 71.3 (2001): 441-457.
- George, Susannah. "Yezidi women welcome back to the faith".15.06.2015. access 04,2018.
<http://tracks.unhcr.org/2015/06/yazidi-women-welcomed-back-to-the-faith/>

- Gibson, Eetta Prince. "in German sanctuary Yezidi women being to face the aftermath" women's news, September 14, 2016. Access July 12, 2018. <https://womensenews.org/2016/09/in-german-sanctuary-yezidi-women-begin-to-face-the-aftermath/>
- Hogg, Michael A., Deborah J. Terry, and Katherine M. White. "A tale of two theories: A critical comparison of identity theory with social identity theory." *Social psychology quarterly* (1995): 255-269.
- Holy, Ladislav. *Anthropological perspectives on kinship*. London: Pluto Press, 1996.
- Hughes, Donna M., and Kathleen Foster. "War, Nationalism, and Rape: Women Respond by Opening a Centre Against Sexual Violence in Belgrade, Serbia." *Women's Studies International Forum*. Elsevier Science, 1996.
- Institute for psychotherapy and pshychotraumatology, Univesity of Duhok.
<http://web.uod.ac/ac/institutes-and-centers/ipp-institute/about/>
- Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Bargaining with patriarchy." *Gender & society* 2.3 (1988): 274-290.
- Khetari, Dawud, *khemse we themanun wethiqet othmaniyet aan meaasat alYezidiy (eightyfive Ottoman documents about the Yezidis misory)* Duhok: Khani Publishing, 2013.
- Khetari, Dawud, *Ma'bad Lalesh we al-Marasim al- Diniyea al-Izadiyea (Lalish temple and the Yezidi religious rituals)* Baqdad: Christian and the other religions Publishing, 2011.
- Kreyenbroek, Philipe G. *Yezidism in Europe Different Generations Speak about their Religion*. Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, Verlag, 2009.
- Kreyenbroek, Philip.G. *Yezidism, its background, observances and textual tradition*. Queenston, Ontario: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1995.
- Kumar, Ashwin. "Disability, rehabilitation and social control: A Foucauldian perspective." *Journal of Human Sciences* 8.2 (2011): 400-409.
- Kozaric-Kovacic, Dragica, et al. "Rape, torture, and traumatization of Bosnian and Croatian women: psychological sequelae." *American journal of orthopsychiatry* 65.3 (1995): 428-433.
- Kirmayer, Laurence J., et al. "Common mental health problems in immigrants and refugees: general approach in primary care." *Cmaj* 183.12 (2011): E959-E967.
- Langer, Robert. "Yezidism between Scholarly Literature and Actual Practice: From 'Heterodox' Islam and 'Syncretism' to the Formation of a Transnational Yezidi 'Orthodoxy'." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 37.3 (2010): 393-403.
- McLeod, Saul. "Maslow's hierarchy of needs." *Simply Psychology* 1 (2007).

- Miran, Rashad. *Rewshi Aeini le Kurdistanda (ethno-confessional situation in Kurdistan)*. Stockholm: Mansur printing :1993.
- Minorsky, Vladimir. *Kurd*. translated by Habibollah Tabani. Tehran: Gostareh publication, 2000
- “Mortality and kidnapping estimates for the Yazidi population in the area of Mount Sinjar, Iraq, in August 2014: A retrospective household survey.” *PLOS medicine*. May 9, 2017. Access august 8, 2018. <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002297>.
- Moxnes, Halvor. "Honor and shame." *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 23.4 (1993): 167-176.
- Nanes, Stefanie Eileen. "Fighting honor crimes: Evidence of civil society in Jordan." *Deconstructing sexuality in the Middle East*. Routledge, 2016. 77-94.
- Nicolaus, Peter. "The serpent symbolism in the Yezidi religious tradition and the snake in Yerevan." *Iran and the Caucasus* 15.1-2 (2011): 49-72.
- Payton, Joanne L. "For the Boys in the Family: An Investigation Into the Relationship Between “Honor”-Based Violence and Endogamy." *Journal of interpersonal violence* 32.9 (2017): 1332-1357.
- Ralston, David A., et al. "Societal-level versus individual-level predictions of ethical behavior: A 48-society study of collectivism and individualism." *Journal of business ethics* 122.2 (2014): 283-306.
- Rudaw report, “Yezidi MP: Christian groups are proselytizing”. Jun 2105. access July 11, 2018. <http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/110620152>
- Ruggi, Suzanne. "Commodifying honor in female sexuality: Honor killings in Palestine." *Middle East Report* (1998): 12-15.
- Russell-Brown, Sherrie L. "Rape as an Act of Genocide." *Berkeley J. Int'l L.* 21 (2003): 350.
- Said Ahmad, Sami. *Al-Izadiya: Ahwaluhum we Mu'taqidatihim (Yezidis: their condition and believes)*. Baqdad: Jame'a Publisher, 1971.
- Saile, Regina, et al. "Prevalence and predictors of partner violence against women in the aftermath of war: a survey among couples in Northern Uganda." *Social Science & Medicine* 86 (2013): 17-25.
- Salzman, Todd A. "Rape camps as a means of ethnic cleansing: Religious, cultural, and ethical responses to rape victims in the former Yugoslavia." *Human Rights Quarterly* 20.2 (1998): 348-378.
- Sanghera, Gurchathen S., and Suruchi Thapar-Björkert. "Methodological dilemmas: Gatekeepers and positionality in Bradford." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31.3 (2008): 543-562.

- Shahrestani, Mohammad Abdulkarim. *al-Milal wa al-Nihal (The book of sects and creeds)*. Tehran: Sharife Razi Publications.
- Shali, Ali, "German state takes in Yezidi victims of ISIS for emotional treatment". august 2015, access April 24, 2018. <http://www.rudaw.net/english/world/12082015>
- Shamo, Shekho and others. *Kariset Shengal (Shengal disaster)*. Duhok: Hawar publishing, Duhok: 2016.
- Sieber, Sam D. "The integration of fieldwork and survey methods." *American journal of sociology* 78.6 (1973): 1335-1359.
- Spat, Eszter. "Religious oral tradition and literacy among the Yezidis of Iraq." *Anthropos* (2008): 393-403.
- Stets, Jan E., and Peter J. Burke. "Identity theory and social identity theory." *Social psychology quarterly* (2000): 224-237.
- Suleiman, Yasir, and Paul Anderson. "'Conducting Fieldwork in the Middle East': Report of a Workshop held at the University of Edinburgh on 12 February 2007." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 35.2 (2008): 151-171.
- Texter, Lynne A., and Janine M. Mariscotti. "From chaos to new life: Ritual enactment in the passage from illness to health." *Journal of religion and health* 33.4 (1994): 325-332.
- Triton, A. S., "Non-Muslim subject of the Muslim state", *the journal of royal Asiatic society Great Britain and Ireland*, Cambridge university press, 1942
- Turner, Victor. *The ritual proses*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1969.
- "UN human rights panel conclude ISIL is committing genocide against Yazidis." UN news. June 16, 2016. Access, June10, 2018. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/06/532312-un-human-rights-panel-concludes-isil-committing-genocide-against-yazidis>
- Uwamaliya, Philomène, and Grahame Smith. "Rehabilitation for survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda: what are the lessons learned?." *Issues in mental health nursing* 38.4 (2017): 361-367.
- Van Gennep, Arnold. *The rites of passage*. Translated by Monika B.Vizesom and Gabrielle L. Caffee. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960.
- Voskanian, Vardan. "Dewrēš E'rd: The Yezidi Lord of the Earth." *Iran & the Caucasus* (1999): 159-166.
- Yezidi girls, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrBYPBBia9Y&t=21s>
- Yoon, Kwang-II "Political Psychology of Individualism and Collectivism", *Journal of International and Area Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 December 2014. 45- 64.

9. Appendixes

9.1 Acronyms

ISIS (Islamic state of Iraq and Syria)

IDP (Internally Displaced Person)

IPP (Institute for Psychotherapy and Psychotraumatology)

B.R.H.A (Board of Relief and Humanities Affairs)

PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)

9.2 Pictures

*Figure 2: Yezidi girls in the purification ceremony
Photo by: Artur Rodziewicz*



*Figure 1: A group of Yezidi girls in the purification ceremony
Photo by: Artur Rodziewicz*



*Figure 4: Qewals in Lalish; Qewals are Yezidi religious singers who play music and chant the holy hymn during the religious ceremonies
Photo by: Artur Rodziewicz*



*Figure 3: Babe Sheykh office and home in Sheykhani
Photo by: Golala Kamangar*



Figure 6: Yezidi women in traditional dresses
Photo by: Artur Rodziewicz



Figure 5: Khanke camp
Photo by: Golala Kamangar



Figure 7: Inside the shrine of Shekh Adi
Photo by: Artur Rodziewicz



Figure 9: Inside a tent in Khanke camp
Photo by: Golala Kamangar



Figure 8: Khanke camp
Photo by: Golala Kamangar



Figure 11: Inside a refugee tent in Khane camp
Photo by: Golala Kamangar



Figure 10: A Yezidi girl who lives for four years in Khanke camp after being released with her mother from captivity
Photo by: Golala Kamangar

