
YEZIDIS AND KURDS: UNVEILING A SHARED IDENTITY

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Special thanks to [Xetari](#)

***"Kurds must set aside their differences and work together for the common good. Only then can we build a brighter future."
- Leyla Zana***

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Introduction

Embarking on the Journey of Understanding: Unraveling the Complex Yezidi Identity

In the vast realm of human identity, there exist intricate layers, each waiting to be unfurled. Identity is not a static label; it is a living, breathing entity shaped by history, culture, beliefs, and perceptions. Our voyage of exploration in this comprehensive essay takes us into the captivating world of Yezidi identity—a subject that has intrigued scholars, communities, and individuals for generations.

The Yezidis: Guardians of a Distinct Legacy

Nestled within the enchanting tapestry of the Middle East, the Yezidi community emerges as a remarkable group—a Kurdish-speaking endogamous minority with roots deeply embedded in the lands of Kurdistan. This expansive region spans across the geopolitical boundaries of Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and Iran, bearing witness to a complex mosaic of cultures, histories, and human stories. Against this backdrop, the Yezidis have thrived while embracing an identity that has garnered attention for its uniqueness.

The Identity Enigma: Ethnoreligious or Subgroup?

At the epicenter of Yezidi identity lies an ongoing debate that weaves through the very fabric of Yezidi society—an inquiry that transcends the realms of classification. It revolves around the question of whether the Yezidi people stand as a distinct ethnoreligious group, boasting an identity all their own, or whether they are, in essence, a religious sub-group intricately interwoven within the broader tapestry of Kurdish identity. This intriguing debate captivates the intellectual discourse, sparking impassioned discussions and underscoring the intricacies of identity in our modern world.

Exploring the Layers: A Multifaceted Perspective

Our journey to fathom the multifaceted Yezidi identity demands an expedition into the annals of history, a trek across the landscapes of Kurdistan, a deep dive into the intricate beliefs and practices that define Yezidism, and, crucially, an open-hearted embrace of the diverse voices that make up the Yezidi community. This essay, therefore, aspires not only to shed light on the contours of this age-old debate but also to cherish the enigmatic nuances, the graceful ambiguities, and the captivating paradoxes that constitute the rich tapestry of Yezidi identity.

A Kaleidoscope of Identities

As we commence this intellectual voyage, our purpose is not merely to provide definitive answers but to engage in the art of questioning. We aim to appreciate the complexities of identity, the shades of gray that transform labels into vibrant narratives, and the vibrant mosaic of human existence. Within these pages, we shall embark on a journey of profound understanding, attempting to capture the essence of the elusive Yezidi identity—an identity that transcends classification and reveals the intricate, ever-evolving facets of human self-perception.

There is a disagreement in Yezidi circles on whether the Yezidi people are a distinct ethnoreligious group or a religious sub-group of the Kurds. In this essay, I will solve this disagreement.

Genetics

Debunking The Separatist Source

Let us begin by examining a key source that has been referenced by proponents of separatism and their supporters to argue against the assertion that Yezidis are part of the Kurdish identity.

<http://yazidis.info/en/news/2452/genetically,-the-closest-people-to-the-yazidis-were-the-assyrians>

This specific passage within the contentious article has been cited as evidence suggesting genetic proximity between Yezidis and Assyrians. However, it is imperative to emphasize that this citation has been extracted from its broader context and, upon closer examination, lacks a definitive and coherent conclusion.

To provide an alternative view on the genetic affinities among the five different ethnic data-sets from the current study, a phylogenetic tree was also constructed based on Nei's D_A genetic distance metric and in the context of a even wider genetic landscape (S2 Table and Fig 3). Results from this second approach suggested that (a) Northern Iraq [Arab] clustered most closely with Lebanon [Lebanese] and Lebanon [Maronite]; Northern Iraq [Kurdish] clustered most closely with Iraq [Iraqi] and Iran [East Iranian]; and at the next level, Northern Iraq [Turkmen] grouped in between Northern Iraq [Arab] and Northern Iraq [Kurdish] clusters, and (b) Northern Iraq [Syriac] and Northern Iraq [Yazidi] clustered together, but away from the other Northern Iraqi populations analyzed in the current study, and largely in between the West Asian and Southeastern European populations. As a testament to overall validity of the phylogenetic tree constructed, (a) Turkish populations from Marmara, Southeastern Anatolia and Cukurova, (b) Cypriot populations (Turkish Cypriot, Greek Cypriot and Greek Cypriot II), (c) four out of the five Armenian populations analyzed (Krasnodar, Hemsheni, Adygei and Erzurum Origin), (d) Turkmen populations from Central/South Asia (Afghanistan and Uzbekistan), and (e) African, Southeast Asian and European populations were all found to cluster most closely among their respective populations.

An instance exemplifying the absence of a definitive conclusion is manifested in the following passage, which posits that Yezidis exhibit the closest genetic proximity to Iranians. It is incumbent upon us to elucidate that 'Iranian' in this context is not an isolated ethnic identity but rather a collective term encompassing various Iranic ethnic groups, such as Kurds, Pashtuns, Persians, Tajiks, Balochis, among others.

It is pertinent to note that the study in question previously arrived at a seemingly contradictory determination, asserting Yezidi genetic proximity to Assyrians. The subsequent assertion that Yezidis are genetically closer to 'Iranians' underscores the complexity of genetic studies, reflecting the intricate web of ancestral ties within the broader Middle Eastern context.

To foster a more scholarly discourse, we must delve into the methodological intricacies underpinning these genetic analyses and recognize that genetic proximity, when assigned to a diverse category like 'Iranians,' requires nuanced interpretation that accounts for the intricate tapestry of ethno-cultural diversity within this grouping.

Table 3 lists the R_{st} -based genetic distances and the corresponding P values observed among the novel datasets, along with 19 other nearby and distant populations. The closest and farthest genetic distances observed for each novel dataset were as follows: (a) Iraq [Arab] with Kuwait City, Kuwait [Arab] (0.0025) and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia [Mongolian] (0.2592), (b) Northern Iraq [Kurdish] with Iraq [Iraqi] (0.0046) and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia [Mongolian] (0.2222), (c) Northern Iraq [Syriac] with Cukurova, Turkey [Turk] (0.0194) and Tanzania [Tanzanian] (0.2984), (d) Northern Iraq [Turkmen] with Iraq [Iraqi] (0.0011) and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia [Mongolian] (0.2010), and (e) Northern Iraq [Yazidi] with Iran [Iranian] (0.0055) and Afghanistan [Pathan] (0.2054). The closest genetic distance observed among the 24 populations was that in between Iraq [Iraqi] and Iran [Iranian] / Southeastern Anatolia, Turkey [Turkish] (-0.0003 / -0.0005). The corresponding P values suggested that the following genetic distances were non-significant: Northern Iraq [Arab] and Kuwait City, Kuwait [Arab]; Northern Iraq [Kurdish] and Northern Iraq [Turkmen]; Northern Iraq [Kurdish] and Iraq [Iraqi]; Northern Iraq [Turkmen] and Cyprus [Turkish Cypriot]; Northern Iraq [Turkmen] and Iraq [Iraqi]; Northern Iraq [Turkmen] and Iran [Iranian]; Northern Iraq [Turkmen] and Beirut, Lebanon [Lebanese]; Northern Iraq [Turkmen] and Southeastern Anatolia, Turkey [Turkish]; Northern Iraq [Yazidi] and Iran [Iranian]; Cyprus [Greek Cypriot] and Cyprus [Turkish Cypriot]; Iran [Iranian] and Iraq [Iraqi]; Iran [Iranian] and Marmara Region, Turkey [Turkish]; Iran [Iranian] and Southeastern Anatolia, Turkey [Turkish]; Southeastern Anatolia, Turkey [Turkish] and Iraq [Iraqi]; Marmara Region, Turkey [Turkish] and Iraq [Iraqi]; Marmara Region, Turkey [Turkish] and Cukurova, Turkey [Turk]; Marmara Region, Turkey [Turkish] and Southeastern Anatolia, Turkey [Turkish]; and Southeastern Anatolia, Turkey [Turkish] and Cukurova, Turkey [Turk]. Upon the Bonferroni correction, the following population pairs were also found to have non-significant differences (a) Northern Iraq [Yazidi] with each of the other four populations from the current study, (b) Northern Iraq [Arab] and Northern Iraq [Kurdish], (c) Northern Iraq [Arab] and Northern Iraq [Turkmen], and (d) numerous others that are also geographically and/or historically connected.

A two-dimensional MDS plot based on the R_{st} -values suggested (a) a core cluster comprising the Iraq [Iraqi]; Iran [Iranian]; Southeastern Anatolia, Turkey [Turkish]; Marmara Region, Turkey [Turkish]; Cukurova, Turkey [Turk]; Beirut, Lebanon [Lebanese] and Northern Iraq [Turkmen] population datasets, immediately surrounded by the Northern Iraq [Kurdish];

As I delve deeper into the examination of this study, a persistent pattern of contradictions begins to surface. It is worth directing our attention to a passage that has, at times, been overlooked but holds significance within the discourse.

In this specific passage, the study posits the existence of an unidentified ancestor within the R1a/R1b haplotypes, which intriguingly exhibits the closest genetic proximity to both Yazidi and Kurdish haplotypes.

How can Yazidis be closer to Assyrians yet share the same ancestor as Kurds?

This “study” is pure nonsense.

Fig 5 depicts M-JN analyses for the four most prevalent Y-chromosomal haplogroups observed in the combined dataset, namely J1, R1b, R1a and J2a1b. The proposed ancestral modal haplotypes for these three networks comprised samples from the following ethnic groups: (a) Arab / Kurdish / Turkmen for J1, (b) an unknown ancestor for R1a/R1b, which was closest to two Yazidi haplotypes from R1b and a Kurdish haplotype for R1a, and (c) Syriac / Kurdish for J2a1b. The following TMRCA estimates were made using both the genealogical and evolutionary Y-STR mutation rates (estimates in brackets are given in the same order): J1 (3782 ±825 and 14640±3193 years), R1a (6309±1610 and 24422±6230 years), R1b (9314±2214 and 36051±8571 years) and J2a1b (4006±907 and 15506±3513 years). TMRCA estimates were also made for the microvariations among the DYS448* 19,20-bearing haplotypes exclusively observed in Yazidis. Briefly, this bi-allelic pattern was observed in four different 17-loci Y-STR haplotypes with the following allelic variations: Yz-M-058 to Yz-M-056/Yz-M-57 by a single-step mutation at DYS439 (11 to 12); Yz-M-056/Yz-M-57 to Yz-M-037 by a single-step mutation at DYS19 (15 to 14); Yz-M-037 to Yz-M-040 by a single-step mutation at DYSS89II (29 to 30) or *vice versa*. Since the ancestral haplotype could not reliably be determined with the available data, four different sets of TMRCA estimates were made with each of the genealogical and evolutionary Y-STR mutation rates, where the DYS448 locus was invariably excluded due to the bi-allelic pattern, and suggested a time-scale of 468±287 to 936±597 years and 1811±1109 to 3622 ±2309 years, respectively.

Unbiased Sources Unveiling Unity

Let me present some unbiased sources that provide evidence supporting the assertion that Yezidis and Kurds may not share the same identity.

Here are the genetic distance results of the Global25 & Dodecad k12b Yezidi samples. The Global25 sample matches best with Kurds, followed by other Iranic samples of Lurs, Zoroastrians and Talysh. Similarly, with Dodecad k12b with Kurdish samples & other western Iranic samples.

Distance to:	Ezid
0.01628422	Kurdish
0.01836033	Iranian_Lor
0.01847322	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.01878370	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02165288	Bukharian_Jew
0.02265654	Iranian_Fars
0.02738541	Turkish_East
0.02800737	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.02878167	Azerbaijani
0.03117644	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03388425	Udi
0.03672105	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.04088118	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.04106260	Georgian_Jew
0.04124429	Turkish_Adana
0.04201406	Mountain_Jew
0.04262751	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04273776	Assyrian
0.04676346	Iranian_Jew
0.04749123	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04825761	Armenian
0.04838609	Georgian_Meskhети
0.05064172	Turkish_Central
0.05077077	Armenian_Erzurum
0.05425450	Georgian_Kakh

Distance to: Yazidi	
2.52772625	Kurd_Sorani
2.54903903	Kurd_Kurmanji
3.77876964	Dersim_Turkey
3.93677533	Iranian_Lur
4.31144987	Kurd_Feyli
4.61036875	Talysh_Azerbaijan
4.67301830	Iranian_Central
5.24702773	Iranian_Zoroastrian
5.40809578	Turkmen_Iraq
5.70629477	Azerbaijani_Iran
5.97289712	Iranian_Fars
6.50558222	Azerbaijani_Republic
7.87137218	Azerbaijani_Turkey
9.02535872	Iranian_Kerman
9.44281738	Turk_Southeast
9.93718773	Udi_Azerbaijan
9.98348136	Iranian_Mazandaran
10.23406566	Iranian_Khorasan
10.32491646	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
10.39561446	Iraqi_Baghdad
11.38320693	Turk_East
12.01230619	Mandean
12.69961023	Turk_Central_East
12.98466788	Azerbaijani_Jew
13.62029735	Iranian_Arab

Take a look at the distance results of samples from the Yezidi priestly castes (2 Şemsanî Sheikhs, 2 Adanî Sheikhs and 2 Pîrs of unspecified lineages) with Global25 calculator, results typical for Kurdish samples, closest matches often being "Ezid", "Kurdish" samples or other western Iranic groups, not Assyrian as these separatists claim.

Distance to: Shingal_Ezidi_Sheikh_Adani	
0.01222707	Ezid
0.01314993	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.01387614	Kurdish
0.01429111	Iranian_Lor
0.01968720	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02079151	Iranian_Fars
0.02575225	Azerbaijani
0.02654231	Turkish_East
0.02668800	Bukharian_Jew
0.02677335	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.02909485	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03262700	Udi
0.03376128	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03591790	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.04043114	Armenian_Syunik
0.04263551	Turkish_Adana
0.04298736	Assyrian
0.04302371	Georgian_Jew
0.04352153	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04376339	Mountain_Jew
0.04758282	Georgian_Meskheti
0.04880361	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04880603	Iranian_Jew
0.05004615	Armenian_Gesaria
0.05049705	Armenian_Erzurum

Distance to: Shingal_Ezidi_Sheikh_Adani2	
0.01669587	Ezid
0.01745303	Bukharian_Jew
0.01844310	Kurdish
0.02382561	Turkish_East
0.02392829	Iranian_Lor
0.02520931	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02863143	Mountain_Jew
0.02869347	Georgian_Jew
0.02933182	Assyrian
0.03042726	Udi
0.03092684	Armenian_Syunik
0.03102698	Azerbaijani
0.03131331	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03154440	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.03374556	Iranian_Jew
0.03440556	Iranian_Fars
0.03550946	Mountain_Jew_o
0.03830544	Armenian_Gesaria
0.03836277	Armenian_Erzurum
0.03847457	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03865259	Turkish_Kayseri
0.03890966	Georgian_Meskheti
0.03979216	Turkish_Adana
0.04306174	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.04311295	Armenian_Urfa

Distance to: Serhed_Ezidi_Sheikh_Shamsani

0.01657414	Ezid
0.01774818	Kurdish
0.02133811	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02149036	Turkish_East
0.02345869	Bukharian_Jew
0.02529917	Iranian_Lor
0.02690452	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02800415	Azerbaijani
0.02842777	Udi
0.02982626	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03050809	Iranian_Fars
0.03361726	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03534167	Armenian_Syunik
0.03688356	Turkish_Adana
0.03701122	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03706406	Turkish_Kayseri
0.03865514	Georgian_Jew
0.03878689	Assyrian
0.03951099	Mountain_Jew
0.04226459	Georgian_Meskheta
0.04274198	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04369165	Armenian_Gesaria
0.04498969	Iranian_Jew
0.04510282	Armenian_Erzurum
0.04611722	Turkish_Central

Distance to: Shekhan_Ezidi_Sheikh_Shamsani

0.01309601	Ezid
0.01762840	Bukharian_Jew
0.02045270	Kurdish
0.02297270	Iranian_Lor
0.02506994	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02547416	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02688143	Azerbaijani
0.02693088	Turkish_East
0.02746898	Iranian_Fars
0.02953091	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03159989	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03661138	Turkish_Adana
0.03670438	Udi
0.03787237	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03805648	Mountain_Jew
0.03809798	Turkish_Kayseri
0.03858336	Georgian_Jew
0.04029355	Assyrian
0.04078199	Armenian_Syunik
0.04230407	Iranian_Jew
0.04263277	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04626133	Turkish_Central
0.04835370	Armenian_Gesaria
0.04864771	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.04865272	Georgian_Meskheta

Distance to: Khanke_Dinani-Tribe_Ezidi_Pir

0.00984480	Ezid
0.01093687	Kurdish
0.01844233	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.01886668	Iranian_Lor
0.01934535	Bukharian_Jew
0.02331591	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02456017	Turkish_East
0.02759012	Iranian_Fars
0.02937548	Azerbaijani
0.02982342	Udi
0.03237819	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03279926	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03503903	Armenian_Syunik
0.03537419	Georgian_Jew
0.03608594	Mountain_Jew
0.03624880	Assyrian
0.03827341	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.04130434	Iranian_Jew
0.04150245	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04168104	Turkish_Adana
0.04187416	Georgian_Meskheta
0.04262851	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04343563	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.04434178	Armenian_Erzurum
0.04440846	Armenian_Gesaria

Distance to: Ezidi_Pir2

0.01355869	Kurdish
0.01504679	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.01558176	Ezid
0.01774413	Iranian_Lor
0.02483841	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02591546	Bukharian_Jew
0.02637264	Turkish_East
0.02685730	Iranian_Fars
0.02911027	Azerbaijani
0.03023236	Udi
0.03147445	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03202871	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03596964	Armenian_Syunik
0.03738044	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03795330	Assyrian
0.03841481	Georgian_Jew
0.03907983	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.03938375	Mountain_Jew
0.04286513	Georgian_Meskheta
0.04416731	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04465894	Turkish_Adana
0.04497511	Iranian_Jew
0.04520713	Armenian_Erzurum
0.04573610	Armenian_Gesaria
0.04633477	Mountain_Jew_o

Furthermore I'd like to present some genetic distance results of four Serhedî Ezidi samples from Russia, Georgia and Armenia with the Global25 calculator. Serhed being the name of the region, most of the ancestors of Caucasian and Russian Ezidis emigrated from 100-200 years ago.

Distance to:	Serhed_Ezidi_Sheikh_Shamsani
0.01657414	Ezid
0.01774818	Kurdish
0.02133811	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02149036	Turkish_East
0.02345869	Bukharian_Jew
0.02529917	Iranian_Lor
0.02690452	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02800415	Azerbaijani
0.02842777	Udi
0.02982626	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03050809	Iranian_Fars
0.03361726	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03534167	Armenian_Syunik
0.03688356	Turkish_Adana
0.03701122	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03706406	Turkish_Kayseri
0.03865514	Georgian_Jew
0.03878689	Assyrian
0.03951099	Mountain_Jew
0.04226459	Georgian_Meskheta
0.04274198	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04369165	Armenian_Gesaria
0.04498969	Iranian_Jew
0.04510282	Armenian_Erzurum
0.04611722	Turkish_Central

Distance to: Ezidi_Mirîd_Georgia_AroqiTribe

0.01219574	Kurdish
0.01336610	Ezid
0.01599120	Iranian_Lor
0.01671334	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02030644	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02368218	Iranian_Fars
0.02415550	Bukharian_Jew
0.02820078	Turkish_East
0.02932594	Azerbaijani
0.03034878	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03278213	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03382313	Udi
0.03732536	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03765780	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.03985591	Armenian_Syunik
0.04099798	Assyrian
0.04121473	Mountain_Jew
0.04179622	Georgian_Jew
0.04354439	Turkish_Adana
0.04420866	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04585531	Georgian_Meskheta
0.04585829	Iranian_Jew
0.04653997	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04920235	Armenian_Gesaria
0.04956127	Armenian_Erzurum

Distance to: Armenian_Ezidi1

0.01066097	Ezid
0.01324763	Kurdish
0.01799509	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.01895154	Iranian_Lor
0.02091988	Bukharian_Jew
0.02210834	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02483038	Turkish_East
0.02528077	Iranian_Fars
0.02728403	Azerbaijani
0.02953447	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03129580	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03144191	Udi
0.03523876	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03675351	Armenian_Syunik
0.03821632	Georgian_Jew
0.03868477	Mountain_Jew
0.03889026	Assyrian
0.04001038	Turkish_Adana
0.04029239	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04208563	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.04385339	Iranian_Jew
0.04389583	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04439019	Georgian_Meskheta
0.04616320	Armenian_Gesaria
0.04650233	Armenian_Erzurum

Distance to:	Armenian_Ezidi2
0.01266490	Kurdish
0.01561749	Ezid
0.01663314	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02172332	Turkish_East
0.02209987	Iranian_Lor
0.02409313	Udi
0.02590360	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02660522	Bukharian_Jew
0.03038866	Azerbaijani
0.03053837	Iranian_Fars
0.03083635	Armenian_Syunik
0.03160381	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03496037	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03637099	Assyrian
0.03660648	Georgian_Jew
0.03720695	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03826799	Mountain_Jew
0.03856563	Georgian_Meskheta
0.04141735	Armenian_Gesaria
0.04171646	Armenian_Erzurum
0.04174390	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04276370	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.04296023	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04308357	Turkish_Adana
0.04356278	Georgian_Kakh

Here we see once again that there's no distinctive characteristic setting apart the DNA of Yezidis from that of Kurds, they are very much the same. Thus, some samples have "Kurdish" as the top match & some get "Ezid", followed by other, closely related western Iranian populations.

Below are two Adani samples. They possess the R1a-Z94 haplotype, & distance-wise, they also didn't possess any particular affinity with foreign ethnic groups, rather, as typical for any Kurd, they are closer to western Iranic groups.

Distance to: Shingal_Ezidi_Sheikh_Adani	
0.01222707	Ezid
0.01314993	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.01387614	Kurdish
0.01429111	Iranian_Lor
0.01968720	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02079151	Iranian_Fars
0.02575225	Azerbaijani
0.02654231	Turkish_East
0.02668800	Bukharian_Jew
0.02677335	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.02909485	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03262700	Udi
0.03376128	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03591790	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.04043114	Armenian_Syunik
0.04263551	Turkish_Adana
0.04298736	Assyrian
0.04302371	Georgian_Jew
0.04352153	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04376339	Mountain_Jew
0.04758282	Georgian_Meskheta
0.04880361	Mountain_Jew_o
0.04880603	Iranian_Jew
0.05004615	Armenian_Gesaria
0.05049705	Armenian_Erzurum

Distance to: Shingal_Ezidi_Sheikh_Adani2

0.01669587	Ezid
0.01745303	Bukharian_Jew
0.01844310	Kurdish
0.02382561	Turkish_East
0.02392829	Iranian_Lor
0.02520931	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02863143	Mountain_Jew
0.02869347	Georgian_Jew
0.02933182	Assyrian
0.03042726	Udi
0.03092684	Armenian_Syunik
0.03102698	Azerbaijani
0.03131331	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03154440	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.03374556	Iranian_Jew
0.03440556	Iranian_Fars
0.03550946	Mountain_Jew_o
0.03830544	Armenian_Gesaria
0.03836277	Armenian_Erzurum
0.03847457	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03865259	Turkish_Kayseri
0.03890966	Georgian_Meskheta
0.03979216	Turkish_Adana
0.04306174	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.04311295	Armenian_Urfa

Kurds, distinct from Arabs

Another aspect I will address is the assertion that Yezidis are of Arab descent, a claim that even emerged during the trial of Saddam Hussein, adding a historical and political dimension to the discussion.

“Yezidis have a history, and they identify themselves as Arabs”

It's worth noting that the claim of Yezidis being distinct from Kurds is not uncommon, especially in conversations with individuals from different ethnic backgrounds who advocate for the separation of Yezidis from the broader Kurdish identity. Their arguments often follow a similar line of reasoning.

“Yezidis have different origins due to some Yezidis speaking Arabic and this proves that there is no correlation with Yezidis being Kurds for speaking Kurdish”

Yezidis of Bashiqa & Bahzani are often mistaken as Yezidis of different origins due to speaking Arabic but looking at their result and the tribes they belong to, it seems like they just went through a linguistic shift.

The simple truth is that the now Arab-speaking tribes in Bashiqa and Bahzani, including but not limited to Xaltî, Dumilî and Hekarî, have historically been classified as Kurdish tribes.

[The Cambridge History of the Kurds.](#)

[EARLY BEGINNINGS](#)

["The Kurdish Principality of Hakkariya* \(14Th-15Th Centuries\)"](#)

["Şerefnâme Kürt Tarihi cilt](#)

[Survival Among The Kurds](#)

I have previously provided genetic samples comparing Yezidis to non-Yezidi Kurds. Now, I will introduce genetic samples from Yezidi individuals within tribes that have faced allegations of having an ethnic Arab affiliation.

Yezidi sample from Bashiqa, calculated with the samples of Eurogenes K13.

Distance to: Ezidi_Bashiqa(K13)	
3.77824033	Kurd_Kurmanji_Turkey
4.06819370	Kurd_Sorani
4.82198092	Zaza
5.31173230	Kurd_Iran
5.41740713	Turkmen_Iraq
5.71316025	Kurdish
6.05800297	Lor_Iran
6.22782466	Talysh
6.34692839	Armenian_East
6.80049998	Turk_East
6.84527574	Armenian
6.90731496	Iranian
7.14213553	Georgian_Jewish
7.15581582	Azerbaijani_Iran
7.43092188	Azeri
7.53613960	Turk_South_East
7.97863397	Armenian_West
8.04570693	Mountain_Jew_Chechnya
8.24226304	Azerbaijani_Turkey
9.56119762	Greek_Caucasus
10.17655148	Assyrian_North
10.31717015	Turk_East_Black_Sea
10.37460361	Greek_Trabzon
10.55212301	Assyrian_South
10.86502646	Mandean

The Hekarî, Dumilî and Xaltî can be found to be mentioned as Kurdish tribes in historical records & the rest of the tribes can be found in the rest of Şêxan which is Kurdish-speaking.

A PILGRIMAGE TO LALISH			87
<i>Village</i>	<i>Souls</i>	<i>Tribes</i>	
		7. <i>Ḥamdāniyya</i>	
Bāzān	1800	Hakāri, Haraqî, Khāltî, Māmūsî, Dumilî	
Ba'shqia	1200	Haraqî, Khatāri, Hakāri, Dumilî	
	—		
	3000		
	—		

Another Euro K13 result of a Yezidi from Bozan, who posted his results on a forum:

https://www.quora.com/Why-do-Kurdish-nationalists-claim-Yezidis-when-they-have-different-genetics-culture-and-religion-and-moreover-consider-themselves-an-independent-ethnoreligious-group/answer/Z%C3%AAdo-Ezidi?ch=10&oid=337438414&share=fccdb55b&srid=hdVhxO&target_type=answer

Distance to:	Zedo
3.86137281	Kurd_Sorani
4.06387746	Kurd_Kurmanji_Turkey
4.49001114	Kurd
4.68769666	Kurd_Iran
4.86886024	Talysh
5.21262890	Zaza
5.28577336	Lur
5.98924035	Iranian
6.67445129	Turkmen_Iraq
7.21134523	Armenian_East
7.76181036	Azerbaijani_Iran
8.22791590	Azerbaijani_Azerbaijan
8.23758460	Armenian
8.41230052	Turkish_East
8.59128046	Jew_Georgia
9.11783417	Azerbaijani_Turkey
9.25599265	Turkish_Southeast
9.69425603	Armenian_West
9.80884295	Jew_Caucasus
10.93693284	Greek_Caucasus
11.25539870	Turkish_East-Black_Sea
11.46392603	Turkish_Meskheti
11.64080324	Persian_Eastcentral
11.97172502	Assyrian_North
12.03629511	Greek_Trabzon

Yezidis of caucasia

Aside from these calculators, there are studies on Yezidis living in the Caucasus confirming the same thing. In this study, Georgian Kurds, the vast majority of whom are Yezidis, showed per mitochondrial DNA, have smallest pairwise values, in other words closest genetic distance with Kurdish samples from Turkey.

Kurdish languages belong to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family. What is the genetic relationship between Indo-European speaking Kurdish groups and other West Asian Indo-European and non-Indo-European speaking groups? For both mtDNA and the Y-chromosome, all Kurdish groups are more similar to West Asians than to Central Asian, Caucasian, or European groups, and these differences are significant in most cases. However, for mtDNA, Kurdish groups are all most similar to European groups (after West Asians), whereas for the Y-chromosome Kurds are more similar to Caucasians and Central Asians (after West Asians) than to Europeans. [Richards et al. \(2000\)](#) suggested that some Near Eastern mtDNA haplotypes, among them Kurdish ones from east Turkey, presumably originated in Europe and were associated with back-migrations from Europe to the Near East, which may explain the close relationship of Kurdish and European groups with respect to mtDNA. Subsequent migrations involving the Caucasus and Central Asia, that were largely male-mediated, could explain the closer relationship of Kurdish Y-chromosomes to Caucasian/Central Asian Y-chromosomes than to European Y-chromosomes.

Kurds migrated into the Caucasus at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries from Turkey and/or Iran ([Wixman, 1984](#)). However, the source population for these migrants is unknown; does the genetic evidence suggest a source population for the Kurds from Georgia? Both the mtDNA and Y-chromosome data indicate reduced diversity in the Georgian Kurds, and the consequently increased effect of drift makes it more difficult to infer the origins of this group. The mtDNA data are equivocal, in that the smallest pairwise F_{st} values involving the Georgian Kurds are with Kurds from Turkey and from Iran. Interestingly, the Kurmanji speakers from Turkey exhibit a larger pairwise F_{st} value with the Georgian Kurds than the Zazaki speakers from Turkey, even though the former speak the same language as the Georgian Kurds. The Y-chromosome data do suggest that the Kurdish group in Georgia was founded by Kurmanji speakers from Turkey, although the presence of haplogroups *P1* and *J2* are at unusually high frequencies in the Georgian Kurds, which is an indication of genetic drift, making conclusions based on the Y-chromosome suspect. However, analysis of Y-STR haplotypes on the background of Y-SNP haplogroups *P1* and *J2* provided some additional insights. Y-STR haplotypes found in the Kurmanji-G are closely related to those found in the Kurmanji-T, whereas Y-STR haplotypes found in other Turkish or Iranian groups are distinct, and more distantly related to the Y-STR haplotypes found in the Kurds. Furthermore, haplogroups *P1* and *J2* are absent in the Zazaki-T ([Nasidze et al. 2004](#)), indicating an even more distant relatedness with the Georgian Kurds.

The Georgian Kurds have lived in the Caucasus for more than 100 years since their migration from Turkey and/or Iran. Was there any subsequent genetic exchange between the Kurds from Georgia and the surrounding Georgian population? MtDNA data suggest that there was very little, if any, gene exchange between these two groups, as the only HV1 sequence type shared between these two groups is the Cambridge reference sequence ([Anderson et al. 1981](#)), which is widespread in this region ([Nasidze et al. 2004](#)). The absence of any other shared mtDNA sequences between Georgians and the Kurmanji-G suggests very little (if any) maternal admixture between these groups. For the Y-chromosome, the strong founder effect in the Kurmanji-G, as evidenced by the unusually high frequencies of haplogroups *P1* and *J2*, makes it difficult to draw conclusions. However, analysis of the relatedness of Y-STR haplotypes on the background of these Y-SNP haplogroups shed some additional light on this question. A median network ([Figure 3](#)) clearly shows the distinctiveness of Y-STR haplotypes in the Kurmanji-G from those in the Georgians, suggesting an absence of genetic exchange between these two groups. On the contrary, Kurmanji-G Y-STR haplotypes are closely related with Kurmanji-T haplotypes, suggesting their common origin.

In conclusion, the genetic results indicate a close relationship between the Kurmanji-G and Kurmanji-T groups, and a clear distinction of the former from Georgians, their geographic neighbours. Moreover, the genetic results indicate that during the Kurdish migration into the Caucasus they experienced a bottleneck effect, and since that time Kurds have not undergone detectable admixture with Georgians. Our results also do not support a hypothesized northern Iranian origin for the Zazaki people; instead, genetically they are closely related to Kurds. Thus, genetic studies of even such recent events as the origins and migrations of Kurds can provide additional insights into the circumstances surrounding such migrations.

Georgian Kurds did show increased drift from their brethren in Turkey, but this is due to bottleneck effect (being descended from a small population) and reduced diversity (due to isolation & practicing endogamy).

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1046/j.1529-8817.2005.00174.x>

Table 2. Pairwise F_{st} values between three Kurdish groups, and Caucasian, European, and West and Central Asian populations. Below diagonal - pairwise F_{st} values based on Y-SNP haplogroups; above diagonal - pairwise F_{st} values based on mtDNA HVI sequences

	Kurmanji-T	Zazaki-T	Kurmanji_G	Kurds_I	Kurds_T	Kurds_Tm	Caucasus	West Europe
Kurmanji-T		0.010	0.017	0.013	0.008	0.019*	0.032*	0.011
Zazaki-T	0.014		0.001	0.004	0.001	0.015	0.032*	0.015
Kurmanji_G	0.091**	0.228**		0.001	0.002	0.018*	0.030*	0.019*
Kurds_I	N/A	N/A	N/A		0.002	0.011	0.030*	0.029*
Kurds_T	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		0.012	0.021*	0.010
Kurds_Tm	0.073*	0.137**	0.189**	N/A	N/A		0.034*	0.020*
Caucasus	0.087	0.145	0.217	N/A	N/A	0.127		0.023*
West Europe	0.221	0.224	0.362	N/A	N/A	0.218	0.278*	
East Europe	0.137	0.081	0.333	N/A	N/A	0.234	0.259*	0.364**
Centr. Asia	0.094**	0.120	0.205	N/A	N/A	0.160	0.225*	0.376**
West Asia	0.019**	0.089	0.144	N/A	N/A	0.074**	0.251*	0.227*

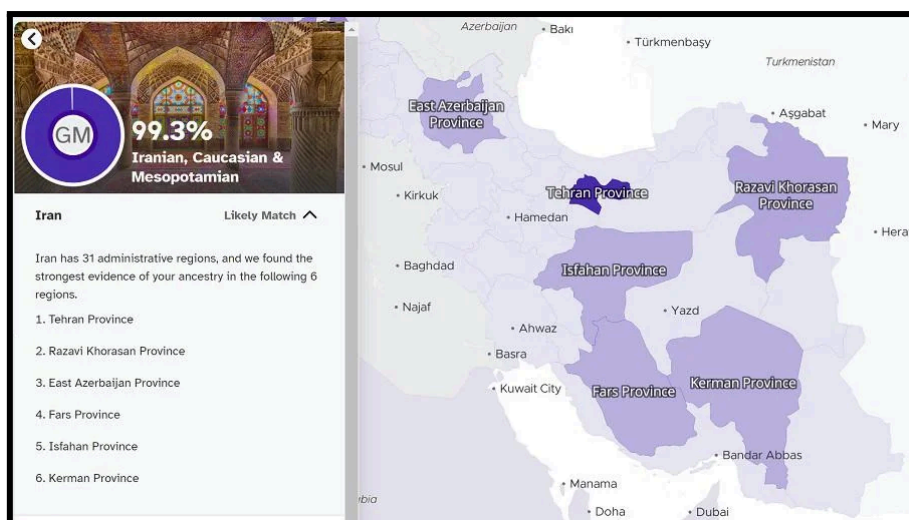
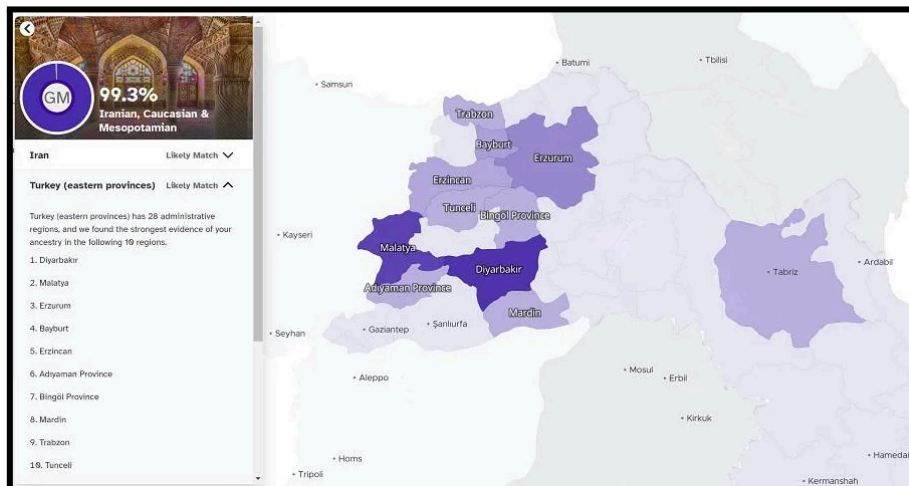
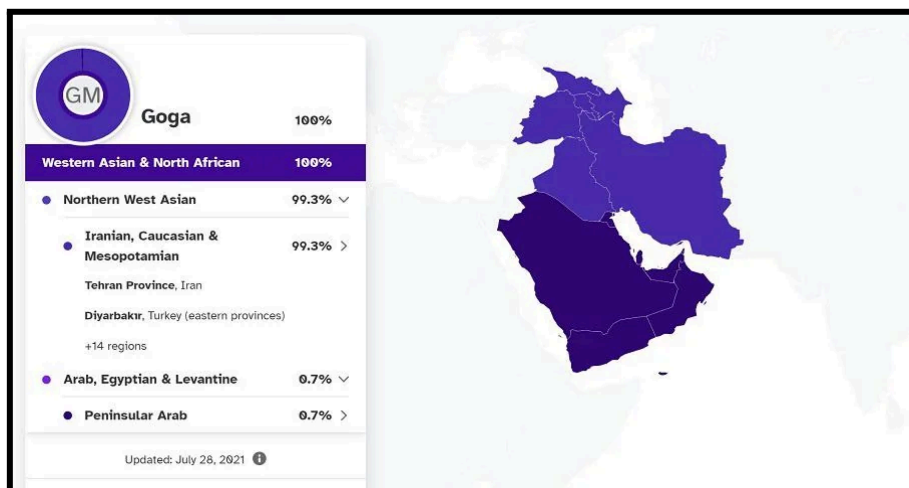
Worth being mentioned is the highest percentage of Modal Kurdish Haplotype being thus far measured in Yezidis in Armenia, followed by Muslim Kurds from the so called "Northern Iraq".

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation.aspx?paperid=19564>

Modal Kurdish Haplotype

Kurds developed on subclade J2-M172 an own typical genetic profile called "*Modal Kurdish Haplotype*" (KMH or MKMH for Muslim Kurds) with the following loci: 14-15-23-10-11-12 (quoted according to the 6 marker of the Jewish Cohen CMH [CMH-6]). The Kurdish J2-M172 KMH is also found in Jews and Armenians. The highest % have been measured so far in Yezidis in Armenia and in (Muslim) Kurds from Northern Iraq (MKMH): Yezidis (in Armenia): 11.9%, MK = Muslim Kurds (N-Iraq): 9.5%, Armenians: Frc/Ø: 5.7%, max.: 7.4%, SJ = Sephardic Jews: 2.6%, KJ = Kurdish Jews: 2.0%, PA = Palestinian Arabs: 1.4%, AJ = Ashkenazi Jews: 1.3%. Sources: Nebel et al. 2001, 2007; Yepiskoposyan, L[evon] 2007 (provided passim unpublished data), citing Weale et al. 2001.

Here are the results of another Yezidi residing in Georgia showed on 23andme.com



The same person's results displayed on Euro K13

Distance to: Georgian_Ezdi_AROQI_g25_scaled	
0.01219574	Kurdish
0.01336610	Ezid
0.01599120	Iranian_Lor
0.01671334	Talysh_Azerbaijan
0.02030644	Iranian_Zoroastrian
0.02368218	Iranian_Fars
0.02820078	Turkish_East
0.02932594	Azerbaijani
0.03034878	Iranian_Persian_Shiraz
0.03278213	Azerbaijani_Turkey
0.03382313	Udi
0.03732536	Azerbaijani_Dagestan
0.03765780	Iranian_Mazandarani
0.04099798	Assyrian
0.04132067	Mountain_Jew
0.04179622	Georgian_Jew
0.04354439	Turkish_Adana
0.04420866	Turkish_Kayseri
0.04585829	Iranian_Jew
0.04705187	Armenian
0.05261816	Turkish_Central
0.05792078	Armenian_Hemsheni
0.05841592	Ahiska
0.05958246	Iraqi
0.05969352	Turkish_Trabzon

Here is an additional study that presents an extensive array of genetic data pertaining to Kurdish populations. Notably, this study reveals that Yezidis exhibit genetic patterns consistent with other Kurdish groups, particularly demonstrating close genetic affinities with Kurmanji Kurds. This alignment underscores the shared genetic heritage and connections within the broader Kurdish ethno-genetic landscape, which plays a significant role in understanding the complexities of Yezidi identity.

<http://corduene.blogspot.com/>

<u>ID</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>YDNA</u>	<u>mtDNA</u>	<u>FTDNA/Study ID</u>	<u>Tribe/Study</u>
KRD772	Kurdistan	Q1b1a1-M378>L245>YP1228	?	YF02747	?
KRD773S	Silêmanî	J2a-L26>PF5087>M67>Z500	?	615639	Zengene
KRD774Z	Erzingan	Q1b1a1-M378>L245	?	574460	?
KRD775Z	Dêrsim	?	?	Ancestry.com	?
KRD776S	Kurdistan	R1a-L62>M417	H1	23andMe	?
KRD777K	Hewlêr	R1b-M343>M269>PF7562	?	X3HFU	Zebarî
KRD778K	Dêrsim	L1b2b-M22>M317>PH8	?	557334	Xîran
KRD780Z	Dêrsim	E1b1b1-M35>M34>M84>FGC18401	J	E22088	Kurêşan
KRD781Z	Dêrsim	E1b1b1-M35>M34>M84>FGC18401	X	E22084	Kurêşan
KRD782K	Qoçgirî	J1-M267>P58>Z2313>Z1884>L829	U3	E20343	?
KRD783Z	Çewlig	J2a-L26>PF5087>Z6065>M47	H	E22085	Xormekan
KRD784Z	Çewlig	J2a-L26>PF5087>L24>Z387>Z438	I	E22081	Xormekan
KRD785K	Dêrsim	R1a-L62>M417>Z282>YP4858	U	E21646	Pîlvenkan
KRD786K	Dêrsim	R1a-L62>M417>Z282>YP4858	I	E22087	Pîlvenkan
KRD787K	Dêrsim	R1b-M343>M269>L23>Z2106>CTS8966	U3	E22086	Xîran
KRD788Z	Dêrsim	R1b-M343>M269>P311	H	E22089	Alan
KRD789E	Şengal	R1a-L62>M417>Z282>YP4858	I	534044	?
KRD790S	Dêrsim	J2a-L26>PF5087>M67>Z500	I	637229	?

C: Cihû
E: Ezîdî
F: Feylî
K: Kurmancî
L: Lakî
S: Soranî

Debunking The Ezidki Language

Yezidi separatist proponents and their supporters commonly reference a specific document to assert the existence of the 'Ezidki' language. This document, a proposal submitted to Unicode for the encoding of the Yezidi script in the Supplementary Multilingual Plane (SMP) of the Universal Character Set (UCS), is frequently cited as primary evidence of the language's existence. However, it is crucial to subject this claim to rigorous examination and potential debunking, given its substantial influence in discussions regarding the Yezidi language.

<http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2019/19051-yezidi.pdf>

Bellow is the alphabet of the supposed Ezidki language

ا	ا	ا	ا	ش	ش	ن	n
ب	ب	ب	+	ص	ص	ه	h
ت	ت	ت	X	ض	ض	و	w,u
ث	ث	ث	ا	ط	ط	ي	y
ج	ج	ج	#	ظ	ظ	پ	p
ح	ح	ح	ل	ع	ع	چ	č
خ	خ	x	#	غ	غ	ژ	ž
د	د	d	L	ف	f	گ	g
ذ	ذ	z	T	ق	q	ص	}w
ر	ر	r	ع	ک	k	و	
ز	ز	z	ل	ل	l		
س	س	s	L	م	m		

XV° Le dialecte sacré des anciens Yézîdis.

J'ai donc tout déchiffré, et je l'ai transcrit sur un cahier de notes en caractères arabes. Mais je me trouvais devant une langue que je ne comprenais pas. Ce n'était ni du persan, ni de l'arabe, ni du turc, c'était un mélange de toutes ces trois langues avec d'autres termes qui ne se trouvaient dans aucun des dictionnaires dont je dispose. J'ai fini par savoir que c'était un dialecte qui ressemblait au kurde ancien, qui n'est plus parlé aujourd'hui; mais dont les mots cependant se trouvent dispersés dans plusieurs dialectes du Kurdistan.

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10

P. ANASTASE MARIE, O. Carm.,

A Bagdad, nous avons à peu près 5000 Kurdes de différentes tribus et de régions variées; grâce à eux, j'ai pu arriver, à force de questions, à comprendre le gros sens des deux manuscrits avec la manière de prononcer chaque mot, qui n'est pas toujours conforme à l'orthographe. Cependant, je dois dire que je ne voyais pas facilement la suite des idées, comme dans la version arabe. Aussi dois-je avouer que mes traductions libres sont faites d'après le texte arabe et non pas d'après l'original kurde qui me reste encore peu clair.

Je laisse donc aux autres orientalistes le soin d'étudier plus à fonds le dialecte sacré des anciens Yézîdis qui diffère notablement du yézîdi moderne, dont j'ai donné quelques spécimens dans le «Machriq». Ne sachant pas moi-même les langues persane et turque, j'avoue humblement que je ne suis pas à même de tirer cette question, au clair, à moins que je ne consacre plusieurs mois pour y parvenir¹.

The pictures above are from a 1911 work of Père Anastase-Marie, a father of the Carmelite church, who said that the language resembled an old Kurdish dialect no longer spoken today, and that it contained Persian, Turkish & Arabic but were in neither any of those languages.

The text in the last picture translated to English

“So I deciphered everything, and I transcribed it into a notebook in Arabic characters. But I was faced with a language that I did not understand. It was neither Persian, nor Arabic, nor Turkish, it was a mixture of all three languages with other terms that were not in any of the dictionaries I have. I came to know that it was a dialect that resembled Old Kurdish, which is no longer spoken today; but whose words however are scattered in several dialects of Kurdish”

In 1913, Vienna-based orientalist Maximilian Bittner conducted an analysis and translation of the same scriptures, utilizing the same alphabet. Bittner described these texts as 'bizarre' and noted that they were composed in a Kurdish dialect, no longer spoken, which he believed to be closely related to the Mukri (Sorani) dialect.

Additionally, Bittner questioned the authenticity of the texts, raising the possibility that they might be forgeries, potentially associated with P re Anastase-Marie. This inquiry adds a layer of complexity to discussions surrounding the Yezidi scriptures and their historical origins.

treffen einiger, zum Teile trauriger Umst nde, fast photographisch getreue Bausen jener beiden geheiligten Manuskripte zu bekommen, die im streng bewachten Jeziden-Heiligtum zu Sinj r, in einer Kasette verschlossen, unter einem Stein des Fu bodens versteckt gehalten w rden!¹ Er gibt uns nun im Anhang zu seinen Notizen  ber die Aufdeckung und deren Werdegang auch diese Bausen in Gestalt von Faksimiles hin, die uns jene v llig unbekanntem bizarren Schriftz ge zeigen sollen, hinter denen sich die Glaubenswahrheiten und Dogmen des *M l k T us*,² wie der von den Jeziden Angebetete hei t, in einer nicht mehr lebenden kurdischen Mundart zu uns sprechend, verbergen, und zur Kontrolle teilt er uns den Inhalt der beiden Schriften nach zwei arabischen Versionen mit, deren er habhaft geworden ist.

Offen gestanden — als ich vor etwa dreivierteil Jahren das am angefuhrten Orte Publizierte durch die G te des Herrn Professor P.W. Schmidt, meines verehrten Freundes und Redakteurs des *Anthropos*, im Manuskripte zu lesen die Gelegenheit fand, konnte ich mich angesichts der so absonderlich geformten Schriftzeichen des Gedankens nicht erwehren, es k nnten auch die Texte selber — etwa von dem jezidischen Gew hrsmann³ des P. Anastase Marie — erfunden worden sein. Doch lagen ja auch jene angeblich auf diese kurdischen ‚Vorlagen‘ zur ckgehenden arabischen ‚Versionen‘ vor mir und gleich die ersten Zeilen des *Kit b-i-j lwa* zeigten mir, da  die Sprache nicht etwa ein von dem ketzerischen Teufelsanbeter schlau ausgedachtes orientalisches angehauchtes Kauderwelsch, sondern gutes und wohl auch  lteres Kurdisch ist, das gerade dem am besten bearbeiteten und uns am meisten verst ndlich gemachten,⁴ mir pers nlich als geradezu klassisch erscheinenden Dialekt der sogenannten Mukri-Kurden sehr nahe steht. Wenn ich nun heute schon auf Grund

To sum it up, if those scriptures are indeed authentic, all evidence is pointing to the fact the alphabet was used for writing Kurdish and not “Ezidki”

At the beginning of September 2006, at an event staged in the Yezidi village of Alagyaz, Armenia, government officials said that new textbooks in minority languages would be distributed to schools in minority-populated villages, while UNICEF said it would provide stationary and other supplies.

Less than a month later, however, Yezidis in Alagyaz and ten surrounding villages were complaining. Their language is the Kurmanji dialect of Kurdish, but the books funded and provided by the government were instead written in Ezidki. While the latter is still Kurdish by another name, the alphabet chosen for publication was in the unaccustomed Cyrillic alphabet instead of the more usual Latin script.

These [new] books are a shame and we don't want to have this rubbish,” said Torkom Khudoyan, vice-president of the National Committee of Yezidis of Armenia.

Speaking to IWPR, both UNICEF and Hranush Kharatyan, head of the Armenian government’s department for national minorities and religious affairs, confirmed reports that the new textbooks are being rejected, but said that it was outside their remit to intervene. Critics, however, argue that the situation should never have arisen in the first place and allege it is part of a continuing attempt to promote a non-Kurdish identity among Armenia’s Yezidis.

"The Yezidi religious and cultural tradition is deeply rooted in Kurdish culture and almost all Yezidi sacred texts are in Kurdish," said Philip Kreyenbroek, head of Iranian studies at the University of Goettingen in Germany and a leading specialist on the Kurds and the Yezidis of Turkey and northern Iraq.

Nahro Zagros, an ethnic Kurdish PhD student from Iraq studying the ethno-musical traditions of Yezidis at the University of York, concurs. Zagros says that he also stumbled upon what many consider to be the artificial division of the community on a recent visit to Armenia. “The school in Shinkani has refused these textbooks, and teachers from Rya Taze, Alagyaz, Dirik, Orta Chia, Amri Taze and Jamushlow have also rejected them,” he said.

Rostom Atashov, president of the Union of Yezidis in Georgia, told IWPR his community uses the Kurmanji dialect and the Latin script. “We are both Yezidis and Kurds,” he said. “We have one language and it is Kurdish, and if you look at where the Yezidis came from geographically, it is Kurdistan. In Georgia, we’ve never even debated this problem. Yezidis are Kurds, and we all believe that.”

Knyaz Hassanov, head of the Kurdish community in Armenia, told IWPR, “These books do not concern us. They are not important and we have decided to publish our own. The overwhelming majority [of Yezidis in Armenia] consider themselves Kurds.

The Kurdistan Committee is now printing its own textbooks in the Latin script for distribution to Yezidi schools during the second half of November.

<https://iwpr.net/global-voices/armenia-yezidi-identity-battle>

The Kurdish Tongue of Yezidis

In the travel report published in 1941 by Ethel Drower, she reports conversations with a Kebanî (religious Ezidi female position) named Dayê Qoteh when Ethel would use some Kurdish words with her or learn them from her. Dayê Qoteh used the term Kermanji (Kurmancî), not "Ezidki"

So a number of us started up the winding uphill pilgrim path which passes some shrines and is well worn though rough. Soon we branched off to a grass-grown track which led steeply upwards, past outcrops of rock, and oaks, and the sacred terebinths. As we mounted higher and higher, valleys and hills unrolled themselves below us in increasingly wider panoramas. When we paused at a rocky turn shaded by an over-hanging tree, we saw a range of snow-mountains rising in their purity behind more lightly covered peaks "Snow," said Daya Qoteh, pointing them out to me. "In **Kermanji** (Kurdish) *bafra*." There was a pleasant fiction between us that she was teaching me Kurdish. We perceived below, like the undulating serpent portrayed on Yazidi shrines, the valley track by which 'Aziz and his car had laboured hither. Daya Qoteh pointed out a Kurdish village below, Mugharah; and another nesting on the hills, Atrush.

Presently Daya Qoteh appeared on my terrace, accompanied by the *faqîr's* sun-browned wife Mammeh, and her black-eyed baby. Mammeh, who tall{ed the Arabic of Bahzané, acted as interpreter. Daya Qoteh had come to take me to task for eating my own food instead of that prepared in their quarters. Why do I not share their food every time they eat?

"But indeed I do both eat and enjoy your food," I protested, and told them how much I had relished the *leban* they had sent for my luncheon.

They were dissatisfied. "You eat too little. You eat," said Mammeh, measuring her little finger, "*so* much and we want you to eat *so* much," and she extended both arms, laughing. "Tonight," she said, "we have made for you a special *dolma* with no meat in it, so that you can eat it without sin."

[184] I explained again that the only reason I did not eat meat was because, being an old woman, I found it suited my health.

"But you are not so old," they replied, wondering.

"Sixty!" I answered, and showed my hands six times to Daya Qoteh.

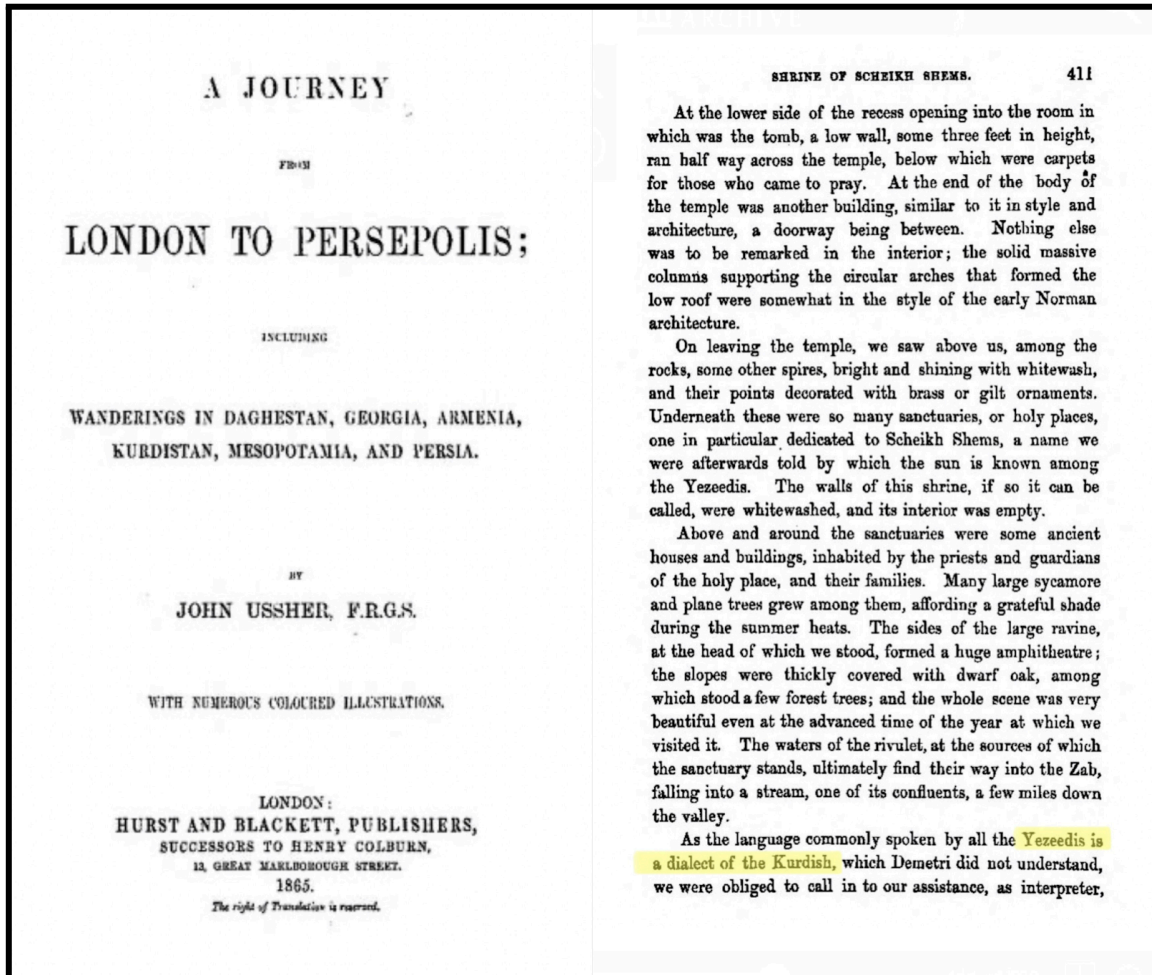
"And I," she countered in Kurdish, and I understood her, "am forty-eight. Forty-" she held up her hands too, "and eight!"

"*Hashta*," I repeated. "That is 'eight'."

"Ha!" said she, delighted, "then you begin to know **Kermanji**!"

I answered that when I was young I had learnt in my country the language of the gypsies, and that they too said *hashta* for eight, at which both women wondered.

Here is another source claiming the same thing



A journey from London to Persepolis by Ussher, John, 1865, p.411

It is also important to note that their holy book "Mashafi Rash" which is written in Kurdish states that "God speaks with Adam in the Kurdish language"

<https://pages.uoregon.edu/sshoemak/102/texts/Black%20Book.htm>

Historical Evidence

Alay Rengîn - flag of the Yezidis

Let's start with the Yezidi flag. The Yezidi flag is not a flag which has been used to historically represent the Yezidis, it's used and founded by the HPÊ to represent the militia. The [Protection Force of Ezidkhan](#) the militia itself is a part of the Kurdish Peshmerga and their leader is a supporter of Kurdish independence who tells his people to support an independent Kurdistan.

"Haider Shesho: Ezidkhan Units take orders from President Barzani, Peshmerga Ministry"

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%8Az%C3%AEdxan_Protection_Force

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UA8hoUc_x5U&ab_channel=EzidiHeritage

Historical Evidence, Prominent Yezidis

Prominent Yezidis

In the presented clip, Baba Chawish is queried regarding the nature of persecution faced by Yezidis, whether it primarily stems from their religious affiliation or their Kurdish ethnicity. In response, Baba Chawish asserts that the persecution faced by Yezidis is a result of both factors, namely their religious beliefs and their Kurdish ethnic identity.

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1425754560442810369>

The observations of the Syriac historian Bar Hebraeus, a contemporary scholar of the era during which Sheikh Adi lived, provide historical documentation of considerable significance. Within his writings, Bar Hebraeus makes a noteworthy assertion, noting that Sheikh Adi held the esteemed status of being regarded as a prophet by the Kurdish populace residing in the geographical region of Mosul. This historical account underscores the profound influence and revered position that Sheikh Adi held among the Kurds of that era, offering valuable insights into the historical perception of his role within the local Kurdish community.

And at [this] time two brothers, the sons of SHAIKH 'ADI, whom the KURDS of the country of MAWSIL hold to be a prophet, quarrelled with each other. And because one of them took to himself a wife from the MONGOLS, the other was afraid, and he took all his family and household, about four hundred souls, and fled to SYRIA, together with all the sheep, and oxen, and horses which they possessed. For the Christians were greatly terrified, and they were afraid of him, lest he should loot their goods in his passage and kill [them]. He, however, passed on and injured no man. But after he had gone, certain highway robbers came and took BETH TAKSHUR, a village in the country of NINEVEH. And the villagers fought strenuously against them in war, and they killed about ten of the robbers; and five men of the village were killed, and seven maidens and three young men were carried off.

In a 14th-century Persian source (Al-Fusul al-Fakhriyya), Sheikh adi is listed among the notable Kurdish figures: "... and from the Kurds are the Kings of Shabankarah, the family of Marwan, the Kings of Diyarbakir, & of the Kurds are Sheikh Cagîr, Sheikh Adî, Sheikh Ebu'l Wefa & others..."

نسل سام - صفاریان ، سامانیان _____ ۳۷

وازا کرد ملوک شبانکاره و آل مروان و ملوک دیار بکرنند و از اکراد شیخ جاگیر و شیخ عدی و شیخ ابوالوفا و غیر ایشان اند . و از اکراد آل ابی الشوک و ملوک الجبل اند . و از قبایل اکراد قبیله مزکان ، از ایشان الامیر حسونه و پسرش بدر و هلال بن بدر ملوک بودند در عصر آل بویه .

و از فرس الإمام ابوحنیفه « النعمان » بن ثابت اقدم ائمه اربعه از نسل قباد بن قیسرُوز بود ، و گفتند که او النعمان بن [ثابت بن] المرزبان بن شاد بخت بن هرمز بن شاه مرد بن کنارکی بن قباد ، و بعضی غیر ازین گفتند .

و از فرس ملوک آل اللیث که اول ایشان « یعقوب » بن الصفار بود . پس برادرش « عمرو » بن اللیث ، و از فرزندان عمرو نیز بعضی ملک داشتند اما بعض ملک پدر ایشان ، و آل اللیث خامل الذکر بودند پدر ایشان اللیث بن حاتم صفار بود ، و از بهر این معلوم نمیشود که از کدام قوم اند از فرس ' .

و از فرس ملوک آل سامان اند و در روایتی است که ایشان از نسل بهرام چوبین بن بهرام حبیب بن سوحر بن کارین ، و بعضی میگویند بهرام حبیب بن کورک بن اثفان بن کردار بن دیرکان بن حم بن جیر بن تسار بن حواد بن ویجهان بن فرین فروال بن سهم بن بهرام بن ساسف بن کورن بن حوزاد بن سعروش بن جر جین بن میلاد بن مروان بن مهران بن قادار بن کشواد بن ساسد بن شداد بن اخشین بن فروذ بن ویرم بن ارس شفا بیز بن منوچهر . و هلال صابی میگوید که : بهرام حبیب بن منوزاد بن خسرو بن نرسی بن بهرام بن اردشیر بن سابور بن یزدجرد الاثیم . و جد ایشان سامان بن حتمار بن طمعاب بن بوسرد بن بهرام چوبین مذکور .

و اول ایشان که باستقلال ملک ماوراءالنهر داشتند : اسمعیل بن احمد بن نوح بن اسد بن سامان مذکور . پس احمد بن اسمعیل . [پس نصر بن احمد بن اسمعیل] پس نوح بن نصر بن احمد . پس عبدالملک بن نوح . پس منصور بن عبدالملک . پس نوح بن منصور . پس منصور بن نوح . پس عبدالملک بن نوح . پس اسمعیل بن

۱ - صفاریان قریب چهل سال حکمرانی کردند ۲۵۳-۲۸۹ و آنها اولین سلسله مستقل بعد از اسلام در ایران بشمار میروند .

Furthermore, Sheikh Adi's great-nephew (Who also was named Adi) was called "Adi the Kurd."

Adi b. Musafir died in January 1162; he was over ninety years old. He was buried at Lalish and his tomb soon became a shrine for pilgrims. According to one account the official deed authorizing the establishment of a religious foundation was signed by the atabeg Nur ed-Din, the head of the dynasty that governed Aleppo and Mosul.²³

Obeying his deathbed wish, his followers chose as Adi's successor his nephew Abu 'l-Barakat b. Sahr, who had come to Lalish many years earlier from Beit Far and was respected for his scholarship and saintly deeds.

Abu 'l-Barakat is described as virtuous, gracious, dignified and shy. Under his leadership the order, now commonly known as Adawis, attracted new disciples and an increasing flow of pilgrims. He died at an advanced age and was buried near Sheikh Adi's tomb. His son and successor, the pious Adi b. Abu 'l-Barakat famed for his love of pilgrimages, was known as 'the father of benevolence'; he was also called 'Adi the Kurd' because he was the first sheikh to have been born in the Hakkari mountains.²⁴

Below is the image of Mir Ismail Beg, the Yezidi Mir in Shingal who thrived during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, raises an intriguing historical question. It is pertinent to inquire why a Yezidi prince of his stature would choose to align himself with Xoybûn, a Kurdish independence movement founded in 1927. Such an affiliation suggests a significant level of engagement and shared objectives with the broader Kurdish cause. This historical aspect prompts a nuanced examination of the dynamics between Yezidi identity and their engagement in the Kurdish political and independence movements of that period, warranting further scholarly scrutiny.



Mir Ismail Beg

The historical record provides compelling evidence of Mir Ismail Beg's active involvement as an integral member of Xoybûn, a Kurdish independence movement founded in 1927. His notable efforts to secure British support on behalf of Xoybûn are underscored by a letter dated February 17, 1930, attributed to him and addressed to an administrative inspector in Mosul. This significant correspondence, originally authored by "al-Amir Isma'il Beg AL-YEZIDI" (Ismail Chol Beg), has been duly translated into both French and English by the Kurdish Institute of Paris.

This correspondence substantiates not only his affiliation with Xoybûn but also his identification as a Kurd. The historical context surrounding Mir Ismail Beg's engagement in Kurdish nationalist movements and his pursuit of foreign support for the Kurdish cause adds depth to our understanding of the complexities surrounding the Yezidi identity within the broader Kurdish socio-political landscape of that period.

The historical records are available for the reader in French and English in the next page

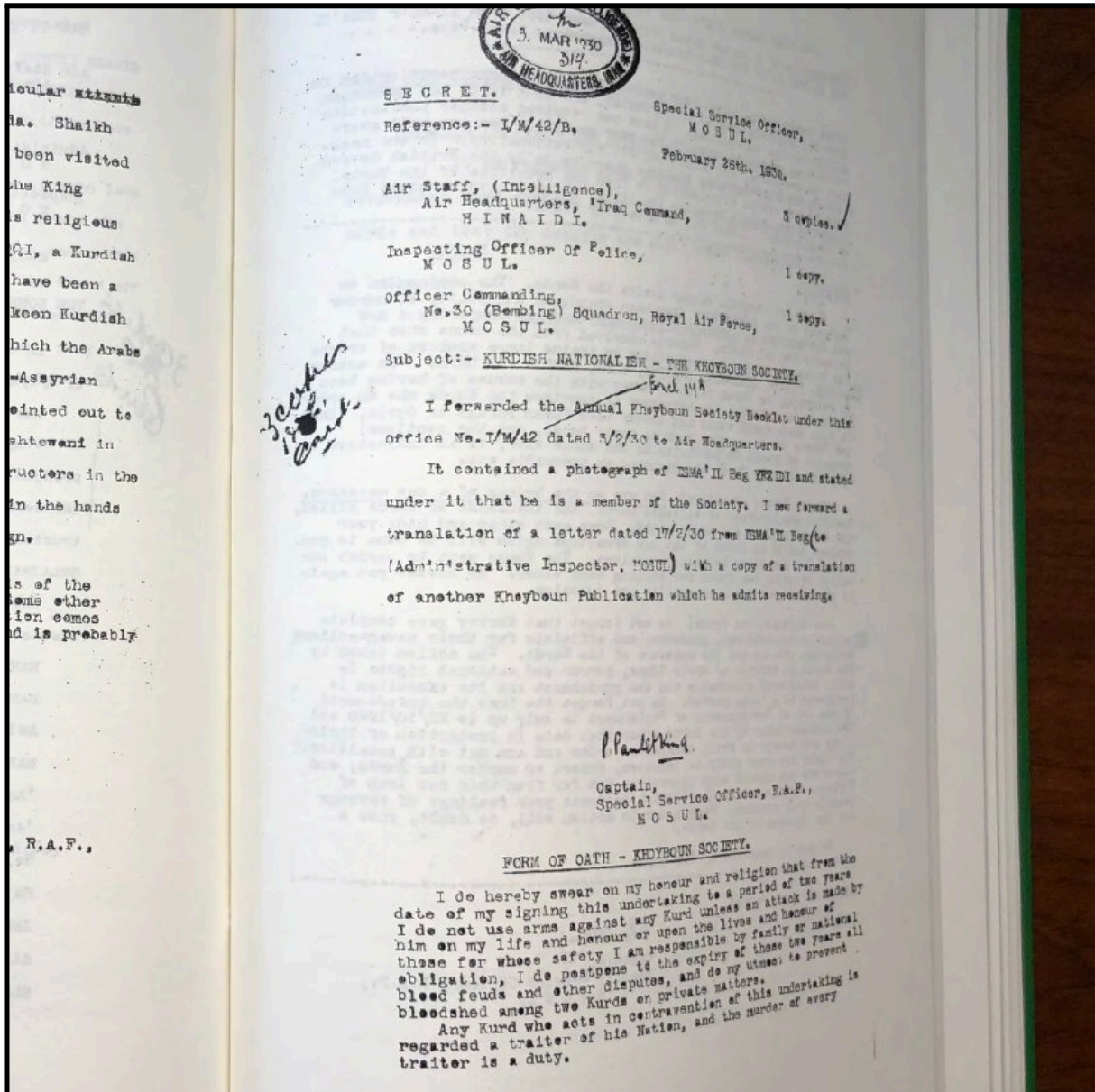
«Traduction d'une lettre datée du 17 février 1930, d'al-Amir Isma'il Beg AL-YEZIDI à l'inspecteur administratif du Liwa de Mossoul. «Il y a environ quatre mois, j'avais reçu une notification de la société Khoyboun du Kurdistan, et l'avais envoyée au Qaimaqam de SINDJAR pour

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l'informer. J'ai reçu maintenant une autre publication, que je vous envoie sous ce pli, pour votre information. Vous savez bien que nous sommes Kurdes et ne pouvons négliger notre nationalité. Mais dans le même temps nous n'oublions pas la bonté que nous témoigne le gouvernement britannique dans son action pour nous libérer de la cruauté des Turcs. Aussi je vous sou mets la lettre que j'ai reçue de mes compatriotes et vous prie de me faire part de votre opinion.

"About four months ago, I received a notification from the Khoyboun organization in Kurdistan, and sent it to the Qaimaqam (Governor) in SINDJAR to inform them. I have now received another publication, which I am sending to you in this envelope, for your information. You know very well that we are Kurds and cannot neglect our nationality. But at the same time we do not forget the kindness shown to us by the British Government in its action to free us from the cruelty of the Turks. So I am submitting to you the letter that I received from my compatriots and ask you to let me know your opinion."

We can also confirm that the administrative inspector received Ismail Beg's letter as he mentions it in this letter of his which is kept in British archives and was published by Cambridge in their 9000 pages long and 13-volume set of Kurdish records.



An RAF special service officer passing on a Xoybun leaflet being handed to Kurds. It shows a picture of Ismail Beg Al-Yezidi as a member of Xoybun. Ismail had sent this to the administrative inspector of Mosul.

Moreover, it is important to note that Yezidi religious authorities, including prominent figures such as Baba Sheikh, the Mîr, and the Peshimam, have consistently emphasized the Kurdish ethnicity of the Yezidi community. This assertion is corroborated by historical records, including a letter dated 1966 from the mayor of Shekhan to officials in Mosul. The letter attests that after conducting thorough investigations and engaging in personal meetings with Yezidi religious leaders, including Baba Sheikh and the Mir, they collectively reached the unequivocal conclusion that Yezidis identify themselves as part of the Kurdish ethnicity and nationality. This historical documentation underscores the Yezidi community's own recognition of their Kurdish identity as endorsed by their religious leadership.

"When carrying out the investigations and the personal meetings with some leaders of the Yazidis that dwell the region of our province, especially Tahsin Said, the general leader of the nation and its prince, and the Bāba-Shaykh, the religious head of the Yazidis and when enlarging upon the subject, based on what they have said, we note that the origin of the community is in the Kurdish regions of Northern Iraq. Thus, the nationality of its members is considered Kurdish." - Excerpt from the 1966 letter.

[ÊZIDÎS IN IRAQ](#)

[Religious Minorities in Republican Iraq Between Granting Rights and Discrimination: A socio-political and historical study](#)

Tord Wallström, a Swedish journalist, met the Yazidi Mir, Tahsin Beg in 1974. Tahsin stated his reason for participating in the Kurdish Revolt. He stated, "I believe in the principles of the revolt. However, there is no relation between the religion and the revolt. I am Kurdish, and all the Yezidis are Kurdish; this is the reason why I joined this revolt". The journalist asked whether all the Yezidis are participating in the revolt, to which Mîr Tahsin responded: "No, but because their participation in the revolt has not been necessary as of yet. I've not requested their participation, but if I do, at least 95% will join the revolt. By the way, the government executed twenty Yazidis recently in Mosul"

Wallström, Tord (1975). *Bergen är våra enda vänner: ett reportage från Kurdistan.*

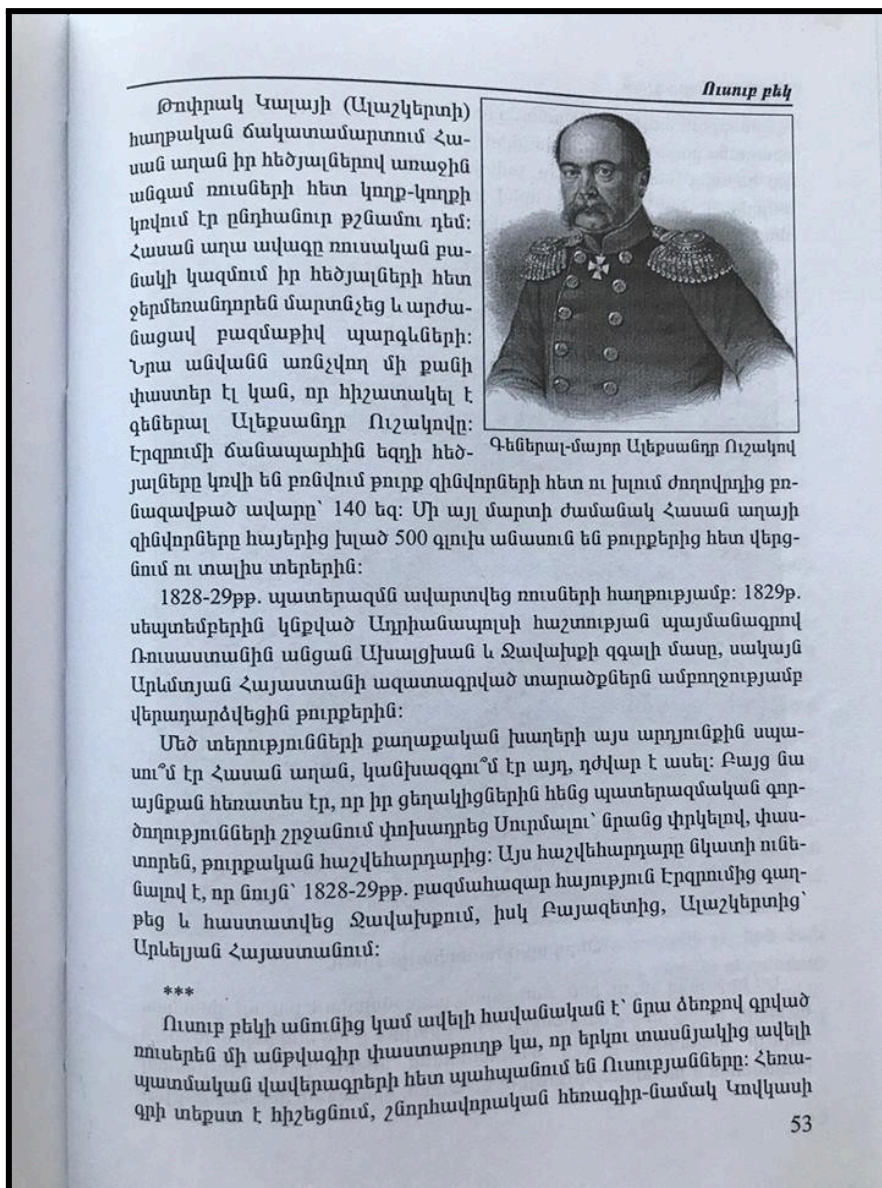
The Yezidi Spiritual Council in Lalish released a statement where they emphasized and expressed their pride in the Kurdish identity of Yezidis, based on linguistic, historical, geographical and traditional facts. The statement was signed by the Mir, Baba Sheikh, Sheikh al-Wazir, a Peshimam and a Qawwal.

SEBASTIAN., MAISEL (2018). *YEZIDIS IN SYRIA: identity building among a double minority.*

Usuv Beg Temuryants, who participated in the Battle of Sardarapat in 1918, was a member of the parliament of the First Armenian Republic, a major political, national, and military leader. Since 1896, he had been a leader of the Yazidis of Transcaucasia.

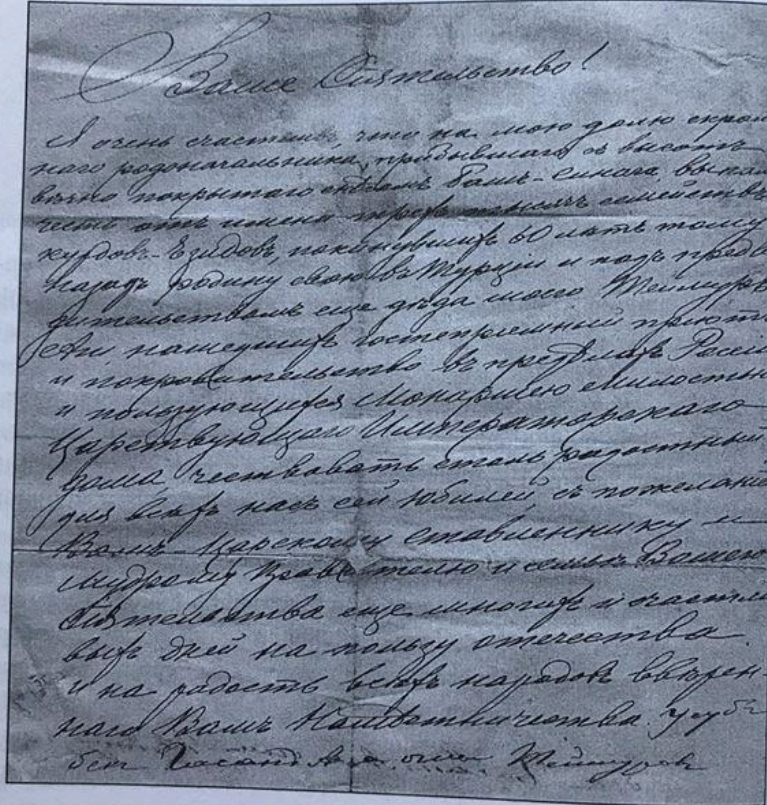
Manuk Muradyan's book "Usuv Beg" (Yerevan, 2012), written in Armenian, contains a letter from Usuv Beg to the Emperor of Russia from the Romanov dynasty.

In this letter, Usuv Beg writes that his people are Yezidi Kurds, that is, he indicates his nationality as Kurdish, but specifies that they are Yezidis by religion. Below is pages from the book, with Usuv Beg's letter included:



Մանուկ Մորադյան

փոխարքային (վերջինիս անունը նույնպես նշված չէ, բայց դատելով չափազանց ընդգծված, ժամանակին բնորոշ արտահայտչաձևերից, դիմելու կերպից՝ ենթադրում ենք, ավելին՝ վստահ ենք, որ փոխարքային է ուղղված): Չունի կնիք, ամսաթիվ, տարեթիվ, ստորին մասում միայն Ռուսուր բեկի ստորագրությունն է: Ներկայացնում ենք նույնությամբ.



Չերդ պայծառափայլություն.

Ես երջանիկ եմ, որ ինձ՝ հասարակ առաջնորդիս է բախտ վիճակվել 60 տարի առաջ իրենց հայրենիքը Թուրքիայում լքած և պապիս՝ Թեմուր աղայի ղեկավարությամբ Ռուսաստանի տարածքում հյուրընկալ ապաստան և հովանավորչություն ստացած, միապետի բարեհոգություն-

նից օգտվող բուրդ-եզդիների 3000 ընտանիքների կողմից շնորհավորելու մեզ՝ բուրդիս այսքան ուրախացնող հորեյանը, մաղթելով Ձեզ՝ քաղալու-փայլության ընտանիքին շատ երջանիկ օրեր՝ հօգուտ հայրենիքի և հուրախություն Ձեր հովանավորյալ բուրդ ժողովուրդների:

*Ուսուր բեկ Հասան աղայի որդի Թեյմուրով՝
(ընդգծումները մերն են՝ Մ.Մ.):*

Ասեմք, որ Ուսուրյանների տանը պահպանվող փաստաթղթերից մեկը, որ կներկայացնենք իր տեղում, տոհմի երևելիներից մեկին՝ Մահմուդ աղային պարգևատրելու մասին է, Ռոմանովների դինաստիայի 300-ամյակի առիթով: Ռուսական այդ վերջին, հռչակավոր, քերևս՝ ամենանշանավոր ցարական (1721 թվականից՝ կայսերական) դինաստիան հսկայածավալ երկիրն սկսել է կառավարել 1613 թվականից և կործանվել բոլշևիկների դաժան ձեռքով՝ 1917-ին (Նիկոլայ 2-րդը և նրա ընտանիքը 1918-ին գնդակահարվեցին): Ուրեմն, կործանումից ընդամենը մի քանի տարի առաջ՝ 1913 թվականին Ռուսական կայսրությունում ամենուր մշել են Ռոմանովների գահակալման 300-ամյակը: Եթե այդ հորեյանի առիթով է անդրկովկասյան եզդիների առաջնորդ Ուսուր բեկը շնորհավորել փոխարքային, ապա նրա մշած «60 տարի առաջ»-ը, իբրև եզդիների՝ Սուրմալուում հաստատվելու տարի, կլինի 1853 թվականը, որ հակասում է պատմական իրողությանը: Նկատի ունենանք նաև, որ նրա մշած թիվը՝ 3000 ընտանիքներ, գրեթե համապատասխանում է 1914թ. հունվարի 1-ի Կայսերական մարդահամարի տվյալներին. Սուրմալուում և Կարսը միասին ունեին 37 հազար 450 եզդի բնակիչներ, որ, ազգային առանձնահատկության առումով, այն ժամանակի պայմաններում, կարող էին կազմել 3000 ընտանիք, մեկ ընտանիքում միջին հաշվով՝ 12 մարդ, կամ փոքր-ինչ ավելի:

Այլ առիթ՝ փոխարքային շնորհավորելու, մեզ հայտնի չէ, եթե նաև նկատի ունենանք, որ 1896 թվականից է Ուսուր բեկը դարձել ցեղապետ:

Անհասկանալի է մնում նաև Հասան աղա ավագի փոխարեն պապին՝ Թեմուր աղային, հասընիների ռուսական տիրապետության տարածքում

46. Ուսուրյանների գերդաստանի արխիվ:

"I am happy on behalf of the 3,000 families of Yezidi Kurds, who 60 years ago, led by my grandfather Temur Agha, left Turkey and found refuge in Russia, I would like to express my gratitude and wish success to you and your family, we live very well on earth and under your rule."

["Усув Бег: курды-езиды благодарят императора России | RiaTaza"](#)
["Курдский Памб – Сипан: географическое положение |"](#)

Yezidi nationalism

Sherfedin

Yazidis distinguish the name of their community from the name of their religion according to the Kurdish phrase:

Miletê min Êzîd ("My nation - the Yazidis.")

Dîne min Şerfedîn ("My religion - Sharfadin.")

However, this phrase does not come up in the official qewls (religious hymns), rather, in those qewls where the terms Şerfedîn and Êzîd (Êzî) are mentioned together, the term "Atqat" comes up next to Ezid instead of "Millet".

Me dîn Şerfedîne û Êzî atqate. ("Our religion is Sherfedin and belief is Ezi.")

— Qewlê Şerfedîn

Me dîn Şerfedîn, atqad Siltan Êzîde. ("Our religion is Sherfedin, belief is Sultan Ezid.")

— Qewlê Qendîla

Şerfedîn is the name of a son of Sheikh Hasan (Sheikh Sharaf ad-Dîn ibn al-Hasan Şerfedin), who led the Yazidis in the 13th century and under whose rule the final canonization of the Yezidi religion took place. As a result, Şerfedîn is considered the personification of the Yezidi religion as implied in the aforementioned qewls. Likewise with Sultan Ezid, the name of God's manifestation, who personifies *atqat* (belief).

"Nevertheless, it is worth noting that certain Yezidi nationalist individuals, who may not possess a comprehensive understanding of their religious scriptures (qewls), have occasionally cited such historical references to propagate the notion that Yazidis constitute a distinct ethnicity. In doing so, they assertively misrepresent "Şerfedîn" as the religious nomenclature, while concurrently adopting "Êzîdî" as the ethnonym."

Additionally, the term "Millet" has only recently begun to be understood in a nationalistic sense due to the growing popularity of nationalist ideologies, as a result, the phrase itself has started to be perceived as an ethnic and national declaration. The term "millet" would have originally been equivalent to "religion" and "religious community" rather than ethnicity. Thus, the original meaning of the phrase "Miletê min Ezid" would've been "I belong to the religious group of Ezid"

[*"Milete min Êzîd. The Uniqueness of the Yezidi Concept of the Nation"*](#)

[*The Religion of the Peacock Angel: The Yazidis and Their Spirit World*](#)

[*Rediscovering Kurdistan's Cultures and Identities: The Call of the Cricket*](#)

[*"Refworld | The Human Rights Situation of the Yezidi Minority in the Transcaucasus \(Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan\)"*](#)

Armenia

Yezidi nationalism was more or less born in Armenia, 1990s when the Armenian government was genociding the Muslim Kurds during the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, those Yazidis who considered themselves as Kurds were expelled or fled from Armenia along with Muslim Kurds. More than half of the Yazidis left/expelled from Armenia. The rest of them were rebranded as “Yezidis” as a new ethnicity and although they speak Kurdish, their Kurdish language was renamed Ezidki by the Armenian government and the Yazidis renounced their Kurdish identity because of the fear of persecution.

<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre#%22itemid%22:%22001-155353%22>

The attack on Lachin began on May 17th. What Azeri military units were still there ran away, followed quickly by the local Kurdish population. A film clip shot by Jenghiz Mustafayev showed soldiers hiding their weapons beneath bedding piled atop flatbed carts and trucks. Lachin was then given over to looting and then burned; stragglers were slaughtered. The late, great Rory Peck of *Frontline News* was with the first lot of Armenian looters to pass through the newly opened ‘humanitarian corridor’ to Karabakh from the Armenian city of Goris.

“I asked Armenian soldiers what they were doing with the captives,” he related to me. “They would smile and draw their knives over their throats. They didn’t care if the people were Azeris or Kurds. To the Armenians, they were Muslims, and fit for slaughter.”

Another source, an Estonian journalist who went by the odd Armenianized pen-name of Yuri Malumiyan, was in the Armenian Ministry of Defense press office when the decision to take Lachin was taken, and related the discussion to me. “ ‘How do we justify it?’ someone asked. ‘Use the Kurdish angle,’ someone replied. ‘It won’t stick,’ another said. ‘But it will confuse the issue for a few days, and that is all we need.’ ”

And so it happened. Lachin was attacked, and taken. Once more, the government of Armenia maintained that it had nothing to do with the as-

sault and conquest. The forces involved were ‘solely Karabakh Armenians’ opening up a ‘humanitarian corridor’ while aiding local Kurds in revolt. The new myth was awe-inspiring in its audacity. It was an internationally accepted cliché that Turks instinctively oppress Kurds and that Kurds are always revolting against their oppressors. The events in Lachin appeared to be just one more example of this old story of Turco-Kurdish enmity, but with a twist: the selfless, oft-victimized Armenians had thrown caution to the wind and had supported innocent Kurds against vicious Turks!

The ruse worked: the international community hesitated to form an opinion, while fact finders were sent to the region to see if the Armenian version of events was true. And when they got to the frontier, they actually found some Kurdish-speaking people who confirmed the story of the Kurdish uprising. The problem was that the individuals who met with the fact finders were not Muslim Kurds, but Kurdish-speaking Yezidis, or Zoroastrians. More to the point, they were not even native to the Lachin area at all, but citizens of Armenia who had been shipped into the area after its conquest.

If there was still any question about what happened to all the Kurds of the Lachin area, it was answered for me a few days later in a rather personal way: a stream of refugees began arriving in the courtyard of our building. The reason for this was that the Lachin Friendship Society was located in the basement. Almost overnight, the club was transformed from a place where one could look for old pals to a venue where one could seek lost relatives and friends or even volunteer for the Lachin Brigade. They were men and women, old and young, and came from every level of society—taxi drivers, schoolteachers, former *kolkhoz* agricultural workers, and professionals. Sadder still was the fact that almost half of the refugees said they were Kurds from Armenia who had been thrown out along with the Azeris in 1988, in the first round of conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Far from being the beneficiaries of the Armenian action, these poor souls had now been expelled from their homes not once but twice by the people who claimed to be their liberators.

Within a week of the original announcement of the ‘Kurdish revolt’ in the Lachin region, the Kurdish theme was quietly dropped. It would reappear some ten months later, during the siege and conquest of the neighboring Kurdish-populated Azeri province of Kelbajar. Then, once again, Yerevan would trot out the ‘Kurds in revolt’ formula for international consumption while chopping off another chunk of Azerbaijan, ethnically cleansing some 60,000 Kurds in the process. The remarkable thing about all this was the total indifference of Kurd-lovers throughout the world—and of most of the world’s Kurds as well.

During the Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes, some 1,500 Kurds had been killed in the Kelbejar and Spartakanas region. Some 6,000 Kurds living in the region had fled from the Armenian attacks to Azerbaijan, together with a large number of Azeris.

Red Kurdistan was left depopulated, empty of Kurds. In such a situation, why had they proclaimed a Kurdish state?

Wekil Mustafa explained: "The Armenians said they were going to give us arms. They said they would aid us materially. We were to work to bring in Kurds from nine separate republics of the former Soviet Union. None of it actually came about. We were only able to get two busloads of people together for the declaration of the state. And the Armenians provided no aid. The intellectuals who should have been leading the people in these territories simply sold themselves. They continually accused various people of all sorts of things, and hampered our work. Now I have no hope at all.

And so I'm simply closing the book on all this. It is definitely not the case that the Armenians used me. I'm a Muslim Kurd, and while everyone else was piling up money, I sold everything I had to come here."

Five years later Emerike Serdar, while recalling those days in a television program we were making on Red Kurdistan, defended his own politicise and said that: "We all knew full well that the Armenians were never going to give us that land, and that we were never going to be able to convince the

Kurds to come and settle in the land depopulated because of the war. But we went to Lachin to leave a marker for history. We filmed it all, we took photographs. This struggle will not end. One day when this issue becomes topical again we will have documentation in our hands."

And so in later years, it was Armenians rather than Kurds who settled on the territories proclaimed as the Lachin Kurdish Republic. And Wekil Mustafa, Prime Minister of the Lachin Kurdish Republic, after living for a time in the city of Krasnodar in the Russian Federation, went to Italy and applied for political asylum in 1999.

Source: Ozgur Politika, 30 November 2000, in Turkish



The First Nagorno-Karabakh War between Armenia and Azerbaijan spilled across the region of Nagorno-Karabakh into the traditionally Kurdish populated areas in both of these countries. In the late 1980s 18,000 Kurds left from Armenia to Azerbaijan. In 1992–1993, Armenian troops advanced into Kalbajar, Lachin, Qubadli and Zangilan, forcing the non-Armenian civilian population out. As much as 80% of the Kurdish population of those regions settled in IDP camps in Aghjabadi.

Thomas de Waal Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War. Azerbaijan. Seven Years of Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. — Human Rights Watch Этнический состав Азербайджана (по переписи 1999 года)

As their Turkish neighbors, ultra nationalist Armenians are trying very hard to dismantle the Kurdish nation. They are using the religious difference between Kurds to cause friction between Kurds, just like Turks, they are also encouraging the Zazakis - who practice Alevism - not to identify themselves as Kurds (I.E the self-proclaimed Kurdologist Garnik Astarian) who seeks to isolate Kurdish religious minorities such as Yezidis and Alevi Zazas from their Muslim peers for their own interests. As Armenian nationalists view Kurdish unity and nationhood as a threat to the claim of the Armenian nation to lands, they consider to be the western parts of “greater Armenia”

Here is what Garnik Astarian, the foremost expert on Kurds amongst Armenian academia had to say about Kurdish independence aspirations:

“The creation of a Kurdish state - whether on the territory of Turkey or Iraq - is a great threat to our national interests. Attempts are now being made to dismember Iraq and create a Kurdish state on its territory, which will become a front structure for the West. It should be taken into account that if some constructive dialogue is possible with modern Turkey - an established state aspiring to the European Union, then the Kurdish massif is an unpredictable and uncontrollable element, and unambiguously anti-Armenian. And there can be no illusions on this score.”

["ПОЛИТИКА ГОСУДАРСТВА ДОЛЖНА СТРОИТЬСЯ НА ОСНОВЕ НАУЧНЫХ ЗНАНИЙ"](#)

Garnik Astarian has postulated the theory in several publications that Zazas and Yezidis are entirely separate nations based on dialectal differences.

Yezidis living in Armenia are encouraged and educated to empathize their religious differences with Muslim Kurds, and to distance themselves from the larger Kurdish community. The historic persecution from Muslims used as narrative basis to empathize ethnic separateness from Muslim Kurdish majority. In-effect creating a syntenic ethnic identity via political pressure and misinformation.

This flimsy politicized alternative identity, however, doesn't stand scrutiny and is easily debunked by more scientific methods such as autosomal genetics which I have presented.

Rostom Atashov, president of the Union of Yezidis in Georgia, told IWPR He believes that the division has opened up Armenia's Yezidi community to the appeal of organizations such as the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party, PKK, currently fighting a separatist guerrilla war in Turkey. "The Armenian government doesn't want to recognise Yezidis as Kurds so the only people willing to help Yezidis in Armenia with establishing their identity are groups such as the PKK," he said.

And that certainly seems to be the case in at least six Yezidi villages in the Aragatsotn and Armavir regions of Armenia visited by IWPR this autumn. While many Yezidis openly identified themselves as such, all also said they were Kurmanji-speaking ethnic Kurds. They additionally expressed support for the PKK and displayed portraits of Abdullah Öcalan, the organization's imprisoned leader, in their homes, cultural centers and schools.

In recent years, several PKK representatives have also openly visited Armenia to tour Yezidi villages. Last year, Yusuf Avdoyan, a Yezidi from the Armavir region of Armenia, was killed along with six other PKK members fighting in Batman, Turkey. According to the Kurdistan Committee in Armavir, his sister has now also joined the PKK and is currently fighting with them.

Some experts believe that the government has only succeeded in alienating the Yezidis through its education policies. One academic from Europe speaking to IWPR on the condition of anonymity said, "The state seems to be distinctly encouraging the Ezdiki faction and has not latched on to the fact that Kurmanji and Ezdiki, which were the same language for the entire Soviet period, are still the same.

The Armenian state's attempt at separating Yezidis to the rest of the Kurds by using the so called "Ezidki" language is explained further in (p.29)

<https://iwpr.net/global-voices/armenia-yezidi-identity-battle>

Iraq - Ba'ath regime

Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, and later the Baghdad-based Ba'ath Party

During the late 1970s, the Iraqi regime under the leadership of Saddam Hussein initiated a series of coercive and brutal Arabization campaigns targeted at the Kurdish population inhabiting northern Iraq. These campaigns were part of Hussein's broader strategy to suppress Kurdish identity and assert centralized control over the region.

As part of these campaigns, traditional Yezidi villages, which had been home to Yezidi communities for generations, were systematically razed and destroyed. This destructive action not only resulted in the displacement of Yezidis but also disrupted their longstanding rural way of life, which had been intricately tied to the mountainous regions where they had traditionally resided.

One notable outcome of these policies was the establishment of the town of Sinjar. Under the regime's orders, Yezidis were compelled to abandon their ancestral mountain villages and relocate to this newly constructed urban center. This coercive resettlement had profound and lasting effects on the Yezidi community, both in terms of their physical displacement and the erosion of their traditional rural livelihoods.

The forced urbanization and displacement of the Yezidi population were elements of a larger strategy by Saddam Hussein's regime to undermine the distinct cultural and ethnic identities of various communities within Iraq, including the Yezidis. This period of upheaval and displacement left a lasting impact on the Yezidi community and contributed to their historical narrative of resilience in the face of adversity.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/140809-iraq-yazidis-minority-isil-religion-history>

Current - Iraqi government

Vian Dakhil, the sole Yezidi parliamentarian in the Iraqi Parliament, has played a pivotal role in the ongoing discussion regarding the Yezidi identity. Her public stance unequivocally opposes any efforts to separate the Yezidis from the broader Kurdish identity. This standpoint holds particular significance as it emanates from a prominent Yezidi figure who actively participates in the Iraqi political landscape. It underscores the fact that there are Yezidis who firmly identify themselves as part of the Kurdish ethno-cultural mosaic, despite historical complexities.

It is important to acknowledge that within the Yezidi community, there are individuals who assert an Iraqi identity rather than a Kurdish one. This perspective, although not exclusive to Yezidis, is rooted in historical context, including the Ba'ath regime's Arabization campaigns that influenced the identity choices of some Yezidis.

During Saddam Hussein's rule, a significant number of Yezidis collaborated with the Iraqi regime against the broader Kurdish population. While such collaboration was not unique to Yezidi Kurds, it has contributed to a nuanced diversity of identity perspectives within the Yezidi community.

Another significant factor shaping contemporary Yezidi identity is the tragic 2014 massacre at the hands of ISIS. Yezidis were subjected to brutal violence, and their protection by Peshmerga forces, who received orders to retreat, was perceived as a betrayal by some Yezidis. In response, the PKK, along with the YPG and YPJ forces (all of which are Kurdish militias), intervened to rescue Yezidis in Shingal. While this intervention saved lives, it also introduced a layer of complexity to Yezidi identity.

Many Yezidis, viewing the retreat of the Peshmerga as a betrayal by their Kurdish counterparts, have since used this event to justify their distancing from the Kurdish identity, despite the fact that the rescuing forces were ethnically Kurdish. This illustrates the multifaceted nature of identity among Yezidis, influenced by historical events and perceptions of loyalty and betrayal.

In sum, the Yezidi identity is a complex tapestry shaped by historical, political, and social dynamics, with diverse perspectives on whether to align with Kurdish or Iraqi identities. Vian Dakhil's stance, the historical context of Arabization campaigns and collaboration with the Iraqi regime, and the traumatic events of 2014 all contribute to the nuanced discussions surrounding Yezidi identity.

*['If it wasn't for the Kurdish fighters, we would have died up there'](#)
[Syrian Kurds provide Iraq's Peshmerga support against ISIS Archived 4 March 2016 at the Wayback Machine](#),
[Middleeastmonitor.com \(4 August 2014\)](#)*

Conclusion

Genetically the Yezidis match closest to Kurds and other Iranic peoples, just like any other Kurd.

The Yezidis do not match closer with Assyrians than to Kurds which the separatist source claims. The source has been taken apart and debunked. *(p.3-5)*

Additionally twenty pages of Yezidi genetics and DNA from multiple sources have been provided for the reader which proves that Yezidis in fact match with and like Kurds. *(p.6-26)*

The Ezidki language has been debunked.

The alphabet used for the so-called Ezidki language was used for an extinct dialect of Kurdish which was close to the Sorani dialect, if the alphabet and language even existed in the first place as it has been pointed out that there is a possibility that they are forgeries. *(p.27-29)*

The Armenian state's attempt at separating Yezidis to the rest of the Kurds by using the so-called "Ezidki" language is explained and so is the opinion of the Yezidi victims *(p.30)*

Sources have also been put forward proving that the Yezidis speak Kurmanji, a dialect of the Kurdish language so even if this extinct dialect ever existed, it was not used by the Yezidis. *(p.31-32)*

Historically the prominent Yezidis have agreed that they are Kurds by ethnicity. Multiple Mirs and other Yezidis with a high position including their Sheikhs have agreed to this multiple times throughout history. They have also helped and fought with the rest of the Kurds for Kurdish independence. *(p.33-43)*

The so-called Ezidkhan flag has also been proven to be used for a Yezidi militia under the command of the Peshmerga and not as a historical flag.

The militia's leader is also a supporter of Kurdish independence. *(p.33)*

The fairly young Yezidi nationalism movement has been examined and the common phrases used by Yezidi nationalists and their supporters to justify the separation has been debunked

("My nation - the Yazidis.") ("My religion - Sharfadin.")

The birth and evolution of Yezidi nationalism has been explained. Additionally the reader can read about the agenda of these separatists and why these so-called supporters support Yezidis splitting from Kurds *(p.44)*

The birth of Yezidi separatism through the Armenian state has also been examined.

The Armenian state has more or less forced the Kurds out of the land which the Armenian government controls or has controlled during the Nagorno-Karabakh War. *(p.45)*

As much as 80% of the Kurds were displaced from Lachin, Kalbajar, Zangilan and Qubadli and instead had to settle in IDP camps. *(p.48)*

Additionally the Arabization which the Ba'ath regime of Iraq launched on the Yezidis has been briefly explained and so has the situation of the Yezidis in the Iraqi parliament today *(p.51)*

(the only Yezidi in the Iraqi parliament is against separation)

The 2014 massacre is briefly explained and the chain of events which led a number of Yezidis from Shingal to identify as Iraqi and not Kurd. *(p.52)*

The sources, arguments and myths presented by Yezidi nationalists and their supporters have all been debunked and dismissed.

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