

Campaigns against Yazidis by Dawood Muras Khatari

The Yazidi community has endured some of the most challenging periods in its existence, fighting for survival. Despite this, they continue to face severe trials, having lost many followers to murder and displacement, with some converting to other faiths out of fear of death and dishonor. However, the remaining Yazidis have not allowed their pain to distract them from performing heroic acts to save what can be saved. Women have joined these efforts, becoming accustomed to scenes of death and injury, displaying resilience and strength like knights. The impact of unjust religious decrees against the Yazidis has been profound, with their severity and brutality overshadowing the Yazidi human experience with a dark veil that obscures the innate qualities of a healthy human being. This cruelty demands endurance to face calamities with an open heart, pushing them to withstand killing, mutilation, crying, injuries, and oppression. Beneath this, the Yazidi possess a great capacity for compassion and empathy, concealing waves of feeling for the pain of others.

Fatwas were readily issued, declaring jihad for deceived Muslims eager to carry out the mission, boasting of their zeal for jihad to establish Islam's foothold in the region. However, the truth was that they were driven by their own base desires, which were outside the bounds of God. They did not forget to climb the ladder of fame on the bodies of slaughtered Yazidis, including captives, some of whom were made sacrificial offerings in rituals where slaughter was repeated annually instead of animals.

All these events transpired, leaving behind calamities and tragedies that have etched themselves into the Yazidi memory, deepening wounds that are unforgivable. We have religious texts that affirm the enormity of the catastrophe.

The poet and researcher Abdul Rahman Al-Mazouri states: The concealment of Yazidis at one time or another in various places was nothing but a fear of their eradication and annihilation, following their continuous subjection to oppression, holocaust, and unjust fatwas.

While the lawyer Abbas Al-Azzawi speaks of the calamities and campaigns against the followers of this faith: Extracting belief is not an easy or simple matter. Regardless of its degree of correctness, such events do not carry the severity of adherence to legitimacy on their face but are interpreted as the belief being natural or innate in humans. Once established, it does not easily dissipate, even with force and harshness.

Gernot Wiessner mentions: Every Yazidi family has a story about the kidnapping of women and children by Kurds, Turks, and Persians.

While Toma Boa says: In the seventeenth century, repeated massacres only served to deepen the Yazidis in their practices and beliefs.

One marvels and deeply considers the resilience of the Yazidi people and how they have preserved their religion, origins, customs, and traditions. This is particularly remarkable considering that many empires, nations, and religions have lost their identities and existence due to campaigns and could not bear the burden, thus melting into other populations and faiths. However, we Yazidis have lived through extremely difficult circumstances, facing a perpetual enemy who has killed Yazidis and taken their women and children captive. In the year 224 AH (838 AD), one can understand the reasons behind the uprising led by Prince Jafar bin Prince Hassan al-Dasini, a Kurdish ruler of the third Hijri century from the region of Mahd.

In the region of Sheikhhan to the east, a rebellion erupted against the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mu'tasim, leading to a fracture in allegiance to the Abbasid state. The historian Ibn Al-Athir records that Al-Mu'tasim (833 - 842) appointed Abdullah bin Sayyid Anas Al-Azdi over Mosul, instructing him to combat Jafar. Abdullah marched to Mosul, where Jafar had taken control of Ma'tai. Abdullah confronted Jafar, driving him out of Ma'tai. Jafar then retreated to Mount Dasin, where he encouraged himself in an elevated stronghold, invisible from below and accessible only through a narrow path. Abdullah pursued him through the ravines and engaged in battle. Jafar, with his Kurdish allies, familiar with the terrain, overpowered Abdullah's forces, who were defeated due to their lack of knowledge of the area. Al-Masudi notes that the rebels, led by Jafar, seized territories between Mosul, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. The Kurdish uprising caused significant concern within the Abbasid Caliphate, prompting Al-Mu'tasim to implement stringent measures to suppress it, aiming for a successful counter against the Kurds, who were adept at mountain warfare. This culminated in the Aytakh campaign of 841 AD.

For the third time, a large army led by Aytakh was dispatched against him, surrounding him and nearly capturing him. Jafar initially fled towards Baba Kish in the face of the Caliph's forces, but they ultimately overcame him at Mount Dasn. Preferring death to a life of humiliation, he consumed poison and died from its effects in the year 226 AH (841 CE). His followers scattered, and Aytakh led the Kurdish prisoners to Tikrit, where horrendous massacres and atrocious crimes were committed, causing great indignation. Aytakh and his men did not leave Jafar's body on the battlefield; instead, they took it to Samarra and crucified it alongside Babak Khorramdin and Maziyar.

In the campaign of Badr al-Din Lu'lu' in the year 644 AH (1246 CE), Badr al-Din Lu'lu' sent his army to fight the Yazidis to force them into paying money, as he burdened them with heavy taxes. A battle ensued between his forces and the Yazidi fighters led by Sheikh Hassan, whom Badr al-Din feared and closely monitored, seizing opportunities to persecute Sheikh Hassan, who had made Mosul the center of his call. The battle ended in Badr al-Din's defeat at the hands of the Yazidis after many were killed and others captured. Subsequently, Badr al-Din summoned the Kurdish Muslim scholars, who unanimously decreed the obligation of jihad against these infidels (the hostile Kurds). Tribes from every corner gathered, supported by Badr al-Din's army, until they overpowered them, crucifying a hundred and slaughtering another hundred, and ordered the dismemberment of their leader's body parts to be hung on the gates of Mosul.

During the campaign of the Governor of Baghdad, Hasan Pasha, in the year 1715.

The campaign led by the Governor of Baghdad, Hassan Pasha, in 1715 is considered one of the largest Ottoman campaigns waged against the Yazidis during the 18th century. Hassan Pasha amassed a large army that included forces from Shahrazur and some Kurdish beys, and marched towards Sinjar. Despite the size of his army and the use of artillery, the Yazidis resolved to resist. They fortified themselves at a mountain site known as Deir al-Asi, which they used as a stronghold for their defense. As the Ottoman military approached, the Yazidis initiated combat, confronting them with spears and arrows, and fought valiantly with their factions and heroes. The flames of war ignited between them, with much stabbing and striking occurring on both sides. However, the Yazidis could not withstand the fierce Ottoman army, continued their assault on the Yazidi strongholds, inflicting heavy casualties and dispersing their ranks. Despite the enormity of the campaign, artillery was used

The difference between the campaigns of the governors of Mosul and Baghdadis that the first campaign was lunched and killed , while the second one, when killing , they were cut off the heads and burden them with badger (large bags) and transfer them to Baghdad..