

R. Latham Lechowick

I won't let them be like me

Ezidi women's agency and identity
after the sinjar genocide

F Frank & Timme
Verlag für wissenschaftliche Literatur

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	19
Maps of Research Area	21
Terms & Acronyms	25
A Note on Language	35

PART ONE | BACKGROUND, THEORY, AND DESIGN

1 Cultural and Historical Foundations of Ezidiness	39
1.1 Prelude to the Study	39
1.1.1 The Situation	39
1.1.2 Arrival in Ezidjan	40
1.1.3 Working in the Field	41
1.1.4 Purposes	42
1.2 Approaching the Subject Matter	43
1.2.1 Research Questions	43
1.2.2 Cultural Context	45
1.2.2.1 Language and Belief	45
1.2.2.2 Culture and Society	50
1.2.2.3 Naming Names: Yezidi, Yazidi, Jezidi, Yazeedee? Ezidi	51
1.2.3 Embracing the '-ness'	53
1.3 Historical and Political Context	54
1.3.1 A Brief History of Ezidis and Shingal	55
1.3.1.1 Ezidi Ethnogenesis	55
1.3.1.2 Shingal's Role and Identity	57
1.3.1.3 Expansion and Contraction	59

1.3.2 Ezidis in Modern Iraq	62
1.3.2.1 The ‘Artificial Creation’ of Iraq	62
1.3.2.2 The Detriment of Collectivisation and Arabisation	63
1.3.2.3 Ezidi Views of Saddam Hussein	67
1.3.3 Ezidis in the KRI	70
1.3.3.1 Ezidis Within and Without the KRI	70
1.3.3.2 From Arabisation to Kurdification	72
1.4 The Current Situation	75
1.4.1 Invasion and Creation: The Rise of Daesh	75
1.4.2 The Ezidi Experience: Genocide & Forced Migration	80
1.4.3 The Future of Iraq and Iraqi Identity after the Genocide ...	84
1.4.4 Now: Frozen Time of Ezidi Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	89
1.5 Structure of the Book	91
2 Of the Spoken, Of the Written	95
2.1 The Earliest Mentions	95
2.2 Western Categorisation	96
2.2.1 The First Academic Studies	96
2.2.2 The ‘Sacred’ Books	98
2.2.3 Subsequent Contributions	100
2.3 The First and Last Ethnographies of Shingali Ezidis	101
2.3.1 The Beautiful Vagueness	102
2.4 Incorporating Oral Tradition	103
2.4.1 ‘Yezidism’	104
2.4.2 Expansion and Incorporation	105
2.5 Recent Developments	107
2.5.1 Scholarship of the Diaspora	107
2.5.2 The Genocide in Scholarship	109
2.5.3 Searching for Identities	110

2.5.4 Incorporating Gender	111
2.5.5 Shingali Voices	113
2.6 Contributions, New Paths of Inquiry, and the Current Work	119
3 Agency of the Everyday	121
3.1 Approaching Everyday Agency	121
3.2 Grounding in the Local	122
3.2.1 The Local and the Global	127
3.3 Non-Dichotomous Nuance	129
3.3.1 A Conscious Agency	131
3.4 The Connective Self	132
3.4.1 Expanding Connectivity: Dissident Bodies and Their Agencies	135
3.5 Removing the Priority of Religiosity	137
3.6 Developing an Everyday Agency	141
3.6.1 Conceptualising 'Agency'	141
3.6.2 The Complement of Generative Agency	142
3.6.2.1 Grounding in the Local	142
3.6.2.2 Agency with Non-Dichotomous Nuance	143
3.6.2.3 Agency and Collective Self	143
3.6.3 Everyday Agency	145
3.6.3.1 Why Consciousness and Choice Matter	145
3.6.3.2 Why Creativity and Desire Matter	146
3.6.3.3 The Everyday is the Focus	146
3.6.3.4 The Centrality of the Agent and her Agency in the Narrative	147
3.7 Confirming An Agency of the Everyday	149

4 Methods & Methodologies, Positions & Positionalities	151
4.1 Methods & Methodologies	151
4.1.1 Ethnographic Data Collection (EDC)	151
4.1.1.1 Specifics of Data Collection and Conversations ..	153
4.1.1.2 Selection of Conversational Partners	154
4.1.2 Relaying and Displaying the Data	156
4.1.2.1 Notations & Descriptions	156
4.1.2.2 Acknowledging and Backgrounding My Voice ...	158
4.1.3 Shared & Situated Knowledge Production	161
4.2 Positions & Positionalities	164
4.2.1 Utilising the Personal	164
4.2.2 Entry into Society	165
4.2.2.1 The Many Benefits of Education	166
4.3 Beginning and Ending with Transparency	167

PART TWO | EVERYDAY SPACE/TIME OF THE CAMPS

5 Setting the Space in Khanke	171
5.1 Introduction	171
5.2 Incorporating Space/Time	172
5.3 Making Space in Khanke	174
5.3.1 Types of House and Potentialities of Home	174
5.3.1.1 Structures	175
5.3.2 (Re-)Creating Place: Inside the Home	179
5.3.2.1 Rooms	180
5.3.3 Outside: Wide Open Spaces & Ashiraish	183
5.3.3.1 The Camp	183
5.3.3.2 The Informal Camps	184
5.3.3.3 The Town	186

5.4	Life in Liminalities	186
5.4.1	Spatial Liminalities	187
5.4.1.1	The First Border: Ingresses, Egresses, and the Palisades of the Camp	187
5.4.1.2	The Second Border: Rising from the Road	188
5.4.1.3	The Third Border: Fading from Field to Field	189
5.4.2	Social Liminalities: Buying and Letting the Imaginary	190
6	Telling Time in Khanke	191
6.1	Introduction	191
6.2	Morning	192
6.2.1	Waking and Praying	192
6.2.2	(Not) Cooking and (Not) Eating	193
6.3	Mid-Morning	194
6.3.1	Stores and Selling	194
6.3.2	Livestock and Farming	198
6.3.3	Children and Schooling	201
6.4	Midday	202
6.4.1	Lunch	202
6.5	Afternoon	205
6.5.1	Resting and Relaxing	206
6.5.2	Visiting and Socialising	207
6.6	Evening	208
6.6.1	Dinner	208
6.7	Night	209
6.8	'Aciz (and the Solitude of a Crowd)	210
6.9	Stuck in Temporary Permanence	213

PART THREE | WOMEN'S WORDS

7 Ezidiness and Identity	217
7.1 Overview of the Chapter	217
7.2 Persecution and Ezidi Identity	218
7.3 Label and Rumour	222
7.3.1 The 'YE-zidi' Label	222
7.3.2 The Role of Rumour	223
7.3.3 The Ascription of Gendered Ezidiness	227
7.3.3.1 A Focus from Daesh	227
7.3.3.2 A Focus from Journalists and NGOs	229
7.3.3.3 A Focus from Ezidis	234
7.3.4 The Effects of Selective Hearing	235
7.4 Ezidiness & 'Non-Muslim' Expressions of Identity	236
7.4.1 A Brief Overview of Ezidi-Muslim Relations in Shingal	237
7.4.2 Emphasising the 'Non-Muslim' Element of Identity	240
7.4.3 (Non-)Identity in Action: Wearing Headscarves	241
7.4.4 Embracing the Ascription: Drinking Alcohol	246
7.4.5 Finding the 'Right' Source: Speaking Arabic	250
7.4.5.1 'Bad' Arabic Acquisition	251
7.4.5.2 'Good' Arabic Acquisition	258
7.4.5.3 Arabic Identity	261
7.5 Conclusion: Rebuffing, Embracing, and Co-Opting Ascriptions and Identities	262
8 Shingaliness and Identity	265
8.1 Overview of the Chapter	265
8.2 Shingaliness and the Everyday Other	266
8.2.1 The 'Silent, Silenced Center' of Ezidiness: Shingali Subaltern Identity	267
8.2.1.1 Places and People, the Souk and the Bazaar	271

8.2.2 Ezdiki, Shingalki, Denayki: Shingali Linguistic Identity	273
8.2.2.1 Shingalki and Welatki	277
8.2.2.2 Considerations of Shingalki	279
8.2.2.3 Deprioritising Language as Classification	280
8.3 Shingaliness and the Mountain in Memory and Identity	281
8.3.1 The Two Shingals	282
8.3.2 The Collective (Idyllic) Shingal	283
8.3.2.1 Memorialising Trauma in Baby Names	288
8.3.3 The ‘First-Personal’ Shingal	288
8.3.4 Walking the Path, Asserting the Memory	294
8.4 Conclusion: The Good and the Bad of Embracing ‘Shingaliness’	296
9 Actualising Agency within Society	299
9.1 Overview of the Chapter	299
9.2 New Agencies Found in Societal Behaviours and Prohibitions (Taboos)	300
9.2.1 Understanding the Culture of ‘Religious’ Taboos	301
9.2.2 Performing Identities and Demonstrating Agency in Mixed Company	303
9.2.3 Confirming Elements of Social Identity	305
9.2.4 Choosing Embodiments	307
9.3 New Agencies Found in Societal Positions and Relationships: A Murid Point-of-View	311
9.3.1 Fito	312
9.3.2 Religious Relationships	317
9.3.3 Kissing Salutations	319
9.4 Transformations of Shame (‘Aib)	321
9.4.1 Women’s Work, Men’s Work	322
9.4.2 Individual and Group Definitions of Shame	326
9.5 Conclusion: Demonstrating New Agencies, Including the Agency of Cessation	328

10 Agency of the Subaltern	331
10.1 Overview of the Chapter	331
10.2 Utilising Subalternity	332
10.2.1 Utilising Ezidiness	332
10.2.2 Utilising Shingaliness	335
10.2.3 Utilising Survorness	335
10.2.3.1 Zerya: 'Any country you like, you can go there.' ..	336
10.2.3.2 Zerya: 'The president told me to leave Iraq, but I told him...' ..	338
10.3 Motherness and the Intergenerational Transmission of Agency ..	340
10.3.1 Utilising Motherness: Transmission of Agency that Previously Did Not Exist	341
10.3.1.1 Nina: 'They go because I couldn't.' ..	341
10.3.1.2 Besna: 'God doesn't let me' but, still, 'I won't let them be like me.' ..	341
10.3.2 Utilising Motherness: Defining One's Own Identity by Agency Demonstrated for Children's Future	343
10.3.2.1 Elind: 'My time is gone.' ..	344
10.3.2.2 Hana: 'I work for them.' ..	345
10.3.3 Utilising Motherness: The Ultimate Sacrifice, Societal Death	347
10.3.3.1 Kaja: 'Your mother left you, how can I love you?' ..	347
10.3.3.2 Zerya: 'I will teach them only peace and love.' ..	350
10.4 Conclusion: Utilising Subalternity for New Agency	351

PART FOUR | CONCLUSION

11Hope and Agency of the Future	355
11.1 Overview of Chapter	355
11.2 Summaries of Research from Analytical Chapters	356
11.2.1 Persecution-as-Identity and Performing ‘Non-Muslim’ ...	356
11.2.2 Responding to the New Other, Welatis, and the Role of the Mountain in Memory	356
11.2.3 New Agencies Found in Societal Transformation	357
11.2.4 Utilising Subaltern Identities for New Agencies (and Power)	358
11.3 Answering the Initial Questions	358
11.3.1 The Core Questions	358
11.3.2 Further Analysis	360
11.3.2.1 Opportunity as a Narrative Theme	360
11.3.2.2 Gender Roles and Attention Paid by Outsiders ..	360
11.3.2.3 Education and the Forced Migration	361
11.3.2.4 A Growing Obstacle	362
11.4 Considerations and Recommendations	362
11.4.1 Academics and Academia	362
11.4.1.1 The Risk Inherent to ‘Ezidi Studies’	363
11.4.2 Journalists and NGOs	364
11.4.3 Governments	365
11.4.4 Everyone	367
11.4.5 Shingali Ezidi women	367
11.5 Conclusion: Hope & The Future Present	368
Bibliography	371
List of Conversation Partners Cited Directly	427