



# Genocide against Yazidis in the coverage of German media outlets 2014 - 2021

Asst.Prof. Dr. Habeeb Ibrahim

Institute for Media Studies

Ruhr – Bochum University

habeeb.ibrahim@ruhr-uni-bochum.de

## Abstract

Genocide of Yazidis by the Islamic State IS has received wide attention by the international media outlets. The Islamic State has killed thousands of civilians, captured and raped hundreds of women. Despite the delay in the Western political stand, specifically the German stand, regarding ISIS's occupation of the Yazidi areas, German media had an active role in shedding light on the crimes committed by ISIS and determining its danger to the future of peaceful coexistence in Nineveh Governorate, which is a center for religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq. This paper sheds light on the characteristics of the German media coverage (Tagesschau 24 TV channel and website of Der Spiegel magazine 2014 - 2021) towards the Genocide of Yazidis, starting with the entry of the Islamic State to their areas, the kill of thousands of civilians and the taking of women as slaves, raping and selling them in the slave market in the city of Mosul. In the paper, we use the descriptive method to understand the media texts that dealt with the genocide of Yazidis. describe a sample of the news, reports, interviews and articles. The paper concluded that the coverage of the Tagesschau 24 TV channel and website of Der Spiegel magazine for the genocide of Yazidis was extensive to a large extent. The media coverage of the two institutions revealed the relationship between mismanagement and political chaos in Iraq and the success of the Islamic State IS in occupying the Yazidi areas. There was sympathy for the Yazidis who were exterminated because of their religious affiliation.

**Keywords:** Genocide, Yezidis, ISIS, media coverage, German media outlets



## Introduction

After the occupation of the of Yazidi-majority areas in the north of Nineveh province by Islamic State IS, the international media outlets covered its details and highlighted developments of its events. Despite the different international media coverage of Yazidi genocide, they participated in presenting a picture of what the Yazidis and the local population were subjected to, who became victims of the extremist group, erasing the Yazidi heritage and trying to wreak havoc on the social and psychological structure of the Yazidi community.

German media outlets had a wide role in covering these events and analysing the dimensions of that tragedy and its impact on the process of peaceful coexistence in Nineveh province, which is inhabited by groups of ethnic and religious minorities. On the other hand, German media outlets introduced the audience to the stand of the German government and its role in stopping and defeating the terrorist group, with the cooperation of Germany's allies, especially the United States, France and Britain.

Despite the divergence of the media policies of the German media outlets, but they adopted almost common positions to a large extent. We chose Tagesschau 24 TV channel because it is a news channel that has news bulletins throughout the day and deals with international issues as well as European issues, and Der Spiegel magazine because it is one of the best German magazines and for its interest in international issues.

This research attempts to answer the questions that were formed after 7 years of German media coverage of the Yazidi genocide, such as: "What is the extent of interest in the genocide of Yazidis in the German media outlets?", "What are the features of the German media coverage toward the genocide of Yazidis?", "What is the position of the political discourse in the German media discourse?". Answering these questions were requiring the use of descriptive method, which is the most prominent method used in media studies to reveal the context of social and political concepts contained in media content.

Der Spiegel: "The Mirror" is a German weekly magazine published in Hamburg 1. The first edition of Der Spiegel was published in Hanover on Saturday, 4 January 1947. 2

With a weekly circulation of 695,100 copies, it is the largest such publication in Europe. 3

Tagesschau 24: news TV channel: One of the German official ARD channels. ARD's media organizations are independent of the government, and receive funding from media usage fees paid by citizens. The channel was founded in 1952 4. It is a German-language news channel, headquartered in Hamburg. It has a website tagesschau.de which attracts a large number of users due to its publications and news programmes.

## Yazidi genocide

The Yazidis, who are a religious minority living in the provinces of Nineveh and Dohuk in particular, were subjected to genocide by the Islamic State, after occupation of the cities and villages inhabited by the Yazidis by the terrorist group 5. Thousands of Yazidis fled to safe areas and thousands immigrated to

1 . Der Spiegel, Euro Topics, via: <https://www.eurotopics.net/de/148789/der-spiegel>

2 . The history of Der Spiegel (05.10.2011) via: <https://www.spiegel.de/international/six-decades-of-quality-journalism-the-history-of-der-spiegel-a-789853.html>

3 . Kevin J. O'Brien (19 April 2004) International Herald Tribune, via: [https://web.archive.org/web/20080226184432/http://www.ihf.com/articles/2004/04/19/spiegel\\_ed3\\_.php](https://web.archive.org/web/20080226184432/http://www.ihf.com/articles/2004/04/19/spiegel_ed3_.php)

4 . Gabriele Trost (23.07.2018) Geschichte der Fernschnachten, übers Internet: <https://www.planetwissen.de/kultur/medien/fernsehnachrichten/pwiegeschichtederfernsehnachrichten100.html>

5 . Nazm Al Kaki (11.08.2014) Yazidis fleeing death in Sinjar, Aljazeera TV, via internet: <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/re->



Europe and America after losing their children, women and men. Experts estimate that around 200,000 Yazidis are now living in Germany, which is the largest Yazidi diaspora community in the world. Most live in North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony.<sup>6</sup>

In 03.08.2014, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria ISIS rampaged across Iraq and Syria, declaring a caliphate and committing genocide against various peoples of Iraq, most notably the Yazidis, Christians and Kaka'is.<sup>7</sup> ISIS fighters left their bases in Iraq and converged on the Sinjar region in Northwest Iraq, close to the Iraqi-Syrian border. There, Sinjar town and 81 villages are spread out around the base of Mount Sinjar, an arid 100-kilometre-long mountain range.<sup>8</sup>

The UN Security Council, after international, societal and individual efforts such as Nadia Murad, and others from the Yazidi community that refused to remain silent over the grievance, had requested the Secretary-General to establish a UNTAD team under Resolution 2379 to support local efforts to hold ISIS accountable by collecting, preserving and storing Evidence in Iraq of actions that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed by the terrorist group ISIS in Iraq.<sup>9</sup>

The Islamic State committed genocide against Yazidis, according to a UN report, "They Came to Destroy: ISIS Crimes Against the Yazidis", issued by the independent international Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic. The report by the Commission of Inquiry also determined that ISIS's abuse of Yazidis amounts to crimes against humanity and war crimes. "Genocide has occurred and is ongoing", emphasised Paulo Pinheiro, Chair of the Commission. "ISIS has subjected every Yazidi woman, child or man that it has captured to the most horrific of atrocities."<sup>10</sup>

The UN investigators called the evidence of genocide "clear and convincing", and that it had identified the perpetrators "that clearly have responsibility for the crime of genocide against the Yazidi community." they said the Islamic State tried "to destroy the Yazidi, physically and biologically" and threatened many different Yazidi villages with the ultimatum to "convert to Islam or die"<sup>11</sup>. Evidence collected by the team had also confirmed ISIS was responsible for acts of extermination, murder, rape, torture, enslavement, persecution and other war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated against the Yazidis, because Islamic State militants considered the Yazidis to be devil worshippers.<sup>12</sup>

At the time of the attack, the Yazidis were not involved in the power struggles to take place within Iraq, demonstrating that ISIS' motivations for attacking were not related to power struggle but to eradication.<sup>13</sup>

## Methodology

The paper revolves around a main question: "How did the German media cover the genocide of Yazidis 2014 - 2021?" The media's coverage of events reveals its media policy and media philosophy, which in

6 . Ansgar Siemens (14.04.2019) Jesidin in Deutschland"Als Tochter war ich eine Sklavin", Der Spiegel, über Internet: <https://www.spiegel.de/panorama/gesellschaft/jesidin-in-deutschland-als-tochter-war-ich-eine-sklavin-a-1255402.html>

7 . Moving Beyond Survival: Sixth Anniversary of Genocide of Yazidis and Christians, Aug. 7, 2020. Via: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/moving-beyond-survival-sixth-anniversary-genocide-yazidis-and-christians>

8 . Valeria Cetorelli and Sareta Ashraph, A demographic documentation of ISIS's attack on the Yazidi village of Kocho, LSE Middle East Centre Report June 2019, P. 7

9 . Six years after Sinjar, Iraq... 2,800 Yazidis are missing and hundreds of thousands are in displacement camps (2020) UNs website, via Internet: <https://news.un.org/ar/story/2020/08/1059182>

10 . UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria: ISIS is committing genocide against the Yazidis, 16 June 2016, via: <https://www.ohchr.org/FR/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=20113&LangID=F>

11 . UN Team Says Islamic State Committed Genocide Against Yazidis, May 10, 2021, via: [https://www.voanews.com/a/middle-east\\_un-team-says-islamic-state-committed-genocide-against-yazidis/6205676.html](https://www.voanews.com/a/middle-east_un-team-says-islamic-state-committed-genocide-against-yazidis/6205676.html)

12 . Ibid

13 . Camilla Østergaard Kristensen, 09 August 2021, The Yazidi Genocide, lack of justice and gender-based violence in genocides, via: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/the-yazidi-genocide-lack-of-justice-and-gender-based-violence-in-genocides>



turn contributes to shaping public opinion because media outlets play its role in covering events within the framework of its media discourse.

This paper aims to analyse the media coverage of the two most important German media outlets, Der Spiegel magazine and Tagesschau 24 TV channel. These two media outlets are important and have a wide audience due to their objectivity and speed in transmitting news and report.

## Literature reviews

Study of (Framing the fall of Sinjar: Kurdish media's coverage of the Yazidi genocide) 14 is based on framing theory, attempts to explain how two major Kurdish media organizations, Rudaw, which is loyal to KDP, and the Kurdish News Network (KNN), which is loyal to the Gorran (Change) Movement, each covered the event in their news reports. By performing a content analysis of 222 news stories covering the event, the key finding of the research is that, in instances of assigning responsibility for the fall of Sinjar, political considerations are the determining factor in how the narrative was framed. Taken as part of a growing literature on media in Kurdistan, the research outlined in this article supports the conclusion that the framing of media coverage in the Kurdistan Region is subject to strong political bias and media outlets support the political narratives advanced by their political patrons, as it is the case in many other Middle Eastern countries.

In Study of (Genocide, rape, and careless disregard: media ethics and the problematic reporting on Yazidi survivors of ISIS captivity) 15 the researchers use a transnational feminist perspective to explore how English language media reported on Yazidi women who survived abduction by the self-declared Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) during the 2014 genocidal attacks. Through a content analysis of 75 online sources from 2014 and 2015, we found widespread breaches of United Nations Global Protection Cluster Guidelines (UN) for ethical reporting on gender violence that potentially compromise the safety and well-being of survivors, and increase the risk of re-victimization and collective stigmatization of Yazidi women. These findings suggest a "hypocrisy of protectionism" as a component of predatory journalism in the War on Terror, and contribute to feminist media scholarship and humanitarian efforts to better serve survivors of gender-based violence in conflict settings.

## Results

Figure No. (1) indicates that there is a discrepancy in the amount of coverage in the issue of the genocide of the Yazidis in the Tagesschau 24 and the website of Der Spiegel for the period from 2014 - 2021. After the genocide, there was interested in covering the Yazidi genocide in the beginning of it, (76) subjects in Tagesschau 24 compared to (24) subjects in Der Spiegel. There has been a marked decrease in the volume of news coverage from 2012-2017. Especially after the liberation of the city of Sinjar and the villages that have been occupied by ISIS since 2014. After the defeat of the Islamic State, the coverage of the two media organizations focused on estimating the extent of the destruction, interviewing the families of the victims, surviving women, the fate of the victims, and the international recognition of the genocide against the Yazidis.

14 . Hawre Hasan Hama (2019) Framing the fall of Sinjar: Kurdish media's coverage of the Yazidi genocide, Middle Eastern Studies, Volume 55, Issue 5, P. 798-812

15 . Sherizaan Minwalla, Johanna E. Foster & Sarah McGrail (2020) Genocide, rape, and careless disregard: media ethics and the problematic reporting on Yazidi survivors of ISIS captivity, Feminist Media Studies, via Internet: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2020.1731699>



## Tagesschau 24 news channel

Figure No. (2) indicates that Tagesschau 24 covered the Yazidi genocide with video and interviews (85%). News coverage focused on interviews with specialists in Islamic groups, religious minorities in the Middle East, and local politicians. To analyze the reasons that led the Islamic State to launch an attack on the Yazidis, who represent a religious minority in northern Iraq. In previous years, specifically in the sectarian war in Iraq, many extremist Islamic organizations launched attacks on the Yazidis. These attacks were a message to the Yazidi minority that the weakness of the Iraqi government - due to the conflicts among sectarian parties, mismanagement and corruptions that enabled extremist groups to threaten religious minorities (Christians, Sabians, Yazidis, Kaka'is). On the other hand, the hate speech prevalent in the Iraqi media - due to the ineffectiveness of media accountability tools - contributed to the occurrence of acts of hate: assassination, threats, displacement.

The share of television reports (68%) contained information about the Yazidi minority living in Iraq and Syria and the challenges it faces since the fall of the Iraqi regime in 2003 and the Syrian revolution in 2011. It also contained information regarding the role of the United States and Europe in developing a strategy to defeat the Islamic State and return the Yazidis to its areas.

34% of coverage was in the form of news that included photos, videos or interviews. It also included information regarding the positions of Western governments regarding the extermination of the Yazidis and the assistance provided by international organizations. 3% of the coverage was by audio.

The coverage of Tagesschau 24 started on 04.08.2014, hours a day of ISIS took over the city of Sinjar. In 05.08.2014, Tagesschau 24 covered a television report in which the term (ISIS fighters) was used. The report analyzed the factors of the organization's strength and success in controlling large areas in Syria and Iraq. After the United States toppled Saddam's regime in 2003, the American army contributed to the rebuilding of the Iraqi army and the Iraqi police forces. The American trainers trained Iraqi officers, and the United States of America assisted Iraq by arming its army with American weapons. On the other hand, the Peshmerga forces failed to repel ISIS attacks. The report also talked about what the West will do to stop the advance of the terrorist organization.

It appears from the reports that were published in the early days of the Islamic State's occupation of the city (Sinjar) that there is a lack of information and the reasons that enabled the organization to spread quickly in northern Iraq, even though the Iraqi army possessed somewhat advanced weapons and military equipment. The report linked the success of the terrorist organization in occupying areas in northern Iraq with several factors, including: the weakness of the Iraqi political and military institutions due to sectarian fighting between Shiites and Sunnis, and the difficult conditions experienced by a large proportion of young people aged 17-30 due to poverty and unemployment, and the failure of government plans to build a democratic Iraq. In the analysis of the Yazidi genocide, an attempt to link the Islamic organizations and know their goals appeared: Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Islamic State. There are many points of convergence between these organizations:

The basic idea of all Islamic movements - IS, but also the Muslim Brotherhood or Hamas - is on the one hand that there should be no separation between state and religion in the Islamic world. On the other hand, the entire Islamist movement is manically obsessed with the idea that the weakening and ultimately all of the problems in the region stem from the abolition of the caliphate that ruled from Istanbul until 1922. That is why a new caliphate is to be established that will implement the laws of Islam, i.e., Sharia, and at least bring the entire Islamic world under its government. This notion relates heavily to the ancient caliphates that existed in Damascus and Baghdad in the early Middle Ages. So, it's a return to the seventh or eighth century - just in the age of chemical weapons and cell phones. (Tagesschau 05.08.2014)





The Tagesschau 24 coverage on 07.08.2014 focused on the terrorist organization's demolition of non-Muslim (Sunni) temples and mosques, such as Christian churches, Yazidi temples and Kaka'i temples, and Shiite Muslim mosques. There was a clear focus on the tragedies experienced by the Yazidis (in Mount Sinjar) fleeing the terrorist organization and the difficult conditions experienced by the Christians who were displaced to the city of Erbil and Dohuk, where there are dozens of churches and Christian families. The media discourse raised various questions regarding: Will the West succeed in taking a unified position on fighting the organization and determining its future in Syria and Iraq? There was a dialogue between the allies (the United States, France, Germany, Britain). The coverage also included that the United States on 08.08.2014 expanded its air strikes for the organization to prevent its advance towards the city of Erbil and Kirkuk. The channel also conducted an interview with Yazidis and Christians fleeing from the cities of (Sinjar), (Al-Hamdaniya) and (Mosul).

The coverage of Tagesschau 24 on 19.09.2014 identified the factors behind the extremist organization's desire to end any presence of Yazidis and Christians in the region and to demolish their synagogues and churches. The emergence of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq was preceded by the emergence of many Islamic groups (the Naqshbandi organization, the Army of Islam, the Al-Qaeda organization...etc). Tagesschau 24 attributed the emergence of these terrorist organizations to the conflicts in the Middle East. A conflict between Shiites and Sunnis, a struggle between classical political systems and the people's desire to establish new political systems, the Arab Spring revolutions and Iranian interference in the internal affairs of Iraq and Syria. These factors led to the desire to establish spheres of influence either on a religious (Islamic), sectarian (Shiite) or national (Kurdish, Arab, Turkmen) basis.

According to the UN, the IS militias also abused Shiites and members of other religious and ethnic groups in a terrible way, according to the report, which is based on statements from more than 100 eyewitnesses. In addition, the investigators also accuse the Iraqi army and militias allied with them for serious crimes. They murdered, tortured and kidnapped civilians in numerous cases. "Some of these acts could be crimes against humanity as well as war crimes. (Tagesschau 24 19.03.2015)

The impact of these conflicts was not immune from the West, as crowds of Yazidis and Christians fleeing from northern Iraq headed towards Turkey and from there to Europe, and the United States, Canada and Australia received hundreds of thousands of fleeing people. On 13.11.2015, 7,500 Peshmerga forces advanced to liberate the city of Sinjar, backed by the aircraft of the military coalition led by the United States of America. The future of the city (Sinjar) was discussed in the media discourse of Tagesschau: What after the liberation of the city of Sinjar? Will this help in the return of the Yazidis to their city and villages? The political chaos and mismanagement in Iraq have become an obstacle for the Iraqi government to present a project for the reconstruction of the city of Sinjar and the return of the Yazidis to their areas.

Tagesschau's coverage was not far from the Yazidis who had reached Germany. The channel conducted numerous interviews with the Yazidis who immigrated to Germany and who were held captive by the extremist organization. There are women and children among them. The German government provided them with psychotherapy. The human stories that emerged were new evidence of the terrorist organization's terrorist dealings with the Yazidis and the erasure of their heritage and culture in northern Iraq.

The channel also met with the Yazidis who immigrated to Germany after the fall of Iraqi oppression in 2003. The German Yazidis provided aid to the newly immigrated Yazidis. Dozen Tikal, a film director and journalist, spoke about her experience in Germany and the extremist organization's attempt to kill the Yazidis because of their religious affiliation: 16

16 . Christian Thiels (31.07.2016) Interview zum Völkermord an Jesiden, über Internet: <https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/interview-tekkal-101.html>



In fact, hardly anything has changed in the life perspective of the Yazidis. They may have become known to the world as victims, but they do not want to be victims. They still must hold out in refugee camps - with no prospects for the future. In this context we keep talking about the rebuilding of the Yazidi-influenced city of Shingal, but it is also about rebuilding people and ensuring security. But we cannot give these people any security because de facto they do not exist. There are still 4,000 Yazidi women in IS captivity and 1,000 Yazidi children are being abused as child soldiers - of course that doesn't leave people in peace. (Düzen Tekkal, 31.07.2016)

Legal issues had a share in the media discourse of Tagesschau 24 channel, the trial of Jennifer W, who traveled to Iraq to join the Islamic State and married an ISIS operative. Together with her husband, she caused the death of a Yazidi child of thirst (5 years old). Jennifer W was tried in Germany in the presence of the girl's mother. The trial was the first of its kind in Germany, so it was covered by all German and international media. In the world's first criminal trial addressing genocide against the Yazidis, today the Higher Regional Court in Frankfurt, Germany, convicted Taha Al J. for genocide and crimes against humanity. This is the first time a former member of the armed group calling itself Islamic State (IS) has been convicted of genocide. 17

Pope Francis' visit to Iraq, and his visit to the areas occupied by the terrorist organization ISIS, received special attention from the Tagesschau 24 channel. The news bulletins carried the words of the Pope, who blamed corruption in Iraq and the political and security chaos for what happened in Iraq. The Pope's speech came at a time when corruption, mismanagement and administrative chaos are still sympathetic to Iraq since the intervention of the United States of America to topple Saddam's regime in 2003.

During his visit to Iraq, Pope Francis denounced abuse of power and corruption in a mass in front of thousands of believers. "It is necessary that the disastrous influence on power and money be eradicated from our hearts and from the church," he said in his sermon in the football stadium in the Kurdish capital of Erbil (Tagesschau 24 07.03.2021)

## Der Spiegel magazine website

The first news coverage of Der Spiegel magazine began on 8/8/2014 in a report that included information about the expanded attack launched by the Islamic State on the city of Sinjar, the main city inhabited by the Yazidis. Der Spiegel used the concept (extremists) in reference to the organization's elements, although this concept has changed in future coverage (Islamic extremists, terrorists, terrorist militias, fanatic Islamists). The Der Spiegel website also covered the United States of America with the sectarian conflict taking place in Iraq that has weakened the Iraqi security services and facilitated the control of the Islamic State over the Yazidi-majority areas.

Thousands of people, members of the Yazidis, have been waiting in the mountains near their homeland Sinjar since the weekend. Hundreds have already died of thirst. The refugees are trapped high, at 40 degrees Celsius, because extremists control the region and shoot anyone who dares to return from there. Dumping drinking water and food, as Obama plans to do, can only be a first step. (Der Spiegel 08.08.2014)

17 . Germany/Iraq: World's first judgment on crime of genocide against the Yazidis, November 30, 2021, Via: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/germany-iraq-worlds-first-judgment-on-crime-of-genocide-against-the-yazidis/>



On August 10, 2014, Der Spiegel website published a picture of a number of Yazidi women and children displaced to safe areas. It includes a call to help the Kurds against the “fanatic Islamists” at the invitation of the United Nations. The term “Kurds” replaced “Yazidis” and “fanatic Islamists” replaced “extremists.”

## Help for Kurds is help for the world

The fight against the fanatical Islamists in Iraq needs a mandate from the UN. (Der Spiegel 10.08.2014)

The media discourse on the Der Spiegel website also focused on publishing the details of the Yazidi genocide regarding the number of Yazidis killed, the number of those who fled to Mount Sinjar and the Iraqi-Syrian border, the number of women captured and taken for sale, and the Kurdistan Regional Government’s procedures for delivering aid to the displaced. The German government has allocated 2.9 million euros to help the survivors. The media discourse also criticized the German government in dealing with the genocide of the Yazidis compared to the position of the United States, which launched air strikes to prevent the militants of the extremist organization from advancing to occupy more cities and villages: (America acts, Germany speaks). There was also criticism of the position of former German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who initially opposed arming the Peshmerga forces with German weapons, to Germany’s principled opposition to sending weapons to the areas of combat and conflict.

Angela Merkels Sprecher verweist auf den Grundsatz, keine Waffen in Kriegs- oder Kampfgebiete zu schicken. Auch Außenminister Steinmeier lässt ausrichten, Deutschland konzentrierte sich auf humanitäre Hilfe. Berlin hat die Nothilfe für die verfolgten Menschen im Nordirak auf 4,4 Millionen Euro aufgestockt. (Der Spiegel 11.08.2014)

The German government did not change its successor and decided despite the organization’s control of many cities in northern Iraq and the attack it launched to occupy the city of Erbil (the capital of the Kurdistan region). This coincided with the United States sending military forces (1,000 soldiers and 130 military advisors) to the Kurdistan region of Iraq, with the aim of training and supporting the Peshmerga forces. The German position was based on Germany’s fear of using its weapons and equipment to kill civilians in conflict areas. Realistically, Germany has fears of being a party to the conflicts, even if it does participate. It wants to take its participation logistical and information rather than active military participation. First the federal government said no, now it wants to support the Kurds in the fight against the IS terrorists with military equipment. Even arms deliveries are no longer a taboo. Why this zigzag course? (Der Spiegel 12.08.2014)

The coverage in Der Spiegel magazine dealt with the humanitarian positions of some European politicians in support of the Yazidis and documented the difficult conditions experienced by those fleeing to Mount Sinjar and to the Iraqi-Syrian border. The visit of Austrian politician and Member of the European Parliament (Michel Reimon) to Mount Sinjar while delivering aid to those fleeing ISIS was significant. The European politician documented a film about the tragedy of the Yazidis. The video was posted on YouTube on 14.08.2014 18.





The 14-minute video contributed to stirring up European public opinion and raising the issue within the European Parliament. Media reports published by the international media contributed to the German Minister of Defense speaking for the first time on 8/14/2014 that “there are military equipment that will be sent to the regional government, although the Peshmerga forces have no experience in using German weapons, because Iraq was used for weapons.” imported from the former Soviet Union. The German government’s reluctance to supply the Peshmerga forces with weapons since the beginning of the crisis was reflected in the media discourse. This was discussed in the report published by Der Spiegel on 15/8/2014, one day before the German army transferred 36 tons of food and medicine to Yazidi refugees. In the same report, reference was made to the statement of German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen:

German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen said “If genocide can only be prevented with German weapons, then we have to help.” At the same time, she pointed out that the Kurds who fought on the ground against the IS militia were mainly familiar with weapons from the former Soviet Union. “Germany does not have such weapons and could not deliver them at short notice.» (Der Spiegel 15.08.2014)

After days of Germany’s reluctance to arm the Peshmerga forces with German weapons to defend the region and prevent ISIS fighters from occupying new areas, the German Minister of Defense arrived in the Kurdistan region on August 17, 2014 and promised to provide the Peshmerga forces with German weapons. Der Spiegel compared Germany’s modest role in supporting the region and helping Yazidi refugees with the role of the United States, which, until August 17, 2014, carried out 101 air strikes against the Islamic State to weaken it and stop its progress towards the Kurdistan region and the Amerli city between Kirkuk and Baghdad, which is inhabited by 12 thousand Of the Turkmen Shiite citizens. Der Spiegel highlighted the attempted murder of non-Muslims and Shiite Muslims by ISIS.

Coverage of the Yazidis fleeing from Sinjar, the killing of thousands who could not escape, and the kidnapping of women and then selling them, emerged in the context of the crisis in Iraq and Syria after the emergence of the Islamic State organization. The extermination of the Yazidis was one of Der Spiegel’s coverage of the crimes committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, such as the fleeing of thousands of Syrians to Turkey, the organization’s attack on the city of Ayn al-Arab (Kobani) in northern Syria, the demolition of temples for religious minorities, and the joining of hundreds of Europeans to the organization. All these contributed to the German media’s coverage of all these issues in its reporting and interviews. It seems that interviews conducted by German journalists who visited conflict areas and met Yazidi survivors, obtained information about the complicity of some citizens in the city of Sinjar (from the Arabs) with the Islamic State. This information revealed the failure of the plans of local governments and civil society organizations in the city of Sinjar and in many areas in Iraq regarding (peace building) and (peaceful coexistence). Corruption may have hindered the implementation of peace-building plans in Iraq, and this information confirmed that peaceful building was just slogans that local governments adopted to reassure the population.

Jalila, 12, tried to escape with her parents and siblings when the “Islamic State” (IS) approached her hometown. But men from their own village, Arabs, stopped the Yazidi family. They extradited Jalila and her sister to ISIS. Jalila was abducted and held by the jihadists for months. Der Spiegel 15.04.2015

Der Spiegel has also been concerned with the role of women in the fight against the Islamic State. In its reports, it focused on the armed force formed by the Kurdish Yazidi Women’s Association “Daughters of the Sun” to defend the Yazidis. The armed force consists of Yazidi girls training in light weapons to defend the Yazidis and liberate the city of Sinjar. As well as the position of international organizations and reports that spoke of a genocide against the Yazidis because of their religious affiliation.



More than 3,200 Yazidi women and girls are still under the control of the terrorist organization. In addition, there are Yazidi boys who have been forced to convert to Islam and fight for IS. How many there are, and how many Yezidi men survived the campaign of the terrorist militia in the Sinjar Mountains in Iraq, cannot be estimated by the commission of inquiry. Der Spiegel 16.06.2016

Der Spiegel presented the fact that the Yazidis, despite being subjected to genocide, the Iraqi government is not interested in transmitting evidence and case files to the corridors of the United Nations and asking the international community to allocate a fund for the reconstruction of Yazidi-majority areas to facilitate their return to their areas. The reason for the seriousness of the Iraqi government lies in the political and economic crises afflicting government institutions, rampant corruption, and the fact that the Yazidis are a minority in Iraq.

This contributed to the migration of tens of thousands of Yazidis to Europe and the United States, to ensure a better life. Der Spiegel interviewed Nadia Murad, who escaped from ISIS prison after being assaulted and sold in the women's market on May 28, 2017, according to her statements, "No one knows the fate of more than 3,000 Yazidi women who were sold and assaulted by ISIS" and "the clergy in Iraq and the Arab countries did not condemn the Islamic State" because the Islamic State killed the Yazidis and sold their (non-Muslim) women, and there are those who support to this day the idea of Muslims right to occupy the cities of the infidels (non-Muslims) and invite them to Islam". Tagesschau 24 linked the goals of Islamic movements in the region: Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic State. These organizations seek to implement Islamic law and threaten non-Muslims in the region to build Islamic states. There was also space for Yazidis who were raped and tortured. There are many Germ

Nadia Murad has been speaking for the Yazidis for almost two years, but with no clear result. According to the UN, ISIS killed around 5,000 Yazidis and abducted 7,000 women and girls. Those who survived and did not emigrate are waiting in camps. 3,000 Yazidis remain missing. Unfortunately, hardly anyone is interested in them. The Yazidis have experienced the worst. But for the people in the west, they are far away. What is missing is a big narrative. A figure who stands for genocide. Nadia's advisors say: Nobody personifies the suffering of her people as well as she does. Der Spiegel 28.10.2017

On the other hand, Der Spiegel highlighted the crimes committed by German citizens who belonged to the Islamic State. Hundreds of Europeans joined the extremist organization and reached the areas controlled by the Islamic State in Iraq and secretly via Turkey. The German girl Jennifer W and her Iraqi husband, Taha A, were tried in Germany on charges of buying a Yazidi child (5 years) with her husband.

According to the investigators, Taha A.-J. the Yazidi women to practice their own religion and forced them to convert to Islam, read the Koran and pray regularly. When the girl went to bed sick, the Iraqi is said to have chained her in the blazing sun in Fallujah, Iraq, as a punishment. There the child died of thirst in the scorching heat. Jennifer W. is said to have watched idly. Der Spiegel 11.10.2019

## Discussion and Conclusion

Despite the early coverage of Der Spiegel website and the Tagesschau 24, the two media outlets differed somewhat in their coverage of the Yazidi genocide by the Islamic State. Der Spiegel website adopted a critical position on the government in its news coverage, especially after the government's reluctance to help the Kurdistan region to defend itself against the terrorist organization that was advancing to occupy the city of Erbil, the capital of the region. Der Spiegel website gave more space to analyze events rather than narrate them and the relationship between terrorist organizations and political turmoil in the Middle East. After the liberation of the city of (Sinjar) and the defeat of the Islamic State in Iraq, the website of



Der Spiegel blamed the Iraqi government for its lack of a plan for the reconstruction of the city (Sinjar) and the villages inhabited by the Yazidis. While Tagesschau 24 gave a wider space to the developments of events and interviewed the families of the victims and the survivors, it also gave importance to the role of women (as victims) in the extermination of the Yazidis.

## References

- Der Spiegel, Euro Topics, via: <https://www.eurotopics.net/de/148789/der-spiegel>
- Moving Beyond Survival: Sixth Anniversary of Genocide of Yazidis and Christians, Aug. 7, 2020, via: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/moving-beyond-survival-sixth-anniversary-genocide-yazidis-and-christians>
- Valeria Cetorelli and Sareta Ashraph, A demographic documentation of ISIS's attack on the Yazidi village of Kocho, LSE Middle East Centre Report June 2019
- Six years after Sinjar, 2,800 Yazidis are missing and hundreds of thousands are in displacement camps (2020) UNs website, via Internet: <https://news.un.org/ar/story/2020/08/1059182>
- UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria: ISIS is committing genocide against the Yazidis, 16 June 2016, via: <https://www.ohchr.org/FR/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=20113&LangID=F>
- UN Team Says Islamic State Committed Genocide Against Yazidis, May 10, 2021, via: [https://www.voanews.com/a/middle-east\\_un-team-says-islamic-state-committed-genocide-against-yazidis/6205676.html](https://www.voanews.com/a/middle-east_un-team-says-islamic-state-committed-genocide-against-yazidis/6205676.html)
- Hawre Hasan Hama (2019) Framing the fall of Sinjar: Kurdish media's coverage of the Yazidi genocide, Middle Eastern Studies, Volume 55, Issue 5, P. 798-812
- Sherizaan Minwalla, Johanna E. Foster & Sarah McGrail (2020) Genocide, rape, and careless disregard: media ethics and the problematic reporting on Yazidi survivors of ISIS captivity, Feminist Media Studies, via Internet: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2020.1731699>
- Germany/Iraq: World's first judgment on crime of genocide against the Yazidis, November 30, 2021, Via: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/germany-iraq-worlds-first-judgment-on-crime-of-genocide-against-the-yazidis/>
- Luftbrücke zu den Jeziden, Sinjar, Irak / Michel Reimon:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IXK7I-6OvU>
- Kevin J. O'Brien (19 April 2004) International Herald Tribune, via: [https://web.archive.org/web/20080226184432/http://www.ihf.com/articles/2004/04/19/spiegel\\_ed3\\_.php](https://web.archive.org/web/20080226184432/http://www.ihf.com/articles/2004/04/19/spiegel_ed3_.php)
- The history of Der Spiegel (05.10.2011) via: <https://www.spiegel.de/international/six-decades-of-quality-journalism-the-history-of-der-spiegel-a-789853.html>
- Nazm Al Kaki (11.08.2014) Yazidis fleeing death in Sinjar, Aljazeera TV, via internet: <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2014/8/11/الإيزيديون-يفرون-من-الموت-بسنجر>
- Christian Thiels (31.07.2016) Interview zum Völkermord an Jesiden, über Internet: <https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/interview-tekkal-101.html>
- Gabriele Trost (23.07.2018) Geschichte der Fernsehnachrichten, übers Internet: <https://www.planetwissen.de/kultur/medien/fernsehnachrichten/pwiesgeschichtederfernsehnachrichten100.html>



- Ansgar Siemens (14.04.2019) Jesidin in Deutschland”Als Tochter war ich eine Sklavin”, Der Spiegel, über Internet: <https://www.spiegel.de/panorama/gesellschaft/jesidin-in-deutschland-als-tochter-war-ich-eine-sklavin-a-1255402.html>

- Camilla Østergaard Kristensen, 09 August 2021, The Yazidi Genocide, lack of justice and gender-based violence in genocides, via: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/the-yazidi-genocide-lack-of-justice-and-gender-based-violence-in-genocides>

## المُلخَص

حظيت عمليات الإبادة الجماعية للايزيديين على يد تنظيم الدولة الإسلامية باهتمام واسع في وسائل الإعلام الدولية. قتل تنظيم الدولة الإسلامية آلاف المدنيين وأسروا واعتصبوا بالنساء. رغم تأخر الموقف السياسي الغربي، تحديداً الموقف الألماني من احتلال داعش لمناطق الإيزيديين، كان للإعلام الألماني دور فاعل في تسليط الضوء على الجرائم التي ارتكبتها التنظيم وتحديد خطر التنظيم على مستقبل التعايش السلمي في محافظة نينوى، باعتبارها مركزاً للأقليات الدينية والعرقية في العراق. يسلط هذا البحث الضوء على خصائص التغطية الإعلامية الألمانية (قناة Tagesschau ٢٤ التلفزيونية ومجلة دير شبيغل Der Spiegel للفترة من ٢٠١٤ ولغاية ٢٠٢١) للإبادة الجماعية للأيزيديين، بدءاً من دخول الدولة الإسلامية إلى مناطقهم وقتل الآلاف من الرجال وأخذ النساء كعبيد واغتصابهن وبيعهن في سوق العبيد بمدينة الموصل. نستخدم في هذا البحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي لفهم النصوص الإعلامية التي تناولت الإبادة الجماعية للإيزيديين. خلص البحث إلى أن تغطية قناة Tagesschau ٢٤ ومجلة Der Spiegel كانت واسعة إلى حد كبير. كشفت التغطية الإخبارية للمؤسستين عن العلاقة بين سوء الإدارة والفضى السياسية في العراق ونجاح تنظيم الدولة الإسلامية في احتلال مناطق الإيزيديين. كان هناك تعاطف مع اليزيديين الذين تم إبادتهم بسبب انتمائهم الديني. الكلمات المفتاحية: إبادة جماعية، إيزيديون، داعش، تغطية إعلامية، وسائل الإعلام الألمانية