

Aso Center for Studies

In coordination with
Swaida Intellectual Digital Magazine

2026

The Druze at the Limits of Trauma and Collective Memory

Sami Daoud

Introduction:

Genocide generates among its survivors an awareness of the necessity to reorganize themselves according to a radically different conception of identity. When the very cause of a group's distinctiveness becomes the reason for its targeting, the violence it endures turns into a mechanism through which the group redefines itself and the way it is perceived in the eyes of its enemies. At that point, its relationship with the society it once imagined itself a part of—and by which it was annihilated—begins to fracture. The group then weaves for its identity its own connective fabric, envisioning itself as part of every individual who belongs to the targeted category, not because of internal homogeneity, but through a shared existential threat. Its relationship with the surrounding society gradually recedes into estrangement—not necessarily because that society is inherently hostile, but because it has transformed into a space where assumptions of safety and belonging have collapsed, and which, in the consciousness of the targeted group, becomes a parallel cultural world irreconcilable in the post-traumatic moment.

Within this framework, the cultural content of any group becomes the actual frontier of its existence, while geography shrinks to vast lines demarcating hostility. Along these reconstituted borders, dynamics of interaction and exclusion between groups take shape. This process does not presuppose a predetermined path or a single model for post-genocidal identity reconstruction, nor does it treat the targeted group as a closed, homogeneous unit. Rather, it seeks to understand the redrafting of cultural boundaries as a historical-cognitive process—one that emerges in response to violence aimed at total erasure, yet without erasing the

group's internal diversities or its conditional possibilities of engagement with the surrounding world.

Moreover, this reading does not carry any normative justification for the outcomes of reverting to a particularized identity; instead, it endeavors to deconstruct the conditions under which such reconstitution occurs—as a spontaneous response to an existential shock that reshapes the mutual gaze between victims and aggressors.

This article argues that the attempted genocide against the Druze of Syria in July 2025—and the accompanying systematic humiliation of their cultural symbols as an *ethno-spiritual group*, together with the destruction of the symbolic carriers of their identity—constituted a collective trauma that reorganized their self-awareness and perception of the Other. It compelled a redefinition of belonging within a social fabric that established a cognitive-cultural unity separating them from those who viewed them merely as potential subjects of extermination.

Accordingly, this study approaches the Sweida massacre through two interrelated conceptual frameworks: Frederick Barth's notion of *ethnic boundary maintenance*, used here as a tool for analyzing post-violence mechanisms; and Omer Bartov's conception of *perception and genocide*, serving as a framework for understanding the genocidal logic—the discourse that seeks to negate collective existence itself.

Policies of Humiliation

The internal violence in Syria, in one of its structural dimensions, rests on the political crime perpetrated by colonial powers following the First World War, when forced political borders were imposed on disparate native groups whose cultural and historical systems were dismantled—rendering the formation of a cohesive political nation an impossibility from its very inception. This legacy did not vanish; rather, it was later reproduced by new actors through policies that further shattered the social and cultural boundaries of indigenous groups, perpetuating political geography as a fragile arena of conflict rather than a field for intercultural dialogue and solidarity.

These structures interacted with the exclusionary policies structured by the Ba'ath Party within Syrian society—not merely as an authoritarian regime, but as an actor that reorganized the political community on artificial administrative bases, dividing society into ethnically and sectarianly opposed urban and local units. This dismantling deepened through tribal and sectarian carriers, mobilized to propagate a contradictory religious-political discourse aimed at entrenching the hegemony of

a doctrinal faction over power, while excluding all who refused to submit to the loyalty system woven by the Ba'athist military elite, in integration with networks of merchants and notables from cities and countryside, particularly in Damascus and Aleppo. In this context, exclusion was not the product of cultural difference per se, but the result of refusing subservience to the faction that had seized power and rejecting the abandonment of cultural particularity in favor of forced integration into an authoritarian system that intertwined religious and political violence to create a “savage state,” in the words of Michel Seurat.

Within this trajectory, the Druze faced systematic political exclusion and social denigration, employing religious pretexts with deceptive character. Since the eleventh century, this group has followed a distinct religious path based on esoteric belief, where faith is understood as a rational interpretation of God's oneness and the path to it, and as an ethical practice embodied in upholding covenants and human relations—not as mere declared doctrinal affiliation, for reason is “the central axis at the core of the doctrine of unity” (1). Hence, their spiritual path manifested in adherence to the spiritual idea without transforming into a proselytizing sect, rendering their cultural particularity susceptible to misunderstanding and hostile interpretation.

Yet this particularity placed the Druze—much like the Alawites and Yezidis—in the crosshairs of Sunni Salafi currents, which classified the Druze among the “deviant sects,” turning them into an invisible enemy in the Salafi imaginary. One of the early roots of this classification traces back to Abd al-Qahir al-Baghdadi (980–1037), a student of Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari with whom he differed intellectually, in his book *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* [The Differences Between the Sects], where he excommunicated all sects that believed in transmigration and esoteric doctrines (2).

This provided the jurisprudential foundation that would later nourish Ibn Taymiyyah's fatwa in the thirteenth century, which prohibited dealings with or intermarriage among the Druze (3). These fatwas were not mere religious rulings; they evolved into imaginary narratives portraying the Druze as a people withdrawn into an “opposing” creed, incompatible with the interests of tribes and groups that monopolized jurisprudential interpretation, binding it to their own benefits—thus turning interpretation into a tool of domination and its dissenters into enemies.

These exclusionary discourses accumulated over centuries, finding extension in the early twentieth century when Muhammad Kurd Ali—minister of education in successive Syrian governments—treated the Druze with contempt in his

magazine *al-Muqtabas* (4), at a time when Syria was merely Ottoman provinces mediated by ignorance, from which alone the conflicting imaginaries of its diverse peoples were formed. His characterizations were merely a modern reprise of older fatwas and an extension of narratives of rivalry for influence among peoples dispersed in southern Syria, on lands owned only by those who had marked their boundaries with blood—leaning on unequal alliances with colonial policies brought by the crumbling imperial powers after the two world wars.

This pattern of denigration continued in academic writings themselves, as when Hanna Batatu, in *Syria's Peasantry* (1999)—whose title matches that of French ethnographer Jacques Weulersse's *Syria's Peasantry and the Near East*, Gallimard 1946—stripped the Great Syrian Revolt led by Sultan Pasha al-Atrash of its national character, reducing it to a tribal chieftaincy act. He relied on an anonymous manuscript cited in a text by a Christian priest hostile to the Druze, ignoring the Druze-Maronite conflictual contexts (5), conflating the economic causes of landowner peasants with claims of the decline of the al-Atrash leadership, and once again drawing on a truncated British document (6). Thus, he reduced Sultan al-Atrash's role in the Syrian Revolt to a tribal chief's uprising exploiting his sect for personal gain, all based on a statement he attributes to al-Shihabandar about al-Atrash, claiming that Sultan told al-Shihabandar he was revolting to save his sect's honor and nothing more (7)—even though the Revolt's first proclamation, read by Sultan, had been drafted in coordination with Abd al-Rahman al-Shihabandar after their meeting in the village of “Kafr al-Luha” (8).

Though Hanna Batatu was not a specialist in the history of mentalities, he did not hesitate to assume fixed mental patterns among specific social groups, using these assumptions as classificatory criteria between peasant categories—heedless of the cognitive errors embedded in his words. This approach led him to reductive conclusions, including linking what he called the “mountain peasant” to a propensity for violence and emotionality, while ascribing “rationality” to plain and orchard peasants, presenting the Druze as the prime example of the former pattern. The issue here extends beyond the weak cognitive basis of these hypotheses to the cultural generalizations they impose, projecting ready-made mental classifications onto complex historical groups (9).

This methodological flaw becomes even clearer when Batatu bolsters it with an arbitrary quote from a text unrelated to the history of mentalities, but one bearing explicit hostility toward the Druze, excerpted from Gertrude Bell's *Syria: The Desert and the Sown* (London, 1919). This text, written in a purely colonial

context, reflects only the superficial impressions of a British intelligence officer at a moment when Britain was tearing apart the region's geography and dismantling its social and political structures. Accordingly, employing such a source as evidence of "mentalities" cannot be deemed scientific practice; it rather reveals a conflation of colonial literature and historical distortion (10).

Contrary to these claims, contemporary social facts show that the predominant origins of jihadist movement elements in Syria derive from plain and steppe regions, not from the mountainous areas inhabited by groups like the Druze and Alawites. Organizations such as the "Islamic State" and "Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham" took root within entrenched tribal structures in Idlib, Hama, Aleppo, Hauran, Deir ez-Zor, and Raqqa—regions that historically formed a social reservoir supporting the Ba'ath regime (11). With the U.S. and British authorization of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham's rule over Syria, tribal mobilization turned into a mechanism for organized violence, used to consolidate control through massacres and exclusion, without the "mountain peasant" being a structural party to these dynamics.

From another angle, Kurdish politician Nouredine Zaza recounts in his memoirs that in 1961 he was subjected to forced residence in the city of Sweida along with Kurdish officials and teachers, as the city was then used as a place of exile and punishment under harsh living conditions. Daily life there constituted a form of collective punishment (12). The Druze knew that Arabizing the name of Jabal al-Druze did not shield them from exclusion as a distinct group, and in the imagined horizon of the invading tribes, it offered only a tortuous thread of blood.

In July 2025, Bedouin hordes, alongside jihadist factions under the administration of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham led by Transitional President Ahmad al-Shara—former ISIS and Nusra Front element—advanced to invade Sweida. The assault did not confine itself to military operations but took on an organized theatrical character, using Druze victims' bodies as a canvas for imprinting techniques of torment and pent-up malice, accompanied by laughter and trampling of corpses. It assumed an organized form targeting the Druze community as a preferred sacrificial victim in a culture that criminalizes difference, steeped in the civil war—manifested in intertwined practices of physical and symbolic violence that transformed killing into a tool of publicly declared collective humiliation. Armed with mobile phones, scissors, and swords, they turned murder into a platform of degradation against the Druze and their religious symbols.

The United Nations Commission of Inquiry report documented the crimes of the new Syrian regime as follows:

“The attack resulted in the killing of 1,000 people, including at least 539 known Druze civilians—among them 39 women and 21 children. Reports also indicated the extrajudicial execution of at least 196 people, including eight children and 30 women. More than 33 villages were burned.

The experts added: ‘The scale of violence—including massacres, looting of homes, shops, and livestock, and the use of stolen phones for extortion—points to a systematic campaign targeting the Druze minority, fueled by hate incitement in media and social media platforms portraying them as allies of Israel.’”

The report further stated that:

“At least 105 Druze women and girls were abducted by armed groups affiliated with the interim Syrian authorities, with 80 still missing. Some released women cannot return home due to security fears. In at least three cases, Druze women were raped before execution” (13).

Transitional President Ahmad al-Shara / al-Julani thanked the Bedouin tribes that participated alongside his affiliated factions in the massacres against the Druze (14), thereby placing the crime within the tasks of his rule. This is precisely what the Ba’ath regime had done literally, using the same Bedouin tribes against the Druze in 2000, culminating in the Sweida Hospital massacre that resulted in the field killing of 22 Druze (15)—not to mention the pledging of numerous Bedouin clans to ISIS in 2015, where they received leadership positions in the organization that granted them the title of “Ansar” (16).

UN investigation committees’ reports on grave violations by Syrian armed factions, from their occupation of the Kurdish city of Afrin in 2018 to their latest massacres in Sweida, passing through other cities they traversed, reveal a consecration of a necrophilic criminal custom / a lust for corpses, and excess in victim torment. They treat killing as pleasure and a political act in their violence-centered culture. All they leave behind are looted and burned homes, rape of women—and sometimes of underage girls in front of their families—and systematic humiliation of victims, as was the case with the Druze, just as with the Alawites and Kurds: demolishing and desecrating these groups’ cultural and religious symbols, and demanding their conversion to Salafi doctrine (17). This reflects a systematic pattern that cannot be understood as circumstantial excess violence, but as a recurrent cultural-political practice in these factions’ behavior since controlling multiple areas. Accordingly, the violence of these factions cannot be seen merely as a military means but as their distinctive identity. Their violations

imbue violence with symbolic weight, intended to shatter the foundational carriers of targeted groups' identities and reproduce a relationship of domination based on humiliation and denial of dignity.

Thus, the Sweida massacre cannot be understood as an exceptional or isolated event apart from the broader trajectory of violence pursued by jihadist factions later incorporated into Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, forming with it a killing regime under the banner "We are the state and more." From the massacre in Qalb Lawza village in Idlib province in 2015, where twenty Druze civilians were killed—followed by displacement and forced religious conversion on remaining residents—a fixed pattern emerges of targeting groups classified as "minorities" as carriers of identities divergent from the Salafi-jihadist project (18). Reports from the Syrian Network for Human Rights, alongside subsequent UN reports, confirm that this trajectory did not cease but reproduced itself in different geographical spaces, retaining the same genocidal logic even if pretexts varied (19).

Therefore, the Druze massacre in Sweida constitutes a natural progeny of a criminal essence defining the cultural content of the factions that perpetrated it and the native groups these factions supply with human ammunition. It redraws the boundaries of identity interaction and exclusion that the Druze will delineate for his self-perception vis-à-vis the Other. For, according to Frederick Barth's precisely argued thesis, human material reorganizes itself according to criteria of values that represent its existence and differentiation from others (20). The sheer volume of humiliation borne by the Sweida massacre will form the point of no return in the Druze relationship with themselves—as an ethno-spiritual community—and in their relationship with their geographical surroundings, of which, in the foreseeable future, nothing remains but stones in hand awaiting the delayed emergence of the invaders.

A joint study by psychologists and sociologists from the Universities of Amsterdam and Bremen shows that humiliation constitutes a complex feeling whose suffering is hard to alleviate, tied exclusively to individual identity. While physical torture can be temporally classified on a relative scale of forgettability, humiliation lingers in memory as a festering dark loop that suppurates whenever recalled, repositioning the victim's existence around the degradation that stripped essential elements of their identity (21). When policies of humiliation target the symbolic carriers of identity—as in assaults on religious symbols, body mutilation, and coerced doctrinal conversion—the insult transforms into a collective experience transcending direct experience, reaching all who cognitively belong to

the targeted group, whether witnessing the event directly or via digital media. The scissors accompanying Druze killings—and appearing in demonstrations demanding their extermination in some Sunni Syrian cities—had the same impact on Druze in Syria or elsewhere.

Documenting practices of humiliation and disseminating them on digital platforms does not suffice with merely conveying the event; it reproduces it as an ongoing spectacle, endlessly retrieved in collective consciousness. In this context, the distance between perpetrator and spectator shrinks, turning the viewer into an implicit participant in recycling violence—whether through normalizing it, justifying it, or inciting it. This dynamic reinforces criminal behavior among perpetrators and deepens trauma among victims, where direct experience equates with vicarious experience in reactivating and reproducing humiliation.

The reason for the inability to ignore the humiliation experience stems from a fundamental difference between the feeling of humiliation and shame. The feeling of humiliation remains exclusively tied to how one views oneself, wounded in dignity independently of others' views. In contrast, the feeling of shame relates to the social gaze a group imposes on its members' behavior; thus, upon changing the social environment, shame can dissipate. Humiliation, however, remains embedded in the soul, gnawing from within at one's self-image. It cannot be escaped wherever one goes (22). When sown collectively, this feeling becomes part of collective memory, reshaping the group's relationship with its social space over the long term.

Thus, when the act of humiliation transforms into a collective theater intertwined with digital platforms, the spectator becomes a participant, vicariously adopting the executioner's role by providing pretexts for crimes and fueling them with hate speech. In this context, certain Arab media outlets—Al-Arabiya, Al-Jazeera, Al-Mashhad—emerged prominently, granting killers license to murder and bolstering violence through their misleading coverage of the Sweida massacre, framing it as a passing episode in a jihadist regime based on killing and tribal invasion. Thereby, the scissors, Kalashnikovs, and primitive appearance of the groups that invaded Sweida became mechanisms of separation between two cultures whose boundaries blood had carved, rendering impossible thereafter any mutual gaze without carrying the crime and its visceral emotions of anger, revenge, and condemnation.

In this sense, the reciprocal gaze between perpetrators and victims becomes the space where new social perceptions embody themselves, as a direct effect of violence that sought to negate collective existence itself.

What precedes provides a detailed embodiment of the concept intellectually rooted by historian Bartov in his analysis of genocide as a mirror of the killing society. The moral inversion of perpetrators, under ideological numbing, leads to celebrating genocide as a form of glory; the criminal justifies his joy in committing atrocities by classifying victims as enemies threatening national security. At that point, his destruction of the group he labels enemy—the Druze here—becomes an act of loyalty to the killing society, conflating massacre with glory for him (23).

Collective Memory and Trauma of the Sweida Massacre

Traumas and triumphs converge in shaping the narrative framework of collective memory, where events are not retrieved as neutral historical facts but as repositories of meaning from which symbols and foundational historical carriers are produced for the idea of the “imagined community.” Within this framework, the traumatic event may be invoked as heroism of salvation, embodied through the national hero as savior of a broken society—much like the symbolism of Sultan Pasha al-Atrash in the Druze collective consciousness—or re-narrated as a referential tragedy used to reestablish social bonds and repair fractured collective consciousness, such as the series of massacres inflicted upon the Druze in Syria since 2015 by Jabhat al-Nusra in Idlib, the 2018 massacre by ISIS, and 2025 by the Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham regime. All these crimes literally targeted the Druze identity, meaning, and continuity as a sect. And because memory does not merely preserve the past so much as reinterprets it to serve the community’s continuity and self-meaning, these massacres will transform into a semantic creator for post-genocidal Druze identity.

Trauma always arrives carried on new boundaries, whether in its relation to time or to aggressor groups, turning certain events into pivotal markers through which the moment of “birth from tragedy” is reimagined. Through visual narrations of the tragedy, the event becomes an active element in collective memory and a pivot for group identity—not necessarily because it is the most violent, but because it is the most symbolic and capable of drawing the line between “before” and “after.” According to Bernhard Giesen, trauma consecrates the moment of violent assault that tears the fabric of meaning and established social bonds, rendering consciousness unable to comprehend it at the moment of occurrence. Yet this incapacity does not erase the trauma; it postpones it, for it to return later in the form of rooted memory through which social bonds are reformulated and a meaningful history is constructed for the targeted group (24).

This process manifests clearly when linking the concept of trauma to Maurice Halbwachs's analysis of collective memory, where memories are not preserved within individuals isolated from the social frameworks that grant them continuity. Collective memory is retrieved through the presence of others and safeguarded from forgetting through shared circulation, making it more entrenched than individual memories that often succumb to repression and fading. In this sense, the past within the individual itself is redivided into private past and collective past, where unrepresentable individual experiences are excluded, while memories serving the encompassing narrative are amplified, granting it cohesion and identity through their cultural or social carriers that provide reason for persistence and constant presence before us (25).

According to a reading of the content of the incitement discourse broadcast by some Syrian and Gulf media figures at the time, accompanied by violent slogans and symbols (scissors and swords) that appeared in anti-Druze demonstrations, it becomes clear that the goal of the massacre was the comprehensive extermination of the Druze or stripping them of their Druzeness through two options: death or humiliation. Violence was thus translated from discourse into practice: manifested in mass killing, corpse mutilation, looting of possessions, and burning of homes and places of worship.

The violence was coupled with a clear theatrical dimension, embodied in some perpetrators documenting their acts and disseminating them—including parading among corpses, assaulting victims before cameras, throwing them from buildings, or abducting Druze women in front of media cameras. This imbued the crime with a spectacular character transcending the military or vengeful dimension to the level of symbolic catharsis. In contrast, the media discourse supporting the transitional authority proved incapable of approaching the event in its broader political and social context, as the Druze were sometimes presented as an internally divided domestic party, while simultaneously portrayed as a security threat, contributing to reproducing a narrative that weakens recognition of the crime's collective and organised nature.

The massacre occurred reinforced by religious and media discourse that provided it symbolic pretexts to transform evil into glory and violation into "religious victory," not content with merely re-narrating violence, but working to entrench it as a foundational moment for irreconcilable identities, and a symbolic act for redrawing boundaries between "us" and "them," incorporating genocide itself into the heart of the narrative foundational to the aggressor community/authority.

Thereby, the Druze necessarily becomes a self-symbolization of their identity that existentially distinguishes them, rendering them—because of it—a subject of killing.

Silence as Complice to Incitement

The recent ordeal of the Druze revealed the fragility of social and political bonds in Syria—which was never truly a state—where symbolic violence intertwined systematically with physical violence. Alongside the silence of segments of the social milieu, particularly from the Sunni component, a more painful factor emerged: overt incitement discourse targeting the Druze existence itself, promoted through certain Gulf channels and official Syrian television, accompanied by demonstrations in Sunni-majority cities that ended in direct assaults on Druze students and their expulsion from universities, driving numbers of them to forced displacement toward areas under Kurdish administration.

This context gains additional gravity from the Transitional President’s invocation of a tribal concept known as “al-faza’a,” a primitive notion originating in Bedouin societies as a collective mobilisation mechanism for protection or invasion amid absent legal institutions. Activating this concept in a contemporary political context constitutes a deliberate process of “sectarianizing” and “tribalizing” the conflict, transforming it from a political dispute into an existential native confrontation. This mechanism ranks among the political customs adopted by the Ba’ath regime for decades, aimed at depoliticising all conflict with it.

This trajectory recalls what the same government previously did when it announced, through religious pulpits, a call for what was termed the “general mobilisation” to attack Alawite areas, leading to the March 2025 massacre that claimed thousands of civilian lives. In the same context, a member of the Popular Peace Committee, Anas Ayroot, thanks the tribes that participated alongside government factions in the Sweida invasion, confirming the process of lending political and moral legitimacy to organised native violence (26).

On the media level, Al Jazeera and Al-Arabiya channels played a central role in producing a misleading narrative, accusing the Druze of committing massacres against Bedouins and government armed factions—in stark contradiction to United Nations and Amnesty International reports (27) and Human Rights Watch (28), which documented different patterns of violations against Druze civilians. This disparity reveals the level of incitement and contribution these channels made to

the massacres against Alawites and Druze, not to mention demonizing Kurds in Syria since the fall of the Ba'ath regime (29).

The Druze experience here intersects with that of the Yazidis during the Islamic State (ISIS) invasion of their areas, when survivors reported that the violence did not come from the organization alone, but local Sunni Arab neighbors joined ISIS, providing logistical and informational support (30), and participated in abductions and trafficking of women in slave markets extending from Mosul to areas in northern Syria, including “Uqab” prison in Idlib, then under Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham administration (31).

This similarity does not aim to assume complete parallelism between the contexts, but to highlight a recurrent pattern of communal violence and the failure of the “good neighborliness” idea in weaving cross-identity social or national relations. Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham’s resort to theologizing politics, politicizing primary identities, turning social neighborliness into a killing tool, dismantling civil structures, and—like the Ba’ath regime—shattering any possibility of transforming the social fabric into a national one, evolves into a form of political resistance against the transitional authority’s violence.

The massacres inflicted upon the Druze by the Ba’ath regime in 2000, Jabhat al-Nusra in 2015, the Islamic State (ISIS) in 2018, and Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham in 2025 will interlink to produce a foundational narrative for Druze identity on the horizon of genocide. The Druze will not forget that he is the son of his violated identity, nor the silence that shrouded the conscience of those who shared with them the dream of a dignified life within a geography fractured by history and blood. He will not forget the scissors with which elder “Marhej Shahin” was humiliated. He will not forget the invaders’ laughter as they took pleasure in throwing young Druze from their home balconies after executing them, nor the Druze women raped before being killed.

Samiha Shaqir’s song “Ghazwat Humaj wa Silah” [Invasion of Savagery and Arms] will remain present in memory—not as lamentation, but as a perpetual act of reminder, rebuilding Druze identity with greater resilience, and with eyes wide open to their fullest, the Druze will stare into the massacre so that it never happens again.

References:

- (1) Sulayman Sulaym ‘Ilm al-Din, *Da’wat al-Tawhid al-Durziyya: al-Madaris al-Fikriyya wa al-Tayarat al-Siyasiyya*. Beirut: Dar Nufal, 1998, pp. 235–236.
- (2) Abd al-Qahir al-Baghdadi: *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*. Ed. Muhammad ‘Uthman al-Khusht. Cairo: Dar Ibn Sina, 1988, pp. 203–204.
- (3) *Majmu’ Fatawa Ibn Taymiyyah*, Vol. 3, Fiqh, Bab Hukm al-Murtad, Mas’ala Hukm al-Duruz wa al-Nusayriyya. Electronic version on IslamWeb, p. 161, available at: <https://isla.mw/ao1zth>
- (4) Muhammad Kurd ‘Ali, “Jabal al-Duruz wa Fitnatihim,” *Majallat al-Muqtabas*, No. 4, Damascus, April 1, 1910, p. 307.
- (5) Hanna Batatu, *Fallah Surya: Awlad Wujaha’ihim al-Rifiyyin al-Aqall Shaan wa Siyasatihim*. Trans. ‘Abd Allah Fadl and Ra’id Naqshbandi. Beirut: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 2014, p. 223.
- (6) *Ibid.*, p. 229.
- (7) *Ibid.*
- (8) ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Shihabandar, *al-Mudhakkirat*. Beirut: Dar al-Irshad, 1967, pp. 169–170.
- (9) Hanna Batatu, *Fallah Surya: Awlad Wujaha’ihim al-Rifiyyin al-Aqall Shaan wa Siyasatihim*, op. cit., p. 43.
- (10) *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- (11) Khadr Khaddur and Kevin Mazur, “Tuqayyulat min al-Sharq: al-Dinamikiyyat al-Mutaghayyira fi al-Mintaq al-Qabiliyya al-Suriyya,” Malcolm Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, February 28, 2017, available at: <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2017/02/eastern-expectations-the-changing-dynamics-in-syrias-tribal-regions?lang=ar>
- (12) Nureddin Zaza, *Hayati al-Kurdiyya*. Trans. Runi Muhammad Dumli. Erbil: Dar Aras, 2001, p. 177.
- (13) Special Procedures, “Syria: UN experts alarmed by attacks on Druze communities, including sexual violence against women and girls,” Geneva, August 21, 2025, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/08/syria-un-experts-alarmed-attacks-druze-communities-including-sexual-violenceohchr>

(14) Speech of Ahmad al-Shara on Sweida events. On YouTube, July 19, 2025, 03:05 minute mark, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULAdkrZTqxA>

(15) Yusuf Fakhraldin and Homam al-Khatib, *al-Tawzif fi al-Sara'at al-Diddiyya: Sultah al-Asad wa Tandhim al-Dawla al-Islamiyya*. Publications of the Center for Democratic Republic Studies and the Syrian Center for Legal Studies, 2020, p. 19.

(16) Ibid., p. 99.

(17) United Nations, General Assembly, *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic*, September 14–October 2, 2020, articles 56/59/60/63/64, pp. 13/16, available at: <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/45/31>

(18) *Al-Quds al-Arabi*: “One resident of the ‘Druze’ villages in rural Idlib: ‘Jabhat al-Nusra’ began building small mosques and imposed Salafi-jihadist teachings on us,” February 17, 2015: <https://2u.pw/wWIBha/>

(19) Syrian Network for Human Rights, “Report: Key Violations by Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham Since the Founding of Jabhat al-Nusra,” January 31, 2022, available at: <https://2u.pw/vNR8o>

(20) Barth, Frederick, “Les groupes ethniques et leurs frontières,” in Poutignat, P. et J. Streiff-Fenart, *Théories de l’ethnicité*, Paris: PUF, pp. 203–249.

(21) Mann L, Feddes AR, Leiser A, Doosje B and Fischer AH (2017) “When Is Humiliation More Intense? The Role of Audience Laughter and Threats to the Self.” *Front. Psychol.* 8:495. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00495

(22) Ibid.

(23) Omer Bartov, *Mirrors of Destruction: War, Genocide, and Modern Identity*, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 29–30.

(24) Bernhard Giesen, “Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity: The Trauma of Perpetrators, the Holocaust as the Traumatic Reference of German National Identity,” University of California Press, Berkeley, California, 2004, pp. 113–114.

(25) Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective*, digital version produced by Mme Lorraine Audy and Jean-Marie, in the collection “Les classiques des sciences sociales,” 2001, pp. 27–28.

(26) “Calls to Declare Sweida Afflicted / al-Shara Insists: We Fight with Tribes,” *Al-Akhbar* newspaper, July 19, 2025, available at: <https://2u.pw/ReN2k>

(27) Amnesty International, “Syria: New investigation reveals evidence government and affiliated forces extrajudicially executed dozens of Druze people in Suwayda,” September 2, 2025, available at: <https://2u.pw/3RNvn>

(28) Human Rights Watch, “Syria: Abuses, Humanitarian Emergency Amid Sweida Clashes,” July 22, 2025, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/07/22/syria-abuses-humanitarian-emergency-amid-sweida-clashes>

(29) Ra’fat Abazid, “Massacre and Mass Displacement of Bedouins from Rural Sweida After Army Withdrawal,” *Al Jazeera Net*, July 17, 2025, available at: <https://2u.pw/sbfMX>

(30) Giselle Khoury, *Al-Mashhad* program on BBC Arabic. “The Yezidi Tragedy in Iraq,” testimony of Layla Talo, *Al-Mashhad* on BBC Arabic, November 8, 2018, 03:04 minute mark, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Et0BMIoflO8>

(31) Lamar Arkandi: “Six Years in Hell,” Shocking Testimony from Shireehan Rasho, *Sky News Arabia*, December 25, 2020, available at: <https://www.skynewsarabia.com/middle-east/1403054>

P.S: The original text, submitted by the author in Arabic, has been translated into French and/or English using artificial intelligence tools, with subsequent human revision to ensure accuracy. The original Arabic version remains the definitive reference for the author’s ideas, arguments, and scientific content, and is consulted in case of any discrepancies or interpretive issues between language versions

Swaida Intellectual Digital Magazine. (2026). Vol. 1(3). ISSN: 3099-3172 (online).