

# Media Black-Out on Arab Journalists and Civilians Beheaded in Syria by Western-Backed Mercenaries

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*Who outside of Syria knows the names Yara Abbas, Maya Naser, Mohamed al-Saeed...? The corporate media has inundated us with news of the two American journalists allegedly beheaded, the first of whose execution video has been [deemedfaked](#). But what of the non-Western journalists and civilians [beheaded](#) and murdered by ISIS, al-Nusra, and associated terrorists in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine?*

*Why didn't the August 2012 execution (which [some reported](#) as a beheading) of TV presenter [Mohamed al-Saeed](#), claimed by the Nusra gang, create the same outrage? Or the [December 2013 kidnapping and point blank execution](#) in Idlib by ISIS of Iraqi journalist Yasser al-Jumaili?*

Why wasn't [the murder of](#) Yara [Abbas](#)—a journalist with al-Ikhbariyya, whose crew's car was attacked by an insurgent sniper—broadcast on Western television stations? Or that of Lebanese cameraman for al-Mayadeen, [Omar Abdel Qader](#), shot dead by an insurgent sniper on March 8, 2014 in eastern Syria.

[Maya Naser](#), [Ali Abbas](#), [Hamza Hajj Hassan](#) (Lebanese), [Mohamad Muntish](#) (Lebanese), [Halim Alou](#) (Lebanese)...all were media workers killed by the Western-backed insurgents in Syria. Their deaths were reported by local media, some even got a passing notice in corporate media, but none resulted in a media frenzy of horror and condemnations as came with the alleged killings of Westerners. Another at least 20 Arab journalists have been killed by NATO's death squads in Syria in the past few years.

The [killing of 16 Palestinian journalists](#) in Gaza, at least 7 targeted while working, during the July/August 2014 Zionist Genocide of Gaza, also fell on deaf ears. Nor were the previous years of murdering Palestinian journalists noted, let alone whipped into a media frenzy. [see also: [Silencing the Press, Sixteenth Report, Documentation of Israeli Attacks against Media Personnel in the opt](#) ]

In Syria, there are thousands of civilians and Syrian soldiers who have been [beheaded](#)—and in far more brutal and realistic manner than the SITE videos insinuate—by the so-called “moderate” Free Syrian Army (FSA), al-Nusra, Da'esh (ISIS), and hoards of other Western-backed mercenaries. At the hands of the various NATO-gangs, tens of thousands more civilians have been assassinated and subjected to various sadistic practices—torture, mutilation, crucifixion, burning in ovens, throwing into wells, and a sick lot more. Thousands more, including children and women, remain missing after being kidnapped during mercenary raids and massacres.

Nidal Jannoud, a farmer from Baniyas (southwestern Syria), was one of the earlier victims of “moderate rebel” assassination. Jannoud was tortured and slaughtered by “peaceful demonstrators” in April, 2011. Omar Ayrout and Yahya Al Rayes [confessed](#) later that they aided a mob in killing Janoud. “I heard gunfire and saw a group of people detaining Jannoud....I took a knife from Taha al-Daye and stabbed Jannoud in his right shoulder...Then the group attacked him with knives and mutilated his body afterwards,” [Yahya al-Rayyis confessed](#).

In the case of the [organ-eating al-Farouq Brigade militant](#) “Abu Sakkar,” who bit into the lung out of a Syrian soldier, there was corporate media notice and general horror. Yet, very quickly corporate media like the BBC, The Guardian, TIME, among others, rushed to justify his cannibalism (see: [Face-to-face with Abu Sakkar, Syria’s ‘heart-eating cannibal’](#) and [BBC whitewashes Syria ‘heart-eating cannibal’ to justify arming al-Qaeda](#)). How the tides would have turned if the lung in question belonged to a Western soldier, or worse, an “Israeli” soldier... would the BBC have then humanized the perpetrator of this barbaric act? Would the world have so quickly moved on, forgotten? Of course not.

Apart from the thousands more individual slaughters, there are also numerous massacres, mostly overlooked or simply lied about in the media.

In Raqqa, overtaken by al-Nusra and the so-called FSA in March 2013, then two months later by ISIS, civilians have faced floggings (including [whipping of women](#)), [executions](#) and [crucifixions](#)...with [bodies left on public display](#) for days, usually for the “crime” of supporting President Assad and the Syrian army, and often for the “crimes” of not living up to the warped version of Islam by their executioners. [see also: [Raqqa Being Slaughtered Silently](#)]

With the May 2012 slaughter of 108 Houla civilians (including 49 children and 34 women)—among them patients in a hospital and entire families in their homes—most corporate media and political fingers pointed at the Syrian Arab Army as the culprits, without a shred of evidence. The BBC brandished Italian journalist [Marco Di Lauro’s](#) image [of dead Iraqi civilians](#) in shrouds, claiming it to portray Houla victims. Upon demand of the aghast journalist, the claim was later retracted and corrected, [an “accident”](#)...but who was listening by that point? Once the trickery of the BBC and other corporate media was revealed, the massacre was no longer newsworthy. [see: [“Syria: Media Lies, Hidden Agendas and Strange Alliances”](#) and [“Syria : One Year After the Houla Massacre. New Report on Official vs. Real Truth”](#) and [“Syria’s ‘false flag’ terrorism, Houla and the United Nations”](#)]

While later investigations into Houla revealed the culpability of the so-called insurgents, the MSM had already moved on, leaving the average person confused, or stuck with the initial lies. Investigative articles aside, there was the [confession of an insurgent member](#) who was present that Friday in Houla:

“...we’d been asked by our supporters from outside to do something to inflame the situation...The planning came from outside...On Friday after prayers, a large number of armed men came...they didn’t enter the mosque or pray. ...The goal was to attack an army checkpoint and to liquidate these families supportive of the government. There were men, like Haytham al-Hassan, who had weapons including a cleaver. They butchered families....They sent people

to announce that 'Shabbiha' had entered the village and slaughtered everyone. I was there. There were no Shabbiha."

The December 2012 slaughter in Aqrab of at least 150 Alawites was likewise misreported, in spite of survivor testimonies. The UK Channel 4's Alex Thomson met Aqrab survivors whose separately-given [accounts corroborated](#) one another:

"...our eyewitnesses say Sunni rebels took hundreds of Alawite civilians as prisoner," noted Thomson, [also writing](#), "They all insist...rebels from the Free Syrian Army (FSA) corralled around 500 Alawite civilians in a large red-coloured two-storey house..." kept there for 11 days.

"They had long beards, and sometimes you couldn't quite understand what they said. They were not dressed in the normal way," said one survivor, Madlyan Hosin. A second interviewee, Hayat Youseh, said, "...they forced us out of our homes and set fire to them."

A Syrian from a village three kilometers from Aqrab told me, "When Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya started saying that the Syrian Arab Army had attacked Aqrab, I went there to find out. I interviewed a lady from Aqrab who said that no army had come near there at the time of the massacre."

Kassab, a predominantly Armenian Christian village near the Turkish border, came under heavy assault earlier this year by insurgents and Turkish soldiers. Kim Kardashian [tweeted](#) about Kassab...then, otherwise, the world largely forgot. In Latakia, some of Kassab's internally-displaced spoke of the March 21, 2014 assault originating from Turkey. One young woman [reported that](#) the insurgents "raped our older women because they couldn't find any girls."

According to a Latakia resident, with friends and a home in Kassab, 88 Christians were murdered, 13 of whom were beheaded, others who were shot dead on the spot. Another 22 elderly were kidnapped and taken to Turkey where they were held for about three months before being released into Lebanon.

The fact that Christians were murdered by foreign mercenaries, let alone beheaded, should have created shock waves in the media. But, not surprisingly, it has had the exact opposite effect, because spotlighting those crimes doesn't serve the West's [stated agenda to overthrow President Assad](#), to [dismember Syria](#) as the NATO-backed takfiris are dismembering Syrians.

In the case of the Kassab massacre, it became transparent that the lack of any governmental/political condemnation of the massacre and kidnappings was not due to lack of knowledge: Turkey helped commit the attack and housed the kidnapped [see: [NATO and Turkey's Genocidal War on Syria](#) and [Searching for casus belli: Turkey's assault on Kassab?](#)]; the West's darling, Ahmed Jarba, [visited soon after](#), sitting with "what appeared to be local rebel commanders in a house that was said to be in Latakia province," the [Daily Star reported](#), noting "Jarba also said 'the Coalition has provided assistance to (fighters on) the front', according to his office."

Four months after [it was liberated](#) of the terrorists, most of the displaced from Kassab still have not returned to their desecrated and looted homes. According to a Latakia resident

who keeps informed on Kassab, “The roads are fairly safe, but they have been targeted by short range missiles and mortars from Turkey. The ‘threat’ of attack and lack of money or resources to rebuild their homes and shops has kept most away. A handful will have enough money to repair, and those who are dirt poor may freeze this winter.”

The [August 2013 insurgent massacre and kidnappings](#) in the villages of Balouta, Hambushiya, and a number of other agricultural hamlets in the Latakia countryside did briefly receive some corporate media coverage...and also absolutely zero international outrage. That outrage was reserved for the [falsified sarin gas attacks](#) not long after, using the kidnapped children to stage their videos. [For a very detailed account of the Latakia massacre and its relation to FSA-falsified Sarin gas videos, see: [“Combating the Propaganda Machine in Syria”](#)]

In the nearly two weeks of attacks on these rural hamlets, 220 civilians were massacred (according to doctors in a Latakia hospital), including infants, children, women, and elderly—even a nonagenarian. At least one hundred were kidnapped (mostly children, some women), only 44 of which were nine months later released. These kidnap survivors spoke of torture at the hands of their “moderate rebel” captors. Al Akhbar [reported that](#) “according to another freed child, the fighters gouged out the eyes of one of the abducted children.”

The assault took place by roughly [20 coordinated factions, including ISIS](#), Jabhat al-Nusra, and the so-called FSA (with the knowledge and approval of the SNC’s George Sabra).

But, there was no outcry by the humanitarian, would-be interventionists and their public.

Two months after the fact, the Guardian’s [Jonathan Steele reported](#) on the attacks, including the insurgents’ move early on August 4 from their base in nearby Salma village to attack the Latakia countryside. Surprisingly, the article actually quoted Syrian Arab Army and National Defence Forces (NDF) officers’ testimonies:

Special forces officer Hassan told Steele, “I heard a rebel telling another rebel: ‘Kill this one, but not that one’. One rebel asked: ‘What do I do about the girls?’ The answer came: ‘I’m sending a truck to pick them up’. Several were taken and raped, and have not been seen again.”

NDF officer Shadi told Steele, “When we got into the village of Balouta I saw a baby’s head hanging from a tree. There was a woman’s body which had been sliced in half from head to toe and each half was hanging from separate apple trees.”

SAA soldier Ali told Steele, “We found two mass graves with 140 bodies. They were not shot. They had their throats slit. About 105 people of different ages were kidnapped...Salafists from abroad were behind the attack.”

In a separate [video interview](#), a resident of one of the villages (unnamed for his safety) testifies:

“There were Chechen, Libyan, Saudi, and Afghan terrorists among them....One group was killing people by swords. And the other group was running after those who had been able to escape and killing them by shooting them....They broke into house while people were sleeping and beheaded them. They removed the foetus of a pregnant woman. I lost 42 from my family. Some of

them were killed and others arrested (kidnapped).”

In the face of mounds of evidence, eyewitness testimony, mass graves, doctor and coroner reports of death by throat slitting, the massacre in Latakia resulted again in none of the fervor that we’ve seen in recent months...in spite of 220 civilians being brutally massacred, another 100—mostly children—abducted by the West’s freedom-loving terrorists.

Twenty km north of Damascus, Adra industrial town suffered horrific atrocities that went largely unreported in the corporate media. The town came under Jabhat al-Nusra and Liwa Al-Islam insurgents attack on December 11, 2013, [Russia Today reported](#), massacring at least 80 residents.

In another report, [Russia Today interviewed](#) eyewitnesses, one of whom said:

“There was slaughter everywhere...The eldest was only 20 years old; he was slaughtered. They were all children. I saw them with my own eyes. They killed fourteen people with a machete. I don’t know if these people were Alawites. I don’t know why they were slaughtered. They grabbed them by their heads and slaughtered them like sheep.”

In addition to the massacre of entire families”, bakery workers were executed and “toasted...in ovens used to bake bread ,” an Adra resident [told RT](#).

Professor [Tim Anderson’s report](#) noted “Beheaded bodies from Adra were proudly displayed by the terrorists... Severed heads were also said to have been hung from trees.”

In Latakia city in April, 2014, I met refugees from Harem, a northwestern city 2 km from the Turkish border, who had fled after Harem came under attack by [McCain’s moderates](#), with the help of Turkey.

One man told me:

“The terrorists attacked us, terrorists from Turkey, from Chechnya, and from Arab and other foreign countries. They had tanks and guns, like an army, just like an army. For 73 days we were surrounded in the citadel of Harem. They hit us with all kinds of weapons. We had women and children with us. They showed no mercy. When they caught any of us, they slaughtered him, and then send his head back to us. They killed over 100 people, and kidnapped around 150... children, civilians, soldiers. Until now, we don’t know what’s happened to them.”



Harem refugee in Latakia centre speaks of atrocities committed by foreign insurgents.  
Photo by Eva Bartlett.

The first Turkish-backed attacks on Harem were in September, 2012, and by October 31, [al Akhbar reported](#) that 4,000 civilians were under siege in the town fortress, warning of a potential massacre by insurgents who are “known to have been supplied with Turkish-made short-range missiles and launchers mounted on four-wheel drive vehicles, as well as an abundance of mortars.” The report also noted Turkey’s role in treating the FSA terrorists: “the FSA wounded are transported across the border to Turkey in ambulances,” and in killing Harem residents: “Dozens of people were killed in Harem’s al-Tarmeh neighborhood after it was subject to a missile bombardment from a Turkish police station.”

Once again, the FSA and ISIS attack was misreported in the corporate media, and the kidnappings of Harem residents not reported period. The situation of occupied Harem has been non existent in the media since. Breaking that silence, on October 12, Twitter user “[Nutsflipped @Nutsflipped\\_z\\_1](#)” tweeted a series of updates on Harem:

“I just talked to someone from [#Harem](#) near the Turkish borders. 60 SAA held off 5000 Islamist all coming from [#Turkey](#) for 1 year.[#Syria](#)

They literally killed 1000s of attackers, until the Turks gave Islamist Grad MLRS and flooded the town with fighters from [#Turkey](#). [#Syria](#)

[#Kobani](#), [#Kessab](#) and [#Harem](#), cities in [#Syria](#) near the Turkish border attacked in the same manner by Islamist coming from [#Turkey](#).”

In a personal message, he explained further. His information, he said, is from a contact from Harem now displaced who has “lost many male relatives. Executed. He was almost executed himself fleeing.”

“ISIS is genociding the natives of Harem, throwing their bodies in caves, selling their women and children. This has been going on since 2012, it was first FSA but they were losing. Then Turkey unleashed ISIS. Now ISIS has stepped up the massacre. Turkey is behind this. The West turns a blind eye. Turkey did the same thing all across the border.”

Some of the most recent massacres and atrocities at the hand of the Western/NATO/Gulf-backed/financed/trained terrorists that have gotten scant notice or tears include:

- The [August 28 and September 6 beheadings](#) of Ali al-Sayyed and Abbas Medlej respectively, and the [September 20 execution of MohammadHamiyeh](#), all Lebanese soldiers (captured with another 16 other soldiers) by ISIS and al-Nusra.
- The October 1 terrorist double-bombings just outside the Ekrima al-Jadida school, killing 33 (mostly children), and injuring 102 (many seriously). [Syria’s Foreign and Expatriates Ministry denounced](#) the “international community” on the failure “to issue a clear condemnation of the atrocities committed by terrorist organizations in Syria...” [[photos](#)]
- The relentless stream of mortar and missile attacks on civilian areas which SANA reports have killed 296 civilians and injured 1487 in August and September alone. [see my: [The Terrorism We Support in Syria: A First-hand Account of the Use of Mortars against Civilians](#)]
- The [October 10 ISIS beheading](#) of Iraqi cameraman [Raad Mohamed al-Azaoui](#)
- The [October 13 ISIS execution](#) of Iraqi journalist Mohanad al-Aqidi [disputed by family]
- Most recently, the highly suspect car crash death of American-Lebanese journalist, Serena Shim, whose timely “accident” occurred just days after she revealed [on air with Press TV](#) that she’d been accused by Turkish intelligence of spying, that she was afraid. Shim had extensively [reported on Turkey’s role](#) in supporting and funneling terrorists into Syria. [see: [The Death of a Reporter](#)]

Shim’s suspect death went unnoticed by corporate media for at least a day; were she a Western journalist who died—accident or assassination—all the major media would have been broadcasting her death endlessly. [see: [Journalists under attack, hypocritical Western media remains silent](#)]

And this is the point. The murders of non-Westerners—whether in Syria, Palestine or elsewhere—doesn’t matter to the media and public, unless it serves an Imperialist or Zionist agenda.

In fact, supremacism and racism aside, the only reason the alleged-beheadings of the two Western journalists, among others, is really being trumpeted and shoved down our fear-mongered throats is that these questionable stories serve perfectly the Axis-of-Destruction’s agenda: a justification to bomb Iraq and Syria, to re-invade, to attempt to implement the [Yinon Plan](#).

The murders of Syrians and other Arab journalists and civilians by NATO thugs are not forgotten, even if the corporate media would have it otherwise. And whereas the corporate media shirks their obligation to report these murders, let alone to report honestly on the real agenda to oust President Assad and destroy Syria as per Iraq, Libya, independent journalists, activists, and concerned pro-resistance people must fill the gap.

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