

Title: Preliminary proposal for encoding the Yezidi script in the SMP of the UCS

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1. Introduction.

The Yezidi script has a long history. According to some data, it dates back to the 13–14th centuries, while some scientists place the creation of this writing system in the 17–18th centuries (Amoêv 1999). The author of the script is unknown. The Yezidi script was used to write two manuscripts, *Maşhaf Raş* and *Ktêbî Jalweh*, first published by Anastase Marie (1911), see samples in Figs. 1–2, while earlier manuscripts of the same titles were known in Arabic.

Texts in the Yezidi script are in the Kurmanji language known also as Northern Kurdish

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Kurdish; <https://www.ethnologue.com/language/kmr>)

A decade ago, an attempt was made in Iraq to revive the script, even a Yezidi-Arabic dictionary was published. Unfortunately, in view of complex political and social situation the Yezidis live in, this idea has not been developed further.

In 2013, the Spiritual Council of Yezidis in Georgia decided to revive the Yezidi script and use it to write prayers, sacred books, on the organization letterhead (see Fig. 3), in the Yezidi heraldry, etc. For this purpose, two orientalists and specialists, Kêrîm Amoêv and Dimitri Pirbari, modernized the Yezidi alphabet and adapted it to the phonetic features of the modern Yezidi language. The book *Yezidi script* was published (Pirbari & Amoêv 2013), where each letter and its phonetic value are described in detail. Today the Yezidi script is used by clergymen in the Yezidi temple in Tbilisi. On the walls of the temple, the names of saints are also written in this alphabet (see Figs. 4–5). A book of prayers *Dua'yêd Êzdiyan* in the Yezidi script has been published recently (see sample pages in Figs. 6–7).

2. Structure. Yezidi is an alphabetic script written right to left in horizontal lines. Modern version of the alphabet includes letters both for consonants and vowels. Letters are written apart, unlike the Arabic script. In historical texts, some ligatures occur: 𐌗 (l-t), 𐌘 (l-c), 𐌙 (l-q), 𐌚 (l-k), 𐌛 (l-y), 𐌜 (l-v). Such ligatures are not used in the modern version of the Yezidi alphabet, but the joining behavior can be specified as an optional feature of the font.

3. Collating order. Collation order is that in the code chart. It is based on that proposed in the book by Pirbari & Amoêv (2013). Historical letters no longer used in the modern script (SE, ZE, DAL, ZAL) are placed after the main sequence. Note that the original order of letters was based on the Perso-Arabic script, cf. Fig. 8.

4. Character names. The usual UCS conventions are used. Glottalization is marked by H (PE versus PHE).

5. Linebreaking. Letters and digits behave as do the letters and numbers in Arabic. However, YEZIDI HYPHENATION MARK can be placed above the last letter in the line to denote word breaks.

6. Punctuation and digits. No script-specific punctuation is known in Yezidi, ⟨ ٫ ⟩ ARABIC COMMA (U+060C), ⟨ ٫ ⟩ ARABIC SEMICOLON (U+061B), and ⟨ ؟ ⟩ ARABIC QUESTION MARK (U+061F) can be used additionally to ordinary FULL STOP and COLON. Arabic digits (U+0660...U+0669) are applied (cf. Anastase 1911).

7. Unicode Character Names.

1ED50	Ⲁ	YEZIDI LETTER ELIF
1ED51	ⲁ	YEZIDI LETTER BE
1ED52	Ⲃ	YEZIDI LETTER PE
1ED53	ⲃ	YEZIDI LETTER PHE
1ED54	Ⲅ	YEZIDI LETTER THE
1ED55	ⲅ	YEZIDI LETTER CIM
1ED56	Ⲇ	YEZIDI LETTER CHIM
1ED57	ⲇ	YEZIDI LETTER CHHIM
1ED58	Ⲉ	YEZIDI LETTER HHA
1ED59	ⲉ	YEZIDI LETTER XA
1ED5A	Ⲋ	YEZIDI LETTER DAL
1ED5B	ⲋ	YEZIDI LETTER RA
1ED5C	Ⲍ	YEZIDI LETTER RHA
1ED5D	ⲍ	YEZIDI LETTER ZA
1ED5E	Ⲏ	YEZIDI LETTER JA
1ED5F	ⲏ	YEZIDI LETTER SIN
1ED60	Ⲑ	YEZIDI LETTER SHIN
1ED61	ⲑ	YEZIDI LETTER TA
1ED62	Ⲓ	YEZIDI LETTER EYN
1ED63	ⲓ	YEZIDI LETTER XHEYN
1ED64	Ⲕ	YEZIDI LETTER FA
1ED65	ⲕ	YEZIDI LETTER SAD
1ED66	Ⲗ	YEZIDI LETTER VA
1ED67	ⲗ	YEZIDI LETTER VA ALTERNATE FORM
1ED68	Ⲙ	YEZIDI LETTER QAF
1ED69	ⲙ	YEZIDI LETTER KAF
1ED6A	Ⲛ	YEZIDI LETTER KHAF
1ED6B	ⲛ	YEZIDI LETTER GAF
1ED6C	Ⲝ	YEZIDI LETTER LAM
1ED6D	ⲝ	YEZIDI LETTER MIM

1ED6E	𐤎	YEZIDI LETTER NUN
1ED6F	𐤏	YEZIDI LETTER UM
1ED70	𐤐	YEZIDI LETTER UUM
1ED71	𐤑	YEZIDI LETTER WAW
1ED72	𐤒	YEZIDI LETTER OW
1ED73	𐤓	YEZIDI LETTER EW
1ED74	𐤔	YEZIDI LETTER HAY
1ED75	𐤕	YEZIDI LETTER YOT
1ED76	𐤖	YEZIDI LETTER ET
1ED77	𐤗	YEZIDI LETTER SE
1ED78	𐤘	YEZIDI LETTER ZE
1ED79	𐤙	YEZIDI LETTER DAD
1ED7A	𐤚	YEZIDI LETTER ZAL
1ED7B	𐤛	YEZIDI LETTER HAMZA
1ED7C	𐤜	YEZIDI MADDA MARK
1ED7D	𐤝	YEZIDI HYPHENATION MARK
1ED7E	𐤞	YEZIDI LETTER ALEF-MADDA
1ED7F		(reserved)

8. Bibliography

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	1ED5	1ED6	1ED7
0	𐌰	𐌱	𐌲
1	𐌳	𐌴	𐌵
2	𐌶	𐌷	𐌸
3	𐌹	𐌺	𐌻
4	𐌼	𐌽	𐌾
5	𐌿	𐍀	𐍁
6	𐍂	𐍃	𐍄
7	𐍅	𐍆	𐍇
8	𐍈	𐍉	𐍊
9	𐍋	𐍌	𐍍
A	𐍎	𐍏	𐍐
B	𐍑	𐍒	𐍓
C	𐍔	𐍕	𐍖
D	𐍗	𐍘	𐍙
E	𐍚	𐍛	𐍜
F	𐍝	𐍞	

10. Figures

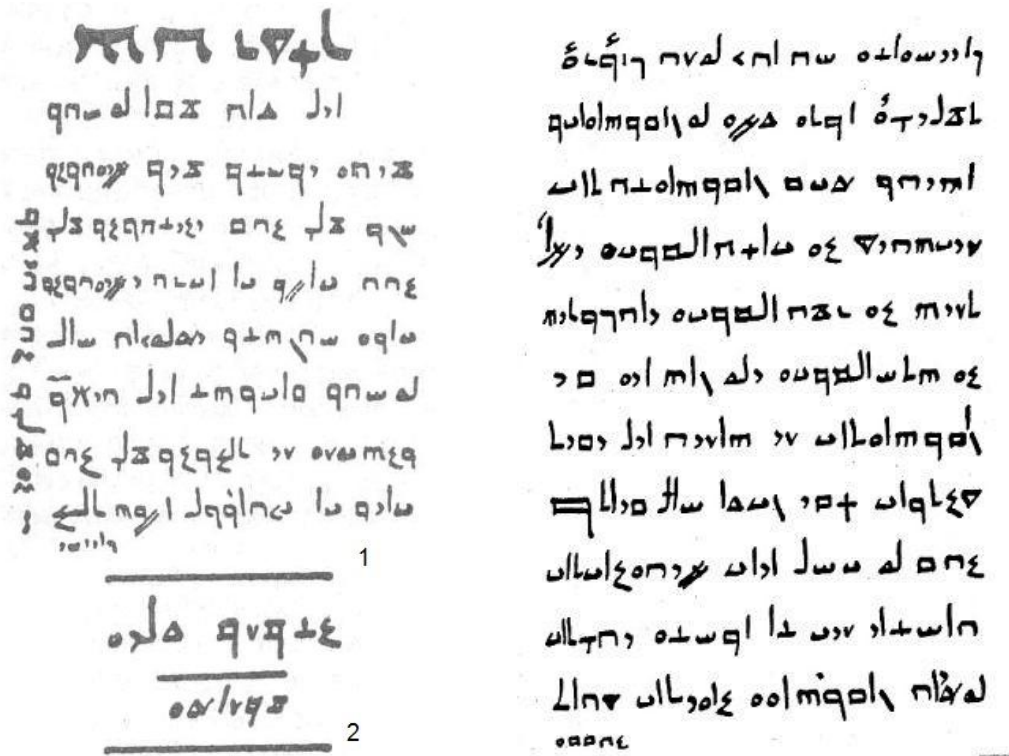


Figure 1: Yezidi manuscript samples (Marie 1911).



Figure 2: Yezidi manuscript sample.

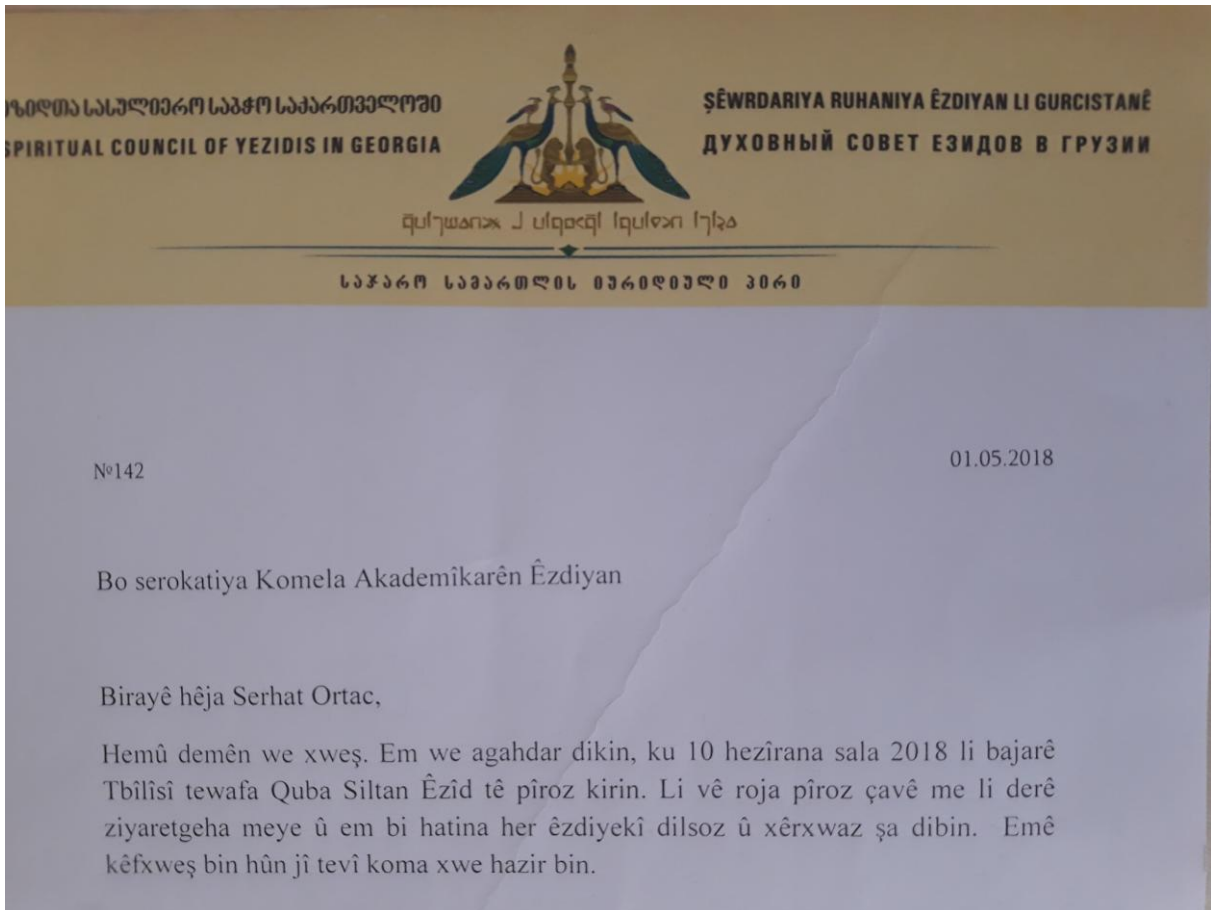


Figure 3: Letterhead of the Spiritual Council of Yezidis in Georgia.

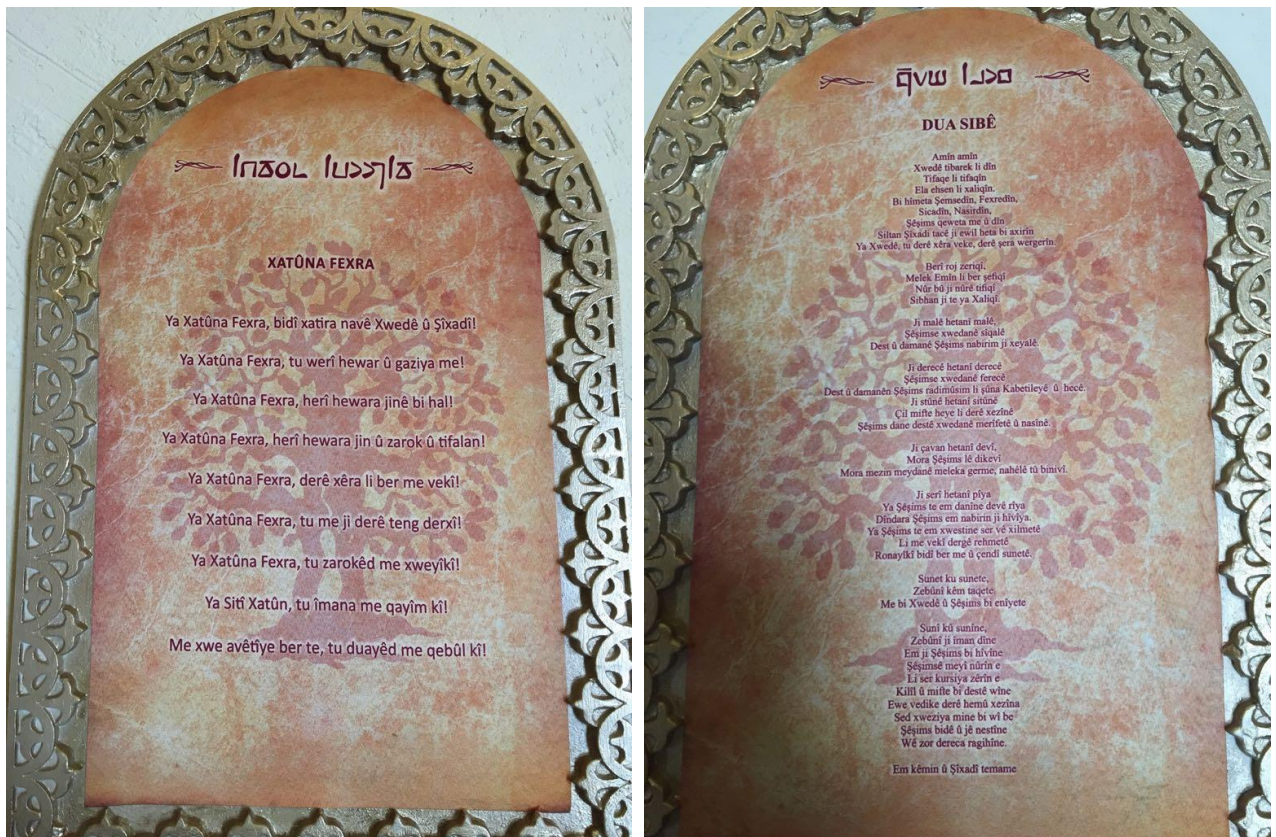


Figure 4: Yezidi inscription on the walls of the Yezidi temple in Tbilisi.



Figure 5: Yezidi inscription in the Yezidi temple in Tbilisi.

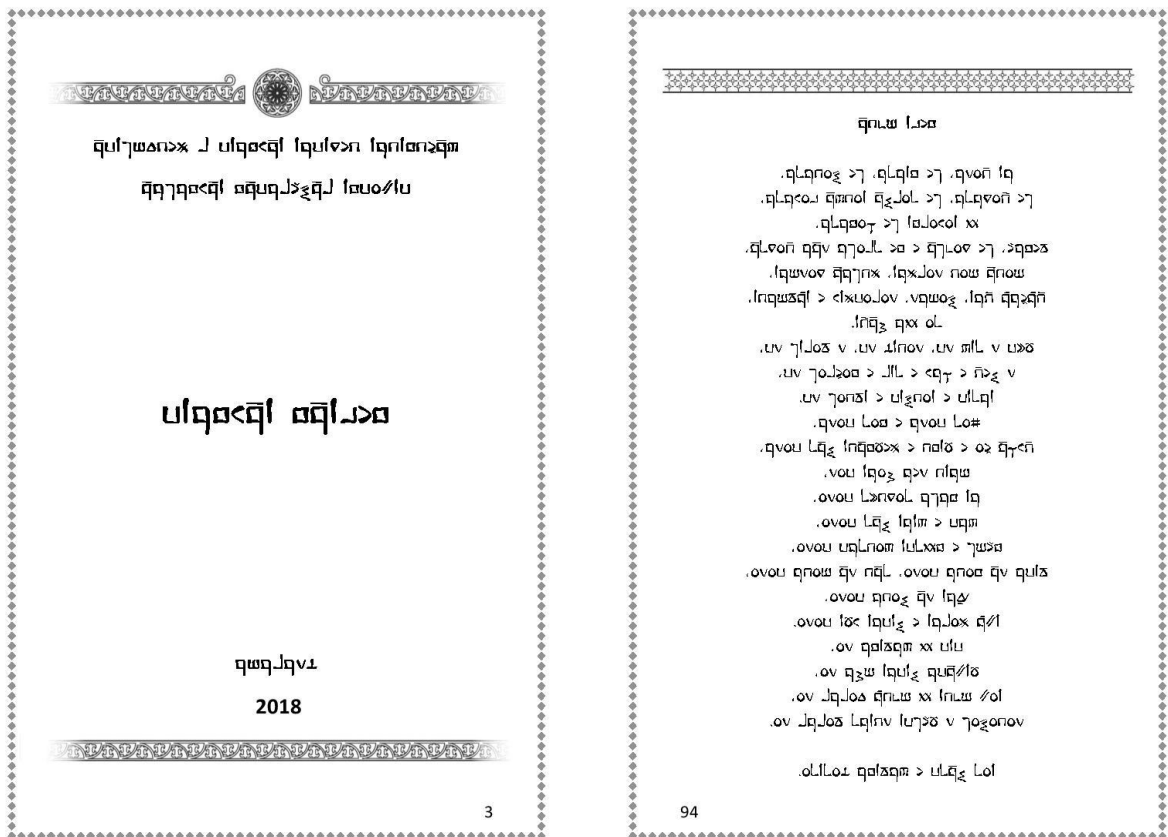


Figure 6: Title page and a sample page from the book of prayers *Dua'yêd Êzdiyan* (2018).

