

A Question Mark Over Yarmouk

Rethinking the Khamis Brigade
Shed Massacre of August, 2011



A Report of the Citizen's Investigation
into War Crimes in Libya
June, 2012

**A Question Mark Over Yarmouk: Re-Thinking the Khamis
Brigade Shed Massacre of August 2011**

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June, 2012**

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Timeline of Key Events:

General Developments

February 15-21: start of Civil War in Libya, as simultaneous protests and militant attacks hand control of many Libyan cities to the opposition, with a de facto capitol in Benghazi.

March 19: NATO begins aerial bombing of government targets in Libya to enforce a “no fly zone” and enable a full rebel takeover of Libya

July-August: Rebel offensives from Az Zintan, Misrata, and the sky, push rebel control closer to Tripoli.

August 19/20: Operation Mermaid Dawn launched, NATO-coordinated Rebel offensive pushing into Tripoli from all sides.

August 22-23: Tripoli reported freed, Bab Al-Aziziyah taken, Muammar Gaddafi on the run, only holdout neighborhoods and some army bases remaining in loyalist hands.

Late August-October: With the capitol under control, the rebels turn to other holdout cities, ferociously besieging Sirte, where Muammar Gaddafi is holding out.

Oct 20: Muammar Gaddafi killed, along with his son, defense minister, and about 100 others, while leaving Sirte. Libya is declared liberated.

To present:: fighting between rebel factions, between tribes and militias, in the south, west, etc. Revenge, persecution, cruelty, and death are rampant, confusion reigns, freedom remains elusive, elections are postponed, and the NTC remains unable to govern.

Yarmouk Base / Prison Shed

By early March: an agricultural shed behind the Yarmouk base starts holding those suspected of challenging the government.

March 7: Arrest of BBC Arabic news crew, including Feras Kilani, who was reportedly beaten at the shed and learned of torture of the few prisoners there.

April – August: prison population reportedly grows steadily as the war intensifies.

Aug 22/23: Both dates cited for a detailed roll call of prisoners read out: 153 prisoners. Perhaps four more added after, for 157 total..

Aug 23, afternoon: order to massacre all prisoners at Yarmouk is sent from Khamis Gaddafi to base commanders, it’s said.

Aug. 23, just after sunset: The order is carried out, using Kalashnikov rifles (many clips emptied) and seven grenades, at close range for minutes straight. 106 killed, 51 escaped, mostly unharmed. Original reports said around 150 were killed.

Aug. 23: Earliest claimed date of Rebel conquest at Yarmouk. (see 3.4.1)

Aug 24, 6:15 am: Misrata fighters report finding (somewhere) remains of 140 prisoners killed with grenades. No further mention, unless... (see 3.4)

Aug. 25-26 – clues of that mystery persist, alongside first official story clues from Yarmouk - 140-170 prisoners killed in a base still held by the loyalists. (see 3.4)

Aug. 26-28: body discovery upon the acknowledged rebel conquest of Yarmouk. saturated Media coverage, dozens of sobbing witnesses, the charred skeletons shown, removed, fleeing loyalists blamed.

Aug. 29 – Khamis Gaddafi reported killed in flight from the massacre base...

Until present: Libyans and foreigners frequently return to the scene to show their determination to figure out what happened there and punish the right people.

Map of some of the cities mentioned in this report



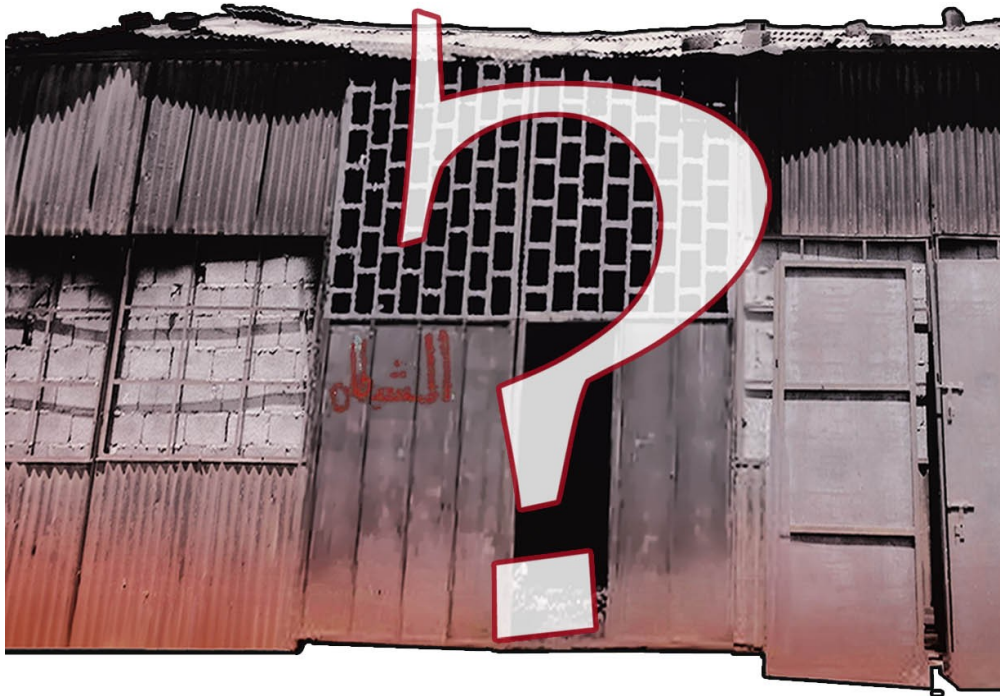
Part 1: Introduction

1.1: Report Overview

1.2: About the CIWCL and this Report

1.3: A “Holocaust” Scene on the World Stage

1.4: Another Khamis Prison Massacre



1.1: Report Overview

At over 150 pages all told, this report is not likely to be read to front to back by very many people. Some sections, especially 2.1 and 3.1, can be safely skimmed or skipped. However, it's important that the report in whole be earnestly considered by as many people as possible. It encapsulates a nine-month investigation, by a team of quite thorough Internet researchers, into one of the pinnacle moments of the Libyan Civil War of 2011. This stark and chilling reminder of the clear line between good and evil, between the old order and the new, was found in a run-down shed at the Yarmouk military base administered by the notorious "Khamis Brigade." Over 150 detainees were locked up there by a paranoid Gaddafi regime, we were told, and liquidated en masse by the guards on August 23 as rebels and freedom drew near. Then they burned all the bodies to cover up the crime, and slipped away out the back door as it were, just as the rebels smashed in the front.

The alleged loyalist effort to silence all the prisoners failed; **at least 51 of the 157 prisoners attacked – nearly one in three – managed to escape alive** to tell all the details. Because of them, this massacre has been called most clear-cut regime crime of the whole war, but everything the world thinks it knows comes from these self-described witnesses who are amazingly inconsistent in recalling just what happened. Only a few core points anyone could have written on an index card make through in (nearly) all cases: Sunset, Aug. 23, Khamis soldiers/mercenaries, guns and grenades, 100-150 killed, all good people treated bad. Everything else is a mess of conflicting versions.

The CIWCL draws attention to **two quite serious crimes** that might have occurred on or around August 23, at or near Yarmouk.

- 1) Rebel forces carried out most or all the killing there, apparently around 150 total at least. The CIWCL suspects the actual victims are some combination of loyalists, suspected mercenaries, and other victims of their taking of the capitol.
- 2) The alleged witnesses are potentially part of a broad – and sloppy - conspiracy to sow a false narrative of what happened. They did not witness the real violence at all, and are reading off a script, or different versions of one.

To many people, this double allegation will be difficult to accept or even clearly consider. Naturally and rightly, people tend to believe those who (say they) witnessed immense horror, narrowly escaped death and, in many cases, lost family members. Charges that they're fabricating it all, perhaps up to inventing demised brothers and sons, would be seen as a grave insult, not to be taken lightly or offered without good evidence. The CIWCL has not taken it lightly. Without access to detailed or credible official records to be decisive, it has amassed plentiful circumstantial evidence to suggest the distinct possibility the witnesses are false ones. The ways that could be managed, as well as morality and psychology considerations, are addressed in sub-section 3.5.2.

Whatever has caused it, the witness accounts offer discrepancies that, on study, only

grow in number and variety. The massacre date, the time of day, the sequence of attack, how it started, how they and the others escaped, whether the victims were burned alive, and other crucial details - all come through with numerous distinct versions. What is described by the several dozen escapees reads more like multiple versions of this singular event that occurred in parallel dimensions. **Agreement abounds, to be sure - in clusters of two who testify together as a team.** But the lack of coherency beyond these small teams suggests these are made-up approximations of what they heard is supposed to have happened. (see section 2.4, “Believe Whom?”)

The cause for dismissing the witnesses is the same case for re-considering the circumstantial clues part three lays out; the nature of past rebel violence compared to the overlooked physical and temporal details of the shed massacre.

The CIWCL quickly noticed a salient fact that was overwhelmingly ignored by the world media. The victims surrounding the shed who weren’t burnt, and whose skin can be seen, were primarily **fighting age Black men**, many showing signs of torture. (see 3.2). That’s of course relevant considering known racism and brutality among the “freedom fighters” (see 3.1) and considering the light pigmentation of the dozens who claim they escaped (see 2.2). The CIWCL simply cannot tell the race of the charred bodies inside just by looking (although an expert with good photos could – see 3.3).

And finally, there is the smoking gun, a hidden thread of rebel knowledge of the killings at the Yarmouk shed. Early messages try to explain **140 mangled bodies - the leavings of what can only be this massacre - “found” by the Misrata brigades** days too early, back when **only the criminal could have known**. (See 3.4, especially sub-section 3.4.2). This knowledge first evidenced itself about ten hours after the alleged massacre, and continued echoing for days until it merged silently into the rising shed massacre narrative, never to be teased back out until the CIWCL’s research uncovered it.

All of this has presented to us a startlingly clear view of suspicions confirmed; it really could have been the civilian “freedom fighters,” rather than vilified government they opposed. This would explain how the witnesses don’t line up, and would justify the decision to put their stories on hold. It’s all a reinforcing logical process with consistent results, and herein the work is shown.

Consider the following rare glimpse of verifiable deception in one place, a staged confrontation in March 2012, captured in a BBC Arabic documentary by Feras Kilani, as the moral contrast to the quite real abuse of black-skinned Tawerghans across Libya. [BAK] The relevant actors (in at least one sense of the word) are compiled into an image on the next page. Clockwise from top left: executioner Ibrahim Tajouri, survivor Bashir Al-Sadeq, survivor Hussein Al-Lafi, and accompanying adviser Dr. Salem Al-Farjani, onetime NTC co-chairman of the National Missing Persons Commission.

Three of these four people have been caught claiming to be direct witnesses to the shed massacre, but giving different names with different back-stories, and multiple accounts with contradictory and changing details. These are the executioner (see 2.3.4), survivor

Al-Sadeq (see 2.5.5), and the adviser (see the whole section 2.5). This is all surprisingly well illustrated in the spots indicated. Survivor Al-Lafi (2.2.5) is less prolific and less obviously deceptive, but he looks none too credible for remembering the attack, which allegedly killed three of his brothers, the same way as the fakers he was surrounded with. This encounter and the characters are also partially covered, with some detail, in the Youtube video “Amnesty by way of Fakery.” [AFV]



Following public expositions of these activities by members of the CIWCL, Dr. Al-Farjani at least has fallen from grace, and had his commission dissolved. Disturbingly, he was then **arrested for unknown reasons** four days after the above-mentioned video was posted, **beaten and tortured, and threatened with death**. Dr. Al-Farjani is, as of this report’s writing, in hiding in Tripoli (see 2.5.6 for more on that).

Standard consideration in assessing guilt for a conspiracy like the CIWCL alleges – motive, means, and opportunity – all provide reason for further inquiry in this case. The rebels and their various allies had the opportunity in control of the area and its people, and any number of means to secure false testimony. The motive is compellingly strong - to **absolve their own war crime and simultaneously attack the enemy with a ferocious demonization campaign**. It would be hard to pass up such a chance.

The stakes are high, and justice is on the line. Several alleged soldiers of the Yarmouk base have been captured by militias of the new government. Many of these have confessed to the crimes the CIWCL fears they are innocent of, and some of these prisoners are surely not actors. It is in part for those waiting to die over the story as accepted that **a question mark must be recognized** as hovering with menace over this event and its aftermath.

1.2: About the CIWCL and this Report

The Citizen's Investigation into War Crimes in Libya (CIWCL) is a small informal collective of ordinary but talented people from several nations who have come together to investigate events of the civil war in Libya, the lead-up to it, and the aftermath of it. Lacking in access to any classified specialist information, the CIWCL relies publicly available sources, gathered and compared. The emphasis on primary evidence, with physical evidence (via photographs and video) taken as that, and witnesses claiming to have seen things as, well... claims, which should be double-checked against other claims and against the physical evidence. This crucial aspect of our approach in large part explains the radically different findings from those reached previously by world governments, Human rights organizations, and the mass media.

The CIWCL's members are driven to examine the clues partly out of a natural bias against accepting the mainstream narrative of the war. Whatever one is inclined to say about this bias, it is all-too-frequently supported, upon investigation, by signs that our suspicions were valid. Considering the overwhelming contrary bias to disbelieve the Libyan government of its day and credit each rebel accusation (always without being "able to confirm"), the CIWCL provides unusual insights. They are also thorough and thus useful, especially with regards to the subject of this report, our most intensively researched slice of the war.

CIWCL signatories as of June 1 These few people were the first to understand what the CIWCL was doing and put their names publicly behind the effort (alphabetical listing):

- Petri Krohn, CIWCL co-founder
Chairman, Finland without Nazism
Helsinki, Finland
- Adam J. Larson, CIWCL co-founder and chief executive person
blog administrator: libyancivilwar.blogspot.com
Spokane, USA
- Peter Schönfeld, Cologne, Germany
- Myra St. Clair, Spokane, USA
- Stan Winer, Bloemfontein, South Africa

Active Members: Krohn, Larson, Schönfeld

Others have expressed interest in signing, joining, or helping, or are actively helping already, but don't wish to be listed as formal signatories at this time. We anticipate some growth after release of this report.

This report builds on research done collectively by several members, signatories, and others, primarily at the Blogspot site The Libyan Civil War: Critical Views (libyancivilwar.blogspot.com). Some translation of spoken Arabic has been contributed by an anonymous translator, and Google translate (plus repairs) and mylanguages.org transliteration was used for Arabic text sources.

The writing and formatting of the report, as well as graphics and the cover design, were done by Adam Larson, CIWCL chief executive person.

The use of photographs and video stills as illustrations is kept to something of a minimum, with sources cited. The CIWCL considers this fair use, necessary to illustrate certain points that are in the public interest, not for profit, and all credited with full respect.

Text emphasis (bolding, italics) is added for this report, and not in the original, unless otherwise noted. The citation method is unusual but usable. Sources are indicated with bracketed letter or numbers like [LH]. These are listed alphabetically in the list at the report's end. Due to time constraints, some sources may be missing, or some sources listed not actually cited. Many do not have details filled in, giving the URL only.

One serious oversight in this report is a listing of all the alleged victims of the massacre. The CIWCL always found there was more to learn from those still talking, and never meant to do an exhaustive study of the given names of those now silenced. A full listing, added as an appendix, would have been a smart idea, but it wasn't realized until it was too late and the report needed done. This will follow as a later-published annex, perhaps with more to follow, all to be available along with this report at ciwclibya.org.

The CIWCL would like to acknowledge all reporters and photographers who brought the world the information it has on this horrific event. We thank the alleged witnesses, rebel fighters and affiliates, and sometimes heroic others for providing fascinating information, whether true or false, to study and understand. We thank all those who've spent honest time and energy trying to understand this and other events, within or outside of the usual channels/ruts of mainstream thinking, and especially to those who've contributed directly to the CIWCL's own base research. And finally, we extend our sympathies to all those on both/all sides in the Libyan War who were killed fighting for what they believe in, right or wrong, or who were just snuffed out senselessly, and to all those they've left behind, perhaps struggling to establish a truth that remains elusive.

1.3: A “Holocaust” Scene on the World Stage

1.3.1: Satan Was Here

In late August 2011, the world was shocked by news of a string of barbaric massacres across Tripoli, accompanying the fall of the Gaddafi regime in the Libyan capitol. These also happened at the same time as those doing the final pushing, the NATO-backed rebel militias, swept into the city.

Perhaps the single largest and certainly the most visibly memorable among these was the alleged Khamis Brigade shed massacre, also called the Yarmouk, or 32nd Brigade massacre. This, as currently understood, was the mass execution of a group of about 150-160 prisoners, using machine guns and hand grenades, on August 23. It was carried out, witnesses say, by soldiers of the elite, 32nd mechanized Brigade. The most notorious military unit run by the Libyan leader’s son, Khamis Gaddafi, and otherwise known as the Khamis brigade, they operated the prison and the adjoining Yarmouk military base.

It’s an anonymous place, the prison where, witnesses say, soldiers cut down their wards before torching the remains and fleeing from the area. The shed (warehouse, hanger, barn, etc.) sits within a small, low-walled compound, used previously by an agricultural collective. Its rickety outer shell of rust-orange corrugated metal is lined with cinderblock walls, now soot-stained. Two interlocking, oversized, barn-style doors of thin metal would have held the prisoners in.

On the west (left) panel, in red spray paint, rebels wrote in Arabic *Ash-Shaytan* - Satan.

The east panel, locked together with the other, has a smaller inset metal door with a sliding bolt lock. It was through that door the media came to see the bodies – as many as fifty of them - reduced to skeletons with only portions of their charred flesh remaining. As their cameras filmed the scene on the 27th and 28th, smoke continued twisting up from the victims as if they had just, moments before, stopped burning in Hell.

The CIWCL doesn’t put any stock in metaphysical explanations for these types of crimes. However what passes for the devil’s work does often make its appearance, during times of war especially. Journalist Janine di Giovanni said in the *Daily Beast* it was one of a few “haunted” places she’d visited, like Srebrenica in Bosnia. Walking up to the doors amid the stench of death and the noted graffiti, she wrote “I begin to feel a familiar sensation: something evil happened here.” [JG]

Something un-Islamic certainly happened there. Even willful cremation is forbidden in Islam, which mandates burial in the dirt within 24 hours and no harm to the body. [YA] Misrata fighter Majid Fayturi, who was among those that took the Yarmouk base, said of those who torched their victims “we cannot say they are Muslims. They do not belong to any religion in the world.” [FPS] Further, as widely noted, the killings and extreme harm to the dead were carried out at the height of Ramadan.

More dead men, at least 20 by some reports, lay scattered around the yard un-burnt. Some of them were bound, some brutalized, all apparently executed. Most of the eleven seen by news cameras are black men (see sub-section 3.2.3). According to the witnesses, there were mass graves beneath the dirt all over the compound containing an unknown number of previous victims of Gaddafi regime violence.

1.3.2: The Location

Yarmouk was one of the two largest bases of the Khamis Brigade guarding the capitol (the other was southwest of the city). The base lies in the southern suburbs, on al-Hadbhah road, about 5 miles (8 km) south of central Tripoli. It's in the Khalet al-Furjan neighborhood of the Salaheddin district, with the immediate area sometimes called the Yarmouk neighborhood. The base has walls enclosing a space nearly a third of a mile square, and it seems to take in surrounding buildings and areas as well. The main gate is capped with a dramatic eagle sculpture, and a giant metal "32" to the right announces the brigade's presence. The Yarmouk base suffered NATO bomb damage throughout the war, some of it shown in drive-by videos from as early as May. Some of the damage is visible in the image below, bordered in blue, with other areas just outside the apparent main walls, a bit south of the base, and also further southwest, also sporting several buildings their roofs apparently pierced by bombs.



Behind the base, just outside its east walls, is the prison compound, outlined in red in the map above. The shed is the only sizeable building in it, 29 feet deep and 52 feet long, with a smaller building (guard house) next to it, and a covered space between them. The shed itself is divided into two chambers, a small 13-foot-wide room with at least one charred body, and the 29x39-foot (9x12 meter) main space everyone refers to, where prisoners allegedly saw and counted each other.

Solid cinderblock walls covered the windows built into the shed frame, leaving no real

light input aside from the grating above the door, and a large hole in the west wall that may or may not have been there before the massacre (accounts differ). Pins and ribbons of light enter through gaps in the walls and ceiling and the hundreds of bullet holes that riddle the place. Wherever metal was not shielded by cinderblock - the doors, the uppermost walls on three sides, and the roof - all are holed extensively.

Within the main chamber, there were no partitions, no privacy, no furnishings whatsoever. There was nothing but some random mechanical junk on the floor of half-concrete, half-dirt. There is no sign of even the most rudimentary prison; no plumbing or fixtures, no lights on the ceiling, no electricity at all, it seems. Nowhere outside are high walls, barbed wire, spotlights, or guard towers seen.

1.3.3 High-Profile Prisoners

But the site has a long alleged history. Sheikh Sayyid Musa Al Sadr, the Lebanese Shiite cleric, is widely believed to have been killed in 1978 after disappearing, allegedly, inside Libya. In October, it was reported that he might have been held and tortured at this very site, and perhaps even buried there. The source is rebel commander and LIFG founder Abdelhakim Belhaj. [LBC]

Whatever happened there in the years between, in 2011 the shed compound seemed to be used for ordinary agricultural things until the brigade reportedly took it over and began holding prisoners there “as early as March 2011” [PHR p. 15], or “by March 2011 at the latest.” [UH]

Some of the self-described prisoners were even foreigners of repute working with the BBC. Journalist Feras Kilani, photographer Goktay Koraltan, and security man Chris Cobb-Smith reported being arrested by the Libyan military near Az Zawiya, accused of being spies. [BBC4] They were taken to a base with an eagle on the gate, Cobb-Smith said at the time, and finally to a “dirty scruffy little compound” behind the base. There they were held in a cage, then a room. Kilani was beaten and his Palestinian people were insulted. Cobb-Smith reported a mock execution they were subjected to shortly before release, and seeing other prisoners shackled, terrified, and speaking of torture. [CNN5]

Another more confusing report suggests Kilani and his team were detained in March after visiting the Yarmouk base itself, to film a documentary about the death of Sheikh al-Sadr. By this, Kilani was surprised to see a man come in with “dogs and special equipment to detect burials,” along with explanations that they were looking for buried bodies. But the newsman investigating the Sheikh’s burial there was threatened not to tell anyone about this, and was arrested, beaten, and released. [LBC]

Cobb-Smith at least returned to the massacre shed after the rebel victory, and verified it as the same spot that they were held. [CTV] Kilani returned at least twice, the first time being in mid-October, after speaking to Belhaj about Sadr. [BKS] The other time was in

March 2012, in conjunction with the dramatic staged confrontation between two alleged survivors and an alleged executioner. (see 2.3.4, 2.5.5)

Richard Spencer of the UK Telegraph also spoke to a judge named Abdul Hadi Abusheiwah, who was “arrested in May because of his ties to Mustafa Abdul Jalil, the head of the rebels' National Transitional Council.” He was sent to Yarmouk, he said, and witnessed prisoners whipped in a corner, among other things, before being “released in July.” [RS1]

1.3.4: Prison Life and Death, Per the Witnesses

Otherwise the prisoners at Yarmouk were, by and large, ordinary Libyan civilians, men of mixed backgrounds, reportedly ranging in age from 14 to at least 70. They mostly hailed from Tripoli, Misrata, and especially from Zlitan, an important city between the two. According to former detainees, those held in this primitive prison were partly rebel sympathizers and collaborators, but largely citizens of suspected loyalty, some innocent of anything aside from breaking curfew.

The prisoners report being held there between a few days and four months, all of it brutal. They describe witnessing or even experiencing treatment like people being crammed into tiny cells in police trucks in the yard for days or weeks, or hanged upside down for long periods and beaten with sticks or metal cables. Some were reportedly subjected to electrocution (in the neighboring guard-house, which did have electricity), or even sliced up. All were starved, routinely denied water, and some report being made to drink urine or motor oil, and humiliated in other ways.

Ibrahim Lousha told Robert F. Worth of the New York Times he and his fellow guards dreamed up things like peeing in the bottles, and making prisoners pray to a poster of Muammar, while high on liquor and hashish. [RW2]. The widespread use of alcohol and other drugs at the Yarmouk base was a theme in an earlier Worth report. “Several inmates told me the guards were almost constantly drunk or stoned, and that this often seemed to make the torture worse.” He found support for this from a captured army officer, who agreed 100% that “smoking hashish had been common in the military.” [RW1]

Another intriguing sub-theme to this system of torture is the humiliation of having women do much of the degrading. Mustafa el-Hitri explained how “a uniformed woman commander called Nooriya, along with two other female officers [...] kicked us repeatedly in our genitals while they screamed at us ‘your seed will give Libya no more children.’” [AL] Worth of the New York Times (who talked mostly to El Hitri) heard a similar story from numerous inmates of “a Chadian woman with a shaved head who used to beat the men on their genitals,” with her female supervisor taunting “she’s more of a man than you are!” [RW1]

Between the abuse, the neglect, and frequent executions or killing of attempted escapees, most onetime prisoners describe witnessing at least a one death or even several. One man, rather outlandishly, swore in a documentary video “this place has witnessed the death of thousands. I’m not exaggerating when I say thousands. Every day, there were about 20-25 bodies.” [FGM 4:55] By more reasonable and supported assessments, a total of 90 prisoners were held there by the beginning of August. [UH] The reported number grew about 50% over the next three weeks, as the invasion of Tripoli loomed. That commenced on August 19 and 20, and on Monday the 22nd, it was said that 153 names were read out for a prison roll call. [PHR p.15] On the 23rd, as central Tripoli was completely under rebel control and Col. Gaddafi himself in flight, the guards at this Khamis prison were given orders to kill all their wards before fleeing the rebel advance.

Prisoners reported seeing ominous signs: new prisoners brought in, and promises of freedom coming up soon, often accompanied by a wicked look, a bad feeling, or even being told that “free ... meant that we will all be killed.” [KS] At least two witnesses, a soldier (“Laskhar”) [PHR] and a prisoner (el-Hitri) [AL], reported seeing Khamis Gaddafi there and apparently giving the fatal order.

The survivors describe the assault as coming just after sunset and the evening call to prayer and breaking of the Ramadan fast. About seven grenades were tossed in, joined with repeated fire from Kalashnikov rifles. They all agree that however many escaped, even more didn’t, were cut down under horrendous circumstances and then, in some accounts, burned alive.

1.3.5: The Witnesses / Some Notes on the Math

Everything we know about the massacre details - who the victims were and what exactly happened - comes from people who claim to be witnesses. These include locals who saw and heard, at least two soldiers who have confessed to taking part, prisoners who had served time there, and some dozens of prisoners who claim to have escaped the massacre itself. Those whose accounts the CIWCL is aware of and considered will all be listed and briefly explained in section 2.2, and analyzed over the three sections after.

The bodies of about 45-55 people were found inside the shed, other bodies totaling apparently more than 32 turned up in the immediate vicinity, and another 22 bodies were found about a half-mile (one km) from there, behind a mosque. The last, possibly related, is generally not counted in this massacre total, which was first given as around 150.

A.M. Bin Halim (escapee #14, p. 37) had said, on August 25, that roughly 180 out of 200 prisoners were killed, with 18 escapees. [DT] A Washington Times report of the 26th said “guards lobbed grenades at around 200 prisoners” and unnamed “eyewitnesses” were more specific on Halim’s math, saying “182 people had died in that incident.” [AKS] Mounir Own told CNN there had been 175 prisoners to start, with two dozen escaping, leaving about 150 dead. [CNN2] Clean-up volunteer Bashir Own (no relation to Mounir) also spoke to CNN and said he saw and removed around 150 bodies on the 28th. [CNN2]

On the other hand, estimates of the dead range as low as 60 per Amr Dau Algala [KS] and the number of escapees as high as an oddly complementary 90 (at least as reported, in a possible mix-up) by witness Senussi. [SZB]

By early 2012, the accepted death toll had been settled at 106, per Libyan authorities and a UNHRC report. This seems to be backwards math based on the “only 51” confirmed survivors subtracted from 157 prisoners. This means *nearly one in three people escaped* both the shed and the prison yard despite this close assault with grenades and machine guns. Further, as we’ll see in the close-up examination, they survived with very few injuries even claimed.

1.3.6: Global Commentary and the Drive for Justice

The discovery of the shed massacre was a clarifying moment, the black and white of charred flesh and bone widely noted as symbolizing the stark contrast between good and evil. Whatever faults the rebels might have in their excesses and small reported abuses, they were clearly a vast improvement over the insane regime that produced a charnel house like this.

There has been no shortage of people near and far noting the significance of this crime, especially back when it was thought to be about 50% deadlier than it now is. One local announced it to be “the greatest massacre in recent history.” [FPS] The Yarmouk shed has been called a “holocaust camp” by Libyan survivors, family of victims, and supporters congregating on Facebook as “the Association of Holocaust victims of Yarmouk prison.” [FBR]

Elisabetta Piqué, a writer for La Nacion (Argentina), was told by her interpreter Ahmed, who was shocked by the charred bodies “this is the same as Hitler did to the Jews.” [EPN] This statement has a whiff of irony to it, considering the belief among many Arabs, including Libyans, that the holocaust was a tragedy fabricated by a global web of crypto-Jews – a network some felt included their own hated Muammar Gaddafi. The CIWCL certainly doesn’t endorse the notion of the holocaust as a hoax to win world support for the creation of Israel, but considering the shed massacre mythology and its place in the realization of a new country (post-Gaddafi Libya), denial of this smaller alleged “holocaust” might be justified.

The media knew the story’s rightful place, pulling out the stronger adjectives and singling it out for magnification. Robert F. Worth describes it as “perhaps the most notorious massacre of the Libyan war.” [RW2] Richard Spencer of the UK Telegraph called it at the time “the most clear-cut war crime of this six-month uprising.” [RS1] Months later, Spencer decried the “damnable” widespread torture, often to death, committed by the “once-heroic” Misrata brigades who had been at the front of liberating Yarmouk. But it all seemed tame, he thought, “to anyone who witnessed [...] the remains of the scores killed and cremated by Khamis Gaddafi in a single incident in a shed-prison as he fled Tripoli in August.” [RS2]

Amnesty International said in August the reported massacre showed a “flagrant disregard for human life and international humanitarian law,” and demanded “loyalist forces in Libya must immediately stop such killings of captives.” [AI] They were rapidly becoming physically incapable of doing much of anything. Sarah Leah Whitson of Human rights Watch said, “these merciless murders took place in the midst of Ramadan and those responsible should be brought to justice and punished.” [HR] They have proven unable to even prevent their own capture, and quite a number of loyalists said to be involved are now awaiting that punishment.

Susan Rice, The US ambassador to the UN, went to the warehouse in November and reported “the stench of death & cruelty was pervasive.” [ABR] At a press conference, she called it a “very important site” where “over 100 people were killed by grenades and bullets and then,” showing some confusion, “their bodies [were] burnt to death.” [USN] UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon made a pilgrimage to the site, was shocked, and said the perpetrators “should be brought to account.” [UM]

The chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno-Ocampo, visited the site on November 23 and met family members of alleged victims, desperately seeking closure. [ITN] After the visit, a spokesman for the court, Islam Shalabi, said Moreno-Ocampo believed “the site merits investigation.” [SG] Alex Loyd, writing for the *Australian*, said of the survivors: “their accounts are likely to provide the backbone” of evidence the ICC would use “to bring charges against Colonel Gaddafi and his sons for war crimes.” [AL]

Khamis, clearly the most relevant son to this case, was reported dead in battle on the 29th – the same day Loyd’s article ran, and nearly two months before his father was summarily executed. But named officers and intermediaries would continue to be hunted down for the crime, in a trend supported so far by the influential people cited above.

1.3.7: Different Reports

From the above statements, we can see this episode matters to Libyans and to the outside world alike. The CIWCL agrees with the ICC’s Mr. Shalabi that a close look – an investigation - is very much merited.

The closest the world has to that, at the moment, is a December report about the massacre issued by the Massachusetts-based Physicians for Human rights (PHR). Deputy director Richard Sollom called it “the first comprehensive forensic account of the massacre.” [GPP] The report, titled *32nd Brigade Massacre: Evidence of war crimes and the need to ensure justice and accountability in Libya* “sought to clarify what took place,” to correct the confused record of earlier reporting. [PHR p.7] The only thing their expertise added was verifying the injuries of two of their four subjects as consistent with detention and abuse, most of that claimed as happening previously at Zlitan. Otherwise, their talent was in taking down and believing whatever the witnesses told them, which improves

nothing on what the media had been doing.

A special commission of the UN Human rights Council issued a report on March 2, which addressed the massacre under study, among many other things. With original witness interviews, this added some useful information. They concluded the witness “testimony is broadly consistent and corroborative.” They added “similar mass killings perpetrated **around the time that opposition forces seized control of Tripoli** have been reported by Human rights Watch,” and “these allegations warrant further investigation.” [UH] Again, the CIWCL agrees.

A report from the Independent Civil Society Fact-Finding Mission to Libya, January 2012, also heard about this incident: “Mass Killings: Yarmouk Detention Centre.” [CS] Their report added little, only passing on vague characterizations they were handed.

Only the PHR report and now this one, those dedicated solely to this complex alleged event, qualify as further investigation of any real scope. The PHR report describes itself as “provid[ing] a measure of truth and acknowledgment for victims and helps to build an important historical record.” This report works towards these same laudable goals, but its conclusions are very different.

Another difference is in the recommendations. The PHR report emphasized hunting down the alleged perpetrators and bringing them to alleged justice. Rebels were already doing this minus the encouragement; the claimed executioner “Laskhar,” one of their interviewees, was obviously in custody already, and others have joined him since (see section 2.3).

In contrast, this report will de-emphasize immediate accountability. It doesn’t even seem worth asking the NTC to have its only effective muscle - the Misrata militias - hunt down and hold themselves to account, if that’s what proves to be warranted. There’s no power outside Libya has any further stomach for involvement, now that the regime is destroyed. For good measure, the notion of accountability is addressed, with a few names are given, in sub-section 3.5.4. But long before these people could ever be punished, someone has to first show how there’s even the slightest case for it, and give that a chance to be considered. Until now, no one in the world community had seriously done that.

1.4: Another Khamis Prison Massacre

1.4.1: “Two Military Camps”

Initial reports of the Khamis Brigade shed massacre were lumped together and perhaps confused with another incident linked closely with it in time and space. Amnesty International reported early on August 26 about “evidence that forces loyal to Colonel Mu’ammarr al-Gaddafi have killed numerous detainees being held at two military camps in Tripoli on 23 and 24 August.” [AI] The *Washington Times* reported at the same time “troops loyal to longtime Libyan leader Col. Moammar Gadhafi massacred more than 180 prisoners at two locations south of Tripoli this week, according to eyewitnesses and a survivor.” The Times’ report showed the relation and even confusion between the locales, citing “Mohammed, a rebel spokesman in Tripoli who only gave his first name.” Mohammed “said a close friend of his was among those who died after being tortured by the regime’s loyalists at one of the detention sites,” with no clarity which one it was. [AKS]

The CIWCL does not have a precise location for the second prison, given as in the nearby Qasr Ben Ghashir area (sometimes QBG below). Google maps does have an area of that name, which seems to be exactly the airport. There's also a town, Bin Ghashir, next to it. The whole area is about 5.5 miles (8-9 kilometers) from Yarmouk, south on al Hadhbah road. [GM3] It's said to be the abandoned grounds of a Brazilian construction company that had been building a new Ring Road. [AKS] The company running it has been identified around as Odebrecht (see [PHR] for example). After appropriation by the regime, the site was allegedly used as a prison, some witnesses claiming to have been held at Yarmouk for some time, then transferred south to QBG.

An obscure reference attached to a set of photographs by Jeroen Oerlemans at Felix features is some help. Taken at “a former Yugoslavian machine factory complex” in “Qasr bin Gashaier” Tripoli, on August 27. Apparently Serbian-run and connected to the Brazilian company’s Ring Road project, it was used as a prison that **Khamis Gaddafi frequently visited**, and it seems to be the one referred to by the witnesses. A local man in traditional robes (a “neighbour of the complex”) showed Oerlmans the “small prison cells,” unfinished [FO1], as well finished ones. [FO2]

The orders to massacre detainees reportedly came down to both camps at roughly the same time, as rebel forces advanced towards them. More than 100 were reportedly killed at Yarmouk, and **only six (or even 4)** at its nearby neighbor. However, bodies found at and near both sites would continued turning up. A Youtube video from posted September 7 shows a bulldozer carrying what seems to be a number of corpses near a reported mass grave (of “rebel sons”) exhumed in Qasr Ben Ghashir. [GGV] The dozens of bodies found around the Yarmouk shed, at the time of the massacre discovery and over the following weeks, are covered in section 3.2.

Besides the six or so killed at the Brazilian warehouse prison, a large number of other prisoners escaped their confinement alive and uninjured. The number is variously given as 50 [PHR], 70 (implied) [AI], and 100 [FO1]. Oerlmans heard the high version; “100 people were freed from their cells at this complex about a week ago,” or on about the earliest given date. Oerlmans passed on word that “at least 4 bodies” described as executed “were found” at the site. [FO3] Local fifth column reportedly did the finding – and leaving - after they were left by their 50-100 fellow prisoners. The UNHRC was told of a rush to locate vehicles to get the wounded survivors to the hospital (below). Someone should have been arranging for the dead to be removed as well, and started towards reunion with family and a proper burial. Instead, locals and fighters were just “finding” them starting to rot days later (see below).

1.4.2: The Witnesses

Considering a reported 50-100 people escaped this place, the proportion of those who’ve spoken up is strangely miniscule compared to the neighboring massacre at Yarmouk. There are only about six accounts total on the public record. By this record, each of the escapees seems to have survived a different massacre from the others – a similarity with the main subject of this report.

The first news from Amnesty International and the Washington Times came on August 26, mentioning both massacres together. The Times cited Mahmoud Okok, a 29-year-old engineer, who says he escaped from QBG after hearing the executions of six fellows. [AKS] Possibly the same person and at least one other, but unnamed, spoke to Amnesty, as they cited “survivors,” but gave no names. [AI]

Robert F. Worth wrote for the New York Times in September of Jamal Al-Ragai, 31, a rebel fighter arrested in mid-June he says, sent right to Yarmouk (relating some of the horrors listed in sub-section 1.3.4), and then transferred to the Brazilian compound. He escaped from there among the 70 escapees (per AI), and went on to command, as of September 21, “a militia of *about 70 men*, many of them veterans of bloody street battles in Misrata and other towns.” [RW1]

Worth later re-visited the issue, meeting a former guard there - the lead executioner as it happens - in detention under Ragai’s brigade. Marwan Gdoura, 28, allegedly emptied two clips from his Kalashnikov into six victims. [RW2] Marwan explained that the Yarmouk prison commander, Hamza Harizi/Hirazi, ordered him by phone to execute six prisoners and leave the rest locked up. “We brought them from the hangar and put them in a small room,” Gdoura told Worth. “The killing happened with a light weapon. We closed the door and left,” he said, and then fled with the others to Bani Walid, Sirte, and Sabha, seeing Khamis Gaddafi die and kissing his brother Seif along the way. [RW2]

Another onetime Yarmouk prisoner shipped south and corroborating Mr. Al-Ragai better than his prisoners is “Ali,” a pseudonym for one of those interviewed by Physicians for

Human rights. A laborer from Az Zawiya, he helped cook food for the “protesters” who had taken over the city in February. He says he was arrested in mid-April, about a month after the government re-took the city. [PHR p.32] He was transferred from the shed to Qasr Ben Ghashir at the beginning of August, and beaten daily “throughout Ramadan usually after the evening call to prayer” in what he called “the worst 21 days of my life.” [PHR p.34]

Finally, the UNHRC spoke with an unnamed prisoner who “was transferred from the agricultural warehouse to the second detention centre at the beginning of August 2011.” [UH] This is possibly Ali, or someone else transferred with him at that time. PHR says 21 others were sent in the same batch.

1.4.3: Three Confirmed Massacre Dates

The date variation is an obvious problem with this story. The massacre is always a morning affair, but first it was the day after the shed massacre, **August 24th**, as reported by Okok and confirmed by Amnesty. Another date was entered by fighter Ragai in Worth’s Sept. 25 article, which had the killings and mass-escape “early on the morning of **Aug. 21.**” [RW1] The same date was cited by “Ali.” PHR heard on September 10 his escape came “early on the morning of 21 August,” capping 21 days of detention. [PHR]

These first offered dates aren’t even next to each other, presenting a full four-day spread for this singular incident. And both of the days are confirmed by more than one vote. Later a third date would emerge in the middle of that gap, perhaps hoping to suggest the real date that all other witnesses had gotten a little bit wrong. The UNHRC’s investigating commission reported:

On 22 August 2011, in the morning, a detainee interviewed by the Commission heard Sergeant [030] talking on his mobile phone and saying that there were a large number of detainees. One of the guards recalled how [046] called [030] around 0700hrs, informing him that the thuwar [rebel fighters] had reached Salahadeen. [030] told them to execute the doctors and the “officers” and lock the others inside the warehouse.

At around 10-11 am, one of the guards, a soldier from the 32nd (Khamis) Brigade, [040] came to the warehouse and took six detainees outside. After less than an hour the witness heard the sound of shooting. [UH p.71]

Settling on the 22nd is as if someone averaged the previous dates and handed the result to the UNHRC. They accepted and passed it on as fact, even though that date was cited by none of the three previous witnesses. It too was confirmed to them, by a Yarmouk guard who left them reporting “the guards from the Brazilian warehouse [062 and 065] had arrived in Yarmouk shortly thereafter and reported that they had “performed the

assignment.”” [UH p.72]

But again it would be the first date, **Aug. 24**, per Robert F. Worth, writing again in May 2012. He was speaking again to Al-Ragai (escaped the 21st) and prisoners then under his control. Yet Worth heard that one of his central subjects, Dr. Omar Salhouba (see below), the dead brother of Ragai’s chief interrogator, “was shot and killed on Aug. 24.” [RW2] Salhoba’s detention and killing are described here as happening at Yarmouk, but he’s a QBG prisoner, and the executioner of only six at that spot, Marwan Gdoura, confirmed the date of “the events of Aug. 24.” [RW2]

As this report will show, there is also confusion at the northern site of the shed massacre, over the date of the killing, as well as the date of the rebel conquest (see 2.4.1, 3.4.1). At Qasr Ben Ghashir, there was no conquest, just a quiet and surreal escape of nearly everyone without any kind of fight.

1.4.4: What Kind of Escape From What Kind of Cells?

Dr. Salhouba, allegedly a Qasr Ben Ghashir prisoner who apparently perished there (see below), reportedly made a “brave, failed efforts to break the men free.” [RW2] This hasn’t been clearly explained, and apparently came some time before the successful and apparently un-aided escape attempt that came on the day of the massacre, immediately after the killing of Dr. Salhouba and the others.

Over time, the nature of the prison cells so many walked out of changed. By the first reports, the prisoners at the Brazilian compound were in solitary jail cells. Amnesty’s witnesses knew five detainees were killed because of the five bodies and because they “heard guards opening five of the cells.” [AI]

Contradicting them, Ragai said “the guards opened the door of the cell next to Ragai’s and led out six prisoners.” [RW1] Six to a cell is certainly not solitary. Ali told PHR the gunshots caused a “panic” in the cells, and that “we all cowered against each other.” He also wasn’t confined by himself. [PHR p.34]

However many were in each one, they apparently breached the security systems of these cells on their own, “[the] detainees panicked when they realized that the guards were planning to execute them all. They managed to break out of the prison,” Sen reported for the Times. [AKS] Amnesty related how “detainees panicked and broke out of their cells fearing they were about to be executed.” [AI]

They may not have all broken out, with perhaps a few doing so and then helping others, maybe after finding the keys. They appear to have allegedly frightened the guards off with their numbers. All sources agree that the guards, who numbered five if any specific number, simply fled the scene without firing a single further shot during the break-out,

however long it took. The panic Ali cites was more passive, cowering within the cells, expectantly, “and then nothing. The guards had run away.” They remained in their cells, however, until “Ali and the other detainees slowly emerged” nearly an hour later. How they simply came out of their cells is still unexplained. [PHR]

The UNHRC in March has six removals, then gunshots followed by “the sound of heavy bombardment in the area,” a new feature that might help explain the guards’ flight. “A few minutes later, having not heard any movements from the guards, they opened the door and freed themselves.” [UH p.71] Even lack of panic, a lack of guards, and distant booms combined do not explain how jail cells are opened from the inside.

The only narrative that attempts to explain this is that spun by Ragai the rebel leader, who claims he led the escape. He knew they had to get out of there, even before the six shootings, or they’d all be murdered. He tried to get a guard to let them all go, but failed. He was let out to use the bathroom, but was then put back, he says, in a different cell.

*Minutes later, the men heard gunshots. The six men were being executed. But at the same time, Ragai realized that **the guard had left him in a cell that could be opened from the inside**. He got out, and began releasing all the remaining men, who fled the compound. The guards did not even try to stop them; instead, they piled into cars and began fleeing themselves.* [RW1]

One man alone stepping out his cell frightened them off, staring them down as he somehow unlocked door after door, after being put in a type of jail cell that shouldn’t even exist. That seems to be his story, and it carries with it at least as many logic problems as the other inadequate and contradictory accounts.

1.4.5: The Victims: The Formula and the Officers

There’s been a bit less confusion over the death toll and the victim identities. The tally of six victims clearly prevails over Amnesty’s five, while that total being confirmed within the few people speaking to the same source is curious. And the professions of the dead show some consistency. Doctors were among the dead, all witnesses seem to agree. Mahmoud Okok, cited above, said two of his friends, both engineers like him, were among the six who were executed. Two others were medical doctors, two unspecified. [AKS]

Engineers would be the minority version and quickly fade from the tally not to return. The number would also grow to six, but the doctors would remain. Physicians for Human rights reported that a guard, whose name was withheld, for a fact “called out for two doctors and four other detainees from the group.” Ali told PHR he “found five detainees shot and killed and one other gasping for breath.” Six fatalities were presumed, and PHR says the brigade “murdered six detainees.” [PHR p.34]

The UNHRC also found six were shot, but unusually “including **three** medical doctors,” along with three “officers.” Equally out-of-step is how only three of the six died immediately, with three gravely wounded. The witness then scrambled for a vehicle to take them to hospital, with “another doctor” passing away before finally “the remaining two were evacuated to the Al-Afia Medical Centre in Qasr Ben Gushair.” [UH] The final confirmed death toll here is **four**. What happened at the hospital isn’t spelled out.

Two or three doctors, two engineers fading away, possibly “officers.” - these are people of impressive professions. That Gaddafi’s thugs targeted people like these (as well as judges and lawyers, at Yarmouk) helps illustrate an important rebel propaganda point that Gaddafi hated Libya and wanted to destroy its institutions. Robert Worth, in a recent New York Times Magazine article, wrote of alleged executioner Marwan Gdoura (see 3.3.5), whose cousin was told, on a jail visit, “your cousin killed **six very qualified people whom Libya will need, two doctors and four officers.**” [RW2]

This same formula, including the doctors *plus officers*, is what we’ll call the new accepted version. The UNHRC had come around to it, but with an extra doctor, and remaining unclear on whom was killed. But rebel sources told them these six were to be the first and only killed, per the order from on high. As the rebels had reached Salahaddin, officer [030] told the guards “to execute the doctors and the “officers” and lock the others inside the warehouse.” [UH p71]

The precise formula Worth was handed was first reported more obscurely alongside the Okok engineers version on Aug. 26. The Rebel-supporting Maktoob Blog had a report of early on August 26 from a “correspondent” in Qasr Ben Ghashir. Roughly translated from Arabic, this report says “six bodies of martyrs were recovered **by the fifth column,**” rebels from within Tripoli, with no mention of the fellow prisoners who “found” them first. [MB] The CIWCL’s best guess for these Tripoli fighters is the unit headed by Jamal Al-Ragai from Tajoura. While he claims to have been imprisoned there himself at the time and to have escaped with the 70 others, he also had 70 members in his brigade, [RW1] suggesting a bit of creative license on what it means to “escape” from a prison as opposed to whatever they actually did there. The fighters left these esteemed Libyan victims laying right there due to the “presence of battalions,” Makhtoub blog relates. [MB]

The victims were named at the Makhtoub blog in Arabic. They are, as the CIWCL has translated them:

- a) *Brigadier M'Hamed Aldberza*
- b) *Brigadier Mohammed Al-Massoud*
- c) *Colonel Dr. Uh Mahmoud*
- d) *Colonel Miftah Futaisi*
- e) *Dr. Ali Alzerat (typo - should be Al-Darrat).*

f) Dr. Omar Salhouba (also translates Zleoppe - same name)

There is little information on the officers, aside from Worth's description of them as "officers who had been arrested for helping the rebels." [RW2] The help isn't explained anywhere the CIWCL knows of. One Facebook page mentions a martyr Colonel Mufta Futaisi (entry d), given as from Zlitan, who "was shot dead in a prison such as Yarmouk." [FMF] Amnesty International reported their five dead included *three men from Zlitan* besides the engineers [AI], suggesting the other officers hailed mostly from the same city as Col. Futaisi. (Zlitan is also where one that half the alleged prisoners at Yarmouk and almost all the survivors hailed from - see 2.2.2). The CIWCL suspects the colonel and the others were allegedly arrested and taken to Tripoli just as the Misrata brigades attacked the city and took captives, on their way to Tripoli. It was local fighters, not the Misratans, who first reported finding the bodies in Tripoli, but that might have been after Misratans had placed them there.

1.4.6: The Victims: Two Doctors and Some Brothers

The doctors present a less troubling image, on the surface, with their illustrated pro-rebellion activities. Amnesty heard that one of the usual two doctors was "believed to be **Ali al-Darrat**, from Misratah, who was taken prisoner near the eastern frontline in July and had not been heard from since." [AI] They didn't provide a name for the other doctor.

Dr. Al-Darrat is a reasonably famous character in the Misrata rebel movement. A tribute video titled (in Arabic) "Doctor Martyr Ali Ibrahim Darrat, supporting the right and the homeland," shows many images of him, alive with family, alive with rebels, and dead. [DV] [L24] His Martyr's bio calls him "a Libyan hero" who returned home from work in Germany to help the fight in his native Misrata, until he was "taken hostage by the brutal Gaddafi forces and African mercenaries **in Tawurgha where he was doing his noble job of aiding injured civilians.**" Again, this came sometime in July, and he was never heard from again. [DM1]

Tawergha – almost totally Gaddafi-loyalist and black-skinned - was the enemy city just south of Misrata. Just why rebel Al-Darrat would be there, helping people injured by rebel attacks and NATO bombs, is unclear. A series of two videos of his arrest are available online, and look authentic. [DAV] A recognizable Dr. Al-Darrat, complete with green hospital scrubs, is shown on his knees, surrounded by black soldiers questioning him. These are presumably Libyan natives of Tawergha, rather than foreigners. A second video claims to show them searching his bags, and finding suspicious items including a Thuraya mobile phone, which had been widely distributed among the rebels, ostensibly to get around government jamming.

He'd apparently been sent quickly to Tripoli but the proof was shown late. Darrat's arrest videos first appeared online only on August 13, [DAV] just as Tawergha was overrun by

the Misratans. It was brutally vacated and wiped off the map (see 2.1.3) in a quick operation of a few days, starting around the 11th and ending before August 15, when the media was allowed in. The rebels would have overrun any prison in Tawergha and liberated Ali if he had remained there.

One unusual thing about Dr. Al-Darrat is his appearance on or before July 7 on Al-Libya TV, the channel owned by Seif Al-Islam Al-Gaddafi, as a more “liberal” alternative to the staid Jamahiriya Arab News Agency (JANA). [L24] The CIWCL’s part-time Arabic translator reports his dialog there, in essence making his fellow rebels sound wrong-headed and misled. [L24] He said that his decision to come to Misrata was because of his emotions, the same ones manipulated by “religious people” there who misled the young by telling them that the Libyan army would kill everyone in the city if they entered. The host rebutted with a reference to a peace plan offered by the Libyan tribes assuring that no prisoners will be killed. “But that was refused (by the Misratans),” Darrat explained. And so the siege was resisted until they were capable of pushing back, with outside help, and besieging and entering Tripoli, intent on revenge for these perceived death threats. And they found Dr. Al-Darrat there.

The CIWCL’s translator says this Al-Libya interview came after the subject’s arrest for fighting with the Misratans, and thus was possibly coerced. He doesn’t act cowed or resentful, but open, and engaged, but he was apparently released after saying these things, only to apparently get caught again doing something vague but heroic right in loyalist-held Tawergha. But bad-mouthing the Misrata rebellion to a national audience along the way, even if under duress, might have angered some of his cohorts and contributed to his mysterious death alongside the Zlitan officers.

A now-obscure article run August 26 on several Canadian news sites cited the death of one **Abdelhamid Darrat**, of Tripoli and Ottawa, Canada. An electrical engineer and internet company owner, he’s supposedly Dr. Ali’s brother, according to his martyr’s biography; “Darrat didn’t join the rebel struggle. But **just like his brother Dr. Ali Darrat, he was detained back in March**, and killed this week in Tripoli.” [MD2] Ali of course was arrested months later, and Abdelhamid’s arrest date in dispute. He disappeared in March, from his home [MD2], or in May, from work with a few others. [OCD] Libyan officials led the family to believe that Darrat was taken out of Tripoli in order to do some sort of Internet work for the government. She said relatives with contacts in the Gadhafi regime told them Darrat was well looked after and doing well.” [OCD] But he apparently wasn’t allowed to talk to his family, before or after this sudden departure.

By one version, his body had been found in the Khamis shed with the other prisoners, thus presumably burnt, but somehow identified. This alleged fact was reported by the 26th, the same day the rebels claim to have first taken the Yarmouk base, and days after knowledge of QBG. [OCD] But there are also clues he – or some kind of “engineer” – was killed at QBG, while his co-prisoner and escapee – engineer **Mahmoud Okok** – survived to tell all about it. [AKS]

However, as the Ottawa Citizen report said, Darrat's daughter "said **Usama Okok**, a family friend who worked with Darrat and was also taken captive in May," somehow escaped and told Darrat's family of his friend's death. The relation between the two Okoks, Usama and Mahmoud, both apparently in the same electrical engineering and/or computer field as Abdelhamid, is unclear. They would seem to be the same person almost, but have differing names and stories of where and when the body was found. Further, Usama had already "told them a different story" from what the news reported. By this, his friend was beaten, tortured, and killed **just days after the arrest**. "They did stuff that no human being would do," his daughter Khadija recalled learning. "Nobody would even have done that to an animal." [OCD]

It required a little archive searching to find the rest of this pulled article, mentioning Khadija's assertion that her father "told me and my sisters you can study anywhere in the world you want." [OCD] That's a perk of the Gaddafi system Abdelhamid had taken advantage of. He has kind words for what the Jamahiriya then offered, he did not join the rebellion like his brother Dr. Ali, and disappeared under mysterious circumstances with different government officials and rebel friends giving different details, having him leaving Tripoli, presumably for something closer to the then-frontline. And Rebel fighters found him dead as they swarmed Tripoli, and left him to rot.

The second doctor, who also has an interesting brother, is **Omar Salhouba**. Less famous than Al-Darrat, and with less illustrated rebel sympathy, he does have a posthumous tribute page on Facebook. [OSF] Otherwise a few details on him were given to Robert Worth by his brother, **Nasser Salhouba**, now working for Jamal/Jalal Al-Ragai as his chief interrogator, especially of his brother's alleged killer, Marwan Gdoura. [RW2]

Nasser had previously studied to be a police investigator, until problems with the Gaddafi regime started in 1996. He told Worth another brother of his, Adel, "was gunned down in a Tripoli soccer stadium" that year by Saadi el-Qaddafi's guards, after someone had booed the leader's son. At least 20 were killed, Worth relates, in the now-obscure incident from this strangely bloody year. Nasser later pulled a gun on government workers while seeking answers for Adel's death, fled to Malta and fell into drugs and crime, and returned to Tripoli around 2003. [RW2]

The "special one" and "frail idealist" in the family was Omar, a 42-year-old pediatrician, apparently a local of the Souq Al-Juma area of Tripoli, who encouraged his brother to be better. Worth relates Omar's crime; he "risked his life by providing thousands of dollars' worth of medical supplies to the rebels." He was then arrested, while in the middle of surgery on a child, on June 7. Dragged off by "two intelligence agents" and stuffed in their car, he then disappeared without a sound, Nasser told Worth.

In between this and his murder on August 24, Dr. Omar was "revered" by fellow prisoners for treating his injured cohorts "and for his brave, failed efforts to break the men free." This isn't explained, but slipping out notes with pleas for help is mentioned, and his prophecy that his brother Nasser would save him. Killed with Dr. Al-Darrat and

the officers on the 24th, some escapees told Nasser that Omar used his last words to implore executioner Marwan to “fear God.” [RW2] But Marwan, the devout loyalist, feared only his commanding officers.

1.4.7: Death Photos/ Bodies Found

In Robert Worth’s August 24 killing version of the story, Libyan rebels had seen and apparently photographed Dr. Salhouba, identified him and, within the day, phoned his brother with the news. “On Aug. 24, Nasser got a call telling him Omar had been shot in the Yarmouk prison.” Nasser spent “more than a day” before finding someone with “a picture of his brother’s bloodied body,” apparently a print, he could take to the hospital to locate his body. The photos apparently weren’t taken with a camera phone like usual, or they could have been sent right after the call. But this worked and he finally made it to Omar’s grave while the cement was still wet. [RW2]

American anti-Gaddafi activist Mohammed Ali Abdullah Addarat (Al-Darrat, but no known relation) of the “National Front for the Salvation of Libya,” spoke late on the 24th of “some pictures that have emerged now of bodies of these prisoners who have been massacred in the last few days.” These were linked to some Yarmouk-like total of “100-140 people who have been massacred,” he thought, “in the Abu Salim prison alone, over the last few days.” [JRA] But these images are quite likely of the crime scene where both dead doctors seem to be laid piled together. The three views the CIWCL could find are compiled into a graphic below.



Oerlmans’ local showed a photo on his mobile phone, held aloft in the same room it was taken in - clearly someone’s furnished living space. [FO3] Taken on August 25 at 2:45/46 am by the screen on his phone, it shows two bodies, about one to four days after the reported jailbreak, top center in the image below. [FO3] These appear to be Dr. Salhouba

(left, in red) and Dr. Al-Darrat, as shown in his tribute video, with Dr. Omar's pale crew-cut visible.[DV]

The close-up of Darrat dead is not completely convincing; there's nothing there that couldn't be faked, hypothetically. He doesn't appear to be riddled with bullets – at least not in the head or torso - from Marwan's two clips plus whatever the other guards poured in. The CIWCL does suspect he was truly killed, though it's not clear by what. He has blood coming from the left ear, and apparently **two spots at the bridge of the nose**, trickling down the sides. It's possible this is the sign of some horrible torture the CIWCL doesn't know anything about. There's no visible bruising, bullet hole, or anything else wrong with his face.

Dr. Salhouba, never seen as clearly, seems to have a long, nasty gash or burn along his upper left arm. His red shirt is spattered with far more blood than Darrat's. Neither Marwan nor the alleged escapees says anything about the victims being tortured, as these two might have been, even after having seen their bodies on the way out and, again, leaving them behind to just be "found" and photographed as they started to decay.

1.4.8: Reflections Back on the Yarmouk Massacre

This part started with the close relation and even confusion between the two alleged massacre sites – a confusion that was heightened Robert Worth's second report on Yarmouk – the killings there of many happened Aug. 23, he duly notes, but Omar Salhouba – killed Aug. 24 - was reportedly "revered at Yarmouk" for helping his fellow prisoners there. It was Marwan Gdoura, one of the guards who "were perfectly open about their roles at Yarmouk" and yet who "shot Omar and the other five victims." But he shot these victims "first; the other two guards fired only after Marwan emptied two clips from his AK-47." On whom isn't clear, unless Worth really thought this was at Yarmouk with its masses killed, as his wording implies but despite the different dates. [RW2] The best reading of all this is describing an alleged Yarmouk prison system, with two locations. By many sources, guards shuttled freely between the two compounds, and prisoners moved within it too, but only south to the Brazilian compound.

The compared accounts show little cohesion on anything except who died and who killed them. There's little overall agreement on when and how it happened. This is not how real memories usually operate, and therefore the accounts are questionable. At the very least, it's fair to say that the picture of what happened there is not as clear as any one witness, or group of witnesses, has tried to make it sound.

There will be those inclined to believe all the version are somehow true, with the vagaries of human memory explaining the conflicting details. From such a viewpoint, the example of Qasr Ben Ghashir could be used to argue that the Yarmouk massacre's record and all of its conflicts present nothing unusual.

The patterns laid out in this smaller study do reflect in the nearby massacre this report will delve into over the following parts. The CIWCL invite all readers to consider, across the witness accounts and the gaps of logic and agreement, just what it is that underlies this larger cluster of broken memories. They claim to reflect what's supposed to be "the most clear-cut war crime" of the whole Libyan Civil War, but they do so like a shattered mirror, a pile of shards chaotically reflecting bits of everything from all directions.

Part 2:

Problematic Witnesses

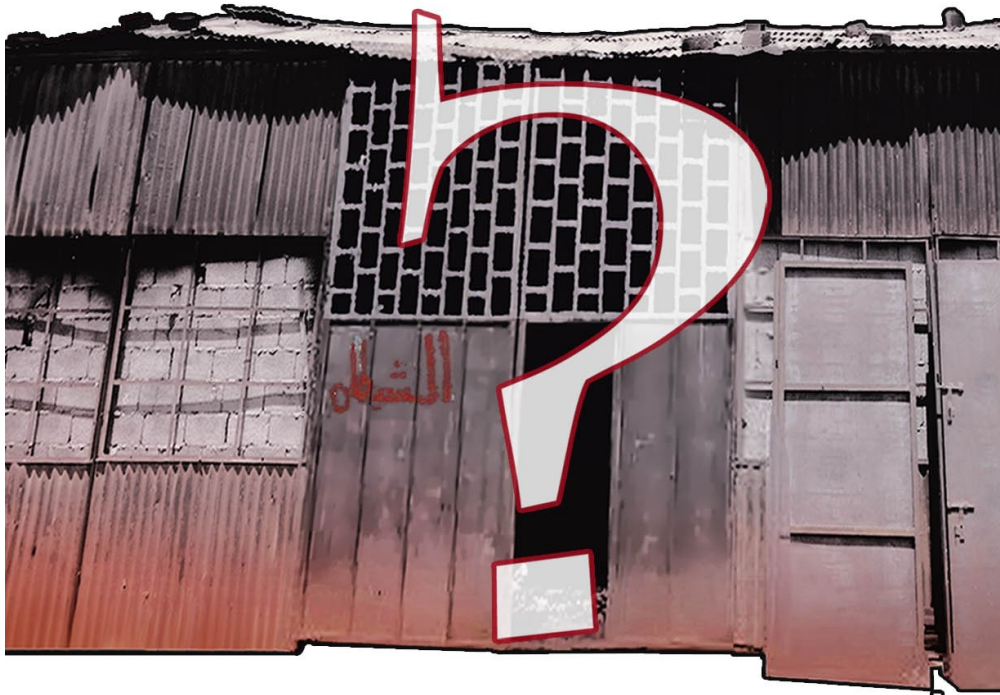
2.1: So-Called Witnesses and Injustice

2.2: Cataloguing the Witnesses

2.3: The Captive Soldiers “Confess”

2.4: Believe Whom?

2.5: See-Through Salem and the Fakers He’s Touched



2.1: So-Called Witnesses and Injustice

2.1.1: The Natural Response

What the world thinks it knows about the massacre at that outbuilding in Khelet al-Furjan is from those who have called themselves witnesses to the events. These include the miraculous escapees, the villainous perpetrators, and the horrified locals.

When someone brings forth to the media their story of what happened, it's only natural to presume first that he or she is telling the truth. That he's lying or embellishing is a logical possibility but carries a certain implied judgment of character most would rather not venture. No one wants to be perceived as attacking someone who witnessed such horror and so narrowly escaped death himself.

Another impulse in the Western media at the relevant time, cultivated if not natural, is to believe nearly anything that implicated the Gaddafi regime in acts of evil, and thus justified the ongoing intervention. With this double impulse working against skepticism, it's little wonder journalists and investigators who met these people face-to-face and one-by-one, did little more than take down the stories as literal truth.

In this case, a few dozen people all claimed to have seen the event and all agree on which side of the conflict was responsible. None of the interviewers came back saying it sounded fishy. Presented with that picture, it's doubly natural for the public to presume this was a true event, witnessed and corroborated by all these people.

That they're all lying, or even some segment of them, is still a logical possibility. But that would challenge multiple witnesses' personal morality, as well as require some level of conspiracy. It's not the thing one should normally presume without quite a bit of good evidence.

But natural and generous responses are also predictable and thus malleable by those whose profession is to deceive. Liars use credulity and benefits of the doubt to mentally rip people off and get away with crimes. On the possibility, however slim, that such people pollute this witness pool, someone must manage the distance required to identify the signs of it. The CIWCL has appointed itself to fill that role.

2.1.2: A Peacetime Problem...

Around the world, even in nominally modern liberal countries at peace, innocent people are all too often convicted of and punished for crimes they never committed. In the United States in particular, such cases are recognized and even corrected more and more in recent years, primarily when rape was involved, and better DNA testing provides scientific proof of their innocence.

The American Innocence Project lays out case after case in their book *Actual Innocence*, revealing disturbing patterns of misconduct by over-zealous police, corrupt prosecutors, and politicians hoping a tough stance will earn them re-election. [SND] Inadequate defense counsel, biased judges, and bad luck all contribute, but active deception and conspiracy against the accused seem to be the norm. Perhaps sub-consciously, people agree to pursue a case that can hardly be factually true. Coached and bribed witnesses are called on, planted evidence is used, junk science, and more, constituting a veritable industry in some states.

One example involving witnesses (but not DNA) was a case from San Francisco in 1990 that only fell apart in 2003. John Tennison and Antoine Goff were exonerated and released without even a re-trial over the gang-related murder they were both convicted of. The case always had problems, and *the real killer finally confessed*. Evidence also surfaced of serious police misconduct, including a fund to pay eyewitnesses, including the only direct witnesses, two teenage girls. The district attorney vowed a probe. [TI]

The problematic witness testimony was only one factor in the decision to release the men, but that weakness was there all along. As Death Penalty.org explained

*“The girls' testimony was inconsistent, lacked crucial details about the car chase and killing itself, and contradicted statements by other witnesses. **One of the girls recanted her story**, confessing that she did not in fact witness the crime, but **the police and the prosecutor bullied her into going back to her original tale.**”* [DPC]

Bullying to secure an untrue story supported by little else, to be repeated under oath and used to lock two men away for life, is highly criminal. It's not the kind of thing one would naturally want to allege of the San Francisco police, but it allegedly happened in this case at least.

Untrue eyewitness evidence and false confessions can be obtained. Plea deals, bribes, trickery, threats - in some parts of the world torture - can give prosecutors or dictators the “smoking gun” they need to blame whoever they've decided to blame, to solve a crime, win an election, start a war, or crush a competing faction. Even outright forgery can be called on if all else fails. The trick is not creating the reality but getting away with it and making it stick, which becomes possible for those effectively above the law.

Another type of witness is worth considering here. One Innocence Project case was solved by DNA science only 12 years after two innocent men were jailed for life for the rape, torture, and murder of a young woman in Oklahoma. Both men had confessions fabricated for them by jailhouse snitches, ones known to say whatever the cops want and actively sought out for repeat performances. That in turn was pursued to flesh out a lead

first offered by the prosecution's chief witness, the eventually-DNA-proven rapist and killer Glenn Gore. [SND p.151]

When the guilty party gets to decide whom to point at, problems with truth and justice are not far behind, and more lives are destroyed. Sometimes it's spotted and corrected (to the extent that's possible) right away. Sometimes it takes 12 or 24 years, and sometimes it never happens.

2.1.3: ... Worse at War

In May 2011 in rebel-held Misrata, Libya, two young black men from the neighboring, largely Gaddafi-loyalist town of Tawergha confessed to their role in raping young Misratan women and girls. The two were paraded before Andrew Harding of the BBC, who reported their confession as seemingly legitimate. [AH] It was clear, however, that Harding saw some of the fatal problems in this narrative.

They were not treated well, still dressed in "the same filthy, bloodstained army fatigues they were captured in two weeks ago." Harding quoted one of them saying "I don't feel nervous or frightened now," but also noted "they are obviously nervous." [AH]

The two captives, one 21 and one 17 years old, claimed they had been part of a mass rape of four daughters from a single family. After shooting the men in the legs, the officers went first. The young kids were paid to take part, encouraged with music and dancing, but went at the girls last. One of them "confessed" it was his first time and he didn't enjoy it. But they were also able to say, from bragging they heard on the military radio system, that 50 families in Misrata were so targeted. One passed on their assurance that "I want to emphasise that the officers forced us to rape," presumably on orders running all the way to the top of the regime. [AH]

Later on, after time for better coaching even, Amnesty International's people, including senior crisis response manager Donatella Rovera, had a look. The UK *Independent* reported on it in June:

*"Ms Rovera says that when she and a colleague, both fluent in Arabic, interviewed the two detainees, one 17 years old and one 21, alone and in separate rooms, **they changed their stories and gave differing accounts of what had happened.** "They both said they had not participated in the rape and just heard about it," she said. "They told different stories about whether or not the girls' hands were tied, whether their parents were present and about how they were dressed.""* [PC]

Their details were inconsistent, suggesting at least one of their accounts (and likely both) were untrue. It seems most likely the result of coaching and threatening, probably far more stick than carrot. But no one could do anything about it, and there was no reversal

of conviction in this case. Self-poisoned by lies or not, vengeful Misratans continued on their announced plans for collective punishment. Tawergha – once populated by around 30,000 mostly black inhabitants - was emptied brutally in mid-August and closed down. Its people were told to leave, but within weeks they were being pursued in their camps around Tripoli and elsewhere, until today being harassed, disappeared, and sometimes turning up dead. Tawergha women have been reported raped in revenge. Misratans, men and women alike, have been abundantly clear that their arguably genocidal solution is a final one. (see also sub-section 3.1.2)

Tarik Kafala for BBC Magazine, following the plight of the exiles in December 2011, spoke to a woman who denies her nephew's alleged confession to rape. Giving her name as Umm Saber, she suggested it was never about evidence, stating "they drove us out because they want our land and homes." But they were also shown a middle-aged prisoner whose "teeth were knocked out by a rifle butt," and swears he witnessed "more than 20 men suffering torture to their genitals, a man being sodomized with a stick, and Tawergha women who worked with the Gaddafi military urinating on prisoners." [TK]

Mr. Kafala didn't specify which version he believed, but the significance of all this dubious evidence cannot be understated. He explained how "people in Misrata explain what happened in Tawergha, the cleansing of a whole town, in terms of the rapes and sexual torture." [TK]

This second example is extremely relevant to the case under study. The same basic fighters – rebel brigades from Misrata – were at the forefront of conquering the Yarmouk base within two weeks of wiping Tawergha off the map. We can believe they and their grievances have nothing to do with the massacre behind the base only because of what the witnesses say.

The natural impulse explained above is healthy and good in most circumstances. However, looking at the dozens of claimed witnesses to the massacre at Yarmouk from a distance, both dishonesty and conspiracy are suggested. In such cases, the view of acceptance becomes a liability and a weakness inviting attack. The following sections will highlight some of the attacks the CIWCL believe have been made on the world community's right to the truth.

2.2: Cataloguing the Witnesses

2.2.1: Witness Overview

The most important witnesses for the purposes of this report are the escapees who saw first hand just what happened on August 23rd or, by the accounts of a few, on August 22. The CIWCL has some details for a total of 29 people claiming, first-hand, to have been in the midst of the shooting and lived to tell. Section 2.4 will deal with these primarily and how they describe the massacre itself and their escape from it.

Other types of witnesses we have catalogued are second-hand escapees accounts (7), possible escapees with too few details to be sure (30), captive soldiers (12) local witnesses (13), and prisoners at other times (10). All told, the CIWCL has 101 entries, with varying levels of detail and relevance. Section 2.3 will deal with those who claim to be among the guards and executioners, and 2.5 will deal with patterns of high-level deception surrounding one self-described local witness and a few others related to his continued, strange activities.

Some of those described in reports as “survivors” do not meet the CIWCL’s qualification of escaping from the massacre. Some like Moayed Burani/Abu Graim were transferred away from the prison days before the massacre. They survived like six billion other people in the world did, by simply not being there that day. They are still listed as witnesses, but only to the existence and character of the prison they say they were once held in.

First witnesses from major English-language media were listed, and then from rights groups, more obscure reports, etc. Accounts in other languages were located, including many news reports in French and social media entries in Arabic. The CIWCL has, to the best of its ability, translated, correlated, and cross-referenced this vast body of information into the following lists and much of this report.

The initial reports suggested 7-10, perhaps 18, 23 or 24 people managed to escape from the grenades and bullets. Some specified 30-35 had gotten out of the shed, but many of these (10-20) died crossing the yard. More names emerged over the months; one web page the CIWCL found listed 40 names in Arabic of (translated) “some of the survivors of the Yarmouk prison massacre.” [FB1] About a dozen of these have additional information the CIWCL either already had or found on searching. The rest, described only as survivors, are listed as possible alleged escapees. [FB1]

There are many patterns among the witnesses that the CIWCL didn’t have the time to trace clearly. Those relating to the nature of the massacre and escape from it are covered in depth in section 2.4, and some select others immediately below.

2.2.2: Zlitan Blessed?

Nearly half of the alleged prisoners and, it seems, a vast majority of the escapees, hailed from the city of Zlitan, mid-way between Tripoli and Misrata. The rebels and NATO had to really hammer that city (and its suburbs, like Majer) before it could be taken, clearing the way to Tripoli. But the massacre list from Yarmouk showed that a lot of Zlitanis opposed Gaddafi, or were suspected of it, and a heavy price was extracted from them, if less than universally.

One report says a full 75 of the 153/157 prisoners were taken from there, with *more than half* of those making it back home. Translated from Arabic, it says: “according to the Legal Committee of the martyrs and missing persons and prisoners of the Council of Zliten,” local victims of “the Holocaust Yarmouk camp” totaled 34 missing and **41 “survivors who arrived in Zliten safely.”** [ZS]

The ICS fact-finding mission mentioned “a list noting the death of 30 individuals from Zliten alone in this incident.” [CS], and it seems the 40-name list is a version of the 41 survivors; of those the CIWCL can find details on, all are Zlitani. [FB1] The reported survival rate is quite amazing, 41 out of the accepted 51 total. By contrast, there would be 82-86 prisoners from Tripoli and the rest of Libya combined, with about ten surviving. With a survival rate nearly five times the national average, one is almost left wondering if Zliten and its people enjoy some special blessing from God.

2.2.3: Compressed Accounts and Non-Compressed

Another pattern of unknown relevance is the plasticity of witness names. Even beyond standard transliteration differences (where Zlitan and Zliten are both correct), multiple names were encountered for some witnesses. These have been condensed into single accounts based on solid clues they were probably the same person. Some names the CIWCL encountered were in Arabic and presented transliteration issues. We used Google translate and mylanguages.org transliteration, plus some adjustments. The result is better than nothing, but a few of these names are likely mangled.

Some variations are more puzzling. Moaiyed, a onetime prisoner, has given family names Abu Ghraim and Burani. Another onetime prisoner, Jamal Rabbani, was a lieutenant colonel, while another of no given rank, Jamal al-Ragai, commanded a rebel unit. One escaped Mr. Abdullah, with the same injuries, hometown, and other details, has gone by Moftar/Muftar, Mabrouk, and “Abdullah.” Such cases have been compressed into single entries.

Three accounts, as listed here, seem to be **physically the same man**. (See 2.5.5) The CIWCL decided this only late in its investigation, and it may deserve a full section. But in the interest of brevity, it will only be noted here, with reference to the fuller, and visual, explanation posted at the *Libyan Civil War* blog. [LBS] “Mohammed Bashir” seems to be the same man as “Bashir Mohammed Al-Sadeq,” aka “Bashir Mohammed al-Germani.” These two names are compressed together by common details, and by precise

account detail matches, including specifying the wrong massacre date (August 22) in three ways, the CIWCL has concluded Mr. Sadeq/Germani is *also* the same as PHR witness “Omar.” In his different characters, he has cited two or even three massacre dates, two duration of detention (95 or just a few days), and at least two escape stories, one via the hole in the wall, and one out the doors.

Right after him in sub-section 2.5.5 is the part where Bashir confronts one of the three soldiers who seem to be the same person, as explained more fully in 2.3.4). Three family names are given, but all preceded by “Ibrahim,” a 20-year old from Tajoura, who among the five on execution detail was the main grenade thrower. The report keeps these six accounts separate as the so-called witnesses apparently wanted it that way. This list may in fact be an assemblage of untrue stories spun by false-name characters, and Omar, Bashir, Mohammed, and the three Ibrahims are all separate characters with different stories. We can be fairly sure at least a majority of these three stories are false, and quite likely all of them. The lesson from those six should be remembered across the full span of 100 names.

2.2.4: Injuries and Lack Thereof

The massacre related deaths across this large list are already an intriguing zero. The related injuries are also puzzlingly few, vague, and far between. Most of the specified or verifiable injuries are said to be from detention elsewhere (especially Zlitan) or otherwise prior to the massacre (see Benowen).

Among them are reported gunshots and shrapnel wounds, one at least shown but far too healed to be that recent. A few limps were on display, but no missing limbs or even fingers. There are no disfigured faces, nor debilitating abdominal injuries. Grenades were allegedly hurled at them between machine gun salvos, in a closed space 25 feet deep.

Two in three of the 157 in there took it all and were decimated, as the bodies left behind and burnt show (see sub-section 3.3.3). A clear majority of their feet were completely gone, many legs below the knees, and quite a few hands were missing, few besides those bodies cut or crushed totally in half. The surviving third, it seems, absorbed nearly none of that onslaught, not just surviving, but doing so by a healthy margin.

2.2.5: (Alleged) Massacre Escapees, First-Hand (29)

Top line (if known): name, age, profession, hometown, time of detention (at Yarmouk if not specified).

1 – Mabrouk/Muftar Abdullah, 45, teacher, Zlitan. Held about 6-8 days.

Mabrouk Abdullah, 45, was shot in his side. [HL] [KL] An unnamed survivor who was “shot in his side” and showed the wound on video, Aug 28. [TV] Visibly the same man

shows off different marks on his back, and is named as Muftar Abdullah Aslitni, 45, a teacher. Aslitni could be confusion over “Zlitani.” [JR] Mabrouk Abdallah spoke to Le Figaro. [LF] “Abdullah,” arrested in Zlitan, was “shot and wounded in his side.” [AP] Moftar Abdallah from the town of Zlitan. [CH] Facebook list of 40, entry #1. [FB1] **Manner of escape:** “[Abdullah] fled the hanger. He hid outside when soldiers returned and fired on other survivors. When they left, he escaped.” [AP] **Injuries:** The gunshot is from the massacre, he says, but it's only been three days and it's totally healed (see 2.4.7). The lesser injuries on his back, in light of the patterns below, are likely from his detention in Zlitan.

2 – Mohammed Gibran Ahbich

A brother of Essam Gibran Ahbich, who apparently died at Yarmouk, spoke for a rebel video interview, professional quality, said to show “a young man from Zlitan [who] tells the story of his suffering and death after surviving an attempt execution...” Recounting parts of his story, he gives his name, as given in the story, as Mohammed Ahbich. [YTZ] A “Mohammad Imran Ahbich” was among three freed rebel prisoners in Tripoli “injured but in good condition at Tripoli Medical Center.” [FB7] List of 40, entry #37 is Mohammad Jubran/Gibran Ahbich [FB1]

3 – Abdel Salaam Ashour, 42, teacher, Zlitan

Manner of escape: “Some of us dived to the floor, and some of us ran. They shot my leg. We were all screaming.” [NYP] [JL] Facebook list #24 [FB1] “Fawzi,” a sobbing youth in a Lacoste shirt and false beard (“un joven de remera Lacoste falsa y barba que”), told Elizabeth Pique he feared his brother “Al-Salem Ashur” was among the dead. Perhaps not. (see also Ibrahim Omar Zadan) [EPN]



#4, Fathallah Al-Ashter [OG]

4 - Fathallah Abdullah Al-Ashter, 70, Zlitan, less than a week.

Fathallah Abdullah [OG] Fathallah Abdullah Al Ashter, 70 [JR] Arrested with his three sons in Zlitan in mid-August. Filmed weeping over his three lost sons – two for sure dead (Ibrahim and Abdul Hakim), and one, Ali, possibly alive but missing. [OG] Facebook list, entry #5. [FB1]. **Manner of escape:** “When another prisoner kicked open the warehouse door Fathallah ran for cover and managed to hide under a truck.” [OG] **Injuries:** None mentioned.

5 - Tahir Ahmed El Bahbah, 16/17 (Zlitan?), held four days

Arrested August 18 ten o'clock at night, with three cousins (Ali Mohamed, Abdulaziz Faraj, and Abdullah Abdul Razak el-Bahbah). They were transferred to Yarmouk on the 19th, saw an escapee killed on the 20th. El-Bahbah says they were released by a guard named Abdul Razak Baroni, prior to the massacre. **Manner of Escape:** he mentions jumping, walls, and houses (the translation was confusing). **Injuries:** “wounded in my

shoulder by bullet and shrapnel...” [FB3] Facebook list #28 [FB1]

6 - Abdulrahim Ibrahim Bashir, 25, Gadames, Held three months

Spoke to Human rights Watch, the only witness to soldiers shooting down through the roof, counted 153 names read out during roll call the day of the execution. **Manner of escape:** “I ran out the door and jumped over the wall. I was not wounded, hamdullah. They just shot and killed us.” He hid in a house with escapees Abdulsalam and Hussein, brothers from Zliten. Hussein was wounded and later died in Bashir’s arms, but his body was left to rot in that house. **Injuries:** none. [HR]

7 – Mohammed Bashir, 52, held less than a week

The CIWCL considers it possible this is the same man also listed as #21 Bashir al-Sidek and thus also #18, Omar (see 2.2.3). Bashir spoke to UK Daily Mirror [MF] and was seen amongst survivors and family meeting Ban Ki Moon in November [VBM] “We were put in the metal building last week after being transferred from other prisons.” During the massacre, which he gives as Tuesday (the 23rd) “he hid behind an empty gas canister” to avoid a second round of shooting, but “that’s when they poured petrol in and set it alight. They were trying to hide evidence but people were still alive. I could hear them scream.” **Manner of escape:** “My friends and I ran through a hole in the wall and tried to escape across the compound.” **Injuries:** none. [MF]

8 - Aamir Benowen, 26, Tripoli, held three months.

Injuries: Seen badly injured, tortured, at Tripoli Medical Center by Global Post, Tracey Shelton – broken ribs, massive bruising, multiple stab wounds, a “sliced open” neck, spoke through a respirator. This was from an attack in the shed four days before the massacre, which no one confirms. He was presumed dead, left unconscious and unaided by anyone, yet witnessed the massacre and survived. **Manner of escape:** unexplained, despite rather requiring an explanation. (see 2.4.7) [GPS]

9 – Said Mohammed Falba, Computer professional, held four months

This name in Arabic, a photo, and a partial account were found at a Facebook page since taken down, but the CIWCL did not save the photo or full content. Therein, Mr. Falba said he worked for Sun Microsystems, apparently in Tripoli, arrested with others from the company on suspicion of feeding NATO coordinates, and sent to Yarmouk. “Said Mahmoud Falba a survivor of the Holocaust...” [FB4] The same face, unnamed, is seen in What Happened at Yarmouk, giving details at the site. He says the prisoners broke out on their own but the guards, in an ambush, started shooting as they emerged, sweeping them back inside, where they re-locked the doors and kept killing them. **Manner of escape:** not explained. [FGM] **Injuries:** He walks with a cane, possibly related to the massacre. It’s not explained, if so.

10 - Amr Dau Algala (Al-Gala), Tripoli, 34, police officer, held at least 5 days
Apparently Munir El Goula’s Brother (see below), spoke to Kim Sengupta, the

Independent, early September. A former police officer, tasked with decoding messages for the government, he refused and started organizing resistance. Arrested with brothers, taken to Abu Salim prison at least two days, and the shed for at least 3 days more. He doesn't specify how many brothers were with him and how many escaped, only mentioning one, Abdullah, who he fears died. **Cited a death toll of 60.** Suggests fire during the massacre. **Manner of escape:** "We were all shouting and we ran out. We climbed over that wall and we ran through the houses." **Injuries:** He showed marks where his wrists were bound with wire. [KS] Mounir el-Goula's brother walked stiffly, as if injured, when they were filmed August 25.[LH]

11 – Mansour Tarar Gazi, 30 (Zlitan?)

A Tarrar Gazi, 30, escaped with Moustapha el-Etri. [JT] A "Taha" escaped with Mustafa. Atiri, and both were taken in by Ahmed al-Farjani. [RW1] Facebook list of 40, Mansour Tarrar Gazi [FB1] Tarrar and Taha are different spellings of the same name, neither likely to be exactly right. Nothing further.

12 - Munir El Goula, (and brother) Tripoli, Mansoura district, held three days

Interviewed Aug. 25. Arrested August 20 along with three brothers, he managed to escape with one of them (shown on video but silent and unnamed, apparently Amr Dau Algala above), and two remained missing. Only one, Abdullah, merited mention as presumed dead. Munir cites a death toll of "20 soldiers and more than a hundred prisoners." **Manner of escape:** "He says somehow he escaped." **Injuries:** none mentioned. [LH]



left to right: Munir el-Goula [LH], Amr Dau Algala [KS], Munir's brother [LH]

13 - Ahmed Mohamed Hadid

An Ahmed Hadid is on the list of 40, entry #17 [FB1] and among three freed rebel prisoners in Tripoli "injured but in good condition at Tripoli Medical Center." [FB7]

14 - Abdulatti Musbah Bin-Halim, 43, construction worker, Zlitan, held a few days
Abdulatti Musbah Haleem, 43, cement buyer, Zlitan [DT] "Abdul Arti Mosbah bin Halim, a construction worker that survived a massacre of up to 200 inmates at Yarmouk prison..." [OM1] is among three freed rebel prisoners in Tripoli "injured but in good

condition at Tripoli Medical Center.”[FB7] Interviewed for the Daily Telegraph August 25, he was arrested “last week,” transferred to Yarmouk shortly. Cited 200 prisoners total, only 18 surviving. “The guards told us that it was all over and we were going to go home that day.” One of the guards “said he would unlock the door and all we had to do was undo the latch and then we could escape,” but “the first of us went out and were met with a hail of bullets...” [DT] **Manner of escape:** “After the firing stopped he and about 30 others ran out through *a hole they had made* in the hangar wall. “Some of us did not make it because they started shooting again.”” **Injuries:** Burns and shackle marks visible, from “captivity in Zliten.” Stated injuries (not shown): “hit by bullets and shrapnel but managed to run behind a stack of tires which offered some protection.” [DT] It offered much protection. Only his lower right leg is bandaged, the ankle apparently bleeding still, in a photograph from the hospital, Aug. 25. [OM1]

15 - Ali Hamouda

A survivor recognized by Fathallah Abdullah al-Ashter, confirms some soldiers taken out and killed first. “Outside the warehouse [Fathallah] greeted another survivor, Ali Hamouda, with a sombre handshake. Ali was uninjured but told us his cousin was among the dead.” [OG] **Manner of Escape:** Unspecified, but would probably have confirmed Fathallah if given the chance. **Injuries:** None.

16 - Mustafa Abdullah El Hitri, 26/27, lawyer, held one day

Unnamed to Sky News [SN2] Mustafa Abdullah El Hitri, 26 [AL] Mustafa Abdullah Atiri, 27 [RW1] Moustapha el-Etri, 27 [JT] El-Hitri in photos [SM3], [SM4], etc.. Arrested Aug. 19, moved to shed just before the massacre. [JD] Witnessed Khamis Gaddafi giving the massacre order. [AL] [RW1] **Method of escape:** He was “encouraged to make a run for it by a guard named as Abdul Razak, who opened the barn doors while the execution detail went to reload their weapons” [AL] He escaped with “Taha” [RW1] or was followed by Gazi Tarar [JT]. “After running from the warehouse, they leapt over a low wall at the far end of the prison, then sprinted between empty houses and farms. They could hear the whine of bullets slicing into the fields around them.” Both were taken in by a local family, then dumped in a nearby town, where loyalists threatened to kill them, until local Ahmed al-Farjani saved them and took them in. [RW1] **Injuries:** walked with a limp a week after [RW1] but not four days after [SN2] nor likely when leaping over walls and dodging bullets [RW1].



Hussein Al-Lafi, telling the world. [BBK]

17 – Hussein Al-Lafi, 40 Az Zawiya, held nearly two months

A father of five, al-Lafi says he was arrested with three brothers on 29 June on suspicion of supporting the rebels, and frequently beaten. He spoke to Amnesty International on August 25/26 [AI], Al Jazeera Aug. 27 [JA], and Feras Kilani in March 2012 [BBK] [BAK] During the massacre, “I couldn’t see anything from the smoke. People were screaming and there were many more rounds of fire.” He remained there in peace long enough to

discover his brothers: Jamal, 44, dead. Osama, 31, was “shot in the heart and had other wounds on his leg,” and passed away. Mohamed, 52: “I tried to stop the bleeding from his thigh, but didn’t succeed.” [AI] To Kilani he added details: his older brother Mohammad was next to the wall. “I touched him and I could feel that his leg was missing. He said to me: ‘Run away, save yourself, and go tell the world that we’ve been slaughtered.’” [BBK] **Manner of escape:** Others had been lingering with him. After confirming the brothers were dead, “I then escaped with three more people through the back of the hangar” and quickly started telling the world. [AI]

18 – Abdelbasset Said Maoma/Amauma, 49, Zlitan

Back in Zlitan on Sept. 2 “Abul [sic] Basit Saad Maoma, 49” showed Seamus Murphy scars from captivity there, before his transfer to Yarmouk, “where he survived the massacre of up to 150 men.” [SM 2] Facebook list #8: Abdelbasset Said Amauma [FB1]

19 - Ahmed Mohammed, 25

“Ahmed Mohammed, 25, also said he survived the massacre and told a similar story [to Mabrouk Abdullah's]. Neither knew how many had been killed nor how and when the bodies had been burned.” [AP] Nothing further.

20 - “Mohammad” (pseudonym), Az Zawiya, held two months.

Interviewed by Physicians for Human rights 9-11 September 2011. [PHR p.23]. Arrested June 15, badly beaten by two Tawerghans with “poor Arabic,” transferred to Yarmouk the 18th. Spent two weeks in prison trucks there, the rest in the shed. On the 23rd, guard Mustafa warned them to flee, and said he would unlock the door for them. The prisoners chanted Allahu Akbar loud enough two guards came over and found the doors unlocked. One of them yelled “who opened the coffin?” while the other stepped in “and reportedly fired his nine-millimeter pistol” at two Misrata captives, killing one. They stepped back out and started firing their Kalashnikovs and lobbing grenades in cycles. **Manner of escape:** PHR reports “At one point one of the soldiers’ weapons jammed, and one of the detainees picked up a metal object and threw it at the soldier while he ran out of the warehouse.” The soldier got his gun working and the shot the man down, but another prisoner “grab[bed] a fire extinguisher and, while running past the soldier, create a cloud of smoke so he could safely escape,” along with others who used the smoke screen and scattered. Mohammad was one of the last two to leave. He and his companion ran “toward the back compound wall where the trucks with the shells” were parked and climbed over.” **Injuries:** Mohammad’s injuries were extensively studied by PHR. He suffered various harm from tight wrist-binding, stomping, beating, and flogging. Much or all of this was from initial detention, none from the massacre itself. [PHR p.26]

21 – “Omar” (pseudonym) Az Zawiya, car-dealer, held 95 days

Shared details with #22 Bashir el-Sadeq, suggesting the same man (see 2.2.3: held 95 days, cites a massacre on the 22nd instead of 23rd, smokes cigarettes (which soldiers stole), accused of helping people flee to Tunisia, plus funding the rebel cause with his car business. He drove a Mercedes-Benz. [PHR] “Omar” spoke to Physicians for Human

rights on September 9. “According to Omar, he was the longest-serving detainee at the Agricultural Compound,” jailed with his nephew, who was apparently released soon after. Two of his cars were stolen and brought there to taunt him. He cites a 22 August massacre, after guard Mustafa tried to set them all free (turning down a fat bribe). [PHR] **Manner of escape:** “...he hid behind some tires and farm equipment. When there was a pause in the shooting, detainees rushed the door and ran in all directions. ... managed to escape safely by scaling the wall of the compound.” [PHR] **Injuries:** None mentioned by PHR – they offered only a psychological assessment focusing on his frequent sobbing.



*Mounir Massoud Own,
CNN video*

22 - Mounir Massoud Own, 33, manual laborer, held less than a month.

Arrested with his younger brother in early August, location unspecified (Tripoli?). Lost track of his brother in the escape, and he’s presumed dead. Own spoke to CNN’s Arwa Damon late on the 28th, given as Muneer Masoud Own, pronounced Muneed. [CNN1][CNN2] [CNN3] He believes about 24 of 175 prisoners escaped, and 150 died. **Manner of escape:** “Mounir made a run for it. “I ran away. I jumped over that wall (pointing southwest). But I don’t remember anything else.” [CNN3] **Injuries:** none mentioned.

23 - Akram Mohamed Saleh, held “about two months.”

He told Amnesty International: “I was in shock when the grenades exploded. There was so much confusion around me, smoke all around.” **Injuries:** “During the escape, he sustained a gunshot wound to his left leg, as well as injuries to his head from exploding grenades. Saleh and 19 other detainees managed to escape, and at least four of them sought medical treatment at a Tripoli hospital.” [AI] No further citations or details. The hospital is apparently Tripoli Medical Center, where Dr. Salem al-Farjani was working. (see section 2.5)

24 - Hisham Al Taher Al-Sari, Zlitan, held five days

Arrested August 18, held at Yarmouk until “Check-out 23/8/2011”... the rest is confusing. (Arabic, auto-translated) [FB2] Facebook list of 40, entry #4 [FB1]

25 – Bashir Mohammed al-Sadeq/Germani, held 95 days.

Bashir al-Sadeq/Seddiq (phonetic) [CBC] Bachir Mohammed Sedik [LM] Bechir Mohammed, Az Zawiyah [CT] Bashir Germani [AG] Bashir Al-Germani/Al-Jamani (phonetic, no titles) to Al-Jazeera English. [VSD] Bashir Al-Sadeq [BBK] The CIWCL feels this is the same man also listed as #8, Mohammed Bashir, and the same as #19, Omar (see 2.2.3, 2.5.5). Matching clues with Omar: a businessman from Az Zawiyah, held there for 95 days, he said, “accused of helping the rebels.” The massacre happened “Monday night,” the 22nd He has things in his shirt pockets like packs of cigarettes. Shown breaking down in tears on camera. [CBC] “Arrested three months ago for helping demonstrators to flee to Tunisia.” [AG] Arrested off and on for years prior to that (for

smuggling?). [VSD] ““They kept me locked for 95 days in that place,” says Bashir indicating the warehouse.” [CT] Took part in a confrontation with soldier Ibrahim Tajouri in tandem with survivor Hussein Al-Lafi.[BAK] **Manner of escape:** “when [the soldiers] went to re-load their guns, he crawled over bodies to a hole in the wall, and in the chaos, escaped.” [CBC] “Then, hidden behind a wall, he heard the screams, shots, cries for help, before seeing the fire lit.” [LM] **Injuries:** “I was not hurt” [AG]

26 - Abed Rizaq Ghazim Senussi, 45, Gadames

Named in full, from “Grames,” presumably Gadames. “35 people escaped ... he being one of them.” [DBS] Named and shown on video [CTV], shown, matching CTV, and to a Hungarian journalist specified as preferring to remain anonymous. [HV/HB] Suggests no grenades were used in the attack (p. 73). Spoke as “Abdul Razak,” 45, of Gadames to another Hungarian, Szlankó Bálint, who reported back a majority of people, perhaps 90, escaped. [SZB] Possible confusion between Yarmouk and Qasr Ben Ghashir (see section 1.4)



27 – Ibrahim Omar Zadan (Zlitan?)

A young man who knows Mohammed Bashir – he “spotted another survivor, Ibrahim Zadan, and the pair embraced in tears.” A photo by Rowan Griffiths shows both men, with meta-info clarifying which is which, and adding “Omar.” [MF] Facebook list #38 [FB1] He seems to be the shy and quiet type. A “Mohammed” told Elizabeth Pique he was looking for a brother named “Riad Omar Zaman,” arrested August 22. He might have survived. See also Abdelsalam Al-Ashour. [EPN]

28 - Moktar Mahmoud Zedan, 22/23, Zlitan, arrested June 17



#26 M. M. Zedan, from ZlitenHorra video [VZH]

La-Croix.com: Moktar Mahmoud Zedan [LC] Translated, from a video description in Arabic: Mukhtar Mahmoud Zadam [VZH] Same name, account on Facebook: born 1988, Zliten [FB5] Facebook list #40 also the same. [FB1] The video is in Arabic, but per the CIWCL’s translator, he names two hero guards, and two killers: “Ibrahim Tajouri and Khairi Tabal are the ones who executed the prisoners.” [VZH] He was “arrested on Friday, 6/17/2011 ... by some of the volunteers in the city of Zliten, with some of his cousins for being a family Zadam, which was attended by some of her children in the events of June 9” [FB5] **Manner of escape:** he “owes his survival to the mercy of a guard,” unnamed. “He let me go while the soldiers, short of ammunition, went to reload,” he said.” [LC] Or, after Abdul Razaq tried to free them and ran away, they were massacred anyway, but “once [the guards] finished their ammo and grenades, they went to a car over there. Once they left, we fled. I ran away and jumped over the barriers.” [VZH] **Injuries:** None mentioned.

29 – Unnamed, held nearly three months

The unnamed host of the video What Happened at Yarmouk was an escapee, specifying a detention from June 1 to August 23. [FGM] He said **thousands were killed there** over the months, gave many descriptions of torture and deprivations and the prison trucks, all with an unnerving permanent grin. **Manner of escape:** “I was one of the people who crawled out through this opening” that was created by the grenade blasts. “We went out through this opening, went to the wall and jumped down.” [FGM 3:56]
Injuries: none mentioned.



2.2.6: (Alleged) Escapees, Second-Hand Accounts (7)

* = now deceased

1 - Rajab Adhedia (Zlitan?)

A survivor of Yarmouk, apparently from Zlitan, who is said to have sworn to R.M. Jaber’s status as escaped, but died anyway. Jaber’s son on Facebook: “[O]ne of the survivors, a Rajab Adhedia where he stated that he found my father lying in front of one house on 26 \ 8 \ 2011.” [FB6] This must have been on returning to the scene, or possibly after two-plus days hiding nearby. Facebook list of 40, #3.[FB1] No further details.

2/3 - Abdulaziz Faraj El Bahbah, Abdul Razak Abdullah El Bahbah (Zlitan?)

Cousins of Tahir El Bahbah, spoken of by him as arrested with him June 18 and sent to Yarmouk the next day. Arrested Third cousin, Ali Mohamed el Bahbah, apparently died. These other two are listed on the Facebook list of 40, as entries #26 and #30. [FB1]

***4 Ramadan Mahmoud Jabr**, 69, Zlitan, held four days

Born 1943, arrested at home on August 19, the same day rebels forcefully conquered most of the city. His son, nearly arrested too but a better runner, looked for Ramadan, and soon heard from returning survivors of Yarmouk he had been there. One Rajab Adhedia said the elder Jabr had survived the massacre on the 23rd and escaped somehow, but was left alone bleeding until the 26th, found in front of a house. He died on August 27, of injuries and diabetes-related illness. [FB6]

5/*6 - Abdulsalam and Hussain, last name unknown, Zlitan

Brothers from Zlitan, fled with A. I. Bashir and hid in an empty house. Hussein died of injuries, his body left in the house to rot. [AL] This could be the explanation for the apparently black-skinned man found brutally killed in an empty house next to the massacre shed. [ABC1]

*** 7 - The Man on the Stairs** (name unknown)

One of the very few known black prisoners, no one knows who he is. But the rebels say

he was shot in the back running across the yard, climbed the south wall, and died bleeding on the stairs on the other side. [CBC] None of that explains the apparent gouging-out of his eyeballs. (see sub-section 3.2.4)

2.2.7: Possible Escapees (30)

(Those simply called “a survivor,” giving clues of being one, etc. - primarily from the Facebook list, most likely all from Zlitan)

1 -Mukhtar H'dyah Muftar Abussnah

Facebook list, entry #12 [FB1]

2 - Hamza Salem Akdarh

[FB1 #32]

3 - Abdelsalam 'ebdalhmyd 'ebdalslam Almbq'e

[FB1 #34]

5 - Milad Ibrahim Khalifa Alshahuba

[FB1 #25]

6 - Abdel Salam M'Hamed Andishe

[FB1 #16]

7 - Mahmoud Mohamed Andishe

[FB1 #22]

8 – Taha (Tarrar) Abdul Salam Andishe

[FB1 #18]

9 - Farouk Mohamed Andishe

[FB1 #20]

10 - Ahmed Muftar Arbash

[FB1 #15]

11 - Ela(the?) Fathallah alAshter

[FB1 #9] distinct from #5, #11

12 - Hakim Fathallah AlAshter

[FB#11]

13 - Joseph Dehom

[FB1 #33]

14 - Ahmed Aahmoudh 'Ela

[FB1 #19]

15 - Ousama el Gardim, Zlitan

Photo, Zlitan, September 2: “Ousama el Gardim was tortured for several days before being transferred to Tripoli, where he survived the massacre of up to 150 men, allegedly committed by loyalist forces.” [SM1]

16 - Saleh Muftar Hadid

[FB1 #7]

17 - Isa Hanafi

[FB1 #35]

18 - Mahmoud Hanash

[FB1 #31]

19 - Mostafa Hashemi

[FB1 #29]

20 - Nur al-Din al-Hashemi

[FB1 #27]

21 - Khaled Khalef Khebir, Souq al-Juma Tripoli

“They [Mr. Kebir and his brother Abdulkhalim] disappeared five months ago and had been transferred from one place to another,” another man explained. [EN] Otherwise, it sounds like a man whose brother only was held there, where he returned to see if he could be identified.

22 - Mohammed Zhirmohamd Bin Masoud

[FB1 #6]

23 - Abdulsalam Mohammed Khalil Muftar

[FB1 #39]

24 - Abu Bakr Mohammed Nofal

[FB1 #21]

25 - Osama Hussein Salem

[FB#14] (a judge?)

26 - Mohammed Ahmedullah Al Sari

[FB1 #2]



27 - Sabri Tabbal

It's unclear if he's an escapee or just a onetime prisoner. He speaks in Youtube video, one of the survivors of “the Yarmouk holocaust camp,” making “an appeal for families of martyrs.” (see left) [YT8] He's seen visiting the site in a video, speaking of his detention therein short snippets. [FGM] An alleged executioner has the same last name – see M.M. Zedan.

28 - Ibrahim Abdullah Zadam

[FB1 #36] distinct from #38 Ibrahim Omar Zadam

29 - Salem Abdelsalam Ibn Zahyh

[FB1 #10]

30 - Unnamed

One unidentified possible survivor in the Zliten Horra video, who demurs attention as he's pointed to by M.M. Zedan, I.O. Zadam, and Mr. Al-Sadeq/Germani/Bashir [VZH - seen at 4:28]

2.2.8: Local Witnesses (13)

1 - Salem Abdul

Channel 4 News report, Alex Thomson, Aug. 28: He spoke with Ahmed Tayel, Salem Abdul, and another man "still too frightened to be identified." "Interviewed separately, they corroborate each other," he said. (see #12) [C4]

2 - Abdul Basit (family name not given), 42

Lived in a house that "overlooked the killing ground," and had a brother there, killed. Knew why the guards decided to kill everyone, saw soldiers "yelling 'Muammar, Muammar' to mask the sound of the shooting while in the yard other guards opened the barn doors and began firing on the detainees and throwing grenades." [AL]

3 - Ali Boukhatwa

An elderly man who lived 700 meters (almost a half mile) from the base. Gives few details except knowing there were 150 prisoners and the dead men outside the shed were soldiers killed and tortured for disobeying orders. [CH]

4 - Salem Faih,

A neighbor who "lives right near here," according to Cristiano Tinazzi (from Italian). [CT] Faih cites the day and time, the breaking of the fast, and the sound of explosions and guns, then survivors. "The prisoners who escaped towards my house, there were four: one of them had his hand severed cleanly, the other two bullets in the legs and one, fortunately, was uninjured." [CT] Possibly Salem Rajab.

5 – Ahmed al-Farjani, 42

A 42-year-old construction worker from a town near the Yarmouk base. He rescued M.A. el-Hitri and "Taha" from an angry mob following their escape. [RW1] Possibly Salem Rajab. See sub-section 2.5.4.

6 - Abdelmenem Faraj Labani

Saw two prisoners escape about August 10. "They were kids, 16 or 17-years old, and they were naked except for their boxer shorts. They hid in a house under construction but the soldiers found them and took them back." [CSM]

7 - Nouri Massoud

For four months, Nouri Massoud listened to the screams coming from the hangar across the street from his house ... Wednesday morning, he found three badly wounded people hiding in a storage area under a stairwell in his house ... On Saturday [the 27th], Massoud and his neighbors discovered two escapees who had been hiding in a house since Tuesday, still too afraid to come out [CSM]

8 - Khaled Oub

He and others heard the massacre and “went to help but the soldiers turned us away. “They said if we came any closer we would be shot by snipers. Then we saw smoke coming from inside.”” [MF]

9 - Abdulatif Rafaii, 42 [CH]

Lives 50 meters (160 feet) away from the prison. “He explains that, since the beginning of the Libyan uprising in February, Gadhafi's people repeatedly brought opponents of the regime, demonstrators and rioters here to be tortured, killed and buried. He says they also used the adjacent property.” [CH]

10 - Dr. Salem Rajab

Dr. Salim Rajub [FPS] Salim Rajip, lives 200 yards from the massacre site [SN1] [SN2] Dr. Salem [TA] anonymous (“medical training”) [HR] Unnamed [GPF] Dr. Salem Rajab [JT], Salem Rajab (phonetic) lives in the house next door [AB] Salem Faih “lives right near here.” [CT] See Section 2.5 for details on his account, activities, and influential alternate identity. Heard the massacre (explosions, gunshots, screams) while eating at home, tried to help, was turned back by loyalist snipers. Found three or four injured escapees, helped them get into Tripoli Medical Center. (possibly also Salem Faih, Ahmed Al-Farjani)

11 - Ahmed Tayel (ph)

Channel 4 News report, Alex Thomson, Aug. 31: He spoke with Ahmed Tayel, Salem Abdul, and another man "still too frightened to be identified." "Interviewed separately , they corroborate each other," he said. (see #12) [C4]

12 - Ahmed Zaydan, 32

A local. “He winced as he recalled the massacre. He said the smoke had lasted for days, and he had smelled the burning bodies from his home. [...] “I want Qaddafi to die,” Zaydan said. “And not just to die once, but to die every minute, every hour. Because for 42 years, he was killing us every minute, every hour.” [RW1]

13 - Unnamed

Channel 4 News report, Alex Thomson, Aug. 31: He spoke with Ahmed Tayel, Salem Abdul, and another man "still too frightened to be identified." "Interviewed separately , they corroborate each other," he said. “Three soldiers threw grenades into this shed then sprayed the prisoners with automatic gunfire, **then set the place ablaze,**” says the frightened anonymous witness. The other two are apparently too frightened to speak on camera. [C4] The same man, apparently, is seen in a photo by Seamus Murphy [SM4]

2.2.9: Yarmouk Guards in Captivity (12)

1 – [028] Possibly Lt. Col. Mohammed Mansour.

Spoken to by the UNHRC's investigators, officer [028] denied the Rebel charge that he took the massacre order directly from Khamis Gaddafi and passed it on. [UH] By that charge, [028] is possibly Lt. Col. Mohammed Mansour (see 2.3.1, 2.3.3, 2.3.5).

2 - [036]

Spoken to by the UNHRC's investigators, responsible for throwing two grenades into the shed, said the doors then blew open. [UH] See 2.3.3. Possibly Ibrahim from Tajouri. See 2.3.4.

3 – [unknown]

A third soldier spoken to by the UNHRC, unclear, from among [017] [038] [057]. The commission spoke only to “two perpetrators” who “admitted direct or indirect involvement in the killing.” Besides [036], the other soldier spoken to is perhaps the one with a more indirect role. [UH]

4 – Abdul Razak Al-Barouni

Spoken of to Robert F. Worth, an alleged hero guard who tried to help the Yarmouk prisoners escape (mentioned by a few of them, in different versions - see 3.4.5), he was reportedly shot in the foot during interrogation by Misrata rebels who captured him. [RW2] See 2.3.5.

5 - Marwan Gdoura, 28, Surman

Held at Al-Ragai's base in Tajoura. Described as a guard from Yarmouk, he seems to have (allegedly) led the execution as Qasr Ben Ghashir (see 1.4), here specified as happening August 24. [RW2] See 2.3.5.

6 – Sgt. Major Hamza Harizi / Hirazi

Mentioned by Physicians for Human rights as subordinate to Lt. Col. Mansour, superior to Laskhar, passed the kill order between them. [PHR] Was possibly referred to as [057] to the UNHRC (not met by them nor even necessarily in custody). [UH] Clearly described as Yarmoukbase commander Hamza Hirazi by Robert Worth, held in or near Az Zintan, not spoken to by the journalist. [RW2] See 2.3.5.

7 – Jumaa

Featured in some of Al-Ragai's torture videos with Ibrahim Lousha and others. Did a funny dange. Held at Al-Ragai's base in Tajoura. [RW2] 2.3.5.

8 - Ibrahim Sadeq Khalifa, 20, Tajoura

Same as Ibrahim Lousha and Ibrahim Tajouri. See 2.3.4 [JD]

9 - Laskhar (pseudonym)

Interviewed by Physicians for Human rights, September 10, 2011. [PHR] From Az Zawiya, he was held in Zawiya, turned in by his uncle. He says he participated in beating and torture of incoming prisoners at Yarmouk. On the 23rd, Laskhar says he took the massacre order, passed it on to his men, and then left and didn't participate. But he came back late that night and executed 12 injured survivors, and later helped burn the bodies before fleeing. He's said to be a maternal cousin to PHR witness "Ali" (see below, prisoners at other times) See also 2.3.2.

10 - Ibrahim Lousha, 20, Tripoli

Held at Al-Ragai's base in Tajoura. Same as Ibrahim Tajouri and Ibrahim Khalifa. See 2.3.4. [RW2]

11 – Naji Najjar

Former Yarmouk torturer, now the clown and whipping boy of Jalal Ragai's Tajoura brigade. See 2.3.5. [RW2]

12 – Ibrahim Tajouri, 20

Same as Ibrahim Lousha and Ibrahim Khalifa. See 2.3.4. [BAK] [BBK] [BC5]

2.2.10: Shed Prisoners at Other Times (10)

1 - Abdul Hadi Abusheiwa/ Abu Shahayna, judge

Abdul Hadi Abu Shahayna, a Tripoli judge who said he was held at the facility, said the other prisoners included lawyers, other judges and engineers — opposition figures, but also regular people caught up in a post-uprising sweep. Judge Abu Shahayna said he was arrested on May 25 and held until July 10 with a group that fluctuated in size between 70 and 100 people. [DKN] Richard Spencer spoke to "a judge, Abdul Hadi Abusheiwa, arrested in May because of his ties to Mustafa Abdul Jalil, the head of the rebels' National Transitional Council. He was released in July, but had returned to see what happened afterwards. He pointed to the corner where inmates had been strung up to be whipped." [RS1]

2 - "Ali" (pseudonym), day laborer, Az Zawiya

Held at Yarmouk from mid-April, transferred to Qasr Ben Ghashir in early August (see section 1.4). Spoke to Physicians for Human rights on September 10. An oddity of his account is how he happened to be a maternal cousin to soldier "Laskhar," whom they also spoke with. Ali says when he first arrived at Yarmouk, he was accused by Laskhar of raping him in front of his own house. [PHR p.33]

3 - Moayed Burani / Moiayad Abu Ghraim, 28

"It reached up to 120 or 130 individuals," said Moayed Burani. The space of captivity did not exceed 20sq m. [actually about 120 square meters] "People were crammed in together on top each other. I heard they (Gaddafi forces) sealed the door and fled. They brought hand grenades and exploded them there," he said. [FPS] Told Human rights Watch he was held in the trucks for six days, fed poorly, and was transferred out of the warehouse on August 10 to another detention facility near Tripoli agreed with A.I. Bashir that "the commander overseeing the warehouse was Muhammad Mansour of the Khamis Brigade. Neither of them had ever seen him." [HR]

4 - Abdullah Salim Al-Dweeb, 50

One survivor, 50-year-old Abdullah Salim al-Dweeb, shared his story with the prosecutor [Moreno-Ocampo]. "We were mistreated and badly tortured with electric shock, and we got beaten with different materials. We were burned by fire," he said. He was among about 20 people who were released before the alleged killings. [SG]

5/6/7 - Feras Kilani, Goktay Koraltan, Chris Cobb-Smith, BBC Arabic News Team

See sub-section 1.3.3

8 – Jamal/Jalal Rabbani/al-Ragai, Tajoura, Tripoli, rebel commander

Jamal Al-Ragai, a rebel fighter/commander, formerly a maker of made uniforms for Gaddafi's army, arrested mid-June, sent to Yarmouk, transferred to Qasr Ben Ghasher. [RW1] "Lieutenant Colonel Jamal Rabbani, an army officer," recalled being jammed with up to 30 others in a police van at Yarmouk, and at other times "they made us crawl around the yard on all fours every morning and afternoon and bark like dogs as they beat us with batons, clubs and rifles." [AL] Was later charged with many Yarmouk guards, as prisoners, and former prisoners, as fighters. See sub-sections 1.4.4, 2.3.5, and 3.4.4 for more details.

9 – Imam Sayyid Moussa al-Sadr

See sub-section 1.3.3

10 – Abu-Bakr Tabib

A German reporter interviewed one Abu Bakr Tabib in the Khamis shed compound, imprisoned for 4 days with his brother Faisal, then transferred to Abu Salim. [TAS] Mr. Tabib explained "I was watching television yesterday, in a report about the charred bodies in a warehouse, I recognized the buildings again which I could see at the time out of the tiny window of the prison van." He says he knows one of the officers who beat him during interrogation and is now going to report him in Tripoli. [TAS]

2.3: The Captive Soldiers “Confess”

2.3.1: Lt. Col. Mansour and Those To Be Held Accountable

A number of witnesses, about ten among those on public record, say they were soldiers of the Khamis Brigade who took part in the brutal mass-killings at the Yarmouk prison. These men are now prisoners themselves, held by rebel militias in Misrata, Tripoli, and elsewhere. These former “Gaddafi henchmen” are only a sub-set of an unknown number captured in connection with this case (which is in turn a sub-set of those captured, really, for serving their government). Most of them, *but not all*, have “confessed” or “admitted” – or, more accurately, claimed - to have had roles that involved personally pulling a trigger or a pin on the victims or passing on an threat-weighted order to do so.

Since the other evidence is widely thought to support a loyalist massacre, the claims would seem credible to most, and would naturally be called confessions. Furthermore, this is clearly a death penalty crime. Lying to save one’s skin is one thing, but to “claim” something that will result in your own death is a foreign idea to the Western mind. But as the world is slowly learning, being in rebel custody is also an experience most observers would find mercifully foreign.

Massachusetts-based Physicians for Human rights (PHR) clearly believed these witnesses from the villain side. They decided those named by them as commanders and collaborators not yet in rebel custody should be hunted down and “brought to justice.” Richard Sollom from PHR wrote an opinion piece run in Global Post, warning that “alleged war criminals from all sides of the recent conflict remain at large” and that “holding these individuals accountable is the most effective way to end impunity and establish the rule of law.” [GPP]

But he only named one such person, from one side; “one whom Libyan authorities should detain and hold accountable is **Lt. Col. [Mohammed] Mansour**, who ordered his troops to kill 153 men in late August.” Mansour is apparently not a pseudonym, in keeping with their principles of full accountability for “alleged war criminals.” They were told, and believed, that he “**reported directly to Khamis Qaddafi**,” who originated the order. [GPP]

With Khamis reportedly dead, Lt. Col. Mansour was the highest-ranking party to this order still at large. PHR seemed to be under the impression that Libya’s rebels were inclined to go soft on Gaddafi loyalists, and they needed prodding to ensure justice was served. Nothing could be further from the truth. It’s not clear if Mansour is still alive, but as we’ll see below, he might well have been among the Yarmouk guards held in rebel prisons preparing to be held accountable.

2.3.2: The Baseline “Best Version” from “Laskhar”

One of the four witnesses interviewed by Physicians for Human rights, for their December 2011 report on “the 32nd Brigade Massacre,” was one of the soldiers allegedly responsible. Their other three subjects, all alleged prisoners, are given the protective pseudonyms Mohammed, Ali, and Omar – all standard Arab names. In a possible coincidence, they gave the character that “tortured and executed detainees” a less-common name – Laskhar- that sounds a bit sinister to English ears, like “Lash Scar.”

They interviewed Laskhar on September 10, presumably in his hometown of Az Zawiyah (just west of Tripoli), where he was being held and where all their other witnesses lived. A “mid-level officer,” he had served four years with the Khamis 32nd Brigade before transfer to Yarmouk in March. Here he guarded the prisoners in the shed out back, beating all incoming detainees, causing at least eight of the victims to die. He said these were buried at various sites near the base where, presumably, someone really buried someone at some time. Laskhar said these brutal orders came from his immediate superior, Yarmouk base commander Sergeant Major Hamza el Harizi. With no indication that name is a pseudonym, PHR names Harizi as one step below Lt. Colonel Mohamad Mansour and thus two degrees of separation from the dictator’s son.

A troubling undercurrent in the guard’s story comes from another of PHR’s small pool of witnesses. This onetime Yarmouk prisoner, transferred to Qasr Ben Ghashir prior to the massacre, was given the pseudonym Ali. He claimed to be Laskhar’s maternal cousin, a claim the guard also apparently confirmed. When he was first brought to the base, Ali says he was blindfolded and interrogated, and accused of raping Laskhar in front of his house, with two friends, and stealing his gun. It was a bogus charge, Ali reasonably asserted, but the blindfolded prisoner “recognized the voice of his cousin, Laskhar” as his main accuser. [PHR p.33] In Arabic culture, it’s unusual for anyone to admit to such a dishonor, let alone ask comrades to help them publicly accuse someone of it. They don’t mention whether or not the guard confirms this unlikely story.

At 12:30 pm on the day of the execution, Laskhar said, Khamis Gaddafi was there at the base conducting a meeting, with bigwigs including Lt. Col. Mansour and the deputy chief of military intelligence. A few hours later, Laskhar says he also saw his boss Sgt. Maj. Harizi get a call from Mansour, relating the order to kill all the prisoners that very night. Unsurprisingly, Hamza also confirmed for Laskhar that the order came straight from the younger Gaddafi. [PHR p.37]

Apparently scheduled to leave for the night around 8:00, Laskhar reported that the operation began at around that time while he “was still at” the brigade barracks, apparently leaving. But he says he wasn’t involved in the bloodshed until “later that night,” when Hamza phoned and “told Laskhar to ensure there were no survivors among the detainees.” An accepted 51 people, at least, are alleged to have escaped already, and most of those would all go on the record as of this report’s publication. But he says he went back around 11:00 pm and tried to help make sure those too injured to run were finished off. “With a flashlight he inspected wounded men” inside the shed and outside,

he told PHR and “admitted ... that he summarily executed 12 detainees with his nine-millimeter pistol that night.” [PHR p.21] The PHR investigators who studied the site found several 9mm bullet casings at the scene, and made the connection with his “admitted” (actually claimed) actions of Tuesday night and into Wednesday morning. [p.22] (see also sub-section 2.4.4)

Laskhar says he remained with his boss Hamza and a dwindling team over the following days, as they dragged the bodies out of the kill shed and piled them on trucks. They tried to dig a mass grave but had the backhoe break down, and couldn’t find another machine. It was “later that same week” that Lt. Col. Mansour is said to have ordered them to pile the bodies back inside the shed and torch them. They did so, with the 45 or so bodies inside, using diesel fuel and tires to sustain the burn. But they clearly left at least a dozen bodies scattered all over outside, some just a few feet from the door. These don’t seem to have been put on a truck first, or even dragged out of the shed, but were primarily killed right where they lay (see 3.2). The rest of the 100-plus corpses must have been stashed somewhere else that’s never been clarified. Some witnesses said they’d been buried, but Laskhar’s account tends to contradict that. It does line up with the body arrangement, as explained in 3.3.2 the non-random arrangement of the charred bodies suggests they were dragged into place, rather than falling where they were hit as most people presume.

As a last-minute note, the CIWCL learned as the report was being finished that alleged escapee M.M. Zedan cites a “Wajdi Kikly from Zawyia,” along with a “Hamza Hreji” (Harizi), for burning the bodies, suggesting the name behind Laskhar. He also says, with the usual omniscience of a random prisoner, it was all ordered by “major Mohammed Mansour.” [VZH]

2.3.3: UNHRC’s Subjects: Confessions, Incriminations, a Denial

The International Commission of Inquiry on Libya, created by the UN Human Rights Council, spoke with three unnamed captive soldiers. Two of these, to the commission’s mind, admitted their factual involvement, and one did not. This total more than likely includes at least one of the soldiers covered above or below in this section, although numbers are given instead of names, few details are shared, and there are some clear mix-ups in their relation of things.

As their March 2 report explains, the commission found the “immediate commander” of the Yarmouk base was the soldier called [056]. This could refer to Laskhar’s superior Sgt. Maj. Hamza el Harizi. As explained in the PHR report, “Hamza was the officer-in-charge” of the Yarmouk detention facility. [PHR p.33]. It doesn’t seem the UNHRC commission spoke with him and it’s not clear if he was in custody. They assigned a number to each of fifteen names of guards and officers provided to them, and then they list sixteen numbers [080, 019, 070, 066, 017, 037, 060, 036, 038, 065, 067, 056, 044, 054, 064, 007]. “The guards themselves appear to have made little secret of their names,” the report says, and notes “one of the guards had even written his name in graffiti on the wall of the centre.” They were able to confirm it was written there, but not who wrote it.

The rebels who liberated the base clearly put up much of the spray-painted graffiti there, if not all of it.

The commission spoke only to “two perpetrators” who “admitted direct or indirect involvement in the killing” as well as a very high-ranking officer. One subject was soldier [036] who admitted to throwing the grenades, and gave them impression “the blast blew the doors open,” a detail young Ibrahim Lousha has specified. The other soldier spoken too is unclear, perhaps the one with a more indirect role.

The commission heard that officer [056], possibly Harizi, reported to “Brigadier [028],” now in custody and met by the commission. He had been in command of “the Khilit al-Ferjan zone,” and **“at that time reported directly to Khamis Qadhafi,” the commission related, “although he denied this to the Commission.”** Brigadier is sometimes a general term for a higher-ranking officer, so this could without contradiction be who PHR named as Lt. Col. Mohammed Mansour “who reported directly to Khamis Qaddafi.” This high-level, crucial witness – *a link if not the link to the leader’s son* - says *there was no such link*. But of course he would say that. The commission has here sided against him and with the bulk of the narrative as handed to them. Besides the two soldiers who confessed:

“...the Commission also interviewed Brigadier [028], who was reportedly at the warehouse earlier on the day of the massacre. He told the Commission he was simply in charge of personnel at the Military Intelligence (Istikhbarat). He reported directly to [008] and him alone. All orders came through [008] and he says he never was tasked directly by members of the Qadhafi family. When asked about his knowledge of the massacre, he claimed he only heard about it after the event and “if you’re interested in human rights violations then I don’t know why I am here.”” [UH p.70]

They apparently quoted him for the perceived irony of his denial. Beneath [028], the commission heard, [056] was supported by a Sergeant [030] who was part of the kill command loop. The commission heard that “Khamis reportedly called and instructed [056] and [030] to “conduct the operation” and then join him in fleeing the city.” [030] then ordered the operation, having already brought in precisely seven hand grenades for that purpose four days earlier. It’s unclear whether or not he was present at the time of the massacre, and he’s not listed among the four (not five as usual) who carried it out. He could very well be “Laskhar,” although the clues are thin.

The ways complicity was enforced, or not, are interesting. One guard called [066] “was later reported to have been one of those who warned the detainees and fled before the massacre” (see sub-section 2.4.6). There were allegedly two or even three of these, [066], “Mustafa,” and a mysterious [019]. Two are presumably the very similar Abdul Razak Baroni and “Mustafa,” previously mentioned only in single form, one or the other or neither of them trying to help. The Commission was told that [066] simply refused to take the grenades pushed on him by sergeant [030], possibly Laskhar.

Another less steadfast guard, apparently [036], who claims he threw in two of the grenades and regretted it, said “he had been given them earlier by the centre commander [056],” possibly Harizi, as opposed to [030]. In true Gaddafi loyalist fashion, the reason he couldn’t refuse was “he had been threatened with being killed himself after he initially refused to take them.” [UH]

Four attacking guards – as opposed to the usual five - under command of [030] were specified by the commission, here numbered as soldiers [017] and [038] who did the shooting, [036] who lobbed the grenades, and a volunteer [057], specific role not known. If there was a fifth executioner as most others (including Laskhar) report, it might be this [030], possibly Laskhar, meaning he was involved contrary to what the commission heard and what he’s said. The alleged plot possibly thickens.

2.3.4: Three Ibrahims in One

Laskhar’s well-thought-out narrative, consistent with numerous points of evidence, is contradicted in various ways by three other named guards, all named Ibrahim. In the unstated math of averaging testimonies into the most clearly alleged crime, these three would vote down the better version, except that the CIWCL is fairly convinced they are all the same person. At least as described, this person is a 20-year old named Ibrahim hailing from the Tajoura neighborhood of Tripoli. He has been presented three times, each time with a different family name. The CIWCL has a visual match on the first two, a detailed and consistent description for the third, and numerous details linking all three.

It’s logically possible that Laskhar, beneath that pseudonym, is the same person as this kid Ibrahim. He or his character was first mentioned in August by alleged escapee Abdulrahim Ibrahim Bashir. Bashir reported to HRW that he saw a guard named **“Brahim” who was “from Tajoura,”** doing what Laskhar was reported to do – executing the survivors late into the night. [HR] A match is however complicated by Laskhar’s four years of service, which would make him 16 at the start to be Ibrahim’s age, and that Laskhar claims to be nowhere near the place when the grenades were tossed, while Ibrahim says he tossed them.

Ibrahim’s first appearance was under the name **Ibrahim Sadeq Khalifa**. The 20-year old “mass murderer” had been arrested at his home in Tajoura, and as AFP reported “awaits fate in Libyan jail.” [JD] Reporter Jay Deshmukh was taken to a makeshift prison in Misrata where Gaddafi loyalists, including the onetime head of Internal Security Mansour Daw, are held. “an administrative building under the Gaddafi regime.” [JD] “By his own admission,” Deshmukh writes, “Khalifa participated in the mass killing of civilians as Tripoli was falling.” However, a “visibly scared” Mr. Khalifa told Deshmukh “I have not met a lawyer or my family members. I don’t know what will happen to me.” Deshmukh saw no signs of abuse, besides a faint burn mark near his collarbone. He was beaten and burned with cigarettes, he says, but only prior to transfer to this prison. Thus he implied

that torture had nothing to do with his candid “confession” there to AFP. [JD]

His crime, which he acknowledged in front of an AFP team touring the prison, was that he burned alive around 150 men in a garage in Tripoli

[...]

*“I threw grenades on them after my colleagues doused them in petrol. We then locked the garage and left. **We burnt them alive,**” Khalifa told AFP, of the massacre that he and four other Qaddafi soldiers carried out.*

*Khalifa admits that those killed by him and his comrades in the Khalit al-Farjan area of Tripoli on the afternoon of **Aug. 22** were civilians. [JD]*

He gives the wrong date, for one thing – the 22nd instead of the 23rd, although it’s possible this is a memory or reporting error, and of no consequence (see also sub-section 2.4.1). There’s a more concrete problem with the grenades. The prisoners – and perhaps the cinderblock walls – describe regular explosive hand grenades with shrapnel, not incendiary ones with fire, used during the gun attack. A few “survivors” *seem* to say there was fire involved during the attack (see sub-section 2.4.3), with only the dubious Mohammed Bashir claiming it explicitly. But no witnesses mention being doused with gasoline before the grenades.



Photos with that article showed this Ibrahim Sadeq Khalifa from the chin down, from the soft lower lip and faint goatee to his sandal-clad feet. He looks perfectly healthy, well-fed and relaxed. His clothing is sporty, casual, a hooded sweatshirt. He stands passively with his hands behind his back. [JD]

The next incarnation was another 20-year-old [BC5] Ibrahim from Tajoura, at least by name; “Tajouri” (meaning family from Tajoura). He was mentioned by that name by Moktar Mahmoud Zedan. Recounting the torture, “I said 'There is no God but Allah' He said 'Which God ? Say Muamar'. I swear to God His name is

Ibrahim Al Tajouri.” [VZH] More famously, he was interviewed by BBC Arabic’s Feras Kilani, apparently in early March 2012, location unclear. [BAK] We see the face of **Ibrahim Tajouri** plenty in the video: blank, passive, tired or broken perhaps, but comfortably so. He wears a different outfit for the Kilani interview than for the confrontation, both consistent enough with young Khalifa’s tastes. His posture while

waiting for Kilani is passive, hands behind his back.

A dramatic confrontation was staged for Kilani, with the prisoner scolded by two alleged survivors, Bashir Al-Sadeq (credibility problems explained in sub-section 2.5.5) and Hussein Al-Lafi, both from Az Zawiyah. Both of them agreed that the cold-hearted kid stepped into the shed between the second and third grenades and opened fire, emptied nearly four clips on Mohammed Al-Lafi and several specified others. “Don’t tell me you don’t remember,” Bashir closed. “I don’t remember,” Ibrahim responded. “I was under the influence of drugs.” [BBK] But he did remember the attack he owned up to under another name, and here still recalls being threatened to do it by Mohammed Mansour, the base commander. This order, by the way, contradicts Laskhar’s story of an order passed from Mansour through Harizi and then Laskhar.

Ibrahim might be UNHRC’s witness [036] who lobbed the grenades while [017] and [038] did the shooting. But in this, Al-Sadeq and Al-Lafi agree young Tajouri led in both regards – he tossed in the first two of the seven grenades, then “Ibrahim Tajouri came in and started shooting,” Al-Lafi said, leaving little for the others to do except the gasoline dousing before the grenades. But that was in Ibrahim’s story, not Ibrahim’s.

With two appearances under two names with different-sounding stories, the possibility young Ibrahim is an actor can’t be ignored. This would explain his healthy, apparently torture-free body, his relaxed and comfortable demeanor and consistent taste in well-fitting clothing he might wear from home before each gig.

In case that’s not enough material to suspect deception, he came back for an apparent third round, speaking to New York Times writer Robert F. Worth later in the Spring. This time, he wasn’t photographed, but was named as **Ibrahim Lousha**, held “in a battered old government building” in Misrata. He was 20 years old, he said, the son of a Tripoli policeman, “looking like a mere child as he slumped in a chair” in his sweat pants and flip-flops, “left leg bouncing restlessly.” He had “big eyes” and “a morose expression” beneath a “buzz cut” that does sound shorter than his previous hairstyle.

Worth knew Lousha “by reputation as the most notorious torturer at Yarmouk.” 20 is quite young to have achieved such an esteemed status, and no previous witnesses had singled him out by name. But Worth himself brings the confirmation; he was shown videos featuring a prisoner who surely knew his name, crying out under his lashes “kill me, Ibrahim, kill me! I don’t want to live anymore! Kill me!” Lousha asked “do you love the leader?” “Yes, yes!” the man responded. Then the prisoner was forced to live, right there on camera. [RW2]

In speaking with Mr. Worth, Lousha described the torture “numbly,” recalling how they gave bottles of their own urine to the prisoners instead of water, and forced them to pray to a poster of Muammar Gaddafi. [RW2] Note the similarity to M.M. Zedan’s description of Ibrahim Tajouri’s torture to force deification of Gaddafi. They weren’t ordered to do

these things, Ibrahim said; “he and the fellow guards came up with these ideas while drinking liquor and smoking hashish.” But the mass killing took special prodding. He names commander Muhammad Mansour, who “arrived late in the afternoon and ordered the guards to kill all the prisoners in the hangar.” He previously said Mansour threatened them with his gun, but Worth adds, as the UNHRC does, Mansour / [028] then left the site, with his gun. With the threat removed, Lousha says: “the other guards had the grenades. I told them, ‘Give the grenades to me.’” He threw two of these in on the prisoners, he told Worth, and the locked doors blew open (a detail the UNHRC was given from their grenade-tosser [036]). There’s no mention here of what followed.

A possible fictional character, or three in one, might have an unnaturally poetic name with lessons written into it, and that may be the case here. The first name Ibrahim is noteworthy in its steadiness and reflection of his Misratan rebel jailor, *Ibrahim* Bietelmal, who is also the head of the Misrata Military Council – a powerful man. The CIWCL cannot determine what Lousha refers to, and Tajouri means a family from Tajoura.

The first given name, Ibrahim Sadeq Khalifa, is most revealing. It seems to mean father of nations / close to God / rejecter of an unholy world (Ibrahim/Abraham) truthful, genuine (Sadeq) leader-steward (Khalifa, as in Caliph) [ID] If there’s any such encoded information in this name, its intent is clearly ironic for a slavish follower of a wicked and dying regime. Only the middle name stands out as a direct illustration of a core feature we’re to perceive – he’s telling the truth, now that he’s got proper guidance.

2.3.5: Robert Worth’s Prison Tour / Al-Ragai’s Freak Show

Robert F. Worth had earlier written about the shed massacre for the New York Times, relying heavily on the inconsistent and apparently coached “escapee” Mustafa Abdullah El-Hirti/Atiri, as well as Jamal Al-Ragai, a rebel commander who escaped from the Qasr Ben Ghashir massacre on August 21.[RW1] Worth spoke September of Jamal al Ragai, 31, a maker uniforms for the Libyan army until he joined the rebellion in March. He started with importing weapons and forming a group of fighters in the capitol, he says, but was arrested in mid-June on a weapons purchase, sent right to Yarmouk (relating some of the horrors listed in sub-section 1.3.4), and then transferred to the Brazilian compound. He escaped from there, and went on to command, as of September 21, “a militia of about 70 men, many of them veterans of bloody street battles in Misrata and other towns.” [RW1]

In the spring of 2012, Worth again visited Libya to meet Ragai once again and see a number of Gaddafi loyalist prisoners accused of running the Yarmouk prison system. Those he saw or heard about, as prisoners, are worth listing together for fullness:

- Ibrahim Lousha, 20, Tripoli. Mentioned above, held in Misrata.
- Hamza Harizi (here Hirazi), Held in or near Az Zintan, apparently.

- Abdul Razak Barouni. Unknown location, second-hand information only.
- Marwan Gdoura, 28, Surman. Held in Tajoura, Tripoli
- Naji Najjar – held in Tajoura
- Jumaa – held in Tajoura

Besides Lousha in Misrata, it was in Tajoura that most of the humbled alleged executioners and torturers that Mr. Worth met were held. Young Ibrahim's home district was also the home of the commander there, Jalal Al-Ragai. His base was like a museum with a bullet-riddled bus they say they hid behind during the early fighting. A second-floor hallway gallery displayed "images of prisoners at the Yarmouk military base, where perhaps the most notorious massacre of the Libyan war took place," but also including those killed at Qasr Ben Ghashir. Interestingly, he writes "many of the brigade's current members are either former prisoners of Yarmouk or the relatives of men who were killed there." Are these amateur civilians drawn in by a brother's death, or are his existing fighters claiming the victims of *someone's* violence as their purported brothers?

Before this ragtag team bound by tragedy, Ragai had previously fought with hardened Misratans, until a divorce Ragai blames on unnecessary roughness by his counterparts. The split was allegedly over one "Abdel Razaq al-Barouni," a Yarmouk guard arrested by the Misrata fighters. Worth notes that Abdul Razak was revered by the prisoners "who told me Barouni unlocked the door of the hangar and urged them to escape just before the Yarmouk massacre began." (actually, Atiri told Worth, as he told others, it was *after* the bulk of the killing when "Abdel Razaq ... went to the door and shouted at the survivors: "Run! Run!") An Abdul Razak Barouni has also been mentioned as trying to set the prisoners free before the massacre entirely (by Taher El-Bahbah), or rather a guard named Mustafa tried to free them before (per the two PHR witnesses), or two or even three guards teamed up (per the UNHRC), or no one helped, depending (see 2.4.5). At any rate, commander Jalal was appalled by one of the Misratans shooting Barouni in the foot during interrogation, Worth writes, and "he decided to take his own fighters and leave, reluctantly allowing the Misuratans to cart off some of his prisoners to their city." [RW2]

All in all what Worth saw remaining in Tajoura was a veritable freak show of allegations, admissions, lack of answers - a sad and fragmented world with strained ruminations over truth and forgiveness. Naji Najjar, a former Yarmouk guard, is now apparently a base trustee, whipping boy, and clown. He reportedly is happy to beg for beatings, and for family of his alleged victims to beat him at will and break broomsticks over him. A letter from his brother was read out: "Naji is being held by an illegal entity, being tortured on a daily basis, starved and forced to sign false statements." They all laughed, even Naji. Ragai's rebuttal to torture, starvation, and false confessions by an illegal entity was "there is no legal entity for us to hand the prisoners over to."

Then there's Marwan Gdoura, the 28-year-old newly-devout Muslim scholar, involved in the execution of prisoners at "Yarmouk," Worth writes, but apparently at Qasr Ben

Ghashir by the details. There, on August 24, he ignored Dr. Omar Salhouba/Salhoba's plea to "fear God" and killed him, along with five others. Interrogator Nasser Salhoba, Dr. Omar's brother, says he still wanted to kill Marwan and once beat him severely for reflexively failing to step on a green Jamahiriya flag, showing a lack of remorse, and "that he would kill all of us here if he could." [RW2]

While Ibrahim the many-named re-teller of vague, shifting, and politically useful stories was in Misrata, "torture tapes" of him playing lead torturer remained in Al-Ragai's possession. He showed Worth the videos "evidence that no one had seen," taken from "the ransacked offices" of Hamza Hirazi/Harizi, presumably shortly after conquest some time in late August. These have indeed never been seen, nor even mentioned until nine months later, and still remain unseen aside from some ominous-looking stills Worth was able to share. He says they feature off-screen electrocution, stringent demands to worship the leader, and other such standards of alleged Gaddafi regime behavior, none of it hard to fake. Others sound like they show genuine scenes of killing and cruelty, but with less clear circumstances.

Worth did note the strange spectacle as Ragai and his fighters who "spent half the time laughing at the videos." When the guard Jumaa entered the scene, "grinning raucously and doing a mock-sensual dance behind the terrified prisoner ... Jalal and his friends found it so funny that they replayed it again and again, clapping their hands and doubling over with laughter." He thinks the laughter was borne of "the absurdity and despair these men had lived with for so long." Ibrahim Lousha mentioned above in Misrata he and the others dreamed up torture ideas "while drinking liquor and smoking hashish." But it sounds a bit like the captors might be hitting the bong before acting like kids reviewing their homemade movies and laughing at each others' acting or script ideas. Even besides the "tapes," it seems a lot of imagination, possibly several smoky late-night brainstorming sessions, has gone into the rebel narrative of the Yarmouk prison system and the Khamis Brigade shed massacre.

The highest-ranking prisoner Worth was tipped off about was "Hamza Hirazi," no rank given, "the Yarmouk prison commander." The man described so heavily by Laskhar as Mansour's representative was then held by a brigade from Zintan, or elsewhere in the Nafusah mountains. Commander Eissa Gliza told Worth he had to move his prisoner frequently to avoid assassination attempts, two of which had been thwarted so far. [RW2] By the Khamis-Mansour link, ostensibly, Harizi was only two degrees from Khamis- the first degree, [028] whoever he was, had denied that crucial link. The CIWCL was eager to learn what the second link said, but for security reasons, there was no meeting. Worth too wrote "I was eager to talk to him," hoping for insight into "one of the central mysteries" of the massacre: "Why? And who gave the orders?" [RW2] The presumptions so far has been "evil," and "Khamis," but perhaps Worth was hoping to have an expertly-handled captive spell it out with alleged second-hand authority.

Missing from this impressive collection Mohammed Mansour, mentioned by Lousha only, with no rank or relation to Hirazi/Harizi specified, leaving the latter still the implied

head honcho. Hirazi Gave Marwan at Qasr Ben Ghashir his order, though Lousha still specified he got his at Yarmouk personally delivered by Mansour. UNHRC's witness [028] who didn't play along sounds like Mansour, which could mean he was at one time held captive. Given his absence from this sprawling article, it's worth wondering if Mansour was killed or taken off the speaking circuit in a less extreme way.

2.3.6 – “Admissions” and the Rebel Culture of Torture

Al-Ragai's bizarre operation, with acknowledged abuse and possibly whole unmentioned layers of manipulation to produce false testimonies and even false videos, seems perhaps more artful and less brutal than average. Recent revelations of torture in Libya's militia-run prison “system” cast a shadow over the emergence of this and other evidence emerging from within it. Extreme claims of widespread rape (of both women and men), electrocution, needles under the fingernails, body slicing, dismemberment, organ harvesting, castration, and even boiling or “cooking” prisoners in front of the others, have been alleged by former prisoners. [LNI] However much of that is true, the abuse is offensive and widespread enough that the Western media and human rights groups have been forced to report on some of it, including removal of toenails, body-wide beatings with sticks and chains, cuts and holes and mutilated limbs. There are dozens of cases of people tortured to death, including prisoners of war, Tawerghans, former professors and diplomats under Gaddafi, and other sorts of people. Amnesty International publicly decried the first 12 known deaths under torture. [BA] Beyond those are many reported since, the others yet unknown, yet to happen, and the other deaths only averted with emergency medical care to stabilize the victims between sessions. As of late January 2012, this service was no longer being offered in Misrata by Médecins Sans Frontières, who considered it unethical. [DW]

Loyalist “mass murderer” Ibrahim Sadeq Khalifa was presented by his Misratan jailors in part, to deny the charges of torture. If such things were done there, it would be as punishment for a crime. “If we wanted to torture these prisoners” Ibrahim Beitalmal reasoned, “Khalifa is the best candidate for that. He has burnt alive 150 men.” [JD] It would violate international human rights norms to torture someone as punishment. And besides, this prisoner seems to be an actor; they do not *require* torture to say what you want them to say.

Other rebel thinkers emphasize they're interested in pragmatic torture, like the Americans do it: to obtain information for justice or “national security.” New information or, sometimes, fabricated corroboration of things someone already believed, can be obtained with it. Commander Mohamed al-Deaka spoke to Barbara Jones of the UK Daily Mail. He “was defensive about abuse by his men.” He acknowledging torture was used in Misrata, but also “everywhere in Libya.” [BJ] Al-Deaka said “we have to use force to make prisoners give answers. Our city was destroyed in the fighting. Now we want to know who carried out the destruction, who raped our women and stole our property.” [BJ]

As for the origins of the rape claims themselves, sub-section 2.1.3 explains how the evidence was at least partially fabricated by coaching witnesses to admit to the policy of mass rape. If they don't already know who did it, they're pretty confident about who knows those people and needs only a little pain persuasion to bring it out. An example of al-Deaka's philosophy in action was captured on video and described in the Daily Mail article. A Tawerghan shopkeeper in a Tripoli camp, being tormented and told **"blood will come from your eyes and nose until you admit what you have done. We've caught 60 of you so far and none of you did anything."** The man never emerged from rebel custody and is feared dead, either for refusing to "confess," or as punishment after compliance. [BJ]

There were no obvious signs of torture with Mr. Khalifa, but there are kinds that leave no marks, and there are purely mental methods of coercion for his or the less presentable prisoners he might be standing in for. All of these so-called executioners or "mass-murderers" are under the control of captors who could have made the road towards "admission" and death *the nice way out*. Brigadier [028], possibly Mohammed Mansour, did not confirm what they said about him, and hasn't been heard from since.

2.4: Believe Whom?

2.4.1: Broad Consensus on the Massacre of Aug. 22 or 23

The UN Human rights Council, on March 2, 2012, released its advance unedited draft report on human rights violations in Libya up to that time. In it, they paid special attention to the massacre under study, finding “only 51” confirmed survivors from among the original prisoner population of, they found, 157. [UH p. 70] On examining the accounts of a number of witnesses, they decided “while there are small discrepancies [...] the testimony from all parties who were at the warehouse at the time of the massacre is broadly consistent and corroborative.” [UH p. 71]

They do not share enough details to double-check the consistency of the witnesses they spoke to. But the CIWCL, in screening the dozens of accounts publicly available, finds major inconsistencies across the board on crucial details. When trying to believe the witnesses, a question arises frequently – which one do you believe when their accounts conflict with each other?

Hungarian journalist Al Ghaoui Hesna, who visited the site on August 29 and spoke to at least one witness, used a word that seems to quite apt in describing the record we see. Google translated, she said in part “the reports have become a bit confusing and ellentmondóvá.” The last part didn’t translate, but broken down, [ellent-mond-óvá] it says “contradictory and guarded” (mond óvá = “cautioned against saying”). Contradictions and guardedness are twin signs of deception - or triple if added with “confusing.” [HB]

A curious feature of the widespread contradictions one finds is that hardly a single aberrant claim is unsupported. There is corroboration from other witnesses - usually one or two - on every distinct version of each detail. This resembles less the memories of a single event that it does people getting their stories straight in numerous small groups, but failing to coordinate between the groups. What emerges is a field of differing schools of thought about what they remember from that assault that nearly ended their lives.

Interestingly, these groupings of agreement are frequently between those who spoke to the same reporters or investigators.

Both the date and the time of day of the killings are exceptions, relatively uncontested across the board. The general consensus has it on August 23, just after sunset, which was 7:44 PM local time that day. [WC] [NO] Many reports say something roughly consistent with this: 8:00, after the evening call to prayer (sunset), and other things supportive of either true recall of an important event, or a well-coordinated cover story.

However, even this point of agreement has its exceptions. An August 22 massacre is supported by alleged escapee Bashir al-Sadeq. He told the CBC’s reporter it happened

“Monday night,” [CBC] PHR witness Omar specified the date August 22. [PHR p.31] Considering Omar and Al-Sadeq as the same character, he’s clarified this wrong date in three ways: he’s specified it by date, by the day name, and by specifying 95 days detention, starting from a May 20 arrest. If his last day was the 23rd, that would have been 96 days.

Munir Massoud Own also told CNN it happened “Monday,” [CNN3] and captive soldier Ibrahim Sadeq Khalifah told AFP the same, August 22. [JD]. That’s double-corroborated even outside the Omar-Bashir circuit. Yet it can’t be true; it’s contradicted dozens of times by those who are sure it happened the next day.

The time of day is less challenged than the date, and that fact alone argues slightly in favor of the witnesses. What the sun was doing is far more memorable and harder to get mixed up than a number or name attached to the day. Therefore, even two contradictions stand out.

Amr Dau Algala (apparently a brother of Munir el Goula) spoke to Kim Sengupta for the *Independent* in September. He told her there were threats, the day before the killings, that the prisoners would be set free, and free meant killed. “The threat proved to be real **the following morning** when the murders began,” Sengupta related. [KS] 17-year-old escapee Taher El-Bahbah, in an account for the Facebook group Yarmouk Prison Massacre, came in closer to the mark but still short. El Bahbah cited about 5:30 pm for a warning to escape, followed by the massacre five minutes later. 5:35 in the mid-afternoon is quite a distinct time from 7:45-8:00, when the sun had just gone away. [FB3]

Either of these could be clues of bogus witness evidence or, quite likely, simple errors or mix-ups of some sort. But again, this is one of the strong points of agreement, and we turn now to the remainder.

2.4.2: M. Bashir, the Hole in the Wall, and the Open Doors

52-year-old Mohammed Bashir is a particularly unreliable witness and, judging by his face and some other clues, the same man as witness Bashir Al-Sadeq/Germani and the same as Physicians for Human rights witness “Omar.” (see 2.5.5)

First speaking to Martin Fricker of the UK Daily Mirror on the 27th, he described the shed wrong - a “container” with thin metal walls the detainees banged their fists against to demand water. They always needed more of that, as it was stifling hot in the container; he said men died from the heat. [MF] In contrast, the photographic record shows these walls are lined with cinderblocks. These would make no banging noise when hit, and would have shielded the inside from the sun’s heat. Further, the adequate ventilation all over the leaky shed and the large gratin above the doors, not to mention **the hole in the wall**, would prevent heat build-up of the kind he cites.

When it came time to finally escape, he says he bypassed the door. “My friends and I ran through a hole in the wall and tried to escape across the compound.” [MF] This is a strange choice for someone who had just “run” through the only exit he could mean. In the northwest corner of the building is a small hole in the cinderblock walls that would allow human passage. It’s at least five feet off the ground, and leads out through the window of the outer metal shell. After climbing out, one would be just inches from the top of the compound’s low outer wall. If one then dropped from there to the ground on the right side, out that hole means out of the compound, free and on the way to safety (see graphic, next page).

Only if one jumped left would the continuing danger and death Bashir encountered be a problem. "I know at least three men did not make it and were shot in the back by the Gaddafi soldiers," he told the Mirror, as they ran south across the compound. [MF]

Another witness describes it more logically. The unnamed host of the video “What Happened at Yarmouk” explained to the crew “I was one of the people who crawled out

through this opening. (pointing, from outside, as seen at right) We went out through this opening, went to the wall and jumped down.” [FGM 3:56] That sounds like his entire escape. There is no running around inside the walls under fire from the guards.



Image: Satellite imagery from Google Maps [GM] lower left inset, Human rights Watch [HR], right, Free Generation Movement [FGM]

But how the hole came to be is contested. PHR witness Omar, who escaped unharmed and feels he is the longest-serving among the prisoners there, has the hole existing and playing an important role throughout his saga. One prisoner, some days prior to the massacre, “attempted to escape by climbing through a hole in the warehouse wall,” PHR reported. “[B]ut guards immediately shot and killed him,” Omar said, and then left his body “to rot in the sun.” [PHR p.32]

That prisoner’s fate might help explain why, when speaking as Omar, Mr. Bashir/Al-Sadeq said he *didn’t* use the hole to escape by. Late on August 22, PHR reports, secret

ally guard Mustafa “came to the window before evening prayer” with food, water, and a warning: “You will either escape or die.” Bypassing the useless “window,” which clearly refers to the hole, Mustafa then unlocked the shed doors “so they could escape later that night.” But they were discovered and the massacre commenced. Omar escaped by the doorway nonetheless, with no detailed explanation. They all “stormed the doors” together. [PHR p.26] Conveniently, this allowed him to be the one witness on records far to agree with PHR’s other escapee, Mohammed. But he had to contradict himself to do it.

Those who’ve taken it call it a useful exit, and while it’s nothing one can just “run” though, the hole in the wall is a good enough escape route **its presence made this prison completely ineffective**. One would need to get up on a ledge about nine to ten feet off the ground, not unlike scaling the outside walls, which several claim – realistically - to have done. Between reaching, jumping, and standing on something (like the air compressor next to the door), almost anyone could get in the window with little difficulty. The hole is small – most of a single 2-foot-wide window segment. An obese person could not do it, but most others could squeeze through with a little flexibility and make the easy reach or leap to the wall, about 24-36 inches away.

If this escape route had had existed for long, it’s reasonable to wonder why the prisoners didn’t slip through it before, on any quiet night when the guards outside had dozed off. If that hole was there the whole time, like “Omar” says, why did the prisoners remain there the whole time also?

One solution to that puzzle comes from two witnesses who explain, in conflicting ways, that the opening never existed before the massacre day. Abdulatti Musbah Bin Halim told Andrew Gilligan of the Daily Telegraph how “after the firing stopped he and about 30 others ran out through **a hole they had made** in the hangar wall.” [DT] Presumably, they had made it just then, inspired by the terror and desperation of such a total attack, using some sort of technical means they never tried before. They picked an excellent spot, if so, letting them bypass the cinder walls and the metal shell.

The video host of “What happened at Yarmouk” disagrees, saying the hole that saved his life was made by the loyalists, on accident. He said, per the video’s subtitles, it “was the only opening created, as a result of the shaking after the grenades were thrown in. This was the only opening created, the only bricks that fell.” [FGM] It saved his life, allegedly.

Al-Sadeq, as Omar, says the hole was there all along, Bin Halim says the prisoners made it just then, and the host says the grenades let them out. Which of those three witnesses, if any of them, is telling it like it was?

The stories of escape above tend to suggest the prison’s doors remained impassable, forcing reliance on this problematic alternative. But many other witnesses specify they simply fled out the doors.

That too comes in many varieties. The doors have been reported as left unlocked as the guards left (anyone who was able to escape once the guards left implies this). They've also been opened by guards to let them out (see below), blown open by the grenades [UH p.69] [RW2], kicked open by a fellow prisoner [OG] and rushed through in a mob with the guards still there, using shouts and a fire extinguisher to confuse them [PHR, p.31].. This last is confirmed by exactly two witnesses, PHR's Omar and Mohammad, contradicting everyone else, including Omar himself when he was Bashir Mohammed *and* when he was Mohammed Bashir.

There is no necessary conflict in the presence of both escape routes. It's possible that some would flee by the doors and some climb out the hole. But it isn't likely the hole was made three different ways, or the doors opened five different ways. Somewhere in this mess, some witness accounts must be considered unreliable on this detail.

2.4.3: Burning the Dead, or Burning Alive?

Returning to Mr. Bashir, who never did explain the hole's origin, he made one final unreliable claim of note, that he was still hiding in the shed, just minutes after the shooting on the evening of the 23rd, when the fire was started. He told the Mirror how, during a quiet moment:

"I ran to the other side of the container and hid behind an empty gas canister. That's when they poured petrol in and set it alight. They were trying to hide evidence but people were still alive. I could hear them scream." [MF]

This agrees with soldier Khalifah, who says he did the burning alive. A few other witnesses, as presented, seem to say they also witnessed the shed being set alight at about the time of the massacre.

Bashir Al-Sadeq told French paper Le Matin how "hidden behind a wall, he heard the screams, shots, cries for help, before seeing the fire lit. Since then he has not regained all his senses." [LM] One local resident who claimed to see it, Dr. Salem Rajab (see section 2.5) according to Libération, said "there were three big explosions and screams, and he saw the flames." [JT] Khaled Oub said "we knew something horrible was happening in there and went to help but the soldiers turned us away. They said if we came any closer we would be shot by snipers. Then we saw smoke coming from inside." [MF] Similar implied supports come from others, like Amr Dau Algala. Speaking to Kim Sengupta of the Independent, he described how he and one brother escaped." They ran for their lives amid the flames, noise and [...] I looked back, but there was too much smoke, I could not see my brother [Abdullah]." [KS]

Abdulrahim Ibrahim Bashir (no known relation to Mohammed Bashir) contradicts that

notion. An astute witness who says he counted all 153 names called out in roll call that day, Bashir escaped with two brothers from Zliten and hid with them “in a house outside the compound for three days.” From here, he “saw that the guards were still there,” finishing people off. Keeping an eye on the compound over the following days, fire only came into his narrative at an ambiguous time near when the rebels arrived:

The [warehouse] was already burning when the rebels came, but I didn't see how it happened. I just saw it when the rebels came; it was already burnt, and black smoke was coming out. I left around sunset yesterday [August 26]. [HR]

Furthermore, as explained in sub-section 3.3.4, the fire had to have been started well after the 23rd. Captive soldier Laskhar says it was done later that week, and some bodies were still visibly smoldering right through the 28th. The UNHRC decided body-burning occurred on the 25th, and was also told that a guard [019] “suggested they burn the bodies inside the warehouse and then use a tank to shell the warehouse and claim that NATO had bombed the warehouse.” [UH p. 70]

Those inclined to believe the witnesses have a choice to make: do you believe those who say the flesh-consuming fire was started the same time as the killing, with the vast majority of witnesses simply failing to notice? Or do you credit those who say it was only to hide the facts days later as A.I. Bashir, Laskhar, and logic suggest? One of these stories - at least - has to be wrong, and they might both be. Just because a story has a rudimentary logic to it doesn't necessarily make it true.

2.4.4: Sequence of Attack

Along with the time of day, the basic fact that guns and grenades were used is another common point nearly all witnesses clearly relate. What order they were used in, how many grenades, and other details all have different versions. Some variation is natural, and such minor discrepancies don't seem to be as troubling as some of the other points CIWCL has looked at. However it's well worth some consideration.

Physicians for Human Rights witness Mohammad relates how the massacre started: “[A] soldier (name withheld) then entered the warehouse and reportedly fired his nine-millimeter pistol at one of the new detainees from Misrata who was sitting near the door. He died instantly. Another man (name withheld) was also shot, but apparently not killed.” Following this, the same two men backed out, apparently shut the doors, and fired through at the prisoners through the metal with machine guns. After this, he saw grenades tossed in through the high grating. [PHR p.26]

“9 mm bullets were found at the site by PHR investigators.” [PHR p.22] These provide support for this story, and/or with the story of fellow PHR interviewee “Laskhar,” who told the group he used that caliber of a pistol to kill prisoners afterward, late that night.

Laskhar admitted to Physicians for Human rights that he summarily executed 12 detainees with his nine-millimeter pistol that night.” [PHR p.37] Their first pistol witness corroborates that, claiming he “saw the soldier named Laskhar hunt down survivors with a flashlight and execute them with his nine-millimeter pistol.” [PHR p 22]

No other witnesses aside from these two specify a nine-millimeter pistol, at either end of the incident. Mohammad did not specify how he was able to make these definitive identifications in the chaos of a massacre, or at a distance around midnight, in the backwash of a flashlight.

Others do mention a pistol, or rather pistols, being used. To the CIWCL’s knowledge there are at least two of them. French paper *Le Figaro* reported from Mabrouk Abdullah (translated). He said at dusk on the 23rd, a monk came to bring them water for the breaking of the Ramadan fast. ““We were praying when suddenly they threw grenades and fired machine guns and pistols.” [LF] Abdel Salaam Ashour, cited in a report from the *New York Post*, didn’t mention grenades, but did say “Three soldiers threw open the doors just after dusk and started firing into us with Kalashnikovs and pistols [...] Some of us dived to the floor, and some of us ran. They shot my leg. We were all screaming.” [NYP]

Neither of these specifies the exact order of pistol usage, nor the caliber of those used. Both are given as teachers, both from Zliten, Ashour aged 42 and Abdullah 45, both among the few actually claiming to be shot.

Only one witness, to the CIWCL’s knowledge, implies no grenades were used in the attack. Abed Rizaq Ghazim Senussi spoke to Canadian CTV [CTV], and judging by the video, was also the man who spoke, unnamed, to Hungarian journalist Al Ghaoui Hesna [HV]. Her blog entry about it, roughly translated, says “guards opened fire inside the open door, but later ... abandoned the men.” The anonymous man “and many companions then managed to escape. The guards, when they returned, **presumably** poured gasoline over the bodies and **threw hand grenades at them.**” [HB] Here, grenades are presumed, along with the fire, apparently in fact linked. He seems to think there were no fragmentation (shrapnel-generating) grenades at all, only incendiary ones. Soldier Khalifah said the same as explained in sub-section 2.3.2. But Khalifah contradicts Senussi by lobbing in fire before leaving the site. He also made sure to lock the door before leaving, mentioning no escapees at all, including Mr. Senussi.

Aside from this, most versions say explosive hand grenades – anywhere from one to eight – were tossed in. They came in either through the grates at the top of the closed and locked doors, or perhaps tossed in through the open doors. The grenades came first, in a majority of accounts, followed by gunfire. As Tajouri, the same Ibrahim Khalifah is sworn to have tossed two explosive grenades, then stepped in and started shooting, before someone else apparently threw the other 5 and whoever did even more shooting. Bashir Al-Sadeq (with agreement from Hussein Al-Lafi) has the cold-hearted kid entering the shed and opening fire wildly, emptying nearly four clips on Mohammed Al-Lafi, old

Ramadan Jabr, and some foreigners. [BBK] [BAK] As Lousha, Ibrahim specified the doors were locked until the two grenades he threw in blew them open, [RW2] a detail also reported to the UNHRC's commission, who spoke to someone "who admitted throwing two of the grenades." [UH p.69] They don't mention his subsequent shooting spree – that part he claims not to remember.

Whatever the order, some said the alternation was cyclical. Munir El Goula said "the mercenaries entered the jail and shot the prisoners in the legs. One took a grenade and threw it in. Five times they opened the door, shot inside, and threw a grenade." [LH] The Independent Civil Society Fact-Finding Mission to Libya heard that guards "opened the door to the large room and opened fire with light machine guns, while a number of hand grenades were also thrown into the room. This procedure was repeated a number of times, apparently until the guards ran out of ammunition." [CS] "Mohammad" told PHR how, as they relate, "the soldiers repeated this pattern of attack four or five times: fire from outside the warehouse, launch grenades, enter the warehouse, and fire into the crowd, then re-load their weapons." [PHR p.26]

Just when during the attack the soldiers climbed up on top of the shed and fired down through the tin roof is also in dispute. This aspect of the attack, highlighted by Human rights Watch [HR], has a very distinct effect on the nature of the killing, making all but impossible to hide "behind" a stack of tires [DT], a gas canister [MF], or the bodies of fellow prisoners [AL].

Numerous witnesses would notice when that commenced, but only Abdulrahim Ibrahim Bashir, 25, reported this aspect at all. As HRW summarized: "[A]t sunset on August 23 guards of the Khamis Brigade opened fire on him and the other detainees from the roof, shooting through the roof's tin sheeting, while another guard threw grenades in from the entrance." [HR] Their investigators did note the bullet holes in the roof, and these definitely exist. In photographs of the dim interior, they can be seen leaving the skeletons and the floor in between them decorated with polka dots of amber light. However, none of the other witnesses has mentioned anything about the act of these holes being torn through the top of their little world there. All the firepower they hid from and recalled so vividly came through the doors, open or closed.

In this case of conflict, young Mr. Bashir (at least) should be discounted. This in turn leaves us with a problem of where the bullet holes in the roof did in fact come from.

2.4.5: Escape Attempts, Hero Guards

Ominous promises of impending "freedom" are widely reported as presaging the shed massacre. Some, like Amr Dau Algala, said this was spoken of the day before. [KS] Others, like M. Bashir, said they were so warned on the day of the event. [MF] This is not necessarily a contradiction, as the same basic information could have been repeated.

Most of these have the soldiers then simply opening the doors as if to freedom, and for greatest contrast, started massacring them instead. Mounir Own says they were promised freedom at sundown on the fateful day, something that got them all talking. And then the guards opened the doors and "instead of setting them free, Mounir says they threw a grenade inside the warehouse and then they opened fire." [CNN1]

Many accounts, and increasingly the official narratives like that of the UNHRC, include an escape attempt or a released-to-die scenario involving more initiative on the part of the prisoners, coinciding with the onset of attack.

In one version, the prisoners noisily broke out on their own, and then the soldiers re-locked the door and started killing them through the closed doors. One unnamed escapee told the makers of the video What Happened at Yarmouk "they heard the breaking, and didn't stop it. They allowed the first person to come out, then executed him on the spot and locked the doors." [FGM, 0:28] The unnamed host of the video isn't clear on the first part, but corroborates the unusual claim the soldiers first locked the open doors. "They locked us in. At first a grenade, then shooting." [FGM 4:22]

Another school of recall has the guards themselves undoing the lock to let the prisoners out. One version of that has the latched undone in an evil trick by the guards. To the UK Telegraph, A. M. Bin Halim related:

One of the guards was from Zliten and I knew him. He said he would unlock the door and all we had to do was undo the latch and then we could escape.

"We undid the door. The first of us went out and were met with a hail of bullets. We ran back inside the hangar but they followed us and threw in six hand grenades. Then they started spraying us randomly with gunfire..." [DT]

Yet another set of versions has one humane guard or another unlocking the door to help. The first to be published came from escapee Mustafa Abdullah el-Hitri/el-Etri/Atiri. this act of mercy came only after the bulk of the killing, as he related it to Alex Loyd. "Abdul Razak was one of them but he seemed sickened by the killing and told us to flee [...] He opened the barn doors and told anyone still alive to run for it." [AL]

According to some witnesses, a different guard named "Mustafa" learned of the impending mass murder and offered to unlock the door before it could happen. This basic story is given by two witnesses, PHR's escapees Omar and Mohammad, confirming each other where no one else does.

As Omar relates it, Mustafa brought the warning "you will either escape or die," and unlocked the shed doors "so they could escape later that night." [PHR p.26] The savior told the prisoners to wait thirty minutes to escape, but they were discovered and punished

with the planned massacre. According to Mohammad, they were given away by chanting “God is great” too loud while waiting. [PHR p.26]

A strange melding of the two stories comes from the youthful escapee Taher el-Bahbah. He has Mustafa’s 30-minute escape plan being carried out by a guard with the name of Mustafa el Hitri’s hero, here given as “Abdul Razak Baroni.” [FB?]

It seems unlikely this is all the same guard, perhaps named Mustafa Abdul Razak Baroni. If there were two hero guards, one was remembered by some, the other by others, with at least some getting confused as to which of the two tried to open the doors early, and which one only after the shooting.

The UNHRC’s commission came up with an answer: both guards tried to help, and both before the massacre, tossing El-Hitri under the bus. In a possible mix-up, they cite soldier [019] – the same guard who reportedly stuck around and suggested burning the bodies and blaming NATO - also ran away after trying to free the prisoners.

During the early evening ... at least one of the guards [019] and possibly others [066 and ‘Mustafa’] informed the detainees that he would leave the door of the warehouse open and turn the light off to allow the detainees to escape because “they wanted you all dead”. The guard then ran away, along with one of his colleagues [066]. [UH p.68-69]

The answer was to find that guards collaborated, with certain action for [019], who must be Abdul Razak Baroni (see 2.3.5), along with possibly “Mustafa,” and possibly with [066] who did flee. In all memories studied by the CIWCL so far, these two or three helpful guards were merged into either one person or, more often, zero.

M.M. Zedan is one exception. At the last minute the CIWCL learned that he said the following:

On Tuesday before sunset two soldiers came to us. The first one's name is Abdel-Razaq Al-Barouni The other one's name is Osama, from Zawyah. I don't know his surname. [Abdel Razaq] climbed on this ladder and they both told us 'we will let you run away.' Abdel Razaq Al Barouni put the key in the keyhole and he told us 'leave [the prison] after half an hour.' They left, and after 3 or 5 minutes someone called Ibrahim Tajouri came, with him another one called Mohamed from Abou Salim and some Tuaregs... [VZH]

2.4.6: Soldiers Out, Soldiers In

Many witnesses agree some members of the Libyan military, some of them the guards in charge of them, wound up dying in the massacre. The exact number is unclear, but significant, perhaps as many as 20. And the sequence, again, is confused.

The slain soldiers were held prisoner in the shed along with the rest for some time, two witnesses agreed for the BBC. Reported survivors Ali Hamouda and Fathallah Abdullah al-Ashter say that on the 23rd, these men were then taken out first.

“Both men said some of Col Gaddafi's own troops were not spared. They too were imprisoned in the warehouse, presumably for not following orders.

"The soldiers were in the middle," Ali said. "They were sitting on blankets. They took them outside first. After that we heard gunshots. Maybe they executed them. Then they start to shoot us." [OG]

The largely-Arab Independent Civil Society Fact-Finding Mission to Libya heard, as summarized in their January report:

Shortly after sunset, a number of guards entered the room and ordered all former members of the military to leave with them. Approximately 17-20 detainees were taken from the room; soon after, those remaining heard a number of shots, which they took to mark their execution. Guards then opened the door to the large room ...[CS p.34]

Munir el-Goula is among the vast majority of other witnesses who makes no mention of that ominous prelude to the all-out attack on the rest of them. In its place, he added to the soldier total an unusual twist that, again, no one else noted. Some of the guards still on duty, standing outside the shed, were pushed in at the last minute and killed. “When they opened the gate, mercenaries came and pushed the soldiers back into the jail. They shot an old man in the leg” and then started killing everyone. El Goula’s death toll, as Channel 4 passed it on, was 20 soldiers and “more than 100” civilian prisoners.[LH]

The CIWCL finds it unusual and noteworthy that none of the former soldiers, taken out first or pushed in last, managed to be among the roughly one in three that survived to tell their of the ordeal. That honor befell the untrained civilians who escaped unharmed.

One explanation is they were only “put” in there to torture the prisoners, as M.M. Zedan swears, but were then taken out and killed:

They put soldiers with us inside the hangar so they could torture us. They stayed from two to three days inside with us to torture us. They fired twice at the martyr Ali Ibrahim. After that Ibrahim Tajouri opened the door and asked the soldiers inside to leave. The soldiers left and he (Tajouri) fired at them. One of the soldiers was Mohamed Al Amine from Zliten. [VZH]

2.4.7: Witnesses vs. Medical Common Sense

Many escapees, but not all, claim to have been uninjured. A. I. Bashir said “I was not

wounded, hamdullah [praise God]. They just shot and killed us.” [HR] Some of them, especially the few seen at Tripoli Medical Center, described and/or showed wounds to the media. Most of these, however, were from “captivity in Zliten.” Consider A. M. Bin Halim (Haleem), who spoke to the Daily Telegraph on the 25th:

While in captivity in Zliten, he was subjected to days of torture, with burns and the marks of shackles clearly visible as he lay at the Tripoli Medical Centre hospital.

[...]

Mr Haleem was hit by bullets and shrapnel but managed to run behind a stack of tires which offered some protection. [DT]

It should be noted that the shackle marks were clearly visible to reporter Andrew Gilligan, but the bullet and shrapnel wounds were only stated.



With those able to show injuries from their time at the Yarmouk shed, more problems arise. Mabrouk/Muftar Abdullah, of Zlitan, spoke to numerous media outlets. He says he was crouching along a wall, but was still shot once, in his side. [KL] To support it, he showed his wound to the Daily Telegraph’s cameras early on the 28th, a deep, circular hole in flesh of his lower left side. [TV] No longer bandaged, we can see that in four and a half days the surrounding scar tissue had healed from just torn open to healed and not even pink anymore (see inset).

There’s no corroboration to support Mr. Abdullah’s shooting, and none is expected in the chaos of the reported attack. But another common-sense-defying survivor is harder to explain. Speaking to Tracey Shelton of Global Post, 26-year-old Tripoli native Aamir Benowen, says he was arrested three months before the massacre, in May or June, for what offense he does not know. Shelton saw him in bed at “the ICU unit of Tripoli’s Central Hospital,” suffering “Numerous stab wounds, broken bones and severe bruising [which] covered his body.” Furthermore, “his neck had been sliced open.” [GPS] The account continues:

Benowen said the callous attack had occurred four days before the massacre of Aug. 23 when he saw an estimated 130 prisoners shot and blown apart by hand grenades. [...] he survived only because guards had assumed he was dead already. Following the attack he had been left lying in his own blood without assistance for four days. [GPS]

The lack of assistance suggests not only the guards but the prisoners he was “killed” amongst, packed in tight by all accounts, also thought he was dead. Then after the shooting, he somehow woke up enough to witness the mass killing – but not enough to

appear alive as they were attacking - and to then revive and escape the shed, in some unexplained way.

However much sense this account makes, no other witness known to the CIWCL mentions a man being beaten and stabbed to death in the middle of the shed and left dead for four days. That in itself should have been memorable, even if one did not witness Mr. Benowen's miraculous, Lazarus-like escape.

There is no reason to doubt Shelton's account of Mr. Benowen's injuries. He was apparently tortured and brutalized severely by someone, shortly before telling this story of a Gaddafi atrocity to the foreign media. Precisely what the connection between these events is, and the current status of Mr. Benowen, the CIWCL does not and cannot know.

2.4.8: Points of Agreement Become Suspicious

The CIWCL's reasonable doubts about the witnesses started on seeing too little agreement on what's supposed to be one, singular event. The effect of that is cumulative as, again and again, questions arise about which version is true, and perhaps if either or any version is true.

At some point, if that occurs regularly enough, it's reasonable to adopt a default suspicion over the veracity of yet another witness claim. It becomes natural to expect the mismatched details one can find between improvised narratives, and which we find in sheaves while assembling this report.

At that point, a switch occurs. It becomes nearly impossible for a witness to agree with everyone, with so much mutually-exclusive variety. As disagreement becomes the standard, the points where there is little or no divergence begin to stand out in contrast - not as signs of a real event, but as indicators of a hidden design. One could easily wonder how all known witnesses could wind up concocting their stories the same way unless they were reading, from the same script, key parts that were *not* left to their imaginations.

The points they agree on, then, deserve some attention. They agree on their own general innocence of any violence or criminal behavior. Some had supported the rebellion, even contributing to the fight indirectly, but didn't deserve to be locked up, abused, or killed. They agree their presence there was the doing of the Khamis Brigade they were handed to, after arrest by the threatened and paranoid government. They agree on the brutality, torture, degradation, and deprivation routinely visited on them by their captors. This led to death frequent enough that quite a few say they personally witnessed at least one fellow prisoner perish there prior to the massacre.

Despite all the conflicts just reviewed, the self-described witnesses tend to agree on the basics of the massacre itself. The approximate date is clear - August 22 or 23, into early 24. That's well before rebels arrived. They agree fairly uniformly it happened shortly after sunset, which has a certain symbolism for the dying days of the regime. They agree

that grenades were used. This rare twist helps explain the severely mangled remains inside the shed (see sub-section 3.2.4).

They don't seem to have all witnessed the same event, but all the different versions were in 100% agreement on the most crucial point of all. The killings were carried out by the Gaddafi loyalist soldiers. The time is another thing they are suspiciously consistent on. In conjunction with the accepted rebel conquest 26, this clarifies and proves who was in charge on the 23rd and the burning days after.

It's only natural that segment of the world community supporting the rebel cause against that of the Libyan government would want to agree with them on this point

But putting aside such blinding biases and considering all with rationalism, there remain questions that each person considering this information should ask him or herself.

- How many conflicting versions of a single, shared, life-changing event can we responsibly accept?
- If eyewitness accounts are really this random and uselessly varied, why are they ever called on as evidence at all?
- If they aren't usually this random, what's different here?
- Is it time yet to put the witnesses aside and re-consider the remaining evidence in a new light?

2.5: See-Through Salem and the Fakers He's Touched

Note: The following text is rather cutting and provocative and may seem insensitive to anyone familiar with the eventual fate of the subject, Dr. Salem Al-Farjani. The CIWCL had compiled the evidence of his apparent operation of large-scale deceit beginning in December 2011, at libyancivilwar.blogspot.com. Within months, his government commission was dissolved, and in mid-May he was arrested for unexplained reasons, beaten quite severely, and as of writing in hiding for speaking out despite threats not to speak out. The CIWCL consider it possible our exposition and embarrassment it might have caused could have contributed to that. This is covered in Sub-section 2.5.6.

2.5.1: Dr. Salem, The Witness

One very active witness of special interest, although he doesn't claim to have escaped the massacre personally, is a man giving the name Dr. Salem Rajab. Alternately, his first name is often given as Salim, and the family name as Rajub or Rajip, all reasonable transliterations of one consistent name. The meaning of his name is interesting in its clarity. Salem of course means peace in Arabic, and Rajab is the 7th month of the Islamic (lunar) calendar. Running June 3 to July 1 in 2011, Rajab was one of the four sacred months in Islam in which warfare is considered blasphemous. Ramadan, the month of the shed massacre and conquest of Tripoli, is another such month. These Islamic strictures apparently had little sway with the "Allahu Akbar" shouting rebel brigades.

Dr. Salem Rajab is not a tall man, beefy in build and sporting a middle-age paunch, appearing in August with a shaved chin and a short-sleeved baby blue Lacoste "alligator" shirt. He spoke first, in passable English, to Stuart Ramsay of Sky News, around 11am on August 27, in two separate broadcasts. It was the first widely seen video footage from the site. In the first video, Ramsay asked the man if any of the victims, any at all, might have been "mercenaries" killed by rebel militias. The witness didn't deny they might be loyalists, but he would allow no doubts on who killed them:

They were killed by Gaddafi forces, that's for sure. That's according to the witnesses, [pointing] and you can talk to them, and according to the people who actually escaped from here. That's for sure. They were killed by Gaddafi forces. That's sure. Sure. [SN1 4:07]

In a second broadcast and interview, that question was not repeated. Salim told Ramsay he was with other people (five or ten total) "near this mosque" on the 23rd when "we heard some people shouting." They went to investigate, he says, heard gunfire and explosions, and then ran into snipers who forced them to turn back. "Next day morning, I mean after maybe, I don't know, one hour or so," he continued, "everything is quiet. And

there were about three people, injured, and they're escaped, okay, and **they are now in Tripoli Medical Center.**" [SN1]

Exactly three former captives in Tripoli were listed, among others on a rebel Facebook page, as "injured but in good condition at Tripoli Medical Center." [FB7] All from Zlitan, these names, in Arabic, are for considered witnesses Mohammed Gibran Ahbich, Ahmed Hadid, and Abdulatti Musbah Bin-Halim. There was at least one other claimed massacre survivor at Tripoli Medical Center: Aamir Benowen of Tripoli, with shocking injuries and a bizarre story. (see 2.2 for all four)

Human rights Watch also spoke on the 27th to an unnamed "local resident" with "medical training," which suggest Dr. Rajab, but with a different story if so. He said that after the shooting, neighbors came by and "asked if I could help people with gunshot wounds. I told them to take them to the hospital." But they were too scared, and kept them at home instead. [HR] Another possible appearance of the good doctor is in the form of local **Salem Faih**, who "lives right near here," according to Cristiano Tinazzi. [CT] Faih is such a rare name the CIWCL could find no information on the meaning of it as a family name. But as a word, it's a verb with various meanings of unclear relation:

Fah/Faih: Be wide, spacious - diffuse odor, perfume - boil, shed blood - uncover, reveal. [AEF] The account style is similar to Rajab's, first specifying the day and time, the breaking of the fast, and the sound of explosions and guns. He cites survivors, here four instead of three. "The prisoners who escaped towards my house, there were four: one of them had his hand severed cleanly, the other two bullets in the legs and one, fortunately, was uninjured." [CT] There are no publicized escapees with a missing hand. He may be referring to one of those he saw dead across the road with a hand sliced off (see 3.2.4), but that man definitely died.

The other accounts, all but one from August 27, are more clearly the same man Ramsay met. He spoke to AFP as "Dr. Salim Rajab," as widely cited, saying in part "I am shocked, I never imagined I would see a scene like this in Libya" [FPS] Libération also spoke with our subject, given as "le docteur Salem Rajab," he said he had kept a medical office in the area. On the 23rd, he said there were "three big explosions and screams, and he **saw the flames.**" [JT] James Foley for Global Post spoke with the same man in his blue polo shirt that evening, leaning against a wall of the compound, seeming exhausted. [GPF] Australian ABC News would speak with Rajab, apparently on the 30th. The audio has him speaking with a hoarse voice, perhaps from talking to the media so much in the last days. He affirmed those killed were civilians, even "protesters." [AB]

Whatever he may have gotten wrong about the order of the events, he seems as knowledgeable as anyone about its aftermath. As "Dr. Salem," he also spoke to Alex Loyd of the Times with strange factual authority: "There are about 65 bodies in all either in the barn or yard," he said. "But we know for a fact that there were more than 150 prisoners in the barn when the firing started and that only about ten escaped. What has been done with the other bodies?" [AL] His math was almost consistent speaking to Libération's writer Jean-Louis Le Touzet, "We are looking for 90 missing bodies," [JT]

2.5.2: Dr. Salem, the Handler of other Witnesses

Besides his noteworthy grasp of massacre facts like the death toll, the witness Dr. Salem was keenly aware of the importance of the survivors. All other witness connections seem to be horizontal, among equals, while our subject is unique in talking about, pointing to, and handling the others.

He knew where three of them were - at Tripoli Medical Center - and that they could be talked to there. But one of those not hospitalized was right there with the doctor and was brought forth for Sky News. He wasn't ready to speak for the first broadcast, but was the sad-faced centerpiece of the second one. This unnamed younger man in an sweaty orange polo shirt was later identified by the CIWCL as Mustafa Abdullah El-Hitri (alternately Moustapha, El-Etri/Atiri).

Mustafa walked up to the camera under Dr. Rajab's left arm, and the doctor then proceeded to translate his story (see inset). The edit cuts out most of what he said, starting only with "seven – ten to eleven people they were try to escape." The different directions they ran were pointed in, and it was explained how some of them were killed along the way. He closed with "this place was for executing the people who are exactly refusing to kill the other people, the civilian people." [SN2]



The doctor and the escapee have now **spoken together to at least three news reporters** the CIWCL is aware of: Ramsay, Loyd, and Le Touzet. [JT] They both stand out in helping the International Criminal Court make a case against the Gaddafi family itself. Ramsay said to the Sky News anchor "the ICC was the first thing that the gentleman who was talking to me in with fantastic English said: please, please get this investigated." [SN3] Mr. El-Hitri alone among the prisoners testified to seeing Khamis Gaddafi present in the prison yard, issuing orders of some type, on the day of the massacre. This could have been a central plank of the ICC's efforts to get Khamis in prison, if he hadn't been killed again just then. [AL]

Robert F. Worth of the New York Times spoke to "Mustafa Abdullah Atiri," a "big man in a sweaty orange polo shirt with enormous, haunted eyes" he first met at the massacre site on August 27. [RW1] He wasn't ready to speak with Worth for until about the 30th. Atiri "walked then with a limp," while Sky News' camera failed to note it days earlier. [SN2 2:27] Worth related how Atiri "seemed terrified that the prison overseers would find him." "They have sleeper cells," he explained. "I saw a list of names, before I was arrested, of people who have been given money and weapons to destabilize the country, like Iraq." [RW1] Yet with his own name and face, we presume, he courageously

exposed his tormentors to the world, both with and without Dr. Salim's help.

A glimpse of that help, going beyond translation, might appear amongst several photos of El-Hitri taken by Seamus Murphy/VII Images early on the 27th. One of these shows possible coaching, with Mustafa gesturing confusion, speaking with someone hidden from view aside from a chubby left arm that looks like Dr. Salem's. [SM4] Raised in gesture, the arm seems to be communicating something superlative. By the angle of sunlight and other clues, this was shortly before Ramsay arrived.

Global Post's video of a visit by James Foley, which did capture plenty of our subject, closes with an unusual glimpse of his handiwork. One gaunt young man with thinning hair, never named or described, was prominently seen on the 27th sobbing intensely, doubled over, requiring calming and support, and so was the subject of several powerful news photos. [BL12] [RH3] [RH4] [YK1] Apparently the same man is seen in Foley's video later in the day. Standing on the sidelines, he's first smiling, talking to another, huskier man who's patting him on the back in condolence or, perhaps, congratulation. [GPF 1:21] That arm, again all we can see, looks a bit like Dr. Salem's. The sobbing man seems aware, if Salem isn't, that a camera was filming them, and he quickly moves away from the pat, leaving the hand lingering and sliding off his back, along the way revealing the short sleeve of that distinctive blue "alligator" shirt (see inset).



2.5.3: Dr. Salem, the Government Official



At left, from Sky News [SN2]. At right, AlManara Libya video, Oct. 1 [ALV]

The CIWCL has discovered striking similarities between this troubling witness Dr. Salem Rajab and one **Dr. Salem al-Farjani**. First, the facial similarity in the image above, sealed by a distinctive off-center gap in the lower teeth, all but proves, just from visuals, that this is the same man. Since October, he has changed his appearance, shedding a few pounds and growing in a short salt-and-pepper beard, [VG] but as other clues related

below continue to clarify, the CIWCL's conclusion is sound. The match is significant in that Dr. al-Farjani was **hired by the Libyan government (National Transitional Council) to help lead its national missing persons commission**. This commission has a little to no Internet presence; the CIWCL could not locate an official website for it, only mentions of its existence, via credible sources, largely after talking with Dr. Al-Farjani.

The photo of a bearded Salem accompanied a December 10 AP article by Vanessa Gera, writing on the NTC's creation of "a national commission to deal with the matter" of missing persons. "It is headed by al-Farjani, a *cardiac surgeon*," she wrote, "and a DNA specialist" wrongly given as Othman Abdul-Jalil (actually Dr. Mohammed Othman). [VG] Knowledge of heart surgery should add little to DNA., forensics, or correlating photos and ID papers. It was likely some other skill set that qualified him for this job.

His journey to the top started with a risky gamble, as Gera related. **Working at Tripoli Medical Center**, he witnessed Gaddafi victims brought in injured and dead, some from far away frontlines. Just long enough he was able to see and secretly record details for future use. "The surgeon took down the names of as many slain fighters as he could," Gera wrote, "before they were hauled off by Moammar Gadhafi's forces, presumably to be buried in mass graves." Sometime he caught the victims later in that sequence, having to foray outside the hospital on **"fact-finding missions to the sites of suspected massacres or mass graves."** [VG]

Gera notes his caution in this operation. He told his wife nothing while hiding his secret files at home with her, and took his 70-year old father along on risky visits to the massacre sites, hoping that would make him appear less suspicious. [VG] As of August 23, if his account as Rajab is true, he was bolder. The biggest massacre of all happened right next door and he was ready to offer material assistance, but for the snipers. By the 27th, he seemed quite fearless in his day-long turn as Dr. Rajab.

A month later, by September 26 at the latest, Dr. Farjani was speaking as a member of a government commission to identify the bones just found on the ground at Abu Salim Prison. These were believed by some to be the remains of the reported 1,270 prisoners executed there in 1996. The mass grave was discovered, it was said, after interrogation of captured soldiers, and the skeletal proof was then shown to the world media. CNN reported "medics with CNN staffers on the scene said the bones **did not appear to be human.**" [CNN6] They weren't finding stray animal bones on their own; the *proof handed to them* was not human. Digging was conspicuously halted, on grounds of extreme professionalism, and apparently never resumed.

One "Salim al-Serjani" disputed the CNN medic claim, telling AFP "we have found human remains, I have no doubt, I have found them myself." [FPN] He was shown sitting in on a panel discussion on the 26th, wearing Dr. Rajab's shirt (see



inset still) in a video from Al Arabiya [AVF] and quoted by them saying “to be honest, we were not prepared to deal with such **human** massacres.” Adding over 400 to the death toll, he called on “foreign organizations and the international community to help us in this task of identifying the remains of more than **1,700 people**..” DNA testing on this ballooning number of bodies would take years, he said, because “acid was poured to eliminate any evidence of this massacre.” [AA] Perhaps only faith and careful management of perceptions could get the whole world to call those few animal bones the proof of this alleged massacre, but Salem was aggressively on the job.

A few days later, he gave the October 1 interview mentioned above, where he’s given as (translated from Arabic) “Dr. Salem Ferjani member of the National Committee to identify the victims of the war of liberation.” [ALV] In late October, New Scientist spoke with “Salim Al-Serjani, vice-president of the newly formed National Commission for Tracing and Identifying Missing Persons.” Here he sounded quite scientific; speaking of “ante-mortem data,” DNA samples, GPS readings, and training “to avoid misidentifications.” [NS] Sometime between September and November, Al-Farjani advised Physicians for Human rights on their report about this massacre. It acknowledges the national commission co-chairs with “sincere gratitude to Dr. Mohamed Othman and Dr. Salem Al-Fergani for their inestimable support in carrying out this investigation.” [PHR p.3]

On November 2 Dr. Al-Farjani re-visited the massacre site at Yarmouk, with none other than UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to his left. [UM] The host also arranged a meeting with a number of them and family members of alleged victims. Video of this reveals one recognizable attendee was Mohammed Bashir/Bashir Mohammed Al-Sadeq/Germani. [VBM] Later Dr. Al-Farjani gave a tour of the site, and some face time with a victim’s father, to Luis Moreno-Ocampo, Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Court. Ocampo, indicating Salem, “eventually, if there are no security problems, we can pass to them everything we have. Because, in fact, many of them,” gesturing in Salem’s direction, “as today, they are helping us to collect the evidence.” [ITN] The ICC is relying on the same man who started out telling Stuart Ramsay what the fictional “Salim Rajip” saw. (He presumably gave Susan Rice her tour as well, although no given details or photos confirm this).

This whole time Al-Farjani was helping the NTC in its “search for fighters who went missing in the war,” a number that he feels could be as high as 25,000. The idea was to bring “certainty” over the identities of those interred and dumped anonymously across the country by linking them to this list of names. Speaking of the importance of truth and of his work to find it, Al-Farjani told Gera. “People are suffering. They want to know the fate of their loved ones [...] **we won't have reconciliation in the country if we don't take care of this.**” [VG]

2.5.4: An Innocent Explanation?

While Dr. Al-Farjani's August foray to Yarmouk seems rather suspicious in light of his later claimed mission, it is possible there's a relatively innocent explanation. The CIWCL acknowledges it has been reticent to contact the Libyan authorities about this matter, and extremely simple answers may await those who do finally ask for clarification.

The answers might reveal that he had a home, or a second home, behind the Yarmouk base, as Dr. Rajub said. It would be a manageable commute to the TMC. There's also a medical practice he kept there, as he said to Libération. [JT] Perhaps this "office" was cover for his investigative work, based in some little rented back-room he was basically living in, 200 meters (650 feet) [SN1] from one of the worst "torture centers" in the country.

It could also be that Rajab isn't even a false name. The CIWCL cannot rule out that his name is something like Dr. Salem Rajub al Farjani, and he sometimes goes by the one name. Further, using a false name, if that's what he did, can have a non-nefarious explanation. It could be argued that he still feared loyalist reprisals; by the story he shared with Gera, he was worried for his own and his family's safety. That fear, heightened by suddenly being on camera worldwide, could drive a man to give a false name.

However, there is much arguing against a defensive pseudonym. The battle of Tripoli was all but over by the relevant date, August 27th, with little to fear from any effective loyalist reprisals. If they couldn't prevent the takeover of the city, it's hard to imagine the loyalists would make a priority of punishing one man for revealing details that were also being related by the dozens of escapees. The vast majority of these – people who barely survived once already and should be more fearful - gave full names that, as far as we know, aren't false ones.

More to the point, Dr. Salem talked to the global media when he could have simply declined to do so. Anyone hoping to sneak in secretly could have stuck to a disguise, blending in, not being seen by hypothetical spies reporting to the scattered former government. If he could avoid being on worldwide TV, which they would also monitor, he'd be safe. Instead he spoke at length with Stuart Ramsay and compounded that by repeating the decision several times, speaking again and again to English and French language news sources, on video when possible.

Then he mentioned Tripoli Medical Center, which is not a good way for a TMC doctor to obscure his identity, and finally, he was giving away his location, "200 meters" from the base [SN1], if that was in fact his real address. Barely anything of his identity was, in fact, hidden here. So as effective camouflage for any deceit, to hide from the loyalists *or* to hide his criminal manipulation of the case, "Dr. Salim Rajab" fails. That raises its own questions vis-à-vis the deceit CIWCL suspects, and we have no certain answer. It's possible he left so many seams on purpose for some reason, deliberately sabotaging his work. Perhaps he's simply that sloppy or arrogant to drop clues, presuming no one would be able to both put them together and care.

Finally, the pseudonym itself fails almost comically. He could have dropped "doctor," or "Salem," or "Al-Farjani," or all three. He dropped only one of those, and there are clues he picked it right back up with another thin pseudonym account. Recall that Dr. Farjani had handled El-Hitri on the 27th and note Robert F. Worth's interview with one **Ahmed Al-Farjani, a local construction worker**. Al-Farjani just so happened to take El-Hitri, and his co-escapee "Taha," into his home on the 24th, just as an angry mob was about to kill them. [RW1] With the name, the shared El-Hitri link, and Mr. Al-Farjani's consistent given age (42 in September to Dr. Salem's 43 in November), it seems quite possible they're again the same man. That would mean this witness team spoke together to *four* different writers, and that many of the points for an innocent explanation are moot.

Ahmed Al-Farjani aside, the only fully honest outcome is that Dr. al Farjani is *both* the concerned neighbor *and* the investigator. That would be a rather fortuitous coincidence, but it is possible. One good sign would be if he had ever publicly added that despite his official interest, he was also a direct witness to this terrible event, who felt so powerless to stop it that he was now supremely driven to exact justice. If so, that would have played quite nicely as the centerpiece of the December Gera article, for example. But nowhere in the Dr. al-Farjani record does this appear, making it seem that Dr. Rajab really is *supposed* to be a separate person, when he clearly is not.

If the innocent explanation proves inadequate, we have a troubling situation. A man who was soon hired to help the nation solve its mysteries between the dead and the missing - an extremely serious and truly thorny issue - has been seen manhandling the witnesses, claiming to be one, and helping seed much of the inconsistent so-called evidence this report has occupied itself with. Behind the apparent deceit is quite likely a rebel massacre it was designed to conceal, and in front of it is the very real danger that the good doctor was hired to do much more of the same.

2.5.5: A Team Effort: Salem and Bashir



Left: M. Bashir on Aug. 27 [MF] Right: Bashir Al-Germani / Al-Sadeq on Aug. 28 [VSD]

An especially prolific witness who has given the CIWCL more than his share of insights is one with several names, always containing "Bashir," Arabic for "bringer of happy news." He first spoke of the horror he witnesses to Martin Fricker on Aug. 27 as Mohammed Bashir, aged 52. Mohammed said he was held at the shed less than a week, and described it wrong (as a "container" with metal walls they could bang on for water).

Dramatically and against much evidence he said that he witnessed the prisoners, aside from his friends and himself, being doused with gasoline and burned alive before he and

his friends finally decided to “run” out through “a hole in the wall.”

The next day Mohammed was at the site again with the same face and shirt, speaking as Bashir Mohammed Al-Sadeq (“sadeq” meaning “truthful”) or Bashir Mohammed Al-Germani. Despite the double name, this is all jumbled together as one apparent character; a businessman from Az Zawiyah, was held in the same shed for 95 days, accused of helping protesters or rebel fighters flee to Tunisia. He did apparently mention prisoners burned alive with grenades, and still says he escaped through the hole instead of the doors.

Then another man spoke up, real name not provided, who shared Bashir’s length of detention, hometown, profession (specifying the car business), and reason for arrest (adding alleged cash donations to the rebels). He spoke to Physicians for Human rights, given by them the pseudonym Omar. Here he mentioned for the first time the heroic guard “Mustafa” who tried to help them escape, lining up perfectly with the same story from PHR’s other escapee alias “Mohammad.” As Omar, Bashir prolifically mentioned the hole in the wall for *everything but his escape*. For that, he **changed the story** to agree again with “Mohammad,” who says the prisoners rushed the doors and fought past the guards to flee the killing.

As mentioned earlier, **PHR consulted with “Dr. Salem Al-Fergani”** for this report, suggesting that the doctor helped set them up with the story-changing witness Bashir, who was apparently “deemed credible” (by criteria listed on page 8) as their Omar. [PHR] This possible teamwork carries over to Al-Farjani’s meeting with Ban Ki Moon in November, where a man looking just like Bashir is in on the survivor/family gallery. He’s the only one the CIWCL can recognize from elsewhere, here wearing a bright, light-blue, long-sleeved shirt. [M2]

And again they wound up on the same small team in March, together meeting BBC Arabic reporter Feras Kilani along with fellow survivor Hussein Al-Lafi and the so-called executioner Ibrahim Tajouri (aka Ibrahim Lousha aka Ibrahim Sadeq Khalifah - see 3.3.4) [BAK] [BBK] In the dramatically staged confrontation that followed, Bashir accused Ibrahim of killing Al-Lafi’s brother “sheikh (respected) Mohammed Allafi,” whom he happened to notice was kneeling down with his back to the door at the time. And then he gunned down a group of foreigners not previously mentioned – an 80-year-old Palestinian and a group of Egyptians. It’s noteworthy these new victims made their debut for the Palestinian Kilani and BBC Arabic. Ibrahim might have thought their story sounded fishy, and opted to plead “I don’t remember. I was under the influence of drugs.” [BBK]

Al-Sadeq and Al-Lafi were escorted to their meeting with Kilani by none other than See-Through Salem. He wasn’t named or introduced, but is visually recognizable as the man who gave the tour to Moreno-Ocampo and Secretary General Ban. Dr. Salem looks patently unhappy on this day, seeming to frown as he meets Kilani, and glaring at the camera as he enters the prison. It seems reasonable to presume that he helped arrange this whole gathering of fakers, under the guise of Free Libya’s effort to decide what really

happened in all these mysterious corners of the war.

2.5.6: A Very Hard Fall From Grace

Sometime in early 2012, Dr. Al-Farjani's mysterious commission suffered an appropriately murky cancellation. Perhaps the problems outlined here, first publicized in mid-December by members of the CIWCL at the website *The Libyan Civil War: Critical Views*, contributed. No explanation has been offered. As of mid-February he was marking the one-year anniversary of the Feb. 17 uprising, mentioned not as a co-chair or deputy chair of anything, but rather "journalist Salem al-Farjani." [MG]

In mid-March, he was scheduled to give a speech in Geneva sponsored by Swiss group TRIAL (Track Impunity Always). In the interests of holding war criminals accountable, they decided to host "a privileged meeting with Dr. Salem Alferjani, forensic scientist and human rights activist and **former Deputy Chairman of the Commission for Missing Persons in Libya.**" [TR] The possible liar and absolver of rebel war criminals was to speak on "Identifying the Missing: Truth and Accountability in Post-Gaddafi Libya." TRIAL's announcement reported on this visionary:

*Despite the premature dissolution of the Commission, Dr. Alferjani is convinced that the disclosure of the truth regarding these mass graves is the only way to provide the victims' families with a minimum of justice, thus **he is still engaged in the identification of the victims** of human rights violations in Libya."* [TR]

Compounding this demotion, Dr. Salem was physically arrested on May 17 – under brutal and mysterious circumstances - at Tripoli Medical Center. A photograph that went semi-viral showed a short chubby man, identified as Al-Farjani, being hauled away by armed men carrying him by the arms and legs (see image on next page). [FBF] Libyan "Press Solidarity" (from an Arabic language report) reported they had asked the interior ministry's Supreme Security Committee (SCC) and the hospital director, "Khaled," about Dr. Salem. As we'll see below, these were apparently the right people to ask, but neither shared a single word on the subject. [PS] A comment left there, from someone whose father was perhaps involved in the arrest, explained how a hospital employee had submitted documents that condemned Al-Farjani as a former "**member of the Revolutionary Committees,**" meaning presumably the vilified form of direct democratic government under the Gaddafi regime, also called by some their "Stasi." [PS]

It seems improbable the doctor could have gotten where he is and done what he's done if he'd been a known member of the Revolutionary Committees. The allegation could just be an excuse issued by an SSC ally, or something he managed to sneak by with, perhaps with some identity surgery. A former Gaddafi loyalist could earn a clean slate with the NTC by showing "early and clear support for the February 17th Revolution," and Salem has the back-story of investigating Gaddafi crimes from the beginning. But his first *verifiable* help – and in the long run it will prove more harm than help - apparently came

around August 23-27, at the hospital and at the massacre shed.

As this report was nearing completion, news arrived by way of the UK Guardian, whose reporter Chris Stephen revealed – to some extent - what happened May 17 and after. Dr. Al Farjani (given as Forjani) had been **sent to remove the director of Tripoli Medical Center, Dr Khalid Urayath**. [GF] The director stood accused of Gaddafi loyalism, tutoring Muammar's mysterious daughter Hannah, and of squandering money. But Urayath has the support of the hospital staff, and apparently interior's SSC force, plus powerful connection in the UK. This was “the fourth attempt this year by health ministry officials to order Urayath to step down,” Stephen writes, and again it would fail. The ministry had Dr. Salem call the general prosecutor to request backup this time from “law enforcement officers.” He did so, and they met him at the Urayath's office. What happened then is the great mystery:

*Instead, [Al-Farjani] was confronted by members of the government's supreme security committee (SSC) waiting in the director's office, who **dragged Forjani through the hospital, beating him so badly he lost consciousness in front of horrified staff**. A fellow medic photographed Forjani being carried, his shirt off, spreadeagled, down the hospital's ambulance ramp while an SSC soldier **threatened to shoot** unarmed hospital security staff giving chase. [GF]*



Dr. Al-Farjani (left of center) being carried, unconscious, from Tripoli Medical Center, May 17, 2012 [FBF]. Note the soldier aiming his gun back, and the man with a club, lower left, and the women across the street. (Image cropped and processed for this report, for artsy effect)

Urayath sided with the SSC as doing the right thing. “You know why they [the SCC] used force on him? **Dr Salem was trying to escape down the stairs – he was trying to escape.**” The surprising thing he wanted to get away from, the why behind the why, is left unexplained. “They took him in care,” Urayath continued, “and took him to the site of the SSC. They put him there, **they interrogated him.**” [GF]

In fact, it's reported, he was beaten in the genitals, considered torture, badly enough to

rupture a testicle, Stephen reports. “I don't know how this could happen, this is a new Libya,” Farjani told the Guardian. During the abuse, “I kept asking them, who are you, why are you doing this?” After the initial buzz over the photograph, the doctor was finally released after five days, handed over to the health ministry with no explanation. He’s now hiding in Tripoli as he speaks out, “having been warned of reprisals if he speaks out.” [GF] Diplomats and others were by the time of writing maneuvering to secure his safety, but the usual levers just don’t seem to work anymore in Libya and his fate remains in the balance.

The reasons for this detention and “interrogation” remain unstated and are thus probably extra-legal. There’s the denunciation cited above, perhaps from Urayath himself, that Salem was secretly a Green loyalist. One possibility is suspicion over his strange campaign outlined here and mostly published well before the incident. In fact, Dr. Salem’s arrest came just four days after the posting of the most incisive encapsulation yet, in video form, as “Amnesty by Way of Fakery.” [AFV] The CIWCL extends its sympathy to Dr. Al-Farjani as a threatened person, but even if our work contributed to his situation, we do not regret revealing the truth here. As he himself has noted, truth is the foundation of justice, and that’s bigger than any one person, however big he’s made himself appear on the world stage.

In fact, Dr. Salem’s high-profile work and grandstanding alone might have instilled jealousy amongst those who decided to arrest him, or might have exacerbated another grievance. And quite possibly the main reason he was disappeared and pummeled was simply to send a signal to a larger target, either Dr. Urayath or, more likely, his opponents in the health ministry. In fact, a health official named Bubash, protesting the NTC’s failure to help or investigate, told the Guardian “We cannot remove [Urayath], we have no armed force. I am one of the people who was threatened. **The supreme security council said: ‘You can see what will happen to you.’**” [GF]

2.5.7 - Not a Distraction

After this apparent fall from rebel grace, with a dangerous turn and no safe resolution yet, there emerges a temptation to cut See-Through Salem some slack, or even write off the whole issue of his pro-rebel deceit. In fact, engendering that temptation might have been the very idea behind shutting his operation down, if not for the unexplained arrest and torture. But he and his baggage remain relevant in three important ways.

1) Even besides lectures, the man is, or was, still at work, at least according to TRIAL, after the Commission’s unexplained end:

“Currently, Dr. Alferjani works together with several local and international NGOs, such as Human rights Watch, Physicians for Human rights and the International Committee of the Red Cross. He is also an important focal point in Libya for the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Luis Moreno-Ocampo and the

Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki Moon. ” [TR]

2) His past work hasn't disappeared. He touched much while in charge, shaping a case that might be entirely bogus, a case that in all likelihood stands unchanged.

3) He might be a rare window into how these things work. It does Libya and the Truth no good if someone as deceitful as Dr. Al-Farjani might have been and replaced him with someone just as crooked but less obvious about it. They could easily get away with hijacking the language and forms of truth and justice, and twisting them to support the NTC/militia narrative and their continued witch-hunt for “perpetrators.”

The second point is of immediate importance for this report; the witnesses this deceiver lobbied for are cast further yet into question. With the cumulative doubts lowered over the accepted narrative in the last three sections, this would be a reasonable point for the reader to place the witnesses on “probation” as our sole basis for interpreting the evidence. We have dead bodies and other clues that, unchained from the circus of words, can be looked at in relative silence until their own, truer, stories start to emerge. The following and final part of the report will provide a space for that emergence.

Part 3:

An Alternative, Evidence-Based Explanation

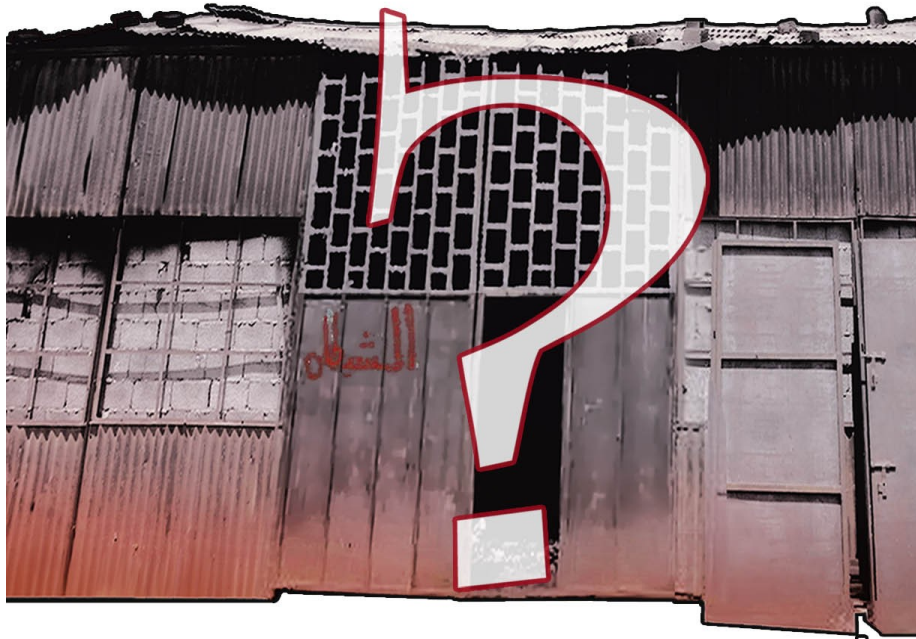
3.1: Racist Brutality up to the Shed

3.2: Un-Burnt Victim Clues

3.3: Charred Victim Clues

3.4: Timeline Clues of a Rebel Massacre

3.5: In Closing...



3.1: Racist Brutality, up to the Shed

3.1.1: "People Say..."

From February forward, the Libyan revolution was recognized, to some extent, for an unsettling bias against Black people. The racism on display has deep roots in Libya's identity as an "Arab" nation on the continent of Africa, and the pan-African policies of the Gaddafi government. Dismayed by black foreigners, about two million in a small nation of only six million, anti-regime activists have eagerly latched onto the idea of ubiquitous black mercenaries, hired to kill them and fit to be gotten rid of. One rebel fighter helping hunt down suspected mercenaries explained "There are a lot of black people that loved Gadhafi because Gadhafi loved black people and gave money to African governments." [DEM]

But well before mercenaries were thought of, nationwide race riots in 2000 saw Hundreds of thousands of African workers and black Libyans attacked in what witnesses and *The Economist* called a pogrom. Often attacking with machetes, light-skinned rioters left dark-skinned bodies "hacked and dumped on motorways," lynched a diplomat from Chad, burned down Niger's embassy, and warned Libyans caught sheltering Africans "that their homes would be next." The death toll was certainly higher than the 150 initially cited by "diplomats," along with tens of thousands injured, and hundreds of thousands, the *Economist* reported, "herded into trucks and buses, driven in convoy towards the border with Niger and Chad [...] and dumped in the desert." Some of these surely died as well. [EP]

All this barbarism, according to the *Economist*, was sparked by "the rumour that a Nigerian had raped a Libyan girl in Zawiya," the city near Tripoli where "pitched battles" took place. [EP] A decade later, race riots again appeared, with not a single rumor of a single rape, but Twitter messages swearing Gaddafi had "given the African Mercenaries," thousands of them, armed with swords and anti-aircraft guns, "full freedom in raping Libyan women" nationwide. [TM] Breathless and widely believed reports, never photographed or recorded for proof, of murderous African repression mushroomed in the first days of protests, with claims that Gaddafi was using the foreigners in a "genocide against the Libyan people." [NLT] or "killing us with his African mercenaries!" [NTW]

This idea was widely reported as nearly fact in the Western and Arab media. A resort to hired brute force was useful in proving the regime's loss of domestic support, illegitimacy, and fitness to be destroyed. Credulous, high profile dissemination came from the likes of regime official and known anti-African racist, Ali Abdelaziz al-Essawi, called out for provocations at the time of the 2000 riots [UNW]. A decade later he would resign as Libya's ambassador to India to join the rebel NTC and to tell al-Jazeera on February 22 the "people say [the mercenaries] are black Africans and they don't speak Arabic. They are doing terrible things, going to houses and killing women and children." [DSG]

Across the country and the following months, when the villains were caught, they were shown as proof – terrified or dead black men, often with passports showing an African origin. That ignores the other possibilities they usually said when given a chance. Libyan soldier, foreign worker, the various disguises would be seen through time and again. Foreign fighters were consistently identified, collectively punished for reported atrocities, and often sent “back to Africa” with a bullet to the head.

3.1.2: Punishing the Mercenaries

A report by the respected French-based groups CIRET-AVT and CF2R gave a figure of 3-4 million for those foreigners who had fled from Libya by May, 2011. These included one million Sahel, West and Central Africans, and 600,000 Sudanese. [CICF] These continued to flood out in a seaborne migrant wave, clogging the ports past capacity. Hundreds of thousands of others were left behind on the waiting list in dead-end camps, or hiding wherever else they could inside the cities, farms, and factories of Libya.

The world watched with some concern this outpouring of human misery, hoping the war would soon be won and the instability ended. Somewhat glossed over was exactly what the Africans in particular were fleeing *from*. Commencing on the first days of the protests and insurgency (they started together, contrary to popular belief) black foreigners and black-skinned Libyans alike started suffering the backlash over the mercenary reports. Unlike the attacks by Africans, the counter-measures were often verifiable.

One dead and stiff mercenary, believed to be flown in from Chad, was shown on al Jazeera on February 19. It’s been reported as Az Zintan (among other places) where this proof was scored, but they had to go into a government facility with a security gate to find it (see inset). [QV1] This “mercenary” was actually a Libyan Internal Security soldier, a national policeman for riot control, judging by the puffy blue camouflage. As far as anyone knows, Internal Security only hired Libyan citizens, even if some of them are quite black. [TM] That same public servant killed in the line of duty was seen again weeks later and drier, dumped in the desert south of the city (here given as Zawiya) [LL1].



*A “mercenary” tortured and killed
in Az Zintan, by Feb. 19 [QV1]*

The desert south of Zintan saw at least one other dumping of perceived human trash. A group of at least twelve dead black men was filmed in the blowing sand, frozen in their various pathetic final poses. This eerie echo of the pogrom busses of 2000 was branded the usual way - the men were called Nigerian mercenaries, who ran all the way out there

by no fault of the rebels, and died, aside from two the rebels allegedly saved. [LL2]

Another Afro-merc famously shown being beaten and then dead on Youtube videos has been named as Hesham Mansour or Hesham Shoshan, a Libyan-born soldier, 27 years old. His family was shown on Libyan TV responding to his callous public lynching. People danced on his body, with his pants pulled down in dishonor, and sodomized him with his fearsome mercenary gun. [HM1]. This weapon was brandished in videos, rare evidence of the Africans actually being armed. It's been identified by others as a Belgian-made FN303, a non-lethal weapon used by police for riot control. [HM2] The CIWCL cannot vouch for any of these details, but finds them worth passing on.

The "Aruba school" in Shahet, east of al Baida, hosted a number of alleged mercenaries in late February. About 325 mostly black men, by their own count, flew into L'Abraq air base on February 18. An army of about 3,000 armed locals had come to meet the 400 African mercenaries someone told them were coming. After a short battle, "the protesters in al-Bayda have been able to seize control of the military airbase in the city," an activist said on the 18th, "and have executed 50 African mercenaries and two Libyan conspirators." [BB]



Some of the Aruba School captives [LAS]

"Roughly 200" and then 156 survivors were shown to the media days later as mercenaries from abroad, sent to kill and, judging by the generic Viagra they found, to rape. [LAS] Given that about 125 of them were dead, Time's correspondent noted "the remaining men consider themselves lucky," as well as primarily "Libyans," albeit ones "with roots in Chad or Niger." There were a few non-Libyans, About six Chadians and some Sudanese teenagers

among them. But when Peter Bouckaert of Human rights Watch was allowed to inspect the mercenaries he found they "were, in fact, 156 soldiers from the south of Libya," Radio Netherlands Worldwide reported, "and not from another African country." By March 2, they reported, the remaining half of the Libyans sent to al Baida had been quietly released to go home. [LAS]

Further, these soldiers repeatedly said they agreed only to counter-protest in Tripoli, with someone else's armed insurgency having them re-routed to al Baida, apparently to help defend the army base, and were there overwhelmed. [LAS] The prisoners were Libyans, and the rebel captors had every chance to learn this in Arabic. Why they insisted these were foreign killers, up until Bouckaert publicly corrected them, remains unexplained.

The fighting forces of Misrata have become rightly infamous for their ongoing campaign of ethnic cleansing against their neighbors in Tawergha. These were primarily black Libyans descended from Tuareg slaves centuries ago. The Misratan rebels still saw

slaves, judging by their Graffiti about “purging” them. After suffering loyalist strikes based from and using fighters from Tawergha, the Misratans – with NATO air support – emptied the town and sealed it off in mid-August, expelling its population of 30,000. [LFP]

Then the Misratans pursued the Tawerghans, ones who appear on lists, to wherever they scattered. This was largely to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps around Tripoli, which were unable to guard against frequent raids during which people were taken and never re-appeared. [BJ] Fearing Misratan raids, one Tawerghan man, speaking of camp security provided by a brigade from Benghazi, “we don't know what we'll do if they go back to Ben Ghazi.” [DEM]

In Benghazi, their fate had been rubber-stamped. NTC Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril said, on the Misratan plan to wipe Tawergha off the map, “nobody has the right to interfere in this matter except the people of Misrata.” [SD2] Racism is rampant there too. A surgeon who fled Benghazi reported “they wanted to kill blacks there. I’d be killed if I stayed.” [TMF] CIRET-AVT/CF2R spoke of Benghazi’s human trafficking mafia, in 2011 just put in check by Tripoli in conjunction with Italy. In revenge, they threw their full support behind the rebellion and found other ways to squeeze money from migrants. As their May report said:

“Numerous gangs and members of the city’s criminal underworld are known to have conducted punitive expeditions against African migrant workers in Benghazi and the surrounding area. Since the start of the rebellion, several hundred migrant workers - Sudanese, Somalis, Ethiopians, and Eritreans - have been robbed and murdered by rebel militias.” [CICF]

3.1.3: Blame Games

Summary executions began early in al Baida and surrounding cities. Rebel forces executed at least 22 captured loyalist soldiers around February 22, somewhere between al Baida and Dernah (by reports). Their bodies were shown in a few videos first appearing early on February 23, bound hands-behind, blindfolded, laid face down and shot dead. They wore a mix of light and dark-skinned men, in mixed military and civilian clothes, and all had their shoes removed.

These videos were published along with news of a total 130 government soldiers executed in the east, as reported, *by their own commanding officers*, for refusing to kill protesters. [PTV] The claim apparently originates with the International Federation for Human rights (IFHR/FIDH), and its affiliate Libyan League for Human rights (LLHR), although the original report is hard to track down.

Countering that claim, another video showed at least one of those killed, and perhaps several others, being harangued and sentenced to death. Their captors look like Islamist

militants, not commanding officers. [LBS] This was a rebel video originally, obtained somehow and shown on Libyan TV (*Al Libya*) as the outside world ignored the grave implications. (The CIWCL is currently drafting a report on this incident) From this, and the unconfirmed and logically tenuous dispatch from the LLHR, it could reasonably be inferred that someone had tallied **130 soldiers killed by insurgents in some massacre or groupings of them, and put them all under the one umbrella of mythology.**

The one potent example will suffice to illustrate a pattern that emerges time and again in the cases under study; no matter the evidence involved, it's only on notable occasions (like the October Mahari Hotel massacre in Sirte of more than 50 loyalists) that no firm accusation of regime authorship is put forth for crimes that might actually be rebel ones.

3.1.4: Smite at their Necks

The repeated claims of Gaddafi-regime massacres are often directly belied by Islamist methods of execution. Anyone is capable, but enraged Islamits are more likely than a professional state security force to do things like cut people's heads or hands off. The following examples are some of the most relevant low points, and by no means the full roster of often-bizarre atrocities that have accompanied Libya's revolution.

Consider the "protester" conquest of Benghazi's chief military base on February 20. Enraged by days of civilians being killed, during attacks on the Al-Fadhil bin Omar barracks ("the Katiba"), they finally took the place, with the aid of heavy weapons and a suicide car bomber. The *Guardian*'s Chris McGreal later reported "what followed wasn't pretty. ... some of Gaddafi's soldiers were lynched. At least one was beheaded." [CMG]

The Internal Security soldier killed in Az Zintan on the 19th, mentioned above, wasn't just killed but tortured. The close-up shots reveal he suffered a left index finger broken in half, a right cheek torn open, and his nose cleanly sliced off of his face.

The city of Az Zawiya to the north was under rebel control in late February and early March, with no security force intervention. CIRET-AVT and CF2R found that, with no help from Gaddafi loyalists, building were massively looted and burned, police were killed, women were raped, and some were killed "in the manner of the Algerian GIA [Armed Islamic Group]: throats cut, eyes gauged [sic] out, arms and legs cut off, sometimes the bodies were burned." [CICF]

As mentioned, fifty other "mercenaries" from Sabha were lynched in al Baida, with 15 hanged in front of the courthouse there. This was acknowledged by eventual NTC chief Mustafa Abdel-Jalil; an unfortunate incident borne of rage and chaos. But at least one more public lynching happened in front of the former Justice minister's own courthouse in Benghazi, and it was in late March.

With NATO's help, rebels had taken Ras Lanuf, and on the night of the 28th, as seen in a video, at least four black men of unclear origins were taken back to Benghazi, paraded before the courthouse in a tiger cage on the back of a pickup truck. By the 30th, there was another video from the same place, again at night, showing a dead black man dangling upside down from a window of Free Libya's answer to the White House. Dressed only in green army trousers, he was having his head slowly hacked off by a few men with swords, while a cheering crowd of hundreds watched and filmed it. Mr. Abdel-Jalil has never publicly acknowledged this incident. [LBB]

In mid-July, just outside Qawalish, six executed Gaddafi soldiers were found dumped in a water basin. One was black, one had his pants pulled down in dishonor, one was "cleanly decapitated." It was said by "rebel sources," based on "they say so," that they'd been "killed and hidden by other Qaddafi soldiers." [CJC] [TRS] In this instance, hardly anyone believed them.

On October 20 in Sirte, about 100 people were left dead in the field following the fatal capture leader Muammar Gaddafi, his son, and his defense minister. At least ten of these were executed, including four black men across the road from the famed drainpipe. One of these, a reporter noted, "had been decapitated, his dreadlocked head lying beside his torso." [RI] No one blamed that on loyalists at all. A few days later, ten badly decomposed bodies were seen by HRW in a large water reservoir. A video shows three bodies, two apparently beheaded, one at least a black man, floating face down, with his pants down. Again, it was said Gaddafi's people did all that before the rebels controlled area, and Human rights Watch, with questionable reasoning, agreed. [LWB]

3.3.5: Blame Games with Flames

Burning has been a call sign of the Gaddafi devils from the outset. February was the first full day of rebel control in Benghazi, following the suicide bombing, the torching of buildings, and the soldier executions. Videos showed at least five badly charred bodies, said in vague reports to be found this day in "military barracks" in Benghazi, and to be "those of soldiers savagely massacred for refusing orders to fire against Libyan civilians." [O24] [IB]

The "savage" part suggests what one man specified; a former soldier at the Katiba, self-described, unnamed, and paraded before journalists. "The African mercenaries put guns to our heads and forced us to open fire on the people," he claimed. "If someone refused then the mercenaries poured petrol over their head and set them alight. I saw this with my own eyes. I had to do what they said." [RP2] He still didn't do it, he said, managing to only wound one protester, but also avoided burning. [RP2]

Perhaps coincidentally, the UNHRC was told by an eyewitness about a different incident, "the extra-judicial killing of **five Chadian nationals**," arrested on that basis, and driven

to “the military barracks in Benghazi,” where armed men “were said to have poured kerosene on their bodies and **burned them to death on 21 February.**” [UH1]

It’s not clear if these two groups of five were the same. Another video in fact shows there are at least six charred bodies, and slightly larger numbers have been reported. By far the most extreme is this claim from the Katiba’s smoking ruins, passed onto *the Guardian*:

*More than 350 people have been killed, [a local man] said, while adding that this death toll did not include the grim discovery made inside the army garrison headquarters by those who entered it following its surrender. “We found **150 corpses burning** and we believe they were the bodies of officers and soldiers who refused to follow orders to fire on the people,” he said. [F21]*

If there really were 150 soldiers burned inside the rebel-swept barracks, this would be troubling, in part because no one else has mentioned this scale of atrocity there, as if in embarrassment.

The 130 executed soldiers the FIDH apparently reported must not have included this 150. It did seemingly include the 22 that the rebels killed, as already mentioned. And according to one source, the number also “included a group of mutinous soldiers slain in the nearby city of al-Bayda, where the **burnt bodies of 48 soldiers** were found at a military barracks.” The source given is the International Federation for Human rights, IFHR/FIDH, “quoting unnamed humanitarian and academic sources.” [MCH]

Later in Sirte, it was reported that 42 victims of a massacre were found, near Muttassim Gaddafi’s home, suggesting he ordered it. Some of the corpses were shown to the media on October 12, as the rebels said they had just taken over that area, and still had resistance not far away. A survivor was able explain it all and identify the victims from video as the suspected rebel innocent civilians he was held with. [LMH]

One spot with about ten victims has been located in satellite imagery by the CIWCL. [LMH] Three of these were reportedly run over with vehicles, and were then burnt with tires. Two skeletal charred bodies were shown, one seen at left, another with its legs missing, and crushed leg bones all around. A Danish reporter was told, by a rebel fighter, that these were all Gaddafi victims, explaining “the proof is that they have burned them.” [NYH] [LBR] It is eerily similar to Yarmouk, six weeks earlier.

The other seven bodies were shown piled by a partially toppled wall, bound, face down, shoes removed. At least five of them were black men, and only one clearly light-skinned, none of them burnt. Previous rebel claims of territory held had that area under control by October 10 or even by October 4. [LMH] But clearly by the 12th the loyalist butchers were gone, and yet the same bodies were found again on October 14, now doused with black fluid and one of the victims, the black man at the front of the pile, with a freshly burned face. [LBR]

3.1.6: Ambiguous Killings in the Tripoli Theater

The rebel conquest of Tripoli was dubbed Operation Mermaid Dawn and launched August 19 with NATO air support. With Misratans sweeping in from the east and Zintanis from the west, the operation brought new opportunities for horrible things to surface. The time of conquest of each area saw the greatest of the Gaddafi regime's alleged brutality in that area; everywhere the rebels went, nebulous loyalists had just executed detainees and then fled. Most of their victims were black men, although few acknowledge this. Frequently, the killers were specified as African mercenaries.

At least thirty bodies were seen rotting in the sun around the traffic roundabout just outside Muammar Gaddafi's Bab al-Aziziya compound, starting late on August 24. Many were killed near cars that had been peppered with bullets or rammed off the road, doors flung open, blankets and clothes strewn about. [LRV] A pile of seven rotting bodies in a field was doused and partly burnt. [L7M]

On the 25th, rebel fighters brought Dan Rivers from CNN to see some of these. "The rebels say they were executed by Gadhafi's retreating forces," Rivers said, "but these bodies appear to be black Africans [...] raising questions about whether the men were executed by the rebels." [DR1] [DR2] Rivers also did another take, in which he was cut off by the minders upon voicing a race-free variation on that doubt. [DR3]

A *New York Times* piece the next day reports on more bodies in the streets from the night's fighting. Rebels were saying the usual, that still-fleeing loyalists were still flee-killing good Libyans. Then one courageous man stepped up and "said they were [Gaddafi's] fighters, slain by rebels," one of whom sternly informed the resident of Free Libya he was not authorized to speak on this matter. [SF]

Disturbingly, many victims right by the roundabout were in and around a medical tent, a specially protected space. At the traffic roundabout, activists in a tent city had long staged demonstrations in support of the Libyan government and defiance of NATO. As of August 24 at the latest, they stopped. Gaddafi loyalists, by the green cloths tied to wrists and ankles, were killed in gurneys and stretchers, on the floors of tents, just outside tents, in and around a parked ambulance. Some were bound, and some were receiving treatment for previous injuries. One victim was **charred and missing its legs**. One seems to have been stabbed in the top of the skull, perhaps with a sword. [LRV] The whole complex of tents was systematically burned down in disgust by the rebel fighters, perhaps with bodies inside.



Two victims in medical scrubs [L18]

Nearby, 18 corpses were reported along the dry riverbed separating Bab al-Aziziyah from the Ghargour neighborhood to the southwest. Many of these were bound, some with their own belts, but many others were unbound, at least when seen.

Nearly all that the CIWCL can make out are clearly black men. One bizarre story told to Human rights Watch tries to explain four of these seen dumped together, two of them in blue/green medical scrubs. A two-witness team suggests African mercenaries killed two of them (a doctor and “another guy,” but not the driver), and stole the gas from their (rebel-marked) ambulance. They then drove off in the ambulance, to dump *three* bodies at the same spot these four were seen, by the other witness’ house. The first witness confirmed the two, and said the third was the driver. No one mentions the fourth body, or the fact that all four are black. HRW implicitly considered this story confirmed and blamed fleeing loyalist mercenaries from Africain a stolen rebel ambulance. [HR2] [LDR]

Abu Salim was the green loyalist holdout neighborhood immediately south of the roundabout area. Abu Salim trauma hospital saw the worst scene of all, widely reported on August 26. Initial reports said that **75-80 or “more than 200”** mysteriously dead bodies were found rotting inside it. **The death toll was 165** by a report from two weeks later. [ATH] Who the victims were and how they died was always left vague. The overall “official story” is that ordinary locals were injured by Gaddafi snipers for protesting, and were taken to the hospital. But the staff then fled the hospital - “for fear of the snipers” – and left the critically injured patients to die. Further, patients kept on being brought in, it was said, and simply left despite no receiving staff. They too just kept dying.

Contrary to the passive explanation, CTV’s reporter Janis Mackey-Frayer saw signs of **gunshot executions of patients in their beds**, and identified one victim from his papers as a special forces soldier with the Libyan army. The rest also seemed to be loyalists, injured in the fighting, but only killed in the hospital. The presumably loyalist staff was gone. In one stretch of hallway, blood spray consistent with gunshots was visible in at least six spots. One man at least was cleanly **beheaded in his hospital bed**, his right arm frozen out in protest (see inset). Between him and others bled in that room, the entire floor was covered with a thick layer of drying blood.[LTH]



Sick ward, Abu Salim hospital – detail from a photo by Francois Mori [FM]

Of the more than 50 bodies the CIWCL can see in various sources, about two victims were clearly light-skinned, with at least a dozen clearly black. Many journalists even noted this fact. For once it wasn’t all men, but also **two women and two children**, Alex Thomson found, as reported on Channel 4 and CNN. [AT2] Andrew Simmons of Al Jazeera English agreed women at least were among the dead. [LTH]

That Gaddafi loyalists weren’t directly blamed is noteworthy. It leaves no explanation at all for the obvious massacre inside that protected medical space. Perhaps the Misrata

fighters (or Zintanis, or whoever) couldn't even believe themselves saying these 75-163-200 killings were loyalist work. A few locals, perhaps by reflex, did whisper that it was probably that. [LTH] (The CIWCL is currently drafting a report on the massacre at the hospital.)

The world gasped at news of all this carnage, and might have drawn a blank if not for what rebel fighters and “witnesses” explained for them in most cases. Sarah Whitson for Human rights Watch announced as fact that “Gaddafi government forces went on a spate of arbitrary killing as Tripoli was falling.” [HR2] They carried out these arbitrary, cruel, and **racist** killings as they fled, easier than walking and chewing gum at the same time. In turn they fled just as they were attacked, which was just as the racist, brutal, unchecked rebels entered town. Why this fails to set off more alarm bells than it does is one of the prime questions the CIWCL would like to ask all the readers of this report to consider.

3.1.7: Bad Omens Around Yarmouk

The pattern described above arced across Libya, through areas where government resistance was worn down from sanctions and bombs. It fish-hooked into Tripoli from the east and west, pointing in space and time south, towards the Yarmouk base and the smoldering find of August 26.

It was there at the Khamis base the follow-on news reports of the 28th caught a possibly relevant side-story. About twelve fighting-age black men were arrested and brought into the base through the eagle gate. AP’s Ben Hubbard reported that he saw “rebel forces punching a dozen black men before determining they were innocent migrant workers and releasing them.” [BHH]



Some of the Yarmouk “mercenaries.” Telegraph video.

The suspected mercenaries were spotted walking up the road across from the eagle gate. A Daily Telegraph video shows the arrest, the bewildered men standing amid a pile of leaves and tree branches, probably from firing above their heads. [TVM] Channel 4’s Alex Thomson was there, his cameraman seeing no punching, only a gentle pat on the head of a “Gaddafi fighter, Gaddafi fighter.” [ATC] The men were slated to visit a “special council” for mercenaries. [TVM] “The men, clearly terrified and some weeping, said: “Please don't go. Don't leave us. They will kill us,” Thompson reported. So he made part of the story refusing to leave until he saw that they were safe. [ATC]

These suspected mercenaries were given water and set free, but followed by media and rebel fighters to the farm they were squatting at. The men had been out looking for food for the community of “hundreds of Africans [...] including many women,” seen by AP

reporters Hubbard and Karin Laub. [HLF] A Reuters report explained “they have no food and the water coming out of the outside tap is salty. They live in fear.” [DLF] Photographs from the site show armed men watching the threatened blacks mill around. [AOP] The men didn’t find any food, but at least they apparently weren’t executed.

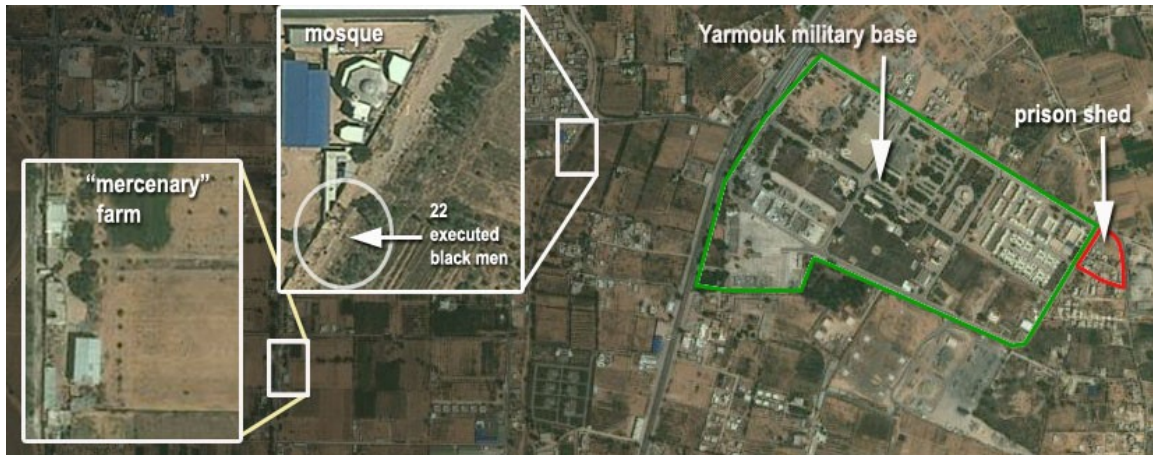
The rebels had a chance to show their compassion for people stuck in a bad situation in the country they were liberating. Instead, recognizing the base of the African mercenaries, they shut it down. As Laub updated later in the day:

*William Osas, a 32-year-old Nigerian, said many of them were once farm workers. They fled the fighting and have been living there for months, often receiving food from the black soldiers in Gadhafi's army. Now the rebels have told them they must get out. "They told us that we have two days to leave here, and **if we don't leave they'll kill us all**," he said. "They said that Gadhafi uses blacks and that we are with Gadhafi, but we don't know anything about that."* [LCT]

They were apparently only evicted on September 4, moved to a factory only to be kicked out of there, then split-up and sent to different camps. [UNO] No one is sure if their numbers have stayed the same or if any of them were routed to other places even less friendly.

The CIWCL has located what seems to be the farm as seen in photographs [GM2]. It lies less than a mile southwest of the Yarmouk base, and a bit closer to **a mosque behind which 22 executed bodies** were discovered on August 26. The graphic on the next page shows where these areas are relative to each other.

The 22 bodies were sprawled along a dry riverbed turned dirt road, running along the back wall of what seems to be a small mosque with a Minaret, by the satellite imagery and an attached photo [GM3] CNN reported on the 29th that “a resident who lives nearby told CNN that at least 22 bodies were found in a ditch near the [Yarmouk] base, but it was not clear whether those remains were connected to the killings at the warehouse.” [CNN4] David Kirkpatrick from the New York Times visited the scene on August 27 and reported back, “at least 15 other men were found rotting in a wooded gully,” at least one of them bound, and with seven others already removed. [DKN]



The dead were called Gaddafi victims, randomly kidnapped, some for their cars. Richard Spencer of the *Telegraph* went there and spoke to Nasser Aweidat, a doctor, who said his brother Mohammed had disappeared after going to help a hospital. “I found him here,” the man said. Spencer added “the family believe he was killed [by Gaddafi loyalists] for his car, perhaps as a means of escape.” [RS1]

Mr. Aweidat was likely a light-skinned man, and Spencer said the bodies he saw were only “blackened by the summer heat.” [RS1] But in fact he was seeing black African skin, as clarified by two known videos from the site. The first is described as filmed on August 26, posted later [MD1], and the other labeled 2011-8-27, encoded the 28th, posted the 29th. [MD2] While the resolution is not good enough to make out fine details, color comes through fine. The CIWCL can count fifteen bodies, and can identify none as light-skinned. Some are a bit vague, but a majority are clearly black people from Chad, Nigeria, Libya, or wherever.

They wear civilian clothes, some of it perhaps ill-fitting (even considering the bloating). Some are partly or perhaps fully stripped, and some have their pants down. They were executed on-site, judging by the dark pools around many of their heads. All seem to be about fighting age except perhaps one (sadly, the seemingly naked one) that looks perhaps too small to be full-grown, and another that seems to have a graying stubble beard. Some seem to have been wounded in battle prior to capture, but they were all apparently killed here.

There are clues these bodies were later torched. Two photos by Ron Haviv/VII mid-day August 28 of the execution site shows “charred ground” where the bodies had been. [RH1] [RH2] A report from Al Manaar confirmed that (translated from Arabic) “when we visited the place referred to by locals behind a mosque there, we saw the burn marks on the soft ground where the bodies were set on fire.” [AM] The grass and twigs beneath are blackened, but there was clearly no burning of remotely the intensity seen at the shed. It’s been said that only the spots the bodies had been in were burnt, to ease the smell after they had gone. The body removal was shown in photographs by Heathcliff O’Malley, Rex Features, late afternoon Aug. 27, doesn’t show any signs of burning, as several corpses lay in body bags already and more are being filled. Only one body, from near the

back of the line, is clearly shown and it looks fully un-burnt. [RO1]

Even if the hypothetical Rebel murderers had burnt their victims, it was clearly after two video were taken showing how similar these were to all the “mercenaries” killed Free Libya during its six months of NATO-assisted expansion. Once again, the killing was blamed on shadow loyalists, African mercenaries with a thirst for the blood of innocent people who would, after death, become black themselves, with decay and/or with fire.

3.2: Un-Burnt Victim Clues

3.2.1: No News on Base Defenders

The Yarmouk base is frequently described as “abandoned” by the time rebels got there. [FPS] [AL] It is possible the place was evacuated under bombardment prior to their arrival, with the local loyalist forces perhaps holed up in buildings nearby or scattering far and wide. Majid al-Faytouri (alt. Fitouri), a rebel fighter, made no mention of seeing or fighting anyone when he told an AFP reporter the soldiers “ran away like rats and then we came along and found these bodies.” [FPS] There have been no public reports or images of soldiers captured or killed at the base. As shown in section 3.3, quite a few soldiers alleged to be there have been captured, but their arrests took place in other areas after fleeing, it’s said.

Quite a few other sources say at least some soldiers didn’t flee but died defending the place. Fighter Nurdin Yussef Misrata, 36, described a seven-hour battle on Saturday, the 27th. “Nato struck and then our special forces attacked.” [N24] Ali Zeidi, commander of a rebel unit from Misrata, told AFP “Eleven rebels died yesterday,” but there were unspecified “higher casualties on the other side.” [N24] Clemens Höges also heard that “Gadhafi's troops put up such a bitter fight that many rebels suspected that the dictator himself was holed up in the barracks.” [DS] Vague reports, mostly via Twitter, mention battles in the area from late on the 24th, but not prior, intensifying on the 26th. [LU] A Euronews videos of mid-day the 26th show rebel forces entering what’s said to be the Yarmouk base, then pulling back, claiming to be in heavy battle, [EY] and a dispatch for Al Jazeera had the rebels still struggling for control at nearly 11pm (see p.126). As explored in sub-section 3.4.1, this alleged ongoing conflict could well have been staged to illustrate a lack of Rebel access.

Of more specific use for this study, the UNHRC’s investigators visited the massacre shed and had an expert examine the site. The report noted, “holes in the door and roof which were consistent with shrapnel burst from the hand grenades,” and as many others have, they noted the myriad bullet holes in the shed-prison’s metal siding. These could be explained by the guards firing into the shed from outside, and in all directions from just inside the opened doors, both of which are described. The Swiss-cheese effect could also be explained by rebels faking a crime scene with their own guns and grenades, before or after arranging the evidence there.

And one feature the UNHRC and no one else publicly noted was that “There were also holes **in the metal doors** of the warehouse **consistent with bullets exiting the warehouse from the inside.**” [UH p.70] The soldiers fired from the inside, but mostly at the prisoners and thus the walls behind them. This refers to the doors. It’s unlikely that soldiers would come in the doors, close the doors, turned around with the prisoners behind them, and shot the doors. A more likely scenario is that at least some of the *actual* massacre victims cornered and killed there around the 23rd **were themselves armed**, and

thus clearly not anything like the alleged civilian escapees.

3.2.2: Tallying the Un-Burnt Victims Near the Shed (32?)

Besides the approximately 45-50 bodies widely photographed inside the trashed warehouse, there were quite a number of corpses left un-burnt in the immediate area. It's been difficult to get a precise reading from available information, but there are at least eleven victims, all apparently fighting-age males, seen in photo or video next to the shed, inside the walled compound, or just outside of it. These too differ greatly from the so-called escapees, in ways that will emerge below, and fall neatly into four categories.



Three corpses were removed early, for unclear reasons, and so were seen only briefly. They were photographed together on a flatbed truck by Seamus Murphy/VII images mid-morning on the 27th. [SM5] Prior to that they were shown in situ in an amateur video from dusk on the 26th. One (#3) seems to have died running across the yard, and another (#2) apparently died crawling near the shed's door. The third (#1) was seen in his underclothes, laid face-up in a pool of blood, inside a prisoner transport truck parked outside. [BV] These bodies, especially 1 and 2, seem to be killed perhaps later than the rest, showing no discoloration, bloating, or signs of maggots, and the blood on their clothes is still faintly red. They've likely been dead no more than two days by the morning of the 27th. The CIWCL does not have a clear reading on who these two might have been. They could be loyalist fighters encountered and killed there, captive ones brought and executed there. They might be rebel fighters or pro-rebel locals killed by a sniper, or by the hypothetical armed soldiers holed up inside the shed.

Seven of the eleven bodies were present during the media storm of August 27/28. **The three most widely seen were laid on mattresses**, semi-covered, right between the shed

and the guardhouse. One (victim #5) had his feet bound with a long stretch of green rope but all else covered by a green blanket. One (#3) has wrists that look like they were once bound but cut free for the cameras. Another (#4) was covered with a colorful floral blanket, well-hidden in most views but surrounded in an enormous pool of blood.

There were **three blood-soaked peripheral victims**. #7 was left on his side behind a toppled wall on the compound's west side. [HR] #8 was found on the stairs just outside the wall at the compound's southwest corner, amid pools of blood trickling down the steps.. [CBC] #9: Another body that had bled much on a dirt floor was shown, already covered heavily in lime powder, by Australian ABC News Aug. 29 in a vacant house just outside the south wall. [ABC1]

Two other corpses (#10, #11) were brought in from elsewhere by bulldozer/front-loader and dumped next to each other in the middle of the prison yard on the afternoon of the 28th. [CBC] One of these, #11, was apparently seen being scooped up from a copse of trees in the small courtyard just south of the compound wall [HV] Body #10 was brought in with a bulldozer seen driving towards the gate along the shed compound's southeast wall. [YK2] Once dumped in the yard, it's briefly visible that this corpse has a missing face, most likely from wild/feral animal predation. A photo by Daniel Berehulak shows most clearly the bare white bone of a skeleton's face as the bulldozer is backing up [DB7], and other views confirm an ear and the meat of his lower left leg are also missing. [DB7] All this is attributable to the effects of neglect, of both civilian pets in war time and of war dead – not to rebel cruelty. *Those* clues are discussed below.

Alex Loyd noted seven of the more visible victims that “lay around the yard, while three other corpses lay in nearby alleys,” perhaps including #10 and #11 [AL] Saad Basir reported on the 28th, well after body #1 had been removed, that some of the “prisoner transport vehicles ... contained bodies,” either then or at a previous time. [WB] The CIWCL has seen no images or clear reports of bodies in these trucks aside from the one. ABC (Australia) reported on August 30 that “in the days since” the grisly discovery, “another 20 bodies have been found outside the warehouse,” apparently including all those covered plus more, “and **another 12 across the road.**” [ABC2]

The United Nations Human rights Commission, in an advance report of March 2, 2012, noted failed to mention the 12 but confirmed that “20 bodies lay outside on the ground with gunshot wounds.” As shown above, some had other injuries. The report adds that these corpses “were subsequently collected in body bags and **reburied at Sidi Hamed in Gargarish.**” [UH, p.70] A mysterious grave of about 200 bodies was found there, along the coast four miles from Tripoli, in early October. [AE] It's not clear if any of these were the bodies discovered with horror once already, at Yarmouk.

Mary Fitzgerald reported in the Irish Times, September 6, on a mutilated corpse found across the road “in a government-owned concrete factory.” The stench alerted locals to this discovery, apparently, beyond the earlier 12 found there. Police officer Salah

Smohem told Fitzgerald “the smell suggests there must be others.” [IT] There were others, presumably in that location, and perhaps elsewhere nearby. On September 8, Moises Saman for the New York Times photographed “rebel fighters exhum[ing] a body from a grave in the Yarmouk neighborhood of Tripoli containing four dead men,” as usually killed by fleeing loyalists. [MS] The exact location hasn’t been pinned down, the one body being removed is invisible inside a blue-green plastic sheet, and the full number of dead in that area remains unsettled.

Just dealing with the bodies reported or visually confirmed in the area, there are about 45-50 in the shed, 32 un-burnt around and across the road, the later-found body, the four dug up on the 6th, and the 22 at the Yarmouk mosque dump nearby. $45/50+32+5+22 = 104/109$, a death toll curiously close to the number of people reportedly killed – around 106. A.M. Bin Halim’s 180 dead, Amr-Dau Algala’s sixty, all the 100-150 reports, named brothers and friends and sons, all the talk of the remaining being in mass graves... In the end it *could* be that the real number was simply the total of the mysterious dozens in the shed plus these ambiguous others executed and left more readable.

3.2.3: Color and Loyalty Clues

Skin pigmentation is apparently difficult to discern for the high-caliber journalists who covered this massacre. Most fail to specify a race or color for the victims at all, and some who do note that many of these bodies are black-skinned also suggest they had *changed color* after they were killed. Journalist Saad Basir said he saw in the compound victims described above “blackened corpses ... left to decompose.” [WB] Richard Spencer called the nearby victims behind the mosque (see 3.1.7) “blackened by the summer heat.” [RS1]

The CIWCL feels that these victims – behind the army base and behind the mosque - are instead African men. The color comes from long ago ancestors as opposed to invading microbes. Clemens Hogen for Der Spiegel English agreed with only a faint nod to decay: “the four dead men outside the warehouse whose corpses were not burned appear to have been powerfully built, dark-skinned men, as far as can be judged after days in the Libyan heat.” [CH] It’s not just the even brown skin color but also a few visible African facial features (#6, 7, 8) and, in the case of #4, hair, that give them away. Some of the clearer views that have helped in this regard are compiled above, right.



Clockwise from upper left: victim #7 [VAF] #8 [TH] #6 [VAF] #10 [CBC] #4 [TV1]



The feet of victim #5, army fatigues, officer's cap. Detail from a photo by Louafi Larbi.

The bound feet of victim #5 are quite light in skin tone, but the other two mattress victims are black men, and all three have **military uniforms** nearby or even laid over them. There are little green flags all over the area, a possible larger Jamahiriya flag draped on victim #6, the green rope, the uniforms, and an officer's cap is also seen (best view at left). That last looks almost like something Khamis Gaddafi might wear when issuing the kill order right there, as "witness" El-Hitri swore he saw happen.

Apparently taking these same cues, Martin Fricker noted for the UK Daily Mirror "the first thing we saw," presumably when walking up to the shed from the gate area, "was the corpse of a Gaddafi loyalist, his decomposing remains partially covered by a blanket. Nearby there were two more bodies, one with his hands and feet bound." [MF]

Besides these signs of loyalty, the mattress victims were apparently sleeping here, bedded down within the Khamis base area but outside the alleged prison shed. In the accepted narrative, they'd most likely be guards, perhaps executed for refusing to kill, or just dozing too long. In the alternate scenario, these would be soldiers sleeping outside the normal barracks to avoid the NATO bombing carried out against the base. Either way, they were apparently caught by surprise and killed while sleeping. Besides the mattresses and blankets, their uniforms are of course off, and their shoes are removed and lined up nearby. #6 wears some kind of baggy clothing, perhaps a shalwar kameez or some kind of pajamas. #5 wears sweat pants, it seems. The fleeting glimpse of #4 uncovered shows, besides the leg wound, that he's wearing only black underwear briefs. [TV1]

Libération's writer Jean-Louis Le Touzet asked Dr. Salem Rajab about the mattress victims. He responded "these are three soldiers who refused to participate in the killing" and, mimicking the scene as if he had seen it, "the mercenaries killed them on the spot." [JT] Höges mused "it is possible that they were soldiers who wanted to desert or did not want to be involved in the massacre." In fact, local witness Ali Boukhatwa "confirmed this version of events," he said, "and also said that the soldiers had been tortured." [CH]

Contrasting that, a Louafi Larbi photo caption showing the same victims says "a rebel fighter walks near *the bodies of fellow rebels*... The bodies were recognised as that belonging to rebel fighters by a man who was a former soldier at the camp." [LLC] This soldier who contradicts the locals is not named. Why the darker-skinned rebel fighters would be killed and left like this by their compatriots for days is not explained.

Loyalist, rebel, fighter, civilian - the most salient feature is the prominent Black African features, striking an unsettling chord appearing again in the wake of a rebel advance. All

in all, at least five and likely six of the eleven were black-skinned. These are the three peripheral victims (#7, 8, 9), the last one the least clear, judging only by fingers and toes in a dimly lit room. Two of the mattress corpses (#4, 6), and one of those dumped in the yard later (#10) are clearly Black. This is in fact lighter than average for a rebel atrocity, but not by much, and it came at the heat of battle, with less leisure to let racism play out, and more reasons to kill whoever crosses one's path wrong, whatever their color.

One of the Nigerians squatting at the nearby farm said they had previously relied in part on "food from the black soldiers in Gadhafi's army." [LCT] They were out looking for food on the 28th, perhaps having lost this previous source. The black soldiers, along with the others, had fled the area, either with or without their bodies. The 22 mosque victims (see 3.1.7) – all those visible clearly black - could be drawn from the alleged "mercenaries" at the farm, from the soldiers who'd been helping them out, or others from around.

As the overall death toll suggests, it might be that these 22 bodies were averaged in to the total 106 or so, greatly upping the verifiable African blood content of this massacre. But even at half-black among those 11 seen right around the shed, the problem is raised. The gene pool of those escapees and/or mutineers who died just after defying the killers is markedly different from the pool of those who kept on running long enough to tell the media all about what really happened. These more fortunate are overwhelmingly light-skinned Arab and none Black. It was allegedly fate, not the fiat of either side's possible racism, that determined who was picked off, but random fate is not usually this racist.

Victim #1 looks possibly of Black African descent, if light-skinned, from the tight-waved hair, but his facial features are gone, with **his neck and face charred** (see below). What remains is his build and clothing clues. Unlike the other exterior victims, this man's body is not that of a powerful fighter. Bloating might play a role, but the thickness of his arms show he really was slightly overweight when killed, suggesting perhaps an older man with his middle-aged cushioning. Further, he's been stripped to underclothes - either because he too was caught sleeping, or because his clothes were less random than the civilian ones some others wore. Both of these suggest, however faintly, that this victim may have been a military officer, perhaps the wearer of the cap. Here in the truck he might have been stripped of his uniform and its clues prior to his killing and the burning away of the clues built into his face.

3.2.4: Cruelty Clues

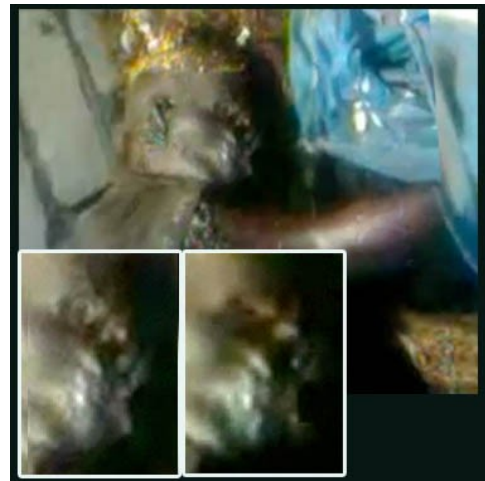
As with the cases in sub-section 3.1.4 and elsewhere, the Yarmouk base massacre victims show signs of barbarity and intense cruelty in their killings, consistent with Islamist terrorists. The concrete factory victim, not shown in any photos or videos, stands out. As the Irish Times reported:

A severed hand was found first, followed by the body. The corpse, which had swollen

*in the heat and was covered in maggots, had been wrapped in a blanket and buried in a pile of sand and rubble. **Its fingers and legs showed signs of mutilation.** A doctor at the scene named Ahmed Suweidy said the corpse also appeared to have been partly burnt.* [IT]

The light-skinned mattress victim's green rope suggests he may have been tied upside down and likely treated to some torture in that pose. #6 might have had his left eye gouged out and head pierced at the missing left eye, with some kind of implement as opposed to a bullet. On two different passes with close-ups, the video from Aljwahr Free Media (AFM) shows the victim's entire face looks sort of caved-in, despite being eerily intact and calm. [VAF 4:25, 7:02] Victim #4 has a bullet hole in the top of his head, and in one revealing view, a nasty 4-inch circular wound on his right leg, at the tender spot behind the knee (see graphic on p. 111). [TV1] This could be a battle injury gone bad with decay or, quite possibly, a bit of torture by those who killed him, although it's not evident he was bound at any point.

Victim #7 by the toppled wall has unclear facial issues, bloody legs, and a wound or possibly a nasty burn on his right shoulder. AFM's video gets the closest view of his discolored and sad-looking face and its mysteries, seen from the right side. At right is a composite image of an enhanced and rotated still and two enhanced frames to help establish what's an artifact and what's actually there. This face is difficult to read. His visible ear seems strangely folded, and his mouth and cheeks seem puffed-up with decay. The strange part is what seem to be **two cavities in his upper face**, right side, about where the eye and nose should be. [VAF] These could be some sort of illusion or a sign of some nasty torture.



AFP's reporter Dominique Soguel noted the three mattress victims lying outside the shed, "as a fourth **eyeless corpse** rapidly decomposed in the heat." [FPS] It's possible she was referring to this body that does seem bloated and perhaps longer-dead than some of the other victims.



Victim #8, Daniel Berehulak photo, detail [DB8]

The victim seen on the stairs, #8, had bled massively from upper and lower body wounds, and also seems to have something wrong with his eyes and head. This may also be the body without eyes that Soguel referred to, depending where she had roamed in the yard. It's best shown in a photograph by Daniel Berehulak/Getty Images Europe (cropped and enhanced at left) [DB8]. This black man's face has a frozen grimace of pain, and his eyes look both

squeezed in agony as well as disrupted and extra puffed-up. [DB8] The blood on the wall could be from his eye sockets or, really, anywhere. The image enhancement also suggests a large, round hole in the left temple. That it's an illusion of shadows is possible, but the same illusion appears in a photo by Tyler Hicks. [TH]

Mr. Sabri Tabbal, self-described onetime shed prisoner, confirmed the cruelty in the FGM documentary. Speaking of the victims, he said "some of them had their legs crushed, their eyes gouged out, behavior that was ..." something he couldn't even put into words. [FGM 5:40] "Islamist" might have been a good one. The "legs crushed" most likely belonged, among those the CIWCL knows of, to the unseen concrete yard victim described above, or possibly to victim #7 whose legs were bloodied but seem the right shape.

The vacant house body #9, beneath the lime, seems to have been pinned down by the arms and legs, and had **his face completely smashed in** between the chin and the eyes. [LDO] From the side-view shown, he almost looks frozen in a wide-mouthed scream, but it's just too wide. There are no cheeks or nose visible.

Of the three early removals, victim #1 inside the police truck stands out in a few ways. The August 26 video and Seamus Murphy photos both suggest his arms were badly tortured - bruised, possibly misshapen, with the right forearm at least sliced or finely burnt. From the large upper-body pool of blood, the red and black visible around his neck and upper chest, he seems to have **had his jugular vein sliced open**. This is an execution method more consistent with undisciplined Islamists than with a national military force, even one losing its grip on power.



Exterior victim #1 late on the 26th. [BV]

The latter had, allegedly, burned their victims to hide clues, and the same was done here. The same victim, seen more clearly in the morning, has a charred face and neck, details melted away behind darkened crust, and shoulders that were just reddened and blistered. All this is consistent with being "necklaced" with a burning tire. His face, with its foamy, melted eyeballs, is plainly visible and unreadable. But as the victim's head rolls back during off-loading to the flatbed, the two-inch slice in his lower throat is still visible. [SM5]

The video isn't clear enough to be certain, but as shown above, it suggests the victim's face and shoulders had normal color and texture at 8:00 the previous night – that is, **he wasn't yet burned**. If that happened between the video and the photo, as the CIWCL suspects, it means the rebels were the ones who tried to hide this sign of a crime that would presumably, then, be their own.

Considering again the 22 Mosque victims from sub-section 3.1.7, they were close to the shed victims, on the same side of Free Libya's color line, and shared the signs of savage treatment. The earlier video reveals more details than the later one, although in poor resolution [MD1]. It shows the body at the front of the array, dressed in white, has a deep cut into his left wrist [2:36]. It looks like an apparent attempt to slice off his hand, recalling the severed hand at the concrete factory. Other victims display horrors like a badly mutilated leg [0:20], a missing leg [2:03], a burnt arm on a prisoner bound behind the back, [2:03] a hole in the chest with white (bone?) visible inside [1:11], several victims with pants pulled down or stripped, and a mysteriously messed up head [1:57]. Some of this seems to be battle damage, with some signs of basic medical treatment prior to capture and execution. Some of it is probably torture.

Heathcliff O'Malley's photographs of late afternoon Aug. 27, shows the process of body removal as it's well progressed. Most bodies are bagged and invisible, but none yet removed. They apparently started at the end with the wrist-cut man and worked south. Here near the end of the line we can see one apparent beheading yet to be zipped in white. This body has what looks like a faceless half-head or an enormous chin and upper lip but is likely a giant, swollen neck stump. The soil around that end of his body suggests massive blood flow. [RO1] This victim but less details can be seen in one of the amateur video, in the same light pin-stripe shirt, hands bound behind his back, dark short pants with brown legs. His body had been laid on its back on a slope, neck end down, perhaps helping to explain the swelling. [MD1 1:25] The body remained in the same position until the O'Malley photo.

Some bad people were in the Yarmouk area a few days before these results were hauled away. They seem to be about the same type of nasty as the ones that struck in so many other places across Libya over the preceding months, leaving their signs just about as one side lost its grip on power in that area, and the other side took it from them by force.

3.2.5 - Claimed As Escapees

In at least some retellings, all the corpses immediately around the shed are supposed to be escaped prisoners. For example, Abdullati Musbah Bin-Halim described fully 30 prisoners making it out the hole in the wall with him, and suggests few if any went over the wall safely. They were massacred in the yard, he recounted. 18 survived, and therefore about 12 - the number of these exterior victims - were shot down, finally dying either in or just outside the yard.

But others acknowledge some of these might have been Gaddafi soldiers, that body #5 with the bound feet surely didn't run away like that, and in general no one says they were all escapees. But many are keen to claim some specific corpse or another as a fellow escapee, and these are most commonly the action-implying peripheral victims #7, 8, and 9. Curiously, all three are clearly black men, with again no known survivors any blacker than M. Bashir / B. Al-Sadeq / Germani.

That same witness, speaking to PHR as “Omar,” described how “another detainee attempted to escape by climbing through a hole in the warehouse wall, but guards immediately shot and killed him.” The rest of the prisoners were beaten in punishment, and later a guard told Omar, whispering through the same hole, how “the guards had left the man who had tried to escape to rot in the sun.” The hole in question is visible in HRW's photo of victim #7, not far from where this body was left rotting in the sun.

#8 is the most emphatically branded as a prisoner. The caption under [Berehulak's photo](#) explains “the man is believed to be a detainee that had tried to escape, only to be shot by pro-Gaddafi loyalists.” The CBC's Susan Ormiston related “it appears a man ran from the building over to this white truck, was shot several times as he tried to scale this wall, and on the other side, he didn't make it.” Höges heard from witness Rafaii “One (escapee) got over the wall and into the neighboring property, where he was shot.” None of this shooting in the back as he climbed a wall explains victim #8's apparent gouged-out eyes.

Body #9 in the vacant house was referred to by The Christian Science Monitor: “in an adjacent house lay another body, which **likely belonged to an escaped prisoner** who had hidden there and died from his wounds.” Again, these wounds seem to include a face smashed completely into his brain. From the above, and from the indoors locale, this is possibly the body that escapee Abdulrahim Ibrahim Bashir was trying to explain to Human rights Watch. [He told them](#) back on the 27th that “he escaped his detention in the warehouse unharmed together with Abdulsalam and Hussain, last name unknown, who were brothers from Zlitan.” This could refer to Abdulsalam Al-Ashour, although he mentions no brother. The brothers were both wounded in the escape. Bashir's own account said:

*After I escaped on August 23, **I hid in a house** outside the compound for three days, and saw that the guards were still there. [...] Two other detainees were wounded with me. [The rebels] took Abdulsalam from Zlitan to the hospital [after they arrived three days later], but **his brother Hussain died in my arms in the house. I left his body inside the house...***

Leaving Hussein behind is a strange decision no one amongst the brother Abdulsalam or the rescuers did anything to dissuade Mr. Bashir from. A fellow heroic escapee, left to rot in an empty house, just like victim.#9 was. But this man died in no one's arms, again appearing to have his own pinned down as his face was battered in.

3.3: Charred Victim Clues

3.3.1: Lost Identities

There can be few good reasons to douse a shed full of dead people with fuel and burn their bodies to cinders. The rebels and their activists are quite certain it was done to hide clues of the dead, and the CIWCL tends to agree. Somebody hoped these ones had been charred blank, and after the treatment, their identities *are* far less obvious than those of the largely Black prisoners outside.

The CIWCL has considered different possible explanations for the charred bodies, including hygienic burning by loyalist soldiers of their own casualties. However, burning the dead is proscribed by Islam, which both sides ostensibly adhered to. [YA] Burial in the dirt within 24 hours is the respectful standard, and most people, even in time of war, would try follow that – at least when dealing with their own.

In the end it seems most likely that the burning was done by one side against the other, and done to erase the victims' identities. Whoever it was that made the decision, it casts doubt on the perpetrators' religious credentials, but it would have been intended, obviously, to blame on the other side.

If this was a rebel massacre as CIWCL suspects, it might seem counter-intuitive to suspect the party more known for including hardcore Islamists. However, the world is full of Islamo-nihilists who adopt the harsh parts of the religion for their own terrorist purposes and deny the parts about mercy and decency. It could well be that some of those rolled through here and left their mark on the flesh they then destroyed with fire.

In the accepted narrative where the Gaddafi loyalists were covering things up, little was concealed. The witnesses popped up in the dozens within a few days, telling the whole world the prisoner details the fire was supposed to erase. But at this point in our investigation the reliability of the witnesses is questioned and we must wonder if the identities they ascribe are the same as the ones physically removed. Ignoring the noise from the alleged witnesses, what remains inside that shed is an array of carbonized bodies. The lack of clues is relative, not absolute, and to the end of re-discovering other possible identities, the CIWCL conveys the following observations, and then some recommendations for parties more qualified.

3.3.2: Body Count and Arrangement

The number of bodies in that room so many journalists passed through is important, but somewhat unsettled. "Around 50," has been offered, along with 53, 55, and even 57, with some specifying they personally reached the tally by counting bodies, skulls, or spines. It has been difficult for the CIWCL to achieve a clear count even with all photographs and video available, but 38 bodies (using the term loosely in some cases) can be consistently identified and given a number, with some few more surely missed in unclear corners. A

fair estimate is somewhere between 40 and 50, a range also offered by some journalists who say they counted.

The 13x29-foot side chamber, a little-seen separate room to the east (right) of this space, has only one charred body clearly present in available imagery, and at least one other apparently burned there with it, but since removed. The present body, lying face-up, is only seen in two videos, neither one getting much detail. [VRT] [VAF] Long furrows in the dirt seem to mark where the victim's shattered left arm dangled as he was dragged in feet-first.

The arrangement of the corpses in the shed is not random, but ordered in a way suggesting they, like the side-chamber victim, were placed there after death. Those most visible piled in front of the doors have their heads overwhelmingly oriented roughly north-south – pointing towards or away from the doors - apparently dragged into place by either the arms or the legs. Body #14 in particular has its arms frozen elbows-up, apparently after being dragged into place by the elbows.

After going over dozens of photographs and videos, the CIWCL prepared a graphic to scale (29x39 feet, 9x12 meters), with body locations and positions indicated for the 38 identified bodies. The positions and body details are a bit arbitrary.



Lettered areas represent partial remains, or unclear areas that might contain additional corpses. Notably area “b” has at least two further bodies in it, amongst other burned debris that remained after the bodies were removed late on the 28th. Area “d” is

apparently free of extra bodies, but just unclear enough to label as an area.

Some bodies were removed early. One of them, the CIWCL cannot say which, was placed in a shipping crate late on the 27th and left it there for about a day, apparently a charred body with parts falling off, wrapped together in a sunflower motif blanket. [JT] Body #11 was present for Sky News' footage early on the 27th, and gone for all later news reports and photos. Possibly another body in about the same spot, but with its head facing towards the door, is seen briefly in the dim video of 8pm on the 26th. [BV] It's either body #11, flipped around by morning and then removed, or a second body cleared from that spot, opening a handy path for the media.

Observations based on the victims falling where they were killed are thus invalid. Saad Basir wrote "most [bodies were] atop one another immediately in front of the only exit; it appeared that prisoners died trying to escape once the killing started." [WB] Rather, it looks a bit like they were piled upon each other, to some extent, just inside the door. Anthony Loyd observed imaginatively that some of the victims "appeared to have been clawing at the walls to escape." [AL] The late Marie Colvin wrote for the Sunday Times how "the charred bodies lay across the warehouse floor and were piled against the wall as if still trying to escape. A burnt arm reached out, seeming to reach for safety." [JL] That arm is discussed a bit below.

This arrangement doesn't in itself go against the accepted (rebel) narrative. One of the more credible witnesses (with an account that's *either* true *or* better crafted than most) is the PHR witness, former soldier "Laskhar" (see 2.3.2). He said they dragged bodies out to bury in a mass grave, had the excavator break down, couldn't find a replacement and then dragged them back in, some of them anyway, and burned them. Why the dozen bodies around the compound were not included is unclear. Perhaps these black soldiers killed by the mercenaries for refusing to kill the prisoners were seen as unfitting for a fire, and better left for the maggots to chew on.

3.3.3: General Injury Clues and Possibilities

The prominent splayed ribs are not apparently the clues of any chest-bursting weapon or of these people's deaths at all, but rather a passive effect of the fire; the bodies all tend to curl backwards, apparently as their stronger back muscles contracted. Those laid face down wound up with heads upright, legs aloft and rigid, like a gruesome yoga posture. Those laid face up have their heads rolling back, chests jutting out, and the ribs spreading out like a Venus Fly Trap plant.

What stands out as a likely clue of how these people died is the abundance of missing limbs. Many hands and even forearms are missing, and **nearly all of their feet are gone**, with quite a few legs missing below the knee and in some cases from the thigh. This is possibly consistent with the attack described by the alleged escapees. The witness accounts do frequently feature shooting in the legs, up to "his leg was missing," but little

mention of aiming for feet as seems the case here. While some claim to have been shot in the legs themselves, none of the escapees lost a single toe that's been mentioned, while quite a few of those in the shed lost almost everything below the knees.

Another explanation for that is Gaddafi loyalist soldiers, local "mercenaries," or other such persons caught trying to run away and having their feet shot out from under them. Then they could easily be arrested by one set of fighters and perhaps processed by another, executed and piled somewhere pending a good Gaddafi-blaming solution.

The missing hands are a little more mysterious. It's possible some body parts - but no skulls that can be seen - were stolen by twisted individuals as war souvenirs.

Many other injuries we see - broken arms and ribs, badly fractured skulls, and so on - might be from the repeated burnings, where bones cool and re-heat, and where skulls can crack as the brains inside boil. Some of it could evidence severe torture, conceivably, and other "injuries" could be from careless traipsing over the skeletons by rebels, locals, and the media.

Some of that bone damage could be from explosives dropped by NATO or fired by the rebels, causing too many deaths for the remaining survivors to deal with; some of the bodies might have been simply found dead and tossed in here as raw material for the myth. Some of the subjects evidence something like up-close RPG attack. Bodies 10, 12, and possibly 23 stop at the mid-spine, the whole upper body removed.

Some of the victims bear signs of execution-style bullets to the head: The CIWCL has only been able to make out two clear cases, but there are probably others, perhaps many. #14 was shot in the left side of the head [SN2], and #15, in the top of the skull. [GPF] While the accepted narrative has a majority killed by the grenades and mass shooting, there were later executions of the wounded sworn to by "Laskhar." But this could also be consistent with a wider war-time pattern of executions carried out on captives when and where they were taken - in the case on these two, after having their feet blown away. Body #14 is missing its legs from shins down, and was dragged in by the arms, while #15 is missing most of its arms and half the legs, dragged in by the legs. These both tend to support the executed runners theory.

#34 along back wall is unique. Visible in some photographs are the signs of massive blood and brain loss from his skull, after the top popped off, and half the flesh of his torso was apparently blown up and slapped against the wall, possibly by a grenade laid on his belly or jammed into a wound in it. Both of these desecrations appear to have happened while the body was already lying on the ground, presumably dead. This might have been one of the first corpses placed, which the rebels decided to "kill" with a grenade, but it looked so awful they didn't repeat the trick. Even burnt - a bit less than average - it's a terror to behold.



Charred body #1. Top, Euronews [VEN], bottom, Aljwahr Free Media [VAF]

As noted, none of those left around the shed site bore the Islamist hallmark of beheading. And while none of the charred victims is clearly missing only the head, body #1 in the northwest corner might be. Less burnt than usual (and a good candidate for DNA extraction), body #1 is fairly intact, still sporting both feet, and was also one of the first placed, possibly the very first. The graphic at left shows video stills

of it. [VEN] [VAF, 10:48] There does seem to be a skull in there, but not oriented properly to be attached. We see what looks like the top and back of it, left ear to the wall, rather than the face or side like we should. Marie Colvin described bodies “piled against the wall,” specifying “a burnt arm” that “reached out, seeming to reach for safety.” [JL] Rather, this arm might have been reaching for the eyes of his rebel decapitator. The posture of protest, left arm out, is reminiscent of the beheading victim at Abu Salim Trauma Hospital (see sub-section 3.1.6).

3.3.4: Smoke Clues

These bodies are not just torched, but carbonized and, in most cases, reduced to little more than skeleton and ash. A lot of moisture had to be boiled out of each one to reach this stage. That suggests a rather long time burning, an amazingly hot fire, or repeated sessions. If there were multiple burnings, it’s not at all certain all they all happened inside the shed, although certainly the last one(s) did. Tires were apparently used here, as alleged; at least three wheel rims are placed among the bodies, mostly the extra-burnt ones nearest the doors. Some close-up views show the remains of tires, oxidized wire mesh. This would let fire burn longer, but there is perhaps less smoke residue than there should be for a prolonged smolder from scratch. It’s possible they were hit more efficiently with a flamethrower, perhaps with repeated re-dousings with fuel as well. This could cause a quick, intense burn, explaining the relative lack of smoke residue.

In fact, some of these repeated burnings seem to have been started after the acknowledged onset of “freedom fighter” control there. The smaller side-chamber was still flaming openly around 8:00pm on the 26th, as rebel affiliated people- locals or unarmed fighters, mill about in well-established control. The main chamber is not flaming, and with no added lighting and the sun just set, it’s too dark to tell how much smoke is still rising. [BV] A video study made by a CIWCL member and posted on Youtube shows in detail the smoke situation after that. Whips of smoke from the bodies in front of the door, and robust plumes from the bodies-and-rubbish pile in the southwest corner, are seen around mid-morning of the 27th. This seems to die down over the afternoon. France 24 shows the corner for some time, not at the best resolution, but

smoke should appear and it doesn't. That was around 5:00 PM. Yet on the following morning, the same corner was billowing again, filling the shed with fresh smoke for dramatic effect in a BBC video. [RSD]

This raises the disturbing possibility – or probability – that someone among the rebels was enhancing and prolonging the burn, perhaps just for photogenic effect. In the late afternoon, CNN filmed open flames in that same corner after body removal. [RSD] The CIWCL cannot say whether this is a simple flare-up of the spot that was smoldering steadily since the last time it was last lit, or whether they had decided whatever was in that corner needed to be burned yet more.

3.3.5: Recommendations

DNA testing may be (or may have been) an option, for some of the less charred bodies or areas of those bodies. Those along the west wall, and in fact around the perimeter, were less charred than those near the doors, with much flesh still intact and little bone visible from the neck down, except where the legs end. Others have undersides or other areas with flesh that was only half-charred. Certainly for the dead outside the shed and the 22 additional Black men behind the local mosque, such testing should be no more difficult than in any other case of murder.

While there has been talk from Dr. Salem Al-Farjani and other NTC officials of DNA testing to help families get closure, it's not clear to the CIWCL if the bodies ever were sampled, before or even after some unfortunate mix-up. The CIWCL cannot endorse any trust in the DNA identifications done by the same Libyan authorities that hired Dr. Al-Farjani to solve such important mysteries, after relying on the military muscle of the people who probably committed the crimes. The science is precisely what it is, but creative bookkeeping could all too easily turn it into a sick farce with the same political intentions underlying the other apparent deceptions connected to this case.

Photographs and videos are among the few things we can be fairly sure are not fake. The CIWCL has had a thorough look at the available imagery, but this should be done again on a more professional level with the best resolution images and the best expertise to call on. Experts in body burning might help establish from the visible smoke when those bodies were last torched, and possibly other clues about how they all were burnt, and whether it all happened in the shed as alleged or if there's more to the story.

The skulls will hold at least some clues to the race of these victims. For example, a quick Internet search suggests the shape of the nasal cavity and presence of a "nasal sill" can determine whether someone is clearly of African or Caucasian (Indo-European, including Semitic Arab) descent. This and other clues should, in the pool of 40-50 bodies, yield a discernable trend. If African features predominate, as they do outside the shed, it would quickly disprove the publicized escapees, none of them Black, and who also claimed many of these dead as close family. Combined with those Black men dead outside, the warehouse contents would then strongly suggest another outburst or bestial rebel racism.

On the other hand, if they're predominantly Arab in appearance, that would not prove the rebel and witness version correct, it would only fail to argue against it – there are plenty of Semitic-origin people resisting the rebel advance who allegedly disappeared by fleeing, but might instead have vanished into carbonized anonymity in that shed behind the Yarmouk base.

3.4: Timeline Clues for a Rebel Massacre

3.4.1: There for Days?

With the preceding sections, it has been established that the un-burnt shed massacre corpses look a lot like victims of previous and later rebel atrocities. Before advancing to calling this a major clue of their guilt, the main perceived obstacle to must be addressed. As mentioned, Clemens Höges from Der Spiegel English had wondered if the brigades might have anything to do with the massacred black men surrounding the site. He was able to rule this out only on the basis of the maggots; their presence by late on Saturday the 27th “would be impossible if the man had only been killed the day before,” which everyone knew was the first time rebels had been present there at all. [CH]

This is the major problem with suggesting rebel execution. At least some victims, if not all of them, appear to have been killed on or about the 23rd, comfortably before the accepted conquest date(s). But if that convention were to fall apart like the witness record does, and if there was evidence for rebel fighters causing decisive violence at Yarmouk on the 23rd, there would be no good reason to rule them out as suspects.

In point of fact, there are once-obscure clues suggesting just that. But before examining those, it's helpful to examine the evidence to the contrary as it's been presented.

With one known exception, rebel forces claim to have taken Yarmouk and its eagle gate no earlier than mid-day Friday the 26th. Human rights Watch spoke to an unnamed fighter who anchored the early end of that by telling them “his brigade entered the base around noon,” and quickly found the smoking shed, explaining “we smelled it.” [HR]

The night of the 26th, presumably late, is more frequently cited as the time of liberation there, with the body discoveries – or at least the first visual contact - only in the morning. The Telegraph, among other sources, gives that chronology, with locals “unable to leave their homes to investigate” until after the rebel victory “Friday night.” It was only “yesterday [Saturday] morning residents and rebel forces moved in to discover the still-warm remains of at least 53 people,” they reported. [T3]

There is a possible conflict, but not a necessary one, between these times. It could be that fighters entered once, smelling or even finding the smoking hangar, but then pulled back in the face of resistance. A Euronews video of mid-day on the 26th purports to show just this, at the Yarmouk base, described by reported Jamel Ezzedini as the last loyalist holdout in the Tripoli area. Rebels are shown entering an expansive walled compound and looting weapons stores for a while until “the army came back at them hard, and they were forced to retreat, and regroup,” the narrator explains. Although it isn't actually shown, it's called “one of the fiercest firefights since the taking of the city.” [EY]

The CIWCL has been unable so far to place this footage anywhere in the main Yarmouk base, and Ezzedini did not mention smelling anything unusual here. But perhaps it's an affiliated area not yet identified. No one was reported as injured or killed by this fighting; it was apparently not meant to hurt anyone, just to show the rebels weren't in full control. One Misrata fighter told AFP, truthfully or not, that "eleven rebels died" in the battle for the base "yesterday," the 26th. Apparently none of those was from the incident Euronews reported. [N24]

The time of conquest that night remains unclear, but it must have been late. Al Jazeera's Evan Hill tweeted at 10:48 pm from the still loyalist-held "Khamis Brigade barracks" at "Tartouk." He arrived there by following the fighters south "through Abu Salim and Salaheddin," so this can only mean the Yarmouk base. [EHT] In a full report for al Jazeera just minutes before the tweet, Hill said

The fiercest remaining pocket of resistance was in Tartouk, around the barracks of the Khamis Brigade, considered Gaddafi's best-trained fighting force. At around 7 pm, a crowd of civilians and rebels near the barracks scattered under rifle fire coming from nearby residential buildings. Rebels responded in force, turning their guns in the direction of suspected snipers and blasting chunks out of the buildings' concrete facades. [EHJ]

This 7:00 incident is described in enough detail it's presumably the one he witnessed. He would tweet "got to Khamis Brigade barracks and came under gun and mortar fire," implicitly upon arrival, as if it were a welcoming party. [EHT] As of these dispatches four hours later, there was still no mention of a victory there. As with the earlier show of no control, there was also no mention of deaths or even injuries. All these supposed loyalists were doing with this fire was saying, as Hill read it, "rebels were still battling for control of one of the final bastions of Gaddafi's military power in the capital." And by extension, these holdouts were alerting the world that the "freedom fighters" could have no connection to any war crimes already committed inside that base.



various visual clues set the date of this footage firmly as prior to the morning of the 27th, but not by much. The massacre shed and its low-walled yard appear calm and fully under control, apparently for some time already. None of the locals or rebel fighters or whoever exactly they are seem armed or nervous about any enemy threat as they move about on

Regardless of who held the base at large, or some part of it, or unspecified neighboring buildings, it's the prison shed out back, and the buildings around it, that matter for discovering the source of that noxious smoke. The situation there seems different than the part of the base Hill was shown in conflict, judging by a cell phone video taken the night of the 26th. Clearly filmed around 8:00 PM, or shortly after sunset,

various low-energy tasks. One carries a pick, and others talk quietly or fiddle with cell phones. One grouping the compound's southwest corner break up their discussion and disperse as the camera approaches. [BV]

Sometime that night, after 10:48, the rebels must've finally won, according to the most prevalent narrative. But another Misrata fighter gave a later yet version to AFP; on the 27th, he said they had only secured Yarmouk earlier that day. "NATO struck and then our special forces attacked," fighter Nurdin Yusef Misrata told AFP. He said the battle started at dawn and "raged for seven hours." [N24] This would put the conquest at about 2:00 pm, 18 hours after the twilight video showing full control, about three hours after Sky News' broadcast.

The three times when Yarmouk was reportedly taken are somewhat troubling. Simple confusion of second-hand information is always likely enough, but it's also possible that at least one of these times were falsified, and perhaps all three, with the differences showing poor co-ordination.

But there was fourth and very different reported date, the minority report. Journalist Andrew Raven of Reuters was outside the eagle gate on Sunday, Aug. 28, and said of the massacre inside "it is not known who the victims were." But less than two days after the official conquest, someone credible and possibly involved told him it had happened *five days ago*. As fact, Raven reported **"the base ... was overrun on Tuesday [the 23rd], the day much of Tripoli fell to a rebel advance."** [RR]

This one aberrant report could possibly be a mix-up of some sort, but there are independent clues suggesting this is a real slip and a rare glimpse of an underlying truth. For example, the UNHRC heard that the nearby Qasr Ben Ghashir semi-massacre was spurred by an order sent downearly morning, August 22. Just as Bab Al-Aziziyah was being first hit hard, "the thuwar had reached Salahadeen" to the south as well. Officer [030] explained this when demanding the guards "execute the doctors and the "officers" and lock the others inside the warehouse." [UH] They did so that same morning, the commission was told by multiple witnesses. This was all the same basic area, with Yarmouk and QBG being smaller areas of Salaheddin. It would officially be days before the rebels acknowledge fighting in those sub-neighborhoods at all, starting seriously only on the 24th, by preponderance of reports. And it would be another two days or more before they acknowledge being able to get inside and around Yarmouk.

Nonetheless, it's quite likely the rebels *were* there days before the 26th, doing something in the shadows aside from launching fake loyalist "counter-attacks." While the vast majority of them would have had nothing whatsoever to do with it, others from the rebel side evidence advance knowledge of details only the criminal would know. These dark but prolific hints stretch back almost three days before the public conquest, back nearly to the alleged time of the event itself. The record of those leaks is traced and correlated in the following sub-sections.

3.4.2: A Hidden Thread 1: Tweets and E-mails

The first clues of the mass-killing at Yarmouk ostensibly came in from escapees, in accounts first publicly mentioned late on August 25th. At uncertain daylight times less than 48 hours after the event. Munir El-Goula and his brother (Amr Dau Algala?) of Mansoura, Tripoli, and Abdulatti Musbah Bin-Halim of Zlitan, spoke to UK's Channel 4 and the Telegraph, respectively, in pieces published late on the 25th but since becoming obscure.

But an unusual, and perhaps the first version of the witness story came with a message first tweeted by “dovenews Libyan™” at 7:05 am on the 25th:

*“Gaddafi forces executed **170 detainees** [sic] in #Alyarmook military base, **only 4 detainees mangd 2 escape 2 from #AzZwayia & 2 from #Hey#Alforjan**” [DNL]*

The number 170 is fairly close to the 180 dead that Bin-Halim would report that day, and he was among four alleged escapees being treated for injuries at Tripoli Medical Center. But three of these were from Zlitan, and none from Zawiyah. “Hey Alforjan” refers to the neighborhood (Hey/Hay/Haya) of Khellet al-Forjan, in which the Yarmouk base is situated. There are no locals from there specified among the escapees. At least three escapees are from Az-Zawiyah (“Mohammad,” Hussein Al-Lafi, and the person who’s gone by Mohammed Bashir and Bashir Mohammed Al-Sadeq/Germani and ”Omar.”)

This early report of 170 dead was echoed by one Joanne Leo, as found in a compilation of tweets and other messages at the Libyan Uprisng archive (generally the source for the messages cited below). As luck would have it, this pro-rebel info-activist was able to add a fifth escapee from her own knowledge. She listed the same four “Plus 1 another: **My uncle** (from Alziziyah) who escaped from Yarmook CONFIRMS this, he said at least 150 massacred.” [LU] Alziziyah may refer to Al-Aziziyah, a town just southwest of the airport, 10-15 miles from Yarmouk. This is another hometown not specified in later accounts; it was mostly Zlitan people.

Later on the 25th “Free Libya,” an apparently affiliated account, shared “some bittersweet news” that “my uncle from my mum’s side has escaped from the Yarmook Military camp prison, badly tortured.” But that was followed shortly with “my family in Hadba are all free. The FF came and liberated them completely last night: Allahu Akbar” [LU] Al-Hadbah is a long road, but part of it passes in front of the Yarmouk base.

Between the witnesses and the tweets, these earliest reports specifying Yarmouk would be the grimmest. There were as many as 200 original prisoners, as few as four escapees, and no more than 18 who survived. These stories were first widely circulated only the following day, along with the Amnesty International report issued early on the 26th

specifying 23 known escapees. From there the story quickly shifted into its current form with more witnesses, more press reports and, by the 27th, photographs and video.

But there was one other version, earlier yet, with the massacre first learned of from **direct discovery of the bodies by people under the banner of the Misrata Military Council**. Since just after their mid-August elimination of black Tawergha, the MMC's information center briefly updated the media with Twitter messages, or tweets from ICFMMC. According to the account's activity page, this practice ended after five days and 36 tweets, and never resumed. The last entry of August 23 announced the return of some prisoners to Misrata. [ICM] By the morning of the 24th they instead sent their heavier new information by e-mail, sent to the UK Daily Telegraph and apparently to no other media. The Telegraph's "as it happened" log announced at 6:15 AM, ten hours after the alleged massacre:

*The Information Center For Misurata Military Council claim to have **found 140 bodies** in a Tripoli prison. They claim the prisoners were killed by **grenades** thrown into their cells. So far 13 bodies have been recovered.* [T1]

While the location of this find wasn't specified, the use of grenades in a prison matches only with the Khamis Brigade shed massacre. Further, the approximate number of dead has no parallel aside from it. "Cells" in a jail are mentioned, as opposed to an open hangar, and there is no mention of these found corpses being burned, to the bone or otherwise. However, the eerie similarities forced the CIWCL to follow the thread of this find as far as it could, and it seems to continue right through to the present time.

By the evening of the same day, the Misratans were adding information to the picture with what seem to be tweets "frm Misrata military council" (but from no still-available channel of their own). A sequence of four messages was re-sent by a Jess Hill/Jessradio, from about 8:17 to 8:22 pm on the 24th. [JRT] Compiled together, they read:

1/4: "We have found possible mass murder in Tripoli prison. We believe **event happen abt 4 days ago**." 2/4: "Drs at main Tripoli Hospital know more. Prisoners were locked up, grenades thrown into their rooms." 3/4: "So far only retrieved **13 bodies. All badly burnt**. Trying to get understanding from city morgue." 4/4: "**A survivor** we believe took the cloths of dead man & **played dead for 10 hours until FLF free him.**" [JRT]

Four days prior would mean the 20th, putting the massacre three days before the discovery suggested by their previous e-mail. As with Mounir el-Goula, this early report cites a vague prison or jail, and doesn't specify Yarmouk. But the fourth tweet adds "a survivor," the first one mentioned, just about 24 hours after the now-accepted massacre

date, and four days after by their reasoning here. **How he was saved within ten hours is unclear; that's the time-span between the Aug. 23 massacre and the first rebel e-mail**, not the time between an Aug. 20 event and anything yet known.

The “survivor” in question, who made it through by playing dead rather than running away, might be Dr. Salem’s protégé Mustafa Abdullah El-Hitri. Prior to his Sky News interview, Ramsay pointed towards where he was talking with a large group of locals, and passed on that the unnamed man had reportedly “survived the assault, he appears to have been shot, played dead, and somehow got out.” [SN1] Otherwise, El Hitri has never claimed to be shot, and describes a dramatic full-on running from bullets, leaping over walls escape as opposed to hiding among the corpses. (see page 43).

On the following morning, at 9:40 AM, the Telegraph had a more detailed update with a second e-mail building on the flashes Jessradio passed on:

A [rebel] statement said: "Over 140 were killed, no more than 10 survived. Doctors at main Tripoli Hospital know more. Prisoners were locked up, grenades were thrown into rooms that contained many of them. This was followed up with many gun firings. So far only managed to retrieve 13 bodies. All badly burnt. Unclear if this was main cause of death [was because of] grenades. Potentially many prisoners were burnt alive. Unclear at the moment. We are trying to get understanding from city morgue."
[T2]

As late as the 26th the Telegraph mentioned “unconfirmed reports of as many as 140 bodies being found at one of Gaddafi’s notorious prisons,” adding that “a spokesman for an opposition group said the bodies had been burnt but showed signs of having been killed at close quarters possibly by a grenade.” [TME]

With these updates, the MMC’s information center helped clarify this is almost certainly the same mass-execution the world would soon be hearing a different version of. Besides the number and blasted state of the bodies, there are few others among the Tripoli massacres that featured any burning of bodies. What “recovered” means here (pulled out of the shed?), and why only 13 had been, is unclear. How many of the others were burned, how badly, and when they had been burnt is also unstated.

With this dispatch the Misratans claim to know almost nothing, and hoped the hospital (presumably Tripoli Medical Center) looking at the survivors, and/or the morgue which presumably had the 13 recovered bodies, would be able to tell them what happened. **If these early messages referred to a separate massacre, the story of the 140 corpses ended abruptly.** It would mean there was no further news on what the hospital or morgue said, and the ten or less survivors were never heard from, allowing a major Gaddafi crime to fade to total obscurity just as the very similar shed massacre came to the fore. The CIWCL finds that rather unlikely.

If these 140 bodies and these few survivors were the same as those emerging from the shed massacre, besides showing the bizarre mutation of the same story, it would mean the Misrata fighters or some ally had **found the remains**, as they reported they had, at the base, **at least two days before** they would later acknowledge being able to do any such thing. Defensive denial like that would suggest a guilty conscience and a covering of one's tracks.

3.4.3: A Hidden Thread 2: Echoes Across the Gap

Between that first story cut short on the morning of the 25th, and the full emergence of the case under study on the 27th, was a short, awkward period that was not quite silently awkward.

On the 26th, NTC commander Abdel Majid Mlegta, “head of operations for the takeover of the capital,” told AFP about an atrocity inside Muammar Gaddafi’s compound that, again, could only be a version of the Yarmouk slaughter. “**In Bab al-Aziziya** there was a mass murder. They killed more than **150 prisoners**. The guards did it before running away. **They threw hand grenades at them.**” [FP2] Interestingly, the compound in the heart of Tripoli was a place that was acknowledged as overrun by rebels on the 23rd or earlier and thus, arguably, it was the place those 140-150 bodies were found, after some earlier massacre. There is no mention here either of burning, and again, there is no mention after this of any 150 bodies, blasted or otherwise, being found anywhere besides the Yarmouk base.

Another possible echo came through earlier, in an obscure Aug. 24 audio interview with Mohammad Ali Abdullah of the humbly-named National Front for the Salvation of Libya. This was posted by Jess Hill/Jess Radio, apparently late in the day, as all re-posts are from Aug. 25. The American Mr. Abdullah spoke of prisoners – political and innocent all - released en masse in Ein Zara, Tajoura, and Abu Salim, and of “eyewitness reports and even some pictures that have emerged now of bodies of these prisoners who have been massacred in the last few days.” Most interestingly, he referred to some specific “indications of up to **100-140 people who have been massacred in the Abu Salim prison alone**, over the last few days.” [JRA] 140 is just a unique enough number that this is more than likely some mutation of the Misratan story from wherever. The other details - grenades, burning – are not there. But the number of prisoners is uncanny, and there’s already a precedent for this massive load to go mobile and be reported at places miles away from Yarmouk.

But one echo bringing it back to the right location came from rebel commander Jamal/Jalal Al-Ragai/Rabbani (see section 1.4). He told Robert F. Worth of the New York Times in September that he was transferred from Yarmouk to the prison at Qasr Ben Ghashir, escaped from there on August 21, and left the area to re-group with his troops in Tajoura to the east. He says he spent those days nowhere near the site of the Yarmouk and QBG massacres, but once the city was mostly liberated, Worth wrote,

“Ragai’s own concern, he told me, was to free the 150 prisoners at Yarmouk.” [RW1] His convoy of fighters finally drove southwest, by best reading, on Thursday the 25th. “At about midday,” Worth writes, “Ragai said, he got a call from one of the other fighters on his cellphone. The man had reached the Yarmouk prison and seen the deserted grounds. “It’s too late,” the man said. “Everyone is dead.”” [RW1]

In crafting this story either from memory or from things he knew, it made sense to have the shed site accessible by mid-day on the 25th. Apparently Al-Ragai just didn’t realize that was still too early to match with what others were saying. If it was deserted and the shed was accessible to a single man, there’s no reason why rebel forces would still be fighting for another day or longer to be able to do the same.

While none of these early witnesses mentions the victims being torched, dead or alive, one line in Andrew Gilligan’s report for the Telegraph, August 25, stands out. “Rebels said Gadhafi troops later **tried to burn the bodies** to destroy the evidence.” The best estimates have the bodies burnt primarily *on* the 25th, or even later, quite possibly even after this report. The smoke was still rising off some of the corpses well into the 28th (see 3.3.4). The people best placed to know right away when the bodies had been torched would be the people responsible, and Gilligan was haring from rebel fighters.

As covered in the previous sub-section, the Misrata Military Council failed to mention upon first discovery that the bodies were burnt. They only introduced the notion late on the 24th, and with only a first 13 seemingly charred. These first mentions sound greatly different from what would later be shown. “Tried to burn” and even “badly burnt” are not the same as successfully charred to skeletons. If these are the same batches, as logic strongly suggests, it seems they were **burnt yet further while under rebel control**.

3.4.4: The Gaddafi Gathering

Like most journalists, Clemens Höges heard the conquest of this Khamis base came on Friday. “Gadhafi’s troops put up such a bitter fight that many rebels suspected that the dictator himself was holed up in the barracks.” [DS] Allegedly he was. One crucial clue contradicting an earlier takeover is a remarkable gathering, on Friday the 26th, of Muammar Gaddafi himself and many of his family at Yarmouk. Khamis was there, of course, hosting them in his fortress before they all set out to Bani Walid.

This story – first related by the UK Daily Mail on September 2 – comes from a self-described witness, seventeen-year-old Abdul Salam Taher al-Fargi. “A child of the southern desert, [...] Abdul has witnessed history,” writer Richard Pendlebury decided. He says he was the youngest recruit to Khamis Gaddafi’s bodyguard, picked for his youth, and his origin is the Loyalist town of Sabha. Al-Fargi was given three days’ training on how to shoot a gun, then sent to Tripoli with big promises following victory. He survived days of fighting “around Green Square and in the Bosleem [Abu Salim] district.” He seems to have no real physical injuries from any of this.

Then, on Thursday last week, when it was clear that the regime was finished, he was summoned along with other hand-picked soldiers to Khamis's compound in the Salahuddin district.

The soldiers stayed there overnight. Then, on Friday, things began to happen. A Hyundai saloon arrived through the front gate and out got the 'King of Kings himself' — the nation's leader — in a flowing robe and desert headdress. With Gaddafi Snr was his daughter Aisha, said Abdul.

Aisha and her dad, along with her brother Saadi, left together soon after arriving. After lunch, all those remaining left with Khamis for Bani Walid, to meet Mutassim. "The 60-vehicle convoy left Tripoli at around 4.30pm, Abdul recalls." [RP1]

4:30 on Friday the 26th is about four hours after the rebels first entered the base, according to the unnamed fighter who talked to Human rights Watch. He said they entered the base around noon on the 26th, and to prove it, said that's when they first smelled the burning remains in the shed. At the same time, we're to infer, the Gaddafi family themselves and Khamis' troops were enjoying lunch alongside that smell some feet away from the NTC forces, before casually departing four hours later.

The convoy made slow progress and frequent stops, the narrative suggests. Just past Tahouna, three days later, Khamis' rearguard column was intercepted by rebel fighters, Farji says. As the exposed gunner on the leading vehicle, Ahmed fired first, but the enemy fired better and the convoy was destroyed. He saw Khamis' armored Toyota Land Cruiser on fire, but still moving slowly. [RP1] Farji survived, still apparently unharmed, by falling off the jeep as it veered. He also avoided summary execution, and was then able to tell his story like so, quite confident, open, and eager to explain all he saw and knew.

Farji said he had been misled about the kind of rebels, but now wanted to help them. Pendlebury noted "Abdul has become something of a pet for the rebels," and perhaps a well-trained one. "As we talked, another colonel came in, ruffled his hair, pinched his cheek and kissed him. 'We are all one country,' he beamed. 'And this is still a Libyan child.'" [RP1]

Considering what's been covered in sub-section 2.1.3 about 17-year-olds held by Libyan rebel militias, they should not be trusted to provide level information. The unverified and highly convenient teenage captive's story could be concocted to prove that Khamis was finally dead for real. Along the way, it tries to bolster their timeline of loyalist control of Yarmouk *until after the burning*. This in turn illustrates the need to concoct things, and thus hints at the truth of Misratan control.

3.4.5: Rebel Responses Behind the Scenes

We have covered the dubious battles for the base, running into a vague time late on the 26th or early the 27th. Contrasting that, there's the amateur video of around 8:00 PM on the 26th – just minutes after sunset - showing the prison shed, its yard, and surroundings fully under control. None of the locals or rebel fighters shown are armed or nervous. They move about on various tasks, one carrying a pick, already used to the corpses all around them. Some of the bodies are shown still flaming away brightly inside the side chamber, with **no effort anywhere to end this desecration of the massacred prisoners.** [BV] It almost seems that burning is among the tasks they're carrying out, as opposed something horrible they just stumbled upon.

The rebel fighters who brought journalists to the shed massacre site, starting in earnest on Saturday the 27th, might have acted a certain way when the cameras were present and differently when we couldn't see them. Just what happened behind the scenes – especially among the possibly guilty parties - we cannot at this time know.

There is one Arab freelance journalist named Saad Basir who managed to linger near the door to the metaphorical back-stage, and captured what seem to be a few unusually candid and helpful moments

In a fascinating article for the Warscapes digital journal, published only in January 2012, Mr. Basir wrote about his tour of Tripoli, with a young fighter he called Mustafa, and his unit from Az Zintan. Of the two main forces in the Tripoli theater (aside from the fifth column inside the capitol), the brigades formed in Misrata were greater in number and drew on recruits from a wider area. But those from the rebel mountain stronghold of Az Zintan also made their contribution, sweeping up from the south and west with great efficiency and, frequently, brutality (see their treatment of towns like Al-Qawalish).

While the Misratans and the Zintanis would repeatedly come to blows after the liberation of Tripoli, they fought together to destroy the government's grasp in August. In their own respective theaters, both camps have shown their penchant for leaving behind dead loyalists and black men (see section 3.1), like those who perished around the Yarmouk base. But the privileged information here comes from the Misrata side, and from what Basir reports, the Zintanis appear to have been brought into the loop only later. He and his friend Mustafa were at Bab al Aziziya on Tuesday the 23rd, as the Yarmouk massacre was happening to the south. He was taken to the site "later that week," apparently on Saturday the 27th, from the presence of numerous other journalists. [WB]

One incident he witnessed there at "Gaddafi's abattoir," which few if any others mentioned, might be a clue. The rebel guards "seemed unable to process the brutality of the murders," which led to "overt displays of bravado and authority," like an outburst against the increasing number of reporters, some perhaps asking too many questions. One

fighter started shouting “Out! Out! Out!” while pointing his rifle towards the exit gate. “He was in a manic state, his eyes bloodshot. He took to darting back and forth across the compound intimidating those he deemed interlopers.” He was calmed by reporters assuring him they only wanted to show the world “what Qaddafi did.” The manic fighter “didn’t lower his gun,” but he did relax. [WB]

Other fighters, stressed-out and “bordering on violence”, reportedly “voiced suspicion that foreign journalists might deliberately portray the slaughter as having been committed by the rebels and thus besmirch the freedom movement.” However likely it might have seemed, judging by previous mainstream news reporting, no one openly besmirched them that day. The rebel version, even with all the problems this report outlines, was passed along faithfully by the world’s media. The same institutional anti-Gaddafi, pro-rebel bias did its magic once again, needing no help but perhaps made more enthusiastic by the threats and gun-brandishing.

Just before going there to see those knee-jerk reactions, Mr. Basir witnessed an even more interesting moment as the rebel unit he was embedded with first learned of the incident from the Misratans.

*“...[T]he group received a phone call from another rebel group that caused the typically chatty and jovial fighters to go silent. I was told that a mass execution had taken place, but was not told anything else. **The rebels were unwilling to engage in conversation or discuss the subject further** as we cautiously rushed to the site.*

[...]

*Upon arriving, Mustafa made inquiries about what had happened from rebel forces outside the gates. **He and other members of his unit then refused to enter. “I don’t want to remember that I [also] killed people,” he said, and promptly left. Confused by the comment, and not fully comprehending the situation, I walked in.***

The [also] is inserted, an inference. Mustafa apparently said, in Arabic of course, “I don’t want to remember that I killed people.” It could mean seeing anyone dead would bring back memories, which is quite understandable. It could also mean seeing the victims of his fellow rebels would remind him, all too vividly, that “he”(his own side) sometimes massacred people.

It wouldn’t be new information, but a **reminder** of something he already knew and was apparently trying with some success to forget. And the whole unit apparently felt that way. **Already they were all trying to forget something the rest of the world has never started to even learn.**

3.5: In Closing ...

3.5.1 – What Happened: A Reasonable Best Guess

If what really happened at the Yarmouk base is other than what the accepted narrative tells, there are four basic logical possibilities for what that would be.

- 1) A real regime crime of some other sort, perhaps replaced with this more dramatic one.
- 2) No massacre at all- for example, the rebels found a loyalist morgue, perhaps with the bodies already burnt, and created a myth to go with it
- 3) A genuine massacre carried out by rebel forces, presumably against loyalist fighters or others they considered enemies.
- 4) Some combination of the above categories, clearly with some dishonest blending into one clean story.

The previous sections of part three have related in some detail the underlying clues, physical and temporal, for the third possibility. On the basis of these findings, the CIWCL can offer some guesses towards an alternative, evidence-based explanation for what was seen at Yarmouk. The general contours of it should be clear enough to those who've followed the points laid out in this report, and should only need a brief synthesis into the following hypothetical scenario.

Anti-Gaddafi forces, most likely from the Misrata branch, arrived at KheletAl-Forjan possibly by the morning of the 22nd, when one rebel narrative has their first arrival and the resultant order to kill the prisoners at Qasr Ben Ghashir (see p. 127). The decisive battle came quite possibly late on the 23rd, perhaps with a start, turning point, or final victory at around sunset. This might be how they set the time of the alleged Khamis Brigade massacre; if locals heard heavy shooting and explosions, their story has both of these by the rare inclusion of a few hand grenades.

It isn't completely certain there even was a battle. It's possible the base had been evacuated in advance and they had fled like the rebels said. In that case, all the killing would be of random isolated fighters or civilians in the area, killed in battle or captured / surrendered and executed.

There would be a gathering of scattered killings or a mop-up of survivors, late into the night, perhaps with isolated gunshots the locals might hear, in both the real version and the Rebel/witness version. It would seem that about 140 bodies - even more than now acknowledged - were tallied by the Misratans and explained by dawn. The killing happening over many hours to a couple of days would fit with the timeline shift we see in their belated acknowledgement of control. They aren't denying just one point in time but a span of three days - August 23-26 - when they categorically could not have been responsible for anything that happened in there. This also might be reflected in the shifting death toll - 140 bodies growing within 24 hours to be reported as 170 (see p.128).

It cannot at this time be known who the charred bodies truly had been. Most likely they were locals killed in those ambiguous days and the few after, but it's possible some were captives brought in from elsewhere to become slain Gaddafi prisoners instead.

The shed location would have been picked later for the piling of bodies, although some of the victims might well have been killed right there. Again, the UNHRC's people noted bullets fired from inside the shed [UH p70] and the un-burnt mattress victims at least might have been killed while sleeping just outside of it. Exterior victims #2 and 3 seem to have been killed last, with circumstances less clear. They might have died as late as the 26th; they were done for prior to 8:00pm, but there is still no visible decay by the next morning, only perhaps rigor mortis.

The cover story was apparently hatched within hours of the sunset massacre, and that of course is where things started to get more verifiably awkward.

3.5.2 - Securing the Witnesses And Their Stories

When the multiple witnesses enter the scene, which is useful in making outsiders believe a cover story, simply "hatching" it becomes insufficient. Multiple false stories told, if they are to agree on anything, would require a conspiracy. This is suggested anyway by the small-scale clustering of agreement within the pool (see 2.4.1). The few points that come though in broader agreement could fit on an index card. – Gaddafi thugs did it, at Sunset on the 23rd, using guns and grenades, and it killed about 100-150 people, but I got away. Some method or other of securing false testimony and managing it, somewhat poorly, is the best explanation for all of this.

There would be plenty of people available to act the parts - rebel fighters, camp followers, assorted locals, and others. Just how they might have secured their cooperation is another unknown. Broadly speaking, there are two ways of compelling people to give false stories, methods used since time immemorial by prosecutors, Mafiosi, and animal trainers. These are the carrot and the stick, punishment and reward, often used in conjunction to narrow choices and steer actions.

The carrot might be a cash payment, useful in the tight times brought on by international sanctions and the freezing of much of the Libyan government's existing money. The moral conundrum the actor would be faced with, where that mattered, could have been dealt with by telling the so-called witnesses they'd be doing good while doing well. It could be said the story they're relating was in fact true for the real victims of this Gaddafi massacre, who clearly all perished. With the real victims dead, they were unable to tell the world their story, and it was only fair someone else should do it for them. Motivated by cash and justice, in their misled minds, they might enthusiastically adopt the name and story handed to them, or worked out in tandem with the rebel myth-makers. Along the way, one could adopt a profession one always desired - suddenly one is a respected lawyer who was blessed with a miraculous escape route he used to help someone else escape too, for example. Plus, one would get to be on TV.

The use of a stick is a more upsetting possibility, and it could take many forms. One possibility that fits with other evidence involves an inversion of the described roles with rebels as the genuine captors of the loyalist “escapees.” As they stormed through loyalist-held cities in August, they might have detained large numbers of people they suspected of supporting Gaddafi or getting in the way. Zlitan in particular, with its 75 alleged Yarmouk prisoners, rises to the top. Then perhaps some of these were found to be innocent of anything and releasable, but still threatened with long detentions anyway awaiting a trial or review that might take a long time.

On the other hand, they could win instant release by accepting the carrot, whatever that was – in return they travel to Tripoli and say some things and maybe weep uncontrollably. This possibility would explain the shackle marks and signs of beating that many witnesses had, mostly specified as happening in Zlitan – just from rebel captors.

One darker scenario yet that could explain some cases, an alleged escapee might be a rebel prisoner as explained above, but whose family members – perhaps diehard Gaddafi loyalists who stubbornly resisted - were killed in the arrest. Now motivated to avoid jail time and help get his family a clean slate in the new order, the prisoner might blame the old order, which would be true in a sense. This would let them be **recognized as martyrs, not as “criminals.”** That’s a rather extreme story to expect from an ordinary human being, but these were extreme times and it is one among the cogent possibilities that could be considered.

There are of course other possibilities ranging, on one end, to death threats and mind-control drugs, to their stories – the most plausible set with the least conflicts - being just as true and accurate as any collected eyewitness memories could be. The CIWCL has attempted to sow doubt over this latter possibility, as it’s been the only one generally considered so far. We do still recognize that it remains a possibility, however.

Another more direct possibility comes from Robert Worth’s line that “many of the [Ragai] brigade’s current members are either former prisoners of Yarmouk or the relatives of men who were killed there.” [RW2] Are these amateur civilians drawn in by a brother’s death, or are his existing fighters claiming the victims of their own violence as their *purported* brothers and fathers?

Names are given for those who escaped and those who didn’t, all ostensibly real. The family members killed presumably will not surface alive somewhere and prove the story wrong. Would Hussein Al-Lafi make up three brothers? Fathallah three sons? It’s possible. Is Hussein even Hussein, really? We can’t be sure. It’s doubtful that any of this could be verified in the climate of chaos in; old records might be lost, new ones created. A paper trail for each of the victims - perhaps to be published for the upcoming anniversary - could all be as fake as anything we’ve seen yet, but still *appear* to prove true this ridiculous story. With or without the guiding genius of Dr. See-Through Salem, there is still a whole Libyan bureau designated for settling these mysteries using methods that can’t be known.

3.5.3 - Further Investigation is Needed

The phrase “further investigation is needed” has become a cliché tossed about among people whose furtive investigations all reinforce each other (on the broad ideas of who’s responsible, if not all the little details). But in this case, the CIWCL alleges something altogether new to the world of organizations that produce well-researched reports. We have been able to soundly make the case for a whole new way of thinking about this massacre that might finally allow it to make sense. *Of course* more investigation, beyond making the case for re-thinking, will be required to establish the truth of the matter and even to grasp the form and direction justice should take.

Furthermore, like many of these groups but to an even higher degree, the CIWCL lacks a budget, dedicated staff, official status, subpoena power, access to classified documents, and thing of that sort. Essentially we have surfed the Internet, and while that’s taken us surprisingly far, clearly has its limits, which we may have reached.

Even if the core accusations of rebel massacre and a conspiracy to fob the blame is not true, the concerns pointing that way are valid, and more inquiry, if only to prove it all wrong somehow, is more than justified. As mentioned in section 3.3, expert analysis of the charred victims for race clues might provide quick answers, or at least valuable background details. Forensic experts should be loosed upon images to locate the numerous shell casings that should litter the shed and the compound, which the CIWCL hasn’t been able to identify in the available record. Feras Kilani’s BBC Arabic documentary (March 2012) shows six empty casings, apparently very old and covered in crust. [BAK] If fresh the shell casings fail to appear in all the close-up photographs from Aug. 27-28, that would be worth knowing.

There might, conceivably be battle logs or cell phone records showing what was said behind the scenes in those days. If anyone can have a look at these, they should. Interviews with fighters and alleged survivors might be useful. On the other hand, the questions raised may be sufficient to quit consulting them altogether on this matter. Without even talking to them, it might still be possible for experts - especially inside Libya - to follow-up on the witnesses and their named family for signs of actually existing prior to or after August 27.

3.5.4 – A Call for Accountability

Considering the limits of what the CIWCL has been or will be able to discover with certainty, it would clearly be premature to call for war crimes charges against any particular person based on their physical involvement. The specific fighters who would were perhaps involved in the massacre are unknown. Some are likely those seen lurking in the news reports, and possibly even the up-front “survivors” or family of same. There is a known correlation with people who wound up fighting with Jamal Al-Ragai, as mentioned. And Abdulrahim Ibrahim Bashir, for one, might show “insider knowledge” of one of the rebel victims, whom he apparently claimed was a co-escapee who died in his arms (see p. 114). More likely the primary actors here were from among the more private

ranks, the kind on the frontlines who wear ski masks and fly black flags and reap their fame on more obscure circuits.

The exact brigades involved aren't even clear. Fighters from Zlitan, Zintan, Zawiyah, and Misrata all have been said to fight in the Khelet Al-Forjan/Qasr Ben Ghashir area. Fifth column cells from Tripoli, local fighters from Swani, Salaheddin, and the Hadbah road/Yarmouk area itself, all appear in the fleeting reports of the time that aren't fully sorted out or verified. More than likely many different units did pass through, one after the other, each one conquering it anew from one more holdout sniper.

One unit from Tajoura, Tripoli, does merit more scrutiny – the one headed by the oft-mentioned Jamal/Jalal Al-Ragai. There's of course the strong tendency of fighters who joined him, presumably *not after* the battle was won around Aug. 27, to be related to (or to have “adopted”) alleged shed massacre victims (3.5.2) And there's the Ragai unit's size similarity to the escapees at nearby Qasr Ben Ghashir. Jamal says he was one of those 70 escapees (the leading one) on Aug. 21, *just before* re-connecting with his 70 fighters - far away from the mini-massacre site with six victims discovered by Tripoli fighters of some stripe (see section 1.4).

The information regarding the 140 badly damaged bodies from the night of the 23rd is what matters most here. That was of course held immediately by the Misrata military council, and given the prisoners story by sunrise on the 24th. That suggests either that their soldiers carried out the killings and passed word up the line, or that they absorbed the info from an affiliated group and took charge of helping them sanitize the story. Either would be a crime of its own sort and the people involved would best know who was responsible for this heinous atrocity. Those who ran the information center could be worth questioning, if they could even be identified. They might know who originated the info and where they got it from, and what parts, if any, were trimmed before publication.

A more direct route to accountability would be to scrutinize the guy who ostensibly oversaw all of it, the **head of the Misrata Military Council, Ibrahim Beitalmal** (alt: Beatalmal, Betamal). Mr. Beitalmal's was previously mentioned as the jailor of multi-named and healthy-looking soldier-actor Ibrahim Sadeq Khalifah (aka Ibrahim Tajouri, Ibrahim Lousha). A linguistic possibility is that he was bestowed with the stable first name by his controller *Ibrahim* Beitalmal. As Khalifah, the kid wrongly claimed the prisoners were burned alive (by him), and gave the wrong date, August 22. Despite the mistakes, Khalifah couldn't be lying under torture, Beitalmal said, because he wasn't tortured, even though he deserved it. Having noted Khalifah's cigarette burn (from elsewhere, he said), AFP's Jay Deshmukh reported:

“If we wanted to torture these prisoners, Khalifa is the best candidate for that. He has burnt alive 150 men,” Beatalmal said, as he smoked a cigarette. “When he came to our prison he weighed 65 kilos. Now he is more than 80 kilos. That would not happen if you are tortured. I am angry at these human rights people. I don't even

want to see their faces.” [JD]

This whole visit was spurred by disturbing news of widespread and fairly bad torture in the Misrata prisons, and less-reported stories from loyalist escapees paint a darker picture yet, running nearly up to the edges of human imagination. But since the likely actor looks perfectly healthy, as he does, **no prisoners there suffer torture**, this man would have the world reason. Beitalmal most likely realized the fakery he was relying on to make this indignant case against the human rights groups and implicitly **banning them from his city**.



BBC interview, Jan. 28, 2012 [BG]

Besides the torture, execution, and all other maltreatment among the probably thousands of people held in his jail system, war crimes charges against at least Beitalmal could be pursued on other important fronts. He would have overseen the mid-August purge of Tawergha, the forceful expulsion of every single person there, and the continuing crimes against the displaced Tawerghan community in Tripoli and elsewhere. Surely there were untold killings of civilian loyalists and illegally executed Gaddafi militants inside and around Misrata, in

Khoms, Zlitan, Tripoli, and other cities during their blitzkrieg offensive of mid-late August. Some at least were tortured or executed with extra brutality – we’ve seen their bodies. Depending on his exact tenure as chief, Beitealmal would know about most of it, and would have ordered much of it, or made it necessary by his orders.

His force’s information center had what seem to be the real Yarmouk victims on their hands and halfway explained within ten hours of the alleged massacre. Then his jail system and its barbaric reported torture produced this soldier’s confession to the preposterous story. At the same time, the younger Ibrahim handily served to “prove” there was no torture at all, a point made so thoroughly the elder all but threatened human rights crusaders to stay away.

A dangerous mental instability is evident in a later reinforcement of the threat. Speaking to BBC’s Gabriel Gatehouse (see inset) “The head of Misrata’s military council, Ibrahim Beitalmal, denies involvement in any abuses and says his accusers have a hidden agenda.” His cunning instincts told him that for denying the obviousness of these malicious lies, **“I think that the people working under the guise of human rights organisations or doctors without borders are Gaddafi’s fifth column.”** [BG] That kind of attitude is bound to hamper their work on his turf, and it was turf handed to him by outside interventionists, spurred by humanitarian concerns pushed widely, and with limited credible evidence, by these same alleged Gaddafi loyalists.

3.5.5: Lessons Learned?

Even if the potential crimes outlined in this report did not occur, the notion still holds some value to those concerned with truth and justice on the scale of war and alleged war crimes. Even if there was no conspiracy over Yarmouk to trick the world into absolving rebel crimes, it's such a good idea that it will surely be tried somewhere, by some amoral actor on the world stage.

Human rights organizations, journalists, government people, and everyone who matters when it comes to war and justice must now ask themselves what defenses they would have against such an exploitation of their good offices. The CIWCL would suggest that defense is weak across the board of the mainstream, reputable groups, and has been for years, leaving them ripe for a disinformation attack. Collectively, HRW, AI, MSF, IFHR, PHR, and the others have surely already passed on dozens of self-serving rebel lies in numerous countries. That's not to dismiss the positive changes, or attempts at it, they manage by working alongside the truth. But these exceptions, however widespread, will by now have exacted a cost in justice and human lives that's impossible to calculate.

Further, we predict there are many more lies to come, and again very few of those will be caught in time. The one studied in this report appears to be **an especially obvious and sloppy operation**, yet even it hasn't been caught really until now, and that only by a team of powerless researchers. Changes in procedure are suggested.

There has been much talk from those championing Human rights in Libya of the connection between truth and justice – but justice simply means accountability for every alleged Gaddafi regime crime, as a message to other “dictators” to be targeted. It all sounds good to most people, but slinking unnoticed is the all-too-likely **rebel crime that was gotten away with**. The lesson sent to others who would challenge those dictators is clear:

*You can slaughter freely and with cruelty, and blame the hated regime. You can do so with full impunity and, in fact, with hefty rewards. We don't want our freedom fighters to look bad, and won't let them. But we all need the enemy to look extremely vile, so lay on the bloodshed. We will help blame everything on them, **and enthrone the guilty**, in the process of destroying governments deemed undesirable and replacing them with deeply indebted client states.*

There are strong and growing signs a message kind of like this was heard loud and clear in Syria, for one place.

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