

Women Beheaded by ISIS for Sorcery

Richard Spencer writes in [Syria](#) for sorcery, an extension of the punishment which is normally reserved for men.

The women and their husbands were all accused of witchcraft, one couple in the town of Mayadeen, in eastern Deir Ezzour province, and one in Deir Ezzour city, according to the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights, which monitors the conflict.

Five people in all in Mayadeen were beheaded, the others on charges of “banditry” and “drugs”, with two of the men then crucified.

The case marks the first time a woman civilian is recorded as having been beheaded, though the punishment has been inflicted on women soldiers from the Kurdish militia, the YPJ, the female version of the YPG.

Women have been stoned to death for adultery.

Sorcery, in Islamic countries, usually means fortune-telling, a practice that is specifically outlawed in the Koran but remains popular. It also attracts the death penalty in Saudi Arabia.

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant remains committed to implementing a hardline version of sharia in territories it controls, despite its unpopularity.

Many refugees say Isil’s strict rule was welcomed initially as a counter-measure to widespread corruption and banditry as Syria fell apart, but that it is increasingly resented.

A number of people, including teenage boys, have been “crucified” – suspended by their wrists in public but not

to death – for failing to observe the Ramadan fast, which began earlier in June.