

SYRIA - THE REVOLUTION THAT SHOOK THE MIDDLE EAST

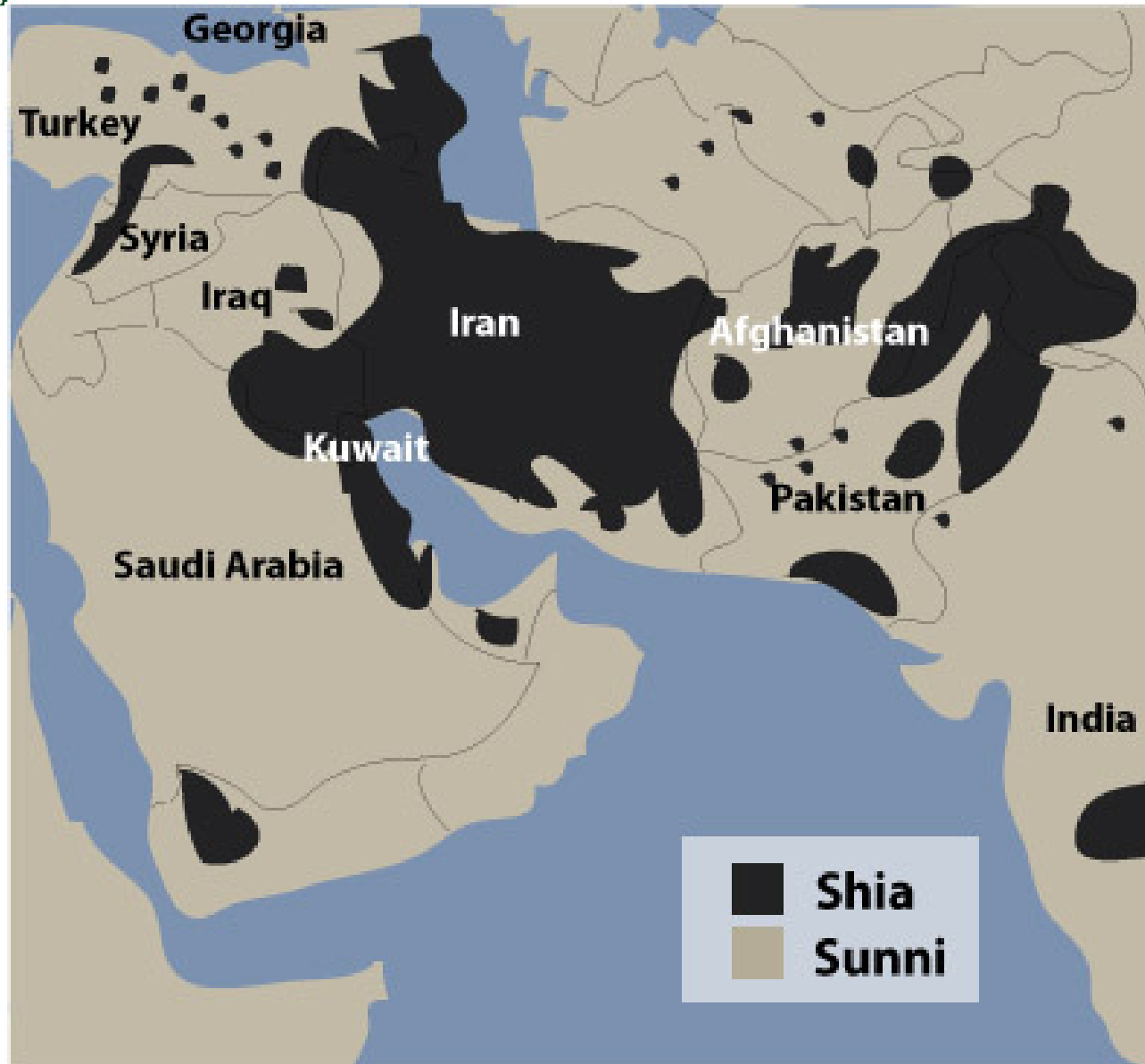
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AGENDA

- **Syrian civil war**
- **Impact on neighbours**
- **...and more widely**



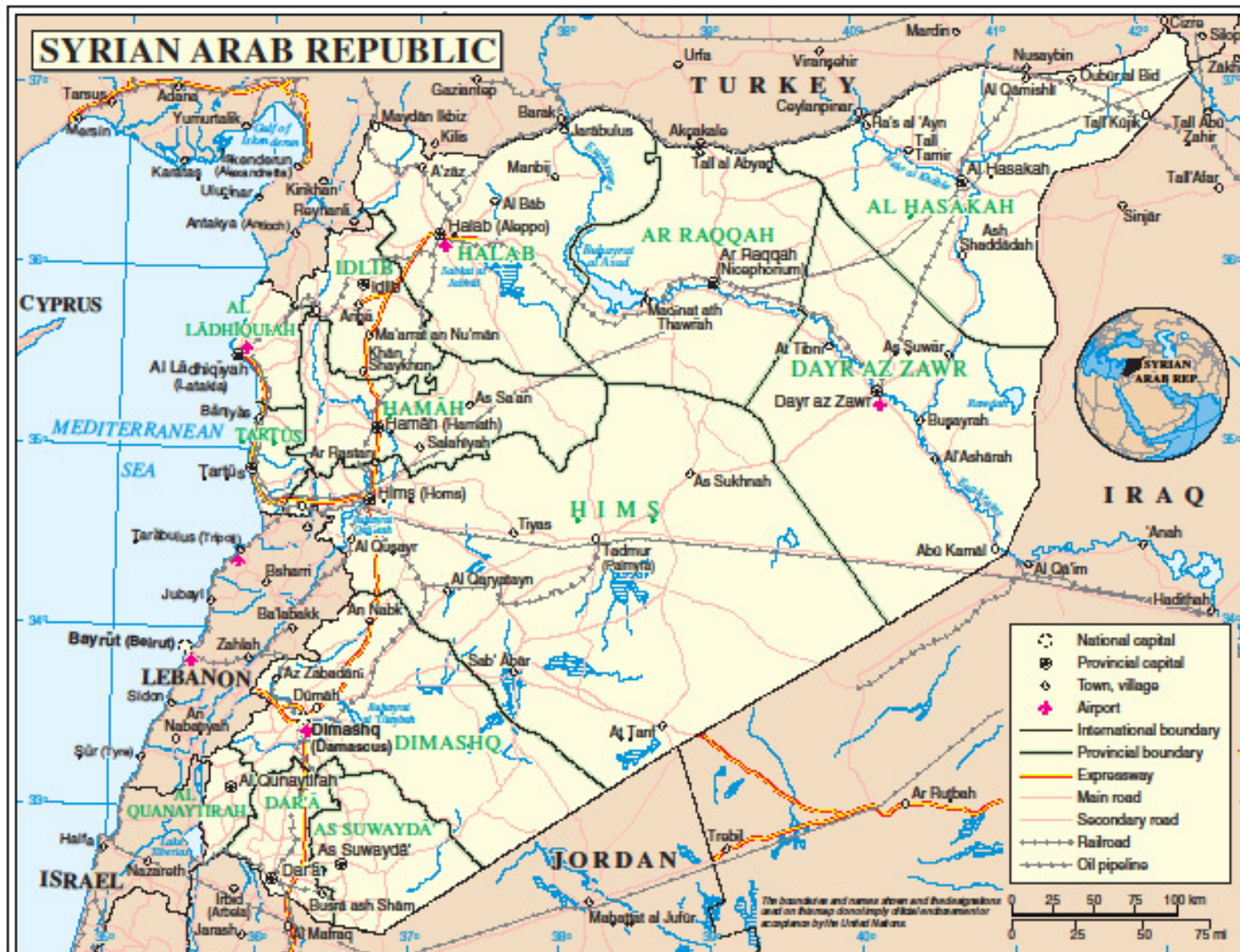
PLAYERS

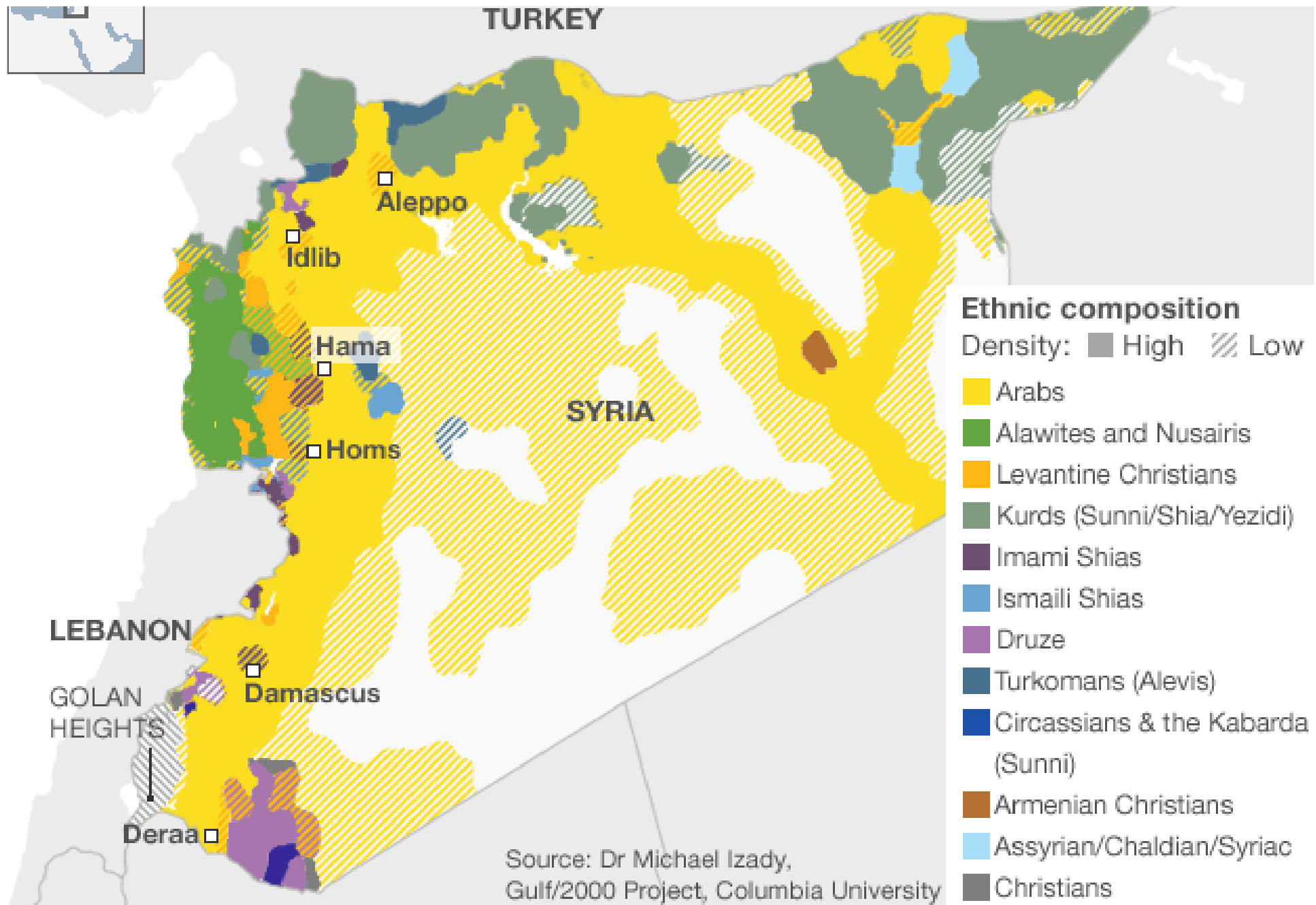
Sunni:

- KSA, Qatar
- Muslim Brotherhood
- Salafists
- Al-Qaeda

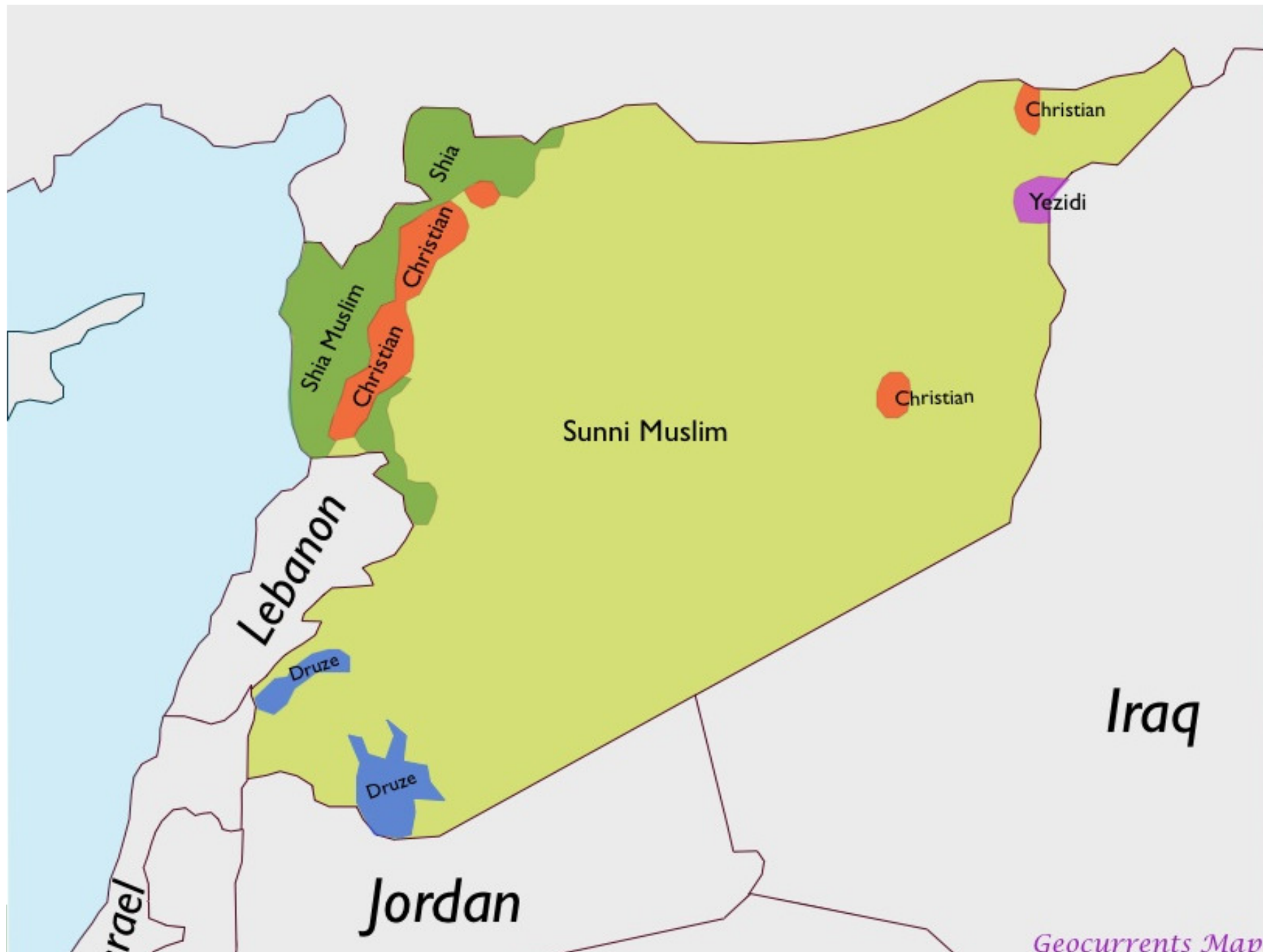
Shia:

- Iran
- Hizballah





Is it ethnically or religiously divided?



SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

- **Regime controls capital, ports, routes**
- **Increasingly jihadist uprising despite FSA**
- **14 jihadist groups reject High Military Council; declare Islamic Emirate in Aleppo**
- **Foreign jihadists; prominence of Jerusalem in JaN's rhetoric, attacks on Christians**
- **FSA fights pro-Assad Kurds**
- **Clashes between pro- & anti-Assad Palestinians**

SYRIAN CIVIL WAR (cont.)

- **Tension exiles-FSA; controversial NCSRO suggestion of talks**
- **We fear rebel victory – uncertain position on aid**
- **Scenarios after general conflict; cross-border federations**
- **Sectarianism, communalism & jihadism will characterise post-Assad Syria**

LEBANON

- **Increased sectarian tensions, every element of Syria reflected here**
- **Assad's terrorism**
- **Dysfunctional government**
- **Grave peril**
- **...but key actors committed to avoiding civil war**

TURKEY

- **Strong state institutions but...**
- **Damascus sponsors left-wing groups inside Turkey, attacks Feb - Mar**
- **Kurdish insurgency in south-east intensified; truce complex but prospects good**
- **Possible Turkish cross-border action**
- **Article 5 of North Atlantic Treaty**

IRAQ

- **Inflexible Shia govt shuns Sunni, polarises**
- **Militants of both sects in Syria (AQI-JaN)**
- **Perceived as part of Iran-led axis**
- **Instability in NW (Kurdish tensions etc)**
- **Violence of 2005-2007 unlikely to return**
- **...but what is alternative?**
- **Iraqi Shia support for Assad will increase as his regime comes under more pressure**

OTHER NEIGHBOURS

- **Last-ditch chemical attack on Israel?**
- **Jihadist, Palestinian targeting of Israel**
- **Jordan vulnerable, Gulf allies support; will pursue balanced relations**

WIDER IMPACT

- **Heightened tensions between Gulf and Iran (but NB other issues – Shia discontent)**
- **Muslim Brotherhood strengthened**
- **Concept of jihad seen as acceptable by regional powers; boost for al-Qaeda**
- **Al-Qaeda base in Syria – prophecies**
- **Al-Qaeda recruits and raise funds – home states affected (reap whirlwind)**

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