

***Al-Qaeda, Syria and the Rise
of Sectarianism throughout
the Middle East***

ASIS, 18 February 2014



ROOTS OF SECTARIANISM



Imam Hussain

... was killed in 680 AD

DEEP-SEATED TENSIONS



Hussain's name written in colour of blood, reflecting Shia demand for vengeance for his death

POLITICAL EXPLOITATION



**Imam's death remains emotive,
continues to be exploited by Shia
political figures**

IMPACT OF IRANIAN REVOLUTION



**Fall of Shah, creation of Islamic Republic
represented huge geopolitical shift**

CREATION OF REGIONAL PROXIES



Tehran established and supported Shia groups throughout region

IRAN-IRAQ WAR



**Sunni Gulf monarchies backed Baghdad
in conflict**

INVASION OF IRAQ



**US intervention brought about collapse
of Saddam's Sunni regime...**

NEW SHIA LEADERSHIP



**... and rise of Shia leadership unwilling
to share power**

SECTARIAN CIVIL WAR



Outbreak of sectarian civil war, bringing sectarian relations throughout region to all time low

UPRISING IN SYRIA



**Popular uprising against Assad regime,
bringing sectarian tensions to surface**

SYRIAN CIVIL WAR



- ... triggering sectarian civil war
- Impact of images of mass killings of Sunnis has had profound regional impact

POLARISATION OF COMMUNITIES



- **2006: Sunni support for Hizballah**
- **May 2013: al-Jazeera survey found that more than 70% believe Hizballah is an enemy of Arabs and Muslims**

UNPRECEDENTED SECTARIAN TENSION



- **Sunni and Shia communities more polarised than ever**
- **Sectarian unrest, violence, kidnaps, Sunni support for jihadism**

COMMERCIAL CONSEQUENCES

JAWAD قاطعوا عملاء إيران..
Business Group

من يشتري من جواد وماركاته فيرنا احنا.. والحين قاعد بدعم اللي قاعد ين بالدوار!!
تقطعوا هالعملاء اين اللي تساعد بدعمهم بالاكل والشرب



The image displays a large collection of brand logos, many of which are crossed out with a red 'X', indicating they have been cut off or are being targeted. The logos include JAWAD, ALFANAR, artikkel, AVIS, and many others. The text above the logos is in Arabic, discussing the consequences of cutting off Iranian customers and supporting those who are being targeted.



COMMERCIAL CONSEQUENCES 2

2

العصائر والألبان ::

المنتج المقاطع:

الصافي	داناو	المراعي	ندى
سن كوبيك	فيمتو	نادك	دانيت

المنتج البديل:

أوال - البري - الريان - كسي دي دي - جودة - الأحصدي - abc - تاخ-تراي - فوستر كلاركس - هانس

شبكة الدعم عن السلسلة

مجلس النظام الغذائي

مجلس الصحة العالمية

IMPACT ON STABILITY



Foreign involvement in various countries, political impact of sectarian tensions

INTERNATIONAL FALLOUT



**Shifting alliances, levels of influence,
tensions between governments**

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