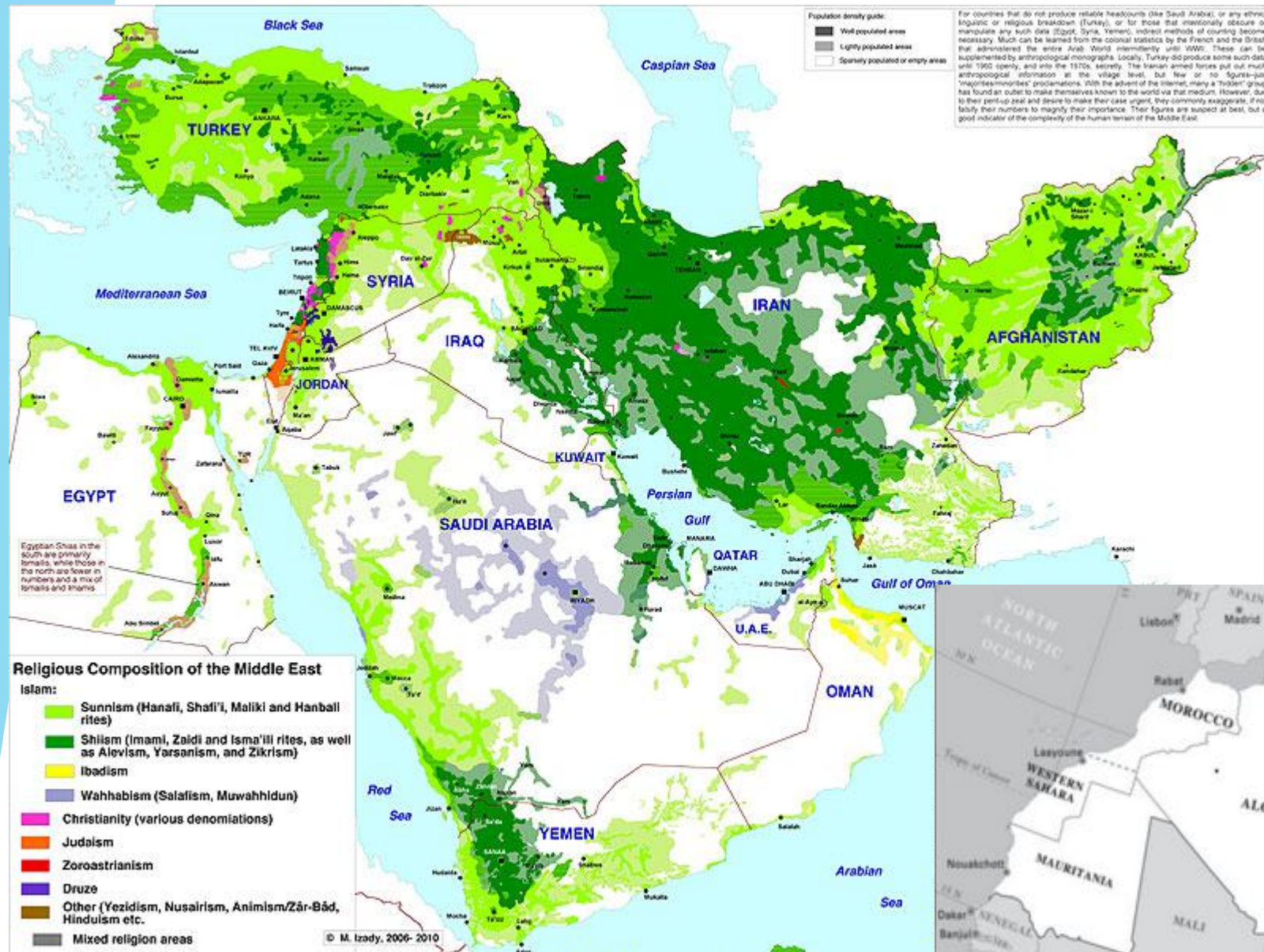


Cultural Region Proposal

The Middle East: Religion and
Ethnic Groups

The Region's Map



The Regions

- Maghreb – North Africa
- Fertile Crescent – Kuwait, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon and Palestine
- Nile Valley – Egypt and Sudan
- Arabian Peninsula – Yemen, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, UAE
- Northern Tier - Turkey

Religious and Cultural Traits

- The Middle East is divided into various ethnic and religious sects (Durham 43).
- The ethnic groups are Arabs, Persians, Kurds, and Turks among other sub-tribes.
- The religions include Judaism, Islam (Sunni and Shiite), Christianity, Ibadism, Zoroastrianism, and Druze among others (Held 120).

Cultural Formation

- Sunni Islam is the religion with the most followers; the faith is mainly practiced in Saudi Arabia, North Africa, the UAE, and Yemen.
- In Iran and Jordan as well as parts of Lebanon, Shia Muslims dominate
- Judaism is mainly practiced in Israel.
- In Syria, Alawites form the majority.
- Iraq has a mixed religious identity of Shia and Sunni, which is responsible for the sectarian wars in the country.
- In Turkey, Christianity and Islam are widely practiced.

Ethnic Formation

- In the North African Maghreb region, the main cultural activity is pastoralism and nomadism in addition to practicing Sunni Islam (Anderson, Seibert and Wagner 12).
- In the Fertile Crescent and the Nile Valley are Arabs, Jews, Kurds, and mixed races, who practice arable agriculture and practice Judaism, Islam and Christianity.
- In the Arab Peninsula and the Northern Tier, trading and oil are the main economic activity (Louise 54).

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