

Prosopography

[History](#)



Prosopography of the Druze In history, Syrian Druze was once a major player in shaping the cultural dimension of the country despite the fact that they form a minor percentage of the Syrian population. Currently, there are approximately 420, 000 Syrian Druze, with approximately 90% of this population inhabiting the Jabal Al Arab Mountains, forming the Jabal Al Arab Druze, with the remaining being the Aleppo and Damascus Druze.

Traditionally, this group is considered to be farmers, who rely on orchards and olive fruits that are properly nurtured on the hills of the Middle East (Gordon, 12). They also have a traditional leadership structure, where there is a council of religious leaders, specifically men, who makes decisions on behalf of the entire community. Additionally, this community tends to grow apple trees, cherry together with significant amounts of wheat. Majority of the Druze family tend to grow their own fruits, vegetables and bake their own bread. Druze women traditionally dress in long blue or white dresses with a white headscarf, while their men had abandoned their traditional modes of dressing, specifically the shirwal and grow moustache (Gordon, 12). Their houses are scarcely furnished, with a characteristic low wooden table and thin cushions lined against the walls. Their language has an Egyptian origin; their language can easily be recognized due to the fact that they have a sharp pronunciation of the letter “ q”. Basically, the life of Druze man revolves around his family and attendance of religious meetings on every Thursday night. They have a high sense of hospitality in their culture and tend to visit each other in their homes (Gordon, 14). In regard to divorce, it is a rare action among the Druze; however, men may initiate divorce when a wife fails to bear children. Consequently, the Syrian Druze has a unique religion, which can be traced back to Egypt; in most cases, their

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Druze religion has been disavowed by Muslims (Gordon, 16). The Community had a positive relationship with the Assad regime, basically owing to the fact that Assad managed to seek tremendous support from the minority communities; however, currently the community is torn in between supporting Assad and the Islamist extremists. Some of the Druzes has claimed that Assad failed them by not providing them with weapons to protect themselves from the Jabhat Al-Nusra attacks (Gordon, 22). The Druze of Syria are poorer as compared to other minority communities; this has been attributed to the fact that they have spent many years on war issues rather than focusing on socio-economic development programs (Gordon, 23)

Prosopography of Syrian Alawites

As a significant portion of the minority group, the Syrian Latakia and Tartus Alawites are considered one of the most prominent religious groups in Syria. Currently, they have an estimated population of 2.6 million, accounting from approximately 12% of the Syrian Populace (www.angelfire.com). In relation to their religious affiliations, a significant number of the Alawites are Muslims, while a few have been associated with being Sunnis. However, most of the Alawites beliefs have been kept secret from persons considered outsiders. A significant number of Alawites currently serve in the Syrian National Army. They are ranked in between poor and rich owing to the fact that they are farmers and have been closely affiliated with the government. This group tends to expose their religious teachings to men who have sworn oaths that they will not expose their secret religious teachings (www.angelfire.com). Alawites' women have been accorded a low status in both their families and the society as a general; this is because they are believed to have emerged from devils, thus are not even taught on religious

knowledge. Historically, Alawites were subjected to persecution by Sunni Muslims, however, they have become one of the most dominant groups in Syria after the Assad Regime, and this is because Assad was an Alawite. Additionally, Syrian Alawites have maintained a positive relationship with Assad in the hope of peace and stability, however currently; they are torn between supporting opposition or Assad's regime. This is due to the blames that several religious leaders within Alawites have directed towards Assad that he is leading the country towards an unnecessary sectarian war (www. angelfire. com). In history, the Alawites have been led by revolutionary leaders, but currently, the top community leadership positions is held by religious leaders and military leaders. The Alawites have been considered as a tribal group owing to the fact that they were historically persecuted, thus tends, to be closed, with a lot of secrets. Additionally, they usually celebrate two major festivals, which are the Christian Holy Days as well as the Persian Holy Days, performed in masses similar to Christian masses (www. angelfire. com).

Prosopography of Armenians

The other significant minority group in Syrian Aleppo, Damascus, Qardaha, Homs and Hama Armenians. Historically, the Armenians of Syria are either partially Armenians decent or full Armenian descent. Their population is approximately 100, 000 in Syria, with an approximate 60, 000 occupying Aleppo (Cosgrove, 7). The other 40, 000 Armenians currently live in Armenian villages (Latakia) such as; Kessab, Damascus, Qamishli as well as Yacoubiya. In relation to their religious affiliation, a significant number of Armenians are believers of the Apostolic Church of Armenia, while others are believers of the Armenian Catholic and Evangelic Church; they believe that <https://assignbuster.com/prosopography/>

the church is an important unifying factor among the Armenians of Syria (Cosgrove, 8). Armenians of Syria are majorly trade merchants and attribute a high value towards education, which is seen as an aspect of maintaining the Armenian Language as well as Patriotism. With regard to the Syrian Armenian family structure, there is a great sense of difference between the roles played by women and those undertaken by men. Generally, women are regarded as caretakers of their households; however, Armenians of Syria allow women to work both in the houses and outside their houses (Cosgrove, 11). Armenian men are monogamous in nature and in some cases; their marriage may be organized or arranged ([www. hyeetch. nareg. com. au](http://www.hyeetch.nareg.com.au)). Their relationship with President Assad became warmer in the early months of 2011, after many Syrian-Armenian men thought President Assad could restore peace to the country. The relationship was also improved due to the fact that Syrian-Armenians were privileged by some of the changes that were made by Assad that allowed them to have access to various improved social amenities such as schools and hospitals. However, before then, Syrian-Armenians were subjected to political persecution in the early 1900's thus they tended to exhibit neutrality in relation to either supporting the government or the opposition (www. hyeetch. nareg. com. au). Their leadership structure is majorly based in the church, with religious leaders from the three denominations making most of the decisions regarding the community needs (www. hyeetch. nareg. com. au). Armenians of Syria are relatively affluent, this is because of the fact that they have invested massively in education among men and women and are considered a hard-working community.

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