

The determinism of geography and survival strategy: The political role of the Druze minority in Israel

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Review Article</p> <p>Main Object: International relations Scope: Druze minority</p> <p>Received: 23 June 2025 Revised: 05 August 2025 Accepted: 13 August 2025 Published online: 19 August 2025</p> <p>Keywords: Druze, Middle East, Jewish State, minorities, survival theory.</p>	<p>The situation of minorities in the Middle East is one of the most complex issues in political sociology. The West Asian region is home to a diverse and plural mix of numerous minorities. Among the existing minorities, the Druze are considered one of the "middle minorities". This ethnic/religious group is spread across three regions: Syria, Israel, and Lebanon. This paper attempts to explore the nature and identity of this ethnic/religious group and the various aspects of their interaction in the three those regions, and to arrive at an appropriate model of political behaviour based on "safe survival." The issue of this research is how this minority continues its different political life in the three mentioned regions and to understand why they have deep ties with the Jewish state. The hypothesis of the article is that the effort to survive and without being eliminated and assimilated into the Muslim majority and to establish and maintain a specific Druze identity, forces them to align with the Jewish state. The macro interests and inherent expediency in the survival of the nation take a specific form in each country that mentioned, and in particular, the acceptance of cooperation with the Jewish state, and of course, acceptance by Israel, has provided the basis for mutual benefit and alignment. In this research, the method of discourse analysis will be used to obtain the key to past interaction, understand the process of cooperation, and chart the path for the future. The research findings show that this interaction is based on mutual benefit and will continue as long as it continues for both sides in the Israel.</p>

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Extended abstract**1. Introduction**

Minorities' situation in the Middle East is among the most complicated subjects for studies in political sociology. West Asia is home to a diverse and plural mix of multiple racial, ethnic, religious and lingual minorities, the distribution of which in numerous countries makes many events difficult to analyse. Minorities face several problems in their hosting societies, including political pressure, artificial borders, uncertain situation among regional powers, lack of democratic procedures to enjoy equal rights, widespread discrimination, the dilemma of divergence/convergence from/with central powers or receive assistance from external powers, to name but a few.

The Druze people are an Arab minority group in West Asia recognized for specific religious faith and their self-identification as 'distinguished' from all other groups. Scattered across three regions, they count about one million in number and have their own religious beliefs. Different clothing, reluctance to keep out-group relations and maintaining ethnoreligious identity by strict in-group regulations are among features that help them create visible demarcation lines with other group in the region. Scattered geographically in the three regions of Syria, Israel and Lebanon, the Druze presence sometimes extends to Europe and Latin America.

This research attempts to explore various aspects of the Druze political identity and interaction in the three mentioned regions to achieve an appropriate model of their political behavior based on secure survival. There is a rich literature about the emergence of the Druze, their religious practice, geographical settlement and dispersion in the region. Content is also produced on the causes of their convergence or divergence with the Jewish state and its various aspects. However, there has been little research and analysis on the representation of the Druze and their discourse in Israeli media. This research contributes to the related literature in that it provides original findings based on the analysis of the Druze discourse in major Israeli media.

2. Aims

This research basically focuses on the three different forms of the Druze political life continuity in the three mentioned regions to understand the reasons for which they have deep ties with the Jewish state. Recent developments in Syria, the fall of the Alawite regime, more active Druze part taking in the geopolitics of the region and Israel's interventions in their support indicate serious bilateral interactions. The hypothesis is that the Druze were driven to accompany and align with the Jewish state as a result of the collective need to survive, perpetuate and maintain identity, rather than elimination and absorption into the Arab Muslim community. Long-term interests and inherent expediency of 'survival' of the nation are realized in different forms in each of the

three countries; and in particular, cooperation with the Jewish state, and of course, acceptance by Israel, have provided the basis for mutual benefit and alignment.

3. Methodology

This research uses discourse analysis as the method to explore the representation of the Druze and Israeli government's interaction or confrontation with the minority in Israeli media in 2024. QmaxDA software is used to analyze data and obtain appropriate outputs. In addition to historical evidence and empirical observation, research findings support the hypothesis.

4. Findings

Findings demonstrate differences in Druze performance in three different ways but a single goal (survival of the nation). The author argues that beside historical tendency, the principle of safe survival has gradually paved the way for the Druze-Israel interaction after the establishment of the Jewish state, leading to increasing relations between the two. The trend seems to be ongoing and even intensified as long as mutual interests are met.

5. Conclusion

This research helps to understand the situation of the Druze within Israel, as well as to address the causes and factors of the interaction and alignment. It is useful as to provide key information about the historical background of the relations and investigate the future path. Findings are insightful for further exploration, by other researchers, of other aspects of the interaction, to examine indications and manifestations of the expanding Druze-government relations in the other two countries (Syria and Lebanon) and the role they play following the fall of Bashar al-Assad and the establishment of the government in Lebanon. In short, the research confirms that the Druze, relying on past relations and the experience of beneficial win-win cooperation, will undoubtedly continue their cooperation with Israel in the near and distant future. It is very likely that this cooperation will extend the Druze branch of Syria and Lebanon, and Israel will maximum use of this tool to regulate part of its relations with the Arab world.

Conflict of interest

The author declared no conflicts of interest.

Ethical considerations

The author has completely considered ethical issues, including informed consent, plagiarism, data fabrication, misconduct, and/or falsification, double publication and/or redundancy, submission, etc.

This article was not authored by artificial intelligence.

Data availability

The dataset generated and analyzed during the current study is available from the author on reasonable request.

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