Iran, Iraq: What's the Difference?

Lisa Adeli University of Arizona Center for Middle Eastern Studies



http://www.cuttingedge.org/map-syria-iraq-iran.jpg

Similarities:

- Several hundred years of common history.
- Regional identity and shared traditions (close association).
- Both have a Shi'a Muslim majority and share pilgrimage sites.
- Both write their languages in the same alphabet and share some common terms.

Differences:

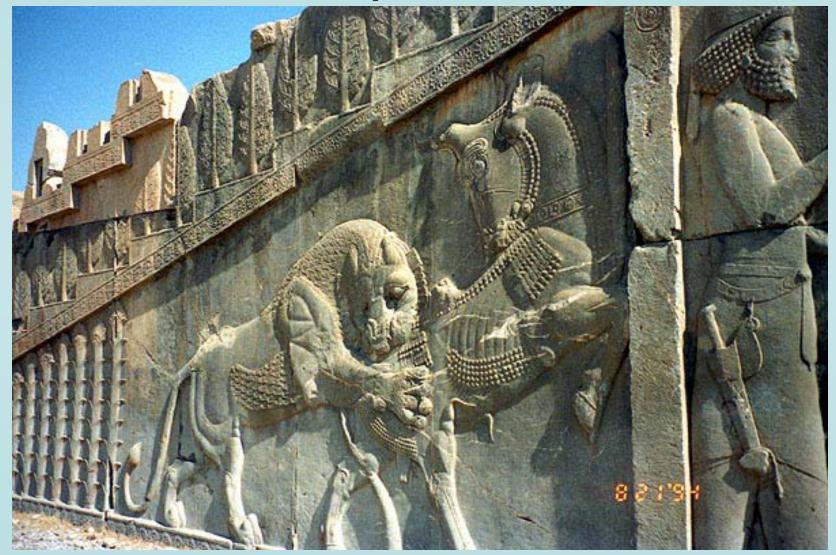
- Several thousand years of separate history (in modern times, for example, Iran was not part of the Ottoman Empire).
- Different enemies (in modern times).
- Iranian traditions shaped by Zoroastrian religion; Iraq influenced by Sunni Islam.
- Different languages (Iran's main language is Persian; Iraq's is Arabic.)

Babylon, Iraq

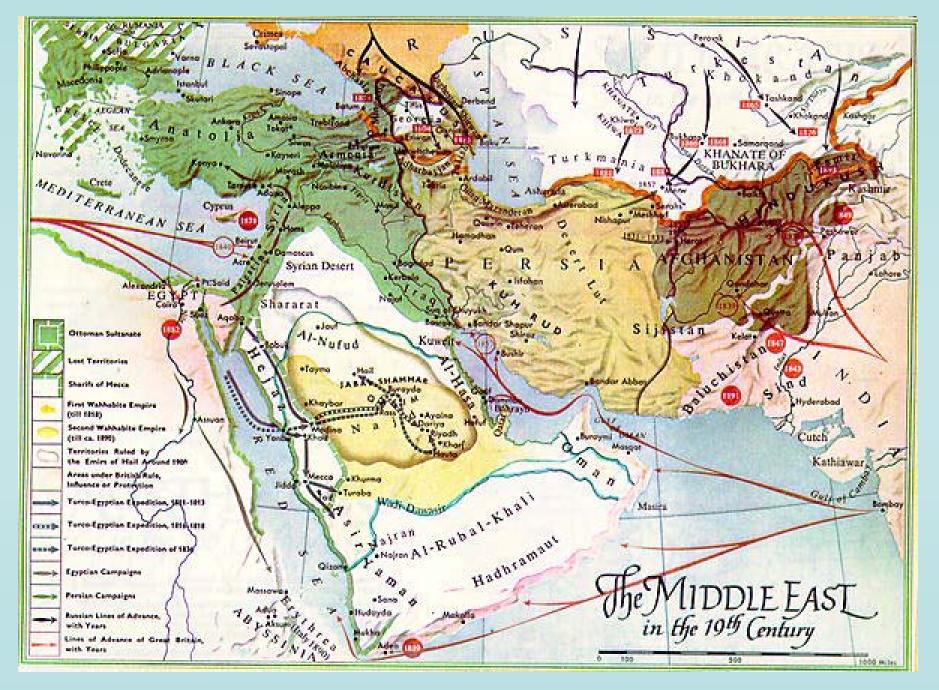


www.uoregon.edu/~klio/im/ane/Babylon%20-%20Stadtansicht%20-%20Zeichnung.jpg

Persepolis, Iran



http://tabisite.com/gallery_as/iran/h940821persepolis_lion.JPG

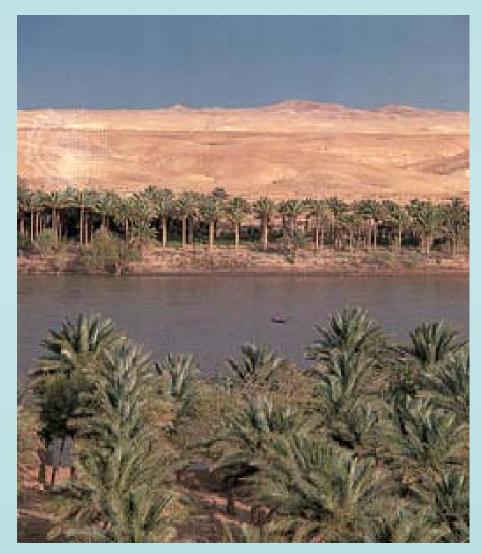


http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~rs143/Resources/Pics/rels143a.jpg



http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/iraq/facility/map-iraq.gif

Euphrates River, Iraq



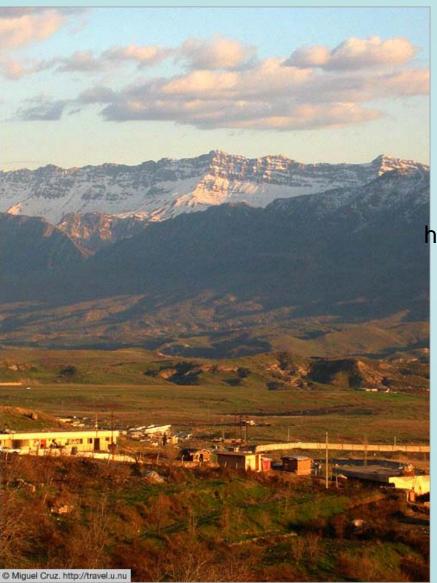
http://cache.eb.com/eb/image?id=1730&rendTypeId=4

Desert in Iraq



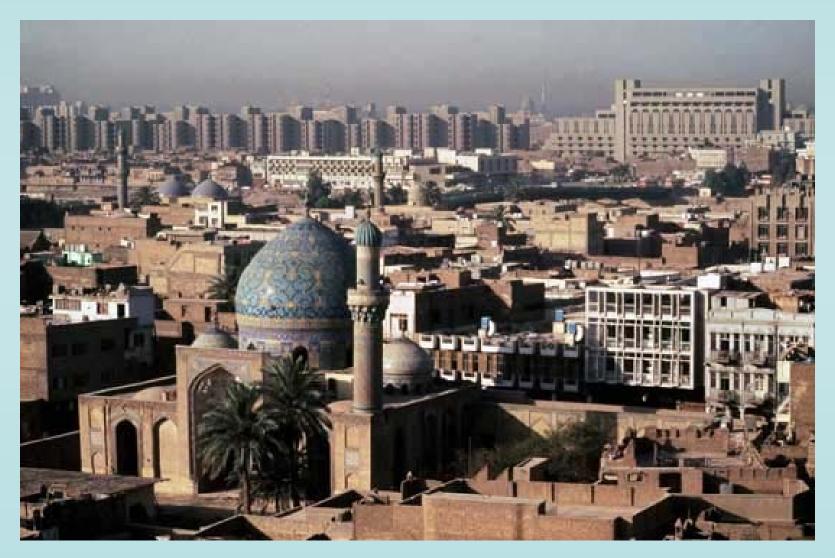
http://www.snifflegear.com/Photos/Iraqi%20Desert%202.jpg

Dohuk Province, Iraq



http://travel.u.nu/pic/iq/4642.jpg

Baghdad, Iraq



http://cache.eb.com/eb/image?id=58693&rendTypeId=4



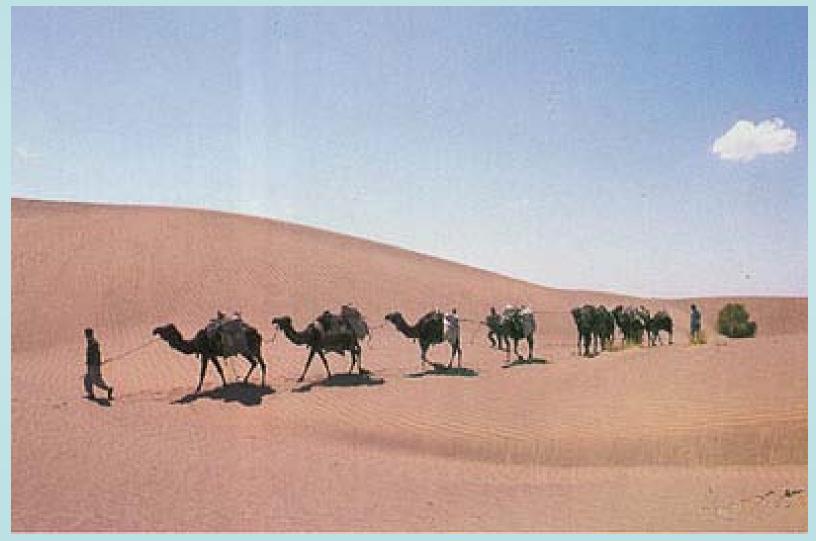
http://biglizards.net/Graphics/ForegroundPix/IranMapSized.gif

Bandar Abbas (as seen from the Persian Gulf)



www.ryu.titech.ac.jp/~ysep/student/ysep2003/present/IRANNN/Iran_files/image018.jpg

Desert in Iran



http://aitotours.net/images/desert.jpg

Iranian Kurdistan



http://ashtarydesign.com/gallery/kurdistan/lg/16.jpg

Caspian Sea, Iran

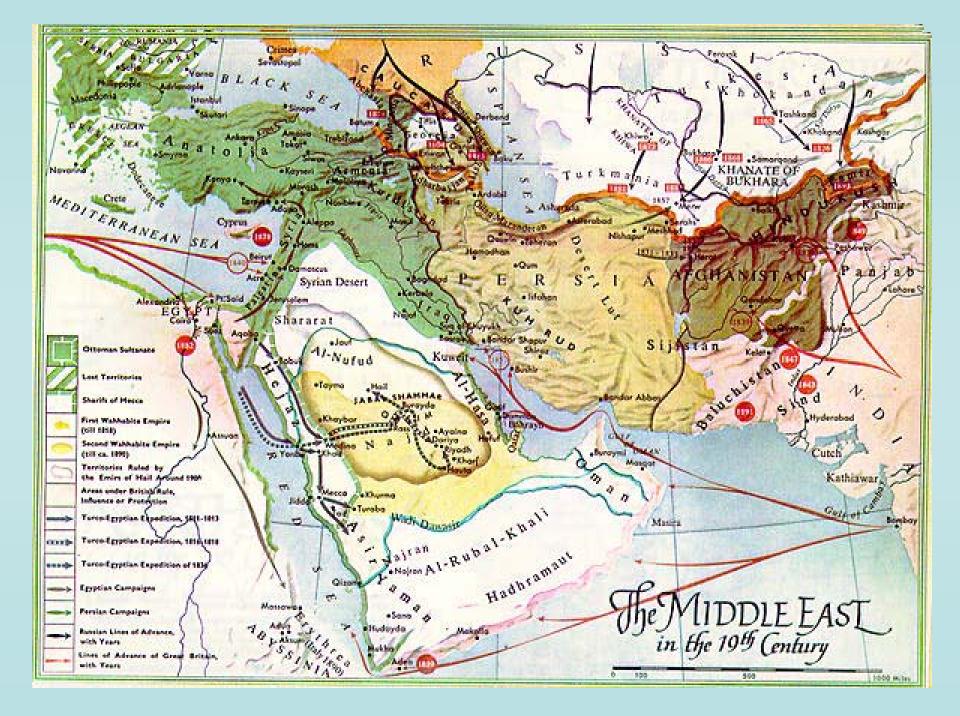


http://i1.trekearth.com/photos/44753/seaside_view_s_.jpg

Snow in Tehran (not a rare sight in winter)



http://jadi.civiblog.org/blog/_archives/2007/5/17/2956275.html



Persian Language (Iran)

- Also called "Farsi"
- Indo-European (Aryan)
- Dialects of Persian also spoken in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and among minorities in other states
- Arabic alphabet (with some differences) and some borrowed words from Arabic

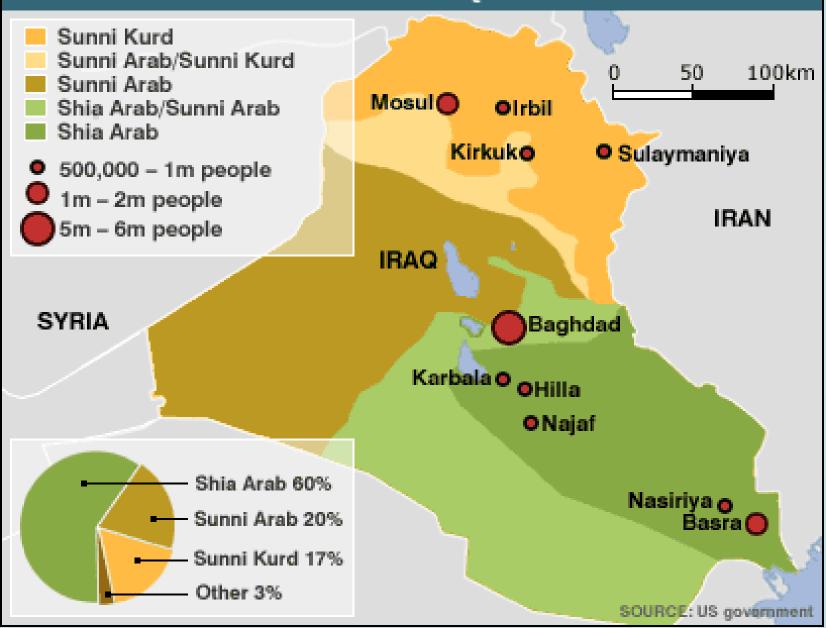
Arabic language (Iraq)

- Semitic language (like Hebrew)
- Spoken throughout North Africa and southwestern Asia
- Also the liturgical language of Islam



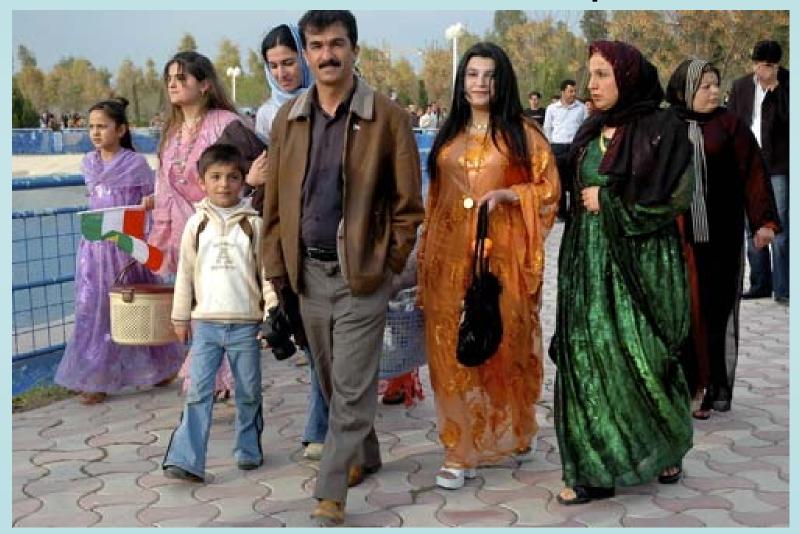
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/de/Iran_ethnoreligious_distribution_2004.jpg

RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS IN IRAQ



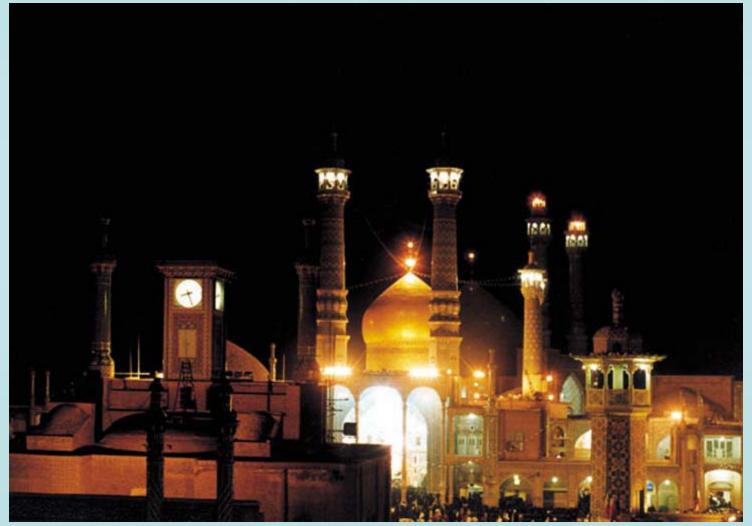
http://news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/spl/hi/in_depth/post_saddam_iraq/img/religion_ehtnic_map416.gif

Nooruz (New Year), celebrated by the Kurds of Iraq



http://time-blog.com/middle_east/Nowruz.jpg

Shi'a Muslim holy place – Qom, Iran



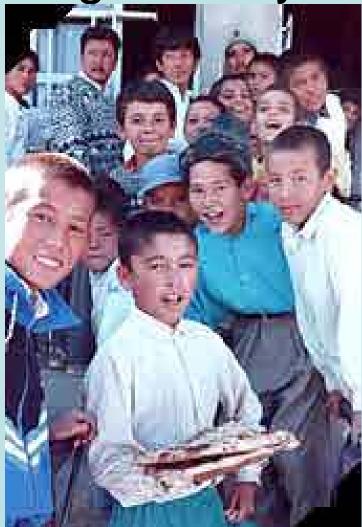
http://www.mojesafar.com/IMAGES/places/QOM.JPG

Shi'a Muslim holy place – Karbala, Iraq



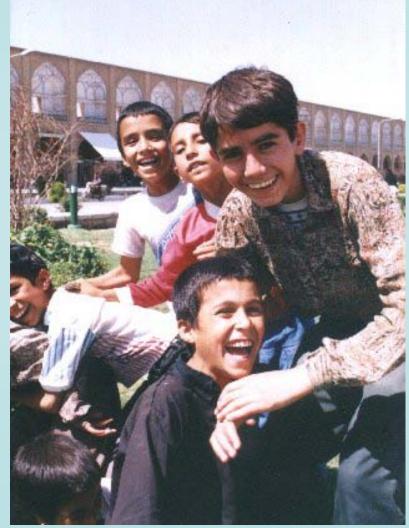
http://www.pictureninja.com/pages/iraq/karbala-mosque.JPG

Afghani children in Torbat-e Jam refugee "guest city" in Iran



http://www.iranproject.org/images/

Iranian children



http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/Base/1406/Pictures/more/kids2.jpg

Iraqi children



http://www.defenselink.mil/dodcmsshare/newsstoryPhoto/2006-01/screen_20060110173032_children-20060110.jpg