

The Middle East since the 1920s (HiHm 2047)

Introduction

In ancient times, Egyptian, Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian civilizations born and flourished in the Middle East. Judaism, the first of the three great monotheistic religions, took form here during the 3000 year of the Old Testament era. From its seeds sprang Christianity and Islam, the two other world faiths born in the Middle East. The region was, successively, a part of the Persian, Greek, Roman, Arab, Mongol, Tatar, and Turkish empires, each contributing to a new fusion of culture and civilization there. During medieval times, the European Crusaders wrested the eastern shores of the Mediterranean from the Muslims in their attempts to seize the Holy Land. The practical result was to open Asia to contact and a free flow of trade with Western Europe.

Both the Middle East and the Near East, the older form of the term, are used to designate the region. But there exists no general agreement regarding the boundaries of the area. Not even scholars wholly agree upon what territory or population should be included in the term. The concept of a Near East emerged in the Western world in the Great Age of Discovery which began in the 15th century. The area farthest away from Europe came to be called the Far East and the lands on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean that lay between Europe and the Far East became the Near East. The term was generally used to describe the lands that came to be ruled as part of the Ottoman Empire after 1453. The similar term Levant is sometimes used for this area, which comes from the French word meaning the rising of the sun, or the east.

During WWII, the British began officially to categorize as the Middle East those Asian and North African lands that lay west of India. Near East is increasingly being displaced by Middle East. But the interchangeable terminology continues to create confusion. Since Near East and Middle East are Western terms indicating the location of the region relative to Europe, they are often not used at all by Asians. Many Indians, for instance, refer to this part of the world today as southwest Asia.

According to Peretz, the Near East or the Middle East includes Turkey, Iran, Israel and the Arab countries of Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, the United Arab Republic (Egypt), the kingdoms, the sheikhdoms, principalities and protectorates.

When we come to the physical setting of the Middle East, a Fertile Crescent stretches along the Levantine coast of the Mediterranean up to the foothills of the Taurus Mountains in Turkey and down again through the Tigris and Euphrates valleys in Syria and Iraq to the Persian Gulf. There are also the great alluvial strips in the Nile Valley, enclaves of fairly rich agricultural land in Iran, and fertile coastal regions in Yemen in southern Arabia and in eastern Turkey along the Mediterranean. Lofty mountain ranges like the Taurus, the Elburz and the Zagros in Iran, and the highland of Yemen cut the region into many isolated units.

Generally, the region is poor in natural resources other than petroleum. Turkey has enough mineral diversity for a modest industrial development; but even its iron, coal, and copper deposits are national resources of secondary importance. Although the oil of Iran and some of the states of the Arabian Peninsula is a major asset, its value depends on sales to world markets rather than internal use. Only in recent decades have oil profits been used extensively for national development of basic agricultural resources.

Not all the region is “oil rich.” a majority of Middle Eastern countries produce no oil at all or only small quantities of it. Paradoxically, the countries with the greatest rate of economic development- Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and Israel-have only relatively small petroleum deposits, while those rich in this resource-such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Abu Dhabi have difficulty in absorbing hundreds of millions of dollars annually in constructive development projects. Iraq and Iran have made major efforts to use oil profits for building up the nation, but political and social obstacles have prevented real success.

Water is the scarcest and most valuable resource of the Middle East. While the total amount available is not inconsiderable, poor distribution creates the region’s major problem. A greater part of the desert will always remain desert, for little can be done to alter the climatic conditions that have made most of the Middle East arid. The only hope for the better use of water is in improving irrigation facilities connected with the region’s few rivers, or desalination of brackish water. At present about 5 percent of the total area is used for crops. About one fifth of the cultivated land requires additional water.

There are only two major river systems in the area. These are the Nile, fed by sources in Ethiopia and Central Africa, and the Shatt el-Arab, fed by the Euphrates, Tigris, and Karun rivers. The only

other river over 350 miles long is the Kizil Irmak (Red River) in Turkey. Parallel to the eastern Mediterranean shore, the Jordan, Litani, and Orontes rivers create small fertile areas in Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, and Syria. The largest of these, the Jordan itself, is only 85 miles long.

The main peoples of the modern Middle East are the Semitic, Turkish, and Iranian linguistic groups. These are broad classifications and within each there are numerous subdivisions. The largest group is the Semitic, whose principal living tongues are Arabic and Hebrew, the language of modern Israel. A few small remnants still use Chaldean and Syriac, but primarily for religious purposes. Our knowledge of Semitic languages begins with the written records left by the Akkadians, who were the forebears of the Babylonians and Assyrians. None of these civilizations has any existing direct linguistic or ethnic survivors except for the few users of Syria.

The tiny group of people which today call themselves Assyrians do not speak that ancient language but a modern form of Syriac, which is a branch of Aramaic. During the time of Christ, Aramaic was the language of Palestine west of the Jordan and also that of Iraq. The Semitic peoples who adopted Christianity used Aramaic and its Syriac script. When the Arabs swept up out of Arabia into Syria and Iraq, the majority of the inhabitants in these regions were members of various Christian sects using variants of the Aramaic language and script. As the new conquerors established themselves, most of these peoples learned Arabic and became Muslims.

Small, scattered pockets of Christians assimilated the Arabic language but retained their own religion. Today in Iraq there are still remnants of the Nestorians, formerly the principal Christian sect in the area. Larger early Christian groups remain unconverted in Syria, and in Lebanon nearly half the population today are Maronites (Eastern Uniates who are under the Church of Rome), Greek Orthodox, Jacobites, and other sects who are unconverted descendants from the pre-Islamic era. Most of these sects continue to use Syriac as a ritual language, and in a few villages the language is still spoken.

The origin of both modern Arabic and Hebrew script can be traced to the Phoenicians, another ancient but now extinct Semitic people. Historians postulate that they migrated to the Levant coasts from the shores of the Persian Gulf around the beginning of the Iron Age. Although there are no Phoenicians today, the Arab sailors of Kuwait and Muscat and the traders of Lebanon dealing in global commerce may well be descendants of this ancient inventive and productive people.

Arabic was not originally the language of all this region. Its spread is a relatively new phenomenon in history. Two thousand years ago it was but one of many Semitic languages with its locus in central Arabia. Not until the Arab conquests following the birth of Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries did it reach a position of cultural dominance. Prior to that time the languages of North Africa and parts of Iran were not Semitic, and those of Palestine and Syria, although Semitic, were not Arabic.

Arabs are today nationals of Egypt, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Republic of Lebanon, the Republic of Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, or, until recently, if inhabitants of the Crown colony of Aden or one of the Aden protectorates, which became the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen.

The only other large Semitic group in the Middle East is the Jews, now concentrated in Israel. Their language, Hebrew, is derived from the same source as Arabic and is like a sister tongue because it is so similar in grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and script. Not only are the roots of many Arabic and Hebrew words identical, but actual terminology is so similar that a knowledge of either Hebrew or Arabic gives a student considerable advantage in learning the other.

After the Semitic peoples, the next large group in the Middle East is the Turks. They are descended from tribes which swept out of Central Asia in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. As the Turkish tribes moved west, they were converted to Islam, and the overwhelming majority of Turks today are Muslims. Indeed, the term "Turk" generally refers to a Muslim whose mother tongue is Turkish. In the contemporary Turkish Republic, it is the rare non-Muslim Turkish citizen who will claim he or she is a Turk. The Turks are related to the tribes of Mongoloid peoples.

The Persian-speaking Iranians, numbering over thirty million, are the third largest linguistic group of Middle Eastern peoples. They belong to the Indo-Europeans, who originated outside the Middle East and heavily influenced, as the name indicates, the languages of Europe. Linguistically related to the Iranians are the Kurds, who are scattered through eastern Turkey, Iraq, northern Syria, northeastern Iran, and Russia.

Chapter One: Post War Peace Settlements

1.1. Paris Conference

WWI destroyed the Ottoman Empire and ended Ottoman sovereignty over all areas beyond Anatolia and a corner of Thrace in Europe. It also ended with the signing of peace treaties with each of the defeated Central Powers. When the fighting stopped, Great Britain controlled most of the Arab regions. An Allied Control Commission sat in Istanbul and British, French and Italian troops began occupying much of southwestern Anatolia. There was immediate competition among the three Allies and Greece to seize what territory they could. All Russian claims had been renounced by the Revolutionary government. Only the United States seemed interested in an open and just peace settlement.

At the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, President Woodrow Wilson tried to modify the Allied wartime agreements and worked for the acceptance of his own principles of self-determination in the Middle East. He sent the American members of a commission to the Middle East to investigate the wishes of the people. The two American commissions, Charles Crane and Henry King, reported that independence was most desired and the people prefer an American mandate though the British were acceptable as second best. But Wilson's illness caused him to withdraw from the Paris Conference. Britain and France disregarded Wilson's recommendations.

1.2. Sèvres and San Remo Conference

San Remo Conference was an outgrowth of the Paris Peace Conference which was held in Italy in April 1920. It approved the final framework of a peace treaty with Turkey which was later signed at Sèvres. France and Britain divided the Arab east between them. The San Remo Conference distributed the mandates without reference to Arab self-determination. Britain received the mandate over Iraq, Transjordan and Palestine. It also made Iraq a puppet kingdom under Emir Faisal, son of Sheriff Hussein of Mecca. Britain also brought Palestine under its direct rule to implement the Balfour Declaration. It detached Transjordan from Palestine and made it a separate puppet state under Emir Abdullah, another son of Sheriff Hussein. France received the mandate for Syria and the Lebanon.

In August 1920, the European Allies finally presented the Treaty of Sèvres to the Ottoman government for signature. All the Arab provinces were placed under British and French control. Greece was to get most of Thrace. It was also given Izmir to administer for five years, when the plebiscite was to determine whether the region would finally become Greek. Italy annexed the Dodecanese Islands. A state of Armenia was carved out of northeastern provinces in Anatolia and was proclaimed independent. Southeastern Anatolia, to be called Kurdistan, was granted autonomy within the Turkish state with the promise of future independence. The Straits were demilitarized and put under international supervision.

The armed forces and finances of what was left of Ottoman territory, and now called Turkey, were placed under the Allies. Turkey left only Constantinople, central Asia Minor and northwestern Asia Minor. The degrading document was reluctantly signed by representatives of the Ottoman government. But it was not ratified thereafter. Instead, a strong Turkish nationalist movement led by Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk) swept out of the Anatolian mountains and drove the Allies from all parts of the country except Istanbul, which the nationalists now abandoned as their capital in favor of Ankara. What was left of the old Ottoman government was dismissed in November 1922. The country became a republic, strong and unified capable of resisting the many and varied Western schemes to carve it up.

Since the Sèvres treaty could not be enforced, a new peace conference was convened at Lausanne, Switzerland. Atatürk's revolutionary government insisted that it would sign no document that did not recognize Turkish national dignity. In July 1923, a settlement was agreed upon. Anatolia was to remain intact and free of any foreign interference. Only the Aegean Islands, except for Tenedos and Imbros, were lost permanently to Greece. The Turks recognized the British annexation of Cyprus and the Italian possession of the Dodecanese Islands. All other Greek, Italian and French interests in Anatolia were voided. Independent Armenia and autonomous Kurdistan were forgotten. Mosul's future was left to be determined in the future because of Iraqi border disagreements between Turkey and England.

The only military restriction accepted by the new state was a thirty-kilometer wide demilitarized zone along the Turkish western frontier in Europe. All Allied economic controls were abandoned and no reparations demanded. The only meaningful restriction on Turkish sovereignty was the

international commission in charge of the Straits. But even this body was headed by a Turkish citizen and supervised by the League of Nations.

The former Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire were less fortunate than Turkey for they were unable to resist successfully Allied plans for their future. Thus until after WWII, the history of the Arab world was determined less by the wishes of the native populations than by the decisions of Western politicians.

The Mandates, 1920



Chapter Two: The Period of British Mandate and the Effects of WWII in the Middle East

2.1. The Arab Communities during the Mandate

Immediately after victory, the British permitted Amir Faisal, son of Sheriff Hussein, to become military governor of Damascus. When French General Henri Gouraud's troops replaced British forces along the Syrian coast late in 1919, they had no authority as yet to interfere with Faisal's nationalist government. The nationalists declared Syria independence and proclaimed Faisal king in March 1920. When the Allied decisions at the San Remo Conference to create a French mandate were made known, General Gouraud sent Faisal an ultimatum to surrender. He then captured Damascus and deposed the new king. The mandate over Syria and Lebanon was confirmed by the League of Nations in 1922.

British officials were divided about the future of Iraq. The Indian Office was skeptical about the ability of the local population to govern itself, arguing that Arab regions along the Persian Gulf and in Iraq should be closely supervised by British officials. At the same time, individual Britons, who had long experience in the Middle East, were more sympathetic to Arab nationalism. They favored partial independence with British administrative and political advice. Initially, Iraq was turned over to administrators who agreed with the Indian Office. But their policies created widespread unrest and a nationalist revolution in 1920. Thereafter, the views of the Cairo Arab nationalists were given much more serious consideration.

In March 1921, a conference was held in Cairo by Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill. Churchill and his colleagues decided to compensate Faisal for his loss of a Syrian kingdom by offering him the crown of the new kingdom of Iraq. Conflicting views of the pro-Arab nationalists and the imperialists were reconciled in the 1922 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance. The treaty recognized Iraqi's formal independence and authorized Great Britain to appoint advisers to the new government, to supervise its army, to protect foreigners and to make recommendations on financial matters and foreign policy.

Formal recognition of full independence came in 1930 after continued nationalist pressure. A new twenty-five year Anglo-Iraqi alliance replaced the 1922 treaty. Ostensibly, foreign controls were ended and Great Britain promised to support Iraqi's application for membership in the League of Nations. The British high commissioner was replaced by an ambassador, who was to have permanent seniority in the diplomatic corps. The two countries agreed to "full and frank consultation" on foreign policy and not to adopt policies might create difficulties for the other party. The agreement permitted the British to keep air bases at Basra and near Bagdad for the "defense of Iraq." In return, Iraqi was required to provide "all facilities and assistance."

From 1932, when Iraqi became a member of the League of Nations, until the end of WWII, its petroleum resources and military air bases made it a vital link in the British chain of Middle East outposts. During this era, few policies not approved in London could be successfully adopted in Baghdad.

Transjordan was also the creation of the 1921 British Middle East conference in Cairo. Transjordan resembled a British semi-colony more than an autonomous nation. Creation of the country in the first place was due more to the political circumstance than to geographic, ethnic or nationalistic factors. Between 1918 and 1920, its remote deserts had been divided between Faisal's Syrian kingdom and the kingdom of Hijaz ruled by his father, Hussein. British military authorities took it over in 1920, including it within the Palestine mandate. At the Cairo conference, British officials decided to bestow the territory on Faisal's brother, Abdullah.

Transjordan was cut off from the Palestine mandate and converted into an emirate, a status somewhat lower than a kingdom. British military officers and civilian administrators managed all the country's affairs, theoretically in consultations with the emir. In practice, until 1928 the British high commissioner in Palestine was also the chief executive in Transjordan. More formal autonomy was concluded in an agreement in 1928, although the country continued to be run much like the British protectorate in the Persian Gulf.

In Palestine, conflict between Jewish and Arab nationalists frustrated all British attempts to encourage local self-government. Arab nationalists considered Palestine part of the Arab heartland and refused to surrender any of their rights or claims. The Zionists, on the other hand, envisaged Palestine as a Jewish national homeland and were determined to realize their aspiration. Efforts to

strengthen their hold in the country only intensified the Arab nationalists' fears of the Jewish minority and led to armed conflict between the two communities. Throughout the interwar mandatory era, therefore, Palestine was also ruled like a British colony.

There was little increase in Western influence in the Arabian Peninsula during the interwar era. Great Britain maintained its holdings along the southern coast and in the Persian Gulf. Mutually beneficial agreements were made with King Ibn Saud, who expanded his desert principality into the largest and most powerful state in the peninsula. After a clash with Sheriff Hussein, Ibn Saud took over Mecca and Medina. Finally in 1927, he was proclaimed king of the Hijaz and Nejd. Ibn Saud's desire for an overland link with Syria would have separated Transjordan from Iraq. Since the British insisted that the land bridge between the two Hashemite kingdoms be maintained, Ibn Saud agreed to entrust the region temporarily to Abdullah in exchange for recognition of his "complete and absolute independence," He also acknowledged Great Britain's special position in Bahrain and the Persian Gulf chiefdoms.

Relations with Yemen remained unsettled because of disputes over the Aden frontier. The Royal Air Force continued to drive out Yemeni raiders until a treaty of friendship and cooperation, signed in 1934, calmed things temporarily in that disputed territory.

2.2. The Jewish Community under the Mandate

Israel is different in the Middle East. Demographically, the country differs from its neighbors because large percentages of its citizens were born beyond its borders; only a little more than half of Israel's Jews are natives. Israel is the world's only Jewish state; most of its customs and traditions are Jewish and its official language is Hebrew. There are strong economic, religious, cultural, and emotional ties between Israel and Jewish communities throughout the world, although not all Jews identify themselves with the country.

In 1918, a national conference representing several Jewish settlements chose Dr. Chaim Weizmann representing them at the Paris Peace talks. But the British military authorities blocked Jewish self-governing institutions as premature. Not until Palestine was turned over to civil authorities in 1920 did not the British permit election of a Jewish constituent assembly. Major decisions for the Yishuv (the historic name for the Palestine Jewish community) was made by European Zionist

leaders like Weizmann. The Yishuv was the vanguard of world Jews and laid the groundwork for the future immigration of most of the world's Jews.

In January 1919, Weizmann and Syria's King Faisal agreed on the need for Arab-Jewish cooperation. Faisal recognized the Balfour Declaration and encouraged Jewish immigration. In return, Weizmann promised Zionist assistance in Arab economic development. Both Weizmann and Faisal agreed that the British were to arbitrate disputes between the two parties.

In 1920, Palestine received its first civilian commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, an English Jew. He had played an important role in forming the Balfour Declaration. The Zionists regarded it as official recognition of their aspiration. The conflict of interests erupted into violence shortly after he became commissioner when the Bedouins attacked northern Jewish settlements. Palestine Arab nationalists would not accept British or Jewish control. The Arabs insisted that they were being denied their rights to rule Palestine. The mandate authorized Jewish immigration and close settlement on the land. The Jews who desired to establish permanent residence would be assisted in attaining Palestine citizenship. Jewish community leaders were authorized to construct and operate public works. The mandate recognized special Jewish rights.

Both the Jewish and Arab communities complained that the British mandatory authorities discriminated against them and protested any measure intended to lead toward self-government. As Jewish and Arab nationalism grew in strength, numbers and influence, the objective of each became control of the whole of Palestine.

Nazi Germany was responsible for the dramatic spread of Jewish nationalism in the 1930s. Victims of Hitlerism flooded into Palestine. In 1935, as many Jews arrived (over 61, 000) as had come during the first five years of the mandate. During the first four years of Hitler's rule, the Jewish population in Palestine nearly doubled. Zionists insisted that Jews should go to Palestine.

2.3. The Palestinian Revolt

As violence increased in 1929, Jews and Arabs clashed at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem (a place of religious importance to both) leaving 150 dead. Arabs attacked synagogues and Jews attacked mosques. A British Commission of Enquiry saw the causes of the Arab's irritation in the delay in granting independence, their fear of being outnumbered, and the loss of the land to the Jews. A

British Government White Paper of 1929 proposed limited immigration, and a restriction on the purchase and settlement by Jews of Arab land. Arabs welcomed these proposals, but Zionist pressure caused Britain to reduce its scope. In the next few years the influx of European Jews, fleeing from Hitler and backed by the wealth of world Jewry, increased the Arabs' fear of imminent Jewish domination.

Arab nationalists were terrified by rapidly growing number of Jews and adopted militant tactics such as a general strike in 1936, refusal to pay taxes to the mandatory and violent attacks on both Jews and British. The British retaliated by arresting nationalist leaders, imposing curfews and military control in Arab areas. Then Arab officials in the mandatory government formally protested in June 1936. 137 senior Palestine government Arab officials and judges informed the British high commissioner that the disturbances were caused due to injustice done to the Arabs.

Arab violence began on a large scale in 1936, which led to Jewish counter violence. The whole country became an arsenal of armed camps. The economic and long term consequences of the strike were disastrous for the Arabs. The revolt only encouraged the deepening nature of the emerging Zionist economy. Before the strike ended, a spontaneous violent rebellion had started by 1938, it had swept up almost all the Arab population of Palestine.

The British used force to restore order and thus the rebellion was put down in 1939. Seeking a peace formula that would satisfy all parties, Britain called a roundtable conference of Jewish and Arab leaders (including Arabs from other countries) in London in early 1939. By then the differences between Palestinian Jews and Arabs had become so great that they would not even sit around the same table. No agreement was reached and the conference ended inconclusively. The British promised to limit immigration into Palestine. The Palestinian Arabs emerged from the revolt weaker and more defeated than they had started it.

2.4. The Middle East on the Eve, Course and Aftermath of WWII

2.4.1. The Middle East on the Eve of WWII

By the eve of WWII, the Middle East was still dominated by Europeans and only Turkey had real independence. The mandated territories and Egypt were still occupied. Britain and France had

introduced Western parliamentary institutions and administrative apparatus in their respective territories. However, the basic pattern of life for the Middle Eastern masses had not changed.

Britain had emerged as the most influential foreign power and directly controlled over the greatest amount of territory. By 1939, British policies controlled Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Transjordan, and the Sheikdoms of the Arabian Peninsula. But an undercurrent of nationalism was already swirling about with greater violence than ever before. It threatened to swamp British interests, military bases and communication centers. France managed to hold its own in Syria and Lebanon though fervent nationalist protests. The Soviet Union was active only in Iran during the interwar period. There were small and ineffectual communist movements in Palestine and the neighboring Arab countries.

As a result of insistence by the US government, a commercial open-door policy was accepted by the British. Thus several American companies obtained a major interest in the Iraqi petroleum company. Other powerful American firms negotiated valuable petroleum concessions in Saudi Arabia. It also contributed to the beginning of a direct US interest in the Middle East.

By 1939, Western interests were directly threatened by Hitler and Mussolini. British and Russian influence in Iran was rapidly replaced by Germany. Germany established close economic ties with Turkey, receiving nearly half its exports. From the port of Bari, the Italians broadcast inflammatory Arabic programs to incite the nationalists of Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Egypt. German and Italian propaganda found willing listeners among local populations throughout the Middle East. Both nations waged a cultural offensive and enticed to their universities hundreds of impressionable young students from Turkey, Iran, and the Arab world.

2.4.2. The Middle East during WWII

The Middle East again became involved in international affairs when Europe entered WWII. There was little actual combat in the area itself, though it was a target of a vast German pincer movement pressing toward its center from the Balkans, the Caucasus, and across the deserts of North Africa. The German force that came closest to achieving victory was finally turned back in November 1942 at the battle of El-Alamein in the Western desert close to the border of Egypt. The region continued to be significant more because of its diplomatic rather than its military role in the war.

In the last peaceful prewar months, France turned to Turkey as a possible Mediterranean ally. Relations between the two had remained cordial ever since France became the first Western European power to recognize Ataturk's new national regime. After France fell in June 1941, the Balkans became the principal theatre of the war operation. By 1941, Axis troops had occupied Bulgaria, seized Greece, Crete, and Yugoslavia, and camped along the Turkish frontier. Hitler's armies crept through the Caucasus, and by November 1943 they reached a point within fifty miles of the Caspian Sea.

A pro-Axis coup in Iraq during 1941 had almost thrown that country into the Axis camp, but its fall was averted by a British invasion in May that year. Libya became a base for invasion of Egypt and the Suez Canal by the German General, Rommel, until he was defeated by British General Montgomery at El Alamein in 1942. The German pincer movement closing in on the Middle East, together with the fall of France, caused second thoughts in Ankara about the Western alliance. When the tide began to turn against Germany in 1944, however, Turkey again changed its policy, severing its economic and diplomatic relations with Hitler. Since support for the Allied cause was required for the charter membership in the newly formed United Nations, Turkey declared war on Germany in February 1945.

The outbreak of the war found Iran trying to counterbalance British and Russian pressures by cultivating a relationship with Nazi Germany. Reza Shah rejected Soviet and British requests in the summer of 1941 to use his territory for a supply route. Since this was their only viable route to Russia after the Nazi invasion of that country in June 1941, the Allies resorted to force. When the Shah rejected an ultimatum demanding expulsion of a German fifth column and the establishment of Allied transit facilities, British and Russian troops invaded, dividing the country approximately along the lines of the 1907 Anglo-Russian agreement.

The USSR occupied Iran's five northern provinces, and Great Britain the rest of the country. The capital, Tehran, became a neutral enclave. Raza Shah was deposed and exiled by the British, with Russian assent, and his son was placed on the throne. In January 1942, Iran, Great Britain and the USSR signed a tripartite Treaty of Alliance giving the Allies use of transit and communication facilities. Special point was made of emphasizing that the country was not "occupied" and that its independence was to be respected. Within six months of the defeat of the Axis, Allied troops were to be withdrawn.

The USA became a partner in 1942 when 30,000 American troops attached to the Persian Gulf Command moved in to operate a route for lend-lease supplies to Russia. Within months after the occupation, Russia began to use its troops as a political lever. The British attempted to undermine this Communist activity, but with little success. While the United States supplied both economic and technical assistance to the Tehran government, it could do little to prevent the USSR from completely dominating the north.

In Syria and Lebanon, France cancelled all self-governments and reasserted its authority when war broke out by re-establishing direct control over these countries. In both Syria and Lebanon, the high commissioner suspended the constitution and dissolved parliament. These tactics aroused the nationalists and turned most of the population against the Allied cause. When France surrendered to Germany, the Vichy regime sent its officials to administer the Levant and Axis influence was widespread. Numerous German and Italian officers came to the region, turning it into a base for anti-Allied activities.

After the Vichy high commissioner announced it would permit German planes to use Syrian airfields when they arrived to assist the anti-Hashemite revolt in Iraq, the British decided to act. In June 1941, a month after the Iraqi uprising, British and Free French troops dissolved the Vichy forces with little fighting, interning the Germans and Italians.

In the Arab world, Axis propaganda had been most successful in Iraq, where strong nationalist forces led by Rashid Ali al-Gilani became influential. While Britain was fighting alone for its life after the fall of France, Rashid Ali plotted to obtain Axis support for their independence. British troops were landed in the south of Iraq, and Rashid Ali demanded their evacuation. When they refused to leave, Rashid Ali's forces attacked the British air base at Habbaniya and seized the Iraqi Petroleum Company's oil-pumping installations. But the Iraqis were unable to cope with the situation. Their appeals to Hitler were unanswered because of German involvements elsewhere. The troops of Great Britain and Transjordan took over the country. Rashid Ali and his followers decamped in haste, and a pro-British government was reinstated for the remainder of the war.

Palestine was remarkably quiet during the war years. The Arab rebellion which erupted in 1936, petered out by 1939 and the Zionists called a halt to their major political maneuvers against the British. When the war broke out, one of the first moves of the Zionist leadership was to pledge all-out assistance to the Allies against Nazi Germany. Throughout the war, however, they did not

continue attempts to rescue persecuted Jews from Europe by smuggling them into Palestine against the wishes of the Arab majority and the British authorities. British restrictions on immigration caused a rift among the Jewish underground forces, and one small terrorist fragment led by Abraham Stern kept up its militant activities against Great Britain. The rest of the Jewish community participated fully in the war effort, through economic cooperation, and large-scale military recruitment.

Transjordan, Palestine's neighbor, and its ruler Emir Abdullah remained loyal British allies. There were no nationalist outbreaks in his emirate. On the contrary, the Arab legion of Transjordan actively assisted the British forces to put down the Rashid Ali revolt in Iraq.

Egypt was the center of Allied Middle East wartime activity. The British Middle East Command, the office of Minister of State for the Middle East, and the Middle East supply center were located in Cairo. Over half a million British, Indian, Australian, New Zealand, South Africa, Polish, Greek, Czechoslovak, Yugoslav, and American soldiers passed through the country on their way to various battle fronts. The historic 1943 conference between United States President Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Chinese General Chiang Kai-Shek, and Turkish President Inonu was held in the shadow of the pyramids.

Egyptian sympathies were divided. Some nationalists, including several of the younger officers who were later to lead the 1952 revolution under Nasser, joined former chief of staff General Aziz al-Misri in an unsuccessful attempt to collaborate with the Nazis. Cabinet ministers and some members of the royal court, who had personal attachments with the Italian royal family, could hardly disguise their Axis sympathies. On the other side, leaders of the social-democratic Wafd party backed the British war effort.

At first, Great Britain did not expect an Egyptian war declaration, only benevolent neutrality. When Italy attacked France in June 1940, however, the British ambassador demanded that Prime Minister Ali Maher would join the Allies. When the latter refused, Great Britain insisted that the king dismiss him and appoint a pro-Allied wafdist government under Nahas Pasha. To enforce their ultimatum, British armored units surrounded the king's palace and threatened to deport him unless Nahas was immediately appointed. To many nationalists, the incident seemed to turn the clock back to 1882. It was a major factor in the subsequent unpopularity of the king and the Wafd

among the younger nationalist army officers. When Allied victory was within reach in February 1945, Egypt declared war on Germany, thus becoming eligible to participate in the San Francisco conference to establish the United Nations.

The sovereign Arab state friendliest to the Allies was Saudi Arabia, although it remained neutral until March 1945, when Ibn Saud also declared war on Germany to become eligible for United Nations membership. When the war began, Great Britain dominated the peninsula. Although American oil companies had been operating in eastern Arabia since 1933, the United States government had remained officially aloof. There was not even a United States consular in Jidda, Saudi Arabia's diplomatic outpost. The country's deteriorating economy soon changed the situation. King Ibn Saudi was forced to seek aid from the United States and British governments.

The United States requested Great Britain to share with Saudi Arabia some of the funds from a 425 million dollar American loan. The indirect American aid was supplemented by direct lend-lease to Saudi Arabia in 1943, and an American air base was set up at Dhahran to link the route with the Far East. Relations became so cordial that in 1945 King Ibn Saudi was invited to visit President Roosevelt when the latter returned from Yalta by the way of Suez Canal.

2.4.3. The Middle East on the Aftermath of WWII

When WWII ended in 1945, Great Britain was still a dominant Western power in the East. Egypt, Palestine, Transjordan, Iraq, Southern Arabia and the Persian Gulf were fully within British control. Russia had reasserted its influence in northern Iran. In Syria and Lebanon, the French had been displaced. American interests were just beginning to develop. Within months after the Allied victory, the signs of a new Middle East power relationship began to appear. The region acquired renewed importance and was soon to become a major center of tensions and clashes between the West and Russia.

Weakened by defeat in 1940, France was no longer able to contain the nationalist tide in Syria and Lebanon. When British and Free French forces had occupied the Levant in 1941, they had recognized the independence of the two Arab states. Pro-French governments in both were replaced by nationalist regimes which resisted the 1943 attempts by the de Gaulle Free French forces to impose again the colonial administration. The British intervened, then and again in 1945,

to protect the nationalists in their demand for complete independence. Both Syrian and Lebanese nationalist governments brought charges before the United Nations Security Council in 1946 claiming the continued presence of French and British troops to be unlawful.

An American draft resolution calling on all four parties to negotiate the immediate evacuation of foreign troops was vetoed by Russia on the grounds that it was ineffective. Nevertheless Great Britain and France continued withdrawing their forces. By the end of 1946, the last foreign soldiers had gone, and Syria and Lebanon were completely free. The dominant position enjoyed by France for nearly four centuries had ended, although French cultural influences, especially in Lebanon, remained strong.

Great Britain withdraw from the Middle East less precipitously than France. The first area abandoned was Palestine. Intensified hatred between the Palestinian Arabs, the Jews, and the British after the war made the latter's position untenable. After an unsuccessful attempt by the 1946 Anglo-American Committee of inquiry to find a compromise, Great Britain handed over the dilemma to the United Nations. In November 1947, the General Assembly accepted the recommendations of its Special Committee on Palestine, which proposed the division of Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish state and the creation of an international zone in Jerusalem.

Palestine's Arab majority and their supporters in the neighboring nations rejected the plan, and their protests gave birth to riots that grew into the Arab-Israel war in 1948. Great Britain evacuated its troops and officials from the country in the midst of these hostilities, abandoning the framework of government to whatever Arab or Jewish forces managed to effect a takeover. The British occupation thus ended shambles.

Abdullah of Transjordan was rewarded for loyalty to the Allied cause over full control over his country at the end of the war. His status raised from emir to king. After the Arab-Israel war, Transjordan absorbed those parts of Palestine not conquered by the Israelis. The resulting state was named in 1949 the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan. The last British troops left the country in 1957.

The last former mandate from which British forces departed was Iraq. After the end of WWI, only a few British officers remained at two royal air force bases in Iraq. Continued British influence in

the country was the principal target of the revolutionists who overthrew the British backed Hashemite monarchy in 1958. A few months later, the last British units left their two air bases and Iraq terminated its alliance with Britain.

The only remaining outposts of direct British influence in the Middle East by 1962, were Aden colony and the adjoining protectorates, principalities, sheikhdoms, and emirates along the southern Arabian coast and the Persian Gulf.

American interests in the Middle East had been neither political nor strategic until WWII. American air bases were then established in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. In Iran, the Persian Gulf Command linked Russia with the lend-lease supply route. United States aid subsidized the Saudi Arabian government. Immediately after the war, most American interests were jettisoned.

The Soviet Union took advantage of victory over the Axis and the decline in British power to press historical Russian ambitions in Turkey and Iran. Even before the end of the war, the USSR began to accuse Turkey of prolonging the struggle by protecting the German flank in the Balkans through a policy of neutrality. Two months before the Nazi collapse, the Soviet government unilaterally denounced its 1925 pact of friendship and nonaggression with Turkey. By the spring of 1947, many Turks feared possible Soviet armed intervention. Neighboring Greece was also in danger of losing its independence to Communist guerrilla forces inside the country.

The US President Truman asked Congress in March 1947 to approve a massive economic and military program to the beleaguered nations in order to prevent the disaster. The Truman Doctrine became part of America's policy to contain Russia and was its first major peacetime Middle East commitment.

Chapter three: Arab Nationalism

3.1. Arab Nationalism to 1908

From the mid-19th century until the Young Turks revolution, only Christian Arabs aspired to independence. On the other hand, the Muslims desired reforms and greater Arab autonomy. Until the late 19th century, communal identity in the East had little to do with territorial boundaries. During the 19th century and early 20th century, various peoples of the Middle East began to feel nationalistic for the first time. The people of Egypt started to think of themselves as Egyptians and wanted to be free of foreign rule. The people of Syria began thinking of themselves as Syrians and sought to be independent. The Iranians, the Iraqis and the rest did the same.

Arab nationalism began during the period before WWI. It first started in Egypt and Syria where Western influence and Western ideas were the most widespread. Arab nationalism was first anti-Turkish because all the Arab lands before 1914 were a part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. Thus the first Arab nationalists wanted independence from the Turkish rule. They organized secret societies and carried on underground propaganda. Several Christian nationalists in Beirut organized the first Arab nationalist secret society in 1875 and distributed revolutionary pamphlets.

3.2. Arab Nationalism from 1908-1914

When the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) took over the Ottoman government in 1908, Arab nationalists believed in their promised era of progress and equality. The CUP was established by the Young Turks who were Ottoman patriots and supporters of Westernization. Many of them were army officers who absorbed Western political ideas. The Young Turks were dissatisfied with the rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (r. 1878-1908). Using the soldiers under their command, they overthrew the old Sultan's government and established a new government.

The Young Turks removed Abdul Hamid II, but the CUP failed to promote the welfare of the Arab provinces, and to foster Arab education and encourage Arab culture. The Young Turks began to ban all non-Turkish societies. Some CUP radicals even wanted to abolish Arabic and translate the Koran into Turkish. Arabs in Istanbul, Damascus, Beirut, Aleppo, Baghdad and other Arab cities opposed to the Turkification program. Some were secret and others were public.

The earliest non-secret society was the Literary Club, established in Istanbul in 1909. The Club served as a meeting place for Arab officials, deputies, writers, students and visitors. The best organized and most widely known of the Arab groups was the Ottoman Decentralization Party, established in Cairo during 1912. Its program called for a multinational and multiracial empire. The society established branches throughout Iraq and Syria. It set up close connections with other groups, both secret and public.

An important secret organization was the Young Arab Society, al-Fatat, organized by seven Muslim students in Paris before WWI. The members strove for Arab independence. On the eve of the war, the society moved first to Beirut and then to Damascus. In Beirut in 1913, the interfaith Committee of Reform roused sentiment for Arab autonomy and public meetings cheered it in Damascus, Aleppo, Acre, Baghdad and Basra. Later in the year, the Young Turks began to suppress the Committee and arrested several of its leaders.

The first Arab congress of nationalist groups was convened in Paris during June 1913 by al-Fatat. Besides delegates from al-Fatat, the Ottoman Decentralization Party and the Beirut Committee of Reform sent representatives. The stated objective was an Ottoman government in which all citizens would have equal rights and obligations whether they were Arabs, Turks, Armenians, Kurds, Muslims, Christians, Jews or Druses.

In August 1913, an imperial decree published promising some reforms. Most of nationalists considered the decree a betrayal. A few like Hamid al-Zahrawi, who had presided over the Paris Congress were still willing to compromise. Al-Zahrawi was awarded for his moderation with a seat in the Ottoman senate.

One of the most colorful Arab nationalists was the Egyptian officer, Aziz Ali al-Masri. Al-Masri was a commander of the Ottoman forces which fought the Italian invasion of Libya in 1912. He represented a generation of conservative individuals who wanted to revive past Arab glories. Al-Masri organized a new secret society, al-Ahd (Covenant). Most of its members were Arab officers in the Ottoman army, principally Iraqis. Al-Masri settled in Egypt, later becoming chief of staff in King Farouk's army.

Al-Masri warned fellow al-Ahd members against the temptations of joining the Europeans. The fear was that insurrection within the empire would lead to foreign conquest. Most other Arab

nationalists, however, broke with the Ottoman government and shifted to Sheriff Hussein and his sons in Arabia. Negotiations between the Arab nationalists and the Allies were conducted through an exchange of letter during 1915 and 1916 between Sheriff Hussein and Sir Henry McMahon, British high commissioner for Egypt. The Hussein-McMahon Agreement formed a military alliance on the basis of a fairly ambiguous political understanding.

Great Britain agreed to support Arab independence in all regions demanded by Sheriff Hussein, comprising the Ottoman Arab provinces south of Anatolia, including the Arabian Peninsula and the regions from the Mediterranean and the Red Sea eastward to Iran and the Persian Gulf. Hussein acknowledged British supremacy in Aden. Hussein established contact with the secret al-Fatat and al-Ahd societies through his sons before concluding negotiations with the British. Both secret societies, despite their earlier support to the Turks, were drawn into military action against the Ottomans on the basis of the agreement with McMahon.

The ruthlessness of Jemal Pasha, Turkish-Ottoman governor and commander in chief of Syria, helped to push the Arabs in support of the Allies. At first Jemal Pasha tried to win them over with promises of a program for Arab welfare. But Turkish promises came too late. Jemal Pasha's fury was intensified by defeat of an expedition he had sent against the British in the Suez Canal zone during 1915. Treason trials were held at which thirty-four nationalists were condemned to death as "traitors." Hundreds of others were deported to remote parts of Anatolia, and a severe police regime was imposed.

While Jemal Pasha was executing nationalists in Syria, the Ottomans also decided to reinforce their position in Arabia. The threat of military repression in Arabia and the executions in Syria set off the military phase of the Arab revolt. Arab revolt was by no means a mass movement. There was no widespread civil unrest against Ottoman authority, due partly Ottoman repression and partly to lack of encouragement from the government of British India.

3.3. Arab Nationalism on the Eve, During and Aftermath of WWII

The Palestine Arab revolt in 1936 fused nationalist policies together in a common front. Both Emir Abdullah of Transjordan and the Iraqi foreign minister, General Nuri al-Said, intervened with the British as friends of the Palestine Arab nationalists. The Committee for the Defense of Palestine

were organized in various Arab cities. The Damascus Committee sponsored a conference of its sister groups at Bluodan in Syria in 1937. In 1938, the Parliamentary Defense Committee in Egypt and Syria joined with other groups to form a world Inter-parliamentary congress of Arab Muslim countries for the defense of Palestine. Some 2500 participants attended the meetings in Cairo during October 1938.

During WWII, vague proposals for a “Greater Syria” and for unity of the “Fertile Crescent” were discussed by the leaders of Iraq, Syria and Transjordan. As far as WWII is concerned, the Arabs were either neutral or openly hostile toward the Allies. In 1945, the Arab League was formed in Cairo. It was a loose federation of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Members surrendered none of their sovereignty. The League aroused a new common Arab consciousness. The initial failure of the League to organize its membership to oppose the Zionists during the Palestine war was a setback. Many youth nationalists began to criticize the Arab defeat by the Jewish forces in 1948. Thus the Zionist victory contributed indirectly to nationalist revolutions in Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq.

The most radical social changes occurred in Egypt under the leadership of Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser and the Egyptian revolution came to symbolize a new nationalism. Its ideology spread throughout the whole Arab East. Nasser’s popularity was intense.

Chapter Four: Zionism and the Establishment of Israel

4.1. Historical Background

The Jews are Semitic group in the Middle East, now concentrated in Israel, and their language is Hebrew. Hebrew expressions, as well as Hebrew script is derived from the same source as Arabic and is like a sister tongue because it is so similar in grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and script. Not only are the roots of many Arabic and Hebrew words identical, but actual terminology is so similar that a knowledge of either Hebrew or Arabic gives a student considerable advantage in learning the other.

In Israel and elsewhere there are many individuals who are not religious in any commonly accepted sense of the term, yet they consider themselves and are regarded by others as Jews. There are also a few Israeli Jews who have converted to Christianity but insist that they are still Jewish. Most Israeli Jews link being Jewish with nationality since Israel was established as a “Jewish State.” Although the Jews are Semitic people by virtue of their historic and contemporary use of Hebrew, it is the native tongue of less than half of the population of Israel. Most inhabitants immigrated to the new state from other areas had to learn the language upon arrival. Consequently, the Semitic Hebrew of modern Israel is a strange blend of accents. It is spoken with Polish, Russian, French, English, Arabic, and other nuances.

Israel is different in the Middle East. Demographically, the country differs from its neighbors because large percentages of its citizens were born beyond its borders. Only a little more than half of Israel’s Jews are natives. Israel is the world’s only Jewish state. Most of its customs and traditions are Jewish and its official language is Hebrew. There are strong economic, religious, cultural, and emotional ties between Israel and Jewish communities throughout the world.

When we come to Zionism, Zionism is an international political and religious movement that supported establishing an independent Jewish state in Palestine and that supports the modern state of Israel. Modern Zionism, the movement for a Jewish return to the home land, is inspired by the ancient land of Israel of the Old Testament. Zionism was a direct product of the economic, political, and social conditions of nineteenth-century European Jews and, indirectly, of the many centuries of Jewish history that followed the dispersion of the Palestine Jewish community after

conquest by Rome during the first century A.D. From the Holy Land, Jews emigrated or were transported mainly to Europe, where they usually lived together in separate communities whose life was based on the laws, traditions, and customs of ancient Israel.

The Jews were not permitted to hold public office or to own land, and they were usually excluded from the dominant social life. Not only were Jews isolated from the community at large, but frequently they were expelled altogether. Nearly every major European nation- Spain, France, England, Poland, Rumania, and Germany- exiled its Jewish community at one time or another.

The Jews did not really become Frenchmen, Englishmen, poles, or Germans. They thought of themselves and were thought of by those around them primarily as Jews. Their national history and sentiment rested on historic memories of past glories in the Holy land. Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles) came to regard each other with suspicion. Non-Jews saw the Jewish community as a “foreign” element in their society and the Jews believed the Gentiles desired to persecute them. Jewish attachment to the Holy Land was not only to the spiritual, but also to the physical land of Zion.

There was a mystique about Palestine among Jews especially while they were segregated and a great many felt a close personal identity with the land, though they had no physical contact with it. Jewish identification with Palestine was far more intense and pervasive than that of the average Muslim or Christian.

By the mid-19th century, the Western Jews were permitted, in varying degrees depending on country, to own property to practice law, and to teach in universities. They acquired the vote along fellow citizens and even entered military service. But the Russian government imposed new restrictions on Jewish movement, place of habitation, and employment. Thus by the 1880s, waves of emigrants were fleeing Russia for Western Europe and the United State. The programs also led to the organization of the first social movements in Eastern Europe directed to the amelioration of the Jewish plight.

In the vanguard of these movements was the Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion), first established in Russia during the early 1880s. This group advocated Jewish settlement in Palestine as practical measures of relief, rather than as a religious ideal. A few Jewish youths from Russia managed to

settle in Palestine, where they established the small town of Rishon le-Zion (First in Zion) in 1882. Within the decade, other Russian and Polish Jewish youths set up a few similar small settlements. Only hand full of the first Zionists went to Palestine, whereas millions of Jews immigrated for Russia to America and Western Europe.

Many who never contemplated emigration to the Middle East, including many who had settled in America and Western Europe, became ardent Zionist. The Zionists as a group professed a desire to return to the land, not only in the national sense, but as farmers. But it was not easy for the lower-middle-class Jews, unaccustomed to such toil, to go to Palestine to work the soil, and their early failures were many. A decade after the first Russian Jewish settlers landed in Palestine, the various Zionist groups came in a single, large movement. Its founder was not from Poland or Russia, but was from Hungary. He was Theodore Herzl, born in Budapest in 1860.

Herzl published his views, *The Jewish State*, in 1895. His writing became the essence of the Zionist cause, capturing the imagination of Eastern European Jewry. The hatred of the Jewish minority by non-Jewish majority existed wherever there were Jews. Even immigration to hopefully safe places did not exempt Jews from eventual anti-Semitism. The Jewish problem was not religious or social, he concluded, but national. Jews were a "nation without a land." Therefore, they should be granted a territory by the world powers to fulfill the needs of a nation.

In his book, Herzl envisaged a "society of Jews "to organize the Jewish masses for emigration and to negotiate the acquisition of a national territory with the European powers. A Jewish company would raise the necessary funds and deal with economic and financial matters. Because he himself was not closely involved with the formal religious practice or observance of the Jewish faith. Herzl did not have the deep emotional ties to Palestine that his followers had. He suggested that either Palestine or Argentina-the latter because of its rich underdeveloped territories-were possible choices for a new Jewish homeland. But Jewish public opinion and the Society of Jews would be the final judges.

The Jewish State stimulated fervent debates on the Jewish problem. Most Jewish leaders in Western Europe and America believed the program unrealistic and one that would jeopardize their possibilities of becoming fully integrated citizens. Orthodox extremists attacked it as blaspheming the "Mission of Israel" and the Messianic doctrine. Liberals opposed another national movement

to the already multiplying nineteenth-century nationalisms because they preferred to look forward to a new internationalism. But most Eastern European Jewry lionized Herzl as a new Moses.

Jewish was so great in Russia and Poland that Herzl successfully held the First World Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in August 1897. Over 200 delegates to the congress came from all over the world, representing Orthodoxy and Reform Eastern and Oriental Jews, socialists, the middle class, and the wealthy. The congress's two principal accomplishments were establishment of the organization, thereafter the principal organizer of Jewish nationalism, formulation of the Basel program, which became the cornerstone of all groups. This program stated that the aim of Zionism is to create for Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law.

To attain this, all Jewry was to be organized to promote the systematic settlement of farmers, artisans, and craftsmen in Palestine. Jewish sentiment and of nationalism was to be strengthened, and efforts were to be made the necessary funds for achieving the Zionist objective. Eventually a worldwide Zionist movement grew out of this congress. It became the unifying force of world Jewry.

By the outbreak of World War I, Zionism had grown from Herzl's visionary idea to a strong, organized, worldwide movement. The Society of Jews became the World Zionist Organization, with considerable finances under its control. The Jewish Colonial Trust and the Jewish National Fund (JNF) were set up to purchase land in Palestine.

Since the time of the Roman dispersion, small numbers of Jews had lived in Palestine. There were only 5000 when Napoleon invaded the area (1799). By the mid-century, their numbers had doubled, and they doubled again by the 1880s. Between 1882 and 1914, the number grew from 24,000 to 85,000. About 12,000 Jews came to live in one or another of the forty-three Zionist agricultural settlements established by 1914. Only 10 percent of Palestine's total Jewish population was Ottoman subjects.

Unfortunately, the Jewish national movement had little contact with the Palestine Arabs. Relations between the scattered Jewish settlements in the country and their communities in the towns with the nearby Arabs were for the most part casual, and often cordial. No deep political schism

emerged until World War I, and the occasional raids of Arab looters on Jewish settlements were strictly for loot, rather than an expression of competing nationalism.

4.2. The Zionist Movement in World War I and the Balfour Declaration

Immediately after the outbreak of World War I, the Ottoman Empire imposed rigid restrictions on Palestine and the surrounding area. Since many Jews were still subjects of the Ottoman enemy, Russia, they either fled or were deported. The Zionist movement itself was charged by the Ottoman Empire with being a subversive element. A number of local Jewish leaders in Palestine were imprisoned or hanged. Zionist institutions like Anglo-Palestine Bank was banned, and public use of Hebrew was forbidden in the streets of the new Jewish town, Tel Aviv. By 1917, the Jewish population had been reduced by nearly a third to only 55,000.

The war fragmented the Zionist movement into three parts—one was in the Allied-controlled countries, another remained under the Central Powers. The third existed in neutral territory. To facilitate contact among them, neutral Copenhagen became the Zionist liaison center. Jewish leaders in the Allied capitals found the time expedient to press their claims to a homeland in Palestine and organized military units to help fight for that land.

More significant were the political maneuvers of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, a chemistry lecturer at Manchester University and a prominent Zionist leader. Before becoming a British citizen, Dr. Weizmann had been a Jewish leader in Russia, his birthplace. He contributed to the Allied cause by developing a process to produce acetone, an essential ingredient for manufacturing cordite required in artillery shells. Scientific discoveries brought Weizmann into intimate contact with British war leaders, whom he persuaded to favor the Zionist cause. They were especially amenable because they were searching for a dramatic appeal to rally world Jewry to their side at a time when the Allied position was doing badly.

In the United States, prominent American Jewish leaders, persuaded President Wilson to back British support of Zionist aims in 1917. Negotiation finally culminated in the Balfour Declaration, published on 2 November 1917 after the acceptance of the British cabinet. The Balfour Declaration was a note prepared by Arthur James Balfour, Britain's Foreign Secretary. It was in favor of the

establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine. It promised to the Zionists that it would support the creation of a national home for the Jews in Palestine.

The British information ministry followed through by creating a special department for liaison, propaganda, and research. It prepared leaflets containing the Balfour Declaration, which were dropped over enemy territory. To counteract Allied support for Zionism, the Central Powers made largely vague statements of sympathy. Germany especially played up its concern over what had been the plight of Russian Jews under the Tsars.

As a result of the Balfour and other conflicting Allied statements, Palestine became a focal point of international disagreement. The Balfour declaration was proclaimed to win worldwide Jewish backing for the war effort at a time when Great Britain urgently needed every possible source of support. Because of the 1917 Revolution, Russia had dropped out of the war. Many influential American Jewish leaders were pro-Zionist, and their backing was an important asset.

4.3. Zionism in the 20th century

A few months after the Nazi accession to power, the Nazi organized a nationwide boycott of Jewish-owned businesses. The effect of this action was violence against both person and property. It also resulted in dismissal from jobs of many Jews throughout Germany, including professors, journalists, lawyers, and government personnel. The Nazi-influenced police forces deliberately and consistently refrained from protecting those Jews under attack.

In 1935, some "legal" measures were introduced in the Reich that were directed against Jewish religious practice, inheritance, and citizenship. The Nuremberg laws were enacted legalizing discrimination against all German Jews. They lost all their civil rights. The Reich Citizenship Law made race a key consideration in the determination of citizenship. The impact was to deny to Jews any participation in the official life in Germany. The Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor (the so-called Purity of German Blood law) prohibited marriage and sexual relations between Jews and "pure-blooded, Aryan" Germans. The Nazis had used the legal system to isolate and repress the Jews and to steal their property.

Many of the concentration camps were transformed into killing centers. The Nazi persecution had resulted in the beginning of the fulfillment of a world without Jews. Whole communities of Jews from distant places throughout Europe such as Greece, Croatia, and Romania were deported to the death camps but not without the Nazis and their accomplices stealing all art work and personal belongings. Some Jewish deportees were coerced into unpaid labor and when injured or exhausted, sent to their deaths.

The world Zionist leaders had no alternative but to support Allied war efforts against the Nazis who were persecuting European Jews. Before terminating the 1939 Zionist Congress, Weizmann informed Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain that the Jews “stand by Great Britain and will fight on the side of the British. The National Council of Palestine’s Jewish community initiated full scale mobilization in 1939, enlisting some 135,000 volunteers for military and other services by the war’s end.

For the Jews, an Allied victory over Hitler was a question of life or death. Hence their enlistments were nearly three times those of the Arabs. A Jewish Rural Special Police unit was also formed in 1942 as a kind of home guard under the British Middle East commander-in-chief. Continued pressure throughout the war from world Jewry on the British government forced the gradual enlargement of Palestinian combat units, and finally the creation of a Jewish Brigade in 1944. In Palestine during the war, the Jewish Agency channeled all material and technical resources of the Yishuv into the war effort.

During the war, Palestine’s political climate was considerably calmer than it had been in decades. Most of the organized Jewish community called off their anti-British campaigns. The Jewish Agency, however, did not cease the underground rescue of Hitler’s victims. Throughout the conflict, the agency continued to smuggle illegal immigrants into Palestine. Those Jews who were caught by the British sea patrols were transferred to some British colony. Conflict over immigration cooled Zionist enthusiasm for cooperation with Great Britain.

Palestine Jews regarded British policy as heartless politics aimed at Arab appeasement, while the British believed that the Zionist underground was motivated less by humanitarian than by political objectives. Relations almost came to a breaking point when Palestine Jewish leaders were charged with illegally procuring weapons from British military depots at two public trials in Jerusalem.

Jewish Agency Chairman, David Ben Gurion, replied angrily that this was still another attempt to discredit the Yishuv. Relations between the Zionist and Great Britain reached a crisis in November 1944 when two Jewish terrorists, sternists, assassinated Lord Moyne, British Minister resident in the Middle East.

The Labor government in power from 1945 found itself under pressure from all sides. As the concentration camps were opened and as anti-Semitism reappeared in Europe, there were enthusiastic demands for the displaced Jews to be given unlimited access to what Zionists saw as the Homeland. The World Zionist Conference wanted a million Jews to be taken there. Pressure also came from the United States where both political parties valued the Jewish vote. President Truman pressed repeatedly for the immediate admission of Jews. In the 1944 American presidential election campaign, both Republican and Democratic leaders called for the removal of restrictions on Jewish immigration to Palestine and land purchases there.

Chapter Five: Conflicts and Wars in the Middle East

5.1. Arab-Israeli War of 1948

The United Nations Commission concluded that Palestine should be partitioned into a Jewish and an Arab state by a boundary running generally from north to south. The British, in December 1947, said they would withdraw from Palestine on 15 May 1948. But they did not allow the United Nations to make preparations for the partition. So as May approached, open warfare between Jews and Arabs was inevitable as both sides seized as much territory as they could.

On 14 May, as the British left, Ben-Gurion proclaimed the state of Israel, with Chaim Weizmann its president and himself prime minister. Armies from Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq powered across the frontiers to assist the Palestine Arabs. Though at first the Jews were in difficulties, they defeated the Arab armies from Iraq, Jordan, Egypt and Syria on every front. Their success rested on their determination that Israel should survive, and on the response of American Jewry to appeals for supplies which helped Haganah to re-equip and re-group its formations. On the Arab side, lack of co-ordination and organization contributed to their defeat. So did rivalry and jealousy, as the Mufti and the members of the Arab League each sought advantage in Palestine. What above all ensured the survival of Israel was the recognition afforded to it by both the United States and the Soviet Russia.

The Arab states, defeated in the war, refused to accept the logic of its result. They would not recognize the state of Israel or the absence of a Palestinian Arab state. Rather, for the next 30 years their aim was to destroy Israel. To this end nationalist groups planned to remove from power those leaders who had brought about the Arab defeat and humiliation. Another legacy of the defeat was the problem of Palestinians who had fled from their homes during the war.

Finally in 1949, successfully arranged armistice agreements between Israel and all the Arab combatants except Iraq. By successful military operations, Israel had gained nearly a third more territory than the amount allocated to it by the UN partition resolution.

5.2. The Suez War of 1956

Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser became Egypt's leader in 1954 and nationalized the Suez Canal on 26 July 1956. Great Britain and France had shares in the Suez Canal. Thus they were much more concerned over nationalization. France was also hostile to Egypt due to Egypt's support to Algerian rebellion. Israel was even more concerned than France and Great Britain because Nasser planned to force Israel to accept peace on Arab terms. It was naturally interested in preventing Nasser from becoming strong enough to carry out his plan. Great Britain and France also feared that Nasser might close the canal and cut off shipments of oil between the Middle East and Western Europe. Thus they prepared for war.

On 29 October 1956, Israeli forces invaded Sinai. Great Britain and France stated that they would intervene unless both Egyptian and Israeli forces withdraw immediately to a distance of ten miles from the canal. Israel accepted the ultimatum, but Egypt rejected it. Great Britain and France began bombing raids and three days later, their forces landed near Port Said. The Israeli army forced Egyptian forces to retreat. Then the UN peacekeeping force entered Egypt to patrol the Egyptian-Israeli border.

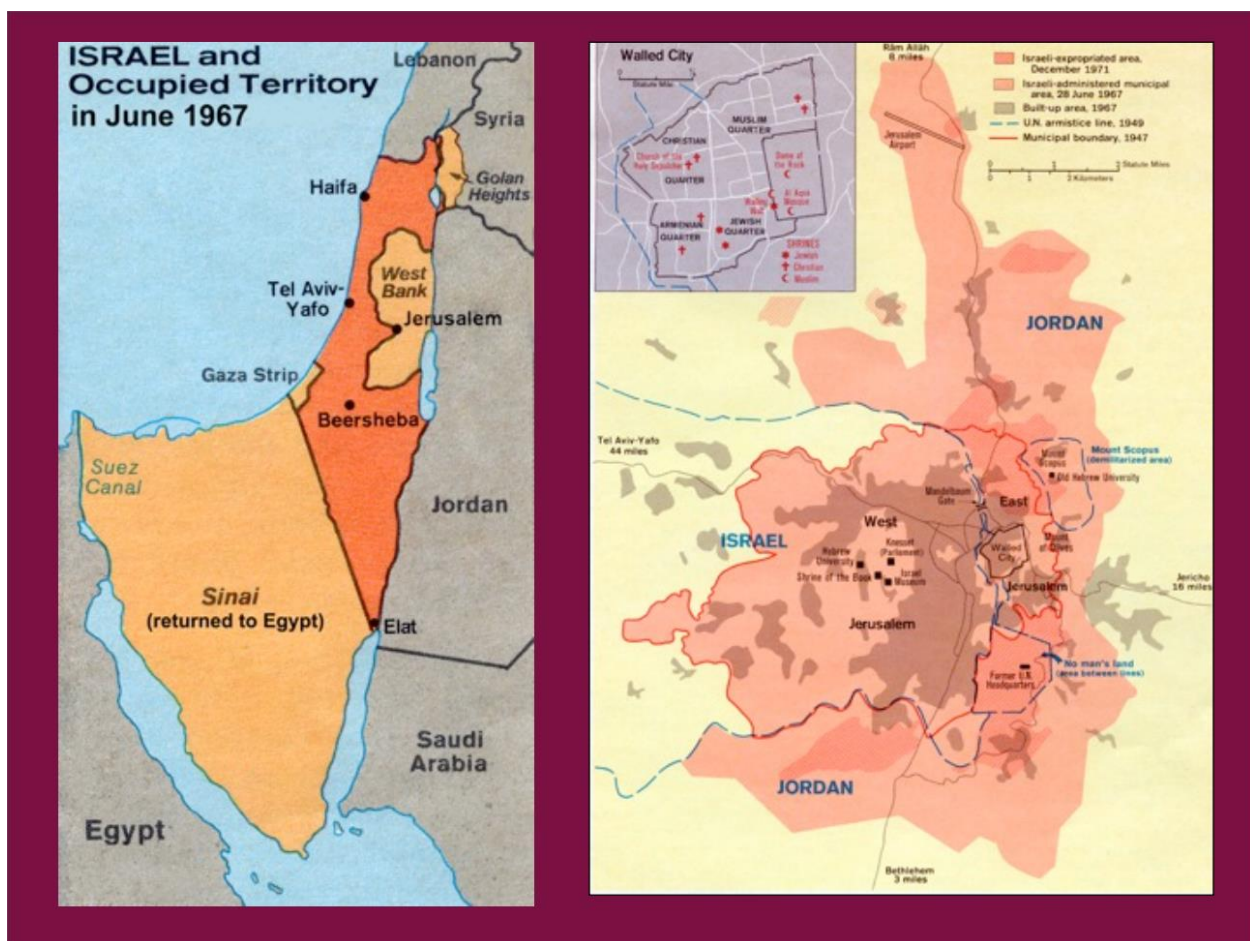
5.3. The Six Days War

Another Arab-Israel war started in 1967. It was the continuation of the previous wars. In early 1960's, Nasser had to face mounting criticism from Syria and Iraq in particular for his unwillingness to contemplate any confrontation with Israel. He worked for the elimination of Israel and began to move troops up to the frontier in Sinai. In May 1967, Nasser closed the Gulf of Aqaba to Israel and called for unified Arab nation against Israel. On 5 June 1967, Israel launched a series of preemptive air strikes against its Arab neighbors. It began when Israel's air force attacked the main air bases of Egypt-followed by those of Jordan, Syria, and Iraq-on the morning of 5 June and wiped out virtually all their war-making potential. Having gained control of the air in the first hour, Israel sent its army into Sinai and, in four days' fighting, took the whole peninsula.

Israel's army then invaded the northern part of the West Bank (or Samaria) and also the north side of Arab Jerusalem. Elsewhere on the West Bank, Israeli forces drove back the Jordanians, under Hussein's direct command, in extremely tough combat. Some 200,000 Arabs sought refuge across

Jordan. Because of recent border clashes with Jordan, the Syrians did nothing for Hussein until he was defeated. By then, Israel could storm Syria's well-fortified positions on the Golan Heights-no easy task-when no other Arab country would or could do anything for the Damascus regime.

Its consequent victory over Egypt, Syria, and Jordan in the war took only six days. It disproved the notion that the Jewish state could not defeat the Arabs without Western allies. It exploded the myth that "unity of goals" among the Arab states would enable them to defeat Israel. It proved that the Israel Defense Force could attain high levels of skill, coordination, and valor in order to ensure the country's survival. In a matter of six days, Israel captured the whole of Sinai and Gaza Strip from Egypt; the Golan Heights from Syria; and the rest of Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan. She also captured many weapons. 10 June 1967, the Arabs had no choice, but to accept a UN cease-fire order.



Why did Israel win? One obvious reply is that Israel attacked first, destroyed most of the Arab fighter planes, and then kept complete control of the air. Another is that Egypt's best troops were still fighting in the Yemen civil war. The slow and ponderous Arab troop build-up which gave the Israelis plenty of time contributed to Israel's victory. Inadequate Arab preparations and communications were other reasons for the Arab defeat. By the time the guns fell silent on 10 June, Israel had expanded its land area to three times what it had been six days earlier, having occupied the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank and the Golan Heights. Almost a million Arabs, most of them Palestinians, had come under Israeli rule.

5.4. The Yom Kippur War of 1973 (Oil /Energy Crisis)

This was the fourth Arab-Israel war. In 1970, the USA and the USSR persuaded Israel and UAR to renew the 1967 cease-fire through the United Nations. Egypt and Syria planned in absolute secrecy to attack Israel. On 6 October 1973, the Egyptian and Syrian forces launched a surprise attack on Israel early on the feast of Yom Kippur. They preferred the day because many Israeli soldiers were off duty. Massive Egyptian air and artillery assault on Israel's Bar Lev line east of the Suez Canal, together with a large-scale Syrian tank invasion of the Golan Heights threatened Israeli forces.

With only 600 officers and soldiers on the Bar Lev line and seventy tanks guarding the Golan, Israel could not withstand this first assault. Within a few hours, thousands of Egyptians had crossed the canal using their surface-to-air missiles to down Israeli planes. They effectively denied the enemy its accustomed control of the air. They also overran most of the Bar Lev line. The Syrians retook Mount Hermon and made advance into the southern half of the Golan Heights. They might have invaded Israel itself. Many Israeli planes were shot down in the early battles. Thus the Arabs scored initial victory.

Israel was able to turn the situation by the second week of the war and pushed the Syrians entirely out of the Golan Heights. It was able to control all the territory it had captured in 1967 and even crossed the Suez Canal into Egypt. The war lasted longer than expected, nearly three weeks, and ended with Israel on the offensive.

During the war, the Arab oil producing states tried to bring pressure to bear on the USA and Western European states by reducing oil supplies. This caused serious oil shortage, especially in Europe. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) began to raise oil prices to stop Western support to Israel. Thus the Arab-Israel War led to oil crisis.

5.5. The Iran-Iraq War of 1980-1988

Iran had become an Islamic republic in 1979 under the leadership of the Ayatollah Khomeini. He had fundamentalist Shiite Muslim supporters. The population of Iraq was mainly Sunni Muslims, but there was a large Shia minority. Saddam Hussein's government was non-religious. Saddam was afraid of militant Islam spreading across the border into Iraq from Iran. He was also afraid that the Shias might rise up against him. Thus he had some of their leaders executed early in 1980.

The Iranians retaliated by launching raids across the frontier. The Iraqis claimed that the Iranian border province of Khuzestan should rightfully belong to them. This was an area peopled largely by Arabs. Saddam hoped that they would rally to support Iraq. There was a long-standing dispute over the Shatt-el-Arab waterway which was an important outlet for the oil exports of both countries. It formed part of the frontier between the two states. The Shatt-el-Arab had once been completely under Iraqi control, but five years earlier the Iranian government had forced Iraq to share control of it with Iran.

Saddam thought that the Iranian forces would be weak and demoralized so soon after the fundamentalist takeover. Thus he expected a quick victory. It soon became clear that he had miscalculated badly. The Iranians quickly organized themselves to deal with the invasion. The invasion began with the Iraqi seizure of the disputed waterway. The Iranians replied with mass infantry attacks against the Iraqi position. The success of Iran's troops, especially the threat to Basra alarmed the non-religious Arab governments. Many Arabs were afraid of what might happen if Iraqi was defeated.

The war entered a new and even more terrible phase towards the end of 1987 when both sides began to bombard each other's capital cities. Tehran and Baghdad caused thousands of deaths. Neither side had achieved its aims. The cost of the war was heavy economically and in human lives. Both sides began to look for a way to end the fighting. The UN became involved and began

talking to both sides and succeeded in arranging a cease-fire in August 1988. Peace negotiations opened in October 1988 and terms were finally agreed in 1990.

5. 6. The Gulf War

During the 1970s, about 70 percent of the oil bought by noncommunist industrial countries came from states surrounding the Gulf: Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, and Iran. Huge tankers carried the oil through the Straits of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman into the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Saddam Hussein began his next act of aggression. His forces invaded and quickly occupied the small neighboring state of Kuwait in August 1990. His real motive was to get his hands on the wealth of Kuwait since he was short of cash after the long war with Iran. Kuwait is small but it had valuable oil-wells. Saddam claimed that Kuwait was historically part of Iraq. He did not expect any from the outside world. Saddam's troops were firmly entrenched in Kuwait and he had the strongest army in the region.

George Bush, President of the US, took the lead in pressing for action to remove the Iraqis from Kuwait. The UN placed trade sanctions on Iraq, cutting off her oil exports. Saddam was ordered to remove his troops by 15 January 1991. More than 30 nations contributed with troops, armaments or cash. When the 15 January deadline passed, Operation Desert Storm was launched against the Iraqis. The campaign, in two parts, was quickly successful. First came a series of bombing attacks on Baghdad in which the people suffered heavy casualties. The second phase was the attack on the Iraqi army itself which began on 24 February. Within four days, the Iraqi had been driven out of Kuwait and routed. Kuwait was liberated and Saddam Hussein accepted defeat.

However, although Iraqi lost many troops, Saddam was allowed to withdraw with many of his army intact. The retreating Iraqis were at the mercy of the Allies, but Bush called a cease-fire. He felt afraid that if the slaughter continued, the Allies would lose the support of other Arab nations.

Chapter Six: Islamic Revival and Iranian Revolution

In Iran, many religious fundamentalists directed their nationalist movement against all foreigners. As riots and strikes became more and more frequent, the Muslim clerics emerged to lead revolutionary movement. Meanwhile, Ruhollah Khomeini, the old Ayatollah, opposed Pahlavi's government. At this time, the whole nation was in turmoil. Ayatollah Khomeini was expelled to Iraq and other clerics inside Iran supported his movement.

Muhammad Reza Pahlavi (Muhammad Reza shah) asked the Iraqi government to expel Ayatollah Khomeini from Iraq. The Ayatollah went to Paris. A number of Western-educated Iranians became his collaborators and together they set to lead the revolution. On 18 January 1979, Muhammad Reza Pahlavi left Iran for medical reasons and by now millions of Iranians were powering in the streets. They demanded the abolition of the monarchy, the removal of the Shah and the return of Khomeini.

On 1 February 1979, Khomeini returned to Iran after years of exile in Iraq and France. On 11 February, a group of technicians in an air base mutinied against the Pahlavi regime. The Shah's army collapsed and the revolution became successful. Power was in the hands of the people and their leader was Imam Ayatollah Khomeini. Following the collapse of the monarchy, the Iranian revolutionaries wanted to establish a republic. Thus the Islamic Republic of Iran was established and Khomeini became its leader.

The deposed Shah was flying from one host country to another in a desperate effort to find a suitable place of exile. Upon leaving Iraq, he spent some time in Morocco. From Morocco, the Shah moved to Bahamas and then moved to Mexico. Finally on 23 October 1979, the Shah was allowed to travel to New York. In March 1980, however, he moved to Egypt where he died on 27 July 1980.

Chapter Seven: Oil in the Middle East- OPEC

Following the end of WWII, the oil resources of the Arab world and Iran had become the most important single reason for the strategic value of the region to the United States. Companies with concessions in the Middle East produced hundred-million-dollar incomes, becoming the most profitable of all over sea investments. Oil brought such a profit to Western investors because it had become a chief source of energy of the European industry. At least 80 to 90 percent of the oil used in most of the countries of Western Europe came from the Middle East. By 1960 Iran and the oil-endowed Arabs states were producing nearly a quarter of the world's output and continued two third of the known reserves.

Oil and natural gas and as well as its location on the air and the sea routes between Europe and Africa, South East Asia, and the Far East involve the Middle East in the bipolar conflict between communist and non-communist regions that came to the surface a few months after the end of World War II. Both the Soviet Union and the major Western powers began their attempts to capture or influence the explosive nationalities movement that dominated the Middle Eastern scene in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The Middle East is poor in natural resources other than petroleum. Although the oil of Iran and some of the states of the Arabian Peninsula is a major asset, its value depends on sales to world markets rather than internal use. Only in recent decades have oil profits been used extensively for national development of basic agricultural resources.

Not all the region is "oil rich", a majority of Middle Eastern countries produce no oil at all or only small quantities of it. Paradoxically, the countries with the greatest rate of economic development-Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and Israel-have only relatively small petroleum deposits, while those rich in this resource-such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Abu Dhabi have difficulty in absorbing hundreds of millions of dollars annually in constructive development projects. Iraq and Iran have made major efforts to use oil profits for building up the nation, but political and social obstacles have prevented real success.

The oil sector accounts for consistently high portions of the gross domestic products. Oil remains the overwhelming source of export revenues. For decades, the Middle East has been supplying a

big part of the oil consumed around the world. Saudi Arabia has led the production for decades. Other nations of the region have also become large producers: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar are some of them.

Venezuela, in South America, was the largest exporter until the 1950s, when Saudi Arabia took the lead. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was founded in 1960 by Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, and Kuwait. Today, about 14 countries are members. The goal was to unify local policies for keeping market shares stable. For the Middle East, the OPEC was also an opportunity to ally with the experienced South American producers and reduce the dependence on European and North American companies. The OPEC first shows its influence on world economy during the Arab-Israel war of 1973 when it placed an oil embargo on Israel and its supporters.

Modern life around the globe has become dependent on petroleum and petroleum related products. This dependency grows every year with new technology and energy demands. An issue that has been widely discussed is the limited amount of oil as a natural resource. With demands of oil rising, the global dependency on oil and the finite amount left makes it a very valuable resource.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries controls the majority of the world's oil supply. As demands rise and supply falls, the profit margin of oil exporting will increase in the future. OPEC's objective is to co-ordinate and unify petroleum policies among member countries in order to secure fair and stable prices for petroleum producers. The oil companies controlled the price of oil and when the prices were lowered, the oil suppliers received less money. OPEC formed in order to combat this payment drop. In addition to joining OPEC, some oil-producing countries nationalized the oil production and refining equipment of the oil companies, which generated large amounts of income for those countries.

OPEC clearly dominates world oil. Oil is the most valuable traded good, as it is the highest volume and value internationally traded goods. The dominance of the world oil market by OPEC has brought a steady stream of revenue for its member countries. OPEC countries, for the most part, all rely on one primary commodity for the majority of what they earn. All of these countries are also food-deficit countries. This means that they must rely on importing agricultural goods in order to meet their food needs.

Chapter Eight: Middle East in the Late 20th Century and Early 21st Century

8.1. Peace Accords

In early November 1973, Egyptian and Israeli army commanders met on the Cairo-Suez road to identify and run through the lines separating the two sides and to arrange for sending food and medical supplies to Egypt's trapped Third Army. After these talks, the American diplomat, Henry Kissinger, began organizing a general peace conference to be held in Geneva in late December under the joint presidency of the superpowers. Syria stayed away because the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had not been invited, but Egypt and Israel both came. After a day of opening speeches, the conference postponed as a technical committee began working on disentangling the Israelis and Egyptians around Suez. The Geneva Conference has been suspended ever since but an attempt was made in 1977 to revive it.

The U.S. government suspended its quest for Middle East peace during its 1976 presidential election. Both President Gerald Ford and his challenger, Jimmy Carter, pledged to back a strong and independent Israel and ignored the Palestinian Arabs. After Carter was elected, though, he would try a new initiative to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict and perhaps the Lebanese civil war as well. After coming to power, Carter's administration proposed a new plan. It urged the Arab states to recognize Israel within its pre-June 1967 boundaries (with some minor border adjustments). Israel was to turn the Gaza Strip and the West Bank over to a government of Palestinian Arabs, but not necessarily the PLO. It also called for reconvening the Geneva Conference to reach the necessary agreements.

Carter gave high priority to Middle East peace and began to talk with various heads of state, hoping to revive the Geneva Conference before the end of 1977. Yet, new problems soon appeared. Israel was intensely suspicious of any conference that the USSR would co-chair with the United States. Now Washington seemed determined to invite the Soviets back in. Besides, the Arab states insisted on having Palestinians at the proposed conference. If they were left out, some Palestinian groups or individuals might kill someone or blow up something to block any peace settlement that might bypass their interest and aspirations.

Negotiating with the PLO was totally unacceptable to Israel, which viewed Yasser Arafat as a murderer and his organization as the umbrella for a collection of terrorist groups. Israel argued that Jordan was a Palestinian state and that there was no need for another, especially one whose covenant called for Israel's destruction. For their part, the Palestinians wanted the PLO to represent them. Menachem Begin, the Israeli Prime Minister, was quick to assert that the West Bank was an integral part of the Land of Israel that had been liberated, not occupied, in 1967. He called on Jews to settle in strategic parts of that mainly Arab area. The Arabs called Begin a terrorist.

The Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat, showed willingness for negotiation with Israel. He had become convinced that Israel could not be destroyed by force. He was the first Arab leader to meet the Israelis face to face when he visited Israel in November 1977. To talk with Israeli leaders meant conceding that Egypt recognized the lawful existence of the state of Israel. Sadat called for Arab acceptance of the state of Israel and an end to hostilities. Menachem Begin also visited Egypt in December 1977. President Jimmy Carter of the US played a vital role in setting up a formal negotiation between the two sides.

A spectacular summit, consisting of Begin, Sadat, and Carter, along with cabinet officers and advisers from the three corresponding countries, met at Camp David, near Washington, in September 1978. Twelve days of intense negotiations produced documents called "A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel" and "A Framework for Peace in the Middle East." The latter was intended to bring other parties into the settlement. But Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and (not surprisingly) Syria and the PLO refused to join in these agreements, which offered the Palestinians little hope for self-determination. After long and bitter debate, Israel's Knesset agreed to pull its troops out of Sinai and hence its settlements and airfields from the lands it would give back to Egypt. The three month deadline agreed upon at Camp David passed without a treaty.

The other Arab governments held a summit meeting in Baghdad in November 1978, offered Egypt inducements to quit the peace talks, and threatened reprisals if it signed a treaty. Hard-line Israelis warned that they would block any pullout from the lands Begin had offered to return to Egypt.

Carter decided in early March 1979 to fly to Cairo and Jerusalem to complete negotiations for the peace accord. He managed to reconcile the differences between Sadat and Begin. A complex

treaty, formally ending the state of war between Egypt and Israel, was signed on the White House on 26 March 1979. Nearly all the other Arab governments condemned it. The state of war that had existed between Egypt and Israel since 1948 was now ended. Israel promised to withdraw its troops from Sinai. Egypt recognized Israeli's right to exist and promised not to attack Israel again. Israel's ships could use the Suez Canal.

Many nations welcomed Sadat's action. But most of the Palestinians accused him of betraying their quest for justice and self-determination by agreeing to negotiate with Israel on the future of Gaza and the West Bank. Washington expected peace, but most of the Middle Eastern peoples rejected the terms Cairo and Jerusalem had accepted. Anwar Sadat was assassinated by some extremist Muslim soldiers in October 1981 while he was watching a military parade. They believed that he had betrayed the Arab and Muslim cause. However, Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, announced that he would continue the Camp David Agreement.

For most of the 1980s, the Arab-Israel feud was overshadowed by the Iran-Iraq War. The PLO was established in 1964 under the leadership of Yasser Arafat. Its aim was to establish a new Palestine state by eliminating the state of Israel. The PLO embarked on a series of terrorist attacks against Israel. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres believed in negotiation with the PLO in the early 1990s. Yasser Arafat responded and talks opened.

In September 1993, the first agreement took place at a conference in Oslo and became known as the Oslo Accords. Israel formally recognized the PLO and the PLO recognized Israeli's right to exist and promised to give up terrorism. The Palestinians were to be given limited self-rule in Jericho (on the West Bank) and in part of the Gaza Strip areas occupied by Israel since the 1967 war. Israeli troops would be withdrawn from these areas. Extremist groups on both sides opposed the agreement.

Binyamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister from May 1996 until 1999, never accepted the agreement reached in Oslo. He began to build large Jewish settlements on the outskirts of Jerusalem. This caused more violent protests from Palestinians. Arafat released some Hamas activists from jail and suspended security co-operation with Israel. The US President, Bill Clinton, tried to keep the peace process by calling both sides together at Camp David in October 1998, but little progress was made.

In January 2001, Ariel Sharon was elected Prime Minister defeating Ehud Barak. Sharon immediately announced that there would be no further negotiations while violence continued. Hamas suicide attacks and the retaliation of Israel continued.

The Road Map for Peace, a new peace plan, was drawn up originally in December 2002 by the representatives of the European Union, Russia, the UN and the USA. Formal discussion had been delayed by the Israeli general election of January 2002, won by Sharon. At last on 30 April 2003, it was formally presented, separately, to Mahmoud Abbas and Sharon. The Road Map aimed to achieve a final settlement of the entire Palestinian-Israeli conflict by the end of 2005. Its basic points were the creation of an independent Palestinian state existing side by side with Israel and stopping of violence by both sides.

The Road Map was accepted in principle by both sides, but violence continued. Later, the situation changed with the death of Yasser Arafat in December 2004. Mahmoud Abbas also known as Abu Mazen won a decisive victory in the election for a new president. He is a moderate who has constantly opposed violence.