

Centenary of WW1 - The Middle Eastern Campaign 1916-1918

Australian Curriculum, Year 9 – ACDSEH095, ACDSEH097

HISTORY – Lesson 5 Creating History - Re-writing the Map in the Middle East

– Jill Curry

The guns fell silent in the Middle East on October 31, 1918, and on the Western Front an armistice was reached less than two weeks later on November 11. World War 1 was finally over. The burning question now was how the lands in the Middle East would be administered. Britain had made promises to the French and the Arabs to gain their support and promised the Jews a homeland.



The outcome was that the former Ottoman Empire was partitioned and the League of Nations (predecessor to the United Nations) mandated that Syria (including Lebanon) be overseen by France, and Palestine and Mesopotamia come under Britain administration. This arrangement was to last until the lands became self-sufficient enough to govern themselves. The Republic of Turkey emerged in 1923. The Kingdom of Iraq was formed in 1932, the Lebanese Republic became

independent in 1943, and the Syrian Arab Republic and Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan both followed in 1946. Last of all was the State of Israel in 1948.

The British Mandate – a Home for both Jews and Arabs

The San Remo Conference in April 1920 was called to allocate the League of Nations' mandates, which were based on the Balfour Declaration of 1917. It was ratified by the League of Nations in July 1922. The Mandate for Palestine fell to the British. Palestine at the time consisted of a much larger area than is thought of today. A Palestinian was a person who lived in this geographic area, no matter what their ethnicity or religious persuasion.



The territory of Palestine was divided along the Jordan River and Rift Valley to provide a homeland for both the Arab Palestinian population and the Jewish Palestinians. 77% of Palestine was given to the Arab Palestinians (the land east of the Jordan River). This area was re-named Transjordan in 1922 and later became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1946. Transjordan comprised nearly 38,000 square miles of Palestine. Under the mandate, Jews were not allowed to settle in this area.



23% of Palestine was given to the Jewish people under this agreement. The area that became Israel was less than 8,000 square miles, which is less than 1/3 the size of Tasmania. Jews *and* Arabs were allowed to settle in this area west of the Jordan River. However, within a few months, the British government's White Paper of June 1922 restricted immigration quotas to the Jews, thus making it extremely difficult for Jews to enter. These restrictions continued even during the Holocaust when the Jewish people were being gassed to death in Hitler's ovens. On November 29th 1947, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 was passed with 33 votes in favour, 13 against, and 10 abstentions. This provided for the further partition of the western (Jewish) section of Palestine into two states – one Jewish and one Arab and a special status for Jerusalem. It was agreed to by the Jewish representatives and rejected by the Arab representatives. On May 14, 1948, when the

British withdrew, Israel immediately declared its statehood. The Arab states immediately declared war on the fledgling nation. The armies of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt (supported also by Saudi Arabia) invaded Israel. Miraculously, Israel survived the annihilation attempt but the conflict continues to this day. By the end of this War of Independence, Judea and Samaria, began to be called the 'West bank' (of the Jordan River). This is the area in which the Palestinians wish to establish a Palestinian State.

The ANZACs played a key role in the dissolution of the crumbling Ottoman Empire by their military efforts in Romani, Beersheba and participation in the entire Middle Eastern Campaign in World War 1. The Allied forces caused an Empire to fall and 6 nations to be born. The ANZACs were often at the forefront. Their achievements put Australia and New Zealand on the world map and won the admiration even of their enemies. Their bravery created the ANZAC legend.



Distances Between Israeli Population Centers and Pre-1967 Armistice Lines

The experience they gained bred many leaders of the young Australian nation. Many consider that the Australian identity was forged on the anvil of the difficulties that they faced and the tough conditions they overcame in the theatre of war.

Maps:

1. Map of mandates – Base map - CIA World Fact Book <https://www.cia.gov>
2. Map of Partition of Palestine – <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PalestineAndTransjordan.png> - Doron
3. <http://laopinion2010.blogspot.com.au/p/historia-israel-y-palestina-breve.html>

4. <http://www.crethiplethi.com/un-security-council-resolution-242/united-nations/un-resolution-242/2009/>

For further research:

Crombie, K., *Anzacs & Israel, A Significant Connection*, West Print Management, 2010

Crombie, K., Gallipoli – The Road to Jerusalem (DVD) www.heritageresources.com.au

Peters, J., *From Time Immemorial, The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict over Palestine*, J KAP Pub, USA, 1984.

<http://beersheba100.com.au>

Questions:

1. Research when and why the term Palestine was first used and how it has changed in meaning over time. Write 500 words on this development.
2. Research the UN resolutions of both San Remo in 1922 and Resolution 181 in 1948. Both Arabs and Jews use these to claim legal right to the land. What are the claims of both sides?
3. The conflict in the Middle East is physically over land but also spiritual in nature. What are the religious reasons given by both sides as claims to the right to live and rule in the land?

Lesson Aims:

1. To provide a short overview of the political outcomes of the Palestinian campaign.
2. To consider the effects of the Middle Eastern campaign then and now.
3. To reflect on the ideologies and beliefs that underlie the conflict today.
4. To research the international agreements that followed the war and the response of both sides to these agreements.

By the end of the lesson the students will:

1. Have an understanding of how the Ottoman Empire was partitioned into 6 modern-day countries.
2. Be able to explain how Palestine was divided to provide a homeland for the Arab and Jewish populations after World War 1 and World War II.
3. Have reflected on the significance of the ANZAC contribution to the formation of current Middle East.

Powerpoint:

1. Light Horse commemorative statue - Photo J Curry
2. Map of mandates – Base map - CIA World Fact Book <https://www.cia.gov>
3. Text only
4. Map of Partition of Palestine – <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PalestineAndTransjordan.png> – Doron

5. Text only
6. <http://laopinion2010.blogspot.com.au/p/historia-israel-y-palestina-breve.html>
7. <http://www.crethiplethi.com/un-security-council-resolution-242/united-nations/un-resolution-242/2009/>
8. Text only