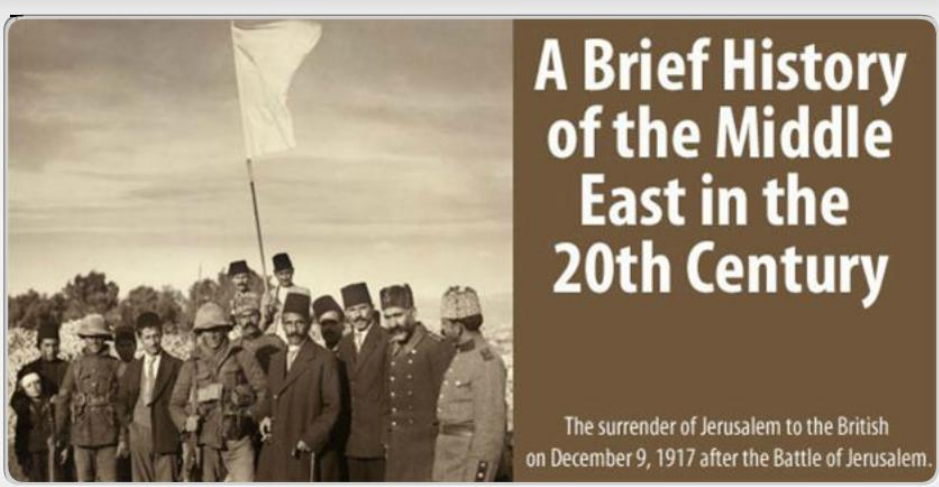


**Module 11: Independence and Challenges in the Modern World**  
**Topic 3 Content: A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century**

A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century



**A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century**

The surrender of Jerusalem to the British on December 9, 1917 after the Battle of Jerusalem.

WWI Mandates      Struggles for Freedom      Independence and Conflict

# WWI Mandates

## Mandate System

**Mandate System**

WWI marked breakup of Ottoman Empire

Territories in Middle East became mandates under the control of the League of Nations

**Britain**

- Palestine (later split into Palestine and Transjordan)
- Iraq (originally called Mesopotamia)

**France**

- Syria (later split into Syria and Lebanon)

Planted the seeds for future conflict

Mandate System

WWI Mandates      Struggles for Freedom      Independence and Conflict

### Event Text

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- Palestine (later split into Palestine and Transjordan)
- Iraq (originally called Mesopotamia)

France

- Syria (later split into Syria and Lebanon)

Planted the seeds for future conflict

### Narration Script

World War I marked the end of the Ottoman Empire, which ruled over much of the Middle East. As part of the terms of the war, some of the Ottoman territories that had been under its control for centuries became mandates under the rule of the League of Nations. As victors of the war, Britain and France administered these territories for the League. Eventually, the goal was to give the mandates independence.

The mandates in the Middle East at this time were Palestine and Iraq, which were ruled by Britain, and Syria, which was ruled by France.

The division of the Ottoman Empire through the mandate system planted the seeds for future conflict in the Middle East that continue to the present day.

# Struggles for Freedom

## Nationalism and Independence

A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century

### Nationalism and Independence

Nationalism grew along with armed resistance in the mandates.

1923 - Britain split the mandate of Palestine into two areas granting Transjordan (later Jordan) autonomy as a region.

1932 - Britain granted Iraq independence.

France split the mandate of Syria into two regions, Syria and Lebanon. These countries became independent in 1943.

British police officer checking pedestrians in Jerusalem

Nationalism and Independence

WWI Mandates      Struggles for Freedom      Independence and Conflict

### Event Text

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1932 - Britain granted Iraq independence.

France split the mandate of Syria into two regions, Syria and Lebanon. These countries became independent in 1943.

### Narration Script

The people living in the mandates were not happy that one colonial ruler had been replaced with another - they wanted independence. Nationalist movements began to spread in these areas. Some of these movements involved armed rebellions against the British and the French.

In order to appease some of these groups, the British split the mandate of Palestine into two areas granting Transjordan autonomy as a region. Faced with the prospect of prolonged wars with the nationalists in Iraq, Britain granted the country independence in 1932.

France also faced the same nationalist pressures in Syria. They separated the Syrian mandate into two regions, Syria and Lebanon. Although there were earlier movements towards granting the countries independence, the process wasn't finalized until 1943.

## Palestine

A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century

Palestine

Not granted independence after World War II

World War II - Jews moved to the region to escape persecution

Zionism - Movement to establish a Jewish homeland

Increased migration resulted in clashes between Arabs and Jews

Map showing boundaries (in red) of Jewish state proposed by Zionist representatives at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference.

WWI Mandates      Struggles for Freedom      Independence and Conflict

### Event Text

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Map showing boundaries (in red) of Jewish state proposed by Zionist representatives at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference.

### Narration Script

Palestine was one mandate not granted its independence after World War II. This area contained the ancient holy city of Jerusalem, which was inhabited by Christians, Muslims and Jews. During World War II, many Jews moved to the region to escape persecution in Europe. This was partly due to the hopes that Palestine would be established as a homeland for the Jewish people, a proposal that had been around since the 1890s. The possibility of Palestine as a Jewish homeland became a strong possibility when Britain took over the mandate after World War I.

The movement to establish this homeland is known as Zionism. Before World War II, Britain tried to ease tensions between Arabs and Jews by limiting Jewish immigration into Palestine. When the Nazi's began to persecute Jews during the war, however, Jewish migration into Palestine rose rapidly. This resulted in more clashes between Arabs and Jews living in the same area.

[Map courtesy Brian Gotts.]

# Independence and Conflict

## Founding of Israel

A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century

### Founding of Israel

Most Western countries supported the creation of a Jewish homeland

1947 U.N. proposes to split Palestine into two states - one Arab and one Jewish - with Jerusalem under U.N. control

Jewish leaders accepted the plan while the Arab leaders did not

On May 14, 1948 Israel declares independence

Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq attacked Israel but were eventually defeated

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled the country

Founding of Israel

WWI Mandates      Struggles for Freedom      Independence and Conflict

### Event Text

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Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq attacked Israel but were eventually defeated

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled the country

### Narration Script

After WWII, and due to the atrocities committed by the Nazis during the Holocaust, most Western countries supported the creation of a Jewish homeland.

In 1947, Britain let the United Nations decide the future of Palestine. The U.N. proposed splitting Palestine into two states - one Arab and one Jewish - with Jerusalem under U.N. control. The Jewish leaders accepted the plan, while the Arab leaders did not.

On May 14, 1948, Jewish leaders declared the independent state of Israel. Within 24 hours, the countries of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq attacked Israel, but were eventually defeated. In 1948, the United Nations set up refugee camps in neighboring countries to house the large numbers of Palestinians leaving the country.

## 1956 - Suez Crisis

A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century

1956 - Suez Crisis

Israel, France and Britain attacked Egypt and took control of the territory surrounding the Suez Canal after Egypt nationalized the canal.

Israel and its allies forced to withdraw under pressure from the world community.

1956 - Suez Crisis

WWI Mandates      Struggles for Freedom      Independence and Conflict

### Event Text

Israel, France and Britain attacked Egypt and took control of the territory surrounding the Suez Canal after Egypt nationalized the canal.

Israel and its allies forced to withdraw under pressure from the world community.

### Narration Script

Despite Israel's victory against the Arab countries, there were three more wars between the two sides. As a result, Israel ended up gaining more land from its neighboring areas.

In 1956, Israel, France, and Britain attacked Egypt and took control of the territory surrounding the Suez Canal. Although the military operations were effective, Israel and its allies were forced to withdraw from the territory under pressure from the world community, including the United States.

## 1967 - Six Day War

The screenshot shows a digital interface for a history timeline. At the top, a black header reads "A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century". Below it, a white box titled "1967 - Six Day War" contains the following text: "Israeli armed forces launched a pre-emptive strike against Egypt, Jordan and Syria." and "Israel won control of:" followed by a bulleted list: "• West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan", "• Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt", and "• Golan Heights from Syria". To the right of the text is a large, empty rectangular area, likely a placeholder for a map. At the bottom of the interface is a horizontal timeline with three colored segments: a green segment labeled "WWI Mandates", a red segment labeled "Struggles for Freedom", and a blue segment labeled "Independence and Conflict". A small white box with the text "1967 - Six Day War" is positioned above the blue segment, indicating the current event's position on the timeline.

### Event Text

Israeli armed forces launched a pre-emptive strike against Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

Israel won control of:

- West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan
- Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt
- Golan Heights from Syria

### Narration Script

In 1967, a conflict erupted after a period of high tensions between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Israeli armed forces launched a preemptive strike against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Israel won control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan. In just six days of fighting, Israel also took over the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip from Egypt, and acquired the territory of the Golan Heights from Syria.

[Map courtesy Ling Nut.]

## 1973 - Yom Kippur War

A Brief History of the Middle East in the 20th Century

### 1973 - Yom Kippur War

Joint attack by Egypt, Syria, and Jordan launched on the Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar

Israel won after three weeks

Brought superpowers close to conflict

Arab-Israeli conflict still dominates politics in the Middle East

1973 - Yom Kippur War

WWI Mandates      Struggles for Freedom      Independence and Conflict

### Event Text

Joint attack by Egypt, Syria, and Jordan launched on the Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar

Israel won after three weeks

Brought superpowers close to conflict

Arab-Israeli conflict still dominates politics in the Middle East

### Narration Script

In 1973, a joint attack by Egypt, Syria, and Jordan was launched on October 6th, the Yom Kippur holiday. The Israeli military was caught by surprise, but was able to defeat the Arab nations. The war only lasted three weeks before a U.N. - brokered cease fire ended hostilities. This war almost resulted in conflict between the two superpowers with the United States backing Israel and the Soviet Union backing Egypt.