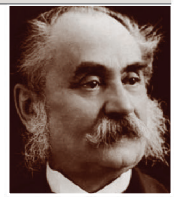
How World War One redrew the map of the Middle East

1914: Ottoman Empire at start of 1914-18 World War

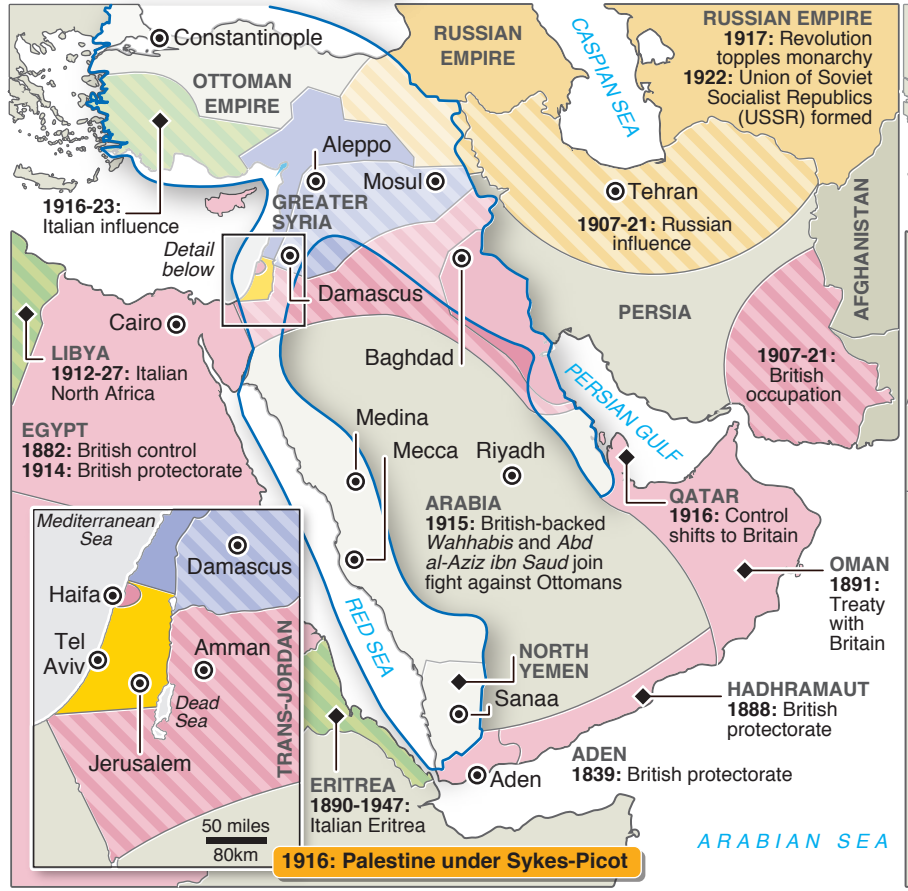
1916: Sykes-Picot Agreement
Direct French rule · Direct British rule · Protection of Britain, France and Russia
French protection · British protection · Italian possessions / influence · Russian influence

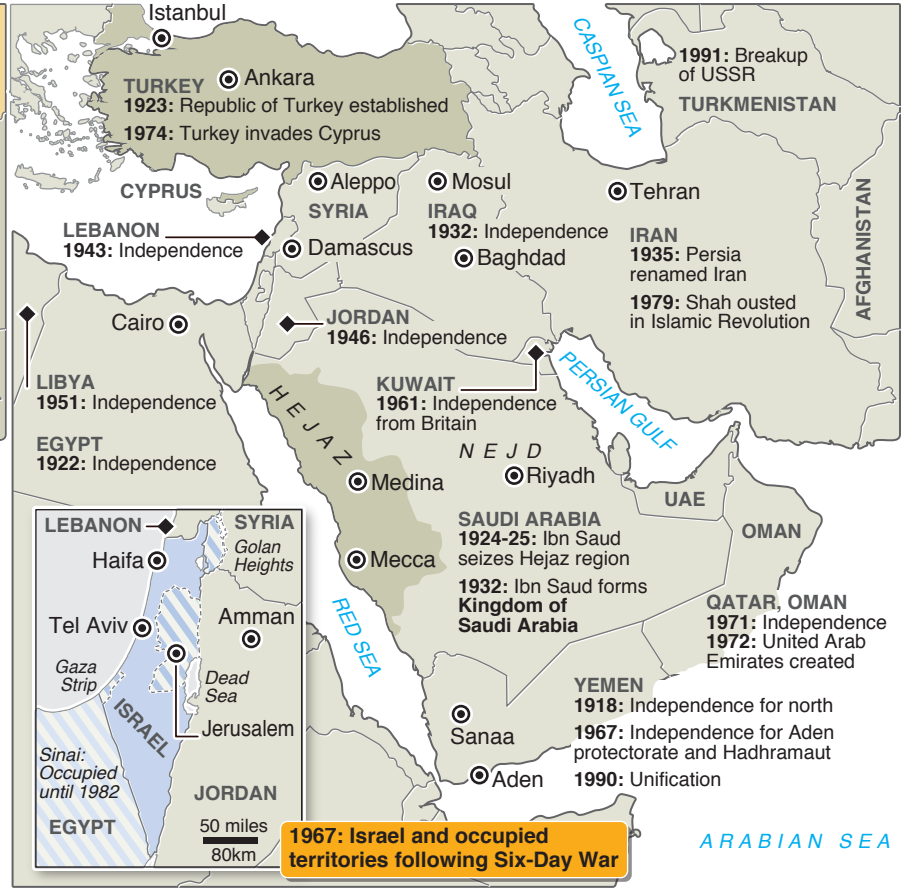
Oct 1915: British diplomat ***Sir Henry McMahon*** *(right)* encourages ruler of Mecca, ***Sharif Hussein ibn Ali***, to join fight against Ottoman Empire. In return, London will back Hussein's ambitions to create independent Arab state that will include Arabian peninsula, Palestine, modern-day Syria and Iraq

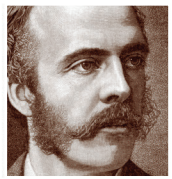


Secret deal: ***Sir Mark Sykes*** *(above left)*, representing Britain, and ***François Georges-Picot***, of France, agree to divide Ottoman Empire's Middle Eastern territories into their own zones of influence. **Agreement grants much of Hussein's proposed Arab state to British and French**

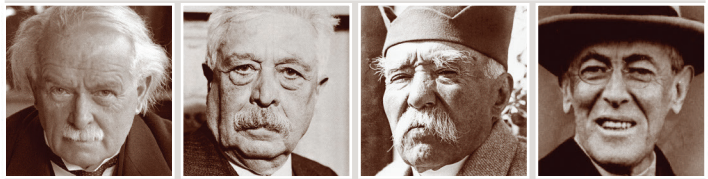
Arab Revolt: From June 1916, Hussein's Arab forces, backed by British advisers including ***T.E. Lawrence*** *(right)*, wage guerrilla war, pushing Ottoman troops out of Mecca and Medina. **Oct 1918: Arab and British Empire forces capture Damascus and Aleppo, ending four centuries of Ottoman rule**







1917, Balfour Declaration: Lord Balfour writes that Britain ***"will view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people"***. Declaration is adopted in **Treaty of Sèvres** at **Paris Peace Conference**



Jan 1919, Paris Peace Conference: *(Left to right)* ***David Lloyd George*** of Britain, ***Vittorio Orlando*** of Italy, ***Georges Clemenceau*** of France, and U.S. President ***Woodrow Wilson. Big Four*** make all major decisions, including drafting of treaties which redraw post-war boundaries, and plan to form ***League of Nations***

1920, Treaty of Sèvres: Carves up former Ottoman territories. ***Palestine*** and ***Trans-Jordan*** become League of Nations mandates administered by Britain, ***Greater Syria*** is administered by France. In 1921 ***British Mandate of Iraq*** is created. In 1926 revolt in ***French Mandate of Greater Syria*** leads to creation of French colony of ***Lebanon***

1948: British Mandate in Palestine ends. Birth of Israel triggers Arab-Israeli War. 750,000 Arabs fled or were expelled from their homes. British wartime leader ***Winston Churchill*** *(above)* describes transition to Jewish state as ***"a hell-disaster"***

Sources: The Balfour Project by Mary Grey, Maps in Time, The National Archives, University of Michigan

Pictures: Associated Press, Getty Images, Université de Montréal (Georges-Picot), British Army (T.E. Lawrence)

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