



Dissertation Title:

**The Place of the Middle East in British Colonial and
Foreign Policy, 1914-1935: Iraq and Palestine as a
Case Study**

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The Place of the Middle East in British Colonial and Foreign Policy, 1914-1935: Iraq and Palestine as a Case Study

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Debrecen, 14 / 09 /2024.

Ali Mahmada
doctoral student

Dedication

To my family, whose constant support and encouragement have been the foundation of my academic success. Your love, patience, and trust in me have given me the courage to face every challenge and achieve my aspirations.

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Abbreviations

APOC	Anglo-Persian Oil Company
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
FO	Foreign Office
WO	War Office
LN	League of Nations
RAF	Royal Air Forces
RLA	Red Line Agreement
RN	Royal Navy
TPC	Turkish Petroleum Company

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Abstract

This thesis thoroughly examines British colonial and foreign policy in the Middle East between 1914 and 1935, exploring the complex interaction of political, economic, and strategic interests that influenced Britain's actions in the region. The study examines the growth of British imperialism and economic competition in the Middle East during the late 19th century, starting with the Industrial Revolution which drove Britain's search for new colonies and strategic resources. Germany's rise as a dominant force in Europe heightened British concerns, particularly regarding its economic interests in the Ottoman Empire. This led to significant developments, such as the initiation of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway project and the exploration of oil in Abadan. British participation in the Middle East during the Great War and its aftermath was characterised by strategic necessities, economic interests, and diplomatic tactics. The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire created both favourable circumstances and difficulties as Britain endeavoured to assert its supremacy in the area amidst rival ambitions from Germany, Russia, and France. Significant historical events, including the Gallipoli Campaign, the Mesopotamia Campaign, and the Sykes-Picot Agreement, influenced British policies and territorial aspirations, as well as the development of the Jewish question during the war period.

After the war, British policymakers encountered the intricacies of executing their goals while manoeuvring through regional dynamics. The process involved various treaties, notably the Paris Peace Conference, the Treaty of Sèvres of 1920, the San Remo Conference 1920, the Cairo Conference of 1921, and the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923. The establishment of mandates, negotiations with France, and the signing of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922 demonstrated Britain's efforts to consolidate its influence in Palestine and Mesopotamia. These actions aimed to balance local aspirations for self-governance. The thesis also analyses significant events such as the Mosul dispute and the development of infrastructure projects like Haifa Harbour and the Baghdad-Haifa Oil Pipeline, emphasising the interconnected relationship between economic and imperial interests in the Middle East. One can gain valuable insights into British policy during this crucial period by utilising various primary sources, including war cabinet papers, archival documents, and secondary literature. This study enhances our understanding of the extent of British engagement in the Middle East and the enduring consequences it has had on the region's geopolitical dynamics.

Keywords: Middle East; Britain; Economic Interest; Ottoman Empire; Baghdad-Haifa Oil Pipeline.

Chapter One

1. Introduction:

1.1. Title Definition:

The thesis titled "The Place of the Middle East in British Colonial and Foreign Policy, 1914-1935: Iraq and Palestine as a Case Study" designates a particular era in British history that was marked by important changes in geopolitics, aspirations for colonialism, and approaches to foreign policy in the Middle East. This timeline, which runs from the outbreak of the Great War in 1914 to the middle of the 1930s, includes significant occurrences and advancements that shaped British relations and activities in the Middle East.

1.2. Background and Significance:

As the British Empire expanded in the second half of the 19th century, strengthening the industrial economy, and searching for new colonies, became potential subjects of British foreign policy. The Industrial Revolution was the transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy. The process began in Britain in the 18th century and quickly spread around the world. Inventions relied on newly harnessed means of using electricity, steel, and petroleum. Experts typically date the Second Industrial Revolution from 1870 to 1914. Throughout the first industrial revolution, there was a tremendous amount of feedback from technology to science. This was analytical by refocusing scientific thought in the light of advanced technologies.¹ Volker Berghahn, in *Europe in the Era of Two World Wars*, argued that, from 1895 to 1914, the world economy entered a boom period that, with a few short recessions, lasted until just before the Great War. For example, in Britain the leading industrial country, annual iron production reached 6.5 million tonnes in the early 1870s. The German Empire's yearly output had expanded almost twice by 1913. In many aspects, it was a continuation of the first industrial revolution. After 1870, the extensive use of steel in ship construction allowed for the construction of larger ships.²

¹ Joel Mokyr and Robert H Strotz, 'The Second Industrial Revolution, 1870-1914', *Storia Dell'economia Mondiale* 21945, no. 1 (1998), p. 1.

² Volker R Berghahn, *Europe in the Era of Two World Wars: From Militarism and Genocide to Civil Society, 1900-1950* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 8-9.

Llewellyn and Thompson, in *‘Imperialism as a Cause of World War I’* proposed that Britain's chief concern was to preserve her overseas empire and overseas trade by maintaining a large navy. After the 1870s, European nations began acquiring colonies in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific. Between 1895 and 1905, imperialistic expansion reached its climax. The British Empire included India, Canada, Australia, Burma, South Africa, New Zealand, Egypt, and other parts of Africa.³ Likewise, Neuburger and Stokes, in *‘The Anglo-German Trade Rivalry, 1887–1913’*, mentioned that, from 1870, monopoly capitalism demanded markets, raw materials, and cheap labour. Capitalism pursued colonialism to satisfy its demands. By 1900, European states had claimed nearly 90 percent of African territory.⁴ The historians Wolfson and Laver, in their book, *Years of Change: European History, 1890–1990*, illustrated that 'Splendid isolation' defined Britain's policy of diplomatic isolation. All of the Great Powers' armies became larger and greater. The arm race went on in a vicious circle, particularly after the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913. The Anglo-German arm race was one of the most essential causes of the Great War.⁵

Woodhouse's *Britain and the Middle East* shows that the new imperialism was an extension of the European continent's thirst for security and power in an era marked by militant nationalism and severe international conflicts. After Britain lost its North American colonies due to the independence of the United States (1783), making India its most important colony. Moreover, in the late 19th century, Great Britain gave more attention to the Middle East to secure the crucial route to access the Eastern Ocean and Indian markets. This trend was further amplified by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which significantly shortened the distance between Europe and India by about. The emergence of Germany as a strong European power after the unification of 1871 and its commercial and political incursions into the Middle East have heightened British anxiety about its economic interests in the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, there is no doubt that protecting British interests in the Suez Canal was critical to the British Empire's ability to safeguard its approaches to India. As a route from Western Europe to India, geography dictated a decision between two primary choices. One route took them by water around the Cape of Good Hope in

³ Jennifer Llewellyn and Steve Thompson, “Imperialism as a Cause of World War I,” alphahistory.com, 2020, https://alphahistory.com/worldwar1/imperialism/#The_scramble_for_Africa.

⁴ Hugh Neuburger and Houston H Stokes, ‘The Anglo-German Trade Rivalry, 1887-1913: A Counterfactual Outcome and Its Implications’, *Social Science History* 3, no. 2 (1979): p. 187.

⁵ Robert Wolfson and John Laver, *Years of Change: European History, 1890-1990* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2001), pp. 165-167.

South Africa. The second option, which was significantly shorter, was to go across the Middle East by land and water.⁶

With regard to the Berlin-Baghdad Railway project, Louay Bahri's work, *Baghdad Railway: Study on the Evolution and Diplomacy of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway Case until 1914*, pointed out that, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the German economy massively increased, and productivity reached a high level. This economic advancement prompted Germany to seek new land for its products. Germany decided that the Middle East was the best place for them, and within a short period of time, German political and economic influence had increased in the area, posing a threat to British interests in the region. The Baghdad project was a good example of German influence in the Ottoman Empire. Britain was not the only European country to oppose or express concern about the increase in German influence in Turkey. France and Russia also expressed concern and fear about the German expansion in the Ottoman Empire.⁷

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Mesopotamia's strategic importance reached a great degree because of the discovery of oil in Masjid-i-Suleiman in Khuzistan province in Persia, just before the outbreak of the Great War. The increasing British interest in Mesopotamia prompted British policy to consider Mesopotamia as a vital area for British political and economic activities. An example of which is that, in 1892, Lord Curzon, the British Parliament Member (1886–1898), explained the importance of Iraq by saying, "Baghdad is located within the ports of the Gulf and must fall within the undisputed British sovereignty."⁸ During his position as a Viceroy of India (1899–1905), Curzon emphasised this importance again in 1911 when he said: "It is a mistake to suppose that our political interests are confined to the Gulf, for it is not so, nor is it confined to the area between Basra and Baghdad but extends north to Baghdad itself."⁹ In order to show that this area was important, the British military started making plans for controlling southern Mesopotamia before the Great War even started.¹⁰ Moreover, the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of

⁶ Christopher Montague Woodhouse, "Britain and the Middle East," *Pakistan Horizon* 62, no. 1 (2009): pp. 90–92.

⁷ Louay Bahri, *Baghdad Railway: Study on the Evolution and Diplomacy of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway Case until 1914* (Baghdad: Baghdad University Press, 1967), https://books.google.hu/books?id=a_4DzgEACAAJ. p.6. [Translated from Arabic].

⁸ Enas Abdullah, *The Modren History of Iraq 1258-1918*, 1st ed. (Baghdad: Adnan Press, 1918), <https://www.noor-book.com/عبد-الله-سعدى-ابن-اس-1918-1258-الحديث-العراق-تاريخ-كتاب-pdf>. p.581. [Translated from Arabic].

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Enas Abdullah, *The Modren History of Iraq 1258-1918*, 1st ed. (Baghdad: Adnan Press, 1918), <https://www.noor-book.com/عبد-الله-سعدى-ابن-اس-1918-1258-الحديث-العراق-تاريخ-كتاب-pdf>. p.581. [Translated from Arabic].

Austria-Hungary was the direct cause of the Great War. Germany declared war on Russia, Serbia's ally, on August 1, 1914. Germany then invaded neutral Belgium on August 3, declaring war on France. On August 4, Britain declared war on Germany.¹¹ During the Great War, all the British attempts at maintaining a friendly relationship with the Ottoman Empire failed. On the other hand, Germany was successful in taking the Ottomans to their side. Due to Britain's location in the Persian Gulf, it seemed inevitable that the country would be required to take part in whatever plans were devised for the Ottoman Empire's subsequent existence.¹²

Furthermore, according to Williamson Murray, the primary focus of Britain was to maintain its commercial interests in the Suez Canal, Dardanelles, Alexandretta, the Persian Gulf, and Mesopotamia. Britain was worried about the Ottoman participation in the war because this would put it on the enemy side of the war. Russian aggression towards British interests in Persia prompted Britain to pay more attention to Persia.¹³ Besides, John V. Basarin emphasises that oil firing was widely accepted by senior naval officers due to its many benefits over coal. Admiral Sir Winston Churchill convinced the British government to purchase shares in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. Moreover, Alexandretta, now known as İskenderun, is strategically located on the Mediterranean coast of modern-day Turkey. During the early 20th century, this port city was critical for maintaining British geopolitical and economic interests in the region. Here's how the presence of Alexandretta in the Mediterranean Sea ensured the safety of Britain's oil interests in the Persian Gulf and its land route to the Mediterranean in many aspects such as its strategic location, military presence and protection for navy in particular and supplying military operation in the region.¹⁴ For such purposes, the British Government's primary focus was securing the area located within a triangle line of commercial interests. The line can be drawn from the Persian Gulf to the north at Mosul Vilayet, to the west at the Mediterranean Sea, and then to the Persian Gulf. To obtain this

¹¹ F. J. Moberly, *History of the Great War: Based on Official Documents. The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918. Volume II*, 2nd ed. (London: Qatar Digital Archive, 1924), p.75, <https://ia800200.us.archive.org/13/items/campaigninmesopo02mobe/campaigninmesopo02mobe.pdf>; George Peabody Gooch and Harold William Vazeille Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914*, 1st ed., vol. 6 (London: HM Stationery Office London, 1926). P.75.

¹² Gooch and Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914*.

¹³ Williamson Murray, James Lacey, and Jim Lacey, *The Making of Peace: Rulers, States, and The Aftermath of War* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 241.

¹⁴ John V. Basarin, "Oil: The Underlying Reason for Gallipoli," Australian Institute of International Affairs, accessed December 14, 2022, <https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/oil-the-underlying-reason-for-gallipoli/>; CAB 24/1, "G12 Alexandretta and Mesopotamia, Kitchener, 16 March 1915." (Kitchener, 1915).

strategy, the British Ambassador to Constantinople, Sir Louis Mallet (1913–1914), argued in favour of cooperation with an Arab movement led by friendly chiefs such as Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Kuwait. This would give Britain control over Mesopotamia, known for its enormous grain-producing areas and lucrative oil fields, without any trouble at all. Concerns included disruption to Persian oil supplies, protection of the British position in the Persian Gulf, and the possibility of a rise in India.¹⁵

Thus, once Great Britain entered the war, the British forces attacked the Ottoman troops in the Basra vilayet south of Iraq in the so called the Mesopotamian campaign. The most notable challenge of this was the siege of Kut Al-Amara.¹⁶ Besides, Kappelmann pointed out that the Mesopotamia campaign and the Gallipoli campaign had witnessed some terrible moments of British military action. The British had suffered some difficulties in his campaign, an example of which was the siege of Kut Al-Amara in 1915. From December 1915 to April 1916, the 6th Division was besieged by Ottoman troops before ultimately surrendering. Consequently, thousands of British and Indian forces were marched into prison and subjected to horrendous mistreatment and hunger. A third died because of illness, hunger, and brutal treatment.¹⁷

Furthermore, for the purpose of reinforcing the eastern front of the war, the first Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill (1911-1915) devised a strategy for the Gallipoli Campaign in September 1914 to defend British soldiers stationed in the Middle East as well as to control the sea passage from Europe to Russia. It seemed like Churchill planned to use the largest navy of the day to force his way through the Straits of the Dardanelles and seize Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, to connect with Russia, which was the stated official reason. It may have released some of the strain on Russia, an ally of Britain. Additionally, it may have allowed supplies to reach Russia across the Black Sea, thereby ending Turkey's participation in the conflict.¹⁸ According to Basarin, the Gallipoli Campaign was an unsuccessful attempt by the Allies to take control of the Dardanelles Strait. The assault failed to make any headway into Istanbul, the Ottoman Empire's

¹⁵ Title File 3136/1914 Pt 1 “German War. Situation in Turkish Arabia & Persian Gulf”: ADM 137/6. Telegram No. 692 from Sir L. Mallet (Constantinople), 4 September 1914.’, 1914, pp. 261–262.

¹⁶ Major Michael Andrew Kappelmann, *Parallel Campaigns: The British in Mesopotamia, 1914-1920 and the United States in Iraq, 2003-2004* (Pickle Partners Publishing, 2014), p. 30.

¹⁷ Kappelmann, *Parallel Campaigns: The British in Mesopotamia, 1914-1920 and the United States in Iraq, 2003-2004*.

¹⁸ Basarin, “Oil: The Underlying Reason for Gallipoli.”

capital. After nine months of fighting many people died from both sides, it ended with no decisive victory for the Allies. It was from this sense of national pride that Anzac Day originally originated.¹⁹

In the south-west of the Ottoman land the British policymakers were successful in gaining local support from Arabs against Turks. After obtaining the support of Britain in a series of letters known as the Letters between Sharif Hussein-McMahon, Hussein led the Arab revolution against the Ottoman rule during the Great War. In June 1916, the Arab revolt against Germany's ally the Ottoman Empire began, a revolution that the British worked hard to encourage. In October 1916, Sharif Hussein proclaimed himself the "King of Arabia," although the Allies officially recognized him only as King of Hijaz.²⁰ Furthermore, the British leadership recognized the significance of Palestine before, during, and after the Great War. They understood the strategic importance of securing the Suez Canal from any Ottoman raids, as it was vital for maintaining control over their imperial trade routes and ensuring communication lines with their colonies in Asia and Africa. Thus, Britain was eager to establish a strong foothold in the Arab provinces after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Britain widely accepted Palestine's strategic importance as a buffer zone for the Suez Canal. The establishment of the context led to the construction of Haifa Harbour after the war.²¹

During the Great War, some controversial debate happened between the two major powers in the region, Great Britain, and his ally France, regarding the division of the Middle East for their future economic ambitions. The most well-known agreement that solved the misunderstanding between them was the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 between Mark Sykes, the British member of the de Bunsen Committee, and the French ambassador in Beirut, George Picot.²² Britain and France's Sykes-Picot accords in the Middle East were a product of their ongoing rivalry leading up to the Great War. The British already controlled several territories when they received mandates in the area. Myriam Yakoubi argued that British politicians were keen on keeping the French away from

¹⁹ Basarin, "Oil: The Underlying Reason for Gallipoli."

²⁰ Walid Badran, "Sharif Hussein Bin Ali, Who Abdicated the Throne of the Hijaz, and His Two Sons Sat on the Thrones of Iraq and Jordan," BBC Arabic, 2022, <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-54408661.amp>. [Translated from Arabic].

²¹ Edward C Jenkins, "Economic Equality and the Mandates Commission," *Journal of Political Economy* 37, no. 5 (1929): pp. 604–616.

²² Christopher M Andrew and Alexander Sydney Kanya-Forstner, "The French Colonial Party and French Colonial War Aims, 1914–1918," *The Historical Journal* 17, no. 1 (1974): p.89.

Egypt, the Suez Canal, and the Persian Gulf. They quickly questioned the Sykes-Picot negotiations, which proposed Palestine as an international zone. The British were able to break their agreement with the French when they issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917, pledging their support for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine.²³

In the last stage of the Great War Britain started the post-war settling of scores in the Middle East. In this respect, Alev Dilek Aydin, in his book *Mosul Question (1918–1926)*, stated that the Middle Eastern oil concessions were a major concern for the British Government during the Great War, leading to the creation of an organisation and policy to guarantee oil supplies for military operations and post-war territorial aspirations. The Mudros Armistice granted the Allies the right to take any strategic location inside the Ottoman Empire, allowing them to seize the entire region and expand their occupation to include entire provinces.²⁴ An example of this was that the Ottoman Army was in full retreat by October 1918. In that time Sir Arnold Wilson was Acting Civil Commissioner of the British occupied area of Mesopotamia. He had been in communication with the British government about occupying the Mosul vilayet. Despite the ceasefire, the British invaded Hammam-al-Ali in November first (Hammam al-Ali is a spa town south of Mosul). The Ottoman commander in Mosul, Ali Ihsan Pasha (1915–1908), was given an ultimatum to withdraw Ottoman soldiers from Mosul, and British forces flew their flag in the city.²⁵

Martin William Gibson, in his work *British Strategy and Oil, 1914–1923*, emphasises that the Paris Peace Conference resulted in the Treaty of Versailles, which established the League of Nations (LN) as a global system of collective security. Other conferences followed, including the San Remo Conference and the Treaty of Sevres of 1920, which failed to result in a long-lasting agreement.²⁶ Lord Curzon suggested that the League or the Peace Conference would need to draft the form of “A” mandates for the Middle East, which would be agreed upon by the British and the French and then presented to the League for approval. As expected, in the San Remo Conference

²³ Myriam Yakoubi, ‘The French, the British and Their Middle Eastern Mandates (1918-1939): Two Political Strategies’, *Revue Française de Civilisation Britannique. French Journal of British Studies* 27, no. XXVII–1 (2022), pp. 3-4.

²⁴ Alev Dilek Aydin, “Mosul Question (1918-1926)” (Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2004), pp. 18–19.

²⁵ Jonathan Conlin, “An Oily Entente: France, Britain, and the Mosul Question, 1916-1925,” *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 31, no. 2 (2020): p. 231.

²⁶ Martin William Gibson, “British Strategy and Oil, 1914-1923” (University of Glasgow, 2012), p. 143.

of 1920, France received a mandate over Syria, including Lebanon, while Great Britain received a mandate over Palestine and Mesopotamia.²⁷

British-controlled India served as a model for the British administration in Iraq, which replaced the Ottoman government and regulations with British ones and strengthened tribal ties.²⁸ It was clear that the Balfour Declaration of 1917 advocated for a Jewish "national home" in Palestine, and the League of Nations accepted the British mandate over Palestine in July 1922. Britain committed itself to supporting the establishment of a Jewish political entity in Palestine, with Herbert Samuel serving as the first High Commissioner (1920-1925). Moreover, Britain encouraged Zionist immigration to Palestine, leading to the displacement of many Palestinians and the establishment of settlements to absorb the immigrant Jews.²⁹ The Allies were unable to reach solutions to the problems of the Middle East after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, leading to a Class 'A' League of Nations mandate and mass demonstrations in Baghdad. The post-war British policy in Mesopotamia anger the local people which consequences in an armed revolt against the British occupation of Iraq in 1920 resulted in 2,000 British soldiers and 8,000 Iraqis killed or wounded. This revolt prompted Britain to re-examine how they would rule Mesopotamia and to search for a more appealing system that the Arabs would accept. Sir Percy Cox, who replaced Wilson as the British High Commissioner in Iraq, set up an interim government and proposed a treaty linking Iraq and Britain with a king acceptable to all Iraqis.³⁰

In Palestine, the Arab resistance to the Balfour Declaration and British Mandate was strong, leading to the British government's exaggeration in insisting on Jewish rights at the expense of all rights and basic demands of the Palestinian people. The British attempted to establish the Jewish State by establishing the Jewish Legion and providing it with weapons and equipment. In 1920, the Haifa Congress's programme of Palestine being an independent Arab country denied any Jews rights to Palestine, leading to anti-Zionist riots and the British government's White Paper of 1922.

²⁷ L Dockrill Michael and J Douglas Goold, "Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences 1919–1923," *Londres, Batsford Acedemic and Educational Ltd*, 1981, p. 173.

²⁸ Courtney Hunt, *The History of Iraq* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2005), pp. 61–62.

²⁹ Elie Kedourie, "Sir Herbert Samuel and the Government of Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies* 5, no. 1 (1969): pp. 44–45.

³⁰ Judith S. Yaphe, "The View from Basra: Southern Iraq's Reaction to War and Occupation, 1915-1925," in *The Creation of Iraq, 1914-1921*, ed. and Gary Sick. Simon, Reeva Spector, Eleanor H. Tejirian (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p. 28.

Arabs wanted to control the government and get their independence quickly, while Jews had religious rights in Palestine. These contradictory ideas led to armed operations and revolts against British and Jewish occupation.³¹

The unstable situation in the Middle East pushed British policymakers to think of different strategies to strike a balance between their interests and those of the Middle Easterners. For instance, the Allied powers and the Ottoman government signed the Treaty of Sévres in 1920. At this meeting, a promise had been made by the Allies in the articles (62-63-64) of this treaty to create a future state for the Kurds, but this dream was not realised because of both internal and external factors.³² Moreover, Britain felt it necessary to hold a conference on March 12, 1921, in Cairo, Egypt, which has become known as the Cairo Conference, under the supervision of British Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill and some other forty advisors. Most of the debate at this conference was about the future of Iraq.³³ Moreover, for the Arabs of Iraq, the conference came up with the decision to select Hussain's son Faisal as king of the newly created state called "Iraq." With regards to the Kurdish question, the future of Kurdistan was discussed in the final meeting of the Political Committee of the Conference on March 15, 1921. As a result of this discussion, the decision on the Kurdish question remained unanswered and was referred to the LN. As the chairman stated, "it was possible for the meeting to come to a definite decision on this matter, as there was no need to refer it to the Foreign Office, or any other quarter, though it might have ultimately to be referred to the League of Nations."³⁴

With regards to Palestine the Cairo Conference discussed the matter of Trans-Jordan from 16th to 23rd of March with the Secretary of State. Concerning the Palestinian issue, Churchill met with Arabs from Palestine and Emir Abdullah, but Churchill refused to make Transjordan an Arab region with an Arab governor. It was agreed during the meeting that; the Conference advocated that Trans-Jordania be declared an Arab province of Palestine, with an Arab governor reporting to

³¹ Nabil Sahli, "The British Role in the Creation of Israel and the Continuation of the Tragedy of the Palestinian People," Alquds, 2020, <https://www.alquds.co.uk/> [Translated from Arabic Resource].

³² Lawrence Martin, *The Treaties of Peace, 1919-1923*, vol. 1 (New York, 1924), 900; Wadie Jwaideh, *The Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2006), p. 131.

³³ Cliohistory, "Cairo Conference 1921, and T.E. Lawrence," Clio Visualizing History, 2013, <https://www.cliohistory.org/thomas-lawrence/cairo>.

³⁴ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, Pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)," p. 61.

the High Commissioner. Based on this premise, they advocated for quick military occupation of Trans-Jordania, believing that without it, it would be difficult to establish a stable administration or put an end to anti-French activities in the British zone. These proposals, however, were contingent on the attitude of Emir Abdullah, and were later changed as a consequence of conversations between the Secretary of State and the Emir conducted in Jerusalem from 28 to 30 of March.³⁵

The Treaty of Lausanne was signed in 1923, and it is the only peace agreement that has remained in effect since the end of the Great War. It was instrumental in bringing about peace negotiations between Turkey and the "Allied and Associated Powers" after the war. The Sultan's government ratified the Peace Treaty of Sèvres, but Kemal's nationalist movement led to its rejection. The Treaty of Lausanne was a victory for Turkey, as it allowed it to keep a foothold in Europe and secure borders like those stated in the National Pact.³⁶ On the other hand, for Britain, Helmut Mejcher claimed that the major goal of British stakeholders after the war was securing Mesopotamian oil. According to him, no other policymakers objected to the Admiralty's desire for Middle Eastern oil in 1918 or later. The Cabinet Secretary, Maurice Hankey, overrode Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour's objections to Britain's occupation of Mosul and kept control of the region's oil potential when negotiating the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, under the influence of Admiral Sir Edmond Slade, the Admiralty's oil expert.³⁷

The post-war British challenges in the Middle East reduced British expenditure, especially in Iraq. Churchill proposed dispatching an expeditionary army of the Empire to safeguard Britain against threats from Egypt, Iraq, and India. He suggested reducing the number of troops in Iraq to 4,000 British and 16,000 Indian soldiers. Lloyd George and Churchill agreed that Britain had an obligation to the Iraqi people and that the War Office should make policy decisions based on what His Majesty's Treasury (The government's economic and finance ministry) said was financially feasible. Churchill advised spending no more than £7 million a year and moving the job of protecting Iraq from the War Office to the Air Ministry.³⁸ Extracting oil and sharing the post-war

³⁵ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 17, pp. 5-6. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)."

³⁶ Roderic H Davison, "Turkish Diplomacy from Mudros to Lausanne," in *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923* (University of Texas Press, 2021), pp. 206-242.

³⁷ H. Mejcher, *Imperial Quest for Oil* (London: Ithaca Press, 1976), pp. 377-378.

³⁸ "CAB 24/106, C.P. 1320 'Mesopotamia', W. S. Churchill, 1 May 1920.," 1920.

spoils were the key elements in covering what the victorious powers spent during the war in the Middle East. Therefore, the San Remo Agreement of 1920, the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey's exploration for oil in Iraq, and the Zionist Organisation of America's application for authorization to explore oil in Palestine were the most crucial points between Britain and France regarding the Middle East in the post-war era.³⁹

The British and Iraqi governments signed the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty in 1922 with the goal of establishing Iraqi self-governance and giving the British control over Iraq's foreign policy.⁴⁰ It was a result of the Cairo Conference and represented the complexities of the LN mandate system. The treaty outlined the limitations of British influence over Iraq, financial matters, and the responsibility of the Iraqi government in defence and administration.⁴¹ Moreover, from 1923 to 1926, the city of Mosul in northern Iraq was a subject of conflict between Arabs, Turks, and the British due to its oil resources. The Sykes-Picot pact initially established French influence, but the Treaty of Lausanne later invalidated this. The British sought to establish a cooperative government.⁴² Moreover, the 1923 Lausanne Conference was a contentious issue between Britain and Turkey over Mosul's control. Britain argued for its geographical integrity and obligations to the Iraqi people, while Turkey claimed it was essential for its military, political, historical, and economic reasons. The Kurds, who made up the majority, did not receive independence rights.⁴³ In 1924, Turkey and Britain disputed the control of Mosul, a region crucial for Iraq's resources and security. Negotiations by the League of Nations failed to resolve the dispute, resulting in economic tensions and diplomatic retaliation from Turkey.⁴⁴

The Mosul dispute and the Iraqi-Turkish Frontier Agreement of 1926 were significant events in post-war Iraq. The League of Nations resolved the conflict, leading to the Ankara Treaty with the

³⁹ Fromkin David, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt and Co, New York, 2001), pp. 534–535.

⁴⁰ *Report on Administration of Iraq, April 1922 to March 1923*, Colonial (Great Britain. Colonial Office) (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1923), 23, <https://books.google.hu/books?id=iuZHgzEACAAJ>.

⁴¹ Ann Wilks, "The 1922 Anglo-Iraq Treaty: A Moment of Crisis and the Role of Britain's Man on the Ground," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 3 (2016): p. 349.

⁴² Sevtap Demirci, "The Evaluation of Turco-British Diplomatic Strategies during the Lausanne Conference, 1922-1923" (London University, 1988). pp. 81-82.

⁴³ William Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil: Iraq, Turkey, and the Anglo-American World Order, 1918-1930*, Ithaca (London: Cornell University Press, 1982). p.76.

⁴⁴ Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky, *The Mosul Question: Mosul Vilayet*, 1st ed. (Paris: Reference Service on International Affairs, 1926), p. 33.

United Kingdom, which ended the Mosul issue and reinforced British dominance over oil reserves. The oil discovery in the Kirkuk region had long-term consequences for the region.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the Signing of the Red Line Agreement of 1928 was a group agreement between the US, Britain, and France regarding Middle East oil resources. It established the Turkish Petroleum Company as the sole operator, with each group receiving a percentage of crude oil output. The British aimed to maintain control and secure access to Iraq's oil.⁴⁶ Besides, the Anglo-Iraqi Agreement of 1932 was a treaty between the British government and the King of Iraq, establishing a strong partnership and allowing open discussions on foreign policy issues. It abolished Iraq's mandate, recognised it as an independent state, and included provisions for military, financial, and judicial affairs. The treaty lasted 25 years and included special agreements on railways, ports, and financial matters.⁴⁷ The Iraqi-British treaty met with negative public opinion, with critics arguing it did not guarantee Iraq's full independence and allowed Britain to exploit the country for colonial purposes. King Faisal, who was previously neutral, later declared Iraq free, compromising his impartiality. The relationship between Iraq and the LN was significant, with the first Iraqi-British treaty accepted as an alternative. Despite criticism, Iraq was admitted as the fifty-seventh member in 1932, boosting its political and economic prosperity and signalling its integration into the international community.⁴⁸

Regarding the question of Palestine, the British early efforts to implement the Balfour Declaration in Palestine highlighted its strategic importance in the Middle East. The Sykes-Picot Agreement and Britain's desire to establish a railway from Baghdad to Haifa strengthened its influence in Iraq.⁴⁹ Despite opposition and debates, the San Remo Conference in 1920 allocated Britain the Mandate for Palestine, which it ratified in July 1922 and implemented in September 1923. The British maintained Palestinian territories as Crown Colonies, despite the mandate's upgrade over

⁴⁵ Jacob Coleman Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Middle East: A Documentary Record 1535-1914* (Princeton: N.J., Van Nostrand, 1956), 133, <https://archive.org/details/diplomacyinnearm1956hure/page/n5/mode/2up>.

⁴⁶ Benjamin Shwadran, *The Middle East, Oil and the Great Powers 1959*, 2nd ed. (New York: Council for Middle Eastern Affairs Press, 1959), 243, <https://archive.org/details/middleeastoilgre0000shwa/page/n9/mode/2up>.

⁴⁷ Ref: IOR/R/15/2/640, “File 25/4 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance, 1930’ [2r] (3/40)” (1930), http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100000000241.0x000021?utm_source=testpdfdownload&utm_medium=pdf&utm_campaign=PDFdownload.

⁴⁸ Manley O Hudson, “The Admission of Iraq to Membership in the League of Nations,” *American Journal of International Law* 27, no. 1 (1933): 135, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2189798?seq=3>.

⁴⁹ Mayir Vereté, “Kitchener, Grey and the Question of Palestine in 1915-1916: A Note,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 9, no. 2 (March 1973): 224, <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/stable/4282473>.

colonialism.⁵⁰ During the British Mandate period, the Jewish migration to Palestine was controversial. The British appointed Herbert Samuel as the first High Commissioner, angering Arabs who demanded change. Despite opposition, Britain justified the creation of a Jewish state.⁵¹ Furthermore, Arab discontent escalated, leading to violence. Palestine's population changed, with a growing Jewish population and a higher Arab population. Moreover, critics have accused Britain of not protecting Arab rights through its actions, including Zionist immigration.⁵² Armed operations, uprisings, and revolts marked the Palestinian reaction to the British Zionist state in Palestine. In 1919, the "Fedayeen" Association launched organized armed action, but it ultimately failed. The Al-Buraq revolution in 1928 sparked Arab support for Palestinians, leading to raids on Jewish communities and British repression. Resistance and conflict characterized the Palestinian reaction.⁵³

The British Mandate in Palestine from 1927 to 1933 had significant economic implications, including the construction of Haifa Harbor. The British government aimed to establish an independent national government, reaffirm Jewish nationality, and regulate immigration based on economic capacity. They also managed Palestine's natural resources, including Haifa Port, which played a crucial role in the nation's development.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the research explores the British government's construction of Haifa harbour in Palestine in the early 20th century, driven by economic and imperial interests. It explores political and economic complexities, the decision-making process for an oil port, and the financial considerations involved.⁵⁵ Moreover, the Baghdad Haifa Oil Pipeline was a crucial infrastructure project by Britain during its mandate period in Palestine and Iraq, connecting oilfields in Kirkuk to ports in Tripoli, Syria, and Haifa, Palestine.

⁵⁰ Elie Kedourie, "Sir Mark Sykes and Palestine 1915–16," *Middle Eastern Studies* 6, no. 3 (1970): 340–345; "The Balfour Declaration - World War I Document Archive," 1917, https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_Balfour_Declaration.

⁵¹ Jacob Metzer, *The Divided Economy of Mandatory Palestine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 78.

⁵² Marjory Veronica Seton-Williams, *Britain and the Arab States: A Survey of Anglo-Arab Relations, 1920-1948*, Luzac & Company, 1st ed. (London: Burleigh Press, 1948), pp. 121–122.

⁵³ "The British Mandate: The Briish Mandate Over Palestine 1923-1948.," Info.Wafa, 2020, https://info.wafa.ps/ar_page.aspx?id=2110.

⁵⁴ Ilan Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two People* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 82.

⁵⁵ Metzer, *The Divided Economy of Mandatory Palestine*, p.166.

The pipeline played a significant role in Britain's oil strategies and regional economic development.⁵⁶

From 1932 to 1935, the major objective of British economic interests in Iraq and Palestine was to ensure access to oil resources and retain dominance over crucial trade routes. The British formed the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) in 1929 in Iraq, which had exclusive control over the nation's oil output. The IPC consisted of British, French, and American corporations, with the British company having the largest ownership share. The British government was determined to preserve its control over Iraq's oil sector, since it served as a crucial energy supply for the British Empire.⁵⁷ The British had a keen interest in enhancing Palestine's infrastructure, which included the establishment of transport networks such as roads, trains, and ports. The primary impetus behind its development was the need to expedite the movement of commodities and people between Europe and Asia, alongside the imperative to accommodate the expanding Jewish community in the area. The British saw Palestine as a strategically advantageous location for product manufacturing, exporting, and importing. In general, at this time, the primary focus of British economic interests in Iraq and Palestine was to ensure access to natural resources and retain dominance over crucial trade routes.

To sum up, the period between 1914 and 1935 was a pivotal era in British history, marked by substantial changes in geopolitics, colonial aspirations, and foreign policy approaches in the Middle East. The thesis examines the impact of the Industrial Revolution, colonial rivalry, and the pursuit of markets and resources on British operations in the area. The British Empire's efforts to protect its foreign possessions and trade routes, namely via naval supremacy, were fundamental to its strategies in the Middle East. The Berlin-Baghdad Railway initiative and the exploration of oil reserves in Mesopotamia had a significant impact on British interests and actions in the area. The Great War emphasised the significance of controlling crucial strategic sites such as the Suez Canal and Palestine for the British imperial agenda. Despite facing obstacles like the Gallipoli Campaign and the Mesopotamia Campaign, the British were determined to maintain their dominance and authority in the Middle East. The discussions with allies, including France, on the allocation of

⁵⁶ New York Times, "Mosul-Haifa Oil Pipeline King Ghazi of Iraq Kirkuk to Sea Opening 1935," *New York Times*, January 1935.

⁵⁷ Office of the Historian, "Milestones: 1921–1936: The 1928 Red Line Agreement," 2023, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/red-line>.

territory highlighted the intricacies of imperial plans in the area. The British military's emphasis on safeguarding economic interests in Mesopotamia and recognising the strategic significance of Palestine resulted in the establishment of Haifa Port. In summary, this thesis provides insight into the complex interaction of economic, political, and military elements that shaped British colonial and foreign policy in the Middle East during this significant change.

1.3. Research Methodology:

This study is grounded on an extensive and varied range of primary and secondary sources, thoroughly depicting British engagement in the Middle East. This has included using an extensive range of source material, and the significance of these sources in influencing the study and the subsequent results will be further examined. This research aims to expand on the extensive literature on the British Empire and its participation in other countries by focusing on the unique and often neglected topic of the British influence on the Middle East. This study has therefore addressed many significant historiographical arguments about British colonial policy and analysed how these ideas are manifested in British actions and policies in the Middle East. The Middle East region has experienced extensive engagement and interaction with various local communities and political entities. This study aims to offer an impartial analysis by incorporating historical accounts from both British and local sources. By doing so, it seeks to understand the perspectives of both the British and the locals regarding British actions. This research is likewise comparative and aims to analyse British actions in the Middle East concerning British imperial policy and activity in other areas.

The work comprehensively examines the economic and colonial competition between Britain and other powers in the Middle East from 1869 to 1935. We will analyse the impact of the Second Industrial Revolution on the British Empire, the history of British commercial diplomacy, and the British military tactics used throughout the war in the Ottoman Empire. In addition, we will examine the Division of the Middle East concerning future economic interests and the period of fulfilling war promises and preserving war ambitions, namely from 1923 to 1935. Overall, the research design is structured to address the intricate interplay of colonial policies, economic agendas, and geopolitical manoeuvres undertaken by the British in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq and Palestine. In order to do this, we will use a qualitative research technique, using historical analysis as our major method. To thoroughly comprehend the events and processes that occurred

during this era, we will analyse primary materials, including historical records, correspondences, agreements, and treaties. In addition, we will examine secondary sources such as scholarly papers, books, and other published materials to place our results in perspective and provide a more detailed and sophisticated analysis of the events.

The study will be structured in a chronological manner, where each chapter will centre on a distinct era in time. We will use a thematic analysis methodology, focusing our attention on significant topics such as industrial advancement, colonial strategies, economic rivalry, military operations, diplomatic agreements, and economic motivations. By doing this, we will be able to discern recurring patterns and trends all through time, enabling us to conduct a more comprehensive examination of the occurrences. To guarantee the trustworthiness and accuracy of our study, we shall use many sources of information and cross-reference our results. In addition, we will thoroughly assess the sources, taking into account their constraints and prejudices, and provide an impartial analysis of the events. Furthermore, archival research forms a cornerstone of this study, involving the examination of documents housed in national archives, including the British National Archives.

Moreover, primary source materials such as official correspondence, memos, treaties, and reports provide firsthand insights into the decision-making processes, negotiations, and interactions between various stakeholders during the period under investigation. The research methodology also incorporates the critical interpretation of primary sources to discern underlying motives, contradictions, and complexities in British colonial policies and economic agendas in Iraq and Palestine. To provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, this research employs a comparative analysis approach to juxtapose developments in Iraq and Palestine. The study has depended on some primary and secondary sources, such as, The Manchester Guardian Newspaper, *'The 'Petrol War': The Scarcity Danger to Germany.'* Along with the war cabinet paper like CAB 24/1. *"G12 Alexandretta and Mesopotamia, Kitchener, 16 March 1915. (Kitchener, 1915).* Besides, the great work of David Fromkin, in his book *A Peace to End all Peace*. Along with the archive papers of 'the British National Archives collections, such as *The Mesopotamia Campaign: The Siege of Kut-Al-Amara, Report of the Mesopotamia Commission*. The book of E. J. W. Slade, *Petroleum Situation in the British Empire 29 July 1918*.

The British Library, Hull History Centre and the Winston Churchill Online Archive, and Qatar digital Archive and some other online resources, along with Lawrence Martin, *The Treaties of Peace, 1919-1923, vol. II, Carnegie Endowment for international peace*. It will also rely on some Arabic sources such as Saad Eskander, *Great Britain and the Future of Kurdistan: From Planning to Partition 1915-1923*, As well as Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky. *The Mosul Question: Mosul Vilayet*. Bell, Lady Florence. *The Letters of Gertrude Bell*. 2nd ed. (Ernest Benn, London, 1927). The Balfour Declaration - World War I Document Archive, 1917. Mosul-Haifa Oil Pipeline King Ghazi of Iraq Kirkuk to Sea Opening 1935. *New York Times*. Finally, Foster, Henry A. *The Making of Modern Iraq: A Product of World Forces*

1.4. Research Objectives:

This research examines the influence of Britain's industrial revolution on colonial and foreign affairs in the Middle East in the second half of the 19th century. The paper investigates the economic concerns, specifically those related to oil and key trade routes, that influenced British policies and activities in the region. The paper also analyses the importance of British naval dominance and imperial security considerations in maintaining authority over crucial maritime routes and territories in the area. Furthermore, it analyses the political talks and competition between Britain and other European countries in the area, namely concerning the division of territories and the granting of oil concessions. The research additionally evaluates the influence of military operations, the LN mandate system, local opposition, and nationalist groups in opposing British colonial control. Furthermore, it explores the role of British oil interests in determining infrastructural projects. It also assesses the efficacy of international treaties and the intricacies of governing ethnic and religious diversity in British-administered regions in the Middle East. The research gaps provide unique insights into the complex interplay between British colonial and foreign policy goals, as well as the historical evolution of the area during a time of significant change.

The dissertation aimed to discuss some key questions of British Colonial and Foreign Policy and the Place of the Middle East during 1914–1935. Here are some major questions, such as: Was the arms race or the alliance system responsible for the outbreak of the Great War? To what extent was Britain justified in opposing German expansion? What were the fundamental reasons behind Great Britain's involvement in the Great War of 1914? What was the initial purpose of Britain's

Mesopotamian campaign? Why was Mesopotamia so valuable to Britain? To what extent was the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 successful in satisfying the participants? What were the primary causes of raising the Jewish question during the war period? What were the main objectives and provisions of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty signed in 1922? What were the significant events in post-war Iraq related to the Mosul dispute and the Iraqi-Turkish Frontier Agreement of 1926? How have historians assessed the Anglo-Iraqi Agreement of 1930–1932? Did the post-war treaties convince all the attendees? How did the oil of Mosul push British policy towards Kurdish fate? What were the reasons behind the British support of the Jewish issue? How did the Middle Eastern oil affect the Victorian powers? These and some more questions like these will be answered in this work. What were the compelling reasons for Britain to acquire dominion over Palestine? Why did Britain insist on implementing the Balfour Declaration in Palestine? What were the main reasons for the controversy surrounding Jewish migration to Palestine during the British Mandate period? What were the economic implications of the British Mandate in Palestine from 1927 to 1935, including the construction of Haifa Harbour? These questions are crucial because they address the underlying motivations and justifications behind Britain's involvement in the Great War and its subsequent Middle Eastern policies. They explore the strategic, economic, and political factors influencing British actions, such as the significance of Mesopotamia, the impact of oil, and the implementation of the Balfour Declaration. By examining these aspects, the dissertation provides a comprehensive understanding of how British colonial and foreign policy was shaped by events in the Middle East during 1914-1935.

1.5. Chapter Outline:

The first chapter cover the research introduction, defining research title, background and significance, research objectives, methodology and thesis questions. The next chapter is titled “*British Economic and Colonial Rivalry Before the Great War 1869-1914*” This chapter examines the effects of the Second Industrial Revolution on the British Empire, specifically looking at innovations, industrial progress, colonial policies, economic competition, and the development of British commercial diplomacy in the Middle East from 1869 to 1914. This text explores several historical topics, including the age of inventions, the industrial advancement of products and transportation, British colonial policies, colonial and economic rivalry, the end of Splendid Isolation, the pre-war arms race, and the Anglo-German rivalry. The third chapter examines British

War Strategies During the War in the Ottoman Empire, which lasted from 1914 to 1918. The text examines a multitude of facets, including the commencement of the First World War in 1914, the relationship between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, particular military campaigns including those in Mesopotamia, Gallipoli, Sinai, and Palestine, and diplomatic accords including the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration. Contradictory historical interpretations of significant correspondences and agreements from this era are also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter four entitled "*The Division of the Middle East for the Future Economic Interests*" offers a comprehensive examination of the economic interests and geopolitical strategies that influenced the division of the Middle East between 1919 and 1923. The geopolitical landscape of the area saw substantial transformation as powerful countries vied for control over its plentiful economic resources, notably oil. The chapter examines the intricate web of political tactics and discussions that shaped the division of land and the establishment of mandates in the Middle East. This text explores the goals and objectives of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, as well as the later agreements, such as the San Remo Oil Agreement of 1920 and the Treaty of Sèvres. The chapter also analyses the reactions of indigenous groups to British policies, including the Iraqi Revolt of 1920 and the Palestinians' struggle to protect their homeland. Furthermore, it elucidates the treaties established to address post-war challenges and the ramifications of these agreements, such as the Cairo Conference of 1921. This chapter focuses on the complex interplay between economic interests, imperial ambitions, and indigenous opposition in the Middle East during this pivotal period.

The fifth chapter titled "*The Phase of Fulfilling War Promises and Preserving War Ambitions, 1923-1933*", explores the period between 1923 and 1935, which was marked by the fulfilment of wartime promises and the preservation of strategic ambitions in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq. It delves into the complex interplay of colonial policies, economic agendas, and geopolitical manoeuvres undertaken by the British in Iraq during this era. The chapter begins with the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922-1924, which outlined the complex negotiations surrounding the Mosul Question, culminating in the Iraqi-Turkish Frontier Agreement of 1926. The chapter also examines the signing of the RLA in 1928, which solidified British goals in controlling oil resources in the region. The chapter also delves into the early steps towards the implementation of the Balfour Declaration in Palestine, examining the establishment of the mandate, Jewish migration dynamics,

and the reactions of the Palestinian population. Furthermore, it examines the strategies and economic objectives of the British mandate in Palestine, with a specific emphasis on the commercial importance of Haifa Port for Britain and the creation of the Kirkuk-Haifa oil pipeline. This chapter provides a thorough analysis of the many and intricate changes that occurred in the Middle East during this pivotal decade. It sheds light on the intricate relationships between imperial ambitions, indigenous responses, and economic necessities that influenced the region.

Chapter Two

2. British Economic and Colonial Rivalry Before the Great War 1869-1914

2.1. Relationship Between Second Industrial Revolution and History of British Empire:

The English historian Arnold Toynbee, named the phrase "Industrial Revolution." The Industrial Revolution was the transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy. The practice began in Britain in the second half of 18th century and has since spread to other parts of the world.⁵⁸ The innovations of the nineteenth century that depended on newly harnessed ways of putting electricity, steel, and petroleum to use were known as "electrical" inventions. In addition, there were a lot of new discoveries in non-industrial fields, like agricultural advancements that made it possible to feed more people who weren't farmers.⁵⁹ The Industrial Revolution, which lasted from 1760 to 1830, was mostly restricted to Britain. Belgium was the first nation in continental Europe to undergo economic transformation. France industrialized more slowly and incompletely than either the United Kingdom or Belgium. By 1848, France had become an industrial powerhouse, but even though it grew quickly during the Second Empire, it was still a long way behind Britain.⁶⁰

The Second Industrial Revolution is generally considered to have occurred between 1870-1914, but some of its most significant events may be traced back to the 1850s. After 1825, the quick pace of groundbreaking innovations began to decline, but it gathered speed again in the later part of the nineteenth century. The big innovations in energy, materials, chemicals, and medicine were important not only because they had a significant influence on production, but also because they boosted the efficacy of research and development in micro-creative activities.⁶¹ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the growth of industrial power in the United States significantly outpaced that of Europe. Germany, for example, did not begin industrialization until 1870, despite the country's wealth of coal and iron. Early in the 20th century, Eastern European

⁵⁸ H Stanley Jevons, 'The Second Industrial Revolution', *The Economic Journal* 41, no. 161 (1931): p. 1.

⁵⁹ Mary Bellis, "The Most Important Inventions of the 19th Century: Innovations That Changed the World," houghtco, 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/inventions-nineteenth-century-4144740>.

⁶⁰ James Wolfe, *The Industrial Revolution: Steam and Steel* (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc, 2015), p. 10.

⁶¹ Joel Mokyr and Robert H Strotz, 'The Second Industrial Revolution, 1870-1914', *Storia Dell'economia Mondiale* 21945, no. 1 (1998), p.1.

nations were falling behind. Industrialization moved to previously industrialized countries like China and India in the mid-20th century.⁶²

2.1.1. The Age of Inventions:

Since the Second Industrial Revolution, which took place in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, technology has played a growing role in promoting economic growth and development and reshaping societies. The growth that started in the 19th century has been far faster than any other growth.⁶³ In this sense, the innovations made after 1870 differed from those before it. The last decades of nineteenth century witnessed significant growth of new technology and innovations that resulted in profound changes in the economy and how people lived and worked in Europe, the United Kingdom particularly. Steel mills, chemical plants, and large factories produced massive amounts of consumer goods; electricity and lighting improved; and new modes of transportation and communication connected people more than ever before. Mechanized agricultural equipment revolutionized food production and turned agriculture into a multibillion-dollar business. It was also a time when inventors discovered new methods to improve current items. Consequently, some people became very wealthy.⁶⁴

Before the Second Industrial Revolution, trains were invented, but there were a lot of accidents because it took a long time to slow and stop them. Then came George Westinghouse, an engineer who was mostly self-taught. It wasn't until 1872 that his air-pressure railway braking invention was granted a patent. Because of this invention, there was a big rise in the number of people and goods being moved across the country by rail. He came up with a process in the early 1900s that heated crude oil inside a container until it reached more than 700 degrees Fahrenheit. People at this temperature used oil in a different way because it broke down into simpler, more useful products. William Burton a chemist and executive for the Standard Oil Co. in Indiana “gave us the array of distillates that runs from fuel oil to gasoline to petrochemical basics,” explains Scranton. “No cracking, no interstate highways.”⁶⁵

⁶² Wolfe, *The Industrial Revolution: Steam and Steel*, p. 11.

⁶³ Andrew Reamer, ‘The Impacts of Technological Invention on Economic Growth—a Review of the Literature’, *The George Washington Institute of Public Policy*, 2014, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁴ Joel Mokyr and Robert H Strotz, ‘The Second Industrial Revolution, 1870-1914’, *Storia Dell’economia Mondiale* 21945, no. 1 (1998), pp. 1-6.

⁶⁵ Patrick Kiger, “8 Groundbreaking Inventions from the Second Industrial Revolution,” *History*, 2021, <https://www.history.com/news/second-industrial-revolution-inventions>.

2.1.2. Industrial Advancement of Products and Transportation:

Most economic historians believe that the years 1873-1895 were a period of slowing development. Even throughout the years of a perceived crisis, overall commerce and industry grew. The Second Industrial Revolution's areas of chemicals, electrical engineering, and machine manufacture continued to flourish.⁶⁶ Most importantly, the global economy boomed from 1895 until shortly before the Great War, with just a few small recessions. In the early 1870s, Britain's yearly iron output reached 6.5 million tons, four times that of Germany (1.6 million tons) and five times that of France (1.2 million tons), with Russia well behind at 375,000 tons. By 1913, the German empire's yearly output had increased almost tenfold (14.8 million tons), surpassing Britain's (9.8 million tons). France's output had tripled, but it was only 4.7 million tons ahead of Russia (3.9 million tons). There was a lot of coal in Britain between 1880 and 1913. There was also a lot of lignite in the coal, which helped Britain keep its lead over Germany.⁶⁷

However, yearly steel production changed significantly. In 1890, Britain still led Germany (3.6 million tons versus 2.2 million). But in 1913, the Germans outproduced the British by three (18.6 million versus 6.9 million). After 1895, industrial progress left agriculture far behind. Prior to 1914, the greatest increases were in the industrial and commercial sectors. And lastly, the fast development of internal and international commerce. With the exception of two brief recessions in 1900–1901 and 1907–1908, the value of European exports more than doubled between 1870 and 1900. By 1913, two-thirds of commerce was between European states.⁶⁸ In addition, the progress of goods and market demands led to the evolution of transportation systems. By 1870, the use of steam power in transportation was widespread, and these were products of the first Industrial Revolution. In the second Industrial Revolution, railroads got quicker, safer, and more comfortable, although this was due to little improvements. The Diesel engine, invented by Rudolf Diesel in 1897, and the use of electrical locomotives were the only truly significant changes to railways during this period. He began looking for an engine that followed the theoretical Carnot cycle, which maximizes efficiency via isothermal expansion, wastes no energy, and uses inexpensive, crude fuel (originally diesel used coal dust in his engines). Because isothermal

⁶⁶ Adam Zeidan., "Industrial Revolution - The First Industrial Revolution," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Industrial-Revolution/The-first-Industrial-Revolution>.

⁶⁷ Berghahn, 'Europe before World War I, 1895–1914', p. 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp.8–9.

expansion is impossible, compression-induced combustion has become the hallmark of diesel engines.⁶⁹

Despite the incredible advancements in sailing ships that resulted in the building of the famed clipper ships, wind power was only going to be employed in leisure and sporting boats. After 1870, steel became more popular as a shipbuilding material. As a result, it became feasible to build larger ships because of this. Because iron and steel ships could be much larger than wooden ships, ships expanded in size and power at a rate that had never been seen before. Furthermore, during this time Gustav de Laval and Charles Parson came up with the steam turbine in 1884, and later improvements made it even better. The rotary motion of the turbine could make huge amounts of speed, and it was far more efficient, faster, cleaner, and quieter than the previous reciprocating marine steam engines.⁷⁰

2.1.3. The impact of Industrial Revolution on Colonialism:

The Industrial Revolution significantly influenced colonialism by transforming the economic and political relationships between industrialized nations and their colonies. The technological advancements and increased production capacities in Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries created a heightened demand for raw materials, leading European powers to expand and strengthen their colonial empires. Industrialized nations sought resources such as cotton, rubber, and minerals from their colonies to fuel their factories, while also using these territories as markets for their manufactured goods. The development of steamships and railways further facilitated the extraction and transportation of these resources, enabling deeper penetration into and control over colonized regions. The era also saw a heightened sense of economic and technological superiority among Europeans, which was used to justify imperial expansion and the exploitation of colonized people. This period is exemplified by the "Scramble for Africa," where industrial powers aggressively competed for territorial control, fundamentally reshaping global economic and political dynamics and reinforcing colonial domination.⁷¹ Consequently, the second industrial revolution and the advance of technology and transportation means increasing the demands of production. Thus, the

⁶⁹ Moky and Strotz, 'The Second Industrial Revolution, 1870-1914', p. 7.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Eric J Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire: From 1750 to the Present Day* (The new press, 1999). p.62.; Daniel R Headrick, *The Tools of Imperialism: Technology and the Expansion of European Colonial Empires in the Nineteenth Century*, Oxford University Press (New York, 1981). pp 112-115.

growth of productivity encourages factories to look for new markets overseas. For that during the period of second industrial revolution 1870-1914 great powers opened the gate of imperialism in Asia and Africa.

2.2. British Colonial Policies and the Future of the Empire:

2.2.1. Colonial Rivalries:

From a macroeconomic perspective, imperialism was pursued because of internal economic circumstances and the economic interests of the country's elite. Hobson (1858–1940), an English economist, described imperialism in 1902 by explaining that big economies needed to find more attractive investment possibilities due to an excess of investable money. Inequality and a lack of overall demand contributed to the oversupply.⁷² Therefore, a dramatic expansion of colonial control took place over the four decades leading up to the outbreak of the Great War. Europe had already established colonies in Asia and Oceania before 1880, but the continent of Africa would soon be torn up by European powers, with France and Great Britain's sights on Africa, and Russia's eyes on Central Asia. Germany, Belgium, Italy, Japan, and the United States all joined the existing colonial powers during that time.⁷³

Economic and ideological motivations for growth in the Victorian era might be categorized. An increasing requirement for raw materials to feed new manufacturing capabilities and customers was the driving force behind the economic drive. Entrepreneurs in Britain expanded their views well beyond the borders of the country they called home, transforming it into the "workshop of the world." As a result, there has been more interest in Asia, Latin America, China, and the Pacific since the middle of 18th century. All of this is based on the assumption that there will always be a market for low-cost items, such as those that can be mass-produced by machines.⁷⁴ Further, it was also no longer Britain that oversaw international commerce, making areas of commercial influence and taking over colonies here and there. Other countries with rapidly growing economies were instead to blame for giving modern society a new name. They were trying to get their own place

⁷² Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison, 'The Economics of World War I: An Overview', *The Economics of World War I*, no. September 2004 (2005): p. 35. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511497339.002.

⁷³ Jonas Kreienbaum, "Colonial Policy, Colonial Conflicts and War before 1914," *International Encyclopaedia of the First World War*, 2022, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/colonial_policy_colonial_conflicts_and_war_before_1914.

⁷⁴ Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815–1914* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1993), doi:10.1007/978-1-349-22784-6. p. 86.

in the sun.⁷⁵ Additionally, trade with self-governing colonies made significant strides forward, while trade with India and other "possessions" remained almost unchanged throughout this period. This expansion was almost entirely concerned with the acquisition of tropical and sub-tropical nations populated by races to whom we have no real intention of granting self-government soon.⁷⁶

Before the Great War, Britain was the world's biggest, wealthiest, and most dominating imperial state. For a long time, the British Empire inhabited a quarter of the world "the empire on which the sun never sets". In late 1800s British colonial territories included Canada, India, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Burma, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and other Pacific and Caribbean islands. Many of these colonies were easily obtained. Others required more time, effort, and blood. For example, Britain acquired South Africa after expensive battles against the Zulus and Boers. British imperialism aimed to sustain and develop commerce, raw material imports, and manufactured product sales. The world's greatest navy and mercantile (commercial) fleet bolstered Britain's imperial supremacy.⁷⁷

France was also a major imperial power, as it had several islands in certain Pacific as well as lands in west and north-west Africa, which were part of the French empire. While the German Empire controlled Shandong (a Chinese province), Samoa, New Guinea, and other Pacific islands, as well as several possessions in central and south-western Africa. The Philippines and huge sections of South America were formerly part of the Spanish Empire, but by the early twentieth century, Spain's imperial influence had dwindled. Nearer to Europe were the Russian and Austrian empires, as well as the Ottoman Empire. As an imperial state, Russia dominated Finland, Poland, and a swathe of Central Asia. As part of Russia's imperial expansion plans in Korea and northern China, the country fought a catastrophic war against Japan in 1904–1905.⁷⁸

Between 1871 and 1890, Germany sought to maintain her predominance in Europe by establishing peaceful agreements with other nations. Italy desired Tunis and Tripoli in northern Africa, causing

⁷⁵ Harry Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism: The Economics of US Foreign Policy*, vol. 21 (NYU Press, 1969). p.34.

⁷⁶ John A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2005), pp. 37- 38

<https://book4you.org/book/2374893/55334b?dsourc=recommend>.

⁷⁷ Llewellyn and Thompson, "Imperialism as a Cause of World War I."

⁷⁸ Ibid.

her to clash with France.⁷⁹ The most important goal for France was to reclaim Alsace and Lorraine from Germany. In 1867 the Dual Monarchy was established by Austria-Hungary in order to achieve governmental authority over the Balkan Peninsula.⁸⁰ Russia's territorial ambitions conflicted with Austria-Hungary and Britain's objectives. Because most Balkan peoples are of Slavic descent, Russia aimed to obtain warm water ports in the Balkans. Between 1856 and 1870, the Treaty of Paris halted her development into the Balkans.⁸¹ All sides recognized that the Sultan relied heavily on Great Britain and Austria for backing and security when they signed the Treaty of Paris in 1856. The Sultan was forced under the 1856 treaty to implement several changes in order to reinforce his weak government. The majority of these measures were never carried out, and the situation simply became worse. With the Ottoman Empire on the verge of collapsing, doubts arose about who would take their place in the Balkans. Furthermore, in 1870, Britain had the world's biggest foreign empire as well as the world's greatest fleet. She didn't want to be bothered with European continental politics. Her major goal was to maintain a huge fleet in order to protect her foreign dominion. France and Russia were her main adversaries before to 1890. Germany, on the other hand, became Britain's main opponent after 1890, as her naval might grew.⁸²

2.2.2. Economic Rivalries (The Anglo-German Trade Rivalry, 1887-1913):

The industrial revolution, which began in Britain in 1750, was sparked by the growth of capitalism in Europe. For the reason that all European nations had become industrialized, there was little room to develop in Europe, necessitating the search for colonies. The goal of colonialism was to fulfil the needs of capitalism. Monopoly capitalism wanted markets, raw materials, and cheap labour starting in 1870.⁸³ The "scramble for Africa" refers to the many initiatives taken by European countries to split Africa into regions and set colonial borders. Britain, Germany, France, Portugal, and Belgium were also participating in this experiment. Because only Africa had not

⁷⁹ Charles Sanford Terry, "Germany and Her Neighbours 1871-1914," *History* 4, no. 1 (March 1915): 23, <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/stable/44991453>.

⁸⁰ Anton Pelinka, "From Habsburg to Communism to Democracy:" in *Austrian Federalism in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Günter Bischof and Ferdinand Karlhofer, vol. 24 (University of New Orleans Press, 2015), 1, doi:10.2307/j.ctt1n2txpf.5.

⁸¹ Gabor Demeter, "Diplomatic Struggle for Supremacy over the Balkan Peninsula 1878-1914" (Institute of History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2017), p. 94.

⁸² Kenneth Shafer, 'The Congress of Berlin of 1878: Its Origins and Consequences' (Portland State University, 1989), pp. 13-16, doi:10.15760/etd.5811.

⁸³ Patrick J. McGowan and Bohdan Kordan, 'Imperialism in World-System Perspective: Britain 1870-1914', *International Studies* 25, no. 1 (1981): p. 52, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2600210>.

been colonized by the 1880s, it became the focus of imperialist concern as capitalism developed.⁸⁴ African natural resources were targeted by European countries in the 1870s and early 1880s.⁸⁵ The territorial scramble led to confrontation among European powers. Due to a rift between Britain and France, Otto Van Bismarck the German statesman (1862-1890) convened a conference of European powers in Berlin in late 1884.⁸⁶ Following these negotiations, Britain, Germany, France, Portugal, and King Leopold II of Belgium (1835-1909) codified and charted their claims to African land at the Berlin Conference of 1884.⁸⁷

Nevertheless, to facilitate future negotiations on European rights in Africa, the conference's leaders agreed on free trade among the colonies. Nearly 90 per cent of Africa's land had been seized by European countries by 1900, yet the African people had no voice in the decision. However, in Germany, this African colonization got a warm reception, whereas in Britain and France it met with opposition. From Cairo to Cape Town, many Londoners envisioned the construction of a British-owned railway that would travel the whole length of Africa. This goal was hindered by German domination over eastern Africa. As a result, the Suez Canal, which transported raw materials and manufactured commodities into and out of Africa, was under the jurisdiction of the British in Egypt. The source of the Nile River, which is located in Uganda, was also a source of concern for the United Kingdom.⁸⁸

From 1890 onwards, economic tensions existed between Germany and Britain. German industrialisation began in 1871, and by 1890, German goods were competing with British goods all over the world, and German merchant ships were threatening the British shipping sector.⁸⁹ Economic tensions between France and Germany were also evident. Alsace and Lorraine were two of France's coal-producing regions, and it was an important centre of textile industry. Which had already been annexed by Germany in 1870. For the first time in its history, France was forced to

⁸⁴ Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa* (London: Hachette UK, 2015), p. 921.

⁸⁵ M. Craven, 'Between Law and History: The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 and the Logic of Free Trade', *London Review of International Law* 3, no. 1 (March 2015): pp. 36–37, doi:10.1093/lril/lrv002.

⁸⁶ Reuters Telegram, "The Berlin Conference," *Guardian, The*, December 1884, 8, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/257784689/?terms=berlin conference of 1884&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/257784689/?terms=berlin+conference+of+1884&match=1).

⁸⁷ M. Craven, 'Between Law and History: The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 and the Logic of Free Trade', *London Review of International Law* 3, no. 1 (March 2015): pp. 36–37, doi:10.1093/lril/lrv002.

⁸⁸ Llewellyn and Thompson, "Imperialism as a Cause of World War I."

⁸⁹ Eric Brose, "Arms Race Prior to 1914, Armament Policy," *International Encyclopaedia of the First World War*, 2014, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/arms_race_prior_to_1914_armament_policy.

purchase coal from foreign nations beginning in 1871. Because of this, France and Germany had to fight for Morocco's natural riches. Austria and Germany competed with Russia for trade concessions in the Balkans.⁹⁰ In the second half of 19th century, economic rivalry played a significant role in inflaming international tensions. Economic rivalry has been exaggerated far beyond reality. Due to a lack of items to sell abroad, Russia's economic competition with Germany in the Balkans was not as serious as it is now. In the decade before the Great War broke out, both Britain and Germany were able to diversify their markets in different parts of the world and in the British Empire and on the continent of Europe, respectively. As Arthur Balfour the British Prime Minister (1902-1905) pointed out that; "We are probably fools not to find a reason for declaring war on Germany before she builds too many ships and takes away our trade." Although, economic disputes had a modest role in the outbreak of the Great War of 1914.⁹¹

It's worth noting that, prior to 1914, one could talk about the British economy collapsing and the German economy advancing. Germany was Britain's second-largest export market in 1913. The German colonial empire, unlike the British or French colonies, did not have a big economic impact on the country. It also had little effect on the escalating tensions between Europe's great powers before the outbreak of the Great War. Several disagreements between France and Britain created tensions in Egypt throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Between 1912 and 1914, the British government used economic imperialism to attempt to strengthen Anglo-German relations. While there was considerable British-German commercial competition in certain situations, the attitude of major bankers and economists involved in imperial initiatives demonstrated that they were not interested in conflict. In this regard, the British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey (1905-1916), stated that: "Yes, we had to fight, but what a hateful necessity. I suppose Germany, our best customer, will be beaten. And what then?"⁹² However, Paul Kennedy's *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism* argues that the economic imperialism and Anglo-German commercial

⁹⁰ Erik Gartzke and Yonatan Lupu, 'Trading on Preconceptions: Why World War I Was Not a Failure of Economic Interdependence', *International Security* 36, no. 4 (2012): pp. 132–134, https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/41428122.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ad23bdd11d124efd319eab515403674d5&ab_segments=&origin=.

⁹¹ Neuburger and Stokes, "The Anglo-German Trade Rivalry, 1887-1913: A Counterfactual Outcome and Its Implications," pp. 187–188.

⁹² Boris Barth, "Imperialism | International Encyclopaedia of the First World War (WW1)," *International Encyclopaedia of the First World War*, 2015, <https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/imperialism>.

competition were critical elements in the creation of antagonism between the two countries, which led to the onset of the Great War.⁹³

2.3. End of Splendid Isolation:

From 1895 to 1902, politicians used the phrase "Splendid Isolation" to refer to Britain's position. It was believed that around the start of the twentieth century, European foreign policy was subjugated to imperial objectives in Africa and Asia. Others argue that, if Britain did truly live in isolation, it was primarily unintentional and a result of real events such as the Boer War (1899-1902) in Africa, which caused Britain to be disliked around the world.⁹⁴ "Splendid isolation" was, above all, based on Britain's undeniable power, but her economic position was weakened by Germany and the United States. To begin with, Britain could no longer claim to be the world's leading industrial power in 1900. Secondly, Germany and Russia posed a danger to Britain's imperial and maritime interests. Meanwhile, other nations, however, such as Austria, France, and Russia, increased their steel output at a higher rate than Great Britain.⁹⁵ British isolation from the rest of Europe was widely referred to in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Britain had a large empire and ruled it. India's large human resources were vital to Britain's dominance. The empire was primarily reliant on Indian soldiers. Protecting trade lines between Britain and India was Britain's top goal.⁹⁶ In addition, Britain's strong fleet secured global economic linkages. Despite this imperial orientation, Britain was interested in Europe. Then there were the opposing empires. Both Belgium and France had African empires. Britain and France fought bitterly for control of North African holdings. Germany held colonies in Africa and was interested in North Africa by the early 1900s.⁹⁷

Another concern was Russia. Throughout the 19th century, Russia sought control of the Dardanelles, where the Black Sea meets the Mediterranean. As a result, Russian warships and

⁹³ Paul M Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (London: Ashfield Press, 1980), p. 441 <https://archive.org/details/riseofanglogerma0000kenn/page/440/mode/2up?view=theater>.

⁹⁴ Marie-Christine Veldeman, "Britain and Europe: From 'Splendid Isolation' to 'Semi-Detachment'," *Équivalences* 39, no. 1 (2012): 39–58, doi:10.3406/equiv.2012.1368.

⁹⁵ Veldeman, 'Britain and Europe: From 'Splendid Isolation' to "Semi-Detachment"' pp. 41-42.

⁹⁶ The Manchester Guardian, "Sir W. Harcourt at the Eighty Club: Speech on the Great Question, British Subordination to Continental Powers," *The Guardian*, April 1897, p. 6, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/257817841/?terms=splendid isolation&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/257817841/?terms=splendid%20isolation&match=1).

⁹⁷ Patrick Manning, "Imperial Balance Sheets Revisited: African Empires of France and Britain, 1900-1960," *Nd., Httpzlllseaculc*, n.d., 6–7.

merchant ships could easily navigate Europe. Russia possessed more northern ports, but these froze over in the winter. The Dardanelles belonged to Turkey. Long-time foes, Turkey and Russia Britannia aided Turkey for fear of Russian ships in the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean was a vital trading route for Britain to India. Until the early 1900s, Russia and France were more important than Germany. Britain and Germany had excellent relations. But this is started to change, when Kaiser Wilhelm II (1888-1918) took over, he wanted Germany to be a superpower. He felt encircled by Russia to the east and France to the west. So, he built up his army. France and Russia shared this anxiety. Every major European state started to build up their armies and fleets in the 1900s.⁹⁸

2.3. The Pre-War Arms Race:

As time went on, the military and naval armies of every country of the Great Powers kept getting bigger. People haven't paid as much attention to nineteenth-century arms races as their twentieth-century equivalents. However, the graph of European military spending between the Franco-Prussian War and the Great War shows that there was a big rise in spending in the half decade before 1914.⁹⁹ Between 1908 and 1913, the European Great Powers increased their expenditure by nearly 50 per cent. Defence spending was spilt between armies and fleets, although the most important before 1914 naval competition (between Britain and Germany) was losing steam on the eve of war. As a result, the entire increase was mostly due to the growth of land armaments. In spite of Italy's costly involvement in the Libyan War from 1911 to 1913, the four major continental land powers engaged in a series of reciprocal and competitive measures that pitted the German and Austro-Hungarian alliance of 1879 against the Franco-Russian coalition (1891–1894). Britain kept its army expenditure stable. This ground weapons race had a greater impact on the onset and timing of the war than the Anglo-German naval race.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Sebasmejaz. "Why Did Great Britain Joined WW1?" *Sebasmejaz*, sebasmejaz.wordpress.com, 19 Oct. 2015, <https://sebasmejaz.wordpress.com/2015/10/19/why-did-great-britain-joined-ww1/#:~:text=In%20the%20late%201800s%20and%20early%201900s%2C%20Britain,was%20India%20with%20its%20vast%20resources%20of%20manpower.>

⁹⁹ John Holland Rose, *The Origins of the War, 1871-1914* (Massachusetts: GP Putnam's sons, 1915), pp. 156-157.

¹⁰⁰ Thomas G Mahnken, Joseph Maiolo, and David Stevenson, *Arms Races in International Politics: From the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp.41-42.

The General Staff in Germany and Austria-Hungary wanted to increase the army, but the War Ministry was concerned that this would lower quality personnel and make the army less trustworthy for domestic repression. Financial and economic factors, as well as the administrations of the British and French governments, stymied development in both countries. Between 1904 and 1911, Austria-Hungary and Italy diverted resources to compete in an armaments race. Following its defeat by Japan in 1904-1905, Russia had four years of weak crops and fiscal restraint.¹⁰¹

Up to 1914, the Ottoman government substantially spent on modernizing its army's weaponry and equipment. This initiative focused on importing raw materials rather than establishing indigenous industrial capability. The Ottoman administration welcomed a German military team to instruct the troops on contemporary weaponry and their usage. However, much of the Ottoman Empire's recent purchases were lost in the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913. It is true that the Ottoman army lost half of its heavy weapons and equipment in the first Balkan war, which was a humiliating defeat, but it did have some assets, even if they were mostly obsolete. We can say that the level of weaponry of the different units in the Ottoman army varied greatly. The 'artillery of the troops was modern', but they had fewer guns, 24-36, than comparable European corps. At the outbreak of the war, the number of cannons was 1500, machine guns 450, and rifles 200,000, but they had no rapid-fire guns at all, only ordered from Krupp's works in 1914.¹⁰² The Ottoman Empire lost its German armament supplies when Bulgaria and Greece closed their borders and the Russian, British, and French fleets put a sea blockade on the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰³

"Prussianism" was a very different concept compared to the British militarism prior to the Great War. In 1903, 2.7 percent of all British men between the ages of 15 and 49 enlisted in the Volunteer Corps. Although working-class members constituted at least 70 per cent of the volunteers by 1900, this figure has since dropped. Overall, they represented that section of the working class that was in somewhat full-time employment, and volunteers came from a variety of jobs, including miners,

¹⁰¹ Mahnken, Maiolo, and Stevenson, *Arms Races in International Politics: From the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century*, p. 43.

¹⁰² John Keegan, *Az első világháború* [The First World War], Európa Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 2010, p. 449

¹⁰³ Jimmy Joe, "Ottoman Weapons: Topmost Powerful Weapons of the Ottoman Empire," Timeless Myth, 2022, <https://www.timelessmyths.com/history/ottoman-weapons/>.

farmers, railway workers, engineering trainees, fitters in Glasgow shipbuilding yards, and other similar fields.¹⁰⁴

Winston Churchill (1874-1965), the British First Lord of Admiralty, noted in early 1914 that “the world is arming as it has never armed before.” Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey (1862-1933) agreed that “excessive expenditure on armaments, carried to an extensive degree, must lead to a catastrophe,” and adding that he saw “very little to be done.”¹⁰⁵ The historian Michael Howard (1922-2019) noted that; “Militarism, like ‘Fascism’ has become a term of such general illiterate abuse that the scholar must use it with care.” Howard described militarism as a society's adoption of the ideals associated with the military lifestyle. Even by late 19th century, European society had become remarkably militaristic.¹⁰⁶ It can be understood from this that, the armed race was sped up a lot because people were afraid. It made people afraid and suspicious of each other. If one of the countries increased the strength of its army or built important rail lines, the others were scared into doing the same. That's why there was this crazy race for guns, especially after the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913. Anglo-German naval rivalry was one of the things that led to the war. Today, historians don't say that the start of the Great War in 1914 was just caused by international tensions caused by the arms race.

2.4. The Anglo-German Naval Rivalry (1906–1914):

The Royal Navy was the world's most powerful navy. It protected the British Isles from invasion and could blockade enemy ports in wartime. But its main goal was commercial protection. Britain's economic growth depended on imports and seaborne commerce sponsored by London. Britain's naval superiority was in danger. Germany started building a combat fleet in 1898. A naval rivalry with Britain ensued. With the dreadnought class battleships constructed in Britain, the naval competition shifted emphasis in 1906. These massive battleships, propelled by steam engines and

¹⁰⁴ Anne Summers, ‘Essay: Militarism in Britain before the Great War’, in *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 2 (Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 105–107.

¹⁰⁵ Zara S Steiner and Keith Neilson, *Britain and the Origins of the First World War* (Macmillan International Higher Education, 2003), p. 216.

¹⁰⁶ Michael Howard, *War in European History* (London: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 109-110.

powerful weapons, rendered all previous warships obsolete. People in both countries wanted more battleships, with help from the press, writers, and naval lobbyists.¹⁰⁷

It's possible that the naval and armament rivalries encouraged militarism. The naval rivalry after 1900 was a crucial event in militarism that precipitated the Great War. At the time, Britain possessed the most powerful navy in the world. The new Kaiser Wilhelm promised to build a German navy that would rival Britain's. This caused great concern in Great Britain. Although Germany's navy was far smaller, the British army was stationed across the country to protect it. Germany didn't have the same sized empire as Britain, but they were the most well-trained and strongest at the time. This meant the Kaiser required a larger fleet than Britain. While Britain and Germany built up their warships, mainland Europe's great nations built up their armies. Germany's dilemma was that if war broke out, they would have to battle both Russia and France.¹⁰⁸

Russia, on the other hand, planned to deploy millions of troops, and France planned to push deep into Germany, forcing a surrender. The military strategies of Britain and France were geared to ensure fast victory. The British navy anticipated the war's expense would cause the enemy's economic collapse. Overall, nations with a large army, wealth, and a strong navy are ready for war. They were able to construct their fleets to the highest quality by competing in the navy and army races.¹⁰⁹ Anxiety in London was sparked by deteriorating relations between France and Germany, as well as a substantial expansion of the German Navy and the surprise arrival of the German gunboat Panther off the Moroccan port of Agadir in July 1911. Winston Churchill, who had distributed a remarkable and extensive note entitled "Military Aspects of the Continental Problem" to Cabinet colleagues, was unexpectedly promoted to Churchill in late October, where he would have complete command of the Royal Navy for the next four years.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ John H Maurer, 'The Anglo-German Naval Rivalry and Informal Arms Control, 1912-1914', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36, no. 2 (1992): pp. 287-288.

¹⁰⁸ Dirk Bönker, "Naval Race between Germany and Great Britain, 1898-1912," 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War, 2015, doi:10.15463/ie1418.10536.

¹⁰⁹ Dhires Nathwani, "What Was the Most Significant Cause of World War One? (WW1)," medium.com, 2016, <https://medium.com/@dhiresnathwani/what-was-the-most-significant-cause-of-world-war-one-ww1-74bb9e815e37#:~:text=Militarism could have cause the,bigger German navy than Britain.>

¹¹⁰ Winston Churchill, *Never Give In: The Best of Winston Churchill's Speeches/Chasing Churchill: The Travels of Winston Churchill*, *Library Journal*, vol. 128, 2003. pp.45-46, [https://search.proquest.com/docview/196849877?accountid=10479.](https://search.proquest.com/docview/196849877?accountid=10479)

From the first decade of the twentieth century, it became evident that London had effectively won the naval armaments race with Berlin, the Anglo-German rivalry continued. Rear Admiral Alfred Tirpitz's, Secretary of State of the German Imperial Naval Office (1897–1916), force was too inexperienced to take on the RN in the much-publicized decisive battle in the North Sea. The conclusion of the Anglo-German naval armaments competition, however, did not imply that the threat of a future conflict between the major powers had vanished. Instead, the rivalry was moved to the European continent and evolved into a land-based weapons race.¹¹¹ To summarize, the naval struggle between Britain and Germany before the Great War is typically seen as the prototypical arms race. Between 1906 and 1912, the two nations engaged in a fierce head-to-head rivalry in the construction of new capital ships, such as battleships and massive armoured warships. During this six-year period, the United Kingdom built 29 capital ships and Germany launched 17. Naval spending in both nations surged to pay for this armament build-up. Germany's navy budget almost doubled, while the United Kingdom's naval budget grew by more than 40 per cent. Another thing that happened because of their naval armament rivalry was that their diplomatic cooperation got worse. Arms control efforts didn't work to stop the fight.¹¹²

2.5. The Alliance System:

In international politics, an alliance is a formal pact between two or more governments to help one another in the times of need. Modern alliances are defensive in nature, requiring partners to join forces if one or more of them are attacked by another state or coalition. Although informal, partnerships are frequently formalized by an alliance treaty that stipulates when an ally is required to support a fellow member. When Germany and France fought each other in the late 1800s, Europe reached a new level of alliance formation. Most major European powers were divided between the Central Powers (led by Germany and Austria-Hungary) and the Allies (led by France, Russia, and Great Britain) by 1910.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Volker R Berghahn, *Europe in the Era of Two World Wars: From Militarism and Genocide to Civil Society, 1900-1950* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 32; Dirk Bönker, 'Naval Race between Germany and Great Britain, 1898-1912', 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopaedia of the First World War, 2015, doi:10.15463/ie1418.10536.

¹¹² John H Maurer, 'The Anglo-German Naval Rivalry and Informal Arms Control, 1912-1914', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36, no. 2 (1992): p. 284.

¹¹³ David G. Haglund, "Alliance International Relations," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/alliance-politics>.

1- The Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria- Hungary and Italy):

The first alliance was the Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, which was formed in October 1879 and was later joined by Italy in May 1882, becoming the Triple Alliance.¹¹⁴ Germany and Austria were obligated to assist Italy in the event of a French invasion of the country. Italy was obligated to support Germany in the event of a French assault on Germany. If one or more of the alliance's members were at war with two or more great powers, the member or members of the alliance who were not participating were obligated to come to the assistance of the other or others. If one of the allies is compelled to make war on another major power, the other members should maintain benign neutrality, if not material backing. When the pact was renewed in 1887, Germany committed to helping Italy in North Africa in the case of a Franco-Italian conflict there.¹¹⁵ Meanwhile, Britain had signed the Mediterranean Agreement with Austria, Hungary, and Italy in the same year, and seemed to be friendly to the Triple Alliance.¹¹⁶

In 1890, Russia was no longer a member of the Triple Alliance. If any signatory become involved in a conflict with a fourth party, the League of the Three Emperors (June 1881) agreed to remain neutral.¹¹⁷ In 1887, Russia and Germany signed the Russo-German Reinsurance Treaty, which reaffirmed neutrality in the case of conflict with a third party, but with two exceptions: the German declaration of war with France and the Russian declaration of war with Austria. After Bismarck resigned in 1890, the agreement was led to expire, even though Russia wanted to keep it.¹¹⁸ The Romanian government had signed a defensive alliance with Austria-Hungary in 1883, to which Germany had agreed. The treaty had been renewed in 1892 and 1913, and it was still in place at the time of the commencement of the Great War.¹¹⁹ In 1877–1878, Romania participated in the Russo-Turkish War, and the unfavourable Treaty of Berlin in 1878 prompted negotiations.

¹¹⁴ Private Wire, "The Austro-German Alliance," *The Guardian*, December 1882, p. 5, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/260464973/?terms=The Triple Alliance&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/260464973/?terms=The+Triple+Alliance&match=1).

¹¹⁵ Robert Wolfson and John Laver, *Years of Change: European History, 1890-1990* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2001), pp.166-167.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.141.

¹¹⁷ Bertram Benedict, *A History of the Great War*, vol. 1 (New York: Bureau of national literature, Incorporated, 1919), pp. 58-59.

¹¹⁸ John A C Conybeare, 'The Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance 1880-1914: A Collective Goods Approach', *The American Political Science Review* 84, no. 4 (1990): pp. 1197–1198, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1963259%0A>.

¹¹⁹ Francis Roy Bridge, *From Sadowa to Sarajevo: The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1866-1914*, vol. 6 (Psychology Press, 2002), p. 409.

Romanian officials were enraged by the loss of three regions to Russia.¹²⁰ The Romanians desired a deal with just Germany, but Otto von Bismarck insisted on a deal with Vienna first. Russia looked to be the biggest danger, and neither France nor Great Britain were suitable partners. Although the alliance's details were kept secret, it was widely agreed that Romania was a member.¹²¹

In 1888, Germany and Italy negotiated a military treaty allowing Italian forces to be used in a fight against France.¹²² Despite the fact that the agreement was constantly renewed, there was a period between 1902 and 1912 when Germany and Austria had little trust in Italy's commitment. This was largely due to the Franco-Italian Peace Treaty of 1902, which guaranteed Italy's neutrality in the case of an assault on France or a declaration of war by France.¹²³ Furthermore, in October 1909, Italy and Russia agreed to help each other in their areas of influence (North Africa and the Balkans). This caused even more tension between Italy and her Triple Alliance allies.¹²⁴

2- The Triple Entente (France, Britain, and Russia):

Both Russia and France feared the increasing strength of Germany, which had already made alliances with Austria-Hungary and Italy. Following the 1894 Franco-Russian Alliance, the two countries resolved to join forces for mutual security.¹²⁵ With a Russian assault on France or an invasion of France by Italy with German help, Russia pledged to supply 700,000–800,000 men. In exchange, France committed to furnishing 130,000 troops to help Russia if Austria declared war against it. If one or more Triple Alliance members mobilized, then France and Russia should too. It was also agreed that the two forces would always work together to draft and help with military agreements and that they would always work together.¹²⁶ For Britain during this time, “the time for "splendid isolation" was over: that England desired to settle all pending questions, especially

¹²⁰ Laura Robson, *The Politics of Mass Violence in the Middle East* (Oxford University Press, 2020), 17.

¹²¹ Barbara Jelavich, ‘Romania in the First World War: The Pre-War Crisis, 1912–1914’, *The International History Review* 14, no. 3 (1992): pp. 441–442.

¹²² Wolfson and Laver, pp. 166–167.

¹²³ Robert Wolfson and John Laver, *Years of Change: European History, 1890–1990* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2001), pp. 166–167.

¹²⁴ Conybeare, ‘The Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance 1880–1914: A Collective Goods Approach’, pp. 1197–1198.

¹²⁵ “The Guardian, Summary of News,” *The Guardian*, November 1894, p. 7, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/260454991/?terms=The Triple Alliance&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/260454991/?terms=The+Triple+Alliance&match=1).

¹²⁶ Wolfson and Laver, *Years of Change: European History, 1890–1990*, p. 167.

Morocco and the Far East, in co-operation with the Triple or the Dual Alliance.’’¹²⁷ British foreign policy was marked by three significant engagements with foreign powers during the first seven years of the twentieth century: an alliance with Japan in 1902, and agreements with France in 1904 and Russia in 1907. The alliance with Japan was followed by agreements with France and Russia in 1907.¹²⁸ To counter what was perceived to be a common threat presented by France and (most likely) Russia in the Far East, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 was established for a five-years term before being extended. In the event of a conflict, any party was required to stay neutral under the terms of the alliance. However, military help was required if any power was forced to battle against two or more powers.¹²⁹

In April 1904, the Anglo-French Entente resolved some of its significant colonial issues. Moreover, the agreement's primary stipulations ended their main colonial disputes. France supported Britain's occupation of Egypt as long as the Suez Canal remained open, while Britain acknowledged France's interests in Morocco and offered diplomatic assistance.¹³⁰ In exchange for maintaining some treaties near Gambia, France dropped her claims over Newfoundland. The deal was not an alliance since there was no reciprocal backing. But it opened the door for further talks, which started in January 1906 with military and naval talks. Britain declined to guarantee help in the case of a German invasion but promised to consider military cooperation if it was agreed upon.¹³¹ In 1907, Britain and Russia signed a treaty, forming the so-called "Triple Entente" with France. This treaty likewise ended colonial conflicts but made no specific commitments. Russia agreed that Britain had the most power in the Persian Gulf, so they divided Persia into three areas of influence.¹³² Europeans were clearly split into two alliances after 1907. Some leaders believed that maintaining peace required a power balance, which was achieved in this way. There were considerable military measures in place to protect one block from the other. It was inevitable that

¹²⁷ George Peabody Gooch and Harold William Vazeille Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914*, 1st ed., vol. 2 (London: HM Stationery Office London, 1927), p. 60.

¹²⁸ Graham D Goodlad, *British Foreign and Imperial Policy, 1865–1919* (Routledge, 2005). p.69.

¹²⁹ George Peabody Gooch and Harold William Vazeille Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914*, 1st ed., vol. 2 (London: HM Stationery Office London, 1927), pp. 120-121.

¹³⁰ Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Middle East: A Documentary Record 1535-1914*, 203.

¹³¹ Benedict, *A History of the Great War*, pp. 84-85.

¹³² Oscar Albert Marti, *The Anglo-German Commercial and Colonial Rivalry as a Cause of the Great War: A Thesis Presented to the Department of History, University of Southern California, Los Angeles* (Boston: Stratford Company, 1917), pp. 63-64.

the preparations for defence would also contain attacks that would lead to a worldwide declaration of war.¹³³

In the case of France and Britain, military preparation (which began in 1906 and lasted until the onset of the war) took the shape of an agreed-upon division of labour in the event of a conflict with Germany: Britain would focus on the maritime war, while France would focus on the land battle. Military preparation between the United Kingdom and Russia did not occur until June 1914.¹³⁴ For the purpose of explaining and tracing the roots of the military discussions, British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey presented this explanation in April 1911; “Early in 1906 the French said to us, “Will you help us if there is war with Germany?” We said, “We can't promise, our hands must be free.” Further, the French then suggested that the military authorities should be able to exchange views, ours to state what they could do, and the French to tell how they would want it done, if we were to join with France in the conflict. Otherwise, as the French argued, even if the British elected to defend France, they wouldn't be able to do it effectively if war broke out. On this, they both agreed.¹³⁵

Keith Wilson in his book *The Policy of the Entente: Essays on the Determinants of British Foreign Policy, 1904-1914*, pointed out that, “the premise upon which the plans of both the War Office and the Admiralty for giving armed support to the French were based was that without such support the French would be defeated by the Germans.”¹³⁶ According to Sir Henry Wilson the Director of Military Operations and Ewart's successor, the British perspective was that a shift in the balance of power in Europe has occurred in recent years, and as before, British foreign policy was geared toward redressing the imbalance by helping the weaker side. When it came to possible allies, Britain's main concern was whether one of them could endure the military might of a more powerful organization until their partner might come into play or pressure of sea power could take effect. Two years later in 1911, Henry Wilson was more direct,

¹³³ Wolfson and Laver, *Years of Change: European History, 1890-1990*, pp. 167-169.

¹³⁴ Conybeare, ‘The Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance 1880-1914: A Collective Goods Approach’, pp. 1197-1199.

¹³⁵ K. M. Wilson, I. Quoted, and N. D’Ombrain, ‘To the Western Front: British War Plans and the ‘military Entente, with France before the First World War’, *British Journal of International Studies* 3, no. 2 (1977): pp. 152–153, doi:10.1017/S0260210500116961.

¹³⁶ Keith M Wilson, *The Policy of the Entente: Essays on the Determinants of British Foreign Policy, 1904-1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.125.

In the case of our remaining neutral Germany will fight France single-handed. The armies of Germany and the fleets of Germany are much superior to those of France, and the results of such a war can scarcely be doubted ... It follows that in a single-handed war France would in all human probability be defeated . . . ¹³⁷

In June 1912, Churchill recommended that a firm naval agreement be reached with France as soon as possible, and he continued; "This arrangement would come into force only if the two Powers were at any time allies in a war. It would not decide the question of whether they should be allies or not"¹³⁸ Moreover, it was agreed that the greatest method to win campaigns was to have decisive numbers at the critical location and time. For the French army, this meant either obtaining numerical superiority over the Germans or creating numerical inferiority in order to counter German counterattacks on France. As Churchill stated: "The reason for sending a British army either to France or Belgium is to secure, either by addition to the French or by subtraction from the German force, a preponderance of strength on the decisive front at the decisive moment."¹³⁹ One could demonstrate that big, wealthy allies will carry the military obligations of smaller, less wealthy friends; resource allocation will be inefficient in terms of defence activities.

2.6. General Pre-war Crises and the Outbreak of War 1914:

1- The Moroccan Crisis of 1905 and 1911:

The scramble for empire in Africa has resulted in some diplomatic conflicts. Two big crises erupted as a result of events in Morocco, a country in north-western Africa. The First Moroccan Crisis refers to the international crisis caused by Kaiser Wilhelm II (1859–1941), when he visits Tangier on March 31, 1905.¹⁴⁰ The Kaiser made many pro-independence speeches, posing a threat to French power in Morocco.¹⁴¹ In 1904, Britain and Spain strengthened France's power in Morocco, a move Germany saw as a setback to its interests and challenged diplomatically. For some reason, Britain favoured the French position in Morocco rather than the German one. The most important

¹³⁷ Wilson, Quoted, and D’Ombrain, p. 156.

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. 153.

¹³⁹ Ibid., pp. 156-157.

¹⁴⁰ The Manchester Guardian, “The Kaiser’s Speech: Discussion in France and Germany,” *The Guardian Newspaper*, November 1905, 7, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258087003/?terms=The First Moroccan Crisis&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258087003/?terms=The%20First%20Moroccan%20Crisis&match=1).

¹⁴¹ Marti, *The Anglo-German Commercial and Colonial Rivalry as a Cause of the Great War: A Thesis Presented to the Department of History, University of Southern California, Los Angeles*, pp. 46-47.

one was that Britain looked at Germany as its economic competitor, controlling Morocco by Germany with an obvious threat to the British trade line to the east (India). Moreover, in 1904, there was an agreement between Britain and France concerning British trade interests in Egypt with a secure path through Morocco for Britain.¹⁴²

With British assistance, the French foreign minister, Théophile Delcassé (1852-1923), adopted a belligerent stance in response to the speech, which turned the French people against Germany. The situation reached a head in mid-June, when Delcassé was pulled out of the government by Maurice Rouvier (1905-1906), a more conciliatory premier. By July 1905, however, Germany had become more isolated, and the French had agreed to hold a meeting to resolve the problem. Up to the meeting, both France and Germany continued to posture, with Germany organizing reserve army forces in late December and France sending soldiers to the frontier in January 1906.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, the Algeiras Conference, which lasted from January 16 to April 7, 1906, was convened to resolve the conflict. The German delegation discovered Austria-Hungary to be their lone ally among the thirteen countries present. Britain, Russia, Italy, Spain, and the United States all supported France.¹⁴⁴ The Germans ultimately consented to an agreement in April that was signed on May 31, 1906, in which France gave up sovereignty of crucial territories in Morocco in exchange for certain internal adjustments. The First Moroccan Crisis was temporarily resolved by the Algeiras Conference, but German unhappiness with the Moroccan situation led to the Second Moroccan Crisis in 1911.¹⁴⁵

When as a German gunboat called Panther arrived in Agadir on July 1, 1911, the Second Moroccan Crisis was born. The Germans said the Panther was there to protect German interests during a local native rebellion in Morocco, but it was actually a way to scare France.¹⁴⁶ In the summer and

¹⁴² The Manchester Guardian, "British Trade Interests in Morocco: A Pessimistic View," *The Guardian Newspaper*, April 1904, 5, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/258435164>.

¹⁴³ Bernadotte E Schmitt, "Triple Alliance and Triple Entente, 1902-1914," *The American Historical Review* 29, no. 3 (1924): 453–456, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1836520%0A>; Guardian Correspondent, "The Morocco Settlement: French Interests, Fully Recognised," *The Guardian*, April 1906, 5, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258129552/?terms=The Algeiras Conference of 1906&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258129552/?terms=The%20Algeiras%20Conference%20of%201906&match=1).

¹⁴⁴ The Manchester Guardian, "German Calculations," *The Guardian Newspaper*, January 1906, 6, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/257721313/?terms=russia&match=1>.

¹⁴⁵ Schmitt, "Triple Alliance and Triple Entente, 1902-1914," 453–456; Guardian Correspondent, "The Morocco Settlement: French Interests, Fully Recognised," 5.

¹⁴⁶ Oscar Albert Marti, *The Anglo-German Commercial and Colonial Rivalry as a Cause of the Great War: A Thesis Presented to the Department of History, University of Southern California, Los Angeles* (Boston: Stratford Company, 1917). pp. 44-45.

autumn of 1911, the "Agadir Incident" prompted a wave of war talk (the British even initiated war preparations), but international discussions proceeded, and the crisis calmed with the signing of the Paris Convention on November 4, 1911. On November 27, 1912, a Franco-Spanish treaty was signed, marginally altering the existing Franco-Spanish limits in Morocco. These provocations by Germany were not intended to expand on Moroccan territory or extend its empire, but to sever ties between France and Britain. It strengthened the Anglo-French alliance and increased criticism of German "gunboat diplomacy" in both countries.¹⁴⁷

It is worth mentioning, these acts of German provocation were not designed to encroach into Morocco or expand its empire, but to drive a wedge between France and Britain. It had the opposite effect, strengthening the Anglo-French alliance and intensifying criticism of German Weltpolitik and 'gunboat diplomacy' in both France and Britain. The German Kaiser Wilhelm II was aiming to create a rift between France and England to forge an alliance between Germany and England in the Moroccan crisis. Contrary to what they had hoped, they were able to strengthen the French-British alliance and further divide them from Germany. Consequently, France also gained control of Morocco, whereas Britain had Egypt at the time. I have got to grab some of that! Italy said as she watched the Ottoman territories being given away like candy. As a result, Italy entered the conflict. Now that Italy had found out that England, France, and Germany would do nothing to stop her, she launched an attack on the Ottoman Empire. Shortly after the start of combat, Italy had captured Libya.¹⁴⁸

2- The Balkan Crisis of 1912 and 1913:

The First Balkan War 1912:

When the Ottoman Empire was at its peak, much of Eastern Europe and the Balkan nations were part of it, but they are no more. In the late 1800s, several nations that were formerly part of the Ottoman Empire gained independence. This is due to the fact that the area piques the attention of

¹⁴⁷ Llewellyn and Thompson, 'Imperialism as a Cause of World War I'; David Stevenson, 'Militarization and Diplomacy in Europe before 1914' Published by: The MIT Press Militarization and David Stevenson Diplomacy in Europe before 1914' 22, no. 1 (2017): pp. 125–161.

¹⁴⁸ R W Seton-Watson, *British Documents on the Origins of the War. Vol. IX. The Balkan Wars. Part I. The Prelude: The Tripoli War*, ed. G. P. Gooch, Harold Temperley (New York: JSTOR, 1934), p. 428.

the major European nations. Britain wished for the Ottoman Empire to remain together for as long as possible in order to defend it from the Russians, whom it thought might attack.¹⁴⁹

In 1912, many Balkan states negotiated a series of military agreements that resulted in the formation of the Balkan League. Russia influenced these countries. The major goal of these coalitions was to publicly declare war on the Ottoman Empire and finally push them out of Eastern Europe. A Serbian-Bulgarian alliance was formed in early 1912. This alliance, later joined by Greece and Montenegro, formed the Balkan League, whose armies smashed the Ottoman Turkish forces in October 1912, driving the Turks back almost to the Bosphorus after eight months of intense fighting, and dramatically shifting the Balkan military balance in favour of the Franco-Russian bloc. On May 30, 1913, the Treaty of London was signed, legally ending the war. At the same time as Austria-Hungary confronted the growth of its Balkan opponents on its southern flank, the Russians conducted a trial mobilization and held their most senior group of soldiers to the north.¹⁵⁰

The Second Balkan War 1913:

The Second Balkan War began on June 29, 1913, when Bulgaria, unhappy with its share of the spoils of the First Balkan War, invaded Serbia and Greece, its former allies. The Bulgarian invasion was repelled, and Serbian and Greek soldiers counter-attacked, invading Bulgaria. This conflict prompted Romanian action against Bulgaria, since Bulgaria had previously engaged in territorial disputes with Romania. The Ottoman Empire also took advantage of the circumstances to reclaim some of the previous war's lost lands. Bulgaria requested an armistice as Romanian soldiers reached Sofia, culminating in the Treaty of Bucharest, which was signed on August 10, 1913, leaving Bulgaria alone, disappointed, and hostile to its former allies. Bulgaria had to hand over

¹⁴⁹ Benedict, *A History of the Great War*, pp. 195–198; The Manchester Guardian, “The Balkan War and The Powers: Right of Capture at Sea,” *The Guardian Newspaper*, October 1912, 8, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259112982/>.

¹⁵⁰ Stevenson, “Militarization and Diplomacy in Europe before 1914 Published by: The MIT Press Militarization and David Stevenson Diplomacy in Europe before 1914,” 140–144; The Guardian, “A Speech from the Bulgarian Victories,” *The Guardian*, December 1912, 10, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259136873/?terms=the+balkan+alliance&match=1>.

parts of its First Balkan War victories to Serbia, Greece, Romania, and the Ottomans under the terms of the treaty.¹⁵¹

The war has also broken the Russo-Bulgarian alliance, leaving Serbia as Russia's only ally in this crucial region. So, Serbia had complete Russian support. This, along with Serbia's victories in the First and Second Balkan Wars, fuelled both Serbian ambitions over Austro-Hungarian-ruled territories and Austro-Hungarian fears of Serbian ambitions. Moreover, the Balkan Wars directly triggered the Great War. First, after winning the Balkan wars, Serbia more than doubled in size, gaining a significant portion of Macedonia. The ambition to become greater by uniting all Slavs grew. This brought her into conflict with Austria, which governed eight million Serbs and Croats and denied Serbia a coast. Second, the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina were a source of concern for Austria. She was determined to hit Serbia quickly. Third, the Kaiser realized Austria was her sole reliable European ally. He assured the Austrian Foreign Minister that 'You can be certain I stand behind you and I am ready to draw the sword whenever your action makes it necessary.' Finally, the Russian Tsar felt humiliated since he couldn't get Albania for Serbia owing to Austrian demand. In an attempt to regain the Balkan reputation, the Tsar announced in February 1914; "For Serbia, we shall do everything."¹⁵²

For Russia, the Austro-Hungarians' war on Serbia had made it dependent on Serbia as a buffer, and the two Balkan wars pushed the great powers to reconsider and revise their foreign policies and ambitions in the area. As a result, a number of Serbian nationalist organizations, like Black Hand, were created in the early 1900s. It was between 1908 and 1911 that these groups rose to power, all with the goal of freeing their people from Austro-Hungarian control. In 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated by Gavrilo Princip, a teenager who was a member of the "Black Hand" in Sarajevo, which resulted in the Great War.¹⁵³ To sum up, the Balkan republics banded together in the First Balkan War after seeing how easily the Ottoman Empire could be defeated by

¹⁵¹ John C G Röhl, *Wilhelm II: Into the Abyss of War and Exile, 1900–1941* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 917. <https://book4you.org/book/2516078/157820>; Benedict, *A History of the Great War*, pp. 100-101.

¹⁵² Erik Sass, "World War I Centennial: Russian Tsar Vows "We Shall Do Everything" for Serbia', www.mentalfloss.com, 2014, <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/54849/world-war-i-centennial-russian-tsar-vows-we-shall-do-everything-serbia>.

¹⁵³ Ian D Armour, *A History of Eastern Europe 1740-1918: Empires, Nations and Modernisation* (A&C Black, 2012), pp. 238-239.

the weakest of forces. After five centuries, the Ottoman Empire was driven out of the Balkans totally by Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria, with Russian assistance, forming the Balkan League. In 1914, Russia was left with just Serbia as an ally in the whole region and had no alternative but to back Serbia.

2.7. The Evolution of British Commercial Diplomacy in the Middle East 1869–1914

2.7.1. Early European Rivalries and British Ambitions in the Middle East:

As this chapter has shown some dramatic advances in technology and economy at the world level, which have been called the Second Industrial Revolution.¹⁵⁴ The well-documented history of Anglo-French colonial clashes mapped out in this chapter is essential to both countries' histories and is especially visible in the Middle East. At Fashoda,¹⁵⁵ there was a lot of tension between Britain and France. This showed how important it was for Britain to be able to influence other countries in order to protect the Suez Canal.¹⁵⁶ Modern colonialism was an expansion of the European continent's drive for stability and power during an era marked by militant nationalism and violent international rivalry. Even in the case of Great Britain, the imperialist state with the biggest economic investment in colonies, the primary motivation for imperialism was international competition with European countries. Britain expanded its dominance not only in a search for new markets, but also to prevent the French, Germans, and Russians from establishing bases and colonies that could jeopardize British interests.¹⁵⁷

Hence, we can now sum up British strategy in the Middle East since the end of the eighteenth century in a single line. Its purpose was to keep any possibly hostile state from dominating the Middle East. The reason for this was essential in India, and it was critical in the nineteenth century because the Ottoman Empire was on the verge of dissolving. The United Kingdom, for example,

¹⁵⁴ John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Age of Napoleon*, 2009, <https://books.google.com/books?id=NJc6PgAACAAJ&pgis=1>.p 547.

¹⁵⁵ The Fashoda Incident (September 18, 1898) was the culmination of a series of territorial disputes in Africa between Great Britain and France, which began in Fashoda, Egyptian Sudan (now Kodok, South Sudan). The disagreements came from each country's ambition to connect its many colonial colonies in Africa. Great Britain wanted to build a railway from the Cape of Good Hope to Cairo to connect Uganda and Egypt, while France hoped to expand its dominion across Central Africa and the Sudan by pushing eastward from the west coast. See, Benedict, *A History of the Great War*, p. 68.

¹⁵⁶ Richard Davis, 'Britain's Middle Eastern Policy, 1900-1931: Dual Attractions of Empire and Europe', *Histoire@Politique* 11, no. 2 (2010): doi:10.3917/hp.011.0007. p.3.

¹⁵⁷ Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Age of Napoleon*. P. 857.

worked very hard to make sure that no other country took over the Ottoman Empire's Middle Eastern areas.¹⁵⁸ Due to imperial competition, in the 1870s and 1890s, France appeared to be Britain's most probable adversary and Germany its most likely ally. Germany's fleet plan of 1898, as well as its ambition for "a place in the sun," made Germany appear to be a strong danger to Britain. The Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902 won naval security in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. The British attempt was to restrict imperial disputes over colonies by treaties (ententes), settling imperial disagreements with France over Northern Africa in 1904 and with Russia over Persia in 1907.¹⁵⁹

2.8. British Shipping and Commercial Interests in the Middle East:

2.8.1. The British Interest in the Suez Canal:

This expansion of the European economy would not be possible without the development of technology. New forms of transportation decreased distances and quickly altered Europeans' perceptions of the world. The Suez Canal is an example of this. When the canal was built, this area became a strategic crossroads between the African and Asian continents.¹⁶⁰ The idea of linking Europe with the Arabian Gulf and India by a land route to Asia Minor and towards the warm waters of the Gulf instead of the long sea route around Africa is a relatively old idea that man can approximately trace back to the sixteenth century. Traveling through the waters from Africa to India would take a long time, and the goods could get damaged and be lost because there was a lot of uncertainty and chaos in them. This made it hard for people to get their goods to Europe.¹⁶¹

The Suez Canal opened on November 17, 1869, inaugurating a century marked by significant developments in the maritime industry. The canal had a profound impact on construction skills and procedures, contributing to the sailing ship's rapid fall as a key international carrier. From the middle of the century through 1869, the British sailing fleet rose in tonnage by 40 per cent. British ship-makers not only challenged, but also surpassed, American ship-makers' position of

¹⁵⁸ Christopher Montague Woodhouse, "Britain and the Middle East," *Pakistan Horizon* 62, no. 1 (2009): pp. 90-93.

¹⁵⁹ Christopher Harvie and Colin Matthew, *Nineteenth Century Britain: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP Oxford, 2000). pp. 125-126.

¹⁶⁰ Caroline Piquet, "The Suez Company's Concession in Egypt, 1854-1956: Modern Infrastructure and Local Economic Development," *Enterprise and Society* 5, no. 1 (2004):, doi:10.1093/es/khh005. pp 7-8.

¹⁶¹ Bahri, *Baghdad Railway: Study on the Evolution and Diplomacy of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway Case until 1914*. P.6. [Translated from Arabic].

internationalization when it came to the design of sailing war ships.¹⁶² After Egypt's ruler went bankrupt and was unable to repay debts, Britain bought a majority stake in the Suez Canal from the Egyptian government in 1875. The remaining shares were held by the French, who were in charge of organizing the construction of the Suez Canal. As a result, the Suez Canal was critical in that it reduced the route between Europe and South and East Asia. In 1882, Great Britain occupied Egypt.¹⁶³ The issue of the construction of the route to India was raised in Britain more than ever after the French began opening the Suez Canal. Britain felt that a shortcut entirely subject to France's access to India was extremely dangerous to its presence and interests in that region of the world. In 1870, British engineers developed a railway project from Alexandrette to Basra through Aleppo, Mosul, and Baghdad. However, a few years later, the British government's position changed again on the issue of the railway after Britain received its share of the Suez Canal.¹⁶⁴

Since its opening in November 1869, the Suez Canal has been one of the most important factors of competition, toughness, and attraction between Britain and France. This rivalry between France and Britain intensified from 1869 to 1888, leading to the Treaty of Constantinople on October 29, 1888. Moreover, in the first article of this conference, the participants (Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, and Austria) agreed that:

The Suez Maritime Canal shall always be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to every vessel of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag. Consequently, the high contracting parties agree not in any way to interfere with the free use of the canal, in time of war as in time of peace. The canal shall never be subjected to the exercise of the right of blockade.

As Britain resorted to all means of extending its influence and singling out control of Egypt and the Suez Canal.¹⁶⁵ The Suez Canal presented the Empire with a new and strategically crucial access point to the East. Besides, the ensuing Anglo-German projects prepared in 1901 and 1902 were

¹⁶² Max E. Fletcher, "The Suez Canal and World Shipping, 1869–1914," *The Journal of Economic History* 18, no. 4 (1958): pp. 556–557., doi:10.1017/S0022050700107740.

¹⁶³ Geoffrey Hicks, 'Disraeli, Derby and the Suez Canal, 1875: Some Myths Reassessed', *History* 97, no. 326 (2012): p. 182, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24429312?seq=1>.

¹⁶⁴ Bahri, *Baghdad Railway: Study on the Evolution and Diplomacy of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway Case until 1914*. p. 18.

¹⁶⁵ W. A. White et al., 'Convention Respecting the Free Navigation of the Suez Maritime Canal. Signed at Constantinople, October 29, 1888.', *American Journal of International Law* 3, no. S2 (April 1909): pp. 123–124, doi:10.2307/2212141.

inconclusive and aimless.¹⁶⁶ George Curzon, the Viceroy of India (1899–1905), dreaded a Russian line to the Gulf as much as a German line. His actions revealed Britain's ongoing concern about foreign control of the Mesopotamian overland route to India.¹⁶⁷

2.8.2. The British Interests in the Persian Gulf:

The establishment of the East India Company (EIC) in 1600 signalled the start of a new era in Britain's relations with India and the Persian Gulf. The most crucial gain for Britain in the 17th century was the demise of Portuguese supremacy in the Gulf. In 1622, the Persian king, Shah Abbas (1571–1629), agreed that the East India Company might retain two men-of-war in the Persian Gulf to defend their commerce. "This agreement marked the first attempt of the English to obtain a political status in the Gulf and formed the beginning of that British political influence over Persia and Mesopotamia, the end of which has not yet been reached."¹⁶⁸ The strategical position of the Middle East in the British mind gave her the opportunity to spread her dominance in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf.¹⁶⁹ This was a very important part of British foreign policy, so it was important to protect all pathways leading to India.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, Russian expansionism was the British primary anxiety in the Persian Gulf. Busch observes that the worries are linked to the "Great Game" in Asia, a war of intelligence, brutality, and diplomacy aimed at keeping Russia from endangering India. The rise and fall of crises and diplomacy in the Gulf were inevitably related to the events involving major powers abroad, such as the Boer War (1899–1902) and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Every inter-imperial conflict prompted Britain to tighten its grip on the Gulf.¹⁷¹

LeDonne stated that in this regard that in 1901, Lord Balfour pointed out that "a quarrel with Russia anywhere, about anything, means the invasion of India." Besides, this competition and Britain's containment policy promoted Britain to form the Anglo-Japanese alliance in 1902, largely to block Russian aggression in Northern China. The Portsmouth Treaty of 1905 established Japan's control

¹⁶⁶ Maybelle Kennedy Chapman, "Great Britain and the Bagdad Railway 1888-1914, Smith College Studies in History, Vol.," XXXI, Northhampton, Massachusetts, 1948. pp. 38-50.

¹⁶⁷ Busch, *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914*. P. 113.

¹⁶⁸ Abdul Amir Amin, 'British Influence in Mesopotamia 1900-1914' (University of Maryland, 1957). PP.2-3.

¹⁶⁹ T. Zinkin, *Britain and India: Requiem for Empire* (London, 1964), p. 48.

¹⁷⁰ Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia 1903-1914*, p.3

¹⁷¹ Busch, *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914*. pp 184-185.

over the Pacific boundary, considerably reducing Russia's perceived danger to the British interests. Following the reconciliation of Russia and Britain, as well as the entente cordiale, which ended the Anglo-French competition in the Mediterranean Sea, Germany became the new focus of Britain in the Middle East.¹⁷² Furthermore, Seton-Watson observes that many foreign policy disputes between Russia and Britain during this period were about Iran. The Anglo-Russian agreement of August 31, 1907, gave Russia large portions of northern Iran as a sphere of influence and the British more strategically important parts of Iran (Southeast), with southwestern Iran being a shared sphere in which both could compete for concessions. In the same way, Britain released a statement to keep its trade safe in the Persian Gulf from any other country.¹⁷³

Britain's influence in Persia remained strong during the second half of the nineteenth century, but foreign policy decisions were ultimately made by the Qajar dynasty rather than the Ottomans. Moreover, from 1820 until its withdrawal in 1971, Britain was the dominating force in the Gulf for more than 150 years. The rise of trade and economic interests drove Britain's early interest in the Gulf area, which began in the seventeenth century, as it did that of many other European countries, most notably the Portuguese, French, and Dutch. When Britain began to consolidate and expand its colonial possessions in India, the nature of their relationship began to change a lot more than it had before.¹⁷⁴

2.8.3. The British Ambitions in Mesopotamia:

Britain began trading with Mesopotamia in the first half of the seventeenth century. Significant changes in British penetration occurred throughout the nineteenth century in Mesopotamia. After Napoleon's Egyptian war, Britain attempted to find a new route to India that was shorter than the one around the Cape of Good Hope or even the land route through Egypt.¹⁷⁵ The British strategic interest in Mesopotamia was a result of her influence over India during the 19th century. When Olney talks about British India in the 1800s, he even says that Ottoman Iraq should be part of the

¹⁷² John P LeDonne, *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700-1917: The Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment* (Oxford University Press on Demand, 1997). pp. 337-338.

¹⁷³ Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire, 1801-1917* (Clarendon Press, 2004). pp.146-147.

¹⁷⁴ Louis Allday, "The British in the Gulf: An Overview," Qatar Digital Library, 2014, <https://www.qdl.qa/en/british-gulf-overview>.

¹⁷⁵ Amin, "British Influence in Mesopotamia 1900-1914.", p.112.

concept.¹⁷⁶ Blyth describes how British Indian authorities viewed Mesopotamia as a potential Indian colony with "as many as twenty-five million Indian settlers."¹⁷⁷ Headrick agrees by stating "Imperialism in the mid-nineteenth century was primarily a matter of British tentacles reaching out from India..."¹⁷⁸ Busch calls the Persian Gulf an "international waterway of steadily increasing importance in the age of imperial rivalries..."¹⁷⁹ According to Busch, if shipping is merely used to assess importance, 136,693 of the 170,566 tons shipped from Basra in 1896 were British. Britain supplied over 60 per cent of the export trade, while Baghdad provided a comparable percentage.¹⁸⁰

In the early 20th century, Mesopotamia was seen as a region with limitless commercial potential, and it was projected to become a large trading area in its own right. Plans for water and mining projects in Mesopotamia has been made public in the United Kingdom and Germany. It was both an economic and a strategic need to defend the path to India. The notion that Britain's future Mesopotamian policy would be significantly influenced by "the present poverty-stricken condition of the land is due not to the niggardliness of nature, but to the destructive folly of man."¹⁸¹ During the 19th century, the British government found it necessary to safeguard its geopolitical, economic, and diplomatic interests in Mesopotamia.¹⁸² Although France had some cultural and religious activities in Mesopotamia, in the last phase of the nineteenth century, Great Britain appeared as the only European power with important interests in Mesopotamia. However, other European states had limited trade interests in Mesopotamia. Besides, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Britain had clearly established a significant political and commercial presence in Mesopotamia. Russia became particularly interested in Persia, and it collaborated with France to establish a presence in the Persian Gulf. Furthermore, Germany had political and economic ambitions in the Ottoman empire in the last decade of the nineteenth century.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁶ James Onley, *The Arabian Frontier of the British Raj: Merchants, Rulers, and the British in the Nineteenth-Century Gulf* (Oxford University Press on Demand, 2007). p.216.

¹⁷⁷ Robert Blyth, *The Empire of the Raj: India, Eastern Africa and the Middle East, 1858–1947* (Springer, 2003). P. 134.

¹⁷⁸ Daniel R Headrick, 'The Tools of Imperialism: Technology and the Expansion of European Colonial Empires in the Nineteenth Century', *The Journal of Modern History* 51, no. 2 (1979), p.205.

¹⁷⁹ Busch, *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914*. p.2.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. P. 188.

¹⁸¹ Gertrude L Bell, *Amurath to Amurath (London, 1911), Palace and Mosque at Ukhaidir: A Study in Early Mohammadan Architecture*, 1914. p. 186.

¹⁸² Stuart Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903-1914* (Garnet Publishing Ltd, 2008), pp. 6-7.

¹⁸³ Amin, "British Influence in Mesopotamia 1900-1914." pp. 10-11

After India, Mesopotamia became the second primary trade focus for Britain after the expansion of trade. In other words, after the growth of British commerce, Mosul and Basra, both tactically and commercially, became the gateways for British trade.¹⁸⁴ Throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, Mesopotamia in general and Mosul in particular remained major strategic and economic hubs. To give a sense of the scope of this trade channel, from 1912 to 1914, Britain controlled over 70 per cent of Mesopotamian commerce.¹⁸⁵ A lot of work was done by Lord Curzon to defend Britain's interests in Mesopotamia. He said that "Baghdad... must be included in the zone of indisputable British Supremacy."¹⁸⁶ Britain thought that Russia's position in Persia was very dangerous, so they came up with a lot of ways to fight back against it.¹⁸⁷

2.8.4. The British Attitude Towards the Berlin-Baghdad Railway Project: (See Figure 1)

The Baghdad Railway was envisaged in 1887 as a collaboration between German businessmen and the Ottoman government. By 1903, Germany had gained one last concession from the Ottomans to construct a new railway line, as well as a new political and economic rivalry with Britain.¹⁸⁸ This new railway line was a strategy for Germany to bring together a future "political and economic federation" that would place Germany as the major power in *Mitteleuropa*, a region that included Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, and the Ottoman Empire.¹⁸⁹ Nonetheless, German interest in Middle Eastern railways was not limited to Mesopotamia; the Turkish Anatolian Railway was also funded by German funds, and plans for a Persian railway existed.¹⁹⁰ Jastrow's *The War and the Bagdad Railway*, emphasizes that "the railway would also prove to be a short cut to India and the farther East, and as such the undertaking was on a plane of importance with the cutting of the Suez Canal."¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁴ E. A. Speiser and Philip Willard Ireland, "Iraq: A Study in Political Development," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 59, no. 1 (March 1939): 117, doi:10.2307/593957. p.39.

¹⁸⁵ Dart Brooks Risley, "British Interests and the Partition of Mosul" (The University of Texas, 2010), p.7. <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/ETD-UT-2010-05-904/RISLEY-THESIS.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

¹⁸⁶ George N Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question: In Two Volumes. I (1892)* (Longmans, Green, 1892). p.578.

¹⁸⁷ Speiser and Ireland, "Iraq: A Study in Political Development." p.39.

¹⁸⁸ Paul K Davis, *Ends and Means: The British Mesopotamian Campaign and Commission* (Associated University Presse, 1994). p.33.

¹⁸⁹ Davis, *Ends and Means: The British Mesopotamian Campaign and Commission*. p.32.

¹⁹⁰ Edward Mead Earle, *Turkey, the Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway: A Study in Imperialism* (New York: Macmillan, 1923). p. 47.

¹⁹¹ Morris Jastrow, *The War and the Bagdad Railway: The Story of Asia Minor and Its Relation to the Present Conflict* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1918), p.10.

The British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord Lansdowne's proposal for the Baghdad Railway in April 1903 emphasized discussions with German investors and the political benefits of utilizing the Baghdad Railway to reduce tensions with Germany.¹⁹² In addition, Britain was against any foreign control over a route to India, and it didn't want the Baghdad Railway to be made global. Instead, each country would have control over the railway in its own area of influence.¹⁹³ Another problem was that the Berlin-Baghdad Railway itself put British shipping companies at risk. They had long had a monopoly on the area between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea, which the Baghdad Railway threatened.¹⁹⁴

As a result of the Berlin-Baghdad Railway concession, Britain was worried that Kuwait, the Gulf's best deep-water port, would become home to a German submarine base. She thought that declaring Kuwaiti independence would be the best way to stop this.¹⁹⁵ McMeekin points out that British worries over the Berlin-Baghdad Railway prompted several international discussions as "The more 'German' the Baghdad railway appeared, the more cause Paris, London, and St. Petersburg would have for trying to sabotage it, or for putting up rival bids for the concession... Germany must appear not to be building the railway alone, while somehow still securing the benefit."¹⁹⁶ After the dispatch, the British government attempted to negotiate with Germany, but the parties involved were unable to reach a deal. The German government, in particular, was opposed to a British railway monopoly in Southern Mesopotamia. In this regard, Bertram Benedict, in his book "*A History of the Great War*," published in 1919, stated that,

The railroad would open to German business lands which had hitherto been largely inaccessible for extensive trade, investment, and raw materials; and Germany took deep interest and pride in her new project. Of course, the German government was by no means blind to the political and military possibilities also in a railroad over which troops could be transported as readily as freight. And the railroad would cut off Russia from the Mediterranean in the Balkans and at Constantinople.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹² Edward Mead Earle, *Turkey, the Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway: A Study in Imperialism* (New York: Macmillan, 1923). p.180.

¹⁹³ Stuart Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903-1914* (Garnet Publishing Ltd, 2008). p. 16.; Chapman, "Great Britain and the Bagdad Railway 1888-1914, *Smith College Studies in History*, Vol." p. 76.

¹⁹⁴ Earle, *Turkey, the Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway: A Study in Imperialism*. p. 191.

¹⁹⁵ Busch, *Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914*. p. 188.

¹⁹⁶ Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express* (Harvard University Press, 2010). p. 39.

¹⁹⁷ Benedict, *A History of the Great War*, p. 73.

Moreover, in 1905, the Board of Trade¹⁹⁸ admitted that the Berlin-Baghdad Railway would present a threat to British control of the Mesopotamian carrying trade. G. A. Lloyd,¹⁹⁹ pointed out, “Any weakening of our position on the Tigris”, ... “means not only the weakening of our whole position in Mesopotamia, but a corresponding increase in German trade and activity . . . Our privileged position on the river is now becoming daily more valuable, in view of the approach of the Baghdad Railway.” By 1907, the fear of Berlin-Baghdad Railway had affected the government’s response to the threat to Britain’s privileged position on the Mesopotamian rivers.²⁰⁰

Furthermore, as long as the railway was built far away from Britain's interests, it didn't bother them. However, after they thought about how the railway would affect their economic and trading interests in the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf,²⁰¹ the British changed their minds about the railway and the way it worked. People in Britain started to worry when the railway from Konia to Baghdad was finished, which made them think about what could happen. After the railway reaches Baghdad, the British government didn't want it to go to Basra because it would hurt British shipping businesses. The Germans also thought it would be a good idea to build a port in Kuwait and extend the railway to the Persian Gulf. Lord Curzon stated that "navigation in Basra was in the hands of a British company for several years. I am afraid that this will be blocked in recent years". In another statement, he said "I believe that river navigation in Basra and Baghdad belong to us." Germany's building of a rail line across the Persian Gulf would hurt Britain's standing in the area.²⁰²

The last stage of Britain's Baghdad Railway strategy was sparked by differences and impasse.²⁰³ The British also agreed to let Germany build a railroad from Baghdad to Basra in exchange for control of any line from Basra to the Persian Gulf, which was a deal that worked out very well.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ The Board of Trade is a British government body concerned with commerce and industry, currently within the Department of Business and Trade. See, Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903-1914*. p. 50.

¹⁹⁹ G. A. Lloyd, later 1st Baron Lloyd of Dolobran (1879–1941), attaché, Constantinople, 1905–1907. In 1907 he was special commissioner to enquire into the future of British trade in Turkey, Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf. Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903-1914*. p. 50.

²⁰⁰ Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903-1914*. p.44.

²⁰¹ Austin Harrison, “England and Germany: The Line of Least Resistance: Politics, Positions and Conclusions,” *The Observer*, July 1907, 6, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259009443/?terms=persian&match=1>.

²⁰² Jamal Hashim Ahmad Dhuwaib, ‘The Impact of Baghdad-Berlin Railway on Britain’s Nautical and Commercial Interests in Iraq’s Rivers’, *European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies* 2, no. 6 (2017): pp. 245–247.

²⁰³ Davis, *Ends and Means: The British Mesopotamian Campaign and Commission*, p. 35.

²⁰⁴ Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903-1914*, p. 238.

Britain also said that she would let Turkey run the Baghdad-Gulf Railway if British businesses could get money from it.²⁰⁵ In addition, the Ottoman Empire and Germany agreed to a lot of things about the Baghdad Railway at the Turco-German Convention of 1911, like length guarantees and military installations.²⁰⁶ British officials were worried that a pro-German strategy in Mesopotamia would alienate the French and potentially prompt Russia to withdraw from the entente. They also feared antagonizing the Ottoman Empire, whose Sultan still claims religious authority and could endanger the allegiance of India's Muslim population.²⁰⁷ According to Maloney:

The strongest case for the Baghdad Railway as a cause of World War I is put by Bennis "Although before the outbreak of the War in 1914, understandings were thus eventually reached regarding the Baghdad Railway by Germany, Russia, France, and Great Britain, the project had already done much to poison the international atmosphere. Germany had come to believe that the opposition of the Entente Powers was only part of their general policy of encirclement...Russia, Great Britain, and France had become deeply suspicious of Germany's plans in the Middle East....Russia's realization that the Austro-German advance into the Balkans and Turkey must be checked if her own plans for securing control of the Straits at Constantinople were not to be thwarted had much to do with the course of events during the fateful days of July, 1914."²⁰⁸

The above statement not only focused on the railway subject but also gave a definition of the pre-war circumstances.

2.9. The Emergence of Oil in the Middle East:

For more than a century, Britain was a coal country, and throughout the 1890s and early 1900s, over 3,200 coal businesses operated in Britain, generating well over 200 million tons of coal each year. In addition to that, providing a cheap and local source of power to British consumers, coal was one of Britain's most important exports. However, petroleum products and the accompanying technology revolutionized Britons' daily lives.²⁰⁹ British and German interest in Middle Eastern railways and the knowledge of Mesopotamian oil dates back to the 1830s. On the other hand,

²⁰⁵ Davis, *Ends and Means: The British Mesopotamian Campaign and Commission*. p. 35.

²⁰⁶ Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903-1914*, p.201.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 211

²⁰⁸ Arthur P Maloney, "The Berlin-Baghdad Railway as a Cause of World War I." (Centre for Naval Analyses Alexandria Va Naval Studies Group, 1984), p. 10.

²⁰⁹ Ian Wereley, "Imagining the Age of Oil: Case Studies in British Petro-cultures, 1865-1935 By" (Carleton University, 2018), p. 13. https://curve.carleton.ca/system/files/etd/1ff95626-ab3d-4798-baf2-796a7e2ec64a/etd_pdf/a558c7bcfad35dc3d6525a8e31d12412/wereley-imaginingtheageofoilcasestudiesinbritishpetrocultures.pdf.

Germany's victory over France in 1871 produced a new power balance in Europe, attracting the Ottoman Sultan Abdul-Aziz's (1830-1876) interest in a joint oil-railroad venture with Germany. In 1872, the Ottoman Sultan Abdul-Aziz elected Wilhelm Von Pressel as the general administrator of the newly founded Asiatic Ottoman Railway Company. The Ottoman sultan had selected him for the task of designing a railway scheme from Haidar Pasha through Ankara, Sivas, Mosul, Baghdad, and the Persian Gulf.²¹⁰

British interest in the Ottoman oil was focused largely on Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf.²¹¹ Britain desired access to Ottoman oil resources but did not press the subject aggressively enough. The Ottoman Empire's Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra provinces were rich in oil and gas fields.²¹² Britain's attempt to secure Ottoman oil concessions in the Hamidian Era during the later years of Sultan Abdul-Hamid II's rule attempted to limit German activity in the Ottoman Empire as an international adversary. Anglo-German competition for the region's oil resources can be observed dating back to the early 1900s. Whereas, Britain attempted to exert influence in the Ottoman Empire's Kuwait and Basra provinces. The United Kingdom had built solid connections with Kuwait's sheikh. It is possible that British political authorities desired control of the Persian Gulf region in order to safeguard Indian commerce and play a major role in managing the oil supplies of what is now known as Iraq.²¹³ Furthermore, in the early 20th century, the British official mentality put a high priority on the Ottoman province of Mosul. Mosul has long been a major commercial city in the Middle East. Mesopotamia, which included the Ottoman provinces of Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul, was a region on one of the shortest routes to India. As a result, Mesopotamia and her three provinces were embroiled in a complicated web of British interests because they were close to the most significant area of the British Empire and the discovery of oil in this region gave high value to it.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Volkan Ş. Ediger and John V. Bowlus, "Greasing the Wheels: The Berlin-Baghdad Railway and Ottoman Oil, 1888–1907," *Middle Eastern Studies* 56, no. 2 (March 2020): pp. 193–206, doi:10.1080/00263206.2019.1667775.

²¹¹ Marian Kent, ed., *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire* (Routledge, 2005), pp.111-112, doi:10.4324/9780203988367.

²¹² Francis Richard Maunsell, "The Mesopotamian Petroleum Field," *The Geographical Journal* 9, no. 5 (1897): p. 528.

²¹³ Enes Yavuz, "Ottoman Oil Concessions during the Hamidian Era (1876–1909)" (Ekonomi ve Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2018), pp.92-93.

²¹⁴ Risley, "British Interests and the Partition of Mosul." p. 7.

2.9.1. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company of 1909:

William Knox D'Arcy, a rich British banker and gold mining magnate, acquired the property and the exclusive right from Mozaffar al-Din, Shah of Persia, on May 28, 1902, to "search for, obtain, exploit, develop, render suitable for trade, carry away and sell" the petroleum fields of Persia. The D'Arcy Concession was enormous, spanning three-quarters of Persia and totalling 1.2 million square kilometres.²¹⁵ According to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company agreement "the company promised to pay the Iranian government, annually a sum equal to 16 percent of the net profits of any company or companies that may be formed."²¹⁶ The agreement was to be in place for sixty years, and it included a great degree of speculation and financial risk because it was unknown if there were enough Persian oil resources to sustain an exploratory operation of the magnitude that D'Arcy envisioned. However, the British chemical engineer, Boverton Redwood (1846-1919), who, after visiting Persia on his tour of rising oilfields in the 1890s, was certain that large supplies of petroleum were under the Zagros Mountains.²¹⁷

The economic revolution may be said to have been heralded in 1908, when oil was found in Masjid-i-Suleiman in Khuzistan province in Persia. The importance of this discovery to Britain was recognized by Winston Churchill. In other words, Churchill convinced the British government to switch the RN from coal to oil while also acquiring a controlling stake in the Anglo-Persian Oil business.²¹⁸ Furthermore, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC) started building an oil refinery in Abadan, a small island settlement in the Shatt al-Arab River delta, in October 1909. This was less than a year after the first oil was found at Maidan-i-Naftun.²¹⁹ The first oil refinery in the Middle East was finished in May 1912, and shortly after that, the ship carrying the first bulk shipment of Persian crude oil set sail from the Abadan Refinery to Britain. The refinery produced a comprehensive range of heavy oil products, including boiler fuels, diesel, kerosene, paraffin, grease, and explosives, which were important to British industries and commercial operators.

²¹⁵ Wereley, 'Imagining the Age of Oil: Case Studies in British Petrocultures, 1865-1935 By', p. 125.

²¹⁶ Lotfollah Nahai and Charles L Kimbell, *The Petroleum Industry of Iran*, vol. 8203 (Washington: US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Mines, 1963), p.3.

²¹⁷ Wereley, "Imagining the Age of Oil: Case Studies in British Petrocultures, 1865-1935." p.125.

²¹⁸ Woodhouse, "Britain and the Middle East.", p. 93.

²¹⁹ Willem Floor, "The Early Beginnings of Modern Abadan," Abadan: Retold, 2017,

https://www.abadan.wiki/en/the-early-beginnings-of-modern-abadan/?fbclid=IwAR0GS91EWL2Bh9F2pA9Y9fHpNbOAh-ZIR2dUxnp0gzsq_LWj_ULJYJGu0gI.

During the Great War, the refinery was the subject of many successful raids by the Ottoman gunboats and local Persian militias, which put a stop to further growth.²²⁰

2.9.2. The Anglo-Ottoman Convention of 1913:

European great powers such as Britain and France made an outstanding commercial contribution to the Ottoman Empire. Likewise, Germany followed suit, having financial and political involvement in the Ottoman Empire. After the unification, Germany had become one of the Europe's most powerful economic, technological, and military powers.²²¹ In the 1890s, Germans attempted to industrialize the country and find new markets, primarily in western Asia. The German expansion in the Ottoman Empire's regions, such as the Berlin-Baghdad railway, had harmed France and Britain's political and economic interests there.²²² In the second decade of the twentieth century, the Baghdad Railway was a worrying subject for Britain. Thus, Britain took the lead in securing her position in the Persian Gulf when she signed a non-ratified agreement with the Ottoman Empire on July 29, 1913, well known in historical papers as the Anglo-Ottoman Convention of 1913. Britain's fear of the Baghdad Railway led to Kuwait's ultimate autonomy and border delineation under the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman Convention. Kuwait, and all the following difficulties made by the British on the subject, had become a reflection of British goals in the Gulf.²²³ It has to be mentioned that Kuwait was clearly no longer part of the Ottoman sphere of influence by the 1910s.²²⁴

The Anglo-Ottoman Convention of 1913 defined Kuwait's position as well as other economic and political concerns between the British and the Ottomans. The agreement formalized the Ottoman Empire's boundary with Persia. It delineated the area of Kuwait that would be independent from direct Ottoman administration and retain a distinct autonomous territory within the Empire. The red line delineated territories immediately under Mubarak Sabah's with a radius of 40 miles, while

²²⁰ Percy Sykes, "South Persia and the Great War," *The Geographical Journal* 58, no. 2 (1921): p. 103, https://ia800708.us.archive.org/view_archive.php?archive=/28/items/crossref-pre-1923-scholarly-works/10.2307%252F1780451.zip&file=10.2307%252F1781457.pdf.

²²¹ Kent, *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*. p. 111.

²²² Kemal H. Karpat and David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East.*, pp. 456-457, *The Journal of Military History*, vol. 55, 1991, doi:10.2307/1985781.

²²³ Ethan Tyler, "A British Lake': Kuwait and the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman Convention," 2017. pp. 45-46.

²²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 49.

the green line delineates the boundary within which tribes would pay loyalty to Mubarak with a radius of 140 miles. The agreement also included the so-called Blue Line, which defined the borders of Bahrain and Qatar, as well as the Violet Line, which defined the limits of the British province of Aden. The agreement defined the British and Ottoman domains of influence, placing all land south of a line drawn from the north of Qatar to Aden under British authority and all countries north of Kuwait under direct Ottoman jurisdiction. Secretary of State Edward Grey thought that the main countries had to agree on Mesopotamian oil concessions and the rights to pass through the Shatt Al-'Arab river, which he thought was important. This kept the deal from being approved.²²⁵ (See figure 2)

Furthermore, in February 1913, the Porte's extraordinary envoy, Ibrahim Hakki Pasha, went to London with the aim of finally settling bilateral differences over the Baghdad railway. With Foreign Minister Grey, almost all sensitive problems in the Middle East were considered, and the German Embassy in London was even involved in the negotiations. Within the framework of the agreements, the Turks recognized the special position of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf region, and although London respected the Sultan's sovereignty over Kuwait, the Porte agreed not to interfere in the internal affairs of the sheikhdom. At the request of the British, Istanbul agreed that the terminus of the Baghdad Railway should be Basra rather than the coast, and that two British officials should be appointed to the board of directors of the Baghdad Railway Company.²²⁶ The series of negotiations lasted for months between the British and the Germans, until in June 1914 an agreement was reached on spheres of influence in the Asian provinces of the Ottoman Empire. According to the terms of the agreement, London no longer opposed plans to build rails in Baghdad, and the Germans agreed to appoint two British citizens to the board of directors of the railway company. It was agreed that the terminus of the line would be Basra, and that Britain would be able to take control of the southern Mesopotamian coast of the Gulf, which Berlin also considered a British sphere of influence.²²⁷

²²⁵ The Shatt al'Arab is a river that originates at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in Al-Qurnah and flows south through Basra and into the Persian Gulf. Tyler. p. 54.

²²⁶ Earle, *Turkey, the Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway*, pp. 255–256; Joseph Heller, *British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire 1908–1914*, Frank Cass and Company, London, 1983, pp. 92–95.

²²⁷ See contract Johannes Lepsius – Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy – Friedrich Thimme (eds.), *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871–1914. Sammlung der Diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes. 37/1. Entspannungen unter den Mächten 1912–1913*. Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, Berlin, 1926. pp. 454–465.

2.9.3. European Rivalry Over Oil in the Region:

The period between 1896 and 1914 is known as the "Indian Summer" of the pre-war British economy.²²⁸ In addition, after the 1870s, Britain remained at the core of the international system. It was very important for her to help the world's trade and payment system work better so that Britain could be more competitive.²²⁹ On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire's economic transformation was aided by German banks, post offices, newspapers, and engineers. In 1884, the first marine link between the Eastern Mediterranean and Germany was established. Five years later, in 1889, the Germans established a shipping service between Hamburg and Istanbul.²³⁰ The Anatolian Railway Company was an operating company financially organized and managed by the Deutsche Bank, which won the first foreign concession concerning Mesopotamian oil in 1888. At the same time, the Turkish government promised the firm preferential treatment when it came to mining rights. This was made clear in the 1903 Baghdad Railway Convention, which allowed the line to be extended from Konia to the Persian Gulf and gave specific rights to extract natural gas and oil from the land.²³¹

It's apparent that oil was seen as a critical component of the concession. The idea was described by Sir Nicholas O'Connor, the British Ambassador in Constantinople in 1900, who stated that the exploration of bitumen and naphtha had the potential to significantly enhance the efficiency of the railway system. At the same time, Dr. Paul Rohrbach effectively conveyed the German perspective via his publication in 1902, when he authored a booklet addressing the Baghdad railway and its associated political and economic implications. He mentioned the petroleum springs in the Kirkuk area as one of the latter when he stated that,

We ought to attach the greatest importance to the circumstance that the Baghdad Railway will pass close to the petroleum districts. The only thing to be feared is that foreign gold and foreign speculators should succeed in securing a preferential right in the exploitation of Mesopotamian naphtha before any effective German initiative has been taken.

²²⁸ Patrick J. McGowan and Bohdan Kordan, "Imperialism in World-System Perspective: Britain 1870-1914," *International Studies* 25, no. 1 (1981): pp 53-54, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2600210>.

²²⁹ Kordan. *Ibid*, pp. 55-57.

²³⁰ Halil Ege Özen, "The German Involvement in Ottoman Economic Development: Banking, Railways and Other Investment, 1888-1914." (Boğaziçi University, 2008), pp. 6-7, http://www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/German_involvement_in_Ottoman_economic_development-Ozen.pdf.

²³¹ "The Baghdad Railway: German Press Angry at English Deal," *The Observer*, May 1913, 12, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/257669359/?terms=Deutsche Bank&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/257669359/?terms=Deutsche+Bank&match=1).

The Germans were given preference, but not monopolistic access to oil along the Baghdad Railway. From 1904 through 1912, there was a surge of interest in Mesopotamian oil, primarily by British, German, and American companies. The Anatolian Railway Company acting for the Deutsche Bank, signed a contract with the Ottoman authorities in July 1904.²³² In addition, Russia was not the only force challenging Britain's hold on Mesopotamia. Germany emerged as Britain's main opponent in economic terms. The Potsdam Agreement between Russia and Germany acknowledged each other's rights in Turkey. The Franco-German Agreement between France and Germany harmonized their commercial interests.²³³

Britain, too, was eager to balance her competing interests and give Germany full rein in Mosul in 1909. As a result, more information is needed to fully understand how the British reacted to Germany in this period before the war.²³⁴ Furthermore, with regards to the railway the definitive provision of kilometric guarantees for the railway as far as Baghdad was an important gain for the Germans; but it was not necessarily a loss to the British. Britain's agreement to the three percent customs increase in 1906 had revealed its inability to prevent the continuation of the line to Baghdad; the 1909–1910 Anglo-German negotiations had indicated its unwillingness to do so. Lowther (1858–1916), Ambassador at Constantinople, 1908–1913, lamented that “if the Germans get to Baghdad . . . it rather takes the wind out of our sails.” But Miss Mabel Dulcie Parker 1877–1951 noted that Britain would not be affected by a Turco-German arrangement which only concerned the area north of Baghdad. To the British government, the most crucial aspect of the March 1911 convention was the provision that German interests would be given the right to participate equally with other foreign (i.e. non-Turkish) groups in financing any railways south of Baghdad.”²³⁵

In 1913, the governments of Britain and Germany, which had conquered the Ottoman Empire, by intervening in the Ottoman issue. Such negotiations were over the delimitation of economic areas of interest for both countries. Furthermore, in July 1913, Winston Churchill, informed the House of Commons that the admiralty was rapidly approaching a point beyond which the government would become the owners, or at the very least, the controllers, of at least a portion of the oil

²³² Marian Kent, *Oil and Empire* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1976), doi:10.1007/978-1-349-02079-9. pp. 16-17.

²³³ Risley, “British Interests and the Partition of Mosul.”, p. 11”

²³⁴ Risley. Ibid, pp12-13.

²³⁵ Stuart Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903-1914* (Garnet Publishing Ltd, 2008), p.154.

required by the navy. A few months later, the British government made concrete moves toward acquiring a controlling stake in the APOC. As a result, the Foreign Office had a very significant stake in the distribution of its ambitions in the TPC, as stipulated in the March 19, 1914, agreement.²³⁶ The European great powers tried to come closer to the Ottoman Empire, which had become known as the “Sick Man of Europe.” Their primary aim before the war was to establish a friendly relationship with the Sultan. The answer to the question, "Who would win the Ottoman's satisfaction?" will be addressed in the next chapter.

2.10. Chapter Summery

The Second Industrial Revolution accelerated colonialism, driven by the need for raw materials. Germany's conquest of Alsace and Lorraine in 1870 heightened tensions with France, while European powers, especially Britain, France, and Germany, competed for territory in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific. This rivalry fuelled alliances and intensified the arms race, most notably the naval competition between Britain and Germany from 1906 to 1912. Britain's "Splendid Isolation" policy sought to keep its dominance, particularly over trade routes between the UK and India, while preventing any single European nation from dominating the continent. Furthermore, India, crucial to the British Empire due to its vast labour resources, played a central role in Britain's military and economic power. Control of the Dardanelles and the Mediterranean was also vital for Britain's trade with India, with Turkey controlling the Dardanelles, leading to British support for Turkey against Russia. Additionally, North Africa became a site of intense competition between the British and French.

As European powers increasingly focused on the Middle East in the late 19th century, Britain aimed to secure commercial and political opportunities, viewing the region as a gateway between Europe and India. Moreover, the Suez Canal's opening was pivotal, granting Britain strategic access to the East. Germany's expansionist ambitions, particularly with the Baghdad railway project and ties with the Ottoman government, worried Britain, as it threatened British interests in the region, particularly the overland route to India. In addition, Oil discoveries fundamentally shifted British interests in the Middle East. The discovery of large oil fields in Southwest Persia in 1907, and the establishment of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, made the region essential to British energy

²³⁶ Edward Mead Earle, “The Turkish Petroleum Company--A Study in Oleaginous Diplomacy,” *Political Science Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1924): pp. 268-270.

security, particularly as the Royal Navy transitioned from coal to oil power. This intensified British efforts to control Mesopotamia, especially after oil was discovered in Persia in 1908. British concerns about German influence in the region culminated in the establishment of the Turkish Petroleum Company, a joint British-German venture to explore oil in Mesopotamia. Britain's eventual acquisition of a majority stake in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1914 reflected the strategic importance of securing oil for both imperial and military purposes.

This narrative highlights how British colonialism was driven primarily by economic motives, particularly access to resources like oil. Britain's determination to control trade routes to India and secure oil supplies reveals the extent to which imperial interests shaped foreign policy. As this thesis argues, the discovery of oil transformed British priorities in the Middle East, making the region a key strategic area, not just for trade, but for energy security, especially when, as naval power, Britain transitioned to oil. Nevertheless, while oil was important for the British Navy, the diplomatic arrangement and friendly relationship between Britain and other European stakeholder in the Middle East were also important for British existence in the region. Furthermore, the increasing competition with Germany over influence in the Ottoman Empire and Mesopotamia underscores how imperial rivalries in Europe extended into the colonial world, ultimately contributing to the tensions that led to the Great War.

Chapter Three:

British War Strategies During the War in the Ottoman Empire 1914-1918

3. British War Ambitions and the Future of the Ottoman Empire 1914-1918:

3.1. The Outbreak of the Great War 1914:

Diverse European nations entered into mutual defence agreements over the course of history, culminating in their eventual engagement in conflicts. As a result of these agreements, allied nations had a legal duty to defend any member that came under attack. Prior to the outbreak of the Great War, the following alliances were in place: Russia and Serbia, Germany and Austria-Hungary, France and Russia, France and Britain, France and Belgium, and finally Japan and Britain. The murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was the direct cause of the great war, which caused the aforementioned factors (alliances, imperialism, militarism, and nationalism) to come into play. This was the event that sparked the conflict.²³⁷ On June 29, 1914, the British Ambassador in Vienna Sir Maurice De Bunsen (1913-1914), send a letter to Edward Grey Foreign Secretary, stating that, “The Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the Duchess of Hohenberg were both murdered yesterday morning by a Slav nationalist or anarchist at Sarajevo.”²³⁸ The British Chancellor of Exchequer David Lloyd George (1908-1915) express his attitude toward this action by pointing out that; “When I first heard the news of the assassination of the Grand Duke Ferdinand, I felt that it was a grave matter, and that it might provoke serious consequences which only the firmest and most skilful handling could prevent from developing into an emergency that would involve nations.”²³⁹

In addition to this, the assassination of the Archduke was the direct cause of the Austrian invasion of Serbia. As a direct consequence of the Austrian invasion, the European alliance system was set into motion, and by the month of August, the whole continent was engaged in conflict. The Triple

²³⁷ The Manchester Guardian, “Special Morning Express: The Double Assassination, Germany and the Danube Peril,” *The Guardian*, June 1914, 18, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259119310/?terms=The murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259119310/?terms=The%20murder%20of%20Archduke%20Franz%20Ferdinand&match=1); The Manchester Guardian, “The “Petrol War”: The Scarcity Danger to Germany.,” October 1914, 8, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259148798/?terms=the outbreak of the great war 1914&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259148798/?terms=the%20outbreak%20of%20the%20great%20war%201914&match=1).

²³⁸ George Peabody Gooch and Harold William Vazeille Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914*, vol. 8 (HM Stationery Office, 1932), p. 15.

²³⁹ Wolfson and Laver, *Years of Change: European History, 1890-1990*, pp.179–180.

Entente, which was comprised of the Great Britain, France, and Russia, battled against the Central Powers, who were made up of Germany and Austria-Hungary.²⁴⁰ Austria-Hungary and Serbia went to war on July 28, 1914. Four days later Austria's partner, Germany, declared war on Russia, Serbia's ally, on August 1. Germany then invaded neutral Belgium on August 3rd, declaring war on France (an ally of Russia). Thus, on August 4, France's ally Great Britain declared war on Germany. The Ottoman Empire declared war on Russia in October of the same year.²⁴¹ This can be clearly seen in the telegraph Herr Von Jagow (the Secretary State of the German Foreign Office 1913 -1916) sent to Constantinople from Berlin on 4th August 1914, "England will possibly declare war on us today or tomorrow. In order to prevent the Porte breaking away from us at the last moment under the impression of the England action, the declaration of war by Turkey on Russia, if possible, today, appears of the greatest importance."²⁴²

3.2. Britain and the Ottoman Empire in 1914:

With regard to the Ottoman Empire, it was obvious that for much of the Nineteenth Century, Britain has been a stalwart protector of what was sometimes referred to as "The Sick Man of Europe." Britain was willing to ignore the authoritarianism, corruption, and inefficiency of the Ottoman Empire in comparison to the considerably greater danger posed by Russian expansion towards the Jewel in the Crown of India and the Dardanelles. During this century, Britain had substantial diplomatic and commercial ties with the Ottoman Empire and often enjoyed preferential access to the Sultan and important decision-makers across their empire. Successive Sultans saw Britain's friendship as providing diplomatic and even military assistance against foreign challenges to the Empire.²⁴³ The Manchester Guardian Newspaper issue an article on November 2nd, 1914, addressed the British FO announcement with regard to the Ottoman Attitude of the War, the article had indicated that:

²⁴⁰ Edward J. Erickson, "The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War," *First World War Studies*, 2014, 93–94, doi:10.1080/19475020.2014.931036.

²⁴¹ The Manchester Guardian, "England Declare War on Germany," August 1914, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259134411/?terms=england declare war on germany&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259134411/?terms=england+declare+war+on+germany&match=1); History.com Editors, "World War I," A&E Television Networks, 2009, <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/world-war-i-history>.

²⁴² F. J. Moberly, *History of the Great War: Based on Official Documents. The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918. Volume II*, p. 75.

²⁴³ A L Macfie, 'The Straits Question in the First World War, 1914–18', *Middle Eastern Studies* 19, no. 1 (1983): pp. 43–44.

At the beginning of the war the British Government gave definite assurances that if Turkey remained neutral her independence and integrity would be respected during the war and in the terms of peace. In this France and Russia concurred. The British government have since then endeavoured with the greatest patience and forbearance to preserve friendly relations, in spite of increasing beaches of neutrality on the part of the Turkish Government at Constantinople in the case of the German vessels in the Straits.²⁴⁴

Despite this, Britain established deals with Germany and the Ottoman Empire in 1914, just before the war, in an effort to stop German encroachment on British interests and to boost the Ottoman economy.²⁴⁵ During the early months of the war, Great Britain attempted, via a series of ambassadorial meetings and letters, as well as pledges to guarantee the territory of the Ottoman Empire, to keep the Ottoman Empire neutral. However, these attempts were unsuccessful. On November 5, 1914, the official beginning of the hostilities took place. It took some time for Britain to formulate any war goals with regard to the Ottoman Empire, since they did not have any at the outset. The continuation of the current situation was not a viable choice anymore. Due to Britain's location in the Persian Gulf, it seemed inevitable that the country would be required to take part in whatever plans were devised for the Ottoman Empire's subsequent existence.²⁴⁶ Furthermore, the primary focus of Britain was to maintain its commercial interests in the Suez Canal, Dardanelles, Alexandretta, the Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia. Britain was worried about the Ottoman participation in the war because this will put her it in the enemy side of the war. The \intimation of Britain was motivated by Russian aggression against British interests in Persia, therefore:²⁴⁷

In mid-August 1914, Sir Edward Grey the British Foreign Secretary (1905-1916) told the Russian foreign minister Sergei Dmitrievich Sazonov (1860-1927) that St. Petersburg could have compensation from Turkey after the war; on November 1, he offered the prospect of a free hand to dismember Turkey; and eleven days later, he specifically offered Russia Constantinople and the Straits to dissuade her from attacking Persia.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ The Manchester Guardian, "Turkey's Acts of Hostility, Foreign Office Statement, The Sigen of German Domination: Egypt and India.," November 1914, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259150619/?terms=Ottoman Empire Declare War on Russia&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/259150619/?terms=Ottoman+Empire+Declare+War+on+Russia&match=1).

²⁴⁵ NA, "CAB 27/1, British Desiderata in Asiatic Turkey," 1915.

²⁴⁶ PP, "Events Leading to the Rupture of Relations with Turkey" (HMSO, 1914), n. [Cd. 7628].

²⁴⁷ David Kenneth Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958* (Oxford university press, 2006), pp. 40–48.

²⁴⁸ Murray, Lacey, and Lacey, *The Making of Peace: Rulers, States, and The Aftermath of War*, p. 241.

In the era before the outbreak of the Great War, unlike Britain the Germans were successful in taking the Ottomans to their side, building up a strong relationship that could be helpful during the war. On the eve of the war the Germans attempted to win the favour of the Turkish Government of the Committee of Union and Progress' (CUP) by offering to subsidize the building of a railway from Berlin to Baghdad, which would have extended German's dominance into the very core of the Ottoman Empire and all the way to the Persian Gulf.²⁴⁹ The Ottomans also agreed in 1913 to deploy a German Military Mission to Constantinople to train and equip the Turkish Army. Meanwhile, in Constantinople, the British had established a naval mission to educate Turkish sailors in preparation for the arrival of two British-built battleships. Although Enver Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of War (1914-1918), was enthusiastic about the German alliance due to the time he spent in Berlin, the majority of Turks were pleased with military neutrality.²⁵⁰

The two battleships being built in British shipyards were the source of the problem, with the first one being launched in August 1914. Winston Churchill made the disastrous decision to requisition the two ships for the RN at that time due to the precarious circumstances in the area. On August 3rd, the day before declaring war on Germany, the British government made this choice. An incensed Turkish government quickly received relief from the chief of the German Military Mission, Otto Liman von Sanders (1913-1921), who pledged that the Germans would make good on replacing the ships. The decision to go to war with Turkey was made in October 1914, after two German warships attacked Russian settlements in Crimea and her fleet. The RN chased these oil-fired battleships (the Goeben and the Breslau) across the Mediterranean, but they were offered sanctuary in Istanbul. They were subsequently handed over by Germany to the Turkish Navy, with Turkish names and flags, and all its personnel donned Turkish caps to complete the illusion.²⁵¹ As previously indicated, this started to alter in the first decade of the 20th century, when Britain became an ally of Russia via her Entente with France and a desire to curb the developing might and influence of Germany. In this setting, the authoritarian Austro-Hungarian and German Empires were more sympathetic to the Ottomans' situation than the conflicting democracies of Britain and France. They were also traditionally apprehensive of the intentions of their long-time

²⁴⁹ Kemal H. Karpat, "The Entry of the Ottoman Empire into World War I," *Bellekten* 68, no. 253 (December 2004): 687–689, doi:10.37879/bellekten.2004, p. 687.

²⁵⁰ John Baldry, "British Naval Operations against Turkish Yaman 1914-1919," *Arabica* 25, no. 2 (March 1978): 152–153, <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/stable/4056533>.

²⁵¹ Karpat, "The Entry of the Ottoman Empire into World War I."

regional adversary Russia, which had joined the Triple Entente with Britain and France. German officials used this natural animosity against Russia and urged the Turks to be suspicious of the Allies.²⁵²

3.2.1. The British War Aims in A line from Mesopotamia to Alexandretta:

Oil corporations had been pressuring the RN to switch from coal to oil well before the turn of the century.²⁵³ Oil firing was widely accepted by senior naval officers due to its many benefits over coal, including increased speed, increased range, smokeless burning, enhanced manoeuvrability, more space on board ships for weapons and equipment, fewer crew members to go oversea, and the possibility of easy refuelling while at sea rather than always docking for coal loading. Most people thought it wasn't in the best interests of the RN to convert since there were no oil reserves in the British Empire. Meanwhile, the German Navy, which likewise lacked reliable oil supplies, was making preparations to switch the firing of its battleships to oil.²⁵⁴ As discussed in the last chapter in 1911 Winston Churchill was very certain that oil was the most appropriate kind of fuel for the fleet. He believed that the continued dominance of the British Empire overseas required a steady supply of oil.²⁵⁵ In a speech to the Parliament that he gave in July 1913, he said, "We must become the owners or at any rate the controllers at the source of at least a proportion of the supply of natural oil which we require." Churchill was successful in convincing the British government to purchase two million pounds' worth of shares in the Anglo Persian Oil Company, which contributed to the accomplishment of a portion of this objective. Late in July 1914, a little over a week before the outbreak of the great war, the Royal Assent was given to the legislative act that would eventually provide the authorization for the acquisition.²⁵⁶

It was pointed out by Lord Kitchener, who was the Secretary of State for War (1914-1916), that a win for the Allies in the war would mean that Russia would control Constantinople and France would dominate Syria, which would impact Egypt's position in terms of its strategic importance.

²⁵² Gooch and Temperley, *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898-1914*, 6:303.

²⁵³ James Goldrick, "Coal and the Advent of the First World War at Sea," *War in History* 21, no. 3 (July 2014): p. 323, doi:10.1177/0968344513504861.

²⁵⁴ Erik J Dahl, "Naval Innovation: From Coal to Oil," *Joint Force Quarterly* 27 (2001): pp. 55–46, [http://www.kkft.bme.hu/attachments/article/70/From Coal to Oil.pdf](http://www.kkft.bme.hu/attachments/article/70/From%20Coal%20to%20Oil.pdf).

²⁵⁵ Christopher M Bell, "Sir John Fisher's Naval Revolution Reconsidered: Winston Churchill at the Admiralty, 1911–1914," *War in History* 18, no. 3 (March 2011): 334, <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/stable/26098347>.

²⁵⁶ Basarin, "Oil: The Underlying Reason for Gallipoli."

It was necessary to take into consideration the prospect of a future confrontation with either Russia or France, or both countries. It would be important for Britain to maintain control over Alexandretta in order to maintain control of Mesopotamia; otherwise, it would be a hazardous outpost with little value. By traveling via train from Alexandretta, reinforcements coming from the United Kingdom would arrive in Mesopotamia fourteen days sooner than if they travelled by water across the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf. By maintaining control over Alexandretta, the size of the peacetime garrison in Mesopotamia could be reduced compared to what would have been the case in the absence of this objective. Also, a Russian offensive would be put in jeopardy by the presence of Alexandretta.²⁵⁷

In the event that Britain did not seize control of Mesopotamia, the Russians would do it instead, putting Britain's position in the Persian Gulf in jeopardy. Through the establishment of several irrigation systems, Mesopotamia had a significant potential for agricultural production. It would provide a solution to the problem of India's overpopulation by providing a market for its people. It ensured the safety of Britain's oil interests in the Persian Gulf as well as the land route leading from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. Occupying even just a little portion of the hinterland around Alexandretta is sufficient. This was easily defensible, as was Mesopotamia, due to the rugged terrain that surrounded its northern border, provided that the Tigris and Euphrates rivers were not compromised. Because of the potential richness and population of the area, protecting it should only be a burden on Britain for a relatively short period of time. It was ideal that a Turkish or Armenian state would offer a buffer to Russia. Nonetheless, a boundary with Russia was better than Franco-Russian dominance of the land route that runs from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf.²⁵⁸ The only person who mentioned oil in any of the documents that were drafted before the assault on the Dardanelles was First Sea Lord John Fisher (1904-1910). He recommended a convoluted plan of action directed against the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. Because of its oil resources and rail link to Mesopotamia, it included raids on the port city of Alexandretta, which is today known as Iskenderun. Alexandretta is located in the

²⁵⁷ "The War: Future of Palestine," *The Guardian Newspaper*, October 1917, p. 4, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258472438/?terms=france&match=1>; CAB 24/1, "G12 Alexandretta and Mesopotamia, Kitchener, 16 March 1915."

²⁵⁸ CAB 24/1, "G12 Alexandretta and Mesopotamia, Kitchener, 16 March 1915."

northeastern corner of the Mediterranean. The Dardanelles would be forcibly taken by a fleet of antiquated British battleships that were built before the Dreadnoughts.²⁵⁹

The naval historian Julian Corbett sent a letter to the First Lord of Admiralty John Fisher (1904-1910). There are two versions of this letter in Corbett's records, and it's unclear which one he wrote to Fisher. In both, he predicts that the Mediterranean would rise to prominence once again due to the approaching collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent Russian conquest of Constantinople. In both, he describes the chance to secure oil supplies in the Middle East as 'a gift of god'.²⁶⁰ Furthermore, Haifa was chosen over Alexandretta as the Mediterranean exit point for the British oil pipeline. The Director of Military Operations (DMO), General Sir Charles Callwell, convinced the de Bunsen Committee, formed in April 1915 to evaluate British war objectives in the Middle East, that the path from Alexandretta to Mesopotamia would have to pass via French territory. In some ways, Haifa was almost as excellent, and a railway via British territory might connect it to Mesopotamia. The only problem was that this railway would be unprofitable.²⁶¹

Oil was a major point in the admiralty's defence of Alexandretta. The Cabinet received two documents addressing the issue. One, by the successor of Fisher in May 1915 Admiral Sir Henry Jackson, focused on why the British should set up shop at Alexandretta, a city with a vast natural harbour. With their sights set on Mesopotamia and the Persian oilfields in their grasp, the British knew they'd need a Mediterranean port on the Baghdad Railway. In addition to being a hub for rail and sea travel, the Gulf of Alexandretta was also an important junction in the global transportation network. As of this point, the Baghdad Railway was able to reach the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. As a second-best option, Beirut may work, but only if the railway were extended there. If another nation were to take control of Alexandretta, it would pose a danger to British communications and necessitate the establishment of a fortified base in Cyprus, both of which would be costly endeavours with little chance of financial reward.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Martin Gilbert, "Winston S. Churchill, Companion Vol. 3: Part 1, August 1914 - April 1915," *Parliamentary History* 3, no. 1 (1972): pp. 367–368.

²⁶⁰ NMM, Corbett Papers, 'CBT/7/5, "Official Admiralty Memoranda Written During the War Including Alexandretta and Mesopotamia", "Corbett to Fisher", 17 February 1915'.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² CAB 24/1, 'G15 Alexandretta. Its Importance as a Future Base, H. B. Jackson, 15 March 1915'.

The other was more concerned with Mesopotamia and its geographical connection. Since around 1830, the possibility of a land connection between the Mediterranean and the Euphrates had been studied. The probable demise of the Ottoman Empire, could result in the conquest of Constantinople by the Russians and the British purchase of Lower Mesopotamia, altered the situation. The United Kingdom was entitled to compensation for its participation in the conflict. As a counterbalance to Russia's rising dominance in that crucial area, it would be important to restore Mesopotamia to its previous prosperity and connect it to the Mediterranean. The admiralty had an additional and crucial stake in the region's oil supplies. Russia would have access to Black Sea supplies at Constantinople, thus, Britain must have access to Mesopotamian resources at Alexandretta.²⁶³

3.3. The Mesopotamia Campaign and The Siege of Kut: (See Figure 3)

The War Office in London and the Indian Army in India shared responsibilities for military information and strategy in Asia in 1914. India was in charge of Persia, the Persian Gulf, and Basra. The rest of Mesopotamia was located within the WO area, although it received little attention.²⁶⁴ As it appeared more apparent that the Ottoman Empire would join the war on the side of Germany, consideration was given to carrying out operations against the empire. The General Staff claimed that Russia would be able to withstand any attack mounted by the Ottoman Empire. An indirect threat to Egypt and the Suez Canal posed by an Arab uprising against Britain was one of the primary concerns in Mesopotamia. Other concerns included a disruption to the Persian oil supplies, the protection of the existing British position in the Persian Gulf, and the possibility that a *Jihad* would lead to a rising on India's Northwest Frontier or possibly even within India itself.²⁶⁵ Britain dispatched soldiers to the Ottoman province of Mesopotamia to safeguard its oil reserves when Turkey joined the war on the central power's side against the allies. If the British were to keep Mesopotamia, they would need to build a railroad to connect it to the Mediterranean, and Alexandretta was one of the most promising possible Mediterranean terminals. In a telegram sent

²⁶³ CAB 24/1, 'G13 Alexandretta and Mesopotamia, Admiralty, 17 March 1915'.

²⁶⁴ J Wedgwood, "Mesopotamia Commission. Report of the Commission Appointed by Act of Parliament to Enquire into the Operations of War in Mesopotamia, together with a Special Report," 1917.

²⁶⁵ F. J. Moberly, *History of the Great War: Based on Official Documents. The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918. Volume II*, pp. 70–74.

to the Indian government on August 13, 1914, the British political resident in the Persian Gulf explained the rising anti-British and anti-Russian sentiment that had prompted this move.²⁶⁶

In addition, Sir Arnold Wilson, India's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, wrote to the Indian government on August 17 to inform that; ‘‘the oil company’s settlement at Abadan nervous of being attacked by the Turks and had asked for the protection a British war ship. ... the Turks had requisitioned the coal at Basra belonging to Euphrates and Tigris Navigation Company (Merssr. Lynch), whereby mail steams were prevented from running.’’ The British Ambassador in Constantinople Sir Louis Mallet (1913-1914) then sent a telegraph to Sir Edward Grey on August 27th, 1914, titled ‘‘Events leading to the Rupture of Relations with Turkey.’’²⁶⁷ Sir Louis Mallet argued in favour of cooperation with an Arab movement led by friendly chiefs such as Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Kuwait. The capture of Baghdad should be the initial move and would be much better than attacking the Dardanelles. Admiral Sir Edmond Slade (1914-1928), the admiralty’s oil expert, agreed, claiming that Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Kuwait were very pro-British and would revolt against the Ottomans at the merest suggestion of British support. This would give Britain control over Mesopotamia, which was known for its enormous grain producing areas as well as its immensely lucrative oilfields, without any trouble at all.²⁶⁸

Both the Ottoman Empire and Germany would suffer a significant setback in the event that Mesopotamia were to be lost. Germany had significant interests in the region and had been attempting to displace Britain and India there in order to further those interests. General Sir Edmund Barrow, who was the Military Secretary to the India Office (1917-1924), was also in favour of cooperating with the Arabs. He believed that this would eliminate any possibility of a jihad and would, as a result, secure India, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. He believed that oil might be used as a pretext for this operation, which is a fascinating inversion of the conventional wisdom that everything in the Middle East revolves around oil. In September 26, he drafted a memo in which he argued in favour of a landing: ‘‘at Mohammerah or at Abadan Island, ostensibly to

²⁶⁶ Arthur J Barker, *The First Iraq War--1914-1918: Britain’s Mesopotamian Campaign* (Enigma Books, 2013), pp. 51–54.

²⁶⁷ F. J. Moberly, *History of the Great War: Based on Official Documents. The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918. Volume II*, pp. 77–78.

²⁶⁸ Title File 3136/1914 Pt 1 ‘‘German War. Situation in Turkish Arabia & Persian Gulf’’: ADM 137/6. Telegram No. 692 from Sir L. Mallet (Constantinople), 4 September 1914.’, 1914, pp. 261–262.

protect the oil' installation, but in reality, to notify the Turks that we mean business and to the Arabs that we were ready to support them.”²⁶⁹

The Imperial General Staff and the government agreed. Lieutenant General Arthur Barrett's 6th Indian Division, consisting of 5,000 troops and 1,400 pack mules, originally intended for deployment in Europe, was ordered from Bombay to Bahrain in mid-October.²⁷⁰ An Indian army division took control of the port of Basra in November 1914. General Sir John Nixon, the British commander, advanced further into Mesopotamia after receiving reinforcements in the form of a second division. Britain hoped that a successful war here would encourage the Arabs to unite against the Turks. One group of soldiers crossed the Euphrates River and headed towards Nasiriya. Major General Charles Townshend led the other, the 6th (Poona) Indian Division (1914-1915), which travelled 100 miles (160 kilometres) down the Tigris to capture the city of Amara on June 4, 1915.²⁷¹

Townshend was tasked with continuing on from Amara to the provincial capital of Baghdad, located some 250 miles (400 kilometres) away. On September 28, 1915, his division marched into Kut after inflicting severe casualties on the Turkish defences. It was just 25 miles (40 kilometres) from Baghdad by mid-November. It was clear that such an operation required more manpower than a single division could provide.²⁷² Townshend's army was already significantly diminished by illness and a shortage of artillery, ammunition, and supplies. Unfortunately, even if he had managed to take Baghdad, he would not have had the resources to keep it. At Ctesiphon, the Turks halted Townshend from 21 to 23 of November 1915. After suffering severe losses, he returned to Kut.²⁷³ According to reported published by the Guardian on December 06, 1915, pointed out that, “during the fighting at Ctesiphon the British casualties were 4,567 officers and men.”²⁷⁴

²⁶⁹ F. J. Moberly, *History of the Great War: Based on Official Documents. The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918. Volume II*, p. 87.

²⁷⁰ Joseph Pomiankowski, *Der Zusammenbruch Des Ottomanischen Reiches: Erinnerungen an Die Türkei Aus Der Zeit Des Weltkrieges* (Akademische Druck-u. Verlag-Anst., 1928). p.105.

²⁷¹ National War Museum, “First World War: Mesopotamia Campaign,” accessed December 14, 2022, <https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/mesopotamia-campaign>.

²⁷² Ron Wilcox, *Battles on the Tigris: The Mesopotamian Campaign of the First World War* (Pen and Sword, 2006), pp.77–78.

²⁷³ Museum, “First World War: Mesopotamia Campaign.”

²⁷⁴ The Manchester Guardian, “British Retreat from Baghdad: Withdrawal Down the Tigris Continued to KUT-EL-AMARA.,” *The Guardian*, December, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258466053/?terms=Kut1915&match=1>.

On November 24, 1915, Lieutenant Henry Gallup, from Royal Field Artillery explain the situation by stating that;

After several hours' fighting the enemy's chief position was carried and occupied by our troops, and we then turned our attention to their left flank, where our people were not getting on well at all and were in fact retiring. It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon that the Turks counter-attacked so strongly. We found afterwards that they had been re-inforced with about 5,000 fresh troops. The 82nd Battery and ourselves were sent forward to try and stop it. I think we managed to do so, for a time anyhow, but it was a very warm time. They then attacked from another quarter and drove our infantry in and we had to limber up and get out as quickly as we could under a most beastly hot fire.²⁷⁵

From December 1915 to April 1916, the 6th Division was besieged by Ottoman troops before ultimately surrendering. Townshend, bowing to Nixon's demands, limited his withdrawal south of Kut on the Tigris.²⁷⁶ The Turks encircled Townshend's camp of 10,000 soldiers and 3,500 camp followers on December 7th. They continued their assaults on the Kut defences throughout the course of several weeks. In addition to the consistent bombardment, this continued to take a toll on the garrison, which barely had enough food and supplies to survive for two and a half months at this point. The defenders eventually died of starvation.²⁷⁷

Besides that, starvation and illness had spread across the Kut garrison by the end of April 1916. Townshend was tasked with opening discussions with the Turks since no relief was in sight. Simultaneously, the garrison began destroying its supply of ammunition and weapons. Since they were running out of food, the remaining members of the division destroyed all of their heavy weapons and explosives on April 29, 1916.²⁷⁸ When Townshend finally gave up, almost 13,000 British and Indian forces were marched into prison and subjected to horrendous mistreatment and hunger. A third would die as a result of illness, hunger, and brutal treatment. One of the British Empire's worst setbacks of the war occurred during this chapter. The British spent the rest of the

²⁷⁵ Museum, "First World War: Mesopotamia Campaign."

²⁷⁶ D. Lloyd-George, "War Memoirs - Volume 1," 1933, pp. 282–283.

²⁷⁷ The British National Archives, "The Mesopotamia Campaign: The Siege of Kut-Al-Amara, Report of the Mesopotamia Commission Catalogue Reference: HO 45/10838/331607," 1915, <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/+https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/firstworldwar/battles/mesopotamia.htm>.

²⁷⁸ Abd al-Razzaq al-Hassani, *Iraq in the Period of Occupation and Mandate*, 1st ed. (Al-Raya Press, 1935), p. 29. [Translated from Arabic].

year reassembling their troops after the Tigris Corps withdrew to Basra.²⁷⁹ The British chaplain Harold Spooner, who was with the garrison in the town of Kut. From December 1915 to April 1916 the British and Indian troops were sieged by the Turkish forces for about 147 days.²⁸⁰ During that time Spooner took a number of photos and wrote diaries. He explained the situation in his dairy written on February 4, 1916, which was archived in the British national archive, under the name *Diary from siege of Kut*. He stated that:

The weather was 'bitterly cold' and Turkish guns were a constant menace. Moreover, the efforts of Anglo-Indian forces under General Aylmer to break the siege were failing. 'We were expecting news of our relief,' ... "Please transmit following message from me to General Townshend. The bravery & endurance with which you and the troops under your command have resisted the attacks of the enemy have excited the admiration of all and I am confident resistance will be maintained until help reaches you in the near future. India thinks of you and your troops all the time."²⁸¹

Many Britons were taken aback when Townshend's force capitulated in late April 1916; up until that point, the Mesopotamia war had seemed like a distant and ultimately victorious undertaking. Despite Kitchener's quick response to preserve the honour of the British and Indian men at Kut-al-Amara, the truth remained that the allies had suffered yet another loss at the hands of the hated Turks, after the humiliating withdrawal at Gallipoli. While a parliamentary commission of investigation examining operations in Mesopotamia was established in London as a result of the fall of Kut-al-Amara, even more dreadful consequences were taking place on the ground. During the march to Turkish prisoner-of-war camps in Anatolia, captured British and Indian troops were subjected to cruel treatment. Out of the 11,800 soldiers taken from Kut-al-Amara on May 6, 1916, 4,250 did not make it to the prison camps where they were held.²⁸²

Despite the heavy losses that British and Indian troops had in this siege, but it has to be said the House of Common's attitude to this defeat was in a positive manner toward the efforts that their

²⁷⁹ Kappelmann, *Parallel Campaigns: The British in Mesopotamia, 1914-1920 and the United States in Iraq, 2003-2004*, 30.

²⁸⁰ Ali Mohammed Qader Mahmada, "The British Economic Interests in Mesopotamia 1914-1918: A Study of Securing Oil, Trade, and Commercial Path," *Modern Economy* 15, no. 03 (2024): p. 285.

²⁸¹ The British National, "Archives, 'The Mesopotamia Campaign: The Siege of Kut-Al-Amara, Diary from Siege of Kut, IWM 76/115/1,'" 1916.

²⁸² The British National Archives, "The Mesopotamia Campaign: The Siege of Kut-Al-Amara, Diary from Siege of Kut, Brutal Treatment," 1916; Priya Satia, "Developing Iraq: Britain, India and the Redemption of Empire and Technology in the First World War," *Past and Present* 197, no. 1 (2007): 211–255, doi:10.1093/pastj/gtm008.

troops had given in the campaign so far. As it was clear after the fall of Kut in 4th of May 1916 Lord Kitchener gave a speech in the House of Common by saying that; I recognize the importance of the position maintained by General Townshend and his forces at Kut-el-Amara. When it came to defending that area, his preparations were so thorough and effective that the adversary had little chance of succeeding. There were around 2,970 British soldiers and about 6,000 Indian soldiers and their followers stationed there. General Townshend's last telegram from Kut stated as follows; "We are pleased to know that we have done our duty and recognise that our situation is one of the fortunes of war. We thank you and General Gorrige and all ranks of the Tigris force for the great efforts you have made to save us."²⁸³

An example of the effect of the Islamic religion on the motivation of Indian Muslim troops is clearly addressed in David Omissi's book, *Indian Voices of the Great War: soldiers' letters, 1914–1918*, stated that,

In February 1916, the 15th Lancers were ordered to march from Basra to front. Most of the regiment refused, owing to their very strong religious objections to fighting the Turks near the Holy Places of Karbala, Najaf and Baghdad. All 429 men involved in the mutiny were punished, most receiving long sentences of transportation to the Andaman Islands.²⁸⁴

At the outbreak of the Great War the British decision makers decided to send the Indian Muslim troops to the western front, while the non-Muslims to the Eastern front. In this case the Indian soldiers would be more loyal to the British authorities. However, because of the British defeat at the Kut Al-Amara it was decided to send the Indian Muslim troops to Mesopotamia from France. A letter was written in Urdu by Ashraf Ali Khan the 6th Cavalry in Sialkot, on March 24, 1916, to Signalling Instructor Dafadar Fateh Mahomed Khan. In his letter, Khan mentioned the presence of the depot of the 15th Lancers in their location, detailing their journey from France to Basra. In one instance, the entire 15th Lancers regiment took an oath not to fight Muslims. They swore this oath by placing the Qu'ran on their heads, but a jemadar told their commanding officer. They refused to fight their Muslim brothers. Consequently, the remaining 429 non-commissioned officers and troopers were arrested and punished. Three Kot Dafadars received life in prison, while

²⁸³ The British National Archives, "The Mesopotamia Campaign: The Siege of Kut-Al-Amara, Diary from Siege of Kut, Kitchener's Speech on Fall of Kut Catalogue Reference: 30/57/71" (London, 1916).

²⁸⁴ David Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War: Soldiers' Letters, 1914–18* (Springer, 2016), pp. 159–160.

others received 15 years. Senior privates received seven years of transportation. Sixty draft recruits were imprisoned for three years in Bombay.²⁸⁵

In spite of the crushing defeat at Kut-al-Amara, the British position in Mesopotamia was by no means in a hopeless state. In December of 1916, the British and Indian troops, totalling 150,000 men, had strengthened their troop divisions and appointed General F. S. Maude as their new head. In February of 1917, the Ottomans' lines of communication with Baghdad were successfully severed by the British and Indian forces, and Kut-al-Amara was retaken on February 24 of the same year.²⁸⁶ Furthermore, the Ottoman defence was able to leave the field before the trap shut, unlike the six Division.²⁸⁷ These troops continued their advance north until they captured Baghdad on 11 March 1917. At his arrival Lieut.-General Sir Stanley Maude gave a speech to the people of Baghdad, the declaration includes mention to the King of Hedjaz and other Arab monarchs;

Our military operations have as their object the defeat of the enemy, and the driving of him from these territories. In order to complete this task, I am charged with absolute and supreme control of all regions in which British troops operate; but our armies do not come into your cities and lands as conquerors or enemies, but as liberators. ... It is the wish not only of my King and his peoples, but it is also the wish of the great nations with whom he is in alliance, that you should prosper even as in the past, when your lands were fertile, when your ancestors gave to the world literature, science, and art, and when Baghdad city was one of the wonders of the world. Between your people and the dominions of my King there has been a close bond of interest. For 200 years have the merchants of Baghdad and Great Britain traded together in mutual profit and friend-ship. On the other hand, the Germans and Turks, who have despoiled you and yours, have for 20 years made Baghdad a centre of power from which to assail the power of the British and the Allies of the British in Persia and Arabia. Therefore, the British Government cannot remain indifferent as to what takes place in your country now or in the future, for in duty to the interests of the British people and their Allies, the British Government cannot risk that being done in Baghdad again which has been done by the Turks and Germans during the war.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁵ Omissi, pp. 167–168.

²⁸⁶ F. J. Moberly, *History of the Great War: Based on Official Documents. The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918. Volume II*, pp. 272–273.

²⁸⁷ Alexander H Joffe, “Charles Townshend, Desert Hell: The British Invasion of Mesopotamia” (Springer, 2012). pp. 342-343.

²⁸⁸ Ltd. Hayman, Christy & Lilly, *The King of Hedjaz and Arab Independence: With A Facsimile of The Proclamation of June 27, 1916. Together with the Proclamation Issued at Baghdad by Lieut. - General Sir Stanley Maude, after the Occupation of That City by the British Forces* (London, 1917), pp. 12–13.

The way had been paved for an advance into northern Mesopotamia, which would eventually lead to Anatolia, the very centre of the Ottoman empire. When the war with Turkey was finally over on October 30th, 1918, British troops in Mesopotamia had advanced all the way up to the north and had taken control of the oil-rich area of Mosul on the 3rd of November. More than 31,000 officers and soldiers from the British and Indian forces had perished in action or through sickness during the four years of warfare in the area.²⁸⁹

Kurds and the Campaign:

At the onset of the Great War, ethnic minorities residing in the Ottoman Empire were confronted with a difficult decision. A significant number of individuals had harboured a longstanding aspiration to emancipate themselves from Ottoman governance, and the rising appeal of Turkish nationalism posed a risk to the distinctiveness and self-governance of non-Turkish ethnic communities residing within the Empire's boundaries. The war, along with the abrupt arrival of British, French, and Russian soldiers, presented an opportunity to undermine the Ottoman authority and establish a more advantageous position at the conclusion of the struggle. The prospect of achieving autonomy under the protection of a new imperial authority was alluring. The Kurdish population residing in Mesopotamia encountered a predicament as the British Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force made progress in the region that was once under Ottoman control. The War Diaries of this army provide valuable insights on the British military's efforts to recruit Kurdish troops for their war campaign, as well as the aspirations of Kurdish leaders to utilise British imperial expansion for their own objectives. These documents also demonstrate the Kurdish objectives after the war, and their subsequent shift from being an ally to being a catalyst for rebellion in British-occupied Iraq.²⁹⁰

During the war, the British soldiers gathered data on the Kurds of Mesopotamia with the primary objective of evaluating their potential as partners in the fight against the Ottoman Empire. Lieutenant G. S. Reed provided a comprehensive account whereby he highlighted the absence of

²⁸⁹ The British National Archives, "The Mesopotamia Campaign: The Siege of Kut-Al-Amara, Diary from Siege of Kut, Renewed Success," 1917.

²⁹⁰ Dan McKee, "Anglo-Kurdish Relations During the Mesopotamia Campaign (1914-1918)," Qatar Digital Library, 2022, <https://www.qdl.qa/en/anglo-kurdish-relations-during-mesopotamia-campaign-1914-1918>.

positive sentiments among the Kurds of Hakkari towards the Ottoman Government.²⁹¹ Additionally, he underscored their historical cohabitation with Christian minority groups. The British archives also document instances when Kurdish forces made efforts to hinder the Ottoman war effort. For instance, in June 1916, the 'Kizil Bash [Qizilbash] Kurds' conducted attacks against Turkish lines of communication.²⁹² Furthermore, Britain had a vested interest in the strained ties between the Kurdish population and Russia. The term 'punitive measures' deployed by Russian troops in conquered territories is referred to euphemistically as such in The War Diaries. These papers elucidate the challenges that an occupying army may encounter as a result of strained relations with indigenous minority groups, so urging British commanders to contemplate the benefits of fostering stronger collaborations with Kurds who oppose the Ottoman regime.²⁹³ The inclusion of Mesopotamian Kurds into the nascent colonial government was contemplated by British authorities. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf proposed the inclusion of Kurds in the Basra police force in September 1915. According to his argument, this will address the current scarcity of workers and decrease the need of transporting police officers from India. As early as 1915, British authorities were modifying their occupation in order to capitalise on indigenous resources and manpower, with the Kurds being among the minority groups seen more inclined to collaborate.²⁹⁴ The British Directorate of forces Intelligence sent envoys to several Kurdish factions in Mesopotamia in order to assess their inclination to provide support in countering the Ottoman forces. British archives indicate that several Kurds shown a predilection for British governance over the French option, owing to France's longstanding role as a guardian of Christian populations in the Middle East.²⁹⁵

²⁹¹ "'War Diary. Army Headquarters, India. [...] B.E.F. "D". Volume 40. PART I. (From 1st to 15th November 1917.)' [161r] (330/544), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/MIL/17/5/3287, in Qatar Digital Library <<https://www.qdl.qa/Arch>> (n.d.).

²⁹² 'War Diary. Army Headquarters, India. [...] B.E.F. "D". Volume 23 PART II (From 16th to 30th June 1916)' [48r] (100/274), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/MIL/17/5/3255, in Qatar Digital Library <<https://www.qdl.qa/Archive/8105>, n.d., https://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100131646849.0x000065.

²⁹³ 'War Diary. Army Headquarters, India. [...] B.E.F. "D". Volume 22. PART II. (From 16th to 31st May 1916.)' [86r] (176/246), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/MIL/17/5/3253, in Qatar Digital Library <<https://www.qdl.qa/En/Archi>, n.d.

²⁹⁴ 'War Diary. Army Headquarters, India. [...] B.E.F. "D". Volume 14. PART II. (From 16th to 30th September 1915.)' [91r] (186/276), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/MIL/17/5/3237, in Qatar Digital Library, n.d., 199, https://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100132734283.0x0000bb.

²⁹⁵ 'War Diary. Army Headquarters, India. [...] B.E.F. "D". Volume 52. PART II. (From 16th to 30th November 1918.)' [50r] (108/558), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/MIL/17/5/3312, in Qatar Digital Library <<https://www.qdl.qa/Arc>, n.d.

The Local Attitude to the British Campaign:

Before the outbreak of the Great War the Iraqi Arabs' political interest was independent within the Ottoman Empire. Arabs and Kurds dreamed of their autonomy and suffered from the harsh Ottoman policy. Thus, when the British Campaign entered Basra vilayet on November 6, 1914, a number of Iraqi Arabs were in favour of supporting British troops against the Ottoman existence. Those such as the Basra Merchants had a very good relationship and commercial ties to British and Indian Merchants. While some other were religiously tied to the Ottomans and consider the British as infidels.²⁹⁶ According to Abdulla the Arabic historian the British plan in Mesopotamia was only to occupy the Basra Vilayet, but its forces' success in occupying Basra changed their plan and they progressed towards occupying Baghdad in accordance with policy considerations when they found the situation in Iran calming. The removal of the Ottomans from the military rally in Mesopotamia affected the British occupiers. In addition, Britain's status in India was strengthened by making it difficult for the Ottomans to communicate with Afghanistan and inciting its border tribes with India to revolt against it.²⁹⁷ The Arabs and Kurds were different nations, but their goal of freedom from the Ottomans was the same.

Moreover, Ali Al-Wardi stated that, the British occupation used rumours and lies, as a preponderant weapon among the inhabitants of cities and clans through their spies. The British spies were successful in persuading Arabs (Iraqi) people that the Turks were defeated and that the victory is for the British troops. Those rumours and myths circulated that the power of the British, their wondrous sciences, their weapons and their unlimited wealth would defeat the Turks and crush them and liberate Arab from them, and these rumours found popularity and acceptance among the inhabitants. This can clearly be seen specially after they found the promises of liberation, progress and prosperity that accompanied every step of the progress of the British occupation army, compared to the clash and hatred that existed between the Ottomans and the Arabs during the great war.²⁹⁸ Despite the tendency of Arabs to the Ottomans by virtue of the

²⁹⁶ Judith S. Yaphe, 'The View from Basra: Southern Iraq's Reaction to War and Occupation, 1915-1925', in *The Creation of Iraq, 1914-1921*, ed. and Gary Sick. Simon, Reeva Spector, Eleanor H. Tejirian (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

²⁹⁷ Abdullah al-Fayyad, *Great Iraqi Revolution 1920* (Baghdad: Al-Rashad Press, 1963); John Morrow, *The Great War: An Imperial History* (Routledge, 2016).

²⁹⁸ Ali Al-Wardi, *Social Glimpses from the Modern History of Iraq*, 2nd ed. (Al-Rashid, 2005). pp. 177-193 [Translated from Arabic].

religious passion of most of the Iraqi people who were affected by the speeches of prominent politicians and clerics, but during the period of the war between two worlds, the Ottoman occupation authorities brutalized the city of Hilla, south of Baghdad, in what is known as (the first and second incident of Akef). During which large numbers of citizens were killed.²⁹⁹ Overall, the Arab people suffered a lot from Ottomans for centuries, because of heavy taxes and mistreatment. Therefore, they were waiting for this opportunity to revenge from the Ottomans. For example, in 1915 when the British army passed Kut to Ctesiphon the Arab people harassed the Ottoman communications.³⁰⁰

3.4. The Gallipoli Campaign 1915-1916:

By the end of 1914, the situation on the Western Front had reached a stalemate, the majority of German battleships operating outside of European seas had been sunk, and Russian offensives on Germany had been unsuccessful. After the western front was sealed off from Germany's advances, the focus of British attention shifted to the possibility of utilizing Britain's naval force to win the war via operations in other parts of the globe. This was especially the case after the western front. It was recommended that operations should take place in the Baltic and the Balkans, as well as landings in Syria. The choice that was made was to make an effort to force the Dardanelles.³⁰¹ The Secretary of the War Cabinet, Colonel Sir Maurice Hankey (1877–1963), believed that opening Dardanelles would allow Russia to acquire the munitions needed to mount an attack.³⁰² Potentially, the Balkan nations would join the Allies and opened a communication route along the Danube. The possibility of food shortages in Britain would disappear if Russian wheat shipments were to arrive. Russia might use the money from these to buy war supplies and pay back the interest on its borrowing from France. Without mentioning it, Hankey overlooked the fact that Britain might gain cash and a new supply source if Russian oil was shipped via the Dardanelles. In 1913, Russia exported 670,000 tons, or 12.7 percent of its entire output of 8,370,000 tons. Of this, Britain imported 130,000 tons, or 7.7 percent of its requirements. Two pipelines, one from Baku to Batum

²⁹⁹ Paul Collins and Charles Tripp, *Gertrude Bell and Iraq: A Life and Legacy* (Oxford University Press Oxford, 2017), pp. 97–98.

³⁰⁰ “Iraq and the Persian Gulf”, British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/MIL/17/15/64, in Qatar Digital Library” (n.d.), 271, https://www.qdl.qa/archive/81055/vdc_100000000239.0x000178.

³⁰¹ CAB 24/1, ‘G6 The Dardanelles and Balkans Operations, A. J. Balfour, 24 February 1915’.

³⁰² Jonathan Quentin Calvin Newell, “British Military Policy in Egypt and Palestine: August 1914 - June 1917” (University of London, 1990), p. 51, [//efaidnbmnnnibpcajpegclclefindmkaj/https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/2931982/342741.pdf](https://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpegclclefindmkaj/https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/2931982/342741.pdf).

and another from Maikop to Tuapse, carried Russian oil to Black Sea ports. The oil deposits in Persia and Mesopotamia were not highlighted as a motivation for the activities.³⁰³

For the purpose of reinforcing the eastern front of the war, Winston Churchill devised a strategy for the Gallipoli Campaign in September 1914 to defend British soldiers stationed in the Middle East as well as to control the sea passage from Europe to Russia. It seemed like Churchill planned to use the largest navy of the day to force his way through the Straits of the Dardanelles and seize Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. To connect with Russia was the stated official reason. It may release some of the strain on Russia, an ally of Britain. Additionally, it may allow supplies to reach Russia across the Black Sea, thereby ending Turkey's participation in the conflict.³⁰⁴ The Allies felt it was time to start the Gallipoli war after the Russian Grand Duke Nicholas (1894-1917) requested their assistance in order to stave off the Ottoman assault in the Caucasus. The British troops thought that they would be able to effectively terminate the campaign with only a single naval strike by British and French vessels.³⁰⁵ On April 25, 1915, the British government intended to deploy an army of 80,000 at Gallipoli with the expectation that they could "walk to Constantinople" Although Middle East oil resources were presumably the strategic target. Churchill switched to a land-based strategy when the combined British and French warships were forced to evacuate on 18 March 1915, having lost a third of its major battleships.³⁰⁶

Alan Moorhead pointed out that many people died from both sides. The British had lost 42,000, the French 14,000 and the Ottoman 56,000. The number of wounded were high than the dead of the mentioning powers. Moreover, the number of troops deployed was 420,000 on the British side, 79,000 on the French side, and 310,000 on the Ottoman side at peak.³⁰⁷ the assault of Gallipoli failed to make any progress into Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. The Allies never ran out of oil throughout the war, whereas the Central Powers struggled to keep up with demand. The number of automobiles and trucks used by the British Army almost multiplied by a factor of a thousand

³⁰³ CAB 24/59, G.T. 5267 'Petroleum Situation in the British Empire', E. J. W. Slade, 29 July 1918, pp. 2-3.

³⁰⁴ Basarin, "Oil: The Underlying Reason for Gallipoli."

³⁰⁵ Department of Veterans' Affairs, "Dardanelles Strategy and Naval Operations 1914 to 1915," Anzac Portal, 2022, <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/ww1/where-australians-served/gallipoli/dardanelles-strategy>.

³⁰⁶ Basarin, "Oil: The Underlying Reason for Gallipoli."

³⁰⁷ Alan Moorhead, *Gallipoli*, Wordsworth Edition, London, 1998, p. 336; Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge – London, 2011, p. 139; Henry Laurens, *Les crises d'Orient II. La naissance du Moyen-Orient 1919-1949*, Fayard, Paris, 2019, p. 48.

throughout the war, while the number of motorcycles increased by a factor of two thousand. Lord Curzon, a high-ranking British politician, even said that the oil supply was the reason the Allies were able to win. After being forced to retire from Gallipoli, the British government made the decision to push on in the Middle East with the assistance of the Australian Light Horse and the New Zealander Mounted Division in order to reach the oil fields.³⁰⁸ Australia and New Zealand have utilized the qualities of their soldiers—perseverance, drive, innovation to identify themselves ever since Gallipoli. This period of stability provided the Ottomans with a little reprieve while their empire crumbled. Modern Turkey was established in part because of the prominence of Mustafa Kemal (after known as Atatürk) during the struggle.³⁰⁹

In addition, the campaign served as the catalyst for a national renewal in Turkey. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Ottoman hero of Gallipoli, went on to form the Turkish Republic. The events at Gallipoli contributed to the growing feeling of national identity in New Zealand and Australia. Those back home were pleased with how their guys had represented them internationally, earning a name for themselves as fierce fighters against the odds. It was from this sense of national pride that Anzac Day originated. Since its first commemoration on April 25, 1916, the day of the landing has become an integral part of New Zealand society, serving as a moment to honour the sacrifices of all New Zealanders, not just those who perished at Gallipoli.³¹⁰

3.5. The British Campaign in Sinai and Palestine:

Egypt was overwhelmed by British and colonial troops in September 1914. The East Lancashire Territorial Division, ordered to release the professional army in Egypt for the western front, arrived first in late September.³¹¹ Bombay's Indian Expeditionary Force arrived in Egypt at the end of October and was assigned in the Suez Canal Zone. The first 30,000 Anzacs arrived at Alexandria, Egypt, in early December. Thousands more reinforcements arrived in subsequent weeks and months. The railways connecting Alexandria and Cairo were jammed with military trains carrying

³⁰⁸ Basarin, "Oil: The Underlying Reason for Gallipoli."

³⁰⁹ The Manchester Guardian, "Lancashire Territorials' Gallantry in Gallipoli," *The Guardian Newspaper*, September 4, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258443738/?terms=Gallipoli&match=1>.

³¹⁰ New Zealand History, "The Gallipoli Campaign: Gallipoli in Brief," NA History, 2022, <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/the-gallipoli-campaign/gallipoli-in-brief>.

³¹¹ Newell, "British Military Policy in Egypt and Palestine: August 1914 - June 1917," p. 43.

troops and horses to Cairo. The Australian Infantry settled near the Pyramids at Mena, the Australian Light Horse in Maadi, and the New Zealanders in Zeitoun Camp near Heliopolis.³¹²

The advent of imperial soldiers helped to ease tensions in Egypt. The Ottoman declaration of war and the caliph's call for jihad, the severing of Egypt's centuries-old ties to the Ottoman Empire, the deposition of Ottoman viceroy Khedive Abbas II (1874-1944), and the accession of Sultan Hussein Kamil (Sultan of Egypt from December 19, 1914, to October 9, 1917), under British protection, all shook Egypt's political foundations to their core. After almost thirty-two years of British rule, the Egyptian populace saw Germany as a potential saviour and hoped for their arrival. German successes over British troops on the western front, such as the Battle of Mons in Belgium (23–24 August 1914), further bolstered these expectations. The British government anticipated subversion by German and Turkish agents, uprising by Egyptian nationalists, and religious unrest by "excitable" masses.³¹³

The rapid appearance of tens of thousands of foreign troops persuaded the Egyptian populace that the British position in Egypt was untenable. The Anzac training camps surrounding Cairo with tens of thousands of cavalries and infantrymen engaging in training and manoeuvres in the desert. The British officials ordered the freshly arriving troops to march through the centre of Cairo in order to impress the locals, who may not have seen the men practicing in their suburban camps. "We had a great march through the winding streets of Cairo some days ago," A cavalryman named Gordon Harper, who was stationed in Canterbury, New Zealand, wrote a letter to his family back home. "We penetrated all the old Cairo native quarters through miles of alleys and slums and variegated stinks." Harper knew that the parade was important from a political point of view,

The idea was to impress the natives who simply swarm here, with our strength, as they still have a traditional and spiritual connection with the Turks. ... The effect was very interesting. The route was packed with fezzed men and veiled women who watched us closely without the semblance of a smile or a cheer, but every indication is that they are petrified with British rule.³¹⁴

³¹² Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 109.

³¹³ William Thomas Massey, *The Desert Campaigns* (GP Putnum's sons, 1918), pp. 1–3.

³¹⁴ Kate Hunter, "Glyn Harper (Ed.). Letters from Gallipoli: New Zealand Soldiers Write Home," *The Journal of New Zealand Studies*, no. 10 (2011): pp. 47–48.

From the early days of the great war, Egypt and its defence played an insignificant role in British strategy. It was Winston Churchill, who "raised the question of bringing Indian troops to Egypt" at the very first meeting in London of the War Council on 3 August 1914. This was a committee hastily assembled by Prime Minister Asquith (5 April 1908 - 5 December 1916) to discuss the major policy of the war. Secretary of War Lord Kitchener (5 August 1914 - 5 June 1916) claimed that one division might be moved from India to Egypt immediately to garrison the country.³¹⁵ Kitchener expanded on this point the next day, arguing that the British regular garrisons in Egypt, Malta, and Gibraltar (adding up to around eleven battalions) should be relieved by the soldiers under command to depart from India. Consequently, Egypt had already lost almost all of its original garrison even before the first battles of the fight were being fought in Europe. Kitchener planned to use these men as reinforcements in France if necessary, and his decision to send troops of the Indian army to Egypt was consequential because it quickly established the idea in the minds of decision-makers in London that Egypt should serve as a sort of launching pad from which soldiers were prepared for front-line duties in Europe and elsewhere.³¹⁶

The position of Egypt was so important for Britain not just in term of economic and commercial prospective but also for becoming an effective station for their troops for the Middle Eastern Campaign whether for Gallipoli or for the Palestine Campaign. The above mentioning military actions taken by Britain at the eve of the war shows the significance of Middle East for Britain. Hence, British leadership's recognition of Palestine's significance before, during, and after the Great War. The context in which the Haifa Port was built. Britain's actions and judgments towards the Muslim World were primarily guided by its imperial mindset. Britain was eager to establish a strong foothold in the Arab provinces in the face of the Ottoman Empire's fall and the rising aspirations of European Powers, notably Russia and France. Britain's geopolitical and commercial interests were served by establishing a presence in Palestine, in part because of the port of Haifa. Palestine's strategic importance to Britain as a buffer zone for the Suez Canal and an integral part of the land route to India was widely accepted.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ "War Council Meeting 5 Aug. 1914, CAB 42/1/2.," 1914.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Jenkins, "Economic Equality and the Mandates Commission."

For what reason did Britain need a safe passageway? As the fate of the Ottoman Empire's Arab provinces hung in the balance, the British government deliberated on its course of action.³¹⁸ They had promised to reassess the condition of the British after the war and had proclaimed Egypt, which had been invaded in 1882, a British protectorate after they had done so.³¹⁹ Concerns were raised in Britain over the safety of the Suez Canal if it were to come under the control of another European state and Palestine was subsequently seized.³²⁰ Secret wartime agreements for the division of Europe's sick man were made in Britain's best interest. Controlling territory in the Middle East was a concern for Mark Sykes, the director of the War Offices of the Middle Eastern Department, in April 1915. He proposed either having the different allies acquire the non-Turkish regions of the Ottoman Empire or keeping it intact but dividing it into regions according to economic and political interests. In any case, according to Sykes, Britain should take control of Mesopotamia as well as the region extending from Egypt in the south to Haifa in the north.³²¹

The British representative, Sir Milne Cheetham (December 1914–January 1915), had his title changed from Consul-General to the British High Commissioner of Egypt, a move that was less revolutionary than the title itself might imply give that Cheetham continued to serve in this capacity until he was succeeded by Sir Henry McMahon on January 9, 1915. Nonetheless, General Maxwell (1914–1916), the British commander in Egypt, had a huge responsibility on his shoulders, since he had to deal with Egypt's defence against foreign attack, security against internal disturbance, and various civic concerns. In fact, Cheetham recognized the risks involved: “While recognising the advantages of single control, experience leads me to believe that either civilian or military work here fully occupies the time of one man.”³²² In 1915, Ottoman armies attacked the British protectorate of Egypt, threatening the Suez Canal. Fighting continued around Suez and Sinai (northeast Egypt) until British forces went on the offensive in mid-1916, clearing Sinai and

³¹⁸ Elie Kedourie, “Britain, France, and the Last Phase of the Eastern Question,” *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 29, no. 3 (1969): pp. 189–197.

³¹⁹ Frederick Maurice, ‘British Policy in the Mediterranean’, *Foreign Affairs*. 5 (1926): p. 108.

³²⁰ Bernard Wasserstein, “The British in Palestine: The Mandatory Government and the Arab–Jewish Conflict (London: Royal Historical Society, 1978); Idem,” *Herbert Samuel: A Political Life*, 1978, p. 7.

³²¹ Elie Kedourie, ‘Sir Mark Sykes and Palestine 1915–16’, *Middle Eastern Studies* 6, no. 3 (1970): pp. 340–345.

³²² “Cheetham to Foreign Office, 20 Nov. 1914, F.O. 800/48.,” 1914; The Manchester Guardian, “East Lancashires in Dardanelles: The Alexandra Home,” *The Guardian Newspaper*, November, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258458798/>.

launching a counter invasion into Ottoman-controlled Palestine in 1917.³²³ With the war's development and Allenby's march into Palestine in December 1917, which changed the picture of the Middle East.³²⁴ The fall of Jerusalem "underlined the preeminent position of Britain" in the Middle East and the Mediterranean after Britain became the de facto ruler of Palestine when the city was taken by the British forces.³²⁵ The British Foreign Secretary informed France in October 1917 that the 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement needed to be drastically modified in the light of Russia's loss and the United States' entrance into the War.³²⁶ The Sykes-Picot Agreement was rejected by the British government's eastern specialists, who also determined by 1918 to progressively withdraw from its terms.³²⁷ Britain re-evaluated its imperial objectives in the Middle East after Germany was defeated. Britain was resolved not to give its economic and imperial competitor, France, any room to grow and threaten its dominance in the area.³²⁸ Britain pursued renegotiations as part of a wider peace settlement despite its military importance in order to prevent future conflicts. France fought Britain's efforts to keep her "out of the Arab lands" and argued that the Sykes-Picot Agreement was still in effect.³²⁹

Regardless of its stance on agreements made during times of conflict, when Britain took control of the Middle East, the subject of what would happen to these regions was raised.³³⁰ Following the war, the British government determined that Britain should have ultimate authority over Palestine and that it "must not fall into French hands."³³¹ There was "very little France could do to get between Britain" and the regions it controlled, as Edward Said correctly points out, since Britain stood in France's way in the Orient (extending from India to the Mediterranean).³³² Furthermore,

³²³ The Manchester Guardian, "The War: The Capture of Gaza," *The Guardian Newspaper*, November 1917, 4, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258476082/?terms=1917&match=1>.

³²⁴ Quincy Wright, "Mandates under the League of Nations," *International Journal of Ethics* 42, no. 1 (1931): p. 43.

³²⁵ Rory Miller, *Britain, Palestine and Empire: The Mandate Years* (Ashgate Farnham and Surrey, 2010), p. 7.

³²⁶ Jan Karl Tanenbaum, 'France and the Arab Middle East, 1914-1920', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 68, no. 7 (1978): p. 22.

³²⁷ Timothy J Paris, "British Middle East Policy-Making after the First World War: The Lawrentian and Wilsonian Schools," *The Historical Journal* 41, no. 3 (1998): p. 775.

³²⁸ Paul C Helmreich, "Italy and the Anglo-French Repudiation of the 1917 St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement," *The Journal of Modern History* 48, no. S2 (1976): p. 101.

³²⁹ Erik Goldstein, 'British Peace Aims and the Eastern Question: The Political Intelligence Department and the Eastern Committee, 1918', *Middle Eastern Studies* 23, no. 4 (1987): p. 424.

³³⁰ Susan Pedersen, "The Meaning of the Mandates System: An Argument," *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft*, 2006, p. 560.

³³¹ Dan Z Gillon, "The Antecedents of the Balfour Declaration," *Middle Eastern Studies* 5, no. 2 (1969): p. 137.

³³² Edward Said, *Introduction to Orientalism*, First edit (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 217.

South African politician and War Cabinet member General Jan Smuts said that, in combination with Mesopotamia, Palestine would provide Britain with a land passage to India and would "bring together the British empire of Africa and Asia."³³³

Britain Between Sharif Hussein and His Ally France:

British elites worried about Islamic support once the Ottomans joined the war. The Ottoman sultan against the Entente might spark instability along Britain's imperial path to India and inside India. British authorities wanted a Muslim dignitary to collaborate with the Entente and undermine the Ottoman sultan's reputation. Caliph's Sharif Hussein ibn Ali, the Amir of Mecca, was such a man. Much of the post–Great War Eastern Mediterranean history has focused on interpretations of Britain's pledges to Sharif Hussein, thus it's crucial to understand their growth, context, and consequences.³³⁴ The Ottoman Empire's most distinguished Arab-Islamic rank was Amir of Mecca. Holder guarded Mecca and Medina. The Ottoman governor of the Hijaz oversaw administrative matters and military security in the area, while the Amir of Mecca maintained the sanctity of the two holy cities and oversaw the yearly pilgrimage. The Amir of Mecca was chosen from families claiming direct lineage from the Prophet Mohammed, earning him the title sharif. Hussein Ibn Ali (1855-1931), a from Hashemite dynasty became Amir in 1908 under Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909) rule. Hussein, who distrusted the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) for political and religious reasons, spent his first years in power building tribal coalitions to gain autonomy from Istanbul. He wanted enough influence to make Amir of Mecca a family title. The great war brought these customary, restricted goals to international diplomacy.³³⁵

When it became obvious that the Gallipoli landings had been unsuccessful, British governor of Egypt Sir Henry McMahon addressed Hussein in private. Egyptians, who are mostly Muslim Arabs, were the closest and most receptive audience for the sultan's call to jihad because of the war's devastating effects on the country's economy. Midway through 1915, McMahon and his advisors were concerned that a Turkish assault on the Suez Canal may start an Arab insurrection

³³³ Sahar Huneidi, *Broken Trust: Herbert Samuel, Zionism and the Palestinians 1920-1925*, *Middle East Journal* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2001), p. 5.

³³⁴ Bilal Tahir, "The Hashimites and the Great Arab Revolt: The Promise and Betrayal of Arabia," *The Review of Religions*, 2020, <https://www.reviewofreligions.org/24721/hashimite-arab-revolt/>.

³³⁵ William L and Martin Bunton Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 6th ed. (New York: Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2017), p. 207.

against them. McMahon didn't give the sharif much credence at first, despite his demands that Britain back Hussein's claim to an empire that included not only the Arabian Peninsula but also Syria, Mesopotamia, and Palestine.³³⁶ While he saw the benefits of being forthright, he also saw the risks: siding with the Arabs over the French might endanger the Entente, and if Hussein were insulted, the Arabs may put their weight behind the Ottoman's *jihad*.³³⁷ In an earlier draft, he had said that Britain could only recognize Hussein's claim to portions of Syria inasmuch as England is free to act without injury to the interests of her friends, one of which being France, but he softened this later. Georges-Picot discovered Hussein's communications with the British. On his return to Paris, he issued new instructions for the French ambassador in London, Paul Cambon (1898-1920), designating himself as Cambon's negotiator and instructing him to press for a Syrian territory that included Palestine and extended from Egypt to Mosul in the east. British diplomats were left dumbfounded by his chauvinism and the conference ended without a deal being reached.³³⁸

In a meeting with French Prime Minister Aristide Briand (1915–1917), French diplomat François Georges-Picot (1870–1951) said that despite Britain's hopes for a new construction, the structures they were erecting were unlikely to survive the war. “With this you will be in a significantly better position to the one we are in, in Egypt. What more could you want, exactly?” “You can feel the importance of this location. “Georges-Picot said, “that's precisely why you want it for the Sharif of Mecca.” He would not yield any more ground.” You are squandering time that is valuable, as we both understand. The second meeting also concluded without a solution.³³⁹ At this stage of negotiation between British and French Diplomates they were too worried about any attempts from their enemy Germany to consider the demands of Sharif Hussein as it can be clearly seen from the British high commissioner in Cairo, who tersely warned London in a telegram on October 18, 1915, that “the Arab party are at [a] parting of the ways” and that he therefore needed to raise his offer to Hussein urgently. He continued: ‘unless we can give them immediate assurance of [a] nature to satisfy them, they will throw themselves into the hands of Germany’. On his return to

³³⁶ “McMahon to Husein, 30 Aug. 1915 Husein to McMahon, 9 Sept.,” 1915.

³³⁷ The Manchester Guardian, “Miscellany,” *The Guardian Newspaper*, July 1916, p. 3, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258359845/?terms=the Ottoman%27s jihad&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258359845/?terms=the%20Ottoman%27s%20jihad&match=1).

³³⁸ Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, “The French Colonial Party and French Colonial War Aims, 1914–1918,” 89.

³³⁹ Mark Sykes, *The Caliphs' Last Heritage: A Short History of the Turkish Empire* (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1915), <https://archive.org/details/39020025220453-the-caliphs-lasth/page/n13/mode/2up>.

London, Sykes backed up McMahon. He too felt that the Arabs would side with the Ottoman Turks “in the event of our letting this opportunity go”.

In the meanwhile, British officers in the Middle East were confused between Arabs and France, their friend. Sir Edward Grey was placed in an uncomfortable position by the escalating crisis in Cairo. First Georges-Picot and then Hussein, unbeknownst to one another, asked him to recognize competing claims to overlapping swaths of the Middle East, forcing him to choose between them. He was cautioned by one of his officers that "the position must be clearly understood from both the French and the Arab side from the outset, or we shall be heading straight for serious trouble," but he could also see that candour had its own dangers. On October 20th, Grey dispatched a telegraph to Cairo instructing the high commissioner to be as unclear as possible in his next letter to the Sharif on the northwest corner of the area Hussein claimed, which was in Syria. But significantly, he also left McMahon with discretion in the matter as it is urgent and there is not time to discuss an exact formula . . . if something more precise than this is required you can give it.³⁴⁰ Furthermore, five days later, on October 25, 1915, Henry McMahon sent a letter to Sharif Hussein regarding his proposal of future Arab kingdom's borders, stating that,

It is with great pleasure that I communicate to you on their behalf the following statement, which I am confident you will receive with satisfaction. The districts of MERSINA and ALEXANDRETA and portions of SYRIA lying to the west of the districts of DAMASCUS, HAMA, HOMS and ALEPO cannot be said to be purely Arab and should be excluded from the proposed limit and Boundaries.³⁴¹

Sharif Hussein's goal to integrate all the areas inhabited by Arabs to the future Arab kingdom, but what he has planned was not in favour of British colonial interests. Therefore, British authority by Henry McMahon rejected his request and informed him that all the area located on the seaside would be under British control after the war ends.³⁴² Despite all of those negotiations with French diplomats and Sharif Hussein the British representatives were successful in persuading both sides and approaching their goal in the region which was overthrowing the Ottoman Empire and gaining

³⁴⁰ Cedric James Lowe and M L Dockrill, *Mirage of Power Pt2 V4* (Routledge, 2013), 530; James Barr, *A Line in the Sand: Britain, France and the Struggle That Shaped the Middle East* (Simon and Schuster, 2011), p. 20.

³⁴¹ UK Government (Henry McMahon), “McMahon–Hussein Letter 25 October 1915” (1915), https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bc/McMahon–Hussein_Letter_25_October_1915.jpg.

³⁴² Jonathan Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Bond Street Books, 2010), p. 108.

the strategic Petroleum lands. Several idealistic minds in Cairo, most notably TE Lawrence, gambled on an Arab renaissance that would see the end of Ottoman corruption and the arrival of French-speaking Levantines by emphasizing the authenticity of the Bedouin culture.³⁴³ The Bedouins under the leadership of Hussein's sons, the Hashemite princes, readily submitted to what they perceived to be the "benevolent" rule of the British. London assured them of an Ottoman-free, autonomous "Arabia." French officials had shown an interest in creating a "greater Syria" that was mostly French-speaking, Francophile, and under French rule by expanding the "France of the Levant" into the country's interior.³⁴⁴

After obtaining the support of Britain in a series of letters known as Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, consequently, Hussein led the Arab revolution against the Ottoman rule during the Great War. In June 1916, the British worked hard to encourage the Arab revolt against Germany's ally the Ottoman to weaken the Ottoman power within the empire.³⁴⁵ Moreover, British intelligence officer Thomas Edward Lawrence headed to Arabia and worked with the irregular Arab forces for two consecutive years. Lawrence became a liaison officer and advisor to Faisal, the son of the leader of the revolution, Sharif Hussein bin Ali, in Mecca. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, was a distinguished, tactician and a highly influential theoretician of guerrilla warfare against the Turks. His small irregular forces attacked the Turkish communications and supply routes and prevented the participation of thousands of Turkish troops in the fight against the allied forces under General Edward Allenby. Lawrence's ultimate goal was to help the Arabs achieve the military success that would lead to self-government after the war. In June 1917, Arab forces achieved their first major victory, capturing Aqaba, a strategically important port on the Red Sea. Success continued as they gradually made their way north.³⁴⁶ Furthermore, the revolt successfully reached its goals in defeating the Ottoman troops. In October

³⁴³ Henry Laurens, "Ottoman Empire: The Division of the Spoils," *monde-diplomatique*, 2003, <https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2003/04/LAURENS/10102>.

³⁴⁴ Thomas Edward Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (Cape, 1946), p. 5.

³⁴⁵ Michael D Berdine, *Redrawing the Middle East: Sir Mark Sykes, Imperialism and the Sykes-Picot Agreement*, First; 1; vol. 78;78.; (London;New York; Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018), 54–55, doi:10.5040/9781350987746.

³⁴⁶ Walid Badran, "Sharif Hussein Bin Ali, Who Abdicated the Throne of the Hijaz, and His Two Sons Sat on the Thrones of Iraq and Jordan." [Translated from Arabic].

1916, Sharif Hussein proclaimed himself the "King of Arabia," although the Allies officially recognized him only as King of the Hijaz.³⁴⁷

How can the borders between British Arabia and French Syria be fixed? Francois Georges-Picot and Mark Sykes, oversee the talks. It went on for a few months, and the balance of power changed during that time. It ended in May 1916 when the French ambassador in London, Paul Cambon, and the secretary at the FO, Edward Gray, wrote each other letters. The French will have direct control over an area from the Syrian coast to Anatolia. Palestine will become an international territory (a de facto Franco-British condominium).³⁴⁸ Moreover, the Mesopotamian province of Basra and a Palestinian enclave around Haifa will be put under direct British control. The independent Arab States given to the Hashemites will be split into two zones of influence and supervision, one in the north given to the French and the other in the south to the British. The so-called Sykes-Picot line, which divides the Arabian Peninsula, should also let the British build a railroad from Baghdad to Haifa. Russians and Italians agree to this deal, but the Hashemites are only told about it in vague and confusing terms.³⁴⁹

3.6. The Sykes-Picot Agreement and Sharing Out the Spoils of Ottoman Empire

3.6.1. The de Bunsen Committee

The de Bunsen Committee was the first official group to be constituted for the purpose of researching the objectives of the British war effort in the Ottoman Empire. The Committee on British Desiderata in Turkish Asia was its official name, but it is more often referred to by the name of its Chairman, Sir Maurice de Bunsen. The report was made on June 30th, 1915. The British desired outcomes had to take into consideration the goals of their allies, some of whom could turn out to be their competitors in the future.³⁵⁰ Prior to the conflict, Britain's goal was to keep the Ottoman Empire intact. Because of its probable extinction, Britain needed to lay a claim for a portion of it in order to defend the interests outlined in the other six arguments which were as follows: Initially, an unambiguous and permanent acknowledgement of Britain's position in the

³⁴⁷ Berdine, *Redrawing the Middle East: Sir Mark Sykes, Imperialism and the Sykes-Picot Agreement*, pp. 78;78.;54–55.

³⁴⁸ Tanenbaum, "France and the Arab Middle East, 1914-1920," p. 8.

³⁴⁹ Henry Laurens, "Ottoman Empire: The Division of the Spoils," p. 16–17.

³⁵⁰ NA, "CAB 27/1, British Desiderata in Asiatic Turkey," 1915, p. 4.

Persian Gulf. Second, the removal of discrimination against British commerce and either the preservation of existing markets or compensation for their loss. Third, the fulfilment of pledges made to different Arab leaders and Basra's citizens. Fourth, the development of industries in which Britain had an interest. Along with river navigation and irrigation systems, oil was suggested. Fifth, irrigation projects to increase the grain supply may result in immigration from India. Sixth, maintenance of Britain's strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean and Persian Gulf with the smallest feasible increase in defence spending and responsibility.³⁵¹

The vilayets of Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul were where the majority of British economic interests could be found in Turkish Asia. Promises made to the local people and their leaders prevented Britain from returning the Basra vilayet to the Ottomans after the country had already chosen to acquire it. If another power took over Baghdad, it would be completely useless. Mosul was essential for establishing a secure mountainous border.³⁵² Baghdad would serve to defend the oil reserves that are now located near the border with Iran. Any foreign force that managed to get its hands on the oil in Mosul would be doing damage to British interests. Irrigation systems relying on water from Mosul might restore Mesopotamia's former role as a source of food for Britain. It was planned for Russia to take Constantinople. If Greece were to join the war, it would be given the Smyrna vilayet.³⁵³ Four possible schemes were addressed by the committee as follows, First, Partition. The remained of the Ottoman Empire would be partitioned among European powers. To transfer military reinforcements, Britain needs a Mediterranean railway. Haifa was chosen as the endpoint because Alexandretta was too near to French and Russian territory to be safe; two maps showed each possibility. Secondly, Zones of Interest: There would be a continuation of the Ottoman Empire, but other nations would have spheres of influence in its former territories. Since any new railway line will be created for economic rather than geopolitical reasons, there is no longer any need for a British railway connection to the Mediterranean.³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ Ibid, p. 5.

³⁵² Stuart Cohen, "Mesopotamia in British Strategy, 1903-1914," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9, no. 2 (March 1978): 171–172, <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/stable/162370>.

³⁵³ NA, "CAB 27/1, British Desiderata in Asiatic Turkey," 1915, p. 5.

³⁵⁴ Martin William Gibson, "British Strategy and Oil, 1914-1923. Martin William Gibson. Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. College of Arts. School of Humanities. University of Glasgow.," 2012, p. 43.

Thirdly. Maintenance of an independent Ottoman Empire: The Basra vilayet would go to Britain, the Ottoman Empire would lose its European territories and Constantinople to Russia, and probably Smyrna would go to Greece. To keep its pledges to several Arab sheikhdoms, Britain would give independence to those states. The pre-war reforms for Armenia that were agreed upon but put on hold will be implemented. Lastly. Anatolia, Armenia, Syria, Palestine, and a region approximately equal to Mesopotamia was called Irak-Jazirah, and these five provinces made up the Ottoman Empire's anthropological and historical divisions. The plan to uproot Constantinople as the political epicentre opened the door to a more decentralized administration. France's area of influence nearly overlapped with that of Syria, while Britain's included all of Palestine and part of Iraq and Syria. (See Figure 4 and 5). The preference was towards decentralization. The goals of the Arabs and Armenians were met, and it was consistent with allied political theory. It sidestepped the potential pitfalls of the others, such as war between superpowers, the establishment of new naval bases, Turkish animosity, tensions with Indian Muslims, and Britain's prospective exclusion from the realms of other powers. If it didn't work, the foundation for a collection of sovereign nations would have been laid. Convincing the Turks and the Allies to accede to it and establishing regional administrations were the key obstacles.³⁵⁵

Admiral Jackson said at the second meeting of the Committee on April 13, 1915 that the admiralty felt Britain should not take over more land than was necessary. Britain's control over the Baghdad and Basra vilayets was critical due to the importance of its oil. Her idea prompted Slade to show up to the meeting two days later and talk about oil. De Bunsen opened the discussion by noting that Mesopotamia was home to significant oil reserves, and that due to Britain's obligations to APOC, it was crucial to understand what might be done to safeguard these interests. According to Slade, it was crucial to safeguard the Persian Concession's interests.³⁵⁶ There was a lot of oil in Asian Turkey:

A strip of oil-bearing regions was known to run from the southern extremity of Arabia along the west coast of the Persian Gulf, through the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, and so on to the northern coast of Asia Minor almost to its European end. There was also known to be a valuable oil district in Palestine to the south of Haifa...it would be sufficient, however, from our point of view if we secured the vilayet of Mosul, as that district contained some very rich oil-bearing lands connecting with the Persian oil

³⁵⁵ NA, "CAB 27/1, British Desiderata in Asiatic Turkey," 1915, pp. 6–26.

³⁵⁶ WO 106/6286, "British Desiderata in Turkey in Asia: Report Proceedings and Appendices of a Committee Appointed by the Prime Minister" (1915), <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C6074469>.

fields, which it was essential we should control to prevent undue competition with the Anglo-Persian Concession. It would of course be necessary to connect the fields by a pipeline with the Mediterranean ... Haifa would do quite well as the terminus port.

The majority of this oil, with the exception of Palestine, was not found at the time but has since been located. In closing, de Bunsen said that Slade's thoughts on Britain's "requirements for oil almost accorded with the views that the committee had made about the incorporation of the Mosul vilayet in the region to be seized by us."³⁵⁷

Oil had played a significant role in Britain's military objectives. Britain had interests in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf, as well as a desire to safeguard the road route to India. As a result, even if there had been no oil in Persia or Mesopotamia, it would have desired some sort of authority over the Basra vilayet. This may have been accomplished by conquest, a dominion, or a zone of influence. The Committee concluded that in order to govern the Basra vilayet, it was also required to control the Baghdad vilayet. The primary reason for Britain's involvement in the Mosul vilayet was oil. However, by this time, oil was no longer a significant factor driving British policy. It's unclear how much the Committee's discussions influenced the Government's actions, as oil is not mentioned in Hankey's journal and is only briefly referenced in his overall command.³⁵⁸ On the other hand, the first effort made by the British government to formulate military goals in the Middle East came to the conclusion that oil was one of the country's interests in the area.

3.6.2. The Sykes-Picot Agreement and Mosul Vilayet (See Figure 6)

Britain and France struck an arrangement in May 1916, with Russian approval, to divide the majority of the Ottoman Empire into five regions. It was called in honour of the primary negotiators, Sir Mark Sykes, a member of the de Bunsen Committee, and Francois Georges Picot. Each nation would have a zone under its direct authority and another zone inside its sphere of influence that would be governed by the Arabs.³⁵⁹ Palestine was to be governed by the international community. The territory under direct British administration comprised the vilayets of Basra and Baghdad. Due to the fact that Mosul was inside the French area of influence, historians assert that

³⁵⁷ NA, "CAB 27/1, British Desiderata in Asiatic Turkey," 1915, p. 47.

³⁵⁸ Baron Hankey, Maurice Pascal Alers Hankey, *The Supreme Command, 1914-1918* (London: Kahle/Austin Foundation, 1961), 389-531, <https://archive.org/details/supremecommand190001hank>.

³⁵⁹ Jewish Virtual Library, "British White Papers: Churchill White Paper," Churchill White Paper, 1922, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/churchill-white-paper-1922>.

Sykes-Picot offered France the potential oil of Mesopotamia. Kent contends that this was due to Britain's lack of a defined oil strategy in 1916.³⁶⁰ It has to be mentioned that by the autumn of 1915, after the heavy British losses, the members of the committee had all accepted the need for a tougher policy towards the Turks.³⁶¹ In any case, the aim, as Sykes put it, was primarily to prepare the ground for 'the first diplomatic clarification' prior to the military conquest of the region.³⁶²

While Mejcher mentions very little about Sykes-Picot, he argues that the treaty granted Mosul to France in its entirety.³⁶³ Jones admits that Sykes-Picot granted France the oil of Mosul; this poses less of a difficulty for him since he does not think that the United Kingdom had a clear oil strategy during this time. He does note that Sykes-Picot declared that earlier British rights to oil in French zones would be honoured, but he disputes whether the Grand Vizier's letter of June 28, 1914, really granted the British oil exploration rights.³⁶⁴ Yergin views it as a casual mistake that was challenged by many British authorities, who then spent a lot of time and effort fixing it.³⁶⁵ According to David Fromkin, the British government gave over Mosul's oil. The War Office point of view was that "From a military point of view, the principle of inserting a wedge of French territory between any British zone and the Russian Caucasus would seem in every way desirable."³⁶⁶ In general, the majority of historians who specialize in the Middle East do not consider the oil of Mosul to be a concern until after the conflict.

As Edward Fitzgerald has shown, Sykes-Picot only allocated approximately half of the Mosul vilayet to France.³⁶⁷ In the north of the vilayet, France was given Mosul, while in the south, Britain was given Kirkuk. Since Sharif Hussein of Mecca was the target of British promises to convince him to lead an Arab uprising against Ottoman authority, it was Britain that first proposed the negotiations. So that the French wouldn't discover that the assurances made to Hussein were a

³⁶⁰ Marian Kent, *Oil and Empire: British Policy and Mesopotamian Oil 1900-1920* (London: Macmillan, 1976), p.122.

³⁶¹ Aaron S Klieman, "Britain's War Aims in the Middle East in 1915," *Journal of Contemporary History* 3, no. 3 (1968): pp. 237-251.

³⁶² *Notes of the Meeting of the War Committee at 10, Downing Street, December 16, 1915.* CAB 42/6/9

³⁶³ H. Mejcher, *Imperial Quest for Oil*, pp. 28-29.

³⁶⁴ G Jones, "The State and the Emergence of the British Oil Industry a Comparative History of National Oil Companies. A. Beltran" (Peter Lang, 2010). pp. 194-195.

³⁶⁵ D. Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), pp. 188.

³⁶⁶ David Fromkin, "Britain, France, and the Diplomatic Agreements," in *The Creation of Iraq, 1914-1921* (Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 143-144.

³⁶⁷ Edward Peter Fitzgerald, 'France's Middle Eastern Ambitions, the Sykes-Picot Negotiations, and the Oil Fields of Mosul, 1915-1918', *The Journal of Modern History* 66, no. 4 (1994): pp. 717-718.

cover for an actual danger to French interests in Syria, Sir Edward Grey offered bilateral discussions. The French Foreign Ministry had enough warning about the oil of Mosul according to pre-war assessments.³⁶⁸

After being summoned to discussions by the British, the French realized that they were in a position to demand greater land, which led to their interest in gaining control of the area. Prior to this realization, the French had no interest in gaining control of the region. They were successful to some extent as a result of Britain's desire for France to control the northern portion of the Mosul vilayet, but Britain insisted that the region around Kirkuk remain under British control.³⁶⁹ It was anticipated that Russia would rule the eastern portion of Anatolia after the war, and Britain desired to have a buffer zone between its zone and the zone controlled by the Russians. By 1919, Mosul's oil had become into a significant problem. Balfour, who was serving as Foreign Secretary at that time, saw that Kitchener, who had passed away at that point, was the one who, for reasons of security, desired a French buffer zone between British and Russian land. Balfour, who was First Lord of Admiralty at the time of the Sykes-Picot agreement, said that it could now be seen that this was a mistake, despite the fact that he had agreed with the decision at the time. However, he did admit that he had supported the decision at the time.³⁷⁰

Furthermore, the decision of the Sykes-Picot contract on Mosul was primarily a consequence of the desire to create a buffer zone between Russian interests in eastern Anatolia and British interests in southern Mesopotamia. This was urged in particular by Kitchener, who argued that after the war the Russians would pose the greatest threat to British interests in the Middle East. The de Bunsen Commission had already proposed a French zone of interest north of the Akko-Damascus-Deir-ez-Zor-Mosul line, which would act as a buffer between Russia and Britain. Giving Mosul to France was Sykes' idea, and the report of the de Bunsen Commission had already hinted at it, saying that France had longstanding missionary interests in the region west of Lake Urmia,

³⁶⁸ Fitzgerald, pp. 700–707.

³⁶⁹ Jukka Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920* (London: The Athlone Press, 1969), 93.

³⁷⁰ Fitzgerald, "France's Middle Eastern Ambitions, the Sykes-Picot Negotiations, and the Oil Fields of Mosul, 1915-1918," pp. 710–716.

inhabited by Nestorian Christians. Sykes specifically proposed Mosul to the French because it would create a buffer zone between British and Russian interests.³⁷¹

James A. Paul, in his article “Great Power Conflict Over Iraq Oil: The World War I Era”, argued that; in the secret Sykes-Picot Accord of 1916, the British relinquished most of the oil-producing territory in northern Iraq to their French allies. British diplomatic and military preparations adjusted to reclaim territory lost. In August 1918, Balfour reminded the British Dominions' Prime Ministers that Britain must be the "leading spirit" in Mesopotamia to supply a major resource. He responded, “I do not care under what system we keep the oil. But I am quite clear it is all-important for us that this oil should be available.” Several days after the ceasefire, British soldiers hurried to conquer Mosul. Britain outmanoeuvred the French, creating a military *fait accompli* in Northern Mesopotamia's oil zone. Frenchmen were angry. France lacked oil reserves in its native territory, therefore its politicians and imperial strategists regarded Mesopotamia as a major resource for economic and military strength. Oil generated the most tension between the allies following the ceasefire.³⁷²

3.6.3. The Balfour Declaration

Another partition plan, the Balfour Declaration was complicated by the fact that Britain published it unilaterally and France and Sharif Hussein saw it as violating commitments Britain had previously made with them. Several events during the great war converged to force the British government to consider the issue of Zionism. It was the widespread assumption among high-ranking government officials that Jewish organizations in the United States and Russia might influence policy toward the war that was the most serious of these concerns.³⁷³ The British government was concerned that Germany may issue a proclamation in favour of Zionist aspirations, eliciting a sympathetic reaction from US Jewry, prior to the United States declaring war on Germany in April 1917. The situation in Russia, which was on the brink of military failure and social unrest by October 1917, prompted a similar line of thinking. British government

³⁷¹ Shane Leslie, *Mark Sykes: His Life and Letters*, Cassel & Company, London, 1923, pp. 249–250; Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War* (Harvard University Press, 2011). P. 197.

³⁷² James A. Paul, “Great Power Conflict Over Iraq Oil: The World War I Era’,” Global Policy Forum, 2022, <https://archive.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/185-general/40479-great-power-conflict-over-iraqi-oil-the-world-war-i-era.html#2>.

³⁷³ Yakoubi, “The French, the British and Their Middle Eastern Mandates (1918-1939): Two Political Strategies,” pp.3-4.

officials felt that significant Jewish members of the revolutionary movement would be persuaded to try to keep Russia in the war by a British show of goodwill toward Zionist goals. These misguided views influenced British policymaking.³⁷⁴

Zionist spokesperson in London Chaim Weizmann had a major impact on British policy. Weizmann was persuasive and tenacious, which served him well in keeping the issue of Zionism on the agenda of the British government and in establishing connections with influential persons in British society. The cabinet's realization that supporting Zionism may benefit British imperial ambitions was a huge boon to his efforts. To prevent France from occupying territory near the strategically important Suez Canal, Britain must be present in Palestine if it was to continue supporting Jewish settlement there.³⁷⁵ Herbert Samuel proposed in March 1915 that Britain back a Zionist state in Palestine as a strategic asset to the north of the Suez Canal. This plan was laughed out of the Cabinet. But after re-evaluation after the Turkish passage, military intelligence designated Palestine as the canal's vital buffer zone. The new policy came with the stipulation that the French be kept as far away as possible from the approaches to the vital waterways that were under British control, such as the Suez Canal and the Persian Gulf. In 1923, when the Criminal Investigation Department of the Palestine Police (CID) was asked to investigate Palestine's strategic importance, this idea was reiterated. The assessment found that despite Palestine's lack of strategic value, Britain should maintain a presence there to prevent the French from gaining access to the Suez Canal.³⁷⁶

In this perspective, the May 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement, which would have put Palestine under international (Anglo-French-Russian) sovereignty, was an outlier, a foolish decision by Asquith's Liberal government that would have pushed the French dangerously near to the canal. Lloyd George, who replaced Asquith as Prime Minister in December 1916, would fix the error.³⁷⁷ Lloyd George's intention to extract his government from the Sykes-Picot Agreement was a crucial factor in the British decision to release the Balfour Declaration in November 1917. This would be accomplished via the Zionists' excellent services. In exchange for the British commitment to assist them in constructing their National Home in Palestine, they vowed to do all they could to secure

³⁷⁴ Bernard Wasserstein, *Herbert Samuel: A Political Life* (Oxford: Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 255–256.

³⁷⁵ Douglas Valder Duff, *Palestine Picture*, 1936, pp. 270–271.

³⁷⁶ The Colonial Secretary, “Cabinet Memorandum, the Duke of Devonshire, CP 351(23),” n.d.

³⁷⁷ Isaiah Friedman, *Palestine: A Twice-Promised Land?* (Routledge, 2018), p. 60.

British rule over Palestine.³⁷⁸ According to Professor Verité, author of the standard study of the Declaration's origins,

For just as in the Declaration itself there was no guarantee yet that H.M.G. was bound to help in establishing a viable national home within the historic boundaries of Palestine, as envisaged in the Zionist programme, so there was no guarantee in it that Great Britain would alone acquire control over the country. The Zionists and the British continued to need one another after the Declaration.³⁷⁹

Arthur Balfour, the British foreign minister, wrote to Lord Rothschild, a key member in British Zionist circles, on November 2, 1917, notifying him that the cabinet had approved the following proclamation of support for Jewish Zionist aspirations,³⁸⁰

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

This was the infamous Balfour Declaration, a short document that included so many ambiguities and inconsistencies that it perplexed every party it listed.³⁸¹

With regards to the above declaration from Sir Arthur Balfour's Declaration, the Manchester Guardian newspaper on Saturday, November 10, 1917, post an article titled "The Future of Palestine: Manchester Zionists and The Government Declaration."

In Manchester, as in other parts of the country when there is a large Jewish community, Mr. Balfour's declaration of the Government's sympathy with the aim of the Zionist Federation to establish a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine was received yesterday with demonstrations of joy and gratitude and of hopefulness for the future. It is an unexpectedly quick response to appeals made by the great majority of Jewish organisations throughout the country less than a month ago. ... Of the quarter of a million Jewish people in this country there are about 30,000 in Manchester.

³⁷⁸ Efraim Karsh And Inari Karsh, *Empires of The Sand: The Struggle for Mastery in The Middle East, 1789–1923*, 1st ed. (London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 254.

³⁷⁹ Mayir Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and Its Makers', *Middle Eastern Studies* 6, no. 1 (1970): 66.

³⁸⁰ Martin Kramer, "The Forgotten Truth about the Balfour Declaration," *Mosaic Magazine*, no. June 5 (2017).

³⁸¹ William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Sixth edition. | Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2017.: Routledge, 2018), 312–313, doi:10.4324/9780429495502.

In conversation with a representative of the "Manchester Guardian" yesterday, Mr. Israel M. Sieff, a member of the English Zionist Federation, explained that, "if the conditions which we are awaiting are fulfilled, and we get Palestine under the suzerainty of Great Britain, or an international Palestine with Great Britain as the mandatory Power, my opinion is that there will be two streams of migration from Europe and America into Palestine—a stream of Jewish nationalists moving there in order to build up the nation, and a second stream, issuing chiefly from the old settlements in Russia and Poland, of those who have found themselves economically ruined by the war, and who will begin life afresh in the land of their ancestors. In the past our colonies have been built on insecure foundations under the misrule of the Turk. If, however, we can get a stable government in Palestine the economic and social possibilities for Jews there will be vast."³⁸²

Most Jewish people in Britain and elsewhere in the world brought the Zionist question under the consideration of the Great Powers to find a solution to this matter. It was clear that if one of the great powers make this dream to come true would get the support of Jewish people throughout the world. The "Uganda Scheme" was a proposal made by the founder of Zionism Theodor Herzl, who present his proposal in the 6th World Zionist Congress in Basel in 1903, to create an independent homeland for Jewish in a portion of British East Africa (Uganda).³⁸³ Moreover, it was stated that at the beginning of the 20th century a proposal was made for the creation Jewish state in Uganda for Jewish to escape rising antisemitism. For such work Joseph Chamberlain the British Colonial Secretary during his visit to East Africa he was aware of the Zionist Organization's ambitions, he pointed out that "If Dr. Herzl were at all inclined to transfer his efforts to East Africa there would be no difficulty in finding land suitable for Jewish settlers."³⁸⁴ David Fromkin, in his book *A Peace to End all Peace*, argued that,

The assistant secretaries of the War Cabinet, Leo Amery discussed the matter in a memorandum to the Cabinet dated 11 April 1917. Warning against allowing Germany to strike again at Britain through domination of Europe or the Middle

³⁸² The Manchester Guardian, "The Future of Palestine: Manchester Zionist and The Government Declaration," 1917, 4, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258476406/?terms=Balfour+Declaration&match=1>; William M Mathew, "The Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate, 1917–1923: British Imperialist Imperatives," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 3 (2013): pp. 231–250.

³⁸³ Nichole M Harris and Naval Postgraduate School Monterey C A Center F O R Contemporary Conflict, "Framing the Zionist Movement: The Effects of Zionist Discourse on the Arab–Israeli Peace Process," *Strategic Insights* 4, no. 5 (2005): p.4.

³⁸⁴ Eitan Bar-Yosef, "Adam Rovner. In the Shadow of Zion: Promised Lands before Israel. New York: New York University Press, 2015. 323 Pp.," *AJS Review* 40, no. 1 (2016): p. 52.

East after the war, he argued that "German control of Palestine" was one of "the greatest of all dangers which can confront the British Empire in the future."³⁸⁵

Thus, the question become a matter of great powers whose take the first action towards not the implantation of it, but it needs a sort of promises at first stage so that it become clear to other powers that this issue became mine and no one has a right to interfere. Great Britain was the pioneer in doing that as it was cleared in the Declaration made by Arthur Balfour.

It was Lord Kitchener, at the commencement of the great war, who decided that the British, French, and Russians would divide the Middle East once the war ended, and he sent Sir Mark Sykes to sort out the specifics. More importantly, Sir Mark Sykes negotiated with France and Russia to divide the Middle East after the war. However, the concept of enabling them to participate with Britain in the division and governance of Muslim Asia was upheld, even though the French got somewhat less than had been planned and the Russians were only permitted to retain what they had already acquired before the war. As far as the British were concerned, the Sykes plan was carried out to a tee: Britain served as the patron of Arab and Jewish nationalism and governed indirectly as the defender of ostensibly autonomous Arab kingdoms.³⁸⁶

Some Historical Arguments Over the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and the Balfour Declaration

With regards to the Sykes-picot Agreement, numerous scholars have provided their assessment of Sykes-Picot, and it seems reasonable to address them in detail currently. Khoury, who thinks that Britain and France lacked clear goals and strategy, views Sykes-Picot as another Anglo-French choice taken without genuine attention to the repercussions and despite conflicts with previous promises in order to permit an assault on the Ottoman Empire.³⁸⁷ Even more controversially, Albert Hourani argues that the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the Balfour Declaration, and the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence were all drafted "to be interpreted in more than one way, and to leave the question of which interpretation should prevail to be decided by the balance of strength when war

³⁸⁵ David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace.: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Avon Books, 1989), p. 277.

³⁸⁶ David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace.: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Avon Books, 1989), p. 18.

³⁸⁷ Albert Hourani, "The Arab Awakening Forty Years After," *Emergence of the Modern Middle East*, 1978, pp. 193–215.

was over.” so that Britain would not have to make a decision in the midst of the urgency of war.³⁸⁸ The author Longrigg believe that senior Anglo-French diplomats were pessimistic about the establishment of an independent Arab state.³⁸⁹

In agreement, Andrew and Kanya-Forstner contend that the assurances made in the McMahon-Hussein correspondence weren't more than a British ruse to keep the Arabs in service as long as possible before their eventual disintegration due to their inability to maintain lasting unity, and that as a result, the correspondence did not violate Sykes-Picot.³⁹⁰ Others claim that Sykes- Picot's Agreement and conclusions reflect an Anglo-French idea that their collaboration and a paternalistic relationship with the Arabs could be accomplished concurrently. Kleiman contends that these discussions anticipated Anglo-French post-war collaboration despite their antagonism, and that Britain's position as broker would guarantee Arab, British, and French interests “could be adjusted reasonably and honourably once Turkey had been defeated.”³⁹¹ In fact, British officials stated emphatically that the Arab agreement that allowed France to send advisors was a big reason why they were accepting of Sykes-Picot. Correspondence also indicates that at the moment of Sykes-Picot, the other Entente powers had been ready for the creation of an Arab state if it happened.³⁹²

Kedourie disproves the claim that France and Great Britain kept Sykes-Picot a secret until after the revolution. Rather, he finds that the Treaty was kept a secret from the international arena because Anglo-French authorities knew it did not fit Wilson's plan for the League of Nations.³⁹³ The fact that the Arabs were knowledgeable of Sykes-Picot yet chose to proceed with their revolution nonetheless demonstrates that even Hussein felt a territorial and administrative deal could be achieved with the French in the future. Based on the facts shown above, it is evident that the Sykes-Picot Agreement was a result of the pre-war British and French orientations to Syria.

³⁸⁸ Albert Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (University of California Press, 1981). pp. 209-210.

³⁸⁹ Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, *Syria and Lebanon under French Mandate* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958).

³⁹⁰ Alain Silvera, “Andrew and Kanya-Forstner: The Climax of French Imperial Expansion: 1914-1924 (Book Review),” *Middle East Journal* 36, no. 1 (1982): p. 95.

³⁹¹ Aaron Kleiman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970).

³⁹² Jukka Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*.

³⁹³ Elie Kedourie, *England and the Middle East: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1921* (Harvester Press, 1978).

Britain continued to prepare for various possibilities and understood better than the French what the Arabs wanted in return for their allegiance.³⁹⁴ On the other side, France continued to see the McMahon-Hussein letters and the Sykes-Picot agreement as consistent with French involvement in Syria. French authorities embraced the idea of an Arab state because they felt it would fall within the French sphere of influence, and despite British declarations to the contrary, French officials regarded the Arab independence movement in Syria as a purposeful effort to displace France in Syria.³⁹⁵ French authorities were prepared to reject all challenges, even those that would assist the military effort and Entente cohesion, making it impossible for the British to find a solution that would be advantageous to all parties engaged in Syria. When the Arabs reaffirmed their desire for an independent Arab kingdom, France grew hesitant to cooperate within the limitations set by Britain and the Arabs in the early years of the conflict.³⁹⁶

3.7. Chapter Summary

Both the British and French fought jointly against the Ottomans throughout the war, first in the Gallipoli Campaign in April 1915 and then in the Arab Revolt beginning in 1916. In the same year, Britain and France settled their dispute over the Ottoman Empire's Arab territories, a move that foreshadowed the empire's eventual collapse. Britain and France's Sykes-Picot accords in the Middle East were a product of their ongoing rivalry leading up to the Great War. The confidential Sykes-Picot agreement reached between France and Britain rested on British confidence in the outcome of this conflict. The Arab regions of the former Ottoman Empire were split into zones of influence by the Sykes-Picot agreement. In its allocated sector, it was decided that each nation would be able to create as much direct or indirect government as it chose and to be willing to negotiate with the Arab State or Confederation of Arab States. The Sykes-Picot Agreement gave France control over the Syrian coast and a large portion of present-day Lebanon. Around the provinces of Baghdad and Basra, central and southern Mesopotamia would come under direct British rule. Since other Christian nations, including Russia, were interested in this area, Palestine would be governed by an international body. In addition to that, the local Arab leaders in the

³⁹⁴ Major C. S. Jarvis, "The Arab Movement," *The Observer*, November 1938,

[https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258376104/?terms=the sykes-picot agreement&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258376104/?terms=the%20sykes-picot%20agreement&match=1).

³⁹⁵ Philip Shukry Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920-1945*, vol. 487 (Princeton University Press, 2014).

³⁹⁶ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, p. 250.

remaining territory, a sizable region that includes present-day Syria, Mosul in northern Iraq, and Jordan would be supervised by French forces in the north and by British forces in the south. Additionally, free travel and commerce would continue to be permitted in each other's spheres of influence.

The British were eager to keep the French as far away from Egypt and the Suez Canal as possible, so they swiftly questioned the so-called Sykes-Picot negotiations, which stipulated that Palestine would be an international zone. The British were able to break their agreement with the French when they issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917, pledging their support for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. When the British were given mandates in the area, they already had sway over several territories.

The war that took place in the Middle East from 1916 to 1918 was successful in attaining the strategic aim of the British government, which, as this chapter argues, was to gain control of wealthy oil reserves. During those three years, there were thousands of casualties on both sides, making it twice as expensive as Gallipoli was in terms of human lives lost. The significance of oil had been undeniably shown over the course of this chapter: the Allied nations never ran out of it, whilst the Central Powers were unable to amass sufficient supplies. During the course of the conflict, the number of automobiles and trucks used by the British Army increased by close to a thousand, while the number of motorcycles increased by more than 2,000. Lord Curzon, as the Leader of the House of Lords, went as far as to remark that the Allies sailed to triumph on a wave of oil. Following the conclusion of the Middle East war on October 30, 1918, the Ottoman Empire surrendered, and the subsequent division of its territory was carried out by the British, French, Italians, Armenians, and Greeks.

The progress of the campaigns in Egypt, Palestine, and Mesopotamia, show the importance of logistics. The relevance of 1916 reorganisations in shaping the authority and penetrative reach of the colonial state and the authoritarian war economy that evolved to manage it are evident. While the Mesopotamia campaign stretched beyond breaking point in 1915 and 1916, the Egyptian campaign developed more cautiously and took off in 1917, benefitting from the reorganisations of 1916. Thus, the logistical tactics of the two campaigns differed, which explains their different fates in 1915–16. However, in each case, the underlying problem was the previously unimaginable demands they put on host communities for local resources. In 1915 till 1916, Egyptian and

Mesopotamian military actions grew substantially. Egypt was the main base for the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force's 1915 Dardanelles operation before it returned home and decided to push over the Sinai Peninsula to Ottoman Palestine. In Mesopotamia, simultaneous advances along the Euphrates and Tigris rivers in 1915 left BEF D dangerously dependent on an overstretched river transportation infrastructure. The Mesopotamian campaign tried to do too much too fast, whereas the Egyptian campaign was more responsive and adaptive.

The challenges that Britain has faced during the war in the Middle East had pushed Britain to build up a quick relationship with the Arab representative Sharif Hussein. The most notable challenges of which was their support of the Jewish question. It was obvious that Britain was successful in gaining the attention of all the Great Powers to the fact that Zionism was a British issue and that no one had the right to interfere. Britain took this step in order to gain Jewish support throughout the world, meanwhile it led to deterioration in the relationship with Arabs in particular and Muslims in general. Other challenges were the defeat in Gallipoli and Kut Al-Amara. The British representative Henry McMahon had quickly reached Hussein through number of letters and won his support by giving him the promise of an autonomous Arab kingdom. Nonetheless, this action would be challengeable for Britain in the post war era.

From a historiographical perspective, numerous historians emphasise the crucial role of oil in influencing British strategy in the Middle East. Peter Sluglett contends that British military operations were principally motivated by the objective of safeguarding oil supplies, a perspective that is supported by Marian Kent, who emphasises the imperial rivalry for dominance over oil. In line with the idea that oil played a crucial role in Britain's campaign success, some historians, such as James Barr, prioritise Britain's geopolitical objectives and competition with France as the core of its Middle Eastern strategy, seeing oil as a component of a wider imperial goal. Furthermore, David Fromkin emphasises Britain's enduring objectives of maintaining control over trade routes and exerting influence over Egypt and India. In contrast, Elizabeth Monroe draws attention to the conflicts arising from Britain's commitments to Arabs and its support for Zionism, particularly the conflicting promises made to Hussein and the Zionist movement. By contrast to other historians, this narrative emphasises the dual importance of oil and the intricate diplomacy of Britain. The analysis offered here highlights the fundamental paradoxes in British strategy: while aiming to obtain oil and establish imperial supremacy, Britain made contradictory commitments to Arabs and Zionists, therefore complicating the ties in the region after the war. Hence, although oil played

a vital role, the Middle Eastern results of the Great War were influenced by British diplomatic strategies and the endeavour to reconcile conflicting interests.

Chapter Four:

The Division of the Middle East for the Future Economic Interests 1919-1923

4.1. The Mudros Armistice and the Seizer of Mosul's Oil:

Although the search for the Mesopotamian oil concession had to be temporarily shelved due to the start of the Great War, Middle East oil concessions continued to be a major concern for the British Government. The government near total reliance on imports of oil was brought home to them by the war, which compelled them to create an organization and policy to guarantee that there would be enough oil supplies for both their military operations and afterward. Additionally, Middle Eastern oil entered discussions about military planning and post-war territorial aspirations. Because strategy and supply were interdependent during the war, Middle Eastern oil concessions were crucial to the development of British government oil policy.³⁹⁷ The imperial strategists perceived an increasing need for oil and a growing threat from shortages as the conflict dragged on. In a letter to Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour (1916–1919) during the closing stages of the war, Sir Maurice Hankey, the influential Secretary of the British War Cabinet (1916–38), argued that oil had become extremely essential to Britain and that oil resources in Mesopotamia will be significant in the future. As British forces drew closer to Baghdad, Hankey said, "Control of these oil supplies becomes a first-class war aim."³⁹⁸

There were two key components to the post-war oil negotiations, the first of which was territorial. The Foreign Office preferred to delay deciding on the Mesopotamian oil concession until after the Peace Conference had defined the borders of the various spheres of influence in the former Ottoman Empire, but before this could happen, Britain needed France's agreement to alter the Sykes-Picot Agreement.³⁹⁹ To recover what had already been lost, British diplomacy and military strategies altered. Balfour reminded the gathering prime ministers of the British Dominions in August 1918 that Britain must be the "guiding spirit" in Mesopotamia to supply the British Empire with a crucial resource that it needed. He pointed out that, "I do not care under what system we keep the oil. But I am quite clear it is all-important for us that this oil should be available."⁴⁰⁰ A

³⁹⁷ Marian Kent, *Oil and Empire: British Policy and Mesopotamian Oil 1900-1920*.

³⁹⁸ James A. Paul, "Great Power Conflict over Iraqi Oil: The World War I Era," *Global Policy Forum*, 2002, 117–118, <https://archive.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/185-general/40479-great-power-conflict-over-iraqi-oil-the-world-war-i-era.html>.

³⁹⁹ Marian Kent, *Oil and Empire: British Policy and Mesopotamian Oil 1900-1920*, pp. 137–138.

⁴⁰⁰ James A. Paul, "Great Power Conflict over Iraqi Oil: The World War I Era."

few days after the armistice was signed, British soldiers hurried to seize the important northern city of Mosul. Thus, Britain outwitted the French and created a military *fait accompli* in the northern Mesopotamian oil zone.⁴⁰¹

The signing of the armistices with Turkey and Germany on October 30 and November 11, respectively, had a significant impact on the oil issue.⁴⁰² To give their troops time to seize Mosul and Aleppo and control Istanbul and the Straits, the British delayed the treaty's signature by two weeks. Four days after their arrival in Mudros on October 27, the Ottoman delegation, led by Hussein Rauf (1918–1922), the new Minister of War, signed the Armistice of Mudros⁴⁰³. The armistice, however, was made up of unclear provisions that were included on purpose to seize whatever territory inside the Ottoman Empire that could not be taken before the conclusion of the war. Without a doubt, the 7th and 24th articles of the armistice were the poorest or most unclear. The seventh article granted the allies the right to take any significant strategic location inside the Ottoman Empire should a scenario arise that endangered their security. This provision alone was enough justification for the allies to seize the whole nation, as the Minister of War (1918–1919), Mustafa Kemal noted, “the 24th article stated that in the event of unrest, the Allies retained the right to seize a portion of the six "Armenian Provinces."⁴⁰⁴

A complete and unconditional surrender was made possible by the Mudros Armistice. The allied powers took advantage of these ambiguous provisions shortly after the armistice terms went into effect on October 31, 1918, and started to implement their plans to dismantle the Ottoman Empire by occupying the strategic locations and gradually expanding this occupation to include entire provinces that were home to Turkish Muslims.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Marian Kent, *Oil and Empire: British Policy and Mesopotamian Oil 1900-1920*, pp. 137–138.

⁴⁰³ Armistice Of Mudros, (Oct. 30, 1918), Pact Signed at The Port of Mudros, On the Aegean Island of Lemnos, Between the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain (Representing the Allied Powers) Marking the Defeat of The Ottoman Empire in World War I (1914–18). See, James. Ryan, “The Armistice of Mudros,” *The International Encyclopaedia of the First World War*, 2021, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/mudros_armistice_of.

⁴⁰⁴ Hamza Karcic, “The Armistice That Spelled the End of the Ottoman Empire,” *Daily Sabah*, 2018, <https://www.dailysabah.com/feature/2018/10/30/the-armistice-that-spelled-the-end-of-the-ottoman-empire>.

⁴⁰⁵ Aydin, “Mosul Question (1918-1926),” pp. 18–19.

4.1.1 The Seizure of Mosul.

By the time that Mosul became a British war aim the forces in Mesopotamia had been reduced in size. In April 1918 two Indian Divisions were transferred to Palestine in order to partially replace British troops who were being sent to France because of the German offensive there.⁴⁰⁶ Furthermore, by October 30th, the vast majority of the Ottoman Sixth Army had been destroyed. In his memoirs, Sir Arnold Wilson, who served as the Acting Civil Commissioner of the British occupied area of Mesopotamia and as the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf from 1915 to 1924, said that he had been in communication with the British government for some time about the need of occupying the Mosul vilayet. He claimed that regardless of whether Mosul was going to be seized by the British or the French, it had to be done so by the time fighting stopped. It is necessary for the vilayets of Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul to be governed by the same central authority.⁴⁰⁷

The Ottoman army had focused on the southern front in the last year of the Great War. As a result, all of the major commanders, including Mustafa Kemal, held key positions on this front. When the armistice was signed on October 30, 1918, Ali Ihsan (Sabis) Pasha, commander of the 6th Army in Mosul, ordered his forces to halt where they were. The British likewise paused, but only briefly; in truth, the British had no intention of halting. Except for Kirkuk, Mosul and a large chunk of its province were under Ottoman Army control until the armistice was signed on October 31, 1918. Even though, the ceasefire specifically stipulated that both troops should maintain their positions, the British invaded Hammam-al-Ali on November 1. On November 2, British General Cassels requested the retreat of Turkish soldiers from Mosul to the north and the surrender of the Turkish garrison in accordance with the armistice conditions.⁴⁰⁸

Ali Ihsan Pasha was given an ultimatum on November 7 by British General Marshall, who demanded that Ottoman soldiers be withdrawn from Mosul by the middle of the day on November 15, else he would be held financially responsible for the situation. Almost immediately after receiving this ultimatum, under the direction of Ali Ihsan Pasha, Ottoman soldiers started

⁴⁰⁶ David L Bullock, *Allenby's War: The Palestine-Arabian Campaigns, 1916-1918* (Blandford, 1988), p. 112.

⁴⁰⁷ Arnold T Wilson, *Mesopotamia 1917-1920 (A Clash of Loyalties a Personal and Historical Record)* (Humphrey Milford, 1931), p. 16.

⁴⁰⁸ Aydin, "Mosul Question (1918-1926)," p. 20.

withdrawing from the city, and on the very same day, British forces flew their flag in Mosul.⁴⁰⁹ The invasion of Ottoman Mesopotamia by the British was close to being finished. A ceasefire agreement had been negotiated by Colonel G.E. Leachman with officers of the Ottoman Sixth Army the day before, and it had been signed south of Mosul. In accordance with the Sykes-Picot agreement that was signed in 1916, about one-half of the vilayet province and its oil riches were to be transferred to French administration.⁴¹⁰ Furthermore, one of the primary focuses of the British war aims was capturing the northern part of Mesopotamia (Mosul Vilayet). This area is rich in oil resources that could cover the British war expenditure. Although, the armistice was signed, the British authorities continue their advance to the northern part of Mesopotamia, and they were successful in taking that area.

4.2. The Paris Peace Conference's Ambitions in The Middle East 1919:

In January 1919, the Paris Peace Conference met at Versailles, a town outside of Paris. To determine the conditions of the peace following the Great War, a meeting was held. The "Big Four" were the delegates of the United Kingdom, France, United States, and Italy, out of the almost thirty countries that took part. The "Big Four" controlled the discussions that resulted in the Treaty of Versailles, which put an end to the war. The compromises made at the meeting are detailed in the Treaty of Versailles. It featured the intended establishment of the League of Nations, which would function as both an international forum and a global system of collective security. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States was a fervent supporter of the League because he thought it would stop future conflicts.⁴¹¹ On June 28, 1919, Germany and France signed the Treaty of Versailles, but the other Central Powers need their own agreements, which were negotiated separately.⁴¹² It is worth mentioning, the formal inauguration of the League of Nations on January 16, 1920, brought the Paris conference to an end, before the conclusion of treaties with Turkey (1920, 1923) or with Hungary (1920). This revision clarifies that while the Paris Peace Conference itself ended in January 1920, the process of signing peace treaties with individual nations extended

⁴⁰⁹ Ilhan KILIC, "Britain's Kurdish Policy and Kurdistan 1918 -1923" (University of East Anglia, 2018), p. 25, https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/id/eprint/69191/1/ILHAN_KILIC-NOVEMBER_2018_MPhil_-HISTORY-THESIS_FULLL.pdf.

⁴¹⁰ Jonathan Conlin, "An Oily Entente: France, Britain, and the Mosul Question, 1916-1925," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 31, no. 2 (2020): p. 231.

⁴¹¹ Michael and Goold, "Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences 1919–1923," 181.

⁴¹² Gibson, "British Strategy and Oil, 1914-1923," p. 143.

beyond that date.⁴¹³ Moreover, the conditions of the Treaty of Sèvres, which was signed with the Ottoman Empire on August 10, 1920, were decided upon during the San Remo Conference in April 1920. This failed to result in a long-lasting agreement, and after Turkey's victory in the Greco-Turkish War, talks had to be restarted in Lausanne in 1923. It was obvious during the discussions that Britain would have a mandate over Iraq.⁴¹⁴

It was uncertain whether Mosul and its petroleum products would be included. In December 1918, French Prime Minister George Clemenceau (1917-1920) and British Prime Minister Lloyd George (1916-1922) agreed that Britain could have Mosul. An Anglo-French hydrocarbon accord was delayed due to a disagreement over what France expected in exchange. Two were signed and cancelled prior to the ratification of the third. The similarities between them indicate that they were cancelled due to other disputes and not because of hydrocarbon disputes. The Treaty of Sèvres appeared to have granted the United Kingdom its goals, but it was not enforceable. The Americans were incensed by the San Remo Agreement because it excluded them from Middle Eastern oil. Under General Mustafa Kemal, Turkey revived, while British relations with France and Italy deteriorated. Without the oil, a revolt in Iraq might have prompted Britain to leave.⁴¹⁵

4.3. The San Remo Oil Agreement of 1920:

Statesmen from the Great War winning nations assembled in San Remo in 1919 and the first few months of 1920 to prepare peace conditions that would be imposed on their defeated opponents. The contract with the Ottoman Empire was the one that took the longest of the five agreements to draft. Along with writing Turkey's peace conditions, it also required dividing up sizable geographical prizes among the competing countries. The Treaty of Sèvres contains the terms of the negotiations for this Middle East peace agreement.⁴¹⁶ Moreover, at the San Remo conference, the main points of the Middle East solution were hammered out. Following a conference of ministers on January 23rd, the British government decided that private exploitation of Mesopotamia's oil reserves should be prohibited because the country's administration could be funded by the

⁴¹³ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Paris Peace Conference". Encyclopaedia Britannica, 19 Apr. 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Paris-Peace-Conference>. Accessed 28 July 2024.

⁴¹⁴ Gibson, "British Strategy and Oil, 1914-1923," p. 143.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Paul C Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres: The Partition of the Ottoman Empire at the Peace Conference of 1919-1920* (The Ohio State University Press, 1974), p. 16.

proceeds. Therefore, when British Prime Minister Lloyd George met Clemenceau's successor, Millerand, he refused to entertain France's reiterated demand for an equal share of the oil unless the costs associated with Mesopotamia were also equally divided. The British Prime Minister rejected the two prior agreements, so they settled on a third, the Cadman-Bérenger agreement of April 18, 1919. It similar to the two prior accords.⁴¹⁷

The mandate was the key issue that remained, to ensure that the League Covenant's provisions were upheld.⁴¹⁸ Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary from 1921 to 1924, argued at the Conference of London that the League or the Peace Conference would need to draft the form of A mandates for the Middle East. He suggested that the Mandates Commission of the conference be given this task. "It was not open either to France or to Great Britain to establish themselves in Syria or Mesopotamia by means of secret agreements."⁴¹⁹ The form of the mandates would first be agreed by the British and the French, and then presented to the League for approval. Later, however, such formalities were disregarded. As expected, France received a mandate over Syria, including Lebanon, while Great Britain received a mandate over Palestine and Mesopotamia.⁴²⁰

4.3.1. The British Mandate Over Mesopotamia:

At the Conference of San Remo in April 1920, the Middle Eastern's destiny was decided. According to the San Remo pact, the League of Nations was tasked with governing and administering the lands formerly occupied by the vanquished Ottomans and Germans.⁴²¹ The European allies were to maintain authority over the territories, now known as mandates, until they were capable of self-government. The British controlled the whole area of Mesopotamia by the time the San Remo Conference ended. For each mission, new national and regional boundaries were established as part of the San Remo Accord.⁴²² On the Middle East map (See Figure 7), they were drawn as straight lines with little regard for historical borders or regional reality. The new

⁴¹⁷ Michael and Goold, "Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences 1919–1923," p. 173.

⁴¹⁸ "San Remo Conference: Points for Consideration," *The Daily Telegraph*, April 1920, 11, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/824662071/?terms=lord&match=1>.

⁴¹⁹ Michael and Goold, "Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences 1919–1923," pp. 173–174.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ "Agreement at San Remo," *The Observer*, April 1920, p. 13, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258602611/?terms=mandate&match=1>.

⁴²² The Manchester Guardian, "British Mandate for Palestine: Announcements by French Premier," *The Guardian Newspaper*, April 1920, 9, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258077873/?terms=San Remo in April 1920 mesopotamia&match=1>.

boundaries split local tribes and clans and unintentionally brought competing tribes under the same rule as they cut across the desert. These arbitrary boundaries led to conflict across the Middle East, but Iraq suffered especially badly. Mosul was initially not thought to be a part of the British Mandate but was added in 1925 when the newly formed Turkish nation attempted to claim the oil-rich region. Iraq was given "Class A" status under the conditions of the mandate, which meant that it had to swiftly gain independence.⁴²³ Additionally, they felt that the establishment of independent Arab states had been promised to them throughout the war, therefore the Iraqis were shocked that the friends—especially the British—had not immediately helped their Arab friends achieve independence. After the Treaty of Versailles, most Arab leaders believed that the intent was to create immediate nations out of the conquered Ottoman territories. To add insult to injury, the British made no efforts to align themselves with the local Arab leaders but instead partnered with the Ottoman rulers and elite who remained in Iraq.⁴²⁴

Until their mandate was up, the British planned to rule by proxy and install a provisional administration. The British administration in Iraq was patterned after their practices in British-controlled India. Each of Iraq's provinces had an Iraqi governor appointed to serve as de facto head of state. The British maintained their dominance. Each Iraqi officer was assigned to a British officer who served as the de facto superior. The Ottoman government and regulations were removed and restored with British models. They replaced the Islamic-based Ottoman civil and criminal laws with common law (a move that was subsequently overturned). The Iraqi dinar was replaced by the Indian rupee, and Indians dominated the new army and police force that succeeded the Iraqi armed forces. By placing their faith in tribal sheikhs to keep the restive rural Arabs under control, the British unintentionally reinforced tribal relationships. The northern regions, which were under Kurdish authority, were difficult for the British to administer. In exchange for the Kurds' cooperation against the Ottomans during Great War, the British offered to assist in the establishment of a Kurdish country. British promises to their Arab friends included the same territory.⁴²⁵

⁴²³ Mark Lewis, "Historical Setting," *Iraq: A Country Study*, 1990, p. 34.

⁴²⁴ Hunt, *The History of Iraq*, pp. 61–62.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*

4.3.2. The British Mandate Over Palestine:

Following the Ottoman Empire's loss in the Great War, the British and French partitioned its former Arab lands into areas of influence. Palestine was taken over by the British. Although the Balfour Declaration advocated for a Jewish "national home" in Palestine, the embryonic Zionist organization had defined statehood as its objective at its first conference in Switzerland in 1897. Other governments, particularly France and the United States, quickly adopted resolutions in favour of the Balfour Declaration's ideals.⁴²⁶ The League of Nations accepted the British mandate over Palestine in July 1922, which included the ideas of the Balfour Declaration in its preamble. According to Article 2 of the mandate document, the Mandatory shall be responsible for putting the country in such political, administrative, and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home, as stated in the preamble, and the development of self-governing institutions, as well as for protecting the civil and religious rights of all Palestinians, regardless of race or religion.⁴²⁷

Thus, Britain committed itself to support the establishment of a Jewish political entity in Palestine. The official implementation of the mandate in September 1923 opened the road for unrestricted Jewish migration to Palestine and the establishment of legally sanctioned institutions that would culminate in the State of Israel twenty-five years later. Although Jewish statehood was not the paramount thrust of British foreign policy, Britain initially worked to implement the terms of the mandate while allowing the Zionists substantial freedom to define the means of that implementation. Arab opposition later modified Britain's actions and reduced British enthusiasm for Jewish statehood.⁴²⁸ Since the mandate over Palestine was accepted, the British administration policy was supporting the establishment of Jewish national home. For implementing that Britain selected Herbert Samuel as the first High Commissioner in Palestine, appointed in the year 1920 to 1925. Samuel was Jewish man, and his appointment led to the anger of the Arabs, who demanded that Britain should change of its mind from this choice, but the British Mandate

⁴²⁶ Shlomo Avineri, "Britain's True Motivation Behind the Balfour Declaration," HAARETS, 2017, <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-britain-s-true-motivation-behind-the-balfour-declaration-1.5462518>.

⁴²⁷ Mahmoud Yazbak, "From Poverty to Revolt: Economic Factors in the Outbreak of the 1936 Rebellion in Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 3 (April 2000): pp. 93–113, <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/stable/4284093>.

⁴²⁸ D.C. Washington, *The Middle East* (Washington: CQ Press, 2008), p. 37, https://archive.org/details/middleeast0000unse_o9z0/page/n4/mode/1up.

administration insisted on her choice of selecting Samuel. It was clear for both Britain and Jewish people that taken this action would not be accepted and would face many obstacles from the Palestinians in particular and Arabs Muslims in general. Thus, Britain took some steps to put the creation of Jewish state in a legal framework, and to show to the public opinion that it was necessary to have Israel homeland in Palestine.⁴²⁹

The Mandate Administration encouraged Zionist immigration and opened a wide range of immigrants under the name that the mandate instrument encourages Jewish immigration and under the pretext that the Jews coming have high technical, scientific, technical, and professional competencies and can contribute to the progress and advancement of the country. The number of Zionist entities at the beginning of the mandate was 50,000, meaning that they were less than seven percent of the population. So, Britain opened the doors of immigration to Jews from all over the world, significantly increasing the Jewish population in the region. So that policy contributed to the forcible displacement of many Palestinians under the threat of Zionist gangs, and with the British military support. The property and lands of the displaced people were seized, and settlements were established to absorb the immigrant Jews. Therefore, the number of Jews increased, during the decade of the British Mandate, nearly (76,400) Jewish immigrated to Palestine, the majority of whom came from Eastern European countries. With the increasing activity of immigration to Palestine, Arabs realized the need to resist Zionism. At the end of the Mandate government in 1948, the number of Jews reached 650,000, making them 31 per cent of the population.⁴³⁰

4.4. The Middle Eastern Reaction toward the British Policy in the Post-War Era:

4.4.1. The Iraqi Revolt of 1920:

Although several treaty negotiations were taking place between the Allies during the years 1918-1920, they were unable to reach appropriate solutions to the problems that had emerged in the

⁴²⁹ Elie Kedourie, "Sir Herbert Samuel and the Government of Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies* 5, no. 1 (1969): pp. 44-45.

⁴³⁰ Mamoun Shehadeh, "Britain's Role in Stabilizing the Zionist Entity in Palestine," 2009, <https://www.diwanalarab.com/دور-بريطانيا-في>. Translated from Arabic Source.

Middle East after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. On the contrary, the decisions that had resulted from these negotiations were tough on the people who were under the control of the Ottoman Turks. For example, on April 25, 1920, at the San Remo Conference, France assumed control of Syria and Lebanon, while Britain took responsibility for Iraq and Palestine. In addition, all of these territories were governed under a Class 'A' League of Nations Mandate, which gave Great Britain a free hand to rule Mosul and Mesopotamia until such a time that it could be confirmed to the British government that they would be able to govern and defend themselves.⁴³¹ Furthermore, Britain would initially grant a semi-autonomous state for the Kurds of Mosul vilayet, but would later take over direct control as a colony. As such the British would never entirely provide the Kurds their sovereignty, and governed ruled them from Baghdad for the period of the occupation. The British pressed ahead with their plan. However, as Wilson pointed out, it would have been difficult to unify the three provinces of Iraq under one flag and felt that the Kurds would never accept Arab rule.⁴³²

To respond to the British strategy to form a unified plan to govern Mesopotamia and Mosul, the majority of Kurds and Arabs refused to recognise the Mandate awarded by the LN. Instead, both nations began to call for independence denouncing the LN's mandate and for British withdrawal.⁴³³ Therefore, in May 1920, both Sunnis and Shi'is participated in mass demonstrations in Baghdad, especially after the announcement of the Mandate system for Iraq on 3 May. As Judith Yaphe describes it:

When Ramadan began on May 17, 1920, huge demonstrations took place in the mosques of Baghdad. *Mawlud* celebrations and *fa 'ziyya* commemorations were held in combined services that took place alternatively in Sunni and Shi'i mosques with members of each sect participating. Besides the intense religious ceremonies, patriotic speeches were made, and poems recited appealing to Arab nationalism, honour, and Islam. Even Muslims who opposed the nationalist cause and Shi'i participation in government attended and helped defray expenses lest they be branded infidels and traitors.⁴³⁴

It became clear for many Arabs that; the Mandate demonstrated the idea that the British had no plan of granting Iraq its independence. Thus, in the summer of 1920 the Iraqi armed revolt broke

⁴³¹ Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq: Contriving King and Country, 1914-1932* (Columbia University Press, 2007), 13.

⁴³² Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 41.

⁴³³ Tripp, p. 41.

⁴³⁴ Yaphe, "The View from Basra: Southern Iraq's Reaction to War and Occupation, 1915-1925," 28.

out against the British occupation of Iraq. The revolution began in the Middle Euphrates. By late July, the revolt had spread throughout the colony and had control over much of the mid-Euphrates area. On the other hand, Britain had planned to reduce the number of ground forces to suppress the revolt dispatched by the British military.⁴³⁵ The revolt turned bloody after the tribes started using violence to accomplish their objectives. Because of the violent clash that had happened between the rebels and British troops, many people were killed and injured from both sides. By the end of October 1920, the British troops managed to eliminate this revolution, by dispatching some other forces from India for reinforcement of the British troops in the area. As a result of this, they were able to bring the country once again under British control.⁴³⁶ As a result, “by the time British rule was restored in 1921, some 2,000 British soldiers and 8,000 Iraqis had been killed or wounded.”⁴³⁷ Beside this, it had cost Britain nearly forty million pounds to bring the colony back under its control; this was a primary reason of holding the Cairo Conference in 1921.⁴³⁸ Furthermore, after the suppression of the rebellion it became obvious to Britain that the imposition of the Indian colonial model did not achieve its goal after a nationalist revolt of May 1920.⁴³⁹

The revolt had also prompted Britain to re-examine how they would rule Mesopotamia, and to search for a more appealing system that the Arabs would accept. The Mandate system was no longer an acceptable choice. Britain believed that the best way to maintain its Mandate over the region was by providing the local population with more self-determination. Sir Arnold Wilson, who had been recommended by Lloyd George to administer direct rule, and who had excluded the Iraqi people from having a role in the government, was requested to resign. Sir Percy Cox, who replaced Wilson, arrived in Baghdad at the beginning of October 1920, to become the first high commissioner under the Mandate. Cox took some steps to calm the situation in the area, one of which was an election for choosing a President for the new government, in order to set up an Arab provisional government.⁴⁴⁰ The uprising had convinced Cox that the British government needed to

⁴³⁵ Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, p. 43.

⁴³⁶ Toby Dodge and Martin Bunton, “Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied,” *International Journal* 59, no. 3 (2004): pp. 7–8.

⁴³⁷ Patrick Cockburn, “Britain’s Role in Shaping Iraq,” BBC News, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/2719939.stm.

⁴³⁸ Dodge and Bunton, “Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied,” 8.

⁴³⁹ Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Routledge, 2018), p. 21.

⁴⁴⁰ Churchill Archive 17/14, “Report of Mesopotamia: Situation on the Arrival of Sir Percy Cox” (Middle East, 1920), 50 Churchill Online Archive, Telegram of 26th October 1920.

discover a form of management that the Iraqis would accept. This would make a more constant political atmosphere, which would in turn secure British fundamental interests in the region. Cox considered that the only appropriate form of administration would be a Council of Ministers who would perform under British supervision.⁴⁴¹

This unstable situation forced Britain to look for solutions. According to Cox, the formation of an interim government as a prelude to the inauguration of the King of Iraq would be the best solution, therefore,

In October, he (Cox) allowed former members of al-Ahd⁴⁴² to return to Baghdad and persuaded the elderly Naqib of Baghdad, Abd al-Rahman al-Kaylani, to become the president of the provisional government under Sunni domination of the new country. Cox and Bell worked assiduously with their superiors in India and London through the winter to take local considerations into account. Instead of a mandate, Iraq and Britain would be linked by treaty. Instead of direct rule, a king acceptable to all Iraqis would be installed along with the trappings of parliamentary democracy suitably advised by British experts.⁴⁴³

Within an abbreviated time, the old Ottoman administrative system was revived, and soon the Iraqi officials started to replace British officers in the provinces and cities, except in the Kurdish district of Sulaymaniyah which was run by Kurdish people under the supervision of British advisors. Most of the country bit by bit turned into the newly shaped Iraq government, but they were under the supervision of British adviser. In the same way, on the general level, the ministries of the national government were turned over, with some British military officers to act as advisors. On 20 November, the new regime was formally established under the recently chosen president, Abed al-Rahman al-Kailani with twenty-one eminent Iraqis.⁴⁴⁴ The creation of this temporary government was a prelude to the inauguration of the Arabic king of Iraq. With respect to this, the negotiations were continuing between Faisal and the British government in London about inaugurating him to be the king of the future state called Iraq. This relates back to the promise that Britain had given

⁴⁴¹ Churchill Archive 17/14, "Report of Mesopotamia: Formation of a Provisional Government." (Middle East, 1920), p.52.

⁴⁴² Al-Ahd is a secret Arab nationalist (The Covenant) society founded in 1913 in Constantinople with primarily Syrian and Iraqi military officers who first advocated Arab autonomy and equality with the Turks, but during the war switched to the goal of Arab independence. By 1914, the Iraqi majority in the group was already planning a revolt in Iraq. These few hundred men in an Arab-speaking area of five million. See, Eliezer Tauber, *The Arab Movements in World War I* (London: Frank Cass, 1993), p. 9.

⁴⁴³ Yaphe, "The View from Basra: Southern Iraq's Reaction to War and Occupation, 1915-1925," p. 46.

⁴⁴⁴ Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, p. 45.

to Sharif Hussein, at the beginning of the Great War, to create a state for the Arabs ruled by the Sharifian family, which has been mentioned earlier in the dissertation.⁴⁴⁵ It has to be mentioned that the Kurdish situation had not been adequately addressed by this settlement which essentially dealt with the Arabic parts of the proposed Iraq.

4.5. The Palestinians' Struggle for Maintaining Homeland:

The future of Palestine was uncertain after the war. Having established a military government in Palestine after seizing Jerusalem, Great Britain was confronted with the challenge of obtaining international approval for the country's continuing occupation in a way that was consistent with its vague, incompatible wartime promises. A universal Syrian congress held in Damascus on March 08, 1920, was attended by delegates from Palestine.⁴⁴⁶ The assembly rejected the Balfour Declaration and chose Faisal Son of Hussain, who governed the Hejaz, as king of a unified Syria (which included Palestine). This resolution was like one that the first Palestinian Arab conference of Muslim-Christian organisations, which had been established by prominent Palestinian Arab figures to resist Zionist operations, had approved earlier in Jerusalem in February 1919. By July 1920, the French had compelled Faisal to cede control of his recently established Syrian kingdom. Any possibility of independence vanished along with the goal of establishing an Arab Palestine inside a federated Syrian state. Arabs from Palestine referred to 1920 as "the year of catastrophe," or as *'ām al-nakbah*.⁴⁴⁷

All of Palestine's residents were impacted by uncertainty over the future of the country, which heightened political tensions. Anti-Zionist riots that broke out in Old Jerusalem's Jewish neighbourhood in April 1920 resulted in several fatalities and numerous injuries.⁴⁴⁸ The riots were blamed by British authorities on Arab dissatisfaction with the unfulfilled promises of independence and on worries of a major Jewish immigration that were stoked by certain Muslim and Christian leaders. After the mandate was confirmed at San Remo, the British replaced the

⁴⁴⁵ Churchill Archive 17/14, "Rearrangement of Administrative Divisions under Native Administrators: Section One: Ruler of Mesopotamia. Colonial Office: Middle East: Various Papers 1920-1921." (Middle East: 1920).

⁴⁴⁶ "The Palestine Arab Congress," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed April 3, 2024, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-palestine-arab-congress#seconc>.

⁴⁴⁷ Bailey Maxim, "The Colonial and Postcolonial Middle East," *New York: The Rosen*, 2017, pp. 120–121.

⁴⁴⁸ "The West Side Story, Part 2: The Darkening Horizon: Jerusalem's New City Under the British Mandate," Jerusalem Story Project, 2021, <https://www.jerusalemstory.com/en/article/west-side-story-part-2-darkening-horizon-jeruselems-new-city-under-british-mandate>.

military government with a civilian one in July 1920, and as assumed personally the first high commissioner was a Zionist, named Sir Herbert Samuel. In August, the new government announced a quota of 16,500 Jewish immigration for the first year, following the Balfour Declaration's implementation. An executive committee (known as the Arab Executive) was founded by Palestinian Arabs during a congress in Haifa in December 1920 to serve as the Arabs' official representation. The British never gave it official recognition, and it was disbanded in 1934. However, the Haifa Congress's program, which outlined the view that Palestine was an independent Arab country and categorically denied any rights of Jews to Palestine, remained the fundamental tenet of the Palestinian Arabs' foreign policy until 1948.⁴⁴⁹

Between 1919 and 1921, more than 18,000 Jews moved to Palestine. In 1921, the Jewish National Fund (which had been started in 1901) bought land, which forced Arab peasants (fellahin) to leave their homes. This sparked more Arab opposition, which was voiced throughout the region by Christian-Muslim groups. On May 1, 1921, there were more major anti-Zionist riots in Jaffa, which spread to Petah Tiqwa and other Jewish towns. Nearly hundreds of people were killed in these attacks.⁴⁵⁰ From August to November 1921, a group of leading Arabs went to London. They demanded that the Balfour Declaration be revoked and suggested that Muslims, Christians, and Jews vote for a national government with a parliament. Because Arab resistance was so strong, the British government put out a White Paper in June 1922 saying that "Great Britain did not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in Palestine."⁴⁵¹ Immigration would not be more than what the country's economy could handle, and steps would be taken to create a governing body. Arabs did not like these ideas because they were a big part of the population under the mandate and wanted to control the government and get their independence quickly. They also did not like the idea that Jewish immigration, which had a political goal, would be controlled by economic factors.⁴⁵²

In the point of view of Arabs, the British government's exaggeration in insisting on Jewish rights came at the expense of all rights and all the basic demands of the Palestinian people who are citizens of that country and holders of right in Palestine. As well as, when the Balfour Declaration

⁴⁴⁹ Maxim, *ibid*, p. 122.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 123.

⁴⁵¹ Winston Churchill, "British White Paper of June 1922," 1922, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/brwh1922.asp.

⁴⁵² Maxim, p. 124.

and British Mandate were inaugurated roughly nineteenth per-cent of the living inhabitants of Palestine consisted of Muslims and Christian Arabs. Thus, this majority number of the Palestine Arab people would never agree with the implementation of the Balfour Declaration and the British mandate was neither legally nor morally valid. On the other hand, if we look at this matter in the point of view of Jewish and Britain, we would see that the Jewish also had the religious rights in Palestine such as Muslims and Christians, which would allow them to have their position in Palestine land.⁴⁵³ The British steps to establish the Zionist State took practical dimensions by establishing the Jewish Legion, providing it with weapons and equipment and training its elements in combat, initiating land confiscation, legislating laws, building Zionist institutions, and arresting opposing Palestinians. Palestine witnessed armed operations, uprisings, and revolts against British and Jewish occupation. The organized armed action was launched in 1919 through the "Fedayeen" Association, but Britain confronted and aborted this assembly.⁴⁵⁴

4.6. Post-War Settlement Treaties:

4.6.1. The Treaty of Sèvres of 1920:

As this chapter has shown, the Paris Peace Conference did not lead to an agreement on territorial disputes in the Middle East. In August 1920, the Allied powers, and representatives of the Ottoman government, which by this time was nothing more than a diplomatic ghost, signed the Treaty of Sèvres, by which Turkey handed up all its non-Arab territories as well as sections of Anatolia. The remnants of Turkish Anatolia were further divided according to secret agreements made amongst the Allies at the same time.⁴⁵⁵ The treaty mandated the creation of multiple new nations in the previous Ottoman lands, such as an autonomous Armenia, Kurdistan, and an internationally governed area in Constantinople (Istanbul). Additionally, it suggested the division of Anatolia and the Aegean islands between Greece and Italy. Furthermore, it aimed to set specific requirements for regions such as Syria and Iraq that were under the jurisdiction of the Allied Powers.⁴⁵⁶ As the research focus on the area under British influence, therefore, the research will concentrate in the Kurdish question in the Treaty of Sèvres. The partition of the Ottoman Empire became a

⁴⁵³ Arnold J Toynbee, "Jewish Rights in Palestine," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 52, no. 1 (1961): 5.

⁴⁵⁴ Nabil Sahli, "The British Role in the Creation of Israel and the Continuation of the Tragedy of the Palestinian People" Translated from Arabic Resource.

⁴⁵⁵ Tomás Irish, "The Paris Peace Conference and Cultural Reparations after the First World War*," *The English Historical Review*, March 2023, cead004, doi:10.1093/ehr/cead004.

⁴⁵⁶ Alfred E Montgomery, "VIII. The Making of the Treaty of Sèvres of 10 August 1920," *The Historical Journal* 15, no. 4 (1972): pp. 775–787.

controversial subject among the leaders of Britain, France, and Italy at the Treaty of Sèvres. This had been drawn up by the London Conference, confirmed by the San Remo Conference, and signed by the Ottoman Sultan's representative at the French town of Sévres on August 10, 1920, when the question of the Kurds was taken into consideration.⁴⁵⁷ Ultimately, the efforts of Sharif Pasha⁴⁵⁸ obtained a result, when the Allies decided to establish an autonomous state for the Kurds. The third section of this Treaty dealt with the Kurdish question in the articles 62, 63 and 64.

Article 62.

A Commission sitting at Constantinople ... shall draft within six months from the coming into force of the present Treaty a scheme of local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates, south of the southern boundary of Armenia as it may be hereafter determined, and north of the frontier of Turkey with Syria and Mesopotamia, as defined in Article 27, II (2) and (3).

Article 63 provides information about the execution and acceptance of the requirements of Article 62 by the Turkish government.

Article 64.

If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples within the areas defined in Article 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas' desires independence from Turkey.⁴⁵⁹

In this agreement the Allies promised the Kurds to create an independent state for them, but what they were being presented with was far less than they had expected.⁴⁶⁰ Moreover, "the Treaty of Sévres, as we shall see, was stillborn. It was swept aside by a resurgent Kemalist Turkey and in 1923 was superseded by the Treaty of Lausanne."⁴⁶¹ In other words, the Kurdish dream was not achieved, because the Turkish Grand National Assembly refused to ratify the treaty. Additionally,

⁴⁵⁷ Efraim Karsh and Imari Karsh, "Empires of the Sand: The Struggle for Mastery of the Middle East, 1789-1923," *Middle East Journal* 54, no. 4 (1999): pp. 257–258.

⁴⁵⁸ Mehmed Sherif Pasha (1865 – 22 December 1951), a founding member of Kurd Society for Cooperation and Progress and representative of the Society for the Elevation of Kurdistan to the Paris Peace Conference (1919–1920). He was a leading Kurdish nationalist. See, Ozoglu, Hakan. *Kurdish notables and the Ottoman state: evolving identities, competing loyalties, and shifting boundaries*. State University of New York Press, 2012. p. 111.

⁴⁵⁹ Martin, *The Treaties of Peace, 1919-1923*, 1:900; Jwaideh, *The Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development*, p. 131.

⁴⁶⁰ Heather Lehr Wagner, *The Division of the Middle East: The Treaty of Sévres* (Infobase Publishing, 2004), 45.

⁴⁶¹ Jwaideh, *The Kurdish National Movement: Its Origins and Development*, p. 132.

Arnold T. Wilson pointed out that stability could only be achieved through the inclusion of Kurdish districts in Iraq, as, the ‘frontier problem will be created only if Kurdistan is left to its own devices’.⁴⁶² Moreover, Lord Curzon the British Foreign Secretary stated that “if the British established a quasi-autonomous Kurdish state with British administration, the French might be tempted to establish a similar state with French advisers in northern Kurdistan.”⁴⁶³ After the failure of creating a new state for the Kurds, the Kurdish issue took on a different character of negotiation, along with the other outstanding issues in the Middle East. That argument proved decisive, and a further step was taken to create a new state for Arab people called Iraq, at the Cairo Conference in March 1921.

4.6.2. The Cairo Conference of 1921:

These events pushed the British government to hold a conference to create a stable situation in the Middle East in general and Iraq in particular. So, for these reasons on the first of March 1921 Winston Churchill, the recently appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies, started the creation of a new Department named the Middle East Department which was to take over from the War Office, Foreign Office and India Office, in order to deal with mandated and other territories in the Middle East.⁴⁶⁴ Hence, at the beginning of March Churchill was keen to pacify the unstable situation in the Middle East, therefore, he left London for Egypt, a week later he held a conference called the Cairo Conference on 12 March 1921 in the Semiramis Hotel in the city of Cairo. Nearly forty civilian and military experts on British policy in the Middle East attended this conference, the “Forty Thieves” as Churchill called them,⁴⁶⁵ In this respect T. E. Lawrence wrote to his Mother that "Everybody Middle East is here . . ."⁴⁶⁶

These participants were divided into two groups to conduct the business of the conference: a Political Committee headed by Winston Churchill, and the Financial and Military Committees,

⁴⁶² Guiditta Fontana, “Creating Nations, Establishing States: Ethno-Religious Heterogeneity and the British Creation of Iraq in 1919–23,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 1 (2010): 6.

⁴⁶³ Zeynep Arikani, “British Legacy and Evolution of Kurdish Nationalism in Iraq (1918-1926): What Significance the Mosul Question,” *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 9, no. 4 (2010): 16.

⁴⁶⁴ “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, Pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1),” 1921, p. 1.

⁴⁶⁵ David, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*, pp. 502–503.

⁴⁶⁶ T. E. Lawrence, “Letter from T. E. Lawrence to His Mother, 20 March 1920,” 1920, https://archive.org/stream/in.ernet.dli.2015.176370/2015.176370.The-Letters-Of-T-E-Lawrence_djvu.txt; David, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*.

presided over by General Walter Congreve.⁴⁶⁷ The conference took twelve days to do what it had planned. During this period about forty or fifty sessions were held “in what was described as utmost secrecy.”⁴⁶⁸ At the Cairo Conference Churchill resolved many primary issues. The most essential one was the decision about who would run Iraq. He believed that a unique leader, who could be controlled by Britain but was approved by the Arabs, would be the best agreement. Cox, Bell, and T. E. Lawrence, his recently chosen Arabic consultant, agreed with this recommendation and suggested Faisal the son of Hussein as the new innovator of Iraq.⁴⁶⁹

Another matter to be considered at the Conference was reducing the British troops in Mesopotamia. In other words, “the main object of the Cairo conference, Churchill said later, was to maintain British control as cheaply as possible.”⁴⁷⁰ A further issue to be discussed at the Cairo Conference was the Kurdish question. In this respect, at the beginning of this Conference Churchill was extremely open to the Kurdish desire for autonomy and to have their own country, acting as a buffer state between Turkey and the future independent Arab state. However, over the course of the conference he changed his mind. Most of the debate of the Cairo Conference was about the unstable circumstances in Mesopotamia. The attendees came together to find a suitable solution at the opening of the Conference.⁴⁷¹ On the morning of Saturday March 12, 1921, the two Committees, Military and Political, were set up to discuss the four elements relating to the agenda of Mesopotamia, in several meetings, respectively. One of the imperative points of this debate was “the cost-cutting”, as the Colonial Secretary, announced that “everything else that happens in the Middle East is secondary to the reduction in expense.”⁴⁷²

Therefore, on March 12, the Military Committee held three meetings to establish how to maintain British control over Mesopotamia as cheaply as possible. The discussion of the first meeting was about the reduction of the Mesopotamia garrison. At the second meeting of this Committee on 13

⁴⁶⁷ “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1),” 1921, 2.

⁴⁶⁸ Aaron S. Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: The Cairo Conference 1921* (London, 1998), p. 110.

⁴⁶⁹ Christopher Catherwood, *Churchill's Folly: How Winston Churchill Created Modern Iraq* (Hachette UK, 2014), 109.

⁴⁷⁰ Laurence Marks, “Iraq Churchill’s Awkward Invention,” *The Guardian*, 1991.

⁴⁷¹ Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill: World in Torment, 1916–1922* (Rosetta Books, 2015), pp. 548–549.

⁴⁷² David, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*, p. 449.

March, Chief of the Air Staff Sir Hugh Trenchard (1919-1927), drew up his proposals for the domination of the new state by the Royal Air Force.⁴⁷³ At the third meeting, General Haldane shaped a comprehensive plan for the reduced martial commitment, and the volume of each garrison was discussed “place by place.” As a result of their conversations, it was decided that “the mobile columns of troops hitherto employed on punitive missions should be replaced by aircraft.”⁴⁷⁴ Furthermore, it was decided that the garrison in Mesopotamia would be decreased from thirty-three to twenty-three infantry battalions. Thus, by October, the troops in Iraq would come down to fifteen thousand. Instead, they would increase the number of local Kurdish forces and the Arabic levies of five-thousand Mesopotamians.⁴⁷⁵

The Political Committee also held its first meeting 12 March to discuss the various candidates for ruler of Mesopotamia. In Cox’s point of view Amir Faisal would be the most suitable leader and preferred by the Arabs themselves. Churchill asked him why? Cox replied “that he considered Faisal’s previous experience during the war placed him in the best position for raising an army quickly.”⁴⁷⁶ On March 13, the second meeting of the Political Committee was held, with Churchill as Chairman. On the same day Churchill, wrote to Lloyd George, that “I think we shall reach unanimous conclusion among all authorities that Faisal offers hope of best and cheapest solution.” Furthermore, Martin Gilbert pointed out, according to the committee’s decision, Emir Faisal must reach Mesopotamia in April or May, and that Churchill relied upon T. E. Lawrence to persuade Faisal to act according to the suggestions.⁴⁷⁷ The purpose of this appeared in the message that Churchill wrote to the Prime Minister: “I have no doubt personally [that] Faisal offers far away [the] best chance of saving our money.”⁴⁷⁸

4.6.2.1. The Kurdish Question:

The Kurdish issue was one of the points of discussion in the Cairo conference, but without the attendance of Kurdish representative in the conference. On 15 March, the fourth meeting of the

⁴⁷³ Michael Paris, “Air Power and Imperial Defence 1880-1919,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 24, no. 2 (May 1989): 209–225, <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/stable/260821>.

⁴⁷⁴ Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill: World in Torment, 1916–1922*, pp. 545–546.

⁴⁷⁵ Aaron S. Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: The Cairo Conference 1921*, 111; “Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, Pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1),” n.d., 3.

⁴⁷⁶ Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill: World in Torment, 1916–1922*, p. 545.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 546.

⁴⁷⁸ Catherwood, *Churchill’s Folly: How Winston Churchill Created Modern Iraq*, p. 133.

Political Committee was held to discuss the question of Kurdistan. This committee consisted of the chairman, Winston Churchill, along with the members of this committee, Sir Percy Cox, Miss Gertrude Bell⁴⁷⁹, Colonel T. E. Lawrence, Major H. W. Young, Major Noel (Consultative Member), and Major R. D. Badcock was secretary of this committee.⁴⁸⁰ The memorandum that has been submitted by the Middle East Department to this Committee for Kurdistan stated,

We are strongly of opinion that purely Kurdistan areas should not be included in the Arab state of Mesopotamia, but that the principle of Kurdish unity and nationality should be promoted as far as possible by H.M.G. The extent of the area within which it will be possible for H.M.G. to carry out this policy must necessarily depend upon the final terms of the peace settlement with Turkey. Whatever the extent of this area may be, we consider that not only control by H.M.G. will be facilitated if there were some forms of central Kurdish Organization to which a British adviser could be attached. This adviser would be under the orders of H.C [High Commissioner] for Mesopotamia and would report through him to H.M.G.⁴⁸¹

This shows that his majesty government could not achieve any final decision about such matter until he had a negotiation with Turkey, because the Turkish government required bringing Mosul vilayet into its borders. The question of whether Kurdistan would be an integral part of Iraq or instead should become a separate state was decided through the common Anglo-Arabian conference. In the meeting the attendees had been split into two groups, each of them presented a different opinion regarding the Kurdish fate. During the discussion Major Noel pointed out that the Kurdish people prefer to have their own state and would never accept to be put under the government of Iraq.⁴⁸² In addition, Major Young believed that “it was desirable to keep the Kurds under our control,” he disagreed to have a separate Southern Kurdistan, which would not be accountable to Britain. Furthermore, Colonel Lawrence thought that the Kurdish of Southern Kurdistan should not be put under the government of Baghdad, although he did not wish to have

⁴⁷⁹ Gertrude Bell (1868-1926) was a British writer, traveller, political officer, administrator, and archaeologist who played a significant role in British imperial policymaking in the Middle East. Often referred to as the "Queen of the Desert," Bell's extensive travels and intimate knowledge of the Arab world made her a crucial figure in shaping the modern states of Iraq and Jordan. See, Green, Philippa. "Gertrude Bell – the death of an unusual woman." *OU News*, 2 Nov. 2023, <https://ounews.co/arts-social-sciences/gertrude-bell-the-death-of-an-unusual-woman/>.

⁴⁸⁰ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)," 1921, p. 59.

⁴⁸¹ Robert Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880–1925* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 1989), p. 58.

⁴⁸² Sarwa Asaad Saber, *Kurdistan from The Beginning of The First World War to The End of The Mosul Problem 1914-1926, A Historical, Political and Documentary Study*, 1st ed. (Erbil, n.d.), pp. 43–44.

two governors in the area (Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah) and recommended one must be chosen to be given the position of a Kurdish leader.⁴⁸³

On the other hand, Miss Bell did not agree with Lawernce's point of view, stating that "the whole position should be left for the further period of about six months, after which she was of the opinion that the Kurds would be anxious to join the Iraqi government."⁴⁸⁴ Additionally, Percy Cox agreed with Miss Bell by believing that "it would be better, ... to allow matters to take their course, in the hope of an ultimate fusion with Iraq."⁴⁸⁵ At the end of this meeting Churchill concluded that the British policy should be to support the Kurdish question and this would not be less than that support that they gave to the Arab cause. He also suggested that "under the influence of the High Commissioner, who would superintend the affairs of the two countries, through entirely distinct and separate channels, Kurdistan and Iraq would be drawn closer together, and that they might form one State in the future."⁴⁸⁶ Then he stated that it might difficult give a final decision on this matter and would be better to be referred to the LN.⁴⁸⁷

As a result of their debate, the attendees realised that if the Kurds were forced to be within the scope of the rule of an Arab government, they would inevitably reject and resist it. Furthermore, this decision would complicate the matter of British withdrawal from the country. "They accordingly recommended that, until such time as a representative body of Kurdish opinion might opt for inclusion in Iraq, Kurdistan should be dealt with direct by the high commissioner and kept separate from Iraq itself."⁴⁸⁸ The purpose of this resolution was to enable the British to develop Kurdish units under the control of British staff, in order to activate and accelerate the reduction of military forces in some areas.⁴⁸⁹ Thus, it became obvious that by mid-1921, it had been decided temporarily to keep Southern Kurdistan separate from Iraq, acting as a buffer state between Mesopotamia and Turkey. The emergence of Kemalist in Anatolia and the weakness of Kurdish

⁴⁸³ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)," 1921, 60.

⁴⁸⁴ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)," 61.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)," p. 3.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

politics and their leader Sheikh Mahmud led to the increased complexity of the Kurdish issue, along with the demand of the newly Arab King Faisal bin Hussein to include Southern Kurdistan into Iraq. Hence, at the end of 1922, Britain made negotiations with Turkey to solve the problem of Mosul (the disputing area that Turkey tried to integrate into its borders). Consequently, in 1923 the treaty of Lausanne was agreed between Britain and Turkey which ended by incorporating Southern Kurdistan into Iraq. Thus, the promises that were given to the Kurds in the treaty of Sévres were demolished.⁴⁹⁰

At the beginning of June 1921, Percy Cox tried to argue that according to the Cairo Conference it had been decided to incorporate the Kurdish areas in Iraq; he was refused by Churchill's directive of "keeping the Kurdish district apart from Iraq and ... setting up a non-Arab buffer between the Arab state and its potential enemies."⁴⁹¹ In the autumn of 1921, Gertrude Bell, supported Cox's view by stating that it would be difficult for the British government to help the Kurdish people, because of the financial crises that Britain had faced. As she said,

There was no money coming from the British to help the Kurds, and we must now be careful to make it absolutely clear that we haven't a penny to spend in furthering Kurdish independence ... If we encourage them, we shall only have to abandon them in their hour of need, which would be the worst thing possible, ... It wasn't just Britain's fault, as the Kurds themselves could not decide on a leader – not two Kurds agree when it comes to practice.⁴⁹²

It has to be said that Miss Bell believed that establishing an independent Kurdistan would put more pressure on Britain, especially in terms of the financial aspect. In contrast, Churchill thought that the Kurdish people would accept union with Iraq in the future. Yet, what he meant by the word 'union' was a sort of confederated relationship between Southern Kurdistan and Iraq. In this case, he stated that,

I want to make it quite clear that we are developing, as it were, a principle of home rule for Southern Kurdistan within the general area of Mesopotamia, at the

⁴⁹⁰ Othman Ali, "The Kurds and the Lausanne Peace Negotiations, 1922–23," *Middle Eastern Studies* 33, no. 3 (1997): pp. 521–525.

⁴⁹¹ Ali Mahmada, "How Have Historians Assessed the British Role in the Kurdish Issue at the Cairo Conference in 1921?" (The University of Huddersfield, 2013). P. 40.

⁴⁹² Liora Lukitz, *A Quest in the Middle East: Gertrude Bell and the Making of Modern Iraq* (London: IB Tauris, 2006), p. 164.

same time that we are developing the general self-government of Mesopotamia.⁴⁹³

In other words, there would be two entities united in terms of their strategic and economic interests, but administratively and politically separate. Adding to this as Bell indicated in a letter to her father, “the Sec. of State has sent us a perfectly damnable despatch . . . recommending that before the election we shall practically advise . . . all the Kurdish districts within Iraq to stand out and form a Kurdish independent state.”⁴⁹⁴ So we can see that the British policy was in the way of creating a separate Kurdish state but this state would share its strategic and economic interests with the government of Baghdad.

With regards to the Kurdish attitude towards the choice of Faisal to be the King of the new state, it had been decided during the Cairo conference that Faisal should be chosen by the Iraqi people through a democratic election. Thus, the election took place in August of 1921, after the Iraqi election Faisal was crowned as King on the throne of Iraq, under the supervision of British advisor Sir Percy Cox.⁴⁹⁵ The Kurdish people were also included in this referendum, but the majority of the Kurdish people refused to take part in this selection and to accept Faisal’s rule over them, because their participation would illustrate to the British and Arab government that the Kurdish people agreed to be part of Iraq.⁴⁹⁶ Moreover, the British had ignored the Kurdish question and denied their rights, while, they carried Faisal and the Iraqi government on their shoulders. This British policy towards the Kurds, led to the deterioration of the situation in Southern Kurdistan. Meanwhile, the Kemalist forces saw it necessary to control some areas in Kurdistan.⁴⁹⁷

Under the volatile conditions in Southern Kurdistan during 1922-1923, Sheikh Mahmud, the Kurdish nationalist ruler who was governing Sulaymaniyah district, “intensified his efforts to mobilize the Kurds for a general uprising against Britain.”⁴⁹⁸ Consequently, on 3 March 1923 the

⁴⁹³ Saad Eskander, “Southern Kurdistan under Britain’s Mesopotamian Mandate: From Separation to Incorporation, 1920-23,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 2 (2001): p. 161.

⁴⁹⁴ Marks, “Iraq Churchill’s Awkward Invention.”

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁶ Saad Eskander, “Great Britain and the Future of Kurdistan: From Planning to Partition 1915-1923,” 2007, p. 264 Translated from Arabic sources.

⁴⁹⁷ Omar Karim, “The Kurdish Issue in the Anglo-Iraqi Conflict 1818-1932. (Sulaymaniyah, 2008),” 2008, pp. 213–214, Translated from Arabic source.

⁴⁹⁸ Ali, “The Kurds and the Lausanne Peace Negotiations, 1922–23,” p. 525.

RAF bombed Sulaymaniyah and forced Mahmud to flee to the nearby mountains.⁴⁹⁹ Despite all the above discussion, it is also argued that after the emergence of Kemal Ataturk, the British promises towards the Kurdish people changed.⁵⁰⁰ This change of policy towards Kurdistan appeared with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, when the question of Mosul [Kurdistan] came under the discussion of Britain and Turkey's delegations. Thus, during the conversation the Kurdish question was manipulated by both.⁵⁰¹ This was ended by dividing the Kurdish lands among Turkey, Iraq and Syria.⁵⁰²

4.6.2.2. The Palestine Issue:

The proposal to hand over two sizable portions of the formerly British-ruled former Turkish provinces to princes from the Hashemite dynasty was adopted during the Cairo Conference. It was decided that the new nation formed from the Turkish Province of Mesopotamia would be named Iraq, and that Prince Faisal, with whom T.E. Lawrence had collaborated during and after the Great War, would rule as king. Transjordan (today Jordan), a state made up of Palestine west of the Jordan River, would be ruled by his brother Prince Abdullah.⁵⁰³ On March 22, Churchill briefly met with a group of Arabs from Palestine in Cairo. He declined to engage in political conversation but promised to meet with them in Jerusalem.⁵⁰⁴ Jerusalem was the location where the Palestine Mission continued with its operations on March 24, 1921. In Gaza, Churchill's train was greeted by a sizable protest against the continued existence of the British Mandate in Palestine. Winston Churchill and Herbert Samuel, who had the mistaken impression that they were being welcomed by the locals, waved to the thousands of protesters while they were screaming anti-Jewish slogans.⁵⁰⁵ On March 28, Winston Churchill met with Emir Abdullah more than once. Abdullah was already living in Amman, and he was planning to move further north. Churchill wanted to make Transjordan an Arab region with an Arab Governor. The Arab Governor would be under British rule and answer to the High Commissioner for Palestine and Transjordan. Abdullah urged

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰ Gareth Stansfield, "The Kurdish Question in Iraq, 1914-1974," *The Middle East Online* 2 (2006): 1.

⁵⁰¹ The Manchester Guardian, "The Oil Question," *Guardian Newspaper*, January 1923, [https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258863968/?terms=The Question of Mosul 24 January 1923&match=1](https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258863968/?terms=The+Question+of+Mosul+24+January+1923&match=1).

⁵⁰² Ali, "The Kurds and the Lausanne Peace Negotiations, 1922-23," p. 521.

⁵⁰³ Jeremy Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia: The Authorized Biography of T.E. Lawrence*, 1st ed., vol. 19 (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1989), p. 131.

⁵⁰⁴ Christopher Sykes, "Crossroads to Israel: Palestine from Balfour to Bevin," *Punyapriya Dasgupta, Cheated by the World: The Palestinian Experience*, 1965, pp. 66.

⁵⁰⁵ Aaron S. Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: The Cairo Conference 1921*, p. 112.

that the High Commissioner should put him in charge of the whole area of Mandate Palestine. On the other hand, he pushed for a union with the land that was given to his brother in Iraq. Churchill said no to both.⁵⁰⁶

Churchill declared, in response to Abdullah's anxiety about a Jewish dominion west of Jordan, that it was not only improbable that hundreds of thousands of Jews would invade the country in a brief period of time and dominate the existing population, but that it was impossible. The process of Jewish immigration would be extremely sluggish, and the rights of the remaining non-Jewish population would be rigorously protected. Trans-Jordania would not be incorporated into the current administrative structure of Palestine, so the Zionist clauses of the mandate would not be applicable. Hebrew would not become an official language in Transjordan, and the local government would not be expected to promote Jewish immigration or colonization. Regarding British policy in Palestine, Herbert Samuel added the following, "There was no question of setting up a Jewish Government there ... No land would be taken from any Arab, nor would the Muslim religion be touched in any way."⁵⁰⁷ British officials speculated that Abdullah's designation as Emir of Syria in Damascus was possible if he managed to control the anti-French acts of the Syrian Nationalists. This would lessen French opposition to his brother's candidacy for Mesopotamia. After negotiation, Abdullah agreed to suspend his march towards the French and take control of the land east of the Jordan River for a trial period of six months in exchange for a monthly payment of £5,000 from the British government.⁵⁰⁸

Since the Emir had no interest in serving as High Commissioner-appointed governor of Trans-Jordania, he did not propose anybody for the position. The inhabitants of his region had heard him declare his desire to play a pivotal role in anti-French activity, and they expected him to stick to his words. He learned that the Sharifian family's interests ran counter to those of His Majesty's Government if he persisted in taking active measures against the French in Mesopotamia and Arabia more generally, as was recommended by the Conference. He proposed appointing an Arab Emir for Palestine and Transjordan, who would have the same relationship with Palestine's High

⁵⁰⁶ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 17, p. 5. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)," p. 5.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁸ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 23, pp. 142-153. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)," 1921, p. 5.

Commissioner that the future Emir of Mesopotamia would have with his country's High Commissioner.⁵⁰⁹ According to Jeremy Wilson, much of the history and turmoil of the contemporary Middle East can be traced back to the Cairo Conference, where Shiite, Sunni, and Kurdish territories were cobbled together to form Iraq. Kurds were not granted their own nation. Regarding the Palestine case the purpose of dividing Palestine in half was to eventually give the Jews the other half.⁵¹⁰

4.6.3. The Treaty of Lausanne 1923:

The Treaty of Lausanne, which was signed in 1923, is the only peace agreement that has remained in effect since the conclusion of the Great War. It was the final peace treaty to be negotiated after the war. It was instrumental in bringing about peace negotiations between Turkey and the "Allied and Associated Powers," which included United Kingdom, France, Greece, Italy, Japan, Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. On July 24, 1923, the final treaty was signed, and on August 21, 1923, it was confirmed in a formal manner by the Grand National Assembly in Ankara.⁵¹¹ In addition to the abolition of the Sultanate in November 1922, the emergence of Kemal's nationalist movement in Turkey led to the rejection of the Peace Treaty of Sèvres, which had been ratified by the Sultan's government. Kemal's revisionist stance, which reflected in part the internal revolution occurring in Turkey and in particular the principles outlined in the National Pact of 1920, was bolstered by military successes against Greece and divisions between the Allied Powers.⁵¹² The peace negotiations that followed the Greco-Turkish War and began in Lausanne in November 1922 were extremely difficult, as evidenced not only by the violent disagreements over several issues and the fears of a resumption of hostilities, but also by the break in the conference from February to April 1923; the Treaty of Lausanne was not signed until July 24, 1923.⁵¹³

⁵⁰⁹ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Appendix 17, pp. 5-6. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)."

⁵¹⁰ Jeremy Wilson, *Lawrence of Arabia: The Authorized Biography of T.E. Lawrence: Pre-Cairo Conference Negotiations*.

⁵¹¹ Alexander Lyon Macfie, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923: Revised Edition* (Routledge, 2014), p. 71.

⁵¹² Peter J. Beck, "'A Tedious and Perilous Controversy': Britain and the Settlement of the Mosul Dispute, 1918-1926," *Middle Eastern Studies* 17, no. 2 (1981): p. 256, doi:10.1080/00263208108700471.

⁵¹³ The Manchester Guardian, "House of Commons, The King's Proroguing Speech: New House Meets on December 20," *The Guardian*, November 1923, p. 12, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258989642/?terms=the+treaty+of+Lausanne+24+July+1923&match=1>.

In many ways, the latter was a victory for Turkey because it allowed it to keep a foothold in Europe and secure borders that were like those stated in the National Pact. This success was furthered in October 1923 by the declaration of the Turkish Republic, whose president would be Kemal and whose capital would be Angora, as well as by the Allied withdrawal from Turkish territory occupied by them during the Great War.⁵¹⁴ Notwithstanding the conclusion of the peace treaty, several impediments persisted concerning the possession of the vilayet of Mosul, as well as the exact demarcation of the boundary line separating Turkey and Iraq. The Parties involved in the dispute included Turkey, which had long controlled the region until the Great War, Iraq a British mandate that had been granted ownership of Mosul following the Treaty of Sévres, and Britain, which had taken hold of Mosul toward the end of 1918 and represented the concerns of its mandate. Despite Iraq's effective control over a majority of the contested region, with support from British forces. Turkey remained steadfast in pledging its claims to the territories outlined in the National Pact. Due to the paramount importance placed upon the sanctity of the National Pact, combined with the nationalist's demand and the intense emotions stirred within the Turkish Grand National assembly, any potential compromise regarding the Mosul region was deemed unacceptable.⁵¹⁵

Kemal was motivated to pursue his claims to Mosul by the area's oil potential and strategic relevance, and he believed that Turkey had already achieved a moral victory against a British government whose assistance for Greece in the previous war had been futile. The sizeable number of Kurds living inside the Mosul vilayet added a new dimension, since their destiny would have an impact on the success of the Turkish program of assimilation within its current boundaries.⁵¹⁶ The question of Mosul will be clearly address in the next chapter. Turkey lost all her Arab conquests as well as the Dodecanese islands because of this treaty, which may be viewed as the end of the Eastern Question in the shape it had assumed over the previous century and a half. Only Eastern Thrace remained in Europe. However, she reclaimed all of Anatolia, as well as the islands most required for the Dardanelles defence, and became a national state for the first time in her history. She was also able to avoid paying any war indemnity and entirely stop the despised system of capitulations (the point on which the talks were the longest and most arduous). The Montreux

⁵¹⁴ Linda C Rose, "Turkish Diplomacy 1918–1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement," *History: Reviews of New Books* 4, no. 1 (October 1975): 10–10, doi:10.1080/03612759.1975.9945178.

⁵¹⁵ Davison, "Turkish Diplomacy from Mudros to Lausanne."

⁵¹⁶ Beck, "'A Tedious and Perilous Controversy': Britain and the Settlement of the Mosul Dispute, 1918–1926," p. 256.

Convention of 1935 supplanted the elaborate Straits Convention appended to the treaty, of which the essential aspects are provided below.⁵¹⁷

4.7. The Cost of British Administration in the Middle East:

Churchill, who was serving as War Secretary at the time, was informed by Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson in August 1919 that Britain's strategic situation had changed since 1914. No major conflict in Europe or invasion of Britain were predicted to occur for many years. Threats from Egypt, Iraq, and India might rival or exceed those from before 1914. He was worried that a crisis in one of these countries, especially in India, might have repercussions elsewhere that required more money to control it. He advocated for the readiness of an expeditionary army to be dispatched to the Empire.⁵¹⁸ In November, Churchill gave the Cabinet copies of four papers about Iraq. The General Staff said that if Britain left Mosul or Northern Persia, they could save money by reducing the number of Iraqi troops. The threat was no longer coming from Turkey, but from local people in faraway places. To connect north of Iraq with the south Britain found out that the best chose to move through Iraq was to have a train line from Basra to Baghdad to Kirkuk and then to Mosul. However, the British didn't want any more additions because a line from Haifa to Baghdad was better for them.⁵¹⁹ In February 1920, the DMO, General Radcliffe, wrote to Wilson and told him that Churchill's plan to cut the number of troops in Iraq to 4,000 British and 16,000 Indian troops would make it difficult to keep more than Basra and the Persian oilfields. He said that in Mesopotamia, and especially in the Mosul Vilayet, we have one advantage that the war has given us. It is worth making some sacrifices now if it will pay off eventually.⁵²⁰

G. H. Bennett notes that Lloyd George openly expressed agreement. H. H. Asquith, the leader of the opposition, said that Britain should remove its costly garrison from Iraq, which had no natural borders, during a discussion on foreign affairs in the House of Commons.⁵²¹ In response, Lloyd George said that although he could understand someone advocating for a total withdrawal from Iraq, he could not understand why Asquith wanted to remain in Basra while doing so. Mosul is a

⁵¹⁷ Harry N Howard, "MS Anderson, Editor, The Great Powers and the Middle East, 74-1923. New York, St. Martin's Press, 1971; London, Edward Arnold, 1970." *Balkan Studies* 13, no. 1 (1972): pp. 176-177.

⁵¹⁸ Michael and Goold, "Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences 1919-1923," p. 207.

⁵¹⁹ CAB 24/93, "C.P.120 'The Situation in Mesopotamia with Notes as to Expenditure', W. S. Churchill, 12 November 1919.," 1919.

⁵²⁰ WO 32/5227 NA, "Reduction of Garrisons in Mesopotamia, 1919-21. DMO to CIGS, 9 February," 1920.

⁵²¹ Gill Bennett, *British Foreign Policy during the Curzon Period, 1919-24* (Springer, 1995), pp. 105-106.

nation with plenty of potential and it has substantial oil reserves.⁵²² He added that Britain had an obligation to the people of Iraq. When the peace treaty with Turkey was signed Britain would claim the mandate for Iraq, including Mosul; this would mean helping and advising an Arab government.⁵²³

It was hard for Britain to manage its budget to maintain its interests in Iraq. Churchill worried about how much it would cost to stay. The budget and who oversaw policy had to be made clear. On May 1, he said that 60,000 British and Indian troops were stationed in Iraq at a cost of £18,000,000 per year to the War Office. He said that the WO was not in charge of strategy, which was set by the FO. The Colonial Office knew how to run a country like Iraq, so it should make policy decisions based on what the Treasury says is possible financially. Churchill advised spending no more than £7 million a year, of which £5 million would go to the troops. The military should be able to choose what it could do with the money it had. He said that Iraq could be protected for less money if the job of doing so was moved from the WO to the Air Ministry. He was the Secretary of State for both the Air Ministry and the WO. In the end, he said that,

In considering the future profit which may be drawn from the Mesopotamian oilfields, it is necessary always to bear in mind the capital charges which are accruing. Every year we go on at the present rate of expenditure adds £1,000,000 a year at 5 per cent, to what Mesopotamia will ultimately have to produce in order to yield a profit. Even if the oilfields bear out our most sanguine hopes, we are burdening them to an intolerable extent with capital charges, and what would be a thoroughly good business for the British Empire, if developed gradually and thriftily is being daily deteriorated by the sterile charges which are mounting up.⁵²⁴

A gathering of ministers in January 1920 claimed that the oil could pay for the whole government of Iraq. Churchill pointed out that if the expenses of remaining were too great, this would not be the case. Over the following several years, British strategy in Iraq was motivated by a desire to remain because of pledges made to the Arabs, the oil, and the preservation of the road to India, rather than a necessity to do so inexpensively.⁵²⁵ Iraq was the site of a rebellion against British control that began in the summer of 1920. It was mostly put down by the time the year came to a

⁵²² “Parliamentary Debates, Fifth Series, House of Commons, Vol. Cxxvii. 25 March 1920, Cols. 644- 45.,” 1920.

⁵²³ *Ibid*, p 662.

⁵²⁴ “CAB 24/106, C.P. 1320 ‘Mesopotamia’, W. S. Churchill, 1 May 1920.”

⁵²⁵ “CAB 23/37, ‘Conclusions of a Conference of Ministers: Oil Situation in Mesopotamia’, 23 January 1920.,” 1920.

close, but it did raise problems over the expense of the British presence in Iraq and the most effective way that country might be managed.⁵²⁶ Oil may have served as a justification for the expense of the occupation, but as Peter Sluglett notes, this was a justification that would have pleased the British press but infuriated international countries. During the revolt, Arnold Wilson, the British Civil Commissioner, reported to the Secretary of State for India that Standard (NJ)'s local representative, W. H. Gallagher, was in contact with the rebels. Wilson did not provide any proof that the American Standard Oil Company of New Jersey (1870-1911) was actively helping them even though Gallagher seemed to have spoken with them. It looked for a time that Mosul could need to be evacuated by Britain. Churchill informed Lloyd George in June 1920 that reducing Britain's obligations in Iraq was necessary to lessen the expenses associated with garrisoning the country.⁵²⁷

In December, Churchill told General Sir Aylmer Haldane, who was in charge of Iraq, that Sir Percy Cox, who had been selected as High Commissioner in Baghdad, said that keeping troops in Iraq would cost £20 million to £25 million each year for the next two to three years. Since this was not enough to make Britain stay, Haldane was to make a plan for leaving. He should also give his view of the General Staff's view that the Basra vilayet could be held by a single division. This would give Britain a foothold and would protect the Persian oilfields. here were two separate oil issues affecting Britain's presence in Iraq; Basra covered the existing Persian oilfields and the Abadan refinery, but the potential oilfields were in Mosul.⁵²⁸ On the evening of December 31, 1920, the Cabinet discussed the situations in Iraq and Palestine. According to Churchill, the uprising in Iraq has been suppressed, and the military situation is stable at this point. When the spring came and the routes became accessible again, the Persian forces were supposed to leave. It was too late to retreat from the Mosul vilayet in the summer without inviting assaults by Arabs, Turks, and maybe Bolsheviks. It would be difficult to convince Parliament to give £20-22,000,000 on the Army Vote if a decision to retire to the Basra vilayet had to be delayed until March 1922. There were two options: either quickly pull out to Basra, leaving anarchy and turmoil behind, or set up an agency to oversee policy

⁵²⁶ Martin (Historiker) Gilbert, *World in Torment: Winston S. Churchill; 1916-1922* (Mandarin Paperbacks, 1975), 490-497.

⁵²⁷ Gibson, "British Strategy and Oil, 1914-1923," p. 158.

⁵²⁸ CAB 23/23., "Winston S. Churchill to General Haldane, 17 December 1920. Original Reference Cabinet Papers," 1920.

in Iraq and provide funds accordingly. After that, everyone agreed that retreating to Basra would be a terrible political move.⁵²⁹

Britain could not occupy Iraq only for its port without also occupying the rest of the nation. After two years, military obligations could be reduced because a new Arab government would have been constituted and a durable peace with Turkey would have been concluded. Cox had said that the Iraqi Arabs would accept Faisal as king, and most of Iraq's problems were from outside the country. If Faisal were to become king with Arab backing, the number of troops stationed in Baghdad, Mosul, and Basra might be decreased from three divisions to two. The French had made it clear that they and British assistance for Faisal in Iraq as hostile, which Curzon noted. The Cabinet had resolved to give Faisal as King of Iraq a second look. Next, they spoke on Churchill's suggestion for a Department of Middle Eastern Affairs. A separate department with its own minister was out of the question due to parliamentary concerns, but the issue of whether it should be part of the Colonial, or the Foreign Office remained. Since the Colonial Office already handled comparable duties elsewhere and the FO lacked administrative expertise, the Cabinet agreed that the new department should be part of the Colonial Office.⁵³⁰

During the time of the Cairo Conference, the question of reducing the British Military power in Mesopotamia was clearly addressed in the agenda of this meeting. Assuming that the plan could be conducted well, the Conference agreed that the number of troops in Mesopotamia could be cut to twenty-three battalions as soon as ships could be made available. Staffs, support services of all kinds, followers, and animals would all have to be cut back in the same way. It was thought that the budget for Palestine and Mesopotamia would go down by £5,000,000 in 1921-1922 if all the necessary steps were taken quickly. If the Government of India could be persuaded to shorten the time that Indian troops stayed on Imperial charge after being sent back to India, that would save even more money. It was not thought to cut the size of the force below the scale of twenty-three battalions until after the hot weather. In the meantime, steps were suggested to make a further cut possible in October.⁵³¹

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

⁵³⁰ "CAB 23/23, 'Cabinet Minutes and Papers 59(20) - 82(20)', 3 November - 31 December 1920. Cabinet 82(20), 31 December 1920.," 1920.

⁵³¹ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, pp. 4-5 British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)."

In the future, the Mesopotamian budget should be able to cover all of the imperial government's civil costs, in addition to making a contribution to the imperial government's military expenses. This contribution would for the time being take the shape of preparations that had been made for an Arab army, which would allow for a reduction in the size of the imperial troops. The local levies, whether Arab, Kurdish, or Assyrian, would be part of the Imperial armies.⁵³² The Colonial Office vote would be responsible for covering the expense of administering the charge, but the Mesopotamian Government could contribute toward covering such costs. On the other hand, the cost of the Arab army would be totally paid by Mesopotamian income, and this would be the contribution of that Government toward the cost of Mesopotamian defence for the year 1921-1922.⁵³³ During the new Bonar Law government a committee was formed to discuss the question whether to stay in Iraq or to leave. Although a group of the government members were in favour of leaving, the existence of oil in the region was the primary reason of their remaining.⁵³⁴

It is worth mentioning, the participation of Indian troops in the Mesopotamia campaign during the Great War underscored the imperialistic aspect of the battle from the British standpoint. Their involvement highlighted the extensive influence and authority of the British Empire, demonstrated by wide variety of regions and populations that were brought into the war effort. Furthermore, it showcased the crucial importance of imperial forces in safeguarding and enlarging Britain's interests in the Middle East and other regions, highlighting the interdependence of Britain's imperial territories within the framework of the conflict.⁵³⁵

4.8. Aims and Disputes Over Oil in the Middle East:

4.8.1. Oil Rights:

During the London meeting, the oil issue was hardly touched upon. The French, eager for a final resolution, brought up the conditions of the Greenwood-Berenger Agreement of December 21, 1919.⁵³⁶ Lloyd George was not going to take it lying down: Britain had second thoughts about

⁵³² Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, *IRAQ, 1900 to 1950: A Political, Social, and Economic History*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Beirut: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 153.

⁵³³ "Report on Middle East Conference Held in Cairo and Jerusalem, March 12th to 30th, 1921, Pp. 3-4. British Colonial Office, June 1921 (CO 935/1/1)."

⁵³⁴ G. E. Gruen, "The Oil Resources of Iraq: Their Role in the Policies of the Great Powers," in *In the Creation of Iraq 1914-1921* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p. 117.

⁵³⁵ Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War: Soldiers' Letters, 1914-1918*.

⁵³⁶ Ronald W Ferrier and James H Bamberg, *The History of the British Petroleum Company: Volume 1, The Developing Years, 1901-1932*, vol. 1 (Cambridge University Press, 1982), 357.

signing the deal since it would give some businesses special privileges. It would be prohibitively expensive to manage Mesopotamia, so any profits would have to go toward covering those expenses. The expense of running the government would greatly outweigh the income it brought in; it already exceeded eight times what Turkey had milled out of the nation. It was far from clear that Britain would see any benefit from administering the territory, but if it did, the oil earnings should not be given to private businesses. Since none of these agreements had any legal standing, he acknowledged no rights to any Turkish petroleum concessions. Tolerating private firms was out of the question, but he may accept an accord that ensured France got her fair part of the oil.⁵³⁷

4.8.2. The British Post-War Oil Aims in Mesopotamia:

British interests in the Middle East evolved during the Great War, with oil playing an increasingly vital role in the region. British strategists and planners wanted guaranteed future oil supply to lessen their reliance on the United States. Taking possession of Mosul, the most promising source of oil under British control, would have needed the approval of France. In the Sykes-Picot agreements (1916), Sykes and Kitchener had given France the city of Mosul, the commercial heart of the oil-rich territory that is today northern Iraq.⁵³⁸ During a meeting of the Middle East Committee⁵³⁹ on February 18, 1918, prominent government adviser Mark Sykes said, "If we played our cards well and in accordance with the underlying political principles now current in the world, we should have a good chance of remaining in control of Mesopotamia after the war."⁵⁴⁰ However, if the United Kingdom were to be accused of encouraging profiteering or establishing monopolies, the country would be at serious risk of losing control of the region. The plan before the Committee was the same as giving the people of modern-day Mesopotamia over to Lord Inchcape (a government director of APOC and the member of the Petroleum Imperial Policy Committee). The House of Commons would roar its disapproval at such a plan.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁷ Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres: The Partition of the Ottoman Empire at the Peace Conference of 1919-1920*, p. 274.

⁵³⁸ "CAB 21/119, 'Petroleum Situation in the British Empire and the Mesopotamia and Persian Oilfields', 1918; CAB 24/59 G.T. 5267, Slade," 1918.

⁵³⁹ The Middle East Committee, initially named the Mesopotamian Administration Committee, was established by the British government during World War I to manage and administer the territories captured from the Ottoman Empire, particularly Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq). This committee was crucial in shaping British policy in the region, addressing issues of governance, security, and economic development. See, Middle East Committee and Eastern Committee [8r] (15/42), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, Mss Eur F112/273, in Qatar Digital Library < https://www.qdl.qa/universal-viewer/81055/vdc_100071779101.0x000010 > [accessed 29 July 2024].

⁵⁴⁰ CAB 27/23, "Middle East Committee Minutes of February 18, 1918," 1918.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

There was no fundamental decision made by the Committee. Instead, discussions were tabled until Baghdad's Civil Commissioner, Percy Cox, could be present for advice. In April of 1918, Percy Cox was present in a Whitehall interdepartmental discussion. Cox was particularly concerned that quick action can be taken to start commerce and banking in Mesopotamia. He shared Inchcape's optimism that Britain would one day secure control of Mesopotamia, but he was unconcerned with the debate around the monopoly concept. He proposed that after the Peace Conference resolved the status and political destiny of Mesopotamia, the ground should be prepared for the British corporations to move forward as quickly as they wished.⁵⁴²

The crucial oil deal between the United Kingdom and France was delayed due to other disagreements. The British government kept trying to establish a national oil firm. Slade wrote a study for the Admiralty titled "Petroleum Situation in the British Empire" on July 29, 1918. Since Hankey, in his role as Cabinet Secretary, had considerable influence over British policy, Slade, Vice Chairman of APOC, had acquired a valuable friend. In a letter to Sir Eric Geddes first lord of admiralty (1917-1919), Hankey proposed that the Admiralty examine the oil dilemma in light of the war's overall objectives and the military's plans for the future. Even if the General Staff views Mesopotamia as a secondary theatre, it should evaluate whether or not the region's oil resources warrant keeping troops and equipment there.⁵⁴³

I have been told privately by people with knowledge of oil production that the oil situation of the future is rather uncertain...It was...suggested that the largest potential oilfields at present known are in Persia and Mesopotamia...there are some as far up as Mosul...if this information is correct, the retention of the oil-bearing regions in Mesopotamia and Persia...would appear to be a first class British war aim. I do not remember, however, that it has appeared as such.⁵⁴⁴

Slade's document was sent to the Imperial War Cabinet on July 30, after Hankey met with the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, and convinced him to do so. Wemyss dictated a covering note to Hankey, who then typed it out. Hankey asked Wemyss to instruct Slade to produce a second study expanding upon his earlier findings about the oilfields of Mosul. According to Wemyss's letter, the Admiralty desired,

⁵⁴² Helmut Mejcher, "Oil and British Policy Towards Mesopotamia, 1914—1918," *Middle Eastern Studies* 8, no. 3 (1972): 380–381, doi:10.1080/00263207208700215.

⁵⁴³ Mejcher, pp. 383–384.

⁵⁴⁴ "CAB 21/119, 'Petroleum Situation in the British Empire and the Mesopotamia and Persian Oilfields', 1918; CAB 24/59 G.T. 5267, Slade."

to endorse in the strongest manner possible, the general principles and general conclusions set forth [by Slade]...the holding in our hands of the motive power of sea-borne traffic - coal...has proved of inestimable value in that maintenance of sea power on which the whole edifice of the Empire rests...it is hoped that...the extreme importance of [Mesopotamia] in regard to the Petroleum situation will not be lost sight of.⁵⁴⁵

Hankey suggested in a letter to Lloyd George dated August 1 that Slade's document, as well as one on Palestine and Mesopotamia by the Allied War Council at Versailles, be taken into consideration during the following day's Cabinet meeting. Hankey contended:

There is no military advantage in pushing forward in Mesopotamia...there may be reasons other than purely military for pushing on. Would it not be an advantage before the end of the war, to secure the valuable oil wells in Mesopotamia?⁵⁴⁶

Slade said that the strategic location and availability of oil were the two main concerns. Despite their intimate connections, it was still conceivable to gather enough supplies without addressing the more crucial strategic dilemma. The world's primary bunker fuel was shifting from coal to oil, thus Britain sought to have as much influence over the oil market as possible. "Half our sea power is gone, and our position becomes a most precarious one,"⁵⁴⁷ as a result of losing control of the world's bunker fuel. Persia and Mesopotamia have the world's most significant prospective oilfields. It was crucial to have control over the oilfields in Mesopotamia and Persia.

In Persia and Mesopotamian lie the largest undeveloped resources at present known in the world... It is not too much to estimate that the oil lands of Persia and Mesopotamia which will extend over an area of 360,000 square miles, or more than twice the size of the oil land of Russia, should not in the future provide a supply equal to that now given by the United States... If this estimate is anywhere near the truth, then it is evident that the Power that controls the oil lands of Persia and Mesopotamia will control the source of supply of the majority of the liquid fuel of the future. If this control is combined with that of coal, then that Power will hold the control of bunker fuel and will be in a position to dictate its own terms to all shipping in case of war.⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴⁵ Slade, "Petroleum Situation in the British Empire 29 July 1918."

⁵⁴⁶ Mejcher, "Oil and British Policy Towards Mesopotamia, 1914—1918," p. 387.

⁵⁴⁷ Gibson, "British Strategy and Oil, 1914-1923. Martin William Gibson. Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. College of Arts. School of Humanities. University of Glasgow.," pp. 115–116.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

To avoid being at the mercy of coalminers or a massive oil trust, the maritime interests represented in that combination wanted ownership of a supply of oil fuel in the Mediterranean. However, even as late as 1919, the FO was troubled by the connection between private and public interests in a "Government body of control." With regards to Inchcape, one of its officials, Kidston, stated it as follows,

The Petroleum Executive, I believe I am right in saying, is largely composed of persons who have a direct personal interest in oil enterprise. What can one expect, therefore, when private and public interests are inextricably mixed up in a government body of control?⁵⁴⁹

Both British lobby organizations and authorities were under the impression that German and Japanese competitors would eventually enter the Mesopotamian market sooner or later. Even among the competitors from the FO and the Board of Trade, there was naturally some agreement that the commercial position of the United Kingdom needed to be enhanced, and that the construction of a financial system controlled by the United Kingdom should have been given priority.⁵⁵⁰

4.8.3. British Post-War Oil Aims in Persia:

Calouste Gulbenkian, also known as "Mr. Five Per cent" was a British-Armenian businessperson and humanitarian who lived from 1869 to 1955. He started the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC) in 1912 to find and develop oil resources in the Ottoman Empire. APOC bought 50 % parts in the company. In 1920, the APOC also bought an oil concession in the north that had been given to a Georgian businessperson, socialite, and philanthropist named Akaki Khoshtaria. Khoshtaria was a former Russian subject who lived from 1873 to 1932. The oil industry in Azerbaijan and northern Iran was his primary business focus. The APOC set up a new company, the North Persia Oil Company, to manage this new purchase. However, the Persians refused to accept the new company, which led to a long-lasting argument over the oil in northern Persia. In 1923, a lot of oil was found in Naft Khana, which is now Khanaqin in Diyala Province. At the time, Naft Khana

⁵⁴⁹ Mejcher, "Oil and British Policy Towards Mesopotamia, 1914—1918," p. 380.

⁵⁵⁰ CAB 27/23, "Middle East Committee, Mesopotamia Trade, Note Prepared by the India Office, February 6, 1918, Secret, M.E.C.-72 (Revise).," 1918.

was a "transferred territory" on the border between Iran and Iraq. The Khanaqin Oil Company was set up as a branch of APOC in London.⁵⁵¹

The D'Arcy oil concession and royalty clauses, which limited Persia to receiving 16 per cent of net income, were widely opposed by the Persian populace at this time. The absence of government control over the oil business contributed to intensify the Persian government's concerns about the way APOC oversaw its activities in Persia since industrial planning and development, as well as other basic changes, depended on oil earnings. An environment of discontent was so prevalent as to imply that a substantial adjustment of the concession conditions would be feasible. Furthermore, APOC's previous practice of stopping oil royalty advances when its demands were not satisfied had significantly diminished in impact as a result of reforms that were implemented and better fiscal order in Persia. To convince the British government to award APOC exclusive access to Persian oil resources in 1923, Burmah (British oil company whose oilfields were located mainly in Burma) hired Winston Churchill to campaign on its behalf.⁵⁵²

4.8.4. The American Oil Interest in Palestine:

In 1913, a significant portion of the Middle East, including Palestine, was under the dominion of the Ottoman Empire. As the potential for oil in the region started to become apparent, it turned into a battleground for rival interests in the petroleum industry. The Europeans, united behind the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC), which later became the forerunner of IPC, formed one side. On the opposing side were the Americans, which included Standard Oil of New York (Socony), a forerunner of Mobil. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company, now known as British Petroleum, had recently initiated the extraction of oil from its Persian oilfield. Meanwhile, Socony possessed a widespread distribution network in the Ottoman Empire but faced a shortage of crude oil supplies.⁵⁵³ The Ottoman Empire had awarded the American Standard Oil Company of New Jersey a concession in Palestine before the outbreak of war. It applied for authorization to explore for oil in early 1920. Britain declined because it was hesitant to allow such operations in occupied enemy territory until its future was determined. In May 1919, the Zionist Organization of America applied

⁵⁵¹ Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, *Oil in the Middle East* (Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 36–37.

⁵⁵² Longrigg, pp. 37–38.

⁵⁵³ Michael Quentin Morton, "The Land That Oil Forgot: Palestine, 1913–1948," *GeoExpro*, 2020, <https://geoexpro.com/the-land-that-oil-forgot-palestine-1913-1948/>.

to send two geologists to Palestine on the condition that they come in their own capacity and not on behalf of any corporation.⁵⁵⁴

The FO conveyed Standard Oil Company's repeated appeal to the Colonial Office in September 1921 after noting that Curzon had placed the responsibility for the lack of progress in obtaining the mandate for Palestine on the United States Embassy in London. Churchill agreed with Curzon that the mandate should be delayed, but he did not want to use this as an excuse to stall the application excessively or to pass up the opportunity to end a small but persistent Anglo-American enmity. It should be made clear that giving permission did not entail endorsing Standard (NJ)'s right to make the concession. It was best to start by speaking with the High Commissioner for Palestine. The FO acknowledged that the presence of the concession had been a consideration in the decision but claimed that this did not impair the legality of Standard (NJ)'s request, which was granted. Standard (NJ) was required to disclose all its findings to the Palestinian administration and would not be permitted to exploit any discoveries until the conditions of the mission had been agreed upon. Although little oil was discovered in Palestine, this demonstrated the British determination to eliminate a little source of friction with the USA.⁵⁵⁵

From 1922 to 1948, the British Mandate in Palestine attracted attention from both British and American oil interests, as they vied for control over the growing oil resources in the Middle East. The British, via the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), initiated operations in regions such as Kurnub, highlighting their geopolitical supremacy and safeguarding crucial oil reserves. British geologists, such as F. E. Wellings, collaborated extensively with their American colleagues from companies like Standard Oil. However, there was considerable tension between them. British authorities actively opposed the exploratory operations of American oil firms, particularly Socony (Standard Oil of New York). Britain was worried about the American existence in Palestine as "T.E. Lawrence had confirmed Socony's interest in Kurnub, causing his superiors to redouble their efforts to block the American effort." Despite facing initial obstacles, such as the confiscation of their equipment during the Great War, Socony's unwavering endeavours resulted in significant progress under the leadership of William Yale. Yale's innovative surveys and legal foundation, along with the

⁵⁵⁴ FO 608/97/17, "Mines and Minerals: American Zionist Scientific Mission; Visit of F Julius Fohs and William H Foster to Palestine in Connection with Oil Prospecting," 1919.

⁵⁵⁵ CO 733/11, "Colonial Office: Palestine Original Correspondence Sept-Dec', 1921. 47206: Oliphant to Colonial Office, 20 September," 1920.

subsequent implementation of the 'Open Door' policy in 1922, enabled American companies to establish a strong presence in the region. This era exemplifies the intricate interaction between colonial aspirations, geopolitical tactics, and business concerns that influenced the oil industry in Palestine throughout the early 20th century.⁵⁵⁶

4.8.5. Britain and France's Oil Dispute:

The French Foreign Office understood that maintaining order in inland Syria would be a significant drain on resources, so Picot and his government favoured exercising direct French rule only along the Mediterranean coast and in an expanded Lebanon, while exercising indirect control over the rest of Syria through Arab puppet rulers. In order to get concessions from Sykes, Picot pretended to Sykes that France insisted on having direct sovereignty over all of Syria. His goal was to expand French dominance eastward from Syria to present-day Mosul in Iraq.⁵⁵⁷

Picot had been ignorant that Kitchener and Sykes had been conspiring to hand over Mosul behind his back. The French zone was supposed to function as a buffer for Britain against Russia, thus they advocated for it to be expanded from the Mediterranean coast in the west to the Asian mainland in the east.⁵⁵⁸ The French in the Middle East would serve as a barrier between the British Middle East and the Russian barbarians to the north, just as the Great Wall of China does between China and its northern neighbours. In the de Bunsen proceedings, this idea was first introduced. Kitchener had been given the idea, by Ronald Storrs, the Oriental Secretary (which is to say, the staff specialist in Eastern affairs), and it became fundamental to his post-war Eastern strategy. To put the French in the front line, at a spot where the Russians may one day be anticipated to assault, meant Britain's claim to Mosul had to be abandoned, despite the oil riches firmly thought to reside there. "The War Office point of view was that from a military point of view, the principle of inserting a wedge of French territory between any British zone and the Russian Caucasus would seem in every way desirable."⁵⁵⁹ Sykes was able to cede territory to Britain, while Picot was able to seize territory for France, both of which included Mosul. The British were supposed to take control of the Mesopotamian provinces of Basra and Baghdad. An Arab state or confederation of

⁵⁵⁶ Michael Quentin Morton, "The Land That Oil Forgot: Palestine, 1913–1948."

⁵⁵⁷ David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace.: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*, 190.

⁵⁵⁸ Luigi Scazzieri, "Britain, France, and Mesopotamian Oil, 1916–1920," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 26, no. 1 (January 2015): 26, doi:10.1080/09592296.2015.999623.

⁵⁵⁹ David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, p. 191.

nations, theoretically autonomous but in fact split into French and British spheres of influence, was to be established throughout the Middle East, except for Palestine and the regions over which France and Britain exercised direct sovereignty.⁵⁶⁰

After the armistice with Turkey was reached, the British Prime Minister acted swiftly to resolve the situation there to avoid American intervention. The Prime Minister made an unusually forthright announcement of his intentions on October 6th, as recorded in the journal of Maurice Hankey, Secretary to the War Cabinet. "Lloyd George took a very intransigent attitude and wanted us to go back on the Sykes-Picot agreement, so as to get Palestine for us and to bring Mosul into the British zone, and even to keep the French out of Syria."⁵⁶¹ Balfour saw things quite differently. When the French proposed Lloyd George's idea of resolving the situation before the Americans came, Balfour believed they were crazy. Balfour believed American involvement was necessary for the peace accord to hold. He was serious about providing the United States the mandate over Palestine, unlike the Prime Minister, and he thought it was crucial that she accept it.⁵⁶²

Clemenceau visited Lloyd George at 10 Downing Street in London on December 1, 1918. The question of the Middle East was brought up a month after the armistices. Clemenceau inquired as to what revisions to the French claims Britain wanted. Lloyd George responded, saying: "Mosul." Clemenceau said, "You shall have it. Anything else?" Lloyd George replied, "Palestine." Again, Clemenceau said, "You shall have it." "A man of his word,"⁵⁶³ Despite the fact that there was no formal confirmation of his concessions, and that the British did not acknowledge that he intended to be compensated for them, Clemenceau adhered to it throughout the angry fighting of the peace negotiations.⁵⁶⁴ From the beginning of his political career until December 1st, Clemenceau's objective had been to give way to Britain in the Middle East to win her assistance in Europe against Germany. Clemenceau thought, incorrectly as it turned out, that he had at least the implicit consent of Lloyd George to back France's rights in Europe in exchange for Clemenceau's unequivocal commitment to accept Britain's claims in the Middle East. However, as of December 1st, the two prime ministers still had not settled their differences over the Middle East. In the months that

⁵⁶⁰ Berdine, *Redrawing the Middle East: Sir Mark Sykes, Imperialism and the Sykes-Picot Agreement*.

⁵⁶¹ David, *A Peace to End All Peace*, pp. 373–374.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Matthew Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East, 1917-1919* (Psychology Press, 1999), p. 122.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid.

followed Clemenceau's first request for Lloyd George to outline his claims in the Middle East on December 1st, it became clear that Lloyd George had not included what he sought from France over the region.⁵⁶⁵

On April 18th, the Prime Ministers negotiated and signed the San Remo Agreement, also known as the Cadman- Berthelot Agreement. A 25% share of the oil, or a 25% ownership in a private business founded to produce it, would be given to the French under this arrangement, which was otherwise identical to the prior accords. Up to 20% of the company might be owned by Americans, with the first 10% coming from the French share and the remaining 10% coming from the other shareholders pro rata. The French commitment to purchase up to 20% of APOC's Persian oil transported across French mandated territory by pipeline would have the backing of the British government. Such agreement was made on July 24, 1920, but the United States was against it, because its citizens were barred from working in the oil fields near Mosul.⁵⁶⁶

4.8.6. Britain and United States' Oil Dispute:

Next to join the scene was the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. Although the company's lead geologist had predicted oil in Iraq as early as 1910, little action was taken on the prospect until after the Great War. The head of the corporation proposed exploring for oil in Iraq in February 1919, prompting A. C. Bedford to go to Europe to manage the situation personally. Britain and France sealed a secret oil deal on April 27, 1920, in which they agreed to divide up the future production of Middle Eastern oil between themselves. Bedford had a French delegation member telegraph along a copy of the agreement he had gotten. Due to the war and oil-scarcity fear, the San Remo pact was considered as detrimental to the interests of the United States as a country. Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby and Foreign Secretary Curzon rebutted this, saying that the United States had just 12 percent of the world's oil reserves and that demand for petroleum far outstripped supply. American oil interests were thought to be funding the anti-British insurgency in Iraq and the Kemalist movement in Turkey, according to British authorities. The State Department and the oil firms supported British dominance in the region, and the president of New Jersey Standard said that Iraq was a country of rival tribes at war with one another. Allen Dulles

⁵⁶⁵ David, *A Peace to End All Peace*, p. 375.

⁵⁶⁶ Kent, *Oil and Empire*, p. 155.

was concerned that the United States would be left high and dry if Britain and France gave up control of their Middle Eastern conquests.⁵⁶⁷

In the summer of 1920, geologists informed the British government that the oil prospects in Iraq were more speculative than anticipated. Sir John Cadman, a prominent character in the British energy industry, was delegated to initiate discussions in the United States. On June 22, 1922, A. C. Bedford of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey proposed to negotiate a stake in the concessionary corporation in Iraq that was owned by the British. “The Department of State responded that it had no objection to his doing so, provided no qualified American oil companies that wished to participate were excluded. Negotiations then went forward, and the dispute with the United States was resolved.”⁵⁶⁸ Then, negotiations continued, and the dispute with the United States ended. However, America left Britain to shoulder the responsibility of imposing European control over the Middle East without assistance.⁵⁶⁹

In addition to Standard Oil of New Jersey, Standard Oil Company of New York (Socony), which had also received concessions from the Ottomans in the Syrian-Palestinian region before the war, also tried to establish itself in Kurdistan with the help of the US government. The firm sent a representative to the American delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, and when two of its geologists were arrested and expelled from Iraq by the British authorities in September 1919, it succeeded in getting the State Department in Washington to lodge a formal protest. Lord Curzon countered this by saying that the restrictions imposed for the duration of the war applied to all nations and prohibited this type of activity until the peace treaty was signed. The US government protested even more strongly against the Franco-English oil treaty signed in San Remo, which enshrined a European monopoly over Middle Eastern oil and which the US saw as a violation not only of US oil companies, but of US national interests. The background to this was that the war had shown for the first time in history the vital military and naval importance of oil, and after 1918 fears of oil shortages were widespread in the US as the price of crude oil soared and domestic reserves dwindled. That is why Washington demanded the application of the ‘open door principle’, which would have guaranteed equal rights for all, but could hardly respond to Curzon’s remark

⁵⁶⁷ David, *A Peace to End All Peace*, pp. 534–535.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 534–536.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid*.

that the United States currently holds 80% of world oil production, while Britain has only 4.5% (the British received four-fifths of their oil needs from the United States before and during the world war⁵⁷⁰). Some British officials were convinced that, having alienated the US, US oil interests were behind the anti-British insurgency in Iraq and even the Kemalist movement in Turkey.⁵⁷¹ However, when the vast oil reserves in the depths of Iraq and the capital needed to bring them to the surface became apparent, London realised that it could not do without the Americans. Therefore, the British government would put pressure on oil companies in 1922 to allow the incorporation of Standard Oil into the TPC, which soon became the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC).⁵⁷²

4.9. Chapter Summary:

From 1919 to 1923, the Middle East experienced substantial changes, mostly influenced by the economic and political objectives of the victorious British and French. Their endeavours to infiltrate regions characterised by racial and ethnic diversity established the groundwork for global forces to exert their influence, especially in the recently established states. The "Middle East question," which pertains to unsolved political matters and ongoing military confrontation, arose due to the territorial partitions established after the Great War. As this chapter has argued, the British exerted essential control over petroleum in the region, prioritising the prevention of any other nation from posing a threat to their oil supplies, especially from Iraq and Mosul. In order to achieve their political and economic goals, the British implemented the mandate system in the region, which included agreements like the San Remo Conference of 1920. This conference effectively placed Iraq and Palestine under British authority. Within Palestine, the British were granted a "dual mandate" by the Balfour Declaration, which entailed their authority to act on behalf of both the Jewish and Arab communities. Nevertheless, the emphasis on creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine resulted in increasing conflicts, as it was widely rejected by the Arab community. Similarly, in Iraq, the local opposition saw significant growth as demonstrated in this

⁵⁷⁰ In 1913, the United States produced 140 times as much oil as Persia. David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace. The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*, Henry Holt, New York, 1989, 29, p. 535.

⁵⁷¹ They were wrong, because Washington was interested in calm and stable conditions in Iraq, because this favoured the activities of the oil companies. And only the British could provide that stability and calm in ethnically and religiously divided Mesopotamia.

⁵⁷² William Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil. Irak, Turkey and the Anglo-American World Order 1918–1930*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1982, pp. 90–91.

chapter through indigenous sources, especially during the Iraqi Revolt of 1920, as the populace eagerly anticipated the realisation of British war commitments.

The sources employed in this dissertation substantially contribute to examining the intricate connection between Britain and the Middle East from two different viewpoints, therefore enabling a more thorough comprehension of the period from 1919 to 1923. The examination of British political and economic goals in the region, namely regarding dominance over oil reserves in Iraq and Mosul, in conjunction with authentic Arab sources, offers an impartial account. This dual methodology provides a valuable understanding of both the colonial powers' tactics and the indigenous people's responses, therefore enhancing the historical analysis of the British Mandate era. The use of Arab sources to emphasise the viewpoints of indigenous communities, particularly during events such as the Iraqi Revolt of 1920, enhances the comprehension of local resistance against British governance. Through the inclusion of these subaltern voices, this thesis offers a more intricate analysis compared to conventional Eurocentric interpretations, which have frequently given priority to imperial viewpoints. This is noteworthy since Arab perspectives have traditionally been excluded from dominant narratives on the Middle East, particularly when addressing the mandates enforced by the British and French following the Great War. The indigenous testimonies I have utilised demonstrate the frustration, opposition, and political awareness of the indigenous people, which were frequently overlooked by colonial authorities and early western historians.

For British strategy in Iraq, this chapter argues that the Cairo Conference in 1921 was a crucial turning point. With Winston Churchill as the chairperson, the meeting concluded with the appointment of Faisal as the monarch of Iraq, which demonstrated Britain's intention to establish stability in the region through indirect governance. Nevertheless, the Kurdish issue remained unsolved and was so sent to the League of Nations. In 1920, the pact of Sèvres made a commitment to grant Kurdish independence. However, the Turkish Grand National Assembly declined to approve the pact, and the absence of Kurdish cohesion further undermined their claim. The Treaty of Lausanne by 1923 superseded the Sèvres Treaty, therefore leaving Kurdish ambitions unrealised. Central to the argument of this chapter, is how oil exerted significant influence on the formation of British foreign policy during this era. The Anglo-French oil agreement proved to be a source of disagreement, especially about Mosul, a region abundant in petroleum resources. In

spite of early opposition, the San Remo Agreement of 1920 resulted in Britain relinquishing a 25% portion of Mesopotamian oil to France in return for dominion over Mosul. This agreement was essential for preserving British supremacy in the region, particularly considering American interests in Middle Eastern oil, which had been marginalised by the U.S.'s exclusion from Mesopotamia's oil reserves.

As shown here, the British pursuit of ensuring security of oil supply was intricately connected to their wider geopolitical strategy. Indeed, Mosul emerged as a central hub of British dominion mostly because of its huge oil deposits. Defence leaders, including Admiral Sir Edmond Slade, emphasised the strategic significance of Mosul in safeguarding Britain's naval capabilities. The British forces had taken control of the city in 1918, a move perceived as a modification of the armistice conditions regarding the Ottoman Empire. The question of Mosul continued to be a source of disagreement during talks with Turkey, which asserted its claim to the area based on its Kurdish population. In 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne initiated a significant shift in Anglo-Turkish relations, as British officials, including Curzon, advocated for the continued inclusion of Mosul in Iraq.

This thesis demonstrates that the post-war aspirations of Britain and France in the Middle East were mostly motivated by economic criteria, namely the dominance over oil resources. From this perspective, the establishment of mandates, particularly in Iraq and Palestine, enabled the British to safeguard their geopolitical interests while concealing their imperialistic aspirations by presenting themselves as representatives of the world community. The persisting Kurdish issue and the deliberate omission of the United States from oil agreements expose the degree to which Britain manipulated diplomatic negotiations in order to establish its supremacy. This argument and the evidence presented in this chapter persuasively illustrate that although Britain made commitments to independence and stability, its primary objective was to retain authority over oil resources, which eventually influenced the tumultuous history of the region.

The historiographical significance of the period from 1919 to 1923 in the Middle East revolves around the complex interplay between British imperial ambitions, particularly regarding oil, and the responses of indigenous populations to European colonial rule. This era, as argued in your thesis, is central to understanding how the mandates system, oil politics, and indigenous resistance shaped the modern Middle East. Several historians have contributed to this field of study, offering

varying perspectives on British and French involvement, the mandates, and the political developments of the time.

Economic interests and oil politics are central to British foreign policy during this period. Historians like Marian Kent has highlighted the significance of petroleum in British imperial strategy. Your argument aligns with these scholars by demonstrating how Britain's control over oil in Iraq and Mosul was a decisive factor in its post-war strategy. However, other historians, like Michael and Goold, extend this analysis by examining how the oil industry also transformed local political economies, making oil a force for both imperial control and local change.

Furthermore, mandates and imperialism are critiqued by historians like Christopher Sykes, who argue that the mandate served British interests while intensifying tensions between Jews and Arabs. Moreover, the indigenous resistance and subaltern voices are also explored, particularly in the context of the Iraqi Revolt of 1920 and the Cairo Conference of 1921. This historiographical trend by incorporating subaltern voices and contributing to the growing scholarship that prioritizes indigenous perspectives in understanding resistance to colonialism. Historical debates and divergences exist regarding the extent to which Britain's actions were driven purely by oil interests. By incorporating indigenous perspectives and focusing on local resistance.

Chapter Five:

The Phase of Fulfilling War Promises and Preserving War Ambitions

1923-1935

5. Iraq

5. 1. The British Colonial Policies and Economic Agenda in Iraq 1923-1932:

5.1.1. The Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922-1924:

The Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, signed on October 10, 1922, was a bilateral agreement between the British and Iraqi governments. The pact was created to enable Iraqi self-governance while granting British authority over Iraq's foreign policy. The purpose of this was to finalize a pact that was agreed upon at the Cairo Conference in 1921, which aimed to establish a monarchy ruled by the Hashemite family in Iraq.⁵⁷³ Moreover, the validity of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was contingent upon the 94 and 132 articles of the Treaty of Sèvres. However, since the Treaty of Sèvres was never ratified and so had no legal standing, the Anglo-Iraqi agreement was likewise considered illegal until 1924.⁵⁷⁴ This agreement is a fundamental element in the intricate web of colonial and post-colonial interactions. Created at a crucial period after the Great War, this treaty exemplified the complexities of the mandate system established by the LN. Following the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, the area saw enormous changes, with Iraq emerging as a prominent centre of attention. The pact symbolized the changing power dynamics, representing both the remaining influence of imperial rule and the early progress toward national independence.⁵⁷⁵

The declaration made by the Secretary of State for Colonies that the mandate would expire as soon as Iraq was accepted into the LN resolved a number of concerns over the level of control that the United Kingdom was supposed to have under the new treaty.⁵⁷⁶ An official signing of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty, which was referred to as a "Friendship" Treaty, took place on October 10, 1922. Faisal delivered a speech in front of the people, stating that "The Treaty...is based on the foundation of

⁵⁷³ FO 93/124/2, "Treaty of Alliance of 1922 (Known as the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty)" (The National Archive, n.d.).

⁵⁷⁴ "Outline of Anglo-Iraq Treaty Relations, 1920-1927," *Bulletin of International News* 4, no. 8 (1927): 171, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25638365>.

⁵⁷⁵ Wilks, "The 1922 Anglo-Iraq Treaty: A Moment of Crisis and the Role of Britain's Man on the Ground," 349.

⁵⁷⁶ Lady Florence Bell, *The Letters of Gertrude Bell*, 2nd ed. (Ernest Benn, London, 1927), p. 593.

mutual advantage and interest... Great Britain... has undertaken to assist us and has recognized our political independence and respected our national sovereignty. All other agreements subsidiary to the treaty will be based on these principles.”⁵⁷⁷

The pact addressed a variety of issues, including the obligations of British officials, the supervision of the legal system, the payment for public works that were erected during the time of military occupation, and the representation of Iraq by the British in other nations. The treaty opened the door for roughly the same degree of British authority that the mandate did, although under a different form. It was necessary to establish key advisory roles for British officials, and the Iraqi government was now responsible for taking care of the large salary that these officials received. Furthermore, it was addressed in the 4th article of the Treaty that the king of Iraq “agrees to be guided by the advice of His Britannic Majesty tendered through the high commissioner on all important matters affecting the international and financial obligations and interests of His Britannic Majesty for the whole period of this treaty.”⁵⁷⁸ On the other hand, the Council of State for Iraq did not agree to recognize the Anglo-Iraq agreement unless it was considered acceptable by the Iraqi Constituent Assembly that was going to be held in the near future.

A fundamental aspect of the pact was that it outlined the limitations within which the British government could use its influence over Iraq. While simultaneously recognizing Iraq as an independent state, it formed a constitutional monarchy under the rule of King Faisal I. This was a step that was strategically aligned with the objectives of the British government. Because of this combination of sovereignty and control, the United Kingdom was able to keep military sites and communication connections inside the borders of Iraq. As a result, the treaty created the framework for a strange situation in which the administration of Iraq was ostensibly autonomous, but its real governance and foreign policy continued to be influenced by the British.⁵⁷⁹ The mandate strategy applied in Iraq, which was in line with the dominant colonial ideology of the period, had characteristics of both benign assimilation and strategic control. British consultants and officials had prominent roles inside the administrative framework, exerting substantial influence in key decision-making procedures. Attempts were undertaken to promote the development of

⁵⁷⁷ *Report on Administration of Iraq, April 1922 to March 1923*, p. 23.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p. 187.

⁵⁷⁹ Nur-Eldeen Masalha, “King Faisal I of Iraq: A Study of His Political Leadership, 1921-1933.” (School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London), 1987), pp. 79–80.

infrastructure, boost economic expansion, and use contemporary administration methods. However, these programs often worked along with imperialistic goals, specifically in safeguarding Britain's economic interests, especially oil concessions obtained by the Iraq Petroleum Company.⁵⁸⁰

The treaty's Article 1 acknowledged Iraq's national sovereignty; however, the exact boundaries of that sovereignty were not yet defined. The British Government maintained control over foreign relations, a critical aspect of sovereignty. Article four required Faisal to seek the High Commadore's counsel on all financial matters; Article six established the British Government's commitment “to secure the admission of Iraq to membership in the LN as soon as possible”.⁵⁸¹ A comparative analysis of the treaty and the draft mandate revealed that although the two documents did not precisely mirror one another, the primary stipulations of the mandate were faithfully replicated in the treaty draft, as intended.⁵⁸² The more significant subsidiary military and financial accords required the Iraqi government to invest 25 per cent of its yearly income in army upkeep and to assume full responsibility for internal order and exterior defence as soon as possible. The Iraqi government was also to shoulder the whole expense of the country's administration, the British Residency, and Iraq's part of the Ottoman Public Debt.⁵⁸³ The port of Basra, the railroads, and other projects undertaken during the military occupation would eventually be turned over to the Iraqi government, but they would still need to be paid for—interest included. Strict language maybe, but that dependent nations should, to the greatest extent feasible, support themselves was a fundamental tenet of British colonial strategy. Although the Anglo-Iraq Treaty's signing signalled a turning point in the two countries' relationship, external events and political shifts in Turkey and London would ultimately have a big influence on British policy in Iraq.⁵⁸⁴

Nevertheless, the story of the pact was not exclusively determined by foreign influences. The installation of a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary system gave Iraq an appearance of self-governance. The increasing self-governance coincided with a rising Iraqi patriotism, giving

⁵⁸⁰ Ferruh Demirmen, “The Region of a Monopoly Great Power Conflict over Iraqi Oil: The World War I Era,” *Global Policy Forum 2* (2003): 1.

⁵⁸¹ Hudson, “The Admission of Iraq to Membership in the League of Nations,” p. 134.

⁵⁸² FO371/775/E78, “Iraq: Mandate Compared with Treaty,” 1922.

⁵⁸³ Paul Hemphill, “The Formation of the Iraqi Army, 1921-33,” *The Integration of Modern Iraq*, 1979, pp. 94–95.

⁵⁸⁴ Elizabeth MacCallum, “Iraq and the British Treaties...,” *Foreign Policy Association 6*, no. 12 (1930): p. 24.

rise to groups and emotions that contested British control. The nationalist undercurrents, intensified by social, cultural, and economic imbalances that were worsened by British policy, became the core of opposition to the mandate.⁵⁸⁵ The controversial path to Iraqi independence was ultimately set in motion by the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922 and the mandate policies it included. As a paradigmatic example of the convergence of foreign rule and domestic ambitions, it exemplified the intricate relationship between colonial powers and emerging national identities. The complex legacies of imperialism are best shown by this era of Iraqi history, which shaped the course of the country and its social and political environment for many years to come.

5.1.2. Mosul Between the Arabs, Turks and British 1923-1926:

A historical framework can be employed to analyse the Mosul issue, commencing with the Mudros Agreement and the British occupation of the province in 1918. Subsequently, the Lausanne negotiations ensued, during which the fate of this province emerged as a pivotal concern amidst the pursuit of peace. The time span from 1923 to 1926 was characterized by significant geopolitical manoeuvring and divergent interests pertaining to the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. Arab-Turkish-British tensions erupted in this region, entangling all parties in a complex struggle for dominion, autonomy, and the acquisition of vital resources, predominantly oil.⁵⁸⁶ The core of this struggle was in the Mosul Vilayet, a region rich in oil resources that was formerly under the control of the Ottoman Empire. Following the disintegration of the empire in the aftermath of the Great War, the future of Mosul became a subject of dispute, particularly after the conclusion of the Mudros Armistice. As per the Sykes-Picot pact of 1916, the Mosul Vilayet fell into the French sphere of influence. Furthermore, the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920 first assigned Mosul as a constituent of the French mandate in Syria. However, later talks and the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 invalidated this provision, resulting in an unclear position for the province.⁵⁸⁷

The Anglo-Turkish dispute revolves around Mosul and Iraq's need to incorporate this region into the newly formed nation. Following the Treaty of Lausanne, the international community saw the

⁵⁸⁵ Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, "The Historiography of Modern Iraq," *The American Historical Review*, 1991, p. 84.

⁵⁸⁶ Nevin Coşar and Sevtap Demirci, "The Mosul Question and The Turkish Republic: Before and After the Frontier Treaty, 1926," *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 1 (2006): pp. 44-45.

⁵⁸⁷ Sevtap Demirci, "The Evaluation of Turco-British Diplomatic Strategies during the Lausanne Conference, 1922-1923."

British presence in Mesopotamia as that of a "colonial power" due to the absence of a formal territorial agreement between Iraq and Britain. Britain would need a significant amount of time to build its presence in Iraq and to develop a cooperative government. To obtain more time, the British administration carefully proceeded with separate conversations with the Turkish government.⁵⁸⁸

5.1.3. The Question of Mosul in Lausanne Conference 1923:

5.1.3.1. British Allegation:

From the British perspective, following the failure of private discussions on the Mosul question, Lord Curzon placed it on the agenda of the Territorial Committee at the Lausanne Conference on January 23, 1923. He asserted that the Mosul issue was just a question of identifying a border line. This British argument was primarily intended to buttress the British opposition to the use of a referendum in the area. Because the application of the plebiscite concept was a Western philosophy, it was an embarrassment for Britain to reject it as one of the Western World's leading nations. Kurds and Arabs, according to Curzon, had never requested a vote and had no idea what it meant. In opposition to his own remarks, Lord Curzon declared that the people of Mosul had voted in favour of Faisal becoming King of Iraq in 1921. He also said that with the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922, both Britain and Iraq took on the obligation of maintaining Iraq's geographical integrity. As a result of its obligations to the Arabs, the Iraqi people, and the LN, Britain was unable to withdraw from Mosul.⁵⁸⁹

Furthermore, Curzon argued that Mosul, primarily inhabited by Arab and Kurdish people, could not be given to Turkey due to its Turkish population, which made up only 1/12 of the entire Mosul population. Kurds, of Persian origin, did not support Turks during the Great War. Economic relationships in the Mosul Province were with Syria and Iraq, and the Christian minority living in Mosul could not be left to Turkey. If Turkey took Mosul, the Turkish border would be 60 kilometres away from Baghdad, posing a threat to Iraq's security. The British thesis was that Mosul

⁵⁸⁸ Stivers, *Supremacy and Oil*. P. 76.

⁵⁸⁹ Henry A Foster, *The Making of Modern Iraq: A Product of World Forces* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1935), p. 143.

was captured during the war with Turkey, giving Britain the right to conquest over the province.⁵⁹⁰ Upon the British control of Mosul city, the British representative General Marshal express his goal,

I have every intention of working at the town and its neighbouring unit it is in a passably clean state. ... The British government as you know, makes no distinction between sects and classes, but treats all alike, and I trust you will all work with me and help me to the best of your ability to restore and maintain peace and order in Mosul town and vilayet. This you can do by whole-hearted support of Lieutenant Colonel Lechman, my representative for civil administration.⁵⁹¹

The local people's attitude of British arrival to the city addressed by the Nakib of Mosul (Local people's representative) as he pointed out that,

In the first place, we thank God who has given us liberty to speak our language after being dumb, has changed our fear to security, and has bestowed on us a sense of security. On the occasion of your entry and that of the soldiers Excellency our respectful congratulations on your arrival. We feel you are already aware that our hearts rejoice. We believe there is no one who does not participate in this joy, and any exception is a traitor or miserable person.⁵⁹²

The local people had suffered owing to mistreatment by the Ottoman representatives in the region.

Curzon claimed that important Turkish towns, such as Kirkuk, had already been occupied after the armistice was signed, and that a war ends with a peace treaty. He denied any connection to oil and believed that the privilege given by the Ottoman Empire to T.P.C. would be extended.⁵⁹³ Finally, Curzon issued a threat to Ismet Pasha that the British Government would resort to Article 11 of the League Covenant if he did not accept arbitration. This provision stipulates that any war or threat of war, whether or not it immediately affects a member state, shall be deemed a concern of the entire League. In order to protect the peace of nations, the League shall take any action deemed prudent and effective.⁵⁹⁴ It was obvious that Lord Curzon intended to utilize the LN as a strategy in this manner. He possessed knowledge of the Turks' strong desire to reestablish their political and international presence. Turkey desired approval, excellent relations, and acknowledgment as

⁵⁹⁰ Catherwood, *Churchill's Folly: How Winston Churchill Created Modern Iraq*, p. 137.

⁵⁹¹ The Manchester Guardian, "General Marshal in Mosul: Proclamation to Citizen," *The Guardian Newspaper*, December 1918, 10, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258235629/?terms=Mosul&match=1>.

⁵⁹² The Manchester Guardian, "General Marshal in Mosul: Proclamation to Citizen."

⁵⁹³ Catherwood, *Churchill's Folly: How Winston Churchill Created Modern Iraq*, p. 137.

⁵⁹⁴ Foster, *The Making of Modern Iraq: A Product of World Forces*, p. 149.

a nation deserving of honour. Lord Curzon was cognizant of the Turks' apprehension regarding the potential offence to international public opinion. Additionally, Turkey desired LN membership. Curzon argues that refusing to accept of League arbitration would result in global isolation for the Turks, necessitating conflict not only with Britain but also with fellow League members.

5.1.3.2. The Turkish Allegation:

The Turkish delegation was headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ismet Pasha Inonu (1922-1924). He advocated the Turkish position that Mosul was an essential component of Turkey and that the Turkish National Pact recognized this. Hence, any resolution that involved the evacuation of Mosul beyond Turkish territorial boundaries would be deemed untenable. His arguments included those of a military-strategic, ethnographic, political, historical, and geographical-economic nature.⁵⁹⁵ According to Ismet Pasha, the cities of Mosul, Kirkuk, and Sulaymaniyah were predominantly inhabited by Kurds and Turks, with an extremely small Arab population. Ismet Pasha asserted that Turkish statistics were more precise than their British counterparts due to the fact that they were collected pre-war for recruitment purposes, when falsification could not have been justified. Ismet Pasha believed that the Kurds and Turks shared identical characteristics with regard to ethnicity, religion, and tradition. In opposition to Curzon's assertion that Kurds originated in Persia, which documented Kurds as Turanian by blood.⁵⁹⁶

Moreover, the Turkish representative responded to the British claims on some points, one of which was that it is impossible for Iraq to take Mosul because they are a minority. Another claim was that the Kurds were in favour of living together with Turks, and the Grand National Assembly (GNA) was composed of both Kurds and Turkish delegates with the same rights as Turks. Furthermore, Ismet Pasha stated that the British occupation of Iraq and the implementation of mandate policy in Iraq were totally opposite to Wilsonian Principles. Moreover, in the historical context, the Mosul vilayet was seen as a right, as this area has been under Kurdish sovereignty since the eleventh century. In terms of economy, the Mosul vilayet is more suitable to be within Anatolia than Iraq because of the existence of a railway road connecting the Mosul district to the

⁵⁹⁵ Briton Cooper Busch, *Mudros to Lausanne* (State University of New York Press, 1976), p. 365.

⁵⁹⁶ Ali, "The Kurds and the Lausanne Peace Negotiations, 1922–23," p. 523.

Mediterranean Sea. He continued his speech by emphasizing that the Mosul people preferred Turkish products than Iraqi goods. Finally, the British troops took Mosul by force, as the Mudros armistice was signed at the time that this area was under Turkish rule.⁵⁹⁷

Based on the statistical data from both countries, the majority of the population of Mosul consisted of Turks and Kurds. Given the notion that the resolution of the Mosul Question depended on the Kurdish problem, it was essential for both Curzon and Ismet Pasha to provide evidence to support their assertions about the origin of the Kurds. According to the Russian historian Minorsky, the disputed regions are situated at the juncture of numerous migration and invasion surges. Ethnically speaking, the vilayet of Mosul has long been recognized for its extremely diverse population. However, what has only recently come to light is the fact that the majority consisted of forgotten Kurds, whose existence and national aspirations had only been acknowledged since the end of the war. Moreover, between the Turks and the British, the ethnic composition of the populations of the disputed territories has been a contentious issue. The subsequent summary presents the statistical data from the Iraq census conducted in 1922-1924 and the Turkish census that was transmitted to Lausanne in 1923, as it appears from the table below:

Ethnic Groups	Turkish Census	Iraq Census	British Census
Kurds	263,830	494,007	427,720
Arabs	43,210	166,941	185,763
Turks	146,960	38,652	65,895
Christians	31,000	61,336	62,225
Jews		11,897	16,865
Yezidis	18,000	26,257	30,000
Total Settled Population	503,000		
Nomads	170,000		
Total	673,000	799,090	785,468

⁵⁹⁷ Richard T B Langhorne, "The Treaty of Lausanne (1923) and the Recognition of Modern Turkey: The International Context," in *Symposium on the Foreign Policy of Atatürk's Turkey (1923-38), Proceedings (Istanbul: Bogazici University, 1984)*, n.d., 117; Private Wire, "The Turkish Armistice," *The Manchester Guardian*, November 1918, 4, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258222533/?terms=mudros+armistice&match=1>.

The Iraqi-Turkish Census of the Vilayet of Mosul Population was addressed at the Lausanne Conference in 1923.⁵⁹⁸

It appears from the above table that the Turkish and Iraqi censuses are dramatically different from each other. Besides, the two governments tried to show the conference that their inhabitants in Mosul Vilayet were greater than those of the other government. For example, the number of Arabs according to the Turkish census compared to the Arab one is 123,731 less. In contrast, the number of Turks in Mosul, according to Arab statistics, is 103,308 less compared to Turkish statistics. This means both sides tried to have a position in the vilayet more than the other side, to show the stakeholders that they had the right to take Mosul more than their competitor. With regards to the British census in this context, it is slightly close to the Iraqi one. It can be seen in all numbers that the British statistic is in favour of Arab existence in the area more than the Turkish. It is well-known and clearly stated in both government censuses that the Kurds are the majority in the region. However, the Kurds didn't have the right to ask for their fate or even to decide to be independent. This can be traced back to internal and external factors.

Furthermore, the existence of numerous distinct ethnic groups inside the nascent state complicated the question of the national identity of Mosul even further, as the majority of its inhabitants are Kurds. With the final settlement of the division of former Ottoman territory after the Great War, all hope of Kurdish self-determination was extinguished. The consequences for Iraq's new state should not be understated. It cannot even be argued that the British, who were primarily responsible for managing the split, were uninformed of the underlying facts. Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary in charge of negotiating the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923⁵⁹⁹, said, "The whole of our information shows that the Kurds, with their own independent history, customs, manners, and character, ought to be an autonomous race."⁶⁰⁰

Furthermore, Sir Percy Cox, the British High Commissioner in Iraq, intended to lend the Kurds military and political help against the Turks, but Winston Churchill, the minister in charge, rejected

⁵⁹⁸ Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky, *The Mosul Question: Mosul Vilayet, 6; Question of Frontier Between Turkey and Iraq: Report Submitted to the Council by the Commission Instituted by the Council Resolution of September 30th, 1924* (Lausanne, 1924), p. 33.

⁵⁹⁹ Robert Olson, "Battle for Kurdistan: The Churchill-Cox Correspondence Regarding the Creation of the State of Iraq, 1921-1923," *The International Journal of Kurdish Studies* 5, no. 1/2 (1992): p. 29.

⁶⁰⁰ David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (New York: J. B. Taurus, 1996), p. 142.

these plans. The imperatives of the empire and the pressing need to reach an agreement with the Turks became Britain's priority, and the Kurdish territories were partitioned, with the exception of Mosul. Mosul's destiny was left to be decided later by the LN, and its status remained in doubt for many years. This delay could only have hampered the establishment of a unified Iraqi identity, as many in Mosul must have felt more like an afterthought to the new state than an important part of it.⁶⁰¹ The British primarily intended to create a Kurdish state for two reasons. Firstly, to implement the war promises given to Kurds for establishing an autonomous Kurdish state. Secondly, Britain thought that the Kurds would be a buffer zone against any advance from the Kemalists toward the new Iraq state.

To sum up, on February 4, 1923, Ismet Pasha agreed to delay the discussion of the Mosul Question for a period of one year in order to promote peace and facilitate direct discussions between Turkey and Great Britain. Ankara directed Pasha to decline signing the pact, since it embodied Curzon's conviction that Turkey should be seen as a vanquished nation. Ankara maintained that the issue of Mosul should be resolved by direct negotiations between the two countries rather than using the LN. Furthermore, Ankara insisted on using all available methods to incorporate Mosul into Turkish territorial borders.⁶⁰² Curzon had the belief that Britain had effectively eliminated the Mosul matter from the conference agenda for many reasons. Initially, he skilfully influenced the topic, compelling the Turks to engage in negotiations over their most vulnerable aspects. Furthermore, he possessed knowledge regarding Britain's advanced military technology, and the Greeks' capacity for threatening Turks from the west. Further, the Turkish needed to maintain positive relations with the British, as Turkey had a challenging alliance with the Soviet Union. Besides, the Turkish government were reluctant to participate in military operations in the Mosul region due to the presence of Allied forces in Istanbul and the Straits.⁶⁰³

⁶⁰¹ Olson, "Battle for Kurdistan: The Churchill-Cox Correspondence Regarding the Creation of the State of Iraq, 1921-1923," pp. 29–30.

⁶⁰² Stanford Jay Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of National Liberation, 1918-1923: A Documentary Study*, 3rd ed. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2000), 1943, <https://archive.org/details/fromempiretorepu0003shaw/page/n5/mode/2up?view=theater>.

⁶⁰³ H Charles Woods, "The Straits-Before and After.," *Fortnightly* 113, no. 674 (1923): 282–292.

5.1.3.3. The Question of Mosul in 1924:

The Turks continued to demand Mosul and how it was taken from them illegally after the Armistice of Mudros. Even when the Treaty of Lausanne was signed between Turkey and Britain in 1923, Turkey maintained its position that Britain had illegally seized control of Mosul Province.⁶⁰⁴ British officials in London and Baghdad continued to believe that Mosul was essential to Iraq's survival for its resources and the security that its mountains brought as natural borders.⁶⁰⁵ Turkish leaders were also afraid that Kurdish nationalism would flourish under the British Mandate and would cause problems in Turkey's Kurdish population.⁶⁰⁶ To resolve the conflicting claims over Mosul, the matter was referred to the LN to send a fact-finding mission to determine who was entitled to the land. The bilateral discussions between Britain and Turkey about the Mosul Question began in Istanbul on May 19, 1924, as previously agreed upon in Lausanne. The Golden Horn Conference reaffirmed the significant divergence between the two parties, leading to the termination of discussions on June 5, 1924. Britain was concerned about the Turkish demeanour after the failure of negotiations. It was uncertain if Turkey would have complete trust in the LN and bring the matter to the Council. Despite Turkey's greater willingness to cooperate with Britain, Ismet Pasha explicitly said that Ankara would not bring the matter to the LN until Britain officially approved the Lausanne Treaty.⁶⁰⁷

According to Lloyd, the Golden Horn did not result in an agreement between the two countries. Turkey insisted that the Sanjaks of Mosul and Sulaymaniyah should be within Turkish borders. Britain rejected that Turkish request and, in return, raised a claim to the lands of the Kurdish Emirate of Hakkâri. Furthermore, Britain played this manoeuvre in order to push the Turks to dispense with Mosul. Britain also used the same tactic with the Iraqi government, threatening her to sign all of the British demands that had been pending for a long time. On the contrary, Britain had threatened King Faisal's government that the fate of Mosul Province would be left in the hands of the Turks. It can be said that the role that Britain played to convince the two parties gave Britain

⁶⁰⁴ H I Lloyd, "The Geography of the Mosul Boundary," *The Geographical Journal* 68, no. 2 (1926): p. 109.

⁶⁰⁵ Reeva Spector Simon and Eleanor H Tejirian, *The Creation of Iraq, 1914-1921* (Columbia University Press, 2004), p. 51.

⁶⁰⁶ Quincy Wright, "The Mosul Dispute," *American Journal of International Law* 20, no. 3 (1926): p. 457.

⁶⁰⁷ Coşar and Demirci, "The Mosul Question and The Turkish Republic: Before and After the Frontier Treaty, 1926."

the sovereignty to control the future of the Mosul Province and guarantee its economic interests in the region.⁶⁰⁸

There was also another dimension to the dispute. Mosul was a very oil-rich region, which made the allied countries, especially Britain, interested in it. Lord Curzon argued that their policy in Mosul was not in any way related to oil and that instead it was guided by the desire to protect the interests of the Iraqi people consistent with its mandatory obligations and that they had never spoken to an oil magnate or to an oil concessionaire regarding Mosul oil. According to Reeva Simon, historians argue about whether Great Britain and probably Turkey were most interested in oil, with some claiming that this was really the main issue.⁶⁰⁹ In addition, there was another point of contention between Britain and Turkey, which was the border line. There was the "Brussels Line," which was decided by the LN in 1924 as the real border of Iraq, and a British line that was the dividing line that Britain had used before. When the matter was brought to the British leaders, Percy Cox, the British High Commissioner to Iraq, and Arnold Wilson, the British Civil Commissioner in Baghdad, appealed to Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, to use the Brussels Line because they saw no significant difference between the two border lines.⁶¹⁰

On August 6, 1924, Britain formally requested the LN to remove the Mosul Question from its political agenda. Britain presented its economic, political, historical, and geopolitical factors and emphasized that Iraq should keep Mosul. Ankara launched a diplomatic counter-offensive on August 25 by submitting a message to the LN. It highlighted that Turkey did not object to the matter being brought to the LN, despite British attempts to hinder the bilateral discussions. Consequently, the matter was brought up for discussion in the League on September 20, 1924.⁶¹¹ As a result of intense diplomatic efforts, political manoeuvring, and even military rhetoric, the geopolitical conflict around Mosul reached its zenith during this time. The arbitration process, which sought to settle the Mosul conflict, was initiated by the LN. On September 27, 1924, it was believed that Britain's responsibilities in Iraq would be finally terminated. However, the attitude was reversed, and the issue of the sustainability of the government's strategy was reopened by the events of the following year, culminating in the Mosul boundary dispute and the League award.

⁶⁰⁸ Lloyd, "The Geography of the Mosul Boundary," p. 113.

⁶⁰⁹ Simon and Tejirian, *Creat. Iraq, 1914-1921*, p. 54.

⁶¹⁰ Lloyd, "The Geography of the Mosul Boundary," p. 114.

⁶¹¹ Tefvik Rustu, *Speech on Frontier Treaty*, 3rd ed. (Ankara: TBMM, Zabit Ceridesi, 1926), p. 65.

Many people were confused and didn't fully grasp the nature of this regulation. The League Council decided on December 16, 1925, that the Treaty of Alliance, the agreements, and the undertaking approved by the League on September 27, 1924, would govern relations between the parties involved in the Mosul issue for twenty-five years, or until Iraq joined the League before then.⁶¹²

Because of these obstacles, Turkey was forced to accept the League of Nations decision. The LN Council session was held in September 1924, where Turkey proposed holding a referendum in the Sanjaks of Mosul and Sulaymaniyah, but Britain rejected the proposal. The LN formed a committee to deal with the Mosul issue. The investigation committee published its report before September 1925. The committee noted that the residents of Mosul Vilayet (the Kurds) refused to join either party and preferred to be independent. Despite these findings, the investigation committee made the following suggestions: First, the Brussels line is the recognized border line. Secondly, since the majority of Mosul's population are Kurds, Mosul is linked to Iraq, and there was no objection to establishing economic ties and agreements for Mosul with Turkey. If the mandate expires in 1928, this proposed arrangement would be extended for 25 years, with the Kurds receiving self-rule and their cultural rights. Third, if the British and Iraqi governments do not adhere to the previous two points, the Mosul governorate will be returned to Turkey.⁶¹³

Upon Ankara's proposal for negotiations reaching London, it became evident that the Foreign Office held the view that the LN was the only resolution. The FO paper underscored Britain's obligation to the LN to liberate the Arabs from Turkish domination and establish a sovereign Iraq. They had already entered a formal arrangement with King Faisal for that purpose. It was indicated that the Mosul question was unrelated to oil resources.⁶¹⁴ What's more, the Turkish Petroleum Business signed a concession deal with the Iraqi government on March 14, 1925, which granted the business a seventy-five-year concession on oil. This occurred before the future of the Mosul Vilayet was decided. This was done even though the British administration consistently denied that they were concerned about the oil in Mosul.⁶¹⁵ After the fate of the Mosul Vilayet became

⁶¹² "Outline of Anglo-Iraq Treaty Relations, 1920-1927," p. 173.

⁶¹³ Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky, *The Mosul Question: Mosul Vilayet*, p. 27.

⁶¹⁴ FO371/10075 E 1098/7/65, "Brief Statement of the Origin of the Impending Negotiations about Mosul," n.d.

⁶¹⁵ Wayne A Leeman, *The Price of Middle East Oil: An Essay in Political Economy*, *Internet Archive* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1962), <https://archive.org/details/priceofmiddleeas0000leem>.

clear to the Turks, on December 16, 1925, the Turkish government withdrew its delegation from Geneva, leaving the Council of the LN to award the Mosul region to Britain without Turkish approval. In response, Ataturk took diplomatic retaliation by concluding a non-aggression pact and friendship agreement with the Soviet Union on December 17 of the same year. Later, the alliance was amended, and its term was extended for another ten years to November 7, 1935.⁶¹⁶

5.1.4. Mosul and the Iraqi-Turkish Frontier Agreement of 1926:

Britain redirected the discussion to the issue of establishing the Iraqi boundary. Nevertheless, the Turks remained unwavering in their belief that the dispute primarily pertained to the destiny of the 'Mosul Vilayet' rather than the matter of the boundary. The LN established an investigative panel comprised of three members under the authority of Britain. A territorial conflict between Turkey and Britain resulted in armed clashes. Meanwhile, in an effort to prevent the escalating animosity between two factions, Turkey formally requested the LN on October 29, 1924, to establish a temporary boundary between Turkey and Iraq. This boundary, thereafter, referred to as 'the Brussels Line,' was intended to resolve the dispute. Britain relied on intelligence assessments that emphasized the Turkish military's objectives. To believe that the Sheikh Saaid Revolt of 1925⁶¹⁷ in the eastern portion of Turkey was a coincidence would be simplistic. The question of whether Britain actively supported the Kurdish revolt or not continues to be a subject of debate. Subsequent British intelligence reports indicated that Turkey had altered its stance, with the Turkish Foreign Ministry no longer supporting a military action and the Turkish government being willing to comply with the decisions of the League of Nations.⁶¹⁸ Britain might take action to support the Kurds against the Turkish to “kill two birds with one stone”. The British policymakers had some primary aims in supporting Kurds. Their primary objective was to showcase their kind and cooperative attitude in dealing with the Kurdish issue, with the purpose of building trust and

⁶¹⁶ Lord Kinross, “Ataturk; A Biography of Mustafa Kemal, Father of Modern Turkey,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 85, no. 4 (1965): p. 464.

⁶¹⁷ Sheikh Saeed Biran's revolution is a revolution that took place in southeastern Turkey against the policy of Turkification and abuse pursued by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's successive governments against minorities. On February 5, 1925, Sheikh Saeed Biran launched a revolution against Turkish oppression towards the Kurds. The uprising spread very quickly, and the rebels took control for a short period of time over large territories in the eastern states of Anatolia. The number of Kurds rising up reached about 600,000, during which they were supported by about 100,000 Circassians, Arabs, Armenians, and Assyrians. But the revolution did not last long, and in mid-April 1925, the sheikh was arrested, and the death sentence was issued against him along with 47 of the revolution's leaders. See, Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880–1925*.

⁶¹⁸ Nevin Coşar and Sevtap Demirci, ‘The Mosul Question and The Turkish Republic: Before and After the Frontier Treaty, 1926’, Ankara University, *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, no. 35, 2004, pp. 50–51.

promoting collaboration with the Kurdish population. This strategy was crucial in motivating the Kurds to identify with British objectives and readily cooperate. Furthermore, the British plan included using the Kurds as a diplomatic instrument to apply pressure on Turkey and disrupt its domestic affairs. As a result, Turkey would be forced to reassess its position on matters like the territorial disagreement with Mosul.

Pál Teleki (1879-1941), the Hungarian Geographer and late Hungarian Prime Minister, served on a committee in the League of Nations in 1924-1925 to demarcate the border between Iraq and Turkey. The committee, consisting of Belgian colonel Albert Paulis and Swedish army officer and diplomat Einar af Wirsén, mapped the region's conditions, including nationalities, ethnic groups, demography, and agriculture. Teleki's Carte Rouge methodology was credited for his appointment. The Mosul Report examined conflicting interests and suggested a referendum. Teleki recognized Kurdish ethnic unity and favoured a natural border, allowing for human factors. He emphasized the importance of recognizing natural geography, climate, lifestyle, ethnography, water supply, and land use in the disputed territory.⁶¹⁹ Furthermore, the Council of the LN approved the recommendations of the committee and decided to include Mosul Province to the new Iraqi state. This decision led to demonstrations in Turkey, and cries rose in Turkey to declare war on Britain. But due to Atatürk's realistic assessment of the situation, the people calmed down because Turkey had just emerged from a series of wars, along with their attendant economic and social problems, which had to be solved. Turkey was immersed in many internal and external crises.⁶²⁰

One of the external problems, according to the Turkish perspective, was that the European countries were the ones who imposed the negotiations on Mosul, which led to Turkey's isolation. Therefore, Turkey signed the Non-Aggression Pact with the Soviet Union in Paris. The goal of that treaty was to find allies.⁶²¹ Regarding the internal problems in Turkey, the most important of which is “the unrest”, the Turks believed that this unrest was created by the British in order to keep the Turkish government busy with internal matters and distract it from thinking about external matters related to obstructing British interests in the region.⁶²² Britain successfully

⁶¹⁹ János Kubassek. “Count Pál Teleki, Geographer.” *Hungarian Conservative*, 9 Jan. 2024, www.hungarianconservative.com/articles/culture_society/count-pal-teleki-geographer.

⁶²⁰ Michael M. Gunter, “The Kurds Ascending, the Evolving Solution to the Kurdish Problem in Iraq and Turkey,” *Palgrave Macmillan*, 2008, p. 12.

⁶²¹ Geoffrey Roberts, *Molotov: Stalin's Cold Warrior* (U of Nebraska Press, 2012), pp. 107–108.

⁶²² Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Middle East: A Documentary Record 1535-1914*, p. 133.

internationalized the issue by reducing it to a border concern. Subsequently, upon the appointment of an investigating committee by the LN Council, it was suggested that Iraq should keep Mosul. The Ankara administration grudgingly agreed to this conclusion as stated in the "Frontier Treaty: The United Kingdom, and Iraq, and Turkey." In 1926, the Turkish government demonstrated its commitment to peace by signing the Frontier Treaty with the Iraqi government. This treaty not only maintained Iraq's independence but also aimed to improve ties with Britain.⁶²³

For another twenty-five years, Britain had promised to provide Iraq's domestic security and defence. It was true that the Council had requested that Britain present a new treaty to the League that would extend the mandatory regime over Iraq. However, this in no way changed the fact that Iraq had already agreed to take full financial and military responsibility for maintaining internal security and defending itself from external aggression as soon as possible, but certainly no later than 1928. This was specifically addressed in the January 13, 1926, Treaty, which was signed to implement the conditions set down by the League Council in its Mosul decision.⁶²⁴ Therefore, Turkey accepted the LN decision and signed the Ankara Treaty with the United Kingdom on March 5, 1926, to demarcate the Turkish-Iraqi border and end the Mosul issue. It was agreed that the Turkish-Iraqi border is the "Brussels Line," with minor amendments in favour of Turkey. Thus, this frontier treaty ends the Turkish land claims. Moreover, according to Article 14 of the treaty, the Turkish Petroleum Company (later called the Iraqi Oil Company) would be compensated with 10 % of Mosul's oil income for the next twenty-five years.⁶²⁵ Turkey later waived that clause in exchange for receiving a one-off payment £500,000 of sterling in gold. Furthermore, it gave Turkey the right to intervene militarily in Mosul and northern Iraq to protect the Turkmen minority residing there if it is exposed to any attack or if any "sabotage" is done to the Iraqi territorial integrity.⁶²⁶

The Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1926 ultimately resolved the issue of Mosul's status by incorporating it into Iraq and consolidating British dominance over the region's oil reserves. The decision elicited a variety of responses. Although it offered a sense of closure, it also provoked animosity among

⁶²³ Tefvik Rustu, *Speech on Frontier Treaty*, p. 65.

⁶²⁴ "Outline of Anglo-Iraq Treaty Relations, 1920-1927," pp. 173-174.

⁶²⁵ Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Middle East: A Documentary Record 1535-1914*, p. 133.

⁶²⁶ Ismail Soysal, "Seventy Years of Turkish-Arab Relations and an Analysis of Turkish-Iraqi Relations (1920-1990)," *Studies on Turkish-Arab Relations* 6 (1991): 40; Kemal Öke, *A Chronology of the Mosul Question (1918-1926)* (Foundation for Studies on the Turkish World, 1991), p. 75.

the Turkish populace and incited nationalist emotions in Turkey. The Mosul dispute from 1923-1926 exemplifies the intricate nature of the geopolitical situation after the Great War. This highlights the complex relationship between historical assertions, national ambitions, colonial agendas, and the importance of natural resources in influencing the fates of countries and areas. The choice about Mosul at this era had significant ramifications, exerting a lasting impact on the political dynamics and interrelationship among these countries in the years that followed.⁶²⁷

Furthermore, it must be said that because of its large oil reserves, Mosul was vital to the Arab concept of the future Iraqi state and an essential component of that state. Most of Mosul's Arab inhabitants shared Iraq's patriotic goals and hoped to be a part of the new nation-state that was taking shape. But Turkey argued for Mosul's return based on its Ottoman heritage, claiming historical and ethnic links to the province. Many factors contributed to Turkey's interest in Mosul, including its rich history, its desire to maintain its territory, and its desire to get access to oil and other vital resources. The oil of Mosul was important to Britain since it was the colonial authority in charge of Iraq's mission. In an effort to consolidate control over Iraq's oil resources, the British government wanted to incorporate Mosul into Iraq after realizing the region's economic importance and its potential as an oil-producing area.⁶²⁸

5.1.5. Mosul Oil and the Signing of the Red Line Agreement, 1927-1928.

5.1.5.1. The Discovery of Oil in Mosul Vilayet:

The discovery of Kirkuk oil in northern Iraq is one of the most important events in the country at the beginning of the 20th century, as it led to radical changes in the political, economic, social, and demographic landscape of the region.⁶²⁹ According to Mardin Faraj, Iraqis have known oil since ancient times, as the Babylonians used some types of black oil in their buildings and streets, and most types of oil wells were very close to the surface of the earth. She adds to Al Jazeera Net that its commercial extraction began at the beginning of the 20th century when the Iraqi-Turkish Petroleum Company discovered it in 1912.⁶³⁰ It turns out that “Baba Gurgur” is a large oil field near the city of Kirkuk, and there is a difference in the name of this area, but it most likely means

⁶²⁷ Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Middle East: A Documentary Record 1535-1914*, p. 133.

⁶²⁸ “Outline of Anglo-Iraq Treaty Relations, 1920-1927,” p. 174.

⁶²⁹ UN Archives Geneva, “Iraq - Special Report on the Progress of Iraq during the Period 1930-1931” (1931), p. 219.

⁶³⁰ Mardin Faraj, “94 Years Ago: The Story of the Discovery of the First Oil Field in Iraq,” Al Jazeera Net, 2023, <https://aljazeera.net/ebusiness/2021/10/17/قبل-94-عاما-حكاية-اكتشاف-أول-حقل-نفطي-في>.

in Kurdish "Fire of the Gods" or "Eternal Fire" because there is a flame emanating from the ground that has not been extinguished since ancient times.⁶³¹ Liora Lukitz, in her book *A Quest in the Middle East: Gertrude Bell and the Making of Modern Iraq*, stated that “ In October 1927, after months of extensive digging, oil was found in Baba Gurgur, north of Kirkuk. This discovery would affect Iraq in a way that Gertrude Bell or her colleagues, could never have foreseen.”⁶³²

The TPC was established as a partnership between the Turkish National Bank, Royal Dutch/Shell, and Deutsche Bank with the purpose of promoting oil discovery and production inside the Ottoman Empire. The British government did manage to sell the shares of the Turkish National Bank to the APOC in March 1914, nevertheless. The Ottoman Grand Vizier gave the reorganized TPC an oil concession in June of the following year to explore and exploit oil sources in Baghdad and Mosul.⁶³³ Wars over pricing broke out as tensions rose between private investors and the oil sector. When this open conflict between the industrial actors ended with the war, a cooperative approach emerged. During this period, the large oil companies could have enjoyed their peak performance (via a cartel). The private sector of the oil business had chosen to begin at a consensus to optimize oil profits and collaborate for common interests. To determine the potential earnings from oil resources, industry participants signed three agreements. At the beginning, the Red-Line Agreement (1928), which included some of the world's largest petroleum reserves, barred firms from conducting independent operations inside a large area of the former Ottoman Empire.⁶³⁴

5.1.5.2. The Singing of the Red Line Agreement in 1928:

In November 1927, a French commission had drawn a map of the Middle East and surrounded the territory of the former Ottoman Empire in the Arab countries of the Middle East with a red line. The main purpose of drawing this map was to find an agreement between the members of the various oil companies to bring them together to contribute together to any new concessions within its scope. After long negotiations between the various members of the Turkish Petroleum Company, it was decided to close the open-door policy announced by the United States in 1922.

⁶³¹ Gruen, “The Oil Resources of Iraq: Their Role in the Policies of the Great Powers,” 122; Faraj, “94 Years Ago: The Story of the Discovery of the First Oil Field in Iraq.”

⁶³² Lukitz, *A Quest in the Middle East: Gertrude Bell and the Making of Modern Iraq*, p. 201.

⁶³³ Abdul Rahman Al-Bazzaz, *Iraq from Occupation to Independence*, 3rd ed. (Baghdad: Al-Ani Press, 1967), p. 167. [Translated from Arabic].

⁶³⁴ C S Sundaresan, “Oil and the Political Economy of State Capitalism,” *Procedia Economics and Finance* 1 (2012): p. 388.

This agreement concluded on July 31, 1928, was known as the RLA.⁶³⁵ Several oil firms from the United States, Britain, and France came to an agreement in 1928 called the Group Agreement, often called the "Red Line" Agreement, over the oil resources in the Middle Eastern countries that were originally part of the Ottoman Empire. When the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC) was first established in 1912, it was the birthplace of the RLA.⁶³⁶

After TPC and its partners discussed how to divide up crude oil production after Iraq's massive oil field was discovered, representatives from Anglo-Persian, the Compagnie Française des Pétroles, Royal Dutch/Shell, and the Middle East Development Corporation signed the RLA in Ostend, Belgium, on July 31, 1928. Each of the four groups was to get 23.75 percent of the crude oil output from TPC, which was authorized to operate anywhere in the Middle East between the Suez Canal and Iran (except Kuwait) according to the agreement's stipulations. An Armenian businessman named Calouste Gulbenkian, who had a minor interest in the TPC, received the remaining 5 percent. But the "self-denying" phrase was the RLA's most crucial component.⁶³⁷

Furthermore, it was stated that the businesses involved would refrain from developing oilfields inside the TPC's jurisdiction without the approval of the other members. Because no one on the TPC was allegedly quite sure of the Ottoman Empire's pre-war borders during discussions, the treaty became known as the RLA. Gulbenkian used a red pencil to draw down an oil border line on a Middle Eastern map at one of the last sessions of the agreement. During discussions between the French and British foreign ministries, the matter had already been settled. Moreover, since the RLA was unable to prevent non-member corporations from pursuing concessions inside the territory governed by the TPC (later renamed the Iraqi Petroleum Company in 1929), it proved to be an intractable arrangement.⁶³⁸ Mardin has also emphasized that the great discovery made after the oil bombing in Kirkuk in 1927 brought about a quantum leap in Iraq's oil industry. The Kirkuk

⁶³⁵ Hikmat Sami Sulayman, *Oil in Iraq: A Political and Economic Study of the Development of Iraq's Petroleum*, (Al-Yaqaza Al-Arabia: Damascus, 1958), pp. 92–94, [Translated from Arabic].; James A. Paul, 'Great Power Conflict Over Iraq Oil: The World War I Era', *Global Policy Forum*, 2022.

⁶³⁶ Office of the Historian, "Milestones: 1921–1936: The 1928 Red Line Agreement."

⁶³⁷ Michael Quentin Morton, "Once Upon a Red Line – the Iraq Petroleum Company Story," *GeoExpro*, 2013, <https://geoexpro.com/once-upon-a-red-line-the-iraq-petroleum-company-story/>; Encyclopedia.com, "Red Line Agreement," *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa*, 2023, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/red-line-agreement>.

⁶³⁸ Office of the Historian, "Milestones: 1921–1936: The 1928 Red Line Agreement."

oil field, discovered on October 14, 1927, as the second largest oil field in the region in terms of production capacity, and the fifth largest in the world.⁶³⁹

The international oil community considers that the RLA is a complex English document, primarily determining the rights of the members of the TPC, and that the most important article in the agreement is based on self-denial and on the basis of making the TPC (currently the Iraq Petroleum Company) the sole agent for other companies that may be formed later for the purpose of obtaining oil concessions, refining, or marketing it in other areas in Iraq that are not included in the TPC area. However, the complex RLA included an important condition for the interest of U.S. companies, provided they renounced the search for oil unilaterally within the territories covered by the Red Line zone.⁶⁴⁰ Furthermore, U.S. companies did not like to act in solidarity and considered participation in this adventure unreliable, while British groups considered the agreement to be in line with their political and trade plans. As for the French and Gulbenkian, they fully supported the RLA because they had nothing in oil except the sources of the area in which the TPC operates in Iraq. In conclusion, the RLA is described as follows:

The Red Line Agreement of 1928 is a document with important restrictive and specific features for the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), which strictly prohibited the partners in the Iraq Petroleum Company from competing with each other and with the Iraq Petroleum Company. This agreement is a prominent example of a company that has confined control of a large part of the world's oil resources and reserved them to a group of companies with which it has jointly controlled the global market for this substance.⁶⁴¹

Profiting from the world's finest oil reserves, the firms were bound by this arrangement to refrain from conducting independent activities within an area roughly comparable to that of the old Ottoman Empire.⁶⁴² In contrast, oil firms would pay royalties and income taxes on earnings to Middle Eastern governments. While most countries accepted cash as royalties, the governments of Iraq and Iran had the legal right to receive crude oil instead. On March 14, 1925, the Iraqi government gave a concession to the TPC, which was later renamed the Iraq Petroleum Company

⁶³⁹ Faraj, "94 Years Ago: The Story of the Discovery of the First Oil Field in Iraq." [Translated from Arabic].

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ Hikmat Sami Sulayman, *Oil in Iraq: A Political and Economic Study of the Development of Iraq's Petroleum*, 92–94. [Translated from Arabic].

⁶⁴² Fiona M Venn, "Middle East Oil and Anglo-American Relations, 1918-1934" (University of Bristol, 1981), p. 271.

(IPC).⁶⁴³ Two weeks later, on Monday, March 30, 1925, the British Parliament member conducted a session titled “Oil Concessions (Royalties)”. The British Liberal and Labour politician Sir Colonel Wedgwood asked William Ormsby-Gore, the Secretary of States for the Colonies, questions regarding whether Iraqi oil concessions involved royalties, if revenue was used to reduce Iraq's debt, and why no security was obtained for capital or interest repayment during the discussions. Sir Gore, in his reply, pointed out that,

I understand that the terms of the concession recently granted by the Iraq Government to the Turkish Petroleum Company provide for the payment to that Government of a royalty based primarily upon output; so far as I am aware there is no intention on the part of the Iraq Government specifically to assign future revenue from this source to the extinction of their debt to this country. His Majesty's Government consider that the Financial Agreement made under Article XV of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty affords sufficient security for the due discharge of that debt.⁶⁴⁴

Moreover, Commander Joseph Montague Kenworthy stated, “If large royalties are being paid, are we to get no repayment for the heavy cost of the garrison and Air Force in Iraq that made these concessions possible? Mr. Ormsby-Gore replied to his question, “At the present moment there is no oil flowing. I said in my reply that the royalties are based on output, and we are not yet sure that there is going to be any output.” Mr. Kenworthy also pointed out that, “Then if there is no oil, we are going on paying, and if there is oil, we do not get any of our money back?” Mr. Gore, replied, “That would be absolutely contrary to the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and to our whole position in Iraq, and I would like to repudiate that suggestion most strongly.”⁶⁴⁵ The British primary aims of this concession is to secure oil, to reduce their post-war expenditures in Iraq, and get back what they have paid so far.

As a result of the Red-Line Agreement in Iraq, the Iraq Petroleum Company emerged as the preeminent petroleum corporation in the region. The pipeline constructed by the company extended in two distinct directions, one of which led to Haditha from Kirkuk and the other to Tripoli, Lebanon, and Haifa (Palestine).⁶⁴⁶ Following the revised agreement of 1925, the Iraq

⁶⁴³ Leeman, *The Price of Middle East Oil: An Essay in Political Economy*, p. 185.

⁶⁴⁴ Hansard, “Oil Concessions (Royalties),” vol. 182 (London, 1925), [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1925-03-30/debates/185123d8-5f32-44e4-b16b-a83ca6aa57b3/OilConcessions\(Royalties\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1925-03-30/debates/185123d8-5f32-44e4-b16b-a83ca6aa57b3/OilConcessions(Royalties)).

⁶⁴⁵ Hansard.

⁶⁴⁶ Shwadran, *The Middle East, Oil and the Great Powers 1959*, p. 243.

Petroleum Company was obligated to make an annual payment of £400,000 to the government of Iraq until export operations commenced in 1931.⁶⁴⁷ Iraqis were unhappy with the amount of royalties that were being paid to them. Challenges arose in January 1932, when the business encountered difficulties due to the devaluation of the British pound against the gold standard. Iraq received a payment of £578,000 as opposed to the approximately £400,000 stipulated in the 1932 agreement.⁶⁴⁸

5.1.5.3. The British Goals of Signing the Red Line Agreement:

The Red Line Agreement of 1928 was a notable diplomatic accomplishment for the British, signifying a fresh approach to preserving British supremacy in the Middle East. The British aims can be seen in some key points, such as, the geopolitical context, strategic and economic goals, and securing Iraqi oil. Geopolitically, the RLA was pursued by the British with the intention of strengthening their control in the Middle East, namely as a reaction to the growing assertiveness of the Soviet Union in that area.⁶⁴⁹ The objective of the agreement was to establish a clear geographical demarcation between the areas of influence of Britain and the Soviet Union in the Middle East. This would guarantee British dominance over strategically important regions and resources. Britain additionally aimed to establish a sequence of economic and strategic objectives for the Western powers operating in the Middle East. These objectives encompassed the facilitation of economic growth and stability, the defence of trade routes, and the assurance of energy transportation from the Middle East to Europe. Ultimately, Britain sought to establish a structure for overseeing the influence of the West and Britain on Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula. This entailed safeguarding the Western powers' rights to maintain military bases and access to Iraq's hydrocarbon resources, in addition to ensuring the independence, stability, and amicability of the Iraqi entity.⁶⁵⁰

To sum up, the British oil policy in this context was to secure its potential oil interests in the region by delineating the boundary between the British and Soviet Union spheres of influence.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 238.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 245.

⁶⁴⁹ Leonard Mosley, *Power Play: Oil in the Middle East*, Penguin Books (Maryland: Baltimore, Md., 1974), <https://archive.org/details/powerplay00leon/page/n5/mode/2up>. pp. 49–50.

⁶⁵⁰ Anthony Sampson, *The Seven Sisters: The Great Oil Companies and the World They Made*, Hodder and Stoughton (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975). pp. 49–50.

Additionally, Britain made this group accord for the purpose of gathering the great powers of the world in the Arabic peninsula in order to protect its ambitions from any future advance from the Soviet Union. The United Kingdom, after the Great War, found itself unable to protect its colonial goals without the other trustful powers in the world. The British plan was well examined at that time, as Britain believed the best way to save her existence was to join other powers within her area of interest, which without any thought would help Britain from any external attack.

5.1.6. The Anglo-Iraqi Agreement of 1930-1932:

In June 1930, in Baghdad, a new treaty of alliance was signed between His Majesty's government and His Majesty's King of Iraq. The agreement allowed for the formation of a "strong partnership" between Britain and Iraq, with open and honest discussions on all foreign policy issues that may impact their shared interests.⁶⁵¹ Iraq would maintain domestic stability and safeguard its interests. The importance of this treaty, because it abolished the mandate over Iraq, brought it to the League of Nations, and made it in the ranks of independent and fully sovereign states in international terms, in addition to the fact that it is still in force between Iraq and Britain.⁶⁵² This alliance treaty consists of eleven articles, with a seven-paragraph military affairs annex, a five-paragraph financial annex, and several clear letters exchanged by the two high parties. A special convention for the organization of judicial affairs, signed in March 1931, replaced the previous judicial convention annexed to the 1922 treaty. The essence of the treaty is that the preservation of imperial communications is in the interest of the Iraqi state. The interests of the two countries are common, and the articles of the treaty and its annexes can be divided into four sections, the first section was General Articles. The second one was a joint British-Iraqi undertakings. The third section related to the Iraqi-British pledges. The last one consisted of the British pledges to Iraq.⁶⁵³

Moreover, the treaty, in a sentence, somewhat elaborate on its most important articles. The first article of the treaty stipulated that lasting peace, and friendship would prevail between Iraq and Britain. Article four obliges each of the two allies to seek the assistance of its ally in the event of

⁶⁵¹ Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 203,

<https://archive.org/details/lastottomangener0000prov/page/202/mode/2up>.

⁶⁵² IOR/R/15/2/640, 'File 25/4 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance, 1930' [2r] (3/40).

⁶⁵³ Abdul Rahman Al-Bazzaz, *Iraq from Occupation to Independence, 194–195; The Iraqi-British Treaty and Its Annex*, vol. 16 (Baghdad: Government Press, 1930), 2, <https://www.noor-book.com/-البريطانيه-المعاهده-العراقية-البريطانية-كتاب-الملحقها>.pdf. [Translated from Arabic].

war. It also specified the British aid to Iraq in the event of war or the danger of war in the provision of facilities and assistance, including the use of railways, rivers, ports, airports, and means of transportation.⁶⁵⁴ The first paragraph of article five stipulates that the responsibility for maintaining internal security rests with Iraq, as well as the responsibility for defence against any external aggression, noting the provisions of Article four. However, Iraq has agreed to grant Britain two air bases, one in or near Basra, and the other west of the Euphrates, which is known today as Sin al-Dhaban airport, which is about 70 kilometres far from Baghdad. Iraq also agreed that Britain would set up troops at airports. Article Six also limits the duration of the treaty to twenty-five years from the date of its implementation.⁶⁵⁵

The two governments agreed that the issues of railways and ports would be the subject of special agreements. These agreements were subsequently concluded, and it was stated in one of the exchange letters that the Iraqi government, due to the alliance between itself and Britain, employed British nationals when it needs the services of foreign officials, if this does not prejudice the right of the Iraqi government to employ non-British foreign officials. The financial agreement obligated the Iraqi government to purchase the remnants of the British army and its facilities at a third of their cost, provided that the British Ministry of Aviation certifies the validity of the price and stipulates that the British government does not pay rent for the use of airports in Iraq.⁶⁵⁶

5.1.6.1. Iraqi Public Opinion of the Treaty:

Although the treaty was ratified in parliament by an overwhelming majority, Iraqi public opinion received it with discomfort, reaching the point of discontent in educated and perceptive environments. In fact, the treaty was criticized by the Iraqi and Arab presses, and several politicians explained the dangers of this alliance to the growth of Iraqi social, political, and commercial aspects. Moreover, the opponents of the treaty conveyed to the Secretary-General of the LN that, "we share the view of the members that the recent Iraqi-British Treaty does not guarantee Iraq's

⁶⁵⁴ Hanna Batatu, *A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba'ithists, and Free Officers*, 2nd ed. (London: Saqi Books, 2004), 332, <https://archive.org/details/oldsocialclasses0000bata>.

⁶⁵⁵ IOR/R/15/2/640, 'File 25/4 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance, 1930' [2r] (3/40).

⁶⁵⁶ Abdul Rahman Al-Bazzaz, *Lectures About Iraq: Iraq from Occupation to Independence*, 2nd ed. (Baghdad, 1954), p. 103.

full independence, but rather allows the British to exploit our country as required by its colonial purposes."⁶⁵⁷

Referring to the position of King Faisal, the king appeared to be neutral in previous treaties, although he sometimes acted secretly against them, as happened in the first treaty of 1922. Whatever the case, the king ended up maintaining his neutrality. In one of his speeches in 1931, he said, "Iraq is free and has no master but its will, and our British ally has only one thing in this country, which is the air line. "What is regrettable is that among the men of the nation there are those who realize the truth of what I have explained to you and do not dare to be frank with you about it, until I was forced to be frank with you about the matter myself."⁶⁵⁸ It is not possible, according to the democratic standard of any constitutional government, for the highest head of state to take such a position, as he loses much of the qualities of inclusiveness that impartiality bestows on him and is stripped of those necessary for him to remain a sublime symbol for the entire nation, not a supporter of one of its parties, or a supporter of one of its policies.⁶⁵⁹

5.1.6.2. Treaty and the League of Nations:

Iraq's relationship with the LN was so close that we rarely find a counterpart among other countries, as the mandate imposed on Iraq was approved by the League's charter and stipulated in some of its articles, and the Iraqi-Turkish disputes over the borders and the vilayet of Mosul were the subject of long discussion and special attention in that major international institution. The annexation of the vilayet of Mosul to Iraq was a unanimous decision taken by the League, as discussed before. The first Iraqi-British treaty was taken note of by the League and accepted as an alternative to the provisions of the Mandate, which Iraq rejected and revolted against. But Britain was able to achieve the goals of the Mandate with the Treaty of Alliance, which contained all the main Mandate aims. Britain, Iraq's ally, was obliged by the League to report on its progress and to continue its progress, as required by the mandate system.⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁷ Abdul Rahman Al-Bazzaz, *Iraq from Occupation to Independence*, p. 202.

⁶⁵⁸ Abdul Rahman Al-Bazzaz, p. 204.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁰ Susan Pedersen, "Getting Out of Iraq in 1932: The League of Nations and the Road to Normative Statehood," *The American Historical Review* 115, no. 4 (May 2010): pp. 975–976, <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/stable/23303209>.

According to Bazzaz, an Iraqi historian, Britain appeared in two different ways: for Iraq it appeared as an ally, based on a treaty concluded between the two countries. It appeared to the League of Nations as a mandatory power over a state that had not yet gained its sovereignty, and it may enter the League and obtain its sovereignty. This strange situation had been going on in Iraq for a few years, and the struggle of Iraqis to get rid of these anomalies has been strong. Britain itself acknowledged this anomaly in its 1928 report: "Iraq has national sovereignty, and yet it is under mandate."⁶⁶¹ In addition, Bazzaz stated that the mandate acted as a guiding and oversight body, and the High Commissioner is in real control of all internal and external affairs of the state. Public administrations and utilities, such as railways and ports, belong to Iraq, but it cannot manage them of its own free will, and its parliament does not have full control over the huge funds that are spent and sometimes even wasted in other ways than necessary. Foreigners in Iraq enjoy great privileges, and Iraqis in the country of those foreigners do not enjoy any of these privileges in return for what those foreigners enjoy in Iraq.⁶⁶²

Furthermore, the Iraqi-British negotiations that followed the 1926 treaty in particular were based on a request from Britain to submit a proposal to the League of Nations to nominate Iraq as a member. After strenuous efforts and many contacts, on October 4, 1929, the British submitted this proposal, and the British Foreign Secretary wrote to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to inform the members of the League of British government's desire to nominate Iraq for membership in the League in 1932.⁶⁶³ On the basis of the five conditions pointed out, Iraq must have a stable government and an administration capable of running the basic affairs of the state on a regular basis. Second, the country must be able to preserve its unity and political independence. Third, the state must be able to maintain public security throughout it. Fourth, Iraq must have sufficient financial resources to meet regular government expenditures. Finally, Iraq must have laws and judicial regulations that always guarantee justice equally to all.⁶⁶⁴

The Commission then laid down the guarantees that Iraq must undertake. First, effectively protect racial, linguistic, and religious minorities. Second, the preservation of foreign interests and

⁶⁶¹ Abdul Rahman Al-Bazzaz, *Iraq from Occupation to Independence*, pp. 206–207.

⁶⁶² Abdul Rahman Al-Bazzaz, 207.

⁶⁶³ Naseem Susa, *League of Nations and Iraq* (Baghdad: Modren Press, 1950), pp. 15–16, <https://www.noor-book.com/en/ebook-‘Uṣbat-alUmam-waal‘Irāq-pdf>.

⁶⁶⁴ IOR/R/15/2/640, 'File 25/4 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance, 1930' [2r] (3/40).

privileges and consular jurisdiction, as they were exercised during the Ottoman Empire under foreign privileges, unless another system is generalized with the consent of the states by the Council of the LN competent. Thirdly, the preservation of foreign judicial, civil, and criminal interests not covered by the foreign privilege system. Fourth, preserving freedom of thought and worship and practicing religious, educational, and natural acts by missionaries of all sects, if they do not prejudice public security, morals, and administration. Fifthly, the financial commitments made by the former Mandatory Power must be preserved. Sixth, the various rights acquired during the Mandate era should be preserved. Lastly, the preservation of the general and special international covenants entered by the Mandatory Power on behalf of the Mandate country, while retaining the right to denounce them by successive authorities.⁶⁶⁵

As the British High Commissioner explained, "His Majesty's Government appreciates the responsibility entrusted to them in Iraq's nomination to the League of Nations, which is, to their knowledge, the only legal means of termination of the Mandate. "If Iraq proves unfit for it, the moral responsibility must lie with His Majesty's Government."⁶⁶⁶ However, it is right to note that some other states have criticized the provisions of the Iraqi-British Treaty and pointed out that its provisions are so stringent that they are not suitable as a basis for linking relations between two independent countries. Susa stated that Article five made the balance of one of the contracting parties preponderant over the other, and that he personally did not like to enter his country into such a pledge, which was accepted by Iraq itself. Others argued that Iraq's acceptance of this treaty would make it after its liberation from the Mandate under British protection. She also said that Annex seven of the Treaty did not take into account Iraq's independence, and that the Treaty was ratified by the Council before Iraq was liberated from the Mandate, as in this case he was not yet the owner of his sovereignty.⁶⁶⁷ The conclusion of the Commission's opinion was worded as follows: "This treaty contains some extraneous articles in treaties of this kind. However, the pledges made by Iraq to Great Britain show that there is nothing in them that benefits the sovereignty of the state."⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁵ Abdul Rahman Al-Bazzaz, *Iraq from Occupation to Independence*, p. 210.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p. 212.

⁶⁶⁷ Susa, *League of Nations and Iraq*, pp. 15–16.

⁶⁶⁸ "Appendix IV Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance, June 30, 1930: Treaty of Alliance between His Majesty in Respect of the United Kingdom and His Majesty the King of Iraq Baghdad, 30 June 1930" (Baghdad, 1930), p. 200.

However, on October 3, 1932, at a session of the Assembly, the Council of the League approved the admission of Iraq to membership in the League of Nations. Iraq thus became the fifty-seventh member of the League. The presiding officer then stated that: a new state has emerged into the world of existence in peace, whereas in the past it was only by means of violence, the League thus shows again the mistake that many people think it was designed to maintain the status quo. The world's denial of national advancement has given an opportunity for normal implementation. Iraq's entry into the LN gave it a chance to implement what the revolutionaries had requested in the past. The Rapporteur of the Committee, the representative of Yugoslavia, said that "it is his pleasure to recommend the admission of Iraq as a member of the League, and it is a passing coincidence that it falls upon a country whose long history has been a bitter struggle for freedom to be ordered to contribute this modest amount to the admission of the Kingdom of Iraq to the League of Nations." It can be said that this attitude from the representative of Yugoslavia was due to the fact that both Iraq and Yugoslavia were oppressed by the Ottoman Empire, which extended from the Adriatic to the Persian Gulf.⁶⁶⁹

When Iraq joined the LN, it was an indication that it was acknowledged as an independent nation. The entire political and economic prosperity of Iraq was boosted by this development, which also contributed to the country's self-confidence. Because it was now obligated to follow the norms and values of the LN, Iraq's accession showed that it had integrated into the larger international community. Furthermore, the political and economic progress of Iraq was greatly aided by this event, which signified the acknowledgment of Iraq as an independent state. There were far-reaching consequences for the whole Middle East when Iraq joined the LN, an indication of the increasing worldwide recognition of Iraq's position as an independent and sovereign state.

Palestine:

5.2. Early Steps Towards the Implementation of the Balfour Declaration:

The British involvement in Palestine may be comprehended most effectively by considering the surrounding regional and international circumstances. It must be considered in relation to Britain's wider strategy towards the Middle East. Prior to the Great War, fierce competition among

⁶⁶⁹ Hudson, "The Admission of Iraq to Membership in the League of Nations," p. 135.

competing European countries in the region heightened the significance of Palestine for Britain. Specifically, France's affiliation with Egypt and Syria, as well as Germany's impact on the Ottoman Empire, prompted Britain to protect its interests in the region. Britain was drawn to Palestine because of its advantageous geographical position, particularly the port of Haifa, which served Britain's strategic and economic objectives. It was widely accepted that Britain considered Palestine to be a crucial defensive barrier for the Suez Canal and an important part of the overland route to India.⁶⁷⁰ What was the purpose of Britain's desire for a buffer zone or a secure route? As it was mentioned in the previous chapters the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 divided the Ottoman land among the alliance's powers (Britain, France, and Russia). According to this agreement Palestine was highlighted as an international subject but in reality, it was under British influence, as Britain represented herself as responsible for the Jewish question.⁶⁷¹ This was clearly addressed in the Balfour declaration of 1917, that gave a promise to the Jewish people that they would have a state in the Palestine land. This declaration was like an instrument for interfering in Palestinian affairs and also it was an excuse to control the eastern Mediterranean. In the same year the British forces led by General Allenby and capture Jerusalem.⁶⁷²

Helmreich argued that, following Germany's defeat, Britain reassessed its imperial objectives in the Middle East. Britain was resolute in preventing France, its competitor in trade and empire, from increasing its power and weakening Britain's dominance in the area. Britain, recognizing the importance of its military position, aimed to prevent recurring conflicts and so pursued renegotiations as a component of a comprehensive peace agreement. France opposed Britain's endeavour to exclude her from the Arab territories and maintained the legitimacy of the Sykes-Picot Agreement.⁶⁷³ In spite of the fact that it advocated for the establishment of wartime accords, Britain took control of the Middle East.⁶⁷⁴ Immediately after the conclusion of the war, the British administration came to the conclusion that "Palestine must not fall into French hands," and that Britain should have complete control over the situation.⁶⁷⁵ Edward stated that it was hard for France to do any activities in the area that were under Britain's authority (which extended from the

⁶⁷⁰ Larry Butler, *Britain and Empire: Adjusting to a Post-Imperial World* (London: IB Tauris, 2002), 16.

⁶⁷¹ Kedourie, "Sir Mark Sykes and Palestine 1915–1916."

⁶⁷² "The Balfour Declaration - World War I Document Archive."

⁶⁷³ Helmreich, "Italy and the Anglo-French Repudiation of the 1917 St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement," 101.

⁶⁷⁴ Pedersen, "The Meaning of the Mandates System: An Argument," p. 560.

⁶⁷⁵ Gillon, "The Antecedents of the Balfour Declaration," p. 137.

Mediterranean to India). This notion is supported by the fact that Britain acted as a barrier for France in the Mediterranean region.⁶⁷⁶ Furthermore, Britain maintained that it was necessary for her to retain control over a tiny enclave in the vicinity of Haifa. Britain was considering constructing a railway from Baghdad to Haifa to establish its area of influence in Iraq.⁶⁷⁷

5.2.1. The Mandate for Palestine:

Palestine, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, which were formerly under Turkish control, were categorized as 'A' mandates.⁶⁷⁸ This indicated that these people achieved a higher level than those in Africa and the Pacific who were assigned to the "B" and "C" missions.⁶⁷⁹ Concurrently, the League's covenant was unclear on the subject of the duration, termination, or remedy available to the League if the required authority failed to preserve the sacred trust's values.⁶⁸⁰ Palestine was placed under military rule from 1917 to 1920 as a result of being classified as occupied enemy territory. The Palestine Mandate was assigned to Great Britain at the San Remo Conference on April 25th, 1920. Subsequently, on July 1st, 1920, the civil administration took over from the military authority of the Administrator of Occupied Enemy Territory. Sir Herbert Samuel served as the first High Commissioner for Palestine. During the Treaty of Sèvres, which was concluded the following month, Turkey officially relinquished its control over Palestine.⁶⁸¹

Moreover, the Principal Allied and Associated Powers allocated the Mandate for Palestine to Great Britain during the San Remo Conference in April 1920. Along the same lines, it became unclear if the promised Arab territories mentioned in the Husain-McMahon communication included Palestine. Arabs said this did not fall within the reservation's purview, and British officials disputed that Palestine was part of that Arab territory. Furthermore, prominent Arab leaders in Palestine have consistently called for independence from the inception of the Mandate, rejecting both the legitimacy of the Mandate and Britain's authority to execute the Balfour Declaration.⁶⁸² British Cabinet members met in June 1921 to consider the importance of Great Britain's retention of the

⁶⁷⁶ Said, *Introduction to Orientalism*, 217.

⁶⁷⁷ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, p. 51.

⁶⁷⁸ Jenkins, "Economic Equality and the Mandates Commission," p. 605.

⁶⁷⁹ David Hunter Miller, "The Origin of The Mandates System," *Foreign Affairs*. 6, no. 2 (1927): p. 287.

⁶⁸⁰ Pitman B Potter, "Origin of the System of Mandates under the League of Nations," *American Political Science Review* 16, no. 4 (1922): p. 570.

⁶⁸¹ Seton-Williams, *Britain and the Arab States: A Survey of Anglo-Arab Relations, 1920-1948*, p. 125.

⁶⁸² *Ibid.*

mandates of Iraq and Palestine before the LN recognized these mandates. Both Parliament and Whitehall deliberated on the matter. The truth is that not everyone in Britain was completely in favour of the mandate. In 1921, the provisions of the Palestine mandate were temporarily accepted by the Cabinet, but in 1922, the House of Lords moved against it.⁶⁸³

The submission of the proposed provisions of the Mandate to the Council of the League was delayed due to discussions with the United States. It was finally ratified on July 24th, 1922. The Mandate was formally implemented on September 29th, 1923. Article 2 of the Mandate outlined the conditions for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.⁶⁸⁴

The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political, administrative, and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home as laid down in the preamble and the development of self-governing institutions, and also for safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion. Furthermore, Local autonomy was to be encouraged under Article 3 and a Jewish Agency was to be set up to advise and cooperate with the Palestine Administration in economic and social measures as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home. Jewish immigration and settlement were to be facilitated under Article 6. While ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced.⁶⁸⁵

An argument was presented stating that the British government had a clear motivation to maintain control over Palestine due to the significant financial investment it had made in the region, totalling more than one hundred million pounds, since the armistice. The decision was made based on the recognition that while dominating any of the Arab regions was considered unpleasant and costly, it would be far more unwanted and costly if they were to fall under the authority of any other European Power.⁶⁸⁶ Furthermore, the Cabinet saw the task of withdrawing from Palestine and Mesopotamia and leaving those nations to disorder as challenging.⁶⁸⁷ According to Rappard, the colonial powers chose to annex or give independence to the conquered areas since it was politically difficult to leave them under their old rulers. According to Rappard, the mandate was an administrative style that gained global acceptance due to the inherent benefits it provided to its

⁶⁸³ Rory Miller, *Britain, Palestine and Empire: The Mandate Years* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010), 3.

⁶⁸⁴ Seton-Williams, *Britain and the Arab States: A Survey of Anglo-Arab Relations, 1920-1948*, p. 125.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 121.

⁶⁸⁶ “TNA/CAB24/125/41, Palestine and Mesopotamia Mandates, Winston S Churchill, 1.6.1921,” n.d.

⁶⁸⁷ “TNA/CAB24/125/29, League of Nations, ‘A’ & ‘B’ Mandates ‘, 1.6.1921.,” n.d.

participants. Who were the people involved in the mandate? He states that the League of Nations, the obligatory powers, and the population of the mandated region were the three entities involved.⁶⁸⁸

In the view of the Middle East Department of the Colonial Office, the political and strategic significance of Palestine was increasing as a result of the fact that the British sea and air communications were moving their focus from Egypt to Palestine.⁶⁸⁹ In July 1923, the Criminal Investigation Department of the Palestine Police (CID) expressed the view that it was now advantageous to maintain control over Palestine. This was due to the potential threat that would arise if Palestine's ports were captured by foreign forces, since it would pose a naval danger to the Suez Canal. Palestine played a crucial role in facilitating the transportation of oil to and from the Mediterranean for the APOC.⁶⁹⁰

Also, in 1923, the British Army's General Staff said that Palestine was not necessary to protect the Suez Canal.⁶⁹¹ For the most part, the defence of the canal came from troops on the banks of the Suez, not in Palestine.⁶⁹² Contrarily, the CID and the Colonial Office maintained the stance that emphasized the significance of Palestine to Suez. Considering this apparent conflict, what were the compelling reasons for Britain to acquire dominion over Palestine? Furthermore, it was believed that India would provide Britain a significant military recruiting ground in the event of war, therefore it was imperative that the Suez Canal remain available for ships to India in addition to land and aviation links via Palestine and Iraq.⁶⁹³ The phrase mandate was sufficiently broad, as Monroe correctly points out, to enable the British to assert that the Imperial defence would remain securely in their hands. You may say that the mandate is an upgrade over colonialism in this regard. Still, the end effect was that the Palestinian territories were maintained as Crown Colonies.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁸⁸ William E Rappard, "The Practical Working of the Mandates System," *Journal of the British Institute of International Affairs* 4, no. 5 (1925): p. 208.

⁶⁸⁹ Maurice, "British Policy in the Mediterranean," pp. 108–109.

⁶⁹⁰ Abdul-Wahab Kayyali, "Zionism and Imperialism: The Historical Origins," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 6, no. 3 (1977): p. 112.

⁶⁹¹ Bernard Wasserstein, "The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement 1918-1929" (JSTOR, 1977).

⁶⁹² Kenneth Williams, "Palestine: A New Policy Wanted," *Fortnightly* 134 (1933): p. 672.

⁶⁹³ Kayyali, "Zionism and Imperialism: The Historical Origins," p. 112.

⁶⁹⁴ Elizabeth Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East 1914-1971*, 2nd ed. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1981), p. 72.

5.2.2. Jewish Migration:

Since the mandate over Palestine was accepted, the British administration policy was supporting the establishment of Jewish home. For implementing that Britain selected Herbert Samuel as the first High Commissioner in Palestine, appointed in the year 1920 to 1925. Samuel was Jewish man, and his appointment led to the anger of the Arabs, who demanded that Britain should change of its mind from this choice, but the British Mandate administration insisted on her choice of selecting Samuel. It was clear for both Britain and Jewish people that taken this action would not be accepted and would face many obstacles from the Palestinians in particular and Arabs Muslims in general. Thus, Britain took some steps to put the creation of Jewish state in a legal framework, and to show to the public opinion that it was necessary to have Jewish homeland in Palestine.⁶⁹⁵

The Syrian Congress convened in Damascus in June 1919, conveyed the Arab perspective on Jewish immigration into Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state. The Arab Executive Committee, chosen via a series of conferences, had authority over the Palestine Arab Political Movement until 1935. Thus, an example of the Palestine situation was that, in April 1920, a series of disruptions occurred in Palestine, resulting in Arab aggression against Jews, resulting in five fatalities and over two hundred injuries. The outbreak was attributed by the Military Commission to several factors. Firstly, it was caused by Arab disillusionment resulting from unfulfilled promises of independence made during the war. Secondly, the Arab population believed that the Balfour Declaration and the establishment of a Jewish homeland would lead to their subjugation. Lastly, discontent arose from the establishment of Faisal's temporary Arab Kingdom in Syria, as well as the rise of nationalist Arab sentiments fuelled by the war and the movement for Arab independence.⁶⁹⁶ Since the inception of the Mandate, Arab leaders in Palestine have consistently rejected the legitimacy of the Mandate and Britain's authority to execute the Balfour Declaration, while asserting their aspiration for independence.⁶⁹⁷ Arabs initially only showed animosity against Jews; however, as time progressed, this attitude shifted, and their discontent with the Palestine Administration crystallized into anti-government activities and, in 1935, into open revolt.⁶⁹⁸

⁶⁹⁵ Kedourie, "Sir Herbert Samuel and the Government of Palestine."

⁶⁹⁶ Seton-Williams, *Britain and the Arab States: A Survey of Anglo-Arab Relations, 1920-1948*, p. 126.

⁶⁹⁷ Williams, "Palestine: A New Policy Wanted."

⁶⁹⁸ Seton-Williams, *Britain and the Arab States: A Survey of Anglo-Arab Relations, 1920-1948*, pp. 126–127.

The substantial surge in the Jewish population in Palestine between 1882 and 1936 was a result of a multifaceted interaction of historical, political, and demographic elements. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several reasons led to waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine. These included hopes for Zionism, seeking refuge from European persecution, and the desire for economic possibilities. The Jewish population, which started at 24,000 in 1882, saw a consistent growth and reached 94,000 by the outbreak of the Great War in 1914.⁶⁹⁹ During this time, there was a rise in Jewish immigration, which was made easier by the British Mandate after the war. As a result, the Jewish population grew to 174,610 by 1931. Due to the growth of anti-Semitism in Europe and the emergence of Nazism, there was a significant influx of Jewish immigrants throughout the 1930s. This resulted in a major rise in the Jewish population, reaching 384,078 by 1936.⁷⁰⁰ as explained in table below;

Era	Year	Jews (core population)	Non-Jews	Total Population	% Jewish
Ottoman Empire	1882	24,000	276,000	300,000	8.0%
World War I	1914	94,000	595,000	689,000	13.6%
	1918	60,000	600,000	660,000	8.1%
British Mandate	1922	83,794	673,388	757,182	11%
	1931	174,610	861,211	1,035,821	16.9%
	1936	384,078	982,614	1,366,692	28.1%

Table (1): Jewish & Non-Jewish Population of Israel/Palestine (1517 - Present)⁷⁰¹

Furthermore, Jacob Metzger, in his book ‘*The Divided Economy of Mandatory Palestine*’, pointed out that:

The immigration-intensive 1930s also revitalized the trend toward urban concentration, which had begun in the mid-1920s, largely by attracting immigrants of the Fifth Aliya to larger towns, notably Tel Aviv and Haifa. The (Jewish) population of Tel Aviv just about tripled (from about 46,000 to 132,000)

⁶⁹⁹ Seton-Williams, pp.121–122.

⁷⁰⁰ Hussain Abu Al-Naml, *The Israeli Economy: From Agricultural Settlement to Economic Knowledge*, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Center of Arab Unity Studies, 2004), pp. 87–88.

⁷⁰¹ Jewish Virtual Library, “Jewish & Non-Jewish Population of Israel/Palestine (1517 - Present),” accessed April 16, 2024, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jewish-and-non-jewish-population-of-israel-palestine-1517-present>.

between 1931 and 1939, and the total population (Arabs and Jews) of Haifa more than doubled (from 50,000 to 106,000).⁷⁰²

Mamoun Shehadeh, an Arab historian pointed out that, the Mandate Administration encouraged Zionist immigration and opened up a wide range of immigrants under the name that the mandate instrument encourages Jewish immigration and under the pretext that the Jews coming have high technical, scientific, technical, and professional competencies and can contribute to the progress and advancement of the country. The number of Zionist entities at the beginning of the mandate was 50,000, meaning that they were less than 7 per cent of the population in 1918. ⁷⁰³ Moreover, article 3 of the Mandatory Power in Palestine encourages local autonomy, while Article 6 of the sacred instrument states that Great Britain should not prejudice other sections of the population but encourage Jewish immigration under suitable conditions. However, Arabs have increased in number, representing 70 per cent of Palestine's population, while Jews have decreased from 7 per cent in 1918 to 29 per cent. This contradicts Article 15 of the Mandate, which prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, and language.⁷⁰⁴

On the words, Britain opened the doors of immigration to Jews from all over the world, bringing a Jewish superiority to the population of the region. So that policy contributed to the forcible displacement of many Palestinians under the threat of Zionist gangs and with British military support. The property and lands of the displaced people were seized, and settlements were established to absorb the immigrant Jews. Therefore, the number of Jews increased, so that at the end of the Mandate government in 1948, the number of Jews reached 650,000, making them 31 per cent of the population.⁷⁰⁵ Secondly, Britain has made it easier for Jews to buy Arab lands by preventing Palestinian farmers from exporting their products until their prices drop, and they are unable to pay debts and taxes, so they are forced to sell them to the Jews at a low price. Hence, from 1931 to 1935, the Zionists were able to buy more than half a million acres. the area of land controlled by the Jews until 1947 amounted to about 6.8 percent of the area of Palestine and is estimated at 1,588,365 acres, whether by sale or by giving it as a donation from the Mandate

⁷⁰² Metzger, *The Divided Economy of Mandatory Palestine*, p. 78.

⁷⁰³ Mamoun Shehadeh, "Britain's Role in Stabilizing the Zionist Entity in Palestine," Dwan Al-Arab, 2009, <https://www.diwanalarab.com/دور-بريطانيا-في>.

⁷⁰⁴ Emile Ghory, "An Arab View of the Situation in Palestine," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1931-1939)* 15, no. 5 (March 1936): 689, doi:10.2307/2602415.

⁷⁰⁵ Mamoun Shehadeh, "Britain's Role in Stabilizing the Zionist Entity in Palestine.

government to the Jews. Thirdly, American, British, and Western funds were flowing into Palestine to finance the construction of the Jewish National Homeland, and Arthur Balfour, the one who promised to establish a Zionist state in Palestine, opened the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1925.⁷⁰⁶

One can blame Britain for taking these actions in favour of Jews, as she failed to protect the rights of native Arabs in comparison to Jewish rights in the region. In contrast, the Jews have gotten much more in Palestine than they were promised, which is warranted by their historical rights. At the same time, Germany was also blamed internationally for the Holocausts carried out by German Nazis against European Jews, especially in the Second World War. But this ought not be an excuse for Britain failing to have fulfil her obligations to the Palestinian Arabs. It has to be said the Arabs did not commit these crimes against the Jews in Europe so that it was unfair that they would have to be punished and pay for Germany's crimes.⁷⁰⁷

5.2.3. The Palestinian Reaction:

The British steps to establish the Zionist State took practical dimensions by establishing the Jewish Legion, providing it with weapons and equipment, training its elements in combat, initiating land confiscation, legislating laws, building Zionist institutions, and arresting opposing Palestinians. Palestine witnessed armed operations, uprisings, and revolts against the British and Jewish occupation. The organized armed action was launched in 1919 through the "Fedayeen" Association, but Britain confronted and aborted this assembly.⁷⁰⁸ During the decade of the British Mandate, nearly (76,400) Jews immigrated to Palestine, the majority of whom came from Eastern European countries, and with the increasing activity of immigration to Palestine, Arabs realized the need to resist Zionism.⁷⁰⁹ On September 24, 1928, Jews attempted to take over the western wall of the Muslim-owned Al-Aqsa Mosque, which resulted in Arab support for the Palestinians from Arab countries. The beginning of the so-called Al-Buraq revolution, which witnessed bloody

⁷⁰⁶ Mamoun Shehadeh.

⁷⁰⁷ Avital Ginat, "British Mandate for Palestine. International Encyclopaedia of the First World War," *International Encyclopaedia of the First World War*, 2018, https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/british_mandate_for_palestine.

⁷⁰⁸ Nabil Sahli, "The British Role in the Creation of Israel and the Continuation of the Tragedy of the Palestinian People."

⁷⁰⁹ Ali Mohammed Qader, "Balfour's Legacy: Britain, Zionism, and the Controversial Path to Israel's Establishment.," *Arab Journal of Science & Research Publishing* 10, no. 2 (2024). p. 12.

events, was followed by a raid by Arabs of Jewish communities in Hebron, Nablus, Besan and Safad. British forces then came to the defence of the Jews, using the utmost repression against Arab demonstrators, and they recalled troops from Egypt and used aircraft, infantry, and armoured vehicles.⁷¹⁰ In addition, the British bombardment destroyed the villages of Fata, Deir Yassin, and others. As well, more than a thousand people, most of them Arabs, were brought to trial, and twenty-six people were sentenced to death, including twenty-five Arabs and one Jew.⁷¹¹

During the 1920s and 1930s, Palestine had frequent and intense clashes between Jewish and Arab communities, resulting in a significant loss of life. The events that took place in 1929, often referred to as the Wailing Wall Riots, are widely regarded as a pivotal moment in the history of the mandate era, significantly impacting both the Arab and Jewish communities. Following the 1929 battle, Arabs ceased to differentiate between Jews of Arab descent and Jews of Eastern European descent instead saw them as a unified entity with shared national ambitions. From the perspective of the Jews, the events prompted the realization that a Jewish state was necessary, and that political factions should collaborate to achieve this goal. Following the 1929 riots, the British established a commission of inquiry to examine the violence. The findings of the Shaw Commission, also known as the Palestine Royal Commission, prompted a reassessment of Jewish immigration and property acquisition. Consequently, this event signified a change in British policy towards the Zionist movement and the Balfour Declaration.⁷¹²

5.3. British Mandate and Economic Priorities in Palestine, 1927-1933:

5.3.1. The Commercial Role of the Haifa Harbor for Britain:

In response to the 1922 request of the Arab Delegation in London for a constitution that would protect the people's civil, political, and economic interests and establish an independent national government, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Winston Churchill, issued a statement outlining British policy in Palestine. Following correspondence between the Zionists, the Colonial

⁷¹⁰ Mamoun Shehadeh, "Britain's Role in Stabilizing the Zionist Entity in Palestine," 2009. Translated from Arabic Source.

⁷¹¹ "The British Mandate: The British Mandate Over Palestine 1923-1948."

⁷¹² Ginat, "British Mandate for Palestine. International Encyclopaedia of the First World War."

Office, and the Arab Delegation, this was published on July 3rd. The guidelines that were established were as follows:

(1) His Majesty's Government reaffirm the Declaration of November 1917, which is not susceptible of change. (2) A Jewish national home would be founded in Palestine. The Jewish People would be in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance. But His Majesty's Government have no such aim in view as that Palestine should become Jewish as England is English. (3) Nor do His Majesty's Government contemplate the disappearance or subordination of Arab population, language, or culture. (4) Status of all citizens of Palestine will be Palestinian, no section of population will have any other status in the eyes of the Law. (5) His Majesty's Government intended to foster the establishment of a full measure of self-government in Palestine, and as the next step a Legislative Council with a majority of members would be set up immediately. (6) The special position of the Zionist executive did not entitle it to any share in the government of the country. (7) Immigration will not exceed the economic capacity of the country at the time to absorb new arrivals. (8) A Committee of elected members of the Legislative Council would confer with the administration upon matters relating to the regulation of immigration. Any difference of opinion would be referred to His Majesty's Government. (9) Any religious community or considerable section of the population claiming that the terms of the mandate are not being fulfilled would have the right of appeal to the League of Nations.

Regarding Palestine, this was just the first of many such policy announcements made by the British government. It should come as no surprise that the Zionist organization approved of this strategy, but the Palestine Arab Delegation in London disagreed.⁷¹³

The stipulations of Article 22 of the League's Covenant were those of the Palestine mandate that did have an impact on the British administration. The British administration considered and alluded to such publications during discussions over the building of the Haifa harbour. In general, they permitted Britain—the required power—to profit monetarily from the mandated region of Palestine.⁷¹⁴ The following 28 articles of the Palestine mandate were particularly significant. Part of the Palestine mandate's Article 11 states that:

The administration of Palestine shall take all necessary measures to safeguard the interests of the community in connection with the development of the country, and, subject to any international obligations accepted by the mandatory, shall have full power to provide for public ownership or control of any of the

⁷¹³ Seton-Williams, *Britain and the Arab States: A Survey of Anglo-Arab Relations, 1920-1948*, p. 127.

⁷¹⁴ Wright, "Mandates under the League of Nations," p. 342.

natural resources of the country or of the public works, services and utilities established or to be established therein.⁷¹⁵

The British government was granted the authority to manage and exploit Palestine's natural resources in accordance with the stipulations of this article, on the condition that it could protect the community's interests and fulfil its international responsibilities. The construction of the Haifa harbour undeniably played a role in the progress of the nation, albeit inciting disagreements with other countries concerning prior commitments. The obligatory nation was granted supplementary privileges, including those stipulated in Article 17, which states, "The mandatory shall be entitled at all times to use the roads, railways, and ports of Palestine for the movement of armed forces and the carriage of fuel and supplies." This article facilitated the British government's ability to contemplate the strategic utilization of Haifa port, specifically in regard to securing a terminus for the Iraq-to-Haifa oil pipeline, in its capacity as the author of the Palestine mandate provisions.⁷¹⁶

The purpose of Article 18 was to officially align with the LN's economic equality objective, sometimes known as the "open door" policy, which was only implicitly addressed in Article 22 of the League's Covenant. According to Edward Jenkins, economic equality is the assurance of equitable treatment under the law, an equal chance to compete and share in the nation's resources, and the right to enter contracts for public works projects on an equal basis with the citizens of the nation awarding the privilege.⁷¹⁷ Article eighteen and nineteen combined to guarantee economic parity for all League members. According to Article 19, "the mandatory shall adhere on behalf of the administration of Palestine to any general international conventions [...] relating to commercial equality, freedom of transit and navigation."⁷¹⁸ The British government had implemented several investment initiatives in Palestine. This includes the chemical extraction from the Dead Sea and Lydda airport. Still, the Haifa harbour development project provided the clearest case study for examining the relevant problems, especially British economic policy in Palestine. We can understand how Britain developed its policy toward Palestine by following the development from the beginning to the end. Furthermore, this offers extensive insight into a variety of factors

⁷¹⁵ Pappe, *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two People*, p. 82.

⁷¹⁶ Pappe, p. 166.

⁷¹⁷ Jenkins, "Economic Equality and the Mandates Commission," p. 605.

⁷¹⁸ William E Rappard, "The Evolution of the League of Nations1," *American Political Science Review* 21, no. 4 (1927): pp. 819–822.

connected to Britain's interventionist policy and its foreign relations, since a variety of domestic and international concerns were considered throughout the project.

The economic motives of British imperialism sparked interest in Haifa's harbour development. When discussing the development of Haifa Port, the British economy was at the forefront of the minds of both the military authority and the civil government in Palestine. According to Solomou, the British economy had sluggish development and was seen to provide only subpar investment prospects after the Great War.⁷¹⁹ As an example of why the British economy was poor, Thomas argues that the country's low investment rate is to blame.⁷²⁰ Consequently, the building of Haifa Harbour was seen as a venture that would provide prospects for Britain. However, according to Alford, the focus on achievement in British post-war politics waned in the 1920s as a result of increased global rivalry in commerce and finance, which in turn caused significant financial risks and problems. The interplay between political shifts and economic realities in the postwar era is complicated, according to Alford. British economic interests and imperial defence in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East were perceived as dependent on Haifa, according to Herbert and Sosnovsky's theory, but this complexity was also recognized in connection to investments in Palestine.⁷²¹

From 1922 until 1931, Norman Bentwich served as the Attorney General of Palestine. During the early years of British authority in Palestine, he detailed the limits of the military administration. The main objective, he said, was to bring modest buildings and change to Palestine in order to restore ordinary life.⁷²² Indeed, the construction of the Haifa port necessitated a more comprehensive approach. As Butler contends, the British defence strategy in the 1920s was to protect the Empire from prospective Russian assaults. The RN was entrusted with the duty of safeguarding the Empire, making it crucial to establish a naval port in Palestine to protect the Suez Canal and uphold Britain's growing regional interests.⁷²³ Marian Kent believes that in order to

⁷¹⁹ Solomos Solomou, *Themes in Macroeconomic History: The UK Economy 1919-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 2.

⁷²⁰ Mark Thomas, "The Macro-Economics of the Inter-War Years," *The Economic History of Britain Since 1700: 1860-1939*, 1994, p. 321.

⁷²¹ Bernard WE Alford, *Britain in the World Economy Since 1880* (London and New York: Longman Group Limited, 1996), pp. 116–124.

⁷²² Michel F Abcarius, *Palestine Through the Fog of Propaganda* (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1946), p. 28.

⁷²³ Butler, *Britain and Empire: Adjusting to a Post-Imperial World*, p. 4.

maintain its dominant position in the area, Britain had to ensure its economic and political superiority, which would be facilitated by the construction of a new port at Haifa.⁷²⁴

The construction of Haifa port began in October 1929 after the British administration resolved the long-standing dispute over the most appropriate approach to be used in the mandated region. The British administration was able to implement its imperial tactics via the Haifa Harbour Works Department, which was founded by the government of Palestine. By using British consulting engineers and personnel to manage the Harbour Department, Britain was able to achieve its objectives without contravening international norms. The British government successfully achieved its imperial objectives by indirectly boosting the British economy via the Harbour Department. Butler argues that Britain had a time of 'economic readjustment' during the inter-war years, which is well shown in the debate of the construction of the port.⁷²⁵ This was shown via the effort to include the imperial economic system, which became especially apparent after the start of the Depression in 1929. During this time, efforts were made to use imperial economic policy in order to support the economy of the metropolis. Undoubtedly, the acquisition of equipment in Britain and the engagement of an Anglo-Egyptian business for the primary dredging align with this overarching concept. This was crucial because, as N. Dimsdale explains, the lack of competitiveness resulting from the little rise in Britain's export prices compared to those of other nations between 1925 and 1931 was a key element in Britain's loss in market share.⁷²⁶

Moreover, in his book titled "The Empire Project," Darwin argues that the foundation of British strength resided in the amalgamation of its robust foreign resources with those of the imperial hub and the effective administration of these resources via diverse imperial political connections.⁷²⁷ In addition, Metzger believes that the establishment of the Haifa port was a component of Britain's dedication to developing Palestine's 'economic infrastructure. The British government made significant expenditures on infrastructure, taking into account the country's dismal economic condition. The use of indigenous workers in the harbour construction adhered to the British

⁷²⁴ Marian Kent, *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), p. 172.

⁷²⁵ Butler, *Britain and Empire: Adjusting to a Post-Imperial World*, 7.

⁷²⁶ Nicholas H Dimsdale, "British Monetary Policy and the Exchange Rate 1920-1938," *Oxford Economic Papers* 33 (1981): p. 324.

⁷²⁷ John Darwin, *The Empire Project, The Rise and Fall of the British World- System, 1830-1970*, 4th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 13.

government's strategy of mitigating the difficulties in mandated Palestine and contributing to the exploitation of its natural assets.⁷²⁸

As the construction of the Haifa port neared completion, the design of the seaport included space for an oil port. The harbour's layout might be used in conjunction with an oil pipeline and the shipment of oil without impeding its regular commercial operations. The Crown agents proposed that the construction of a secure oil dock be undertaken simultaneously with the primary harbour construction, expressing great enthusiasm for the idea. The building of the oil dock was authorized in August 1933, after the completion of the majority of the seaport works.⁷²⁹ What was the reason for the long duration of the British government's decision-making process regarding the oil facilities located in Haifa harbour? The main cause of this was principally the delay in resolving the matter of aligning the oil pipelines from Kirkuk to the Mediterranean. Furthermore, the British government believed it was prudent to provide the IPC with the authority to propose the construction of the oil port as a means to fund its expenditures. It was crucial since the initial estimate of £100,000 for the loan supply of the seaport did not account for the expense of an oil dock.⁷³⁰

5.3.2. The Kirkuk-Haifa Oil Pipeline: (See Figure 8)

In the early stage of portioning of Ottoman land the Ally powers Great Britain and France in some exchange letters between M. Paul the French Ambassador and Sir Edward Grey, the important of line between Baghdad and Haifa has been discussed. In this regard the Manchester Guardian Newspaper in an article titled "Partition of Turkey: The Secret Treaty of 1916" pointed out that,

Great Britain will have the right to construct, administer, and be the sole proprietor of a railway uniting Haifa with the Zone "B". She will have, further, a perpetual right to transport troops at all times along this railway. It must be understood by both Governments that this railway must facilitate the junction of Baghdad and Haifa.⁷³¹

⁷²⁸ Metzer, *The Divided Economy of Mandatory Palestine*, p. 35.

⁷²⁹ Ibid, p.166.

⁷³⁰ Metzer, pp. 166–167.

⁷³¹ The Manchester Guardian, "Partition of Turkey: The Secret Treaty of 1916," *Guardian Newspaper*, May 1919, 4, <https://theguardian.newspapers.com/image/258387911/?terms=The Secret Treaty of 1916&match=1>.

The purpose of the mandate system was to avoid the annexation of seized regions and ensure the implementation of the 'open door' policy, which aimed to provide equal economic possibilities for all members of the League. By accepting the mandate of Palestine and Iraq, Britain was able to surpass its geographical ambitions before the war. This allowed them to construct both a railway and an oil pipeline connecting the two nations, which were under British control.⁷³² During the development of Haifa port, the British government underwent a complicated and failed decision-making process before settling on the most suitable approach that matched with Britain's objectives and circumvented international censure. The British government's discussions over the harbour exemplify the process by which the investment strategy for the mandated area was developed. Additionally, they demonstrate the evolution of the methods used to manage the land. This was essential since the individuals responsible for overseeing the colonies were also the ones tasked with establishing methods for governing the mandated region.⁷³³

When the oil conduit from Iraq reached its terminus in Haifa, it was believed that Britain's imperial interests and dominance in the region were secure. The examination of the pipeline route dispute by Edward Fitzgerald has brought attention to the critical nature of the United Kingdom's relations with its adversaries, France and the United States, for which it relied heavily on energy supplies.⁷³⁴ Furthermore, G. Gareth Jones claims that the British government adopted an interventionist strategy after the Great War to ensure its access to Middle Eastern oil.⁷³⁵ The oil pipeline was inaugurated fourteen months after the official inauguration of the seaport at Haifa. King Ghazi of Iraq inaugurated the 1,150-mile pipeline on January 14, 1935. The pipeline was built by the Iraq Petroleum Company to connect its oilfields in Kirkuk to the ports in Tripoli, Syria, and Haifa, Palestine, located on the Mediterranean. The oil pipeline in Iraq was officially inaugurated in the presence of a distinguished assembly, mostly consisting of officials representing the various nationalities of the company's owners.⁷³⁶ Nevertheless, when compared to the magnificence of the

⁷³² Jenkins, "Economic Equality and the Mandates Commission," p. 605.

⁷³³ Wright, "Mandates under the League of Nations," p. 477.

⁷³⁴ Edward Peter Fitzgerald, "Business Diplomacy: Walter Teagle, Jersey Standard, and the Anglo-French Pipeline Conflict in the Middle East, 1930–1931," *Business History Review* 67, no. 2 (1993): pp. 207–245.

⁷³⁵ G Gareth Jones, "The British Government and the Oil Companies 1912–1924: The Search for an Oil Policy," *The Historical Journal* 20, no. 3 (1977): pp. 647–672.

⁷³⁶ Ernest James Buckton, "The Construction of Haifa Harbour. (Includes Plate at Back Of Volume).," in *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers*, vol. 239 (Thomas Telford-ICE Virtual Library, 1935), p. 569.

Haifa harbour's opening ceremony, the official opening of the pipeline in the Kirkuk oil fields was modest, without either a ceremonial guard or musical performance by a British army band. Ghazi, the current monarch of Iraq and son of the late King Faisal, conducted a thorough examination of the structures and residential areas. Subsequently, he proceeded to enter the pump house and started the engines by rotating the handle, therefore commencing the transportation of oil over the desert towards the Mediterranean.⁷³⁷

The Haifa port played a crucial role in Britain's oil strategies in the Middle East. The program addressed two prominent concerns pertaining to the oil pipeline. Britain used an interventionist approach, in which political factors affected economic decisions. The second objective was to ensure the provision of gasoline for the British navy in case of conflict, thereby fulfilling strategic goals. Thus, Britain sought to withdraw from its oil agreement with France in order to assert its own preferences on the IPC, a commercial entity, over the path of a pipeline that terminated in Haifa.⁷³⁸ It should be said that building a railway line between Haifa and Baghdad wasn't just a British goal. People all over the world wanted it too. The suggested road would help the Arab government in Iraq in very real ways. Iraq's "transit trade" dropped sharply after Iran decided to cut off trade with Iraq and use their own ports on the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. The Haifa-Baghdad railway was seen as the best way for Iraq to solve its problems. As an extra bonus, some people thought this might also make it easier for Persians to trade through Iraq.⁷³⁹ Furthermore, Britain tried to speed up the trade line from Persia to the Haifa seaport, such progress was addressed in a report archived by the United Nations Library and Archives Geneva. The report stated that,

Facilities have been progressively improved, and formalities simplified; through booking to and from Persia by the 'Iraqi railways was established in 1927; port dues have been much reduced; customs procedure has been greatly improved; and every effort has been made generally to speed up the traffic through 'Iraq.⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁷ New York Times, "Mosul-Haifa Oil Pipeline King Ghazi of Iraq Kirkuk to Sea Opening 1935."; Chiefs of Staff Committee: Minutes of 149th Meeting, 7th October 1946, in CAB-79-52-9. 6-7. (n.d.); "Desert Oil: A Thousand Mile Revier of Wealth Built Across the Wilderness," *Evening Chronicle*, January 1935, 6, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/895615275/?terms=haifa&match=1>.

⁷³⁸ William E Rappard, "Nationalism and the League of Nations Today," *American Political Science Review* 27, no. 5 (1933): p. 724.

⁷³⁹ Morton B Stratton, "British Railways and Motor Roads in the Middle East, 1930-1940," *Economic Geography* 20, no. 3 (1944): pp. 189–203.

⁷⁴⁰ UN Archives Geneva, Iraq - Special Report on the progress of Iraq during the period 1930-1931, p. 211.

During 1920s the British interest in the Baghdad-Haifa railway line became obvious. The 1930s witnessed a second wave of interest in this railroad. However, there was a slight change between the Haifa railway of 1920s compared to 1930s project. In the first one the British government purely focused on the project while in the 1930s decade this project became the matter of the Both British and Iraqi governments.⁷⁴¹ The Haifa-Baghdad railway was considered advantageous in 1930 because of the economic resurgence of Iraq and Persia, as well as the need for direct access to their natural resources, food products, and markets. The construction of the railway would redirect Middle Eastern commerce away from the Suez Canal and entice people from India. The strategic benefits of this alternative to the Suez Canal were enhanced as a result of the military use of aeroplanes. The Haifa-Baghdad railway provided notable benefits to the Arab Government in Iraq by serving as a means to bring Persian commerce to the nation. The implementation of the railway project has the ability to mitigate the decrease in transit traffic in Persia and even entice Persian trade towards Iraq.⁷⁴² (See Figure 9).

The main goal of British economic interests in Palestine and Iraq between 1932 and 1935 was to maintain control over important trade routes and to guarantee access to oil resources. In 1929, the British established the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) in Iraq, which was given exclusive authority over the country's oil production. British, French, and American firms made up the IPC, with the British company holding the lion's share of ownership. Being the vital source of energy for the British Empire, the British government was keen to maintain control over the oil industry in Iraq. The British had a strong desire to improve Palestine's transportation system, including the construction of ports, railroads, and highways. Its creation was primarily driven by the need of facilitating the passage of people and goods between Europe and Asia, as well as the need to serve the region's growing Jewish population. Palestine was seen by the British as a strategically beneficial position for the production, import, and export of goods. Generally speaking, the main goals of British economic interests in Palestine and Iraq during this period were to maintain control over important trade routes and to guarantee access to natural resources.⁷⁴³

⁷⁴¹ Morton B. Stratton, "British Railways and Motor Roads in the Middle East, 1930-1940," *Economic Geography* 20, no. 3 (July 1944): 189, doi:10.2307/141113.

⁷⁴² Stratton, pp. 191–192.

⁷⁴³ Office of the Historian, "Milestones: 1921–1936: The 1928 Red Line Agreement."

5.4. Chapter Summary:

This chapter has examined the British colonial policies and economic agenda in Iraq between 1923 and 1935, giving particular attention to significant events including the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty (1922-1924) and the Mosul Question. The Anglo-Iraqi Treaty sought to create Iraqi self-rule while maintaining British authority over foreign policy, thereby representing the shift from imperial dominion to national autonomy. While it included provisions for Iraqi self-governance, it also permitted substantial British control. An analysis of the arguments put forward during the 1923 Lausanne Conference illuminates the Mosul Question, which focused on the control of the oil-rich Mosul province. The British and Turkish delegations engaged in a discussion on the future of Mosul, with Britain placing emphasis on strategic interests and population demography, while Turkey highlighted historical and ethnic rights. The League of Nations (LN) interfered by designating Mosul to Iraq under British authority, therefore exacerbating the existing tensions between Turkey and Britain.

The chapter further examined the 1926 Iraqi-Turkish Frontier Agreement, which effectively resolved the conflict over Mosul and enhanced the diplomatic ties between Turkey and Britain. The political and economic consequences of the oil discovery in Kirkuk and the signing of the Red Line Agreement in 1927-1928 are argued to be central to Britain's efforts to safeguard its oil interests and establish dominance in the Middle East. As demonstrated, the agreement's self-denying provision and oil production divisions were crucial to Britain's determination to retain dominance in the region. The subsequent chapter undertakes an analysis of the Anglo-Iraqi Agreement of 1930-1932, which signified Iraq's shift towards independence while preserving deep connections with Britain. As will be argued, notwithstanding the disapproval of the Iraqi population, who believed it curtailed genuine autonomy, Iraq's membership in the League of Nations enhanced its political position.

This compellingly illustrates the intricate nature of British colonial tactics and their enduring consequences on Iraq and the Middle East. As has been consistently argued, the economic interests of Britain, namely in the oil sector, significantly influenced British policies, frequently overshadowing authentic endorsement of Iraqi independence. The ongoing exploitation of treaties and agreements demonstrates a consistent strategy of dominance rather than collaboration. According to this perspective, although Britain's influence played a role in Iraq's ultimate

attainment of independence, it was accompanied by persistent foreign interference and domestic turmoil, which continue to have an impact in the present day. In addition to examining British policies in Iraq, the thesis also addresses the early steps toward the implementation of the Balfour Declaration in Palestine, shedding light on Britain's strategic interests in the region. The chapter highlights how the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which pledged support for a Jewish state in Palestine, served as a tool for Britain to exert influence in the eastern Mediterranean. Britain's involvement in Palestine was primarily driven by its geopolitical ambitions in the Middle East, especially the strategic importance of the port of Haifa.

The Mandate for Palestine placed the region under British control. This chapter has proposed how both Jewish and Arab populations reacted to the mandate, noting a significant increase in Jewish immigration, which fuelled tensions. The Palestinian response to British and Jewish occupation has been analysed through the lens of armed uprisings, revolts, and widespread unrest. This chapter further explores the construction of the Kirkuk-Haifa Oil Pipeline, a major infrastructure project that underscored British imperial interests in the Middle East. By accepting the mandates for both Palestine and Iraq, Britain secured key oil transport routes and bolstered its influence in the region. The negotiations between Britain and France regarding the railway and oil pipeline have examined in detail, highlighting the strategic decision-making processes behind the development of the Haifa port. The pipeline and port became central to Britain's broader oil strategies, cementing its economic control over trade routes and vital energy resources.

This part of the thesis effectively underscores the deep intertwining of British economic interests and its geopolitical manoeuvres in Palestine. In this view, the Balfour Declaration, while framed as a humanitarian gesture, primarily served as a means for Britain to extend its influence over Palestine and the eastern Mediterranean. The construction of the Kirkuk-Haifa Oil Pipeline reveals the true extent of British imperial ambitions, with oil once again being the driving force behind foreign policy. The strategic positioning of Haifa and the pipeline not only reinforced British dominance but also exacerbated tensions in the region. These actions set the stage for enduring conflict in Palestine, as Britain's interference prioritized control over local stability.

This chapter provides a nuanced analysis of British colonial policies in Iraq and Palestine between 1923 and 1935, focusing on key events such as the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, the Mosul Question, and

the Balfour Declaration. It challenges traditional interpretations that focus on British support for self-governance and independence, arguing that Britain's geopolitical and economic strategies were geared toward maintaining dominance in the region, especially in relation to oil. The chapter explores the role of the League of Nations in shaping territorial outcomes, the 1923 Lausanne Conference debates, and the Iraqi-Turkish Frontier Agreement, revealing the enduring British influence in securing key territories and oil reserves. The exploration of the oil discovery in Kirkuk, the Red Line Agreement, and the construction of the Kirkuk-Haifa Oil Pipeline highlights the central role of oil in British decision-making, aligning with more recent scholarship that reevaluates the role of economic imperialism in shaping the Middle East. The Balfour Declaration's implementation and Britain's role in Palestine are linked to its broader imperial ambitions, particularly concerning the eastern Mediterranean and the Haifa port. The chapter also uses indigenous sources, such as local Iraqi and Palestinian accounts, to offer a more balanced view of the consequences of colonialism. The findings have contemporary relevance, as the long-term consequences of these policies continue to influence the political landscape of the region.

Chapter Six:

6. Conclusion:

Colonialism expanded rapidly as a result of the Second Industrial Revolution, shifting the focus from merely acquiring goods to securing raw materials for industrial production. Alsace and Lorraine, which Germany conquered after the 1870 war, had been a source of increasing friction between Germany and France. Europe's colonization of Asia, Africa, and Pacific began in 1870s. In Africa, British, French, and German forces competed for territory and control. As a result, alliances and ententes were formed and strengthened as a result of these actions. Consequently, the weapons race became more ferocious.

The term "Splendid Isolation" was used to characterize Britain's isolation from the rest of Europe in the 1800s and early 1900s. India, with its enormous pool of labour resources, was crucial to the dominance of the British Empire. Moreover, for protecting the Empire British forces were primarily reliant on Indian soldiers. The safety of trade routes between the United Kingdom and India was of paramount importance to the British government. In the 19th century, the Dardanelles, where the Black Sea meets the Mediterranean Sea, were a major worry for Britain. For centuries, the Mediterranean was a vital aspect of Britain's commerce with India. There was one hitch, however: Turkey held the Dardanelles. For a long time, Turkey and Russia had been bitter foes. The United Kingdom aided Turkey in its conflict with Russia. Therefore, Britain did not want Russian ships in the Mediterranean, hence the closure. Also, there was fierce competition between the British and French over North African territories. Germany began to exhibit an interest in colonial Africa in the early 1900s.

A famous example of an arms race was Britain and Germany's naval rivalry before the Great War. From 1906 until 1912, there was a fierce rivalry between the two major powers over the construction of big battleships and armoured cruisers. During this six-year period, Britain launched 29 capital ships while Germany launched 17. The goal of British foreign policy in Europe is to prevent any nation in Europe from gaining a monopoly on power. By 1907, Britain had come to realize that Germany posed the biggest danger to its national security. Because of this, the United Kingdom has been siding with both Russia and France. Despite being a member of the Triple Entente, Great Britain did not intend to fight in the Great War. Furthermore, in the second half of the 19th century, the so-called Middle East became the focus of the world's great powers. Europeans

began to increase their interest in the area by exploring, spying, and trading in the Ottoman territories of the Middle East. For Britain, the Middle East was still largely a geographical mass between Europe and India. Despite the fact that other European countries were interested in the Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia, Britain was more successful than her competitors in seizing commercial and political opportunities.

The Suez Canal presented the Empire with a new and strategically crucial access point to the East, but William White, Britain's ambassador in Constantinople, reaffirmed in 1887 that the government should take a "friendly but restrained" approach to the proposal. The German project did, in fact, continue to advance. The ensuing Anglo-German projects prepared in 1901 and 1902 were inconclusive and aimless. Curzon dreaded a Russian line to the Gulf as much as a German line. His actions revealed Britain's ongoing concern about foreign control of the Mesopotamian overland route to India. Despite the expansion of East Indian Company commerce, Britain was not the only European power to profit from this region of the Ottoman Empire. Germany was a rival, although not as a direct danger, but as a steady grower. The tight links between the Kaiser's administration in Berlin and the Young Turks' government in Istanbul were particularly unfavourable to Great Britain in the years leading up to the Great War. In 1903, Germany was granted a concession to expand its railway line across Anatolia to Baghdad, and it gained drilling rights on both sides of the projected route. As a result, growing concerns about German rivalry in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf sparked violent protests in London.

It is obvious that the nature of British interest in the Middle East had undergone a revolution, such as the economic revolution, in which the chief factor was the discovery of oil in prodigious quantities. Oilfields, particularly in Southwest Persia, were another important factor driving western interest in the Middle East. On the Iranian side of the Gulf, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company began production in 1907. In Southwest Persia, oil fields had delivered significant quantities of oil since 1907, and there were hints that oil may have been discovered further in the area. In other words, the discovery of oil in Persia in 1908 heightened London's interest in the area. In the second decade of the twentieth century, a combination of British and German interests founded the TPC, which was granted a license to search for oil in Mosul and Baghdad on the eve of the war. With the discovery of oil, Mesopotamia became very important to Britain: it sits on the path to her favourite colony, India, and was needed for the RN, which proclaimed the abandonment

of coal-powered ships in favour of oil-powered ships. Later, in 1914, Britain moved to acquire a majority interest in the APOC, motivated by a desire to ensure oil supplies for the RN.

The murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary in Sarajevo by a Slav nationalist or anarchist ignited the Great War. The killing triggered a series of events that led to the participation of other countries as a result of their alliances and goals related to imperialism, militarism, and nationalism. Britain had consistently stood up for the Ottoman Empire, often known as "The Sick Man of Europe." The Ottoman Empire's advantageous geographical position and the potential danger of Russian expansion into India and the Dardanelles were the main reasons for this. Britain had significant diplomatic and economic connections with the Ottoman Empire and frequently had privileged access to the Sultan and influential decision-makers across the kingdom. In 1914, Britain forged agreements with Germany and the Ottoman Empire with the aim of halting German expansion into British territories and bolstering the Ottoman economy. In the early stages of the conflict, Britain made efforts to maintain the Ottoman Empire's neutrality by participating in ambassadorial meetings, exchanging letters, and making promises to safeguard the Ottoman Empire's territorial integrity. Nevertheless, these efforts proved to be fruitless.

Prior to the turn of the century, oil firms had been exerting pressure on the Royal Navy to transition from coal to oil. Senior naval officers largely adopted oil firing due to its numerous advantages over coal. These included improved speed, extended range, smokeless combustion, enhanced manoeuvrability, increased space on board ships for weapons and equipment, reduced crew requirements for overseas operations, and the convenience of refuelling at sea instead of relying solely on coal. In 1911, Winston Churchill firmly believed that oil was the most suitable fuel for the navy. He held the belief that the sustained hegemony of the British Empire in foreign territories necessitated a consistent supply of oil. During a speech to Parliament in July 1913, he expressed the need for our nation to own, or at the very least regulate, a piece of the natural oil supply that we depend on. Churchill successfully persuaded the British government to acquire shares worth two million pounds in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, thus contributing to its achievement.

The primary objective of the British in Mesopotamia was to retain dominion over Alexandretta, as it served as a strategic foothold for maintaining control over Mesopotamia's very fertile grain-producing regions and highly profitable oilfields. Reinforcements from the United Kingdom would reach Mesopotamia fourteen days earlier if they came by rail from Alexandretta, compared to

travelling by sea across the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf. Retaining control over Alexandretta could potentially reduce the necessity for a substantial military presence in Mesopotamia during peacetime, compared to the scenario where this goal remains unachieved. Alexandretta's existence would jeopardize a Russian attack. Furthermore, Britain's principal objective was to safeguard its economic interests in the Suez Canal, Dardanelles, Alexandretta, the Persian Gulf, and Mesopotamia. Britain was concerned about the Ottomans' involvement in the war because it would align them with the hostile side of the conflict. Russian aggression towards British interests in Persia prompted Britain's decision to become involved, with the following objectives:

- To establish and maintain British dominance in Persia, thereby securing British control over commercial and political affairs in the region.
- To safeguard British influence in the areas surrounding the Persian Gulf.
- To protect British oil interests in Mesopotamia.

Britain has enduring diplomatic and economic interests in the Middle East. Following the Ottoman Empire's involvement in the conflict, the British Empire had three strategic options to protect its interests in the region: Engage in intervention inside the Ottoman Empire while preserving a stance of neutrality throughout the conflict. Provide assistance to the Ottoman Empire in its conflict with adversaries and ensure that the Ottoman Empire remained impartial in the battle. Adopt a passive approach and allow the situation to unfold, maybe leading to Ottoman participation in the war as allies of Germany. The British Empire finally chose to interfere in Mesopotamia. Several factors, including the perceived threat to British commercial and strategic interests in the Middle East, the concern that Ottoman involvement in the war would endanger British oil interests in Mesopotamia, the fear of a potential Russian invasion of the Ottoman Empire that would compromise the security of British oil interests, and the British intention to safeguard their longstanding ally, the Ottoman Empire, influenced the decision.

By the conclusion of 1914, Britain had effectively obtained the collaboration of the Indian Army to seize control of Basra, while Russia launched an invasion on Ottoman Armenia and made progress towards Constantinople. Britain also secured the backing of France in their military operation against the Ottoman Empire. The British involvement precipitated the swift deterioration of the Ottoman Empire in Mesopotamia. Britain promptly took measures to assert its dominance

over Mesopotamia by gaining authority over Basra and Baghdad. Admiral Wilcox led a British naval fleet that invaded the Shatt al-Arab estuary in October 1914, seized control of the town of Basra, and established a military base for British activities in Mesopotamia. The following months, the British steadily extended their dominion over Mesopotamia, seizing Baghdad in March 1917 and driving Ottoman troops further into the heart of the Ottoman Empire. The main goal of Britain's military campaign in the Ottoman Empire was to protect its critical economic and geopolitical interests in the region. The British government made the decision to safeguard British oil interests in Mesopotamia and prevent Ottoman participation in the war with Germany. In order to accomplish these objectives, Britain had three alternatives:

- To seize and govern the Ottoman Empire's oil fields.
- To divide the Ottoman Empire and guarantee the establishment of autonomous buffer states between the Ottoman Empire and Russia.
- To supplant the Ottoman Empire as the dominant force in the region while safeguarding the autonomy of non-Muslim communities.

After the war, Britain successfully safeguarded her economic and military interests in the Middle East, dismantling the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, Britain had neglected to safeguard the rights of the non-Muslim populations inside the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, there were tensions that emerged between Britain and the Arabs, who had provided assistance throughout the war.

Ultimately, the need to safeguard Britain's crucial economic and military interests in the Middle East drove her objectives in Mesopotamia and the Ottoman Empire. Apprehensions over the Ottoman Empire's involvement in the war and the potential jeopardization of British oil interests in Mesopotamia motivated the British engagement in Mesopotamia and the Ottoman Empire. In the end, the British Empire managed to protect its interests in the Middle East. However, this achievement caused the Arab populations, who had previously backed Britain throughout the war, to feel isolated and estranged.

The Gallipoli campaign and the British war in Sinai and Palestine were pivotal events during World War I, with profound implications for both the area and the global stage. The Gallipoli battle, spanning a duration of nine months and leading to a staggering one million losses on both sides, was unsuccessful in advancing towards Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the war, the Allies enjoyed a consistent and ample supply of oil, but the Central Powers

had difficulties meeting their oil requirements. During the war, the British Army saw a significant surge in the use of motorized vehicles, which had a notable influence on their combat capabilities. Lord Curzon, a prominent British statesman, explicitly said that the availability of oil was the decisive factor that enabled the Allies to emerge victorious. Following their compulsory withdrawal from Gallipoli, the British government resolved to continue their efforts in the Middle East, enlisting the support of the Australian Light Horse and the New Zealander Mounted Division with the goal of reaching the oil fields.

The events that took place at Gallipoli had a long-lasting influence on the national identities of Australia and New Zealand. Additionally, the campaign acted as a catalyst for a process of national rejuvenation in Turkey. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the esteemed figure of the Ottoman Empire who played a pivotal role in the Battle of Gallipoli, subsequently established the Turkish Republic. The events that took place at Gallipoli had a significant role in fostering a sense of national identity in both New Zealand and Australia. The people back home were delighted with how their compatriots had portrayed them on the world stage, establishing a reputation as formidable combatants under challenging circumstances. Anzac Day developed from a feeling of national pride. Since its first observance on April 25, 1916, the day of the landing has become an essential component of New Zealand society, providing an opportunity to pay tribute to the sacrifices of all New Zealanders, not just those who died at Gallipoli.

British and colonial forces were instrumental in safeguarding Egypt from the Ottoman menace in the Sinai and Palestine regions. The Ottoman declaration of war and the subsequent termination of relations with the Ottoman Empire exacerbated the tensions in Egypt, but the presence of imperial troops alleviated them. The British used Egypt as a base from which to start their Middle Eastern Campaign, highlighting the significant strategic importance of the area. Britain's imperialistic perspective influenced its actions and decisions towards the Muslim World, and the pre-war British and French approaches to Syria led to the Sykes-Picot Agreement. By 1918, the British government's eastern experts decided to gradually retreat from the conditions of the agreement, resulting in its rejection. Despite its military significance, Britain engaged in renegotiations as a component of a broader peace settlement with the goal of averting future hostilities.

The British Campaign in Sinai and Palestine played a crucial role in the British strategy in the Middle East, aiming to establish control over the area to serve Britain's own interests. The challenges that Britain has faced during the war in the Middle East had pushed Britain to build up a quick relationship with the Arab representative Sharif Hussein. The most notable challenges of which were the defeat in Gallipoli and Kut Al-Amara. For that the British representative Henry McMahon had quickly reached Hussein through number of letters and convinced him by giving him the promise of an autonomous Arab kingdom. Nonetheless, this action would be challengeable for Britain in the post war era. The campaign was characterised by the British government's attempts to get the backing of Sharif Hussein, the Amir of Mecca, with the aim of weakening the power of the Ottoman sultan and diminishing the likelihood of instability in the area. The mission also served as a means of ensuring a secure route for British soldiers and supplies while simultaneously safeguarding the Suez Canal and the pathway to India.

Ultimately, the Gallipoli War and the British War in Sinai and Palestine were pivotal occurrences during Great War that had profound implications for both the local area and the global stage. The events that occurred at Gallipoli had a long-lasting influence on the national identities of Australia and New Zealand. Additionally, the campaign acted as a catalyst for a process of national rejuvenation in Turkey. The British military operation in Sinai and Palestine demonstrated the region's significant geopolitical value and Britain's aspirations for imperial expansion. Britain's imperialistic worldview influenced its approach and decisions about the Muslim World, and pre-war British and French attitudes towards Syria led to the Sykes-Picot Agreement. The British government's eastern experts disliked the agreement and decided by 1918 to gradually withdraw from its conditions. As part of a broader peace deal, Britain engaged in renegotiations, prioritizing the prevention of future wars over its military significance.

Regarding the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, the Agreement was a pivotal event in the Ottoman Empire's partition throughout World War I. The Sykes-Picot deal partitioned much of the Ottoman Empire into five areas. Each country would have control over one zone and influence over another, with the Arabs governing the latter. Russia secretly endorsed the deal, which emerged as a consequence of Britain and France's pre-war geopolitical inclinations towards Syria. The Bunsen Committee, which was the first official body to investigate the goals of the British war endeavour in the Ottoman Empire, outlined the intended British results in the area. The outcomes of these negotiations encompassed a clear and enduring recognition of Britain's role in the Persian

Gulf, the elimination of bias against British trade, the fulfilment of promises made to various Arab leaders, the advancement of industries in which Britain had a stake, the preservation of Britain's strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean and Persian Gulf, and the establishment of a stable government in Mesopotamia to avoid excessive rivalry with the Anglo-Persian Concession. The deal sparked controversy and gave rise to disputes and tensions in the area, as the Arab population believed that their desires for self-governance were not being fulfilled. Britain's unilateral issuance of the Balfour Declaration worsened the situation, as France and Sharif Hussein perceived it as a violation of Britain's previous commitments to them. The proclamation conveyed support for the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, although it had several uncertainties and contradictions that confused all the parties concerned.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement played a crucial role in the partition of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, leading to profound and extensive repercussions throughout the area. The agreement, stemming from the pre-war British and French approaches to Syria, was contentious and gave rise to disputes and tensions in the area. The de Bunsen Committee delineated the intended objectives of the British in the area, which included the creation of steadfast governance in Mesopotamia to avert excessive rivalry with the Anglo-Persian Concession. The Balfour Declaration exacerbated the situation by endorsing the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, but its many ambiguities and contradictions left all parties concerned confused. Historians have offered varying evaluations of the Sykes-Picot agreement, with some contending that Britain and France had unclear objectives and lacked a coherent strategy. They contend that Britain and France made the agreement without truly considering the consequences and disregarding earlier commitments. Some argue that the Sykes-Picot Agreement and its outcomes demonstrate the belief of the British and French that they could collaborate with the Arabs while maintaining a paternalistic relationship.

The Mudros Armistice and the capture of Mosul's oil were crucial factors in the post-war diplomatic discussions and the territorial aspirations of the British Government in the Middle East. As the struggle continued, the imperial planners acknowledged the growing need for oil and the mounting risk of shortages. Throughout the war, the British emphasized gaining control of Mesopotamian oil resources as a primary objective. The post-war oil discussions focused on two main aspects: territory and political considerations. The British intended to postpone making a decision on the Mesopotamian oil concession until after the Peace Conference had established the boundaries of the several areas of control in the former Ottoman Empire. The conclusion of

armistices with Turkey and Germany had a profound effect on the oil issue. In order to secure control over Mosul and Aleppo, as well as Istanbul and the Straits, the British intentionally postponed the signing of the treaty by a period of two weeks. The Mudros Armistice was an absolute and unreserved capitulation, which the Allied forces used vague terms of to start their efforts in dismantling the Ottoman Empire. They accomplished this by capturing key positions and progressively extending their control to include whole provinces.

Furthermore, British troops in Mesopotamia, which had been a relatively peaceful theatre for some years, pushed to conquer the town of Mosul in October 1918. It was subsequently disputed that Britain had done this by, at best, bending the conditions of the armistice with the Ottoman Empire. David Lloyd George requested in December that Britain should have complete sovereignty over the Mosul vilayet, and Georges Clemenceau agreed. The sole written record of what was said is a note made by Maurice Hankey in his journal pertaining to Lloyd George's version of the meeting. The two prime ministers were not joined by any aides at the time. Even though Sykes-Picot only granted France around half of the prospective oilfields, Clemenceau received criticism in France for turning over Mosul. There was no corporation in France that could profit from them. For France, trading its stake in Mosul for a stake in British-operated oilfield was a tempting alternative, particularly if it meant securing British backing for its other objectives. Although Britain had goals in Mesopotamia other than oil, most of them could be accomplished by holding control of the Basra vilayet. The Mosul vilayet was needed just for its oil and maybe for irrigation plans.

The capture of Mosul was a key objective for the British in their war efforts since the city had significant oil reserves that may offset the costs of the British military campaign. Despite signing the armistice, the British authorities persisted in their military progress towards the northern region of Mesopotamia and succeeded in capturing that territory. The Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and the San Remo Agreement in 1920 further consolidated the British mandate over Iraq, including Mosul and its oil riches. Nevertheless, the Americans were infuriated by the San Remo Agreement due to their exclusion from control and access to oil resources in the Middle East. From 1919 to 1923 dramatic changes took place in the Middle East. Based on the goals of the British and French Great War winners, economic and political penetration in racially and ethnically diverse places is crucial for the placement of global players. As a result of the Great War's territorial division based on the interests of the winning side and the emergence of new states in the Middle East. "The

Middle East question" a set of unresolved political issues and an endless military conflict and all the political and economic issues it brought soon arose. Furthermore, various departments in Whitehall were very concerned about the issue of British sovereignty over petroleum in the Middle East. Above all, it was crucial that no nation be able to prevent Britain from receiving supplies.

In order to control the region British administration applied the mandate system to rule over the region and secure its political and economic ambitions. In the San Remo agreement of 1920, it was decided that Iraq and Palestine will be under the British mandate policy. A "dual mandate" was handed to the British, meaning that they were to act both on behalf of "international society" and the people of Palestine. The Mandate for Palestine's preamble and second article both includes references to the Balfour Declaration. Thus, Britain had a "dual obligation" to both Jews and Arabs. Although the Balfour Declaration's principal points, such as its support for a Jewish national home, were incorporated in the mandate, Britain was still required to implement its policy in Palestine in line with the requirements of both Jews and Arabs. It was clear the British Mandate over Palestine gave an opportunity for the Zionist Organization to spend most of its time to secure the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine, which was unwelcomed by the Arab people. In Iraq it was the same local people were against the British rule in the area and they were waiting for the British war promises to be applied.

The post war settlement in the Middle East took place after some clash with local people in Iraq and Palestine, the most significant of which was the Iraqi revolt of 1920. Thus, the British decision makers set to gather to solve the problems that arose in the area. Britain felt it necessary to hold a conference on 12 March 1921 in the Cairo city in Egypt which has become known as the Cairo conference, under the supervision of the British Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill with some other forty advisors. Most of the debate in this conference was about the future of Iraq.

For Arab of Iraq the conference come out with the decision of selecting Faisal son of Hussain as a king of the newly created stated called "Iraq." With regards to the Kurdish question, the future of Kurdistan was discussed in the final meeting of the Political Committee of the Conference on 15 March 1921. As a result of this discussion, the decision of the Kurdish question remained unanswered and was referred to the LN. As the chairman stated, "it was possible for the meeting to come to a definite decision on this matter, as there was no need to refer it to the Foreign Office,

or any other quarter, though it might have ultimately to be referred to the League of Nations.’’ It is true that the most important opportunity that the Kurds had in relation to their hopes being realised was the Treaty of Sévres in 1920, when the Allies decided in the articles (62-63-64) to create an independent state for the Kurds. But unfortunately, what had been promised did not come to fruition, because the Turkish Grand National Assembly refused to ratify the treaty. It has also to be said that the lack of Kurdish solidarity was one of the major factors in replacing this agreement with the treaty of Lausanne in 1923.

If we look at this work in term of the foreign policy in the Middle East it was obvious that in the early 1920, the Anglo-French oil deal was not terminated when Britain opted to prevent private businesses from participating in the production of Mesopotamian oil. An agreement was required to gain a thorough understanding of the territorial issue since Mesopotamian oil had become a sticking point in Anglo-French ties. In exchange for a general agreement at San Remo, Britain gave up a portion of the oil, thereby giving France a 25 percent share in exchange for Mosul, but without giving it official recognition. The French accepted 25 percent and gave up their desire for full equality when the Syrian question was satisfactorily resolved, and they saw how difficult it would be to get a larger share. A secret compromise had been made within the parameters of a larger agreement.

In the Middle East, the period after the war was characterised by volatility and transformation as the people of the area sought more self-governance and liberation from colonial domination. The Turkish Grand National Assembly did not officially approve the Treaty of Sévres of 1920, which partitioned the Ottoman Empire and created a self-governing region for the Kurds and replaced it with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. The Treaty of Lausanne concluded the Eastern Question and officially recognised Turkey as a sovereign country, marking a significant milestone in its history. Nevertheless, as a result of the pact, Turkey relinquished all of her Arab conquests, including the Dodecanese Islands. The San Remo Conference of 1920 led to France acquiring jurisdiction over Syria and Lebanon, while Britain assumed responsibility for Iraq and Palestine as part of a Class 'A' League of Nations mandate. The British ambition to establish a coherent framework for governing Mesopotamia and Mosul resulted in the Iraqi Revolt of 1920. Both the Kurds and Arabs refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the mandate system, viewing it as a perpetuation of

colonial governance. Both Sunnis and Shi'is spearheaded the uprising, which resulted in the deaths of over 2,000 British troops and 8,000 Iraqis.

The British did not implement their intention to offer semi-autonomous status to the Kurds of Mosul vilayet, instead assuming direct governance of the province as a colony. The Kurdish populace, feeling their desires for self-determination unfulfilled, became more dissatisfied as a result. The Palestinians encountered a state of ambiguity over the destiny of their nation, since the Balfour Declaration and the San Remo Conference resulted in the formation of a military administration in Palestine. The Palestinian Arabs refused to accept the Balfour Declaration and demanded self-governance, resulting in outbreaks of anti-Zionist violence in Old Jerusalem and Jaffa. The goal of the Cairo Conference of 1921 was to establish a stable state of affairs in the Middle East, specifically in Iraq. The meeting yielded a resolution to establish a universally accepted monarchy in Iraq, along with the accompanying elements of a parliamentary democracy. This marked a deviation from the mandate system and provided a more attractive framework for the Arabs. The meeting also decided to conduct elections to select a president for the newly established government, aiming to establish an Arab interim administration.

Ultimately, the period after the conflict in the Middle East was characterised by opposition and calls for self-governance. Britain pondered leaving Iraq, or at least abandoning the Mosul and Baghdad vilayets and keeping Basra, many times in the early 1920s. The 1920 Iraqi Revolt questioned the expense of staying in Iraq. The answer was to put Faisal, who had fought with Britain throughout the war, on the throne and rule via an Arab administration alongside the RAF and local soldiers. The Iraqi Revolt of 1920, the Palestinian quest for territorial preservation, and the Cairo Conference of 1921 all underscore the difficulties encountered by Britain in the area. The Treaty of Sèvres and the Treaty of Lausanne exemplify the evolving political dynamics in the Middle East and Turkey's ultimate formation as an independent nation-state. The financial burden of the British government in the Middle East, namely in Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq), was a major issue in the aftermath of Great War. The British government, under the leadership of Winston Churchill, had a strong understanding of the strategic significance of the area, especially in relation to its oil reserves. The fundamental goal of the British administration was to retain dominion over the area, safeguard its oil assets, and secure its passage to India.

The desire to create a stable and safe atmosphere influenced the British government's strategy towards Mesopotamia, facilitating the exploitation of the region's oil reserves. The government was prepared to allocate substantial resources to the territory, which included deploying military forces and establishing a colonial administration. Nevertheless, the financial burden of maintaining a substantial military presence in the area posed a huge strain on the British purse, prompting the government's desire to decrease its spending. Geopolitical interests in the areas were intricately linked to the British government's objectives for oil in Mesopotamia. The government recognized the critical importance of controlling the region's oil resources to uphold Britain's global power status. The government was prepared to engage in negotiations with other nations, such as France and the United States, in order to safeguard its interests in the area.

The oil conflict in the Middle East was a complex and diverse matter, including several forces and interests. Retaining authority over the region's oil reserves and ensuring their safe passage to India shaped the British government's strategy towards the area. The government's desire to protect its interests in the area motivated its inclination to engage in negotiations with other influential nations like France and the United States. Moreover, the treaty between England and France was signed at San Remo in April of 1920. In return for Syria and a 25 per cent share in TPC, the French gave over their oil holdings in Iraq, including Mosul, to the British. Thus, the French received the shares of Germany, which was defeated at the end of the war, and Syria, which had been pledged to Faisal. Faisal, who had been sitting about doing nothing, was appointed by Britain as the leader of the newly formed state of Iraq.

Britain and France reached an oil accord after some time, notwithstanding the prime ministers' agreement. San Remo saw the signing and ratification of an Anglo-French oil accord. The Ottoman Empire was then subjected to the punitive Treaty of Sèvres. It looked to offer Britain all it sought in the Middle East, including the LN mandate over Iraq's vilayets of Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul. The three oil accords' resemblance suggests that the first two were victims of other Anglo-French disagreements at the peace talks. Sèvres collapsed due to Mustafa Kemal's resurrection of Turkey and Allies' conflicts. San Remo upset Americans because it excluded them from Mesopotamia's oilfields. It was commonly assumed that US oil output will shortly peak. Britain pondered leaving Iraq, or at least abandoning the Mosul and Baghdad vilayets and keeping Basra, many times in the early 1920s. The 1920 Iraqi Revolt questioned the expense of staying in Iraq. The answer was to

put Faisal, who had fought with Britain throughout the war, on the throne and rule via an Arab administration alongside the RAF and local soldiers. Prestige, defensibility, Arab pledges, and oil kept Mosul and Baghdad. Britain wanted oil and Iraq needed money. Turkey's triumph against Greece in late 1922 questioned this system's longevity. Renegotiating the Treaty of Sèvres may give Turkey Mosul. British strategy changed once the Lloyd George Coalition collapsed.

A committee was established by the new Bonar Law Government to investigate whether or not Britain should remain in Iraq. Even those who wished to flee believed that oil was the only reason to remain. In 1923, Lausanne hosted negotiations with Turkey while the LN deliberated. Mosul's affiliation with either Turkey or Iraq was one of the most contentious issues. The Turks stated that they wished to control only those regions of the Ottoman Empire where ethnic Turks constituted the plurality of the population; they claimed that since the Kurds of Mosul were ethnic Turks, Mosul should be controlled by the Turks. Curzon argued that Mosul ought to be an Iraqi city because the Kurds are not Turkish. He insisted that oil had nothing to do with his opinions and claimed that he did not even know if Mosul contained oil.

Britain's wartime promises had significant consequences after the Great War. Amir Faisal expected Britain to deliver an independent Arab Kingdom, but Sykes-Picot forced the Lloyd George government to initially renege on its promises. The implementation of the British war promises went through some challenges before reaching its destination. However, the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1922 was a significant agreement that aimed to establish Iraqi self-governance while maintaining British influence. It created a constitutional monarchy under King Faisal I and addressed various issues, such as British obligations and payment for public works. However, the treaty faced opposition from nationalist groups. Overall, the treaty played a crucial role in shaping Iraq's path to independence and had complex legacies in the country's history.

From 1923 to 1926, conflicting interests between Arabs, Turks, and the British over Mosul, Iraq, centred on dominion, autonomy, and oil control. The Lausanne Conference in 1923 differed significantly between the British and Turkish perspectives. The British argued for continued control, while the Turks rejected British occupation. The issue was postponed for further negotiations. In 1924, Turkey and Britain disputed Mosul due to conflicting interests, leading to the LN awarding the region without Turkish approval. The Iraqi-Turkish Frontier Agreement of

1926 resolved the dispute over Mosul's status by incorporating it into Iraq and solidifying British control over oil reserves, granting Turkey military intervention in Mosul and northern Iraq.

Furthermore, the discovery of oil in Mosul Vilayet, specifically in the Kirkuk region, had far-reaching consequences in terms of politics, economics, society, and demographics. The establishment of the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC) aimed to facilitate oil exploration and extraction in the Ottoman Empire. However, conflicts arose between private investors and the oil sector. Eventually, a cooperative approach was adopted, resulting in the signing of the Red-Line Agreement in 1928. This agreement limited independent operations by oil companies. Besides, the Red Line Agreement of 1928 was a significant agreement that aimed to divide oil resources in the Middle East among oil firms from the United States, Britain, and France. It established the TPC as the sole agent for obtaining oil concessions in the region and reserved control of a large part of the world's oil resources to the group of companies involved. However, the agreement faced challenges as non-member corporations were still able to pursue concessions within the territory governed by the TPC.

What's more, the Anglo-Iraqi Agreement of 1930-1932 established a strong alliance between Britain and Iraq, granting Iraq independence and sovereignty. The treaty included provisions for mutual assistance in times of war and allowed Britain to maintain air bases in Iraq. However, the treaty has faced criticism from the Iraqi public, with concerns raised about its impact on Iraqi society, politics, and commerce. Opponents argue that the treaty does not guarantee full independence and allows Britain to exploit Iraq for colonial purposes. King Faisal's opposition to the treaty has also caused controversy, as it undermines his role as a symbol for the entire nation. The Mandate for Palestine was assigned to Great Britain at the San Remo Conference in 1920. The mandate aimed to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine while protecting the rights of all its inhabitants. However, it faced opposition from Arab leaders, who called for independence and rejected British authority. Despite this opposition, the mandate was formally implemented in 1923, and Palestine remained under British control as a Crown Colony.

The British administration's support for Jewish migration and the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine caused anger and resistance from the Arab population. This led to an open revolt in 1929. The population of Palestine underwent significant changes during this time,

with the Jewish population growing through immigration and the Arab population growing due to a high birth rate. The British administration's policies, such as encouraging Zionist immigration and facilitating the purchase of Arab lands by Jews, resulted in the displacement of Palestinians and favoured the Jewish population over the native Arabs. Ultimately, Britain failed to fulfil its obligations to the Palestinian Arabs. Furthermore, the British steps to establish the Zionist State in Palestine resulted in armed operations, uprisings, and revolts by Palestinians against British and Jewish occupation. The events of the 1920s and 1930s, including the Wailing Wall Riots in 1929, had a significant impact on both the Arab and Jewish communities. The British response to the riots led to a change in their policy towards the Zionist movement and the Balfour Declaration. The increasing immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe also heightened Arab resistance to Zionism. These actions and tensions between the Jewish and Arab communities set the stage for further developments in Palestine.

In addition, the British government, under the Palestine mandate, had the authority to manage and exploit Palestine's natural resources, including the construction and utilization of the Haifa seaport. This decision was in line with their economic priorities and allowed them to profit monetarily from the mandated region. However, this strategy led to disagreements with other countries regarding prior commitments. The construction of Haifa port in Palestine was driven by British economic and imperial interests, aiming to boost the British economy and maintain its dominant position in the region. The harbour was strategically important for protecting the Suez Canal and the British Empire's defence. The British government used its authority under the Palestine mandate to manage and exploit Palestine's natural resources, including the harbour. The decision to include oil facilities was delayed due to funding and pipeline alignment. Moreover, the mandate system was implemented to prevent the annexation of seized regions and ensure equal economic opportunities. Britain accepted the mandates of Palestine and Iraq to fulfil its geographical ambitions and establish a railway and oil pipeline connecting the two nations. The development of the Haifa port exemplified the decision-making process and management strategies employed by the British government in the mandated region. The inauguration of the oil pipeline in Iraq was a significant event, although it was less grand compared to the opening ceremony of the Haifa port. The Haifa port played a crucial role in Britain's oil strategies in the Middle East, addressing political and strategic concerns. Additionally, the proposed Haifa-Baghdad railway was seen as a solution to Iraq's trade and economic challenges.

The primary purpose of the British economic interests in Iraq and Palestine from 1932 to 1935 was to secure access to oil resources and keep control over major trade routes. This was the primary motivation behind British economic interests in these two regions. The founding of the Iraqi Petroleum Company and the construction of infrastructure in Palestine were two of the most important measures that the British adopted in order to accomplish these objectives effectively. It is possible that future studies will entail a deeper investigation into the influence that British economic interests had on the local inhabitants, as well as the larger geopolitical dynamics of the area during this period. In addition, doing research on the long-term effects of British engagement in Iraq and Palestine, especially with regard to the oil sector and trade routes, would be of great use in gaining important insights into the historical development of these territories.

7. Figures



Figure 1: The Berlin- Baghdad Railway Project (map).⁷⁴⁴

⁷⁴⁴ Sam.FH9 (archaeoplan.com)

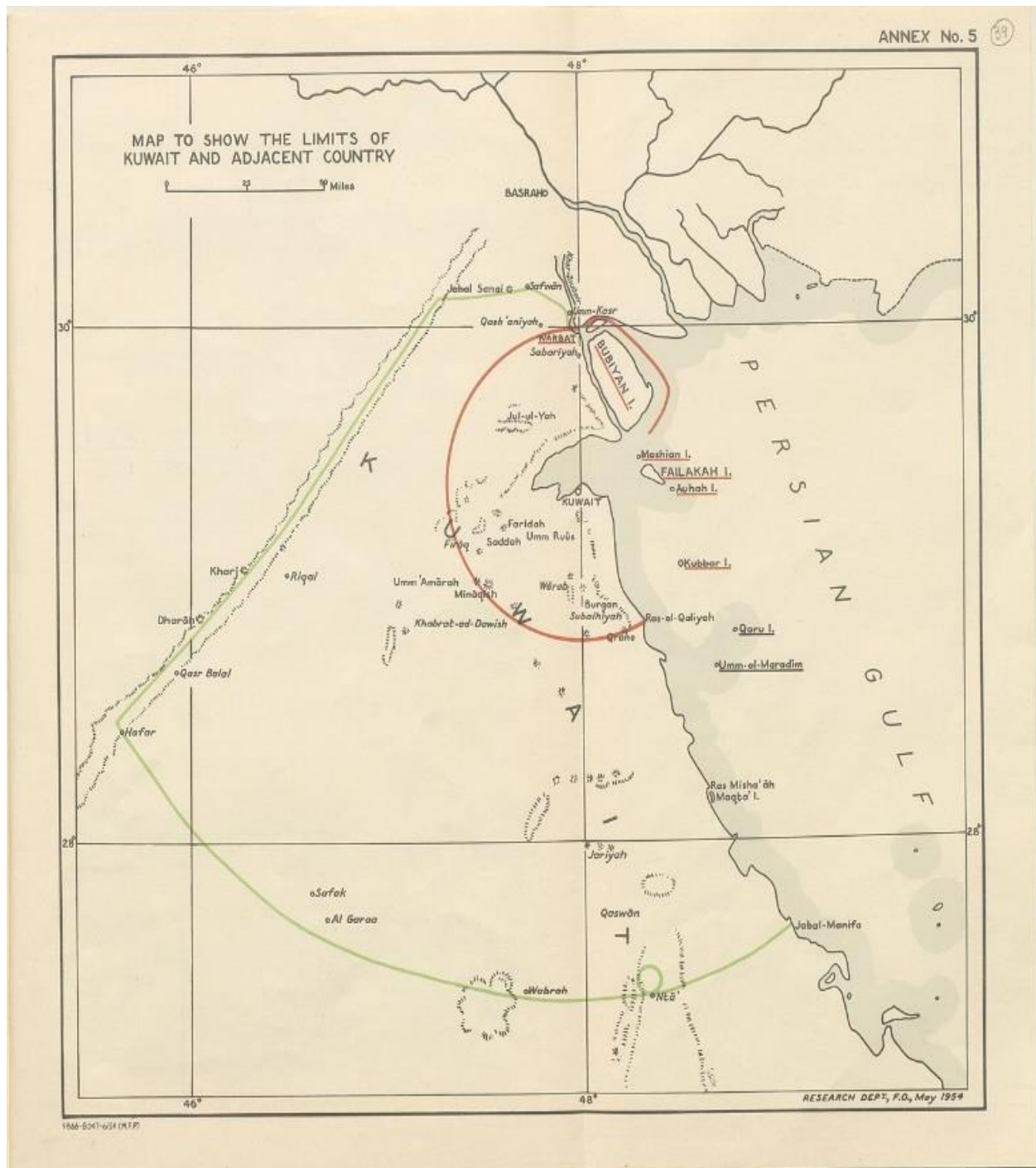


Figure 2: The Map of Kuwait's territorial boundaries after the signing of the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman Convention.⁷⁴⁵

⁷⁴⁵ Tyler, "A British Lake": Kuwait and the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman Convention." p.53.

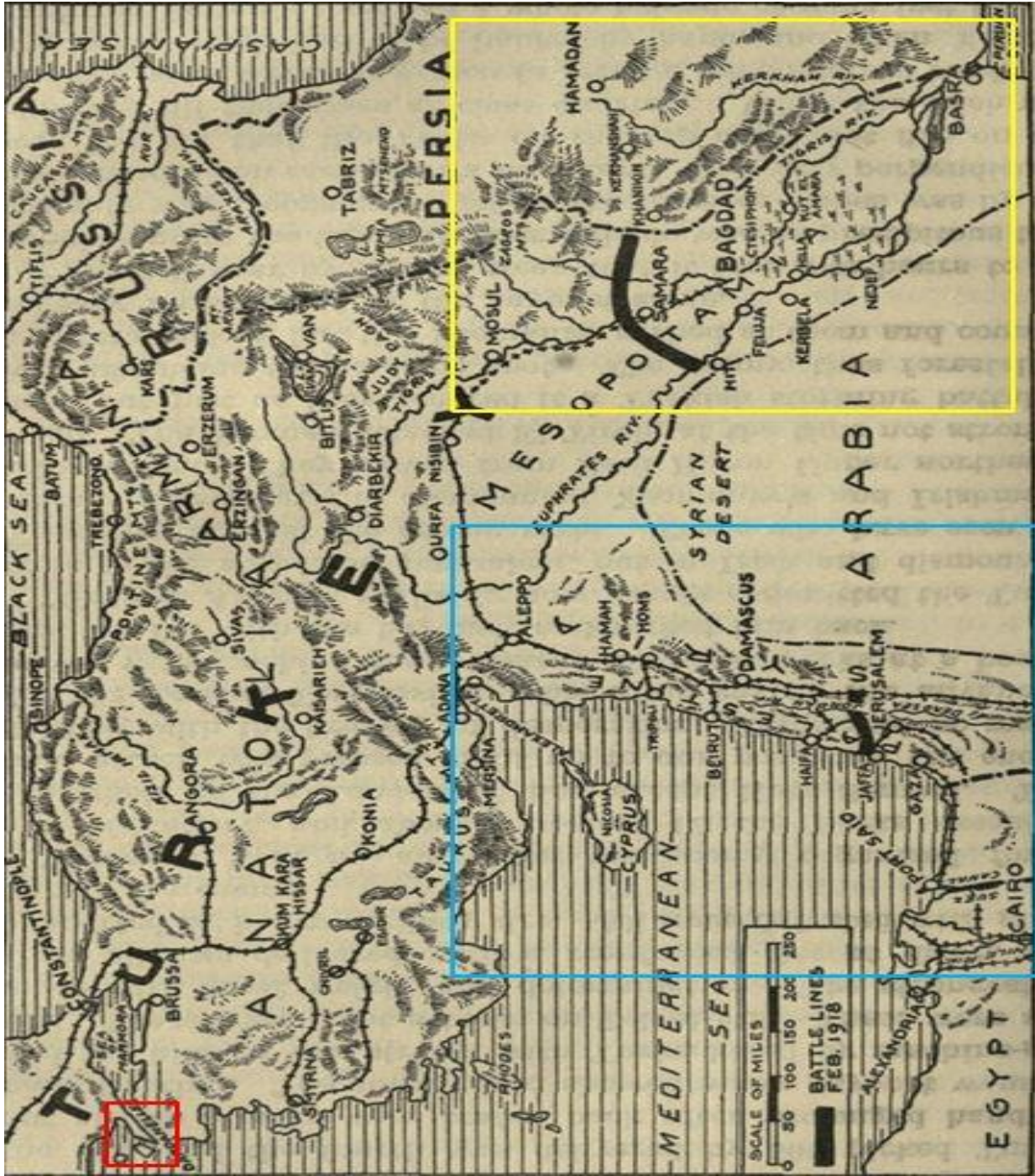
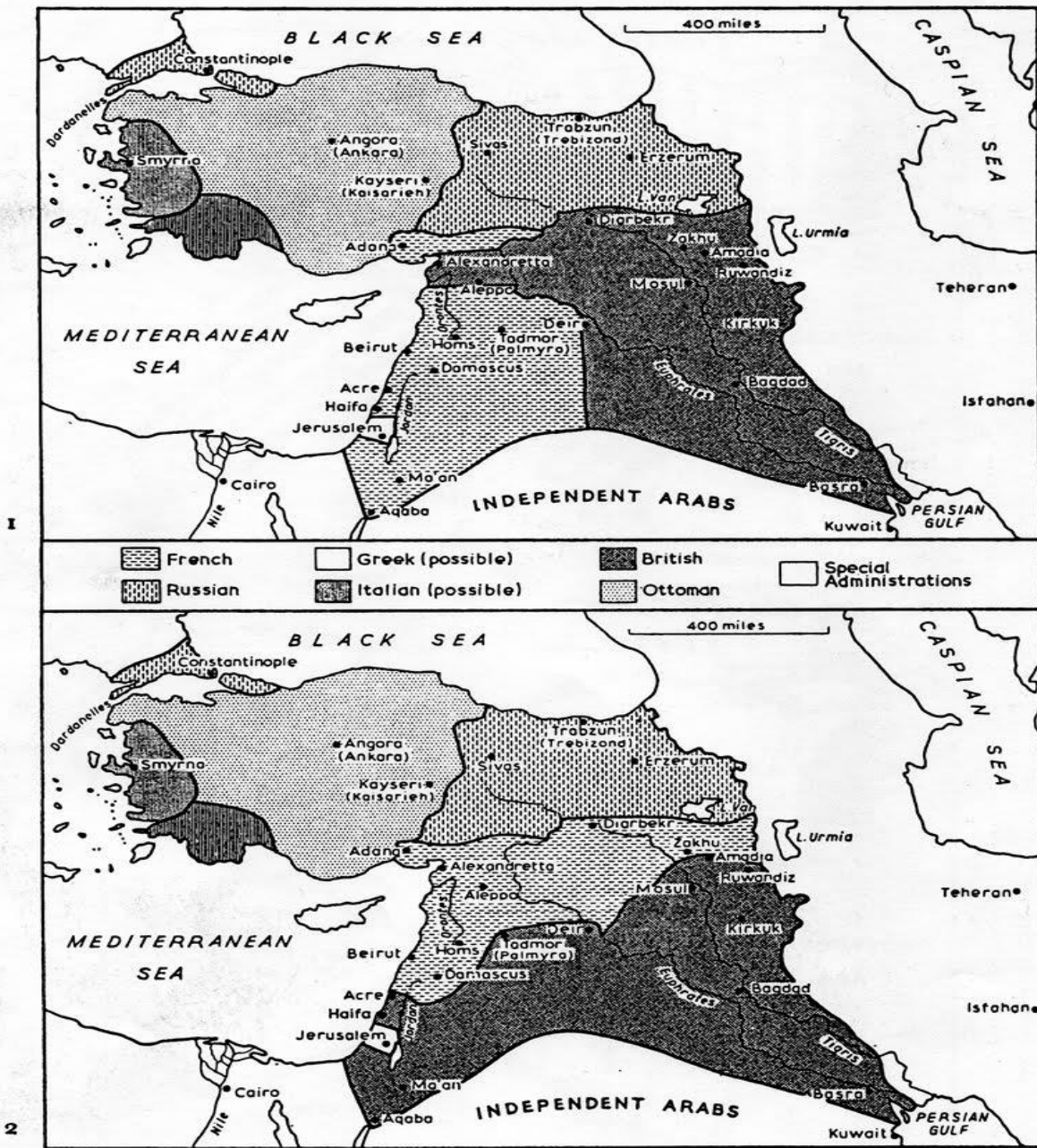


Figure 3: The Mesopotamia campaign (yellow box) and its location relative to the related campaigns at Gallipoli (red box) and Egypt and Palestine (blue).⁷⁴⁶

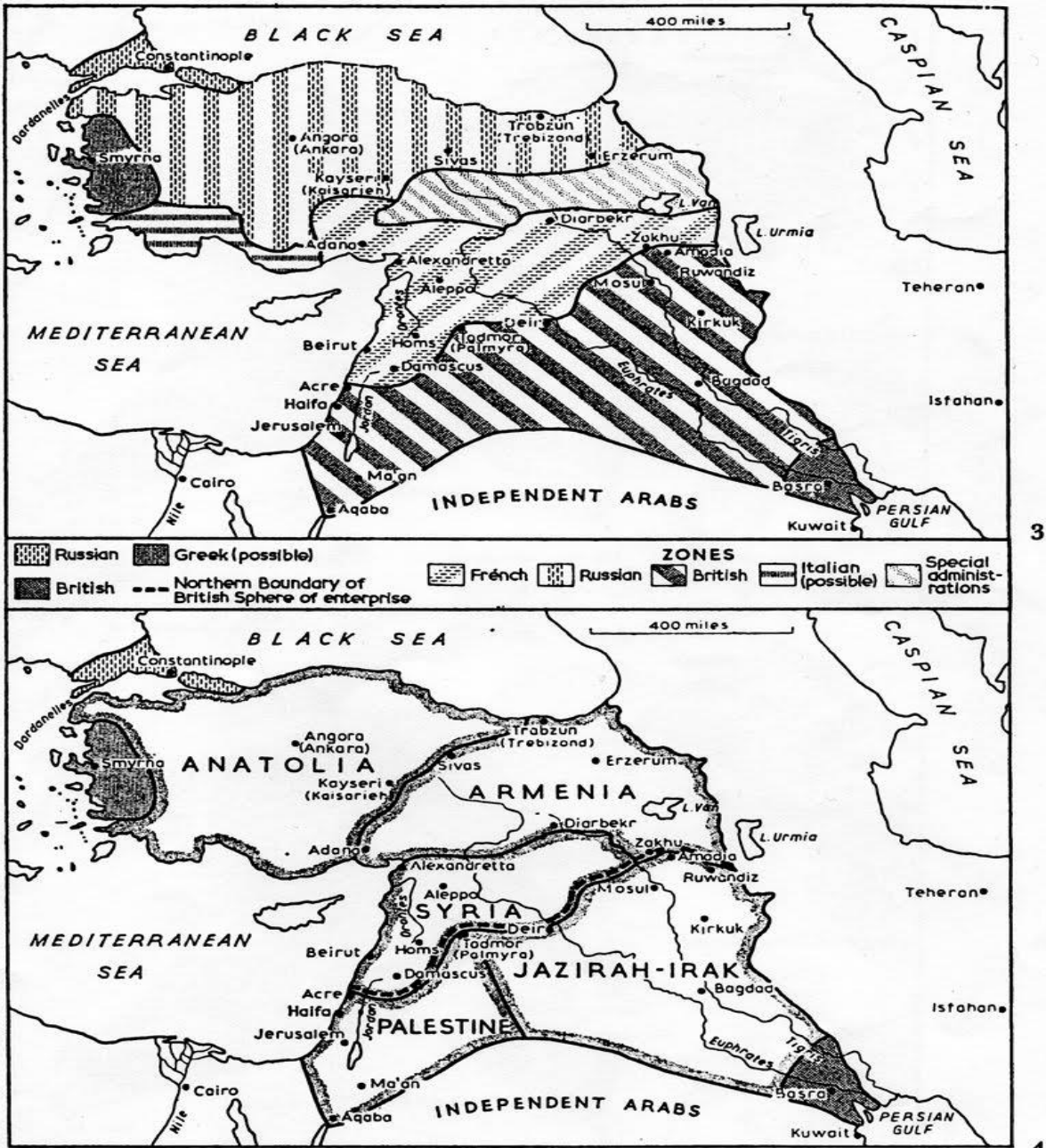
⁷⁴⁶ “The Campaign in Mesopotamia,” The Long, Long Trail, accessed March 29, 2024, <https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/battles/the-campaign-in-mesopotamia/>.



MAP I. Four possible solutions for the settlement in Asiatic Turkey, presented by the Bunsen Committee in June 1915. (Based on maps i-iii and v, enclosed in the Report of the Committee on Asiatic Turkey, CAB. 42/3.)

Figure 4: Four possible schemes of the De Bunsen Committee in 1915. ⁷⁴⁷

⁷⁴⁷ CAB 27/1, Map, No. V.



1. First scheme of annexation including Alexandretta in British territory.
2. Second scheme of annexation replacing Alexandretta by Haifa.
3. Scheme of partition in zones of interest.
4. Ottoman Devolutionary scheme.

Figure 5: Four possible schemes of the De Bunsen Committee in 1915. ⁷⁴⁸

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

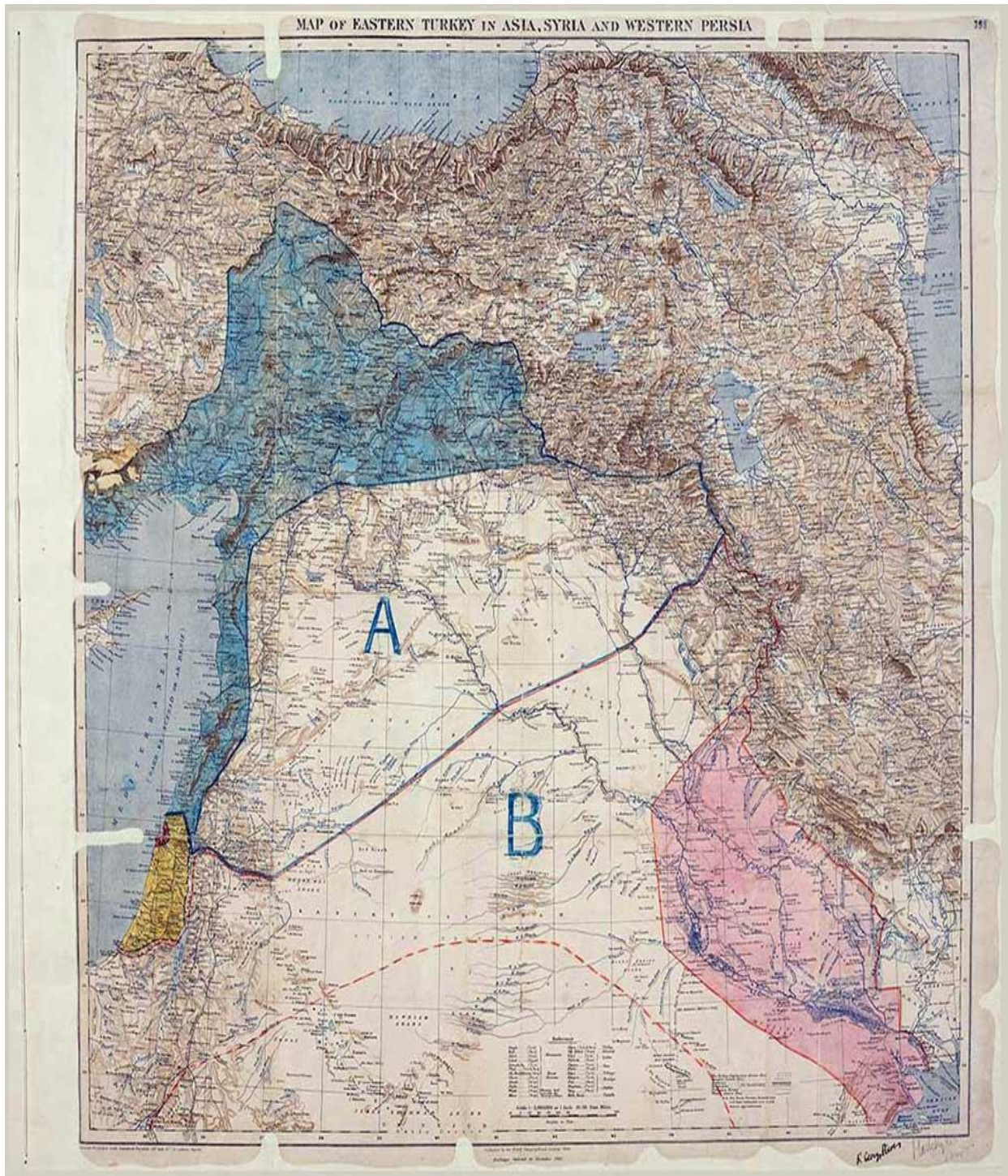


Figure 6: “Map attached to the Sykes-Picot Agreement, signed by Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot (catalogue reference: MPK 1/426)”⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁹ “Dividing The Bear’s Skin While the Bear Is Still Alive,” The National Archives, 2016, <https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/dividing-bears-skin-bear-still-alive-1916-sykes-picot-agreement/>.

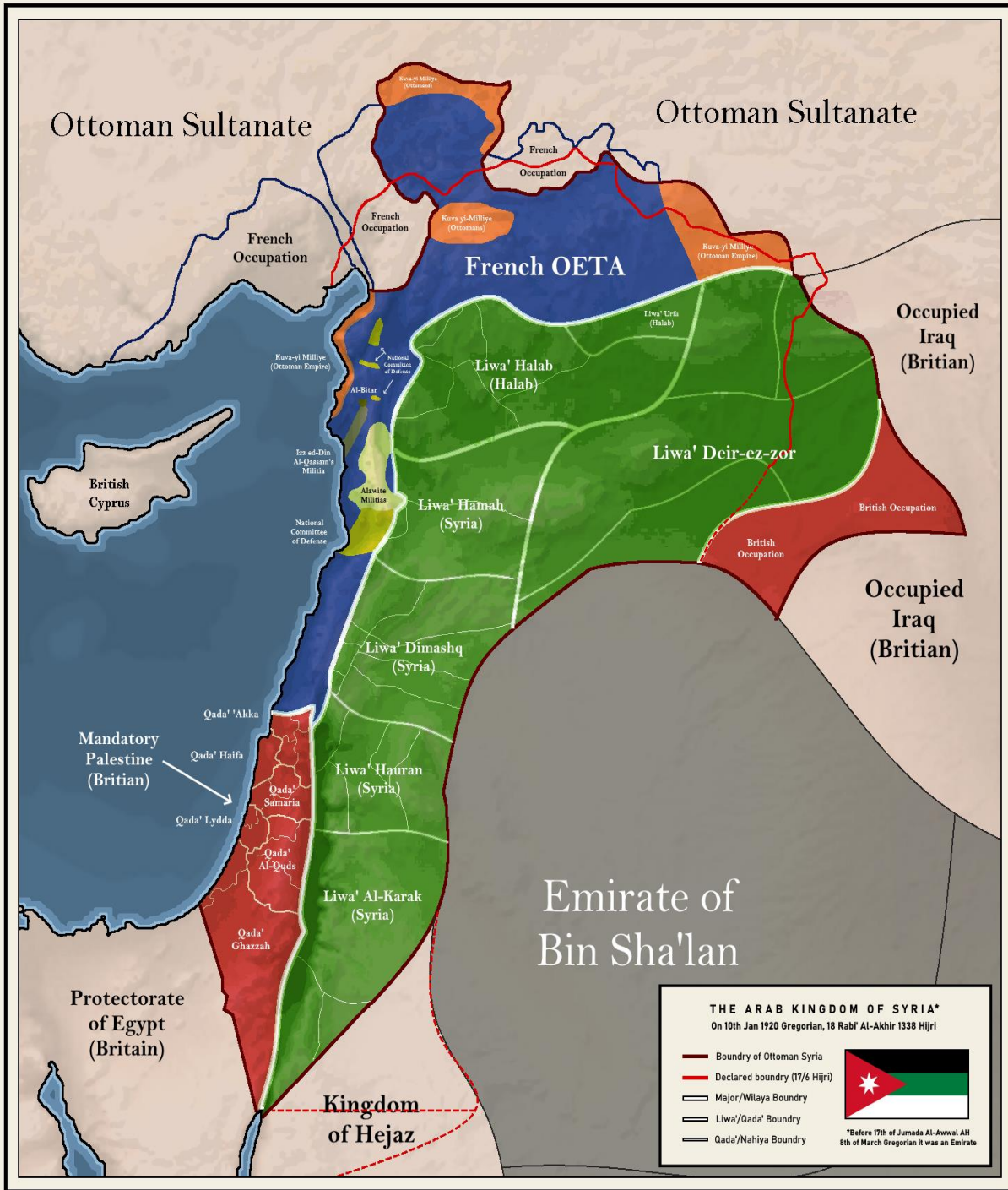


Figure 7, Map of the Middle East.⁷⁵⁰

⁷⁵⁰ https://www.reddit.com/r/MapPorn/comments/197hpt/map_of_the_levant_in_1920/#lightbox

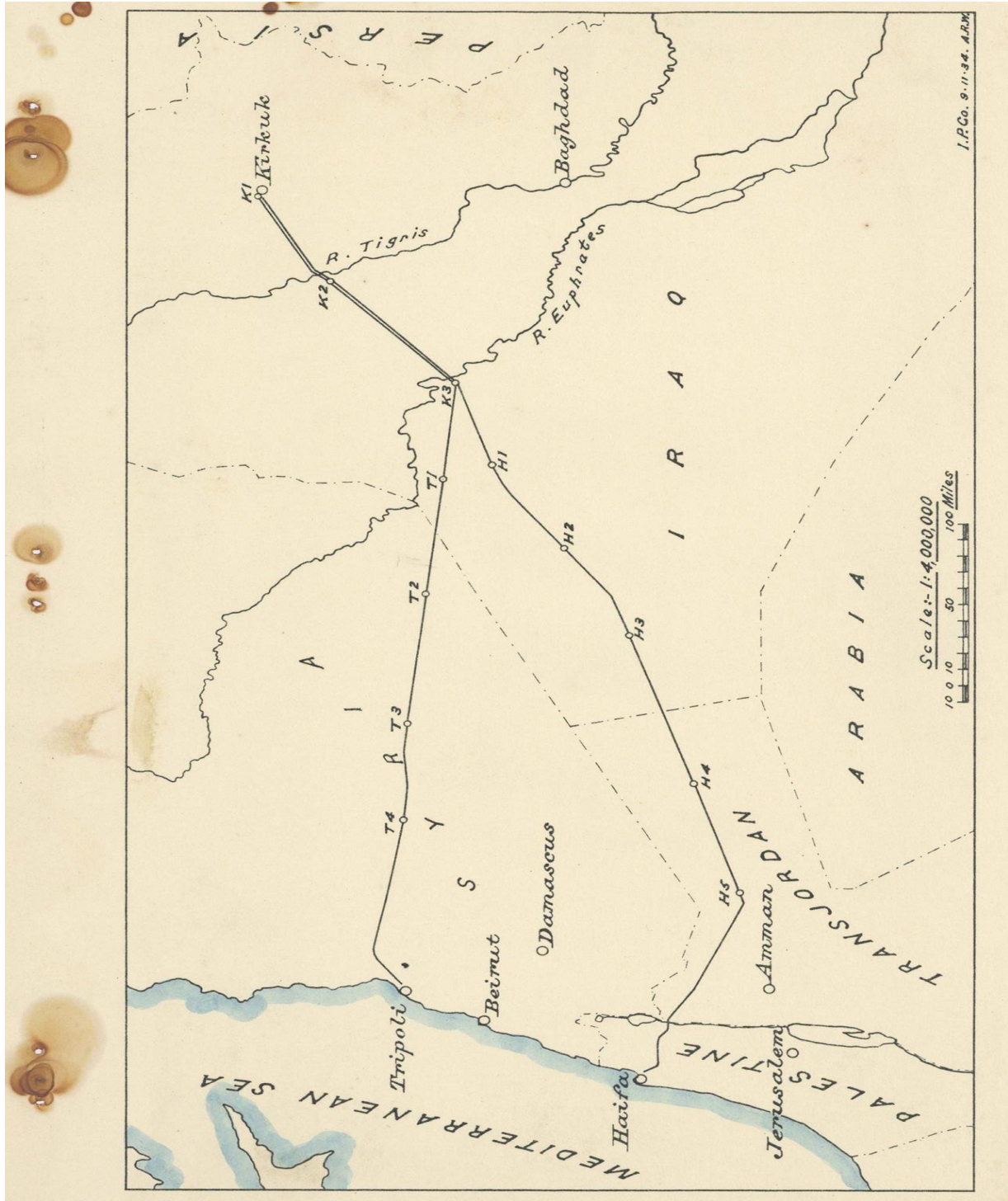


Figure 8: Kirkuk-Haifa-Tripoli Oil Pipeline.⁷⁵¹

⁷⁵¹ "Construction of the Iraq-Mediterranean Oil Pipeline," Biblioteca De Arte Gulbenkian, 2024, <https://gulbenkian.pt/biblioteca-arte/en/read-watch-listen/construction-of-the-iraq-mediterranean-oil-pipeline/>.

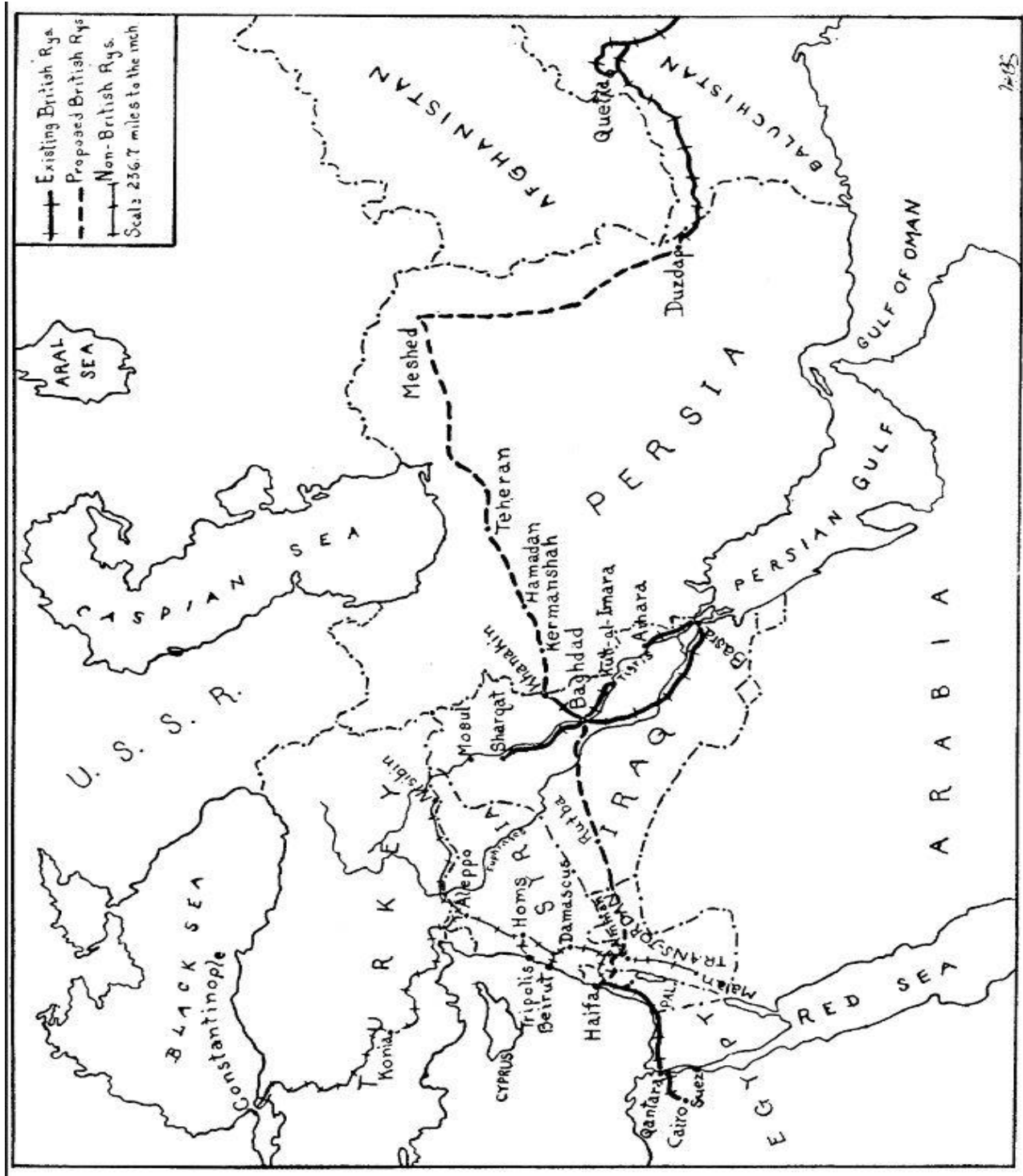


Figure 9: The Railways in the Middle East.⁷⁵²

⁷⁵² Stratton, "British Railways and Motor Roads in the Middle East, 1930-1940," July 1944, p. 190.

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