

The Spoils of War: How Western Colonization Shaped Cultural, Political, and Economic Characteristics in the Modern Middle East

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INTRODUCTION

Our seminar – *The Middle East: History, Geography, and Culture* – is a natural fit with my classroom curriculum. As an Advanced Placement World History teacher, I am always looking for opportunities to bring new knowledge to my students about areas and peoples of the world that are often one-dimensional and misinformed. Our school places a very heavy emphasis on creating “life-long learners,” as well as students who will enter the workforce after college ready to lead and engage in important policy-making decisions, some of which will be directly related to affairs between the West and the Middle East.

The unit I would like to create and implement in my classroom will focus on giving my students a broader and deeper understanding of current Middle Eastern politics, economics, and culture in relation to lasting impacts from the period of colonization following World War I. In class we often discuss how man-made borders between countries neglect to support pre-existing cultural boundaries. I believe the areas of Iraq, Palestine, and Israel are important examples of this, and will be useful and worthy for a study of this concept with my students, who often want to know why countries or political powers seem to ignore this fact when trying to gain new territory, access to raw materials, or to convert people to a standard political or religious identity. I tell them that we have to look at the factors that drove those people or governments to become involved in affairs outside of their own territory. Simply put, what were the colonizers looking for? How did they look for it and what imprint did they leave? By examining what the European powers (specifically France and England) were hoping to accomplish in that region, we can better understand the roots of the fragile relationship many Middle Eastern countries have with Western powers and use that information for future diplomacy between these countries.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives for this unit are based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for 10th grade World History Studies. The aim is to use content from my unit background and lesson plans to reinforce these objectives with my students in the classroom. Lesson plans are aimed at broadening students’ knowledge of the modern Middle East by examining the cultural, political, economic, and geographic characteristics of the region, while using primary sources, discussion, film and literature to do this.

TEKS Objective (1) History A: *The student understands traditional historical points of reference in world history. The student is expected to:* Identify the major eras in world history and describe their defining characteristics.

TEKS Objective (2) History A: *The student understands how the present relates to the past. The student is expected to:* Identify elements in a contemporary situation that parallel a historical situation.

TEKS Objective (7) History A: *The student understands the impact of political and economic imperialism throughout history. The student is expected to:* summarize the effects of imperialism on selected societies.

TEKS Objective (12) Geography A: *The student understands the impact of geographic factors on major historic events. The student is expected to:* locate places of historical significance and describe their physical and human characteristics. **TEKS Objective (19) Culture A and B:** *The student understands the history and relevance of major religious and philosophical traditions. The student is expected to:* compare the historical origins, central ideas, and the spread of major religious and philosophical traditions including Islam and identify examples of religious influence in historic and contemporary world events.

TEKS Objective (21) Culture A and B: *The student understands the roles of women, children, and families in different historical cultures. The student is expected to:* analyze the specific roles of women, children, and families in different historical cultures and describe the political, economic, and cultural influence of women in different historical cultures.

TEKS Objective (26) Social Studies Skills D: *The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:* transfer information from one medium to another, including written to visual and statistical to written or visual, using computer software as appropriate.

RATIONALE

This is an important study for many reasons. The first, and most obvious, is that our students are living during a time when relationships between the Middle East and Western entities, such as Europe and the United States, are tempestuous. They need a better understanding of the actions taken by both groups that brought them to where they are today. A number of factors can be considered here; among the most prevalent are economic factors like oil consumption, and conflicting political ideology. We will first explore the motives behind the Western colonization of former Ottoman territories in the early 20th century to gain insight about this important shift in involvement. What were Western powers looking for and hoping to accomplish? How did European interaction in these territories contribute to growing nationalist movements following the war? How were cultural identities of Middle Eastern peoples shaped by a heavy European presence in their respective territories?

I would like to communicate this information to my students using a variety of methods that target many different learning styles. I would like to incorporate primary sources, including first hand accounts from British, Iraqi, Palestinian, and Israeli peoples who occupied and lived in these territories following World War I. I am hoping journals and personal narratives will help increase students' interest in the material as personal stories provide them with another angle from which to look at crucial events. I would also like to incorporate film into my unit. After my students take their Advanced Placement exam, we will have a week-long film festival that uses films that highlight some of the major themes we've discussed throughout the year. Films such as *Promises* focus on the joint occupation of Israel and Palestine by Jews and Muslims. Told from the perspective of Jewish and Muslim children living in Jerusalem, *Promises* examines the existential hurdles these children will have to overcome in order to coexist with each other peacefully down the road. Scholarly articles are also important for critical analysis. Works such as Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" will give students a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural differences between groups of people drive economic and political decision-making, often because (Huntington argues) cultural characteristics are less easily compromised.

UNIT BACKGROUND

Iraq

The end of World War I brought new leadership (European powers) to the Middle East. As the victors of the war, England and France began to carve out mandates in the Middle East to support their own imperialistic goals. But growing nationalism in these areas and ineffective leadership made it difficult to truly micromanage these new lands. This unit will explore the impact of British control of Iraq and Palestine following the war, as well as the challenges associated with the U.N. partition of Palestine and subsequent creation of the Jewish state of Israel. I've selected these regions for focus because of current challenges stemming from that region: the U.S.-Iraq war and the ongoing quest for stability in Israeli and Palestinian territory.

In 1920 Britain began a long and arduous relationship with Iraq. The mandate was met with resistance from day one by all the groups occupying the territory: Kurds, Shi'a, and Sunnis. Three distinct geographic regions also accompanied this religious diversity. All would be unified under the British mandate, and the extreme diversity could make this political unification problematic (Cleveland 204). If Britain was to successfully maintain control, they would need a leader who would both obey British authority and provide resistance against other forces (namely Ataturk of newly independent Turkey). Their choice was Faisal bin Al Hussein Bin Ali El-Hashemi, who had formed an alliance with the British during World War I in the hopes of defeating the Ottoman Empire and gaining independence. Faisal fought alongside T.E. Lawrence and later participated in the diplomatic process that produced the controversial Balfour Declaration (which is discussed later in the unit background). Although Faisal had little connection with most of the people in the occupied territory (he was originally from the Arabian Peninsula), Britain engineered his election by limiting voting and ensuring Faisal the popular vote, believing he could be easily manipulated. The British "also believed that Faisal would be moderate and that his reputation as an Arab figure of international stature would prove attractive within Iraq" (Cleveland 207). But he was not malleable nor very popular, at least at first, and he rejected many of the stipulations set by the mandate, increasing tensions between Iraq and England. The task before him was challenging: "he [Faisal] was foreign to the region, and his monarchy had been brought into existence by Britain, the alien occupier, not by popular demand" (Cleveland 208). There was also a surge in nationalist movements that worried the British, and Faisal did almost nothing to stop them. As author Jeremy Salt put it, "The British now had to make the best of a king whom they had put on the throne but no longer trusted" (94, 97, 99).

In 1922 Iraq and Britain signed a twenty year contract with the goal of Iraqi independence, but until that time, all military, political and economic decisions and undertakings had to be approved and overseen by British officials. The questioning by the Iraqi people regarding Britain's true commitment to independence was certainly valid. Added to this were growing tensions between the Kurdish peoples and Shiites, which made the management of those aforementioned political, economic and military decisions all the more problematic for Britain. The Kurdish population appeared unwilling to assimilate, and outside of the cities it was difficult to enforce government policy, especially in the areas that were divided tribally (Cleveland 205). When examining the long-term impacts of Western involvement, the question of satisfying Kurdish and Shiite populations is still a problem in Iraq today. Although the territories these groups occupy are not identical to that of the 1920s, the map found on BBC News Online shows how division among ethnic and religious groups in Iraq still persists today (see map under Works Cited).

The tide appeared to turn in 1924, when the promise of new elections and a reduced contract seemed to bring Iraq closer to independence, but Britain was determined to remain firm with its control, and renegotiated its treaty to remain in effect for another 25 years. "Iraq was effectively

being run by two governments and had been granted national sovereignty while remaining bound to a mandate” (Salt 99-101).

Why was political stability crucial for Britain in this region? One can return to the original question posed about the colonizers interests in the Middle East. In the particular case of Iraq, oil was a plentiful resource whose value was growing by the minute. Britain had to select and maintain political and economic policies carefully, so as not to disrupt control of oil resources. Author William Cleveland puts it, “The scramble for colonies later became the scramble for oil concessions” (207-208). There was also the issue of access and trade. The Suez Canal was vitally important to the British as it was their gateway to India, as was proven in 1956 when Gamal Nasser of Egypt nationalized the canal, presenting the possibility of a catastrophic loss of money for the British.

Britain had a powerful army and a wealth of resources, but appeared unable to control resistance in Iraq. The territory was a British mandate after all, but perhaps Britain had bitten off more than it could chew? Salt offers that reoccurring problems with leadership were at the root of Britain’s failures. The British put men in positions of power who were not easily pushed around, but who also remained in power for incredibly brief periods of time (there are exceptions to this in neighboring territories, namely King Abdullah I of Jordan). No leader was around long enough to gain the loyalty of the people needed to achieve any lasting reform (Salt 112).

Palestine and Israel

In his book *The Great War for Civilization: The Conquest of the Middle East*, author Robert Fisk states that, “No code of morals can justify the persecution of one people in an attempt to relieve the persecution of another” (367). The belief was that the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine would yield terrible results, namely displacement and hostility. Could the Jews not go somewhere else other than Palestine? Certainly there were other places for Europe’s displaced Jewish population, but not in the eyes of Zionists. How would placing them in the middle of the Arab world ever work?

For almost 1300 years Jerusalem had been under Arab Muslim control, and Jewish peoples, although small in numbers, had coexisted with the Arab Muslim and Christian populations fairly peacefully. The notion that Jews would come to dominate the territory in both numbers and politics seemed a far off notion to the Arab Muslims who lived in the region. This would all change following both World War I and World War II. In addition to the territories of present-day Iraq and Jordan, Britain was now effectively in control of the Palestinian region, another mandate produced from the Allied victory (Alsowayel, February 16, 2009).

But how did Britain gain control of this region? In 1916 the Sykes-Picot agreement created British and French mandates out of much of the former Ottoman territories, namely those of Iraq and Palestine discussed in this paper. Again, oil and access to resources and trade proved to be the primary factors, as Iraq held vast oil reserves, and Palestine was strategically located close to the Suez Canal. To further understand the relationship of the British to the creation of Israel, the clock must be wound back to 1917, with a close examination of the decisions made by European powers after World War I. It was a year later that Chaim Weizmann, a Jewish chemist and arguably the man responsible for the modern Zionist movement, would make his plea for the displaced Jews of Europe. Weizmann had worked tirelessly to petition the British government on behalf of the Zionist movement, but his success in the achievement of a Jewish homeland depended a great deal on his growing relationship with Faisal Ali, the Arab nationalist leader who had forged deep ties with the British during the war (Andelman 84). Relations between the two were crucial, and it was clear that both men recognized success for their respective causes depended upon their abilities to work together and to convince the British these causes were

worthwhile. Weizmann knew he had to make a case for Zionists that would appeal to British imperial and economic interests:

Should Palestine fall within the British sphere of influence and should Britain encourage a Jewish settlement there, as a British dependency, we could have in twenty to thirty years a million Jews out there, perhaps more; they would develop the country, bring back civilization to it, and form a very effective guard for the Suez Canal. (Andelman 87)

It was also imperative that Weizmann and Faisal find a way around the Sykes-Picot agreement, which had originally set aside some of the Palestinian territory to be under French control. For Weizmann, British control of the region was more favorable to that of the French. Many European Jews disliked the way France forced its culture on colonized populations. For Faisal, presenting a united front with Weizmann was important for giving political leverage to the Arabs in regions where Jews could wield a great deal of influence (Andelman 90-91, 95).

The petition was a success, and would be known to the world as the Balfour Declaration: His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors 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 the existing non-Jewish Communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed By Jews in any other country. (Andelman 92)

It seemed like such an enormous success for both parties (Arab and Zionist) involved, but things began to unravel quickly. By 1920, skirmishes between Arabs and Jews began in areas that are still problematic today: the border between Israel and Syria (namely the hotly contested Golan Heights) and along portions of the present day Israeli-Lebanese border. British control of the region was only growing weaker, and hopes of having Faisal serve as a powerful leader and middleman between the British and Palestinians were quickly being dashed. In addition to this, the borders of the region were reduced as the declaration was cemented, decreasing the territory which Muslims, Jews, and Christians were now expected to share. As mentioned before, most Palestinians felt little to no allegiance for Faisal because he was not from Palestine, and his inability to stop the growing numbers of Jewish settlements only deepened Palestinian resentment, creating previously unseen violence. The extreme backlash against his leadership pushed Britain to remove him from power in Transjordan and to relocate him to Iraq. Faisal's leadership abilities would rapidly be put to the test there as well (Andelman 102, 104-105, 107-108).

Growing nationalism in the region made it particularly difficult for the British to continue to manage their mandate. This was largely due to the fact that the Balfour Declaration was so severely flawed: in an attempt to satisfy the several demands, everyone would be intensely dissatisfied. Britain could not keep its promises to both the Palestinians and the Zionists, and the response reflected this: "Arab nationalism is as intense a force as Jewish... The Gulf between the races is thus already wide and will continue to widen if the present Mandate is maintained" (Andelman 109). Anger from Arabs at Western nations was a natural response; they believed they had carelessly and selfishly allowed this to happen. In an effort to give sanctuary to Jews, close to one million Arabs were displaced from their homes and farms. The greater the influx of Jews into the region, the greater the tension between the two groups became (Andelman 110).

In 1948, Britain gave and backed out on the mandate. They turned control over to the United Nations, who would now have the incredibly tricky task of trying to reconcile two injured parties: the Jews and the Arabs. The subsequent creation of a formal Jewish state – Israel – in 1948, and its recognition by Western powers (particularly that of the United States) further intensified

religious, political, and ideological divides that have made the region unstable today (Andelman 110).

Were the problems that existed in British-controlled Iraq similar to those that plagued the Palestinian region? Certainly the issue of leadership proved to be problematic for Britain in both places. In 1936 a revolt against British rule broke out in Palestine, catapulting a man by the name of Haj Amin al-Husseini to the forefront of Palestine's movement for independence and eventual status as a nation. Haj Amin is a fascinating man: to Palestinians he is a hero; to Israelis a Nazi sympathizer. Examining Haj Amin's leadership in Palestine in the 1930s is crucial to better understanding the relationship between the Jews and Arab Muslims of the region. Moreover, Haj's role as Palestinian liberator threatened to disrupt British rule in Iraq when he continued to press for revolts against British authority in Iraq as well (Fisk 358-360). After several unsuccessful attempts, Haj Amin went to Europe in the hope of gaining support for Palestinian independence from two unlikely men: Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. Haj Amin's goal was simple: in exchange for helping destroy the growing Zionist movement (which was perceived to be threatening to the Palestinian population), Hitler and Mussolini's nations would support an independent Arab Palestinian state. But his efforts in Europe proved to be fruitless. "All they would say on German radio was: 'We are with the Arab people and for their independence.' But they never agreed to a formal treaty. Hitler refused publicly to recognize the claim to independence of the Arab states, partly because Mussolini was in no mood to lose his colony of Libya." (Fisk 361)

The Six Day War

For many Israelis and Palestinians the most decisive event in the tempestuous relationship between the two groups was the Six Day War that took place in June 1967. Israel launched a preemptive strike against Arab nations it believed were planning an attack. Defying the odds, Israel not only won the war, but managed to gain some of its most crucial areas: the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, and Gaza (Friedman 254). While control of the Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt in 1982, Israeli military presence in Gaza and the West Bank is a contributing factor to much of the violence and chaos in those regions today. Israel's conquest left many happy; many Israelis and American Jews felt that the results of the war were simply part of God's plans for the Jews. The land gained in '67 was seen as some of the holiest (places like Jericho and Hebron), and that it was "an obligation for Jews to settle and build" (Friedman 311). The land acquired by Israel during 1967, and the subsequent occupation, would prompt both the first and second *Intifadas* (uprisings) by Palestinians in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Gulf Wars

One of Iraq's greatest challenges was the regular disruption of power and the high turnover rate of its leaders. Some stability would come when the Ba'th party took control in 1968. It was eleven years later that its most notorious leader, Saddam Husayn (Hussein), would take control and engineer the catastrophic invasion of Kuwait in 1990. While most know the outcome of this war, many do not see the deep link between Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation:

The failure of the Palestinian Intifada to bring about a change in Israel's relentless settlement policy, the impending immigration of hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews to Israel, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the emergence of the United States – the ally of Israel – as the sole superpower all combined to create an atmosphere of frustration and uncertainty within the Arab world. Husayn justified Iraq's ongoing military buildup with the argument that the only way to force Israel to recognize Palestinian rights was for the Arab states to achieve military parity with Israel. (Cleveland 478)

Motivations were also about economic gain, for Kuwait was a natural barrier to unrestricted access to the Persian Gulf. Husayn believed his cause would appeal to Arabs, particularly Palestinians, and he saw himself as their “liberator.” It was also an opportunity for a country that had largely been prevented from achieving any real independence or solidarity (persistent British occupation) to show others just what it was capable of doing. What Husayn did not account for as he was planning his invasion was the rapid and severe response from the United States (Cleveland 479-481).

While the U.S. involvement in Kuwait lasted only a matter of days, our 2003 invasion of Iraq (what many refer to as the Second Gulf War) reminds us that the first Gulf War brought a great deal of disruption to the region. Although Husayn was still in power and ruthlessly oppressive (especially to the Shi’a population), our invasion of Iraq would need evidence stronger than this to be warranted. The U.S. government banked on finding weapons of mass destruction, but underlying issues such as access to oil and lingering resentment from 1991 are largely attributed to as the real factors behind the decision to go into Iraq. For many, Operation Iraqi Freedom has been seen as an enormous disaster, despite cries of success by the U.S. government for the ultimate capture of Husayn and dismantling of the Ba’th party. The stringent ethnic divisions discussed earlier in this paper were exacerbated as our occupation of Iraq brought greater instability, greater stratification between the dominant groups (Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds), and a tremendous insurgency effort by many Iraqis (Cleveland 544-545, 548). The violence still persists today. Iraq’s democracy is shaky at best. What the future holds for Iraq is uncertain, but it is clear that the Western involvement of both the past and the present will undoubtedly be a part of what is to come.

Israel and Palestine following the Gulf War

When the Gulf War ended in February 1991, much of the world’s attention now shifted back to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which was rapidly approaching a near 50-year history. Attempts at reconciliation and peace were largely fruitless (as evidenced by the conflict that still persists 60 years later), but are worth exploring. One of the defining events was the Oslo Peace Process, which set out initially to accomplish two things: to obtain “mutual recognition” between Israel and Jordan, and to recognize the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and its leader Yasir Arafat. Many believed that the only way to achieve some sort of stability was going to have to begin with diplomatic talks. Israelis themselves were divided over the notion of engaging in diplomatic talks, especially following the *Intifada* that took place in the late 1980s, a wave of violence between Israelis and Palestinians in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank. The *Intifada* brought violence many Israelis were desperate to end, and many understood it was a direct result of the occupation. Palestinians themselves were also divided about the notion of diplomacy, especially as the Israeli government continued to increase construction of Jewish settlements (Cleveland 499-500). Although apprehensive, both sides began a historic undertaking in 1993, when Israel and the PLO agreed to “work towards a plan that would bring autonomy for Palestine in Gaza and the West Bank.” Yasir Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin famously shook hands on the White House lawn. It appeared a new chapter – one that seemed to hold a great deal of promise – had begun (Cleveland 502, 540).

Another important factor in Israel’s willingness to address Palestinian autonomy was due to a very real fear of Hamas, an Islamic resistance movement that rejected diplomacy with Israel and sought to create an Islamic Palestinian state. While largely held responsible for supporting the first *Intifada*, its popularity with Palestinians could not be ignored. For many, it was a welcome change to failed policies of the PLO and the larger movement of Pan-Arabism. “The growing strength of Hamas, with its ties to other Islamic opposition groups throughout the region, concerned Israeli leaders and gave them cause to consider negotiations with the PLO as a means of defusing the discontent from which Hamas drew its strength” (Cleveland 503).

However, reality soon set in and relations between the two soured as key issues (ones the Oslo accords neglected to address) could no longer be ignored. Palestinians were given no assistance in tackling the challenges that came with the loss of East Jerusalem in the Six Day War, as well as the growing numbers of Palestinian refugees. The follow-up to Oslo in 1995 was also disappointing for Palestinians: only a mere fraction of the West Bank had been placed under PLO rule, despite original blueprints which were focused on shifting this area to Palestinian authority. And while all of this was occurring, Israeli's occupation (that had largely been put on hold by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin) was back on in full force as the construction of new settlements began to increase tremendously. As violence escalated and Israeli authority over the disputed regions seemed to grow by the minute, Arafat and the PLO appeared to be growing more and more out of touch with the Palestinian population. Hamas on the other hand used this to their great advantage, escalating violence in an attempt to undermine Israeli authority in occupied territories, the goal of which was weakening relations between the Israeli government and the PLO (Cleveland 504, 507-508, 509).

Divisions among Palestinians regarding diplomacy with Israel were not the only roadblocks to mutual peace and stability. Israelis were also split in their beliefs about what the future should hold for both territories. This was tragically evident with the assassination of Rabin, murdered by a Jewish extremist who, like many, ardently opposed any sort of appeasement or transfer of land with Palestine (Cleveland 509). "There existed among Israelis a lingering suspicion that Palestinians were unreliable terrorists, and among Palestinians, a suspicion that Israelis were determined expansionists" (Cleveland, 510).

Israel's leaders that followed Rabin tended to largely favor expansion (Benjamin Netanyahu and Ariel Sharon), and as they continued to build more extensive settlements, the rest of the world could do little to intervene. The World Court proclaimed it illegal and the UN condemned the actions, but the fatal flaws of Oslo were exposed: the agreements made largely favored Israel, and there was very little room for intervention from outside forces (Cleveland 511-512). Throughout the late '90s violence backed by Hamas only increased, as did their support from Palestinians. This violence resulted in a second *Intifada*, or uprising, and this time around Yasir Arafat did little to quiet them (Cleveland 516). Arafat's death in 2004 and Sharon's stroke (resulting in his ongoing coma) left a hole in a fractured peace process that seemed only to be limping along.

What Next?

The conflict at present appears to continue to be at a standstill, as both Israelis and Palestinians seek different means to achieve stability. Recently U.S. president Obama met with both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas. Abbas seeks an end to Israeli settlement construction, while Netanyahu seeks "natural growth," a process which would allow construction to occur within already existing settlements (Entous). Additionally, the debate over a one-state or two-state solution seems to be at the forefront of the conflict. While many believe that a two-state solution is the only viable path for these bitter enemies, others like Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi contend that a two-state solution would never work. The problems foreseen come from an inability for Israel to defend its borders (as per the two-state solution), and the incapacity on the part of Palestine to accommodate high numbers of refugees in territory granted to Palestine under the two-state solution (Qaddafi). While neither party seems to be willing to back down, one thing is undeniable: peace in Israel and Palestine is at the heart of the matter for the Middle East, and its achievement is vital to improved relations between Arab and Western peoples.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson Plan One: Introduction to The Middle East after World War I

The students will be expected to meet the following objectives, based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for 10th grade World History: TEKS Objective (1) History A, TEKS Objective (2) History A, TEKS Objective (7) History A, TEKS Objective (19) Culture A and B, and TEKS Objective (26) Social Studies Skills D.

Material and Resources

Students will need background information for the discussion and writing segment of this lesson. I use the article, “Three Conflicting Agreements Regarding the Arab World,” by Jiu-Hwa Upshur (see information in supplemental sources).

Procedures and Activities

Have students read either individually or as a class (round-robin style) Upshur’s article. After they read, have them answer the following questions for content review:

1. What were the British hoping to gain in the Arab world?
2. Who did the British make agreements with during the war?
3. What did Sherif Husayn propose the Arabs do?
4. What was stipulated in the Sykes-Picot agreement?
5. What was the purpose of the Balfour Declaration?
6. Why were these new territories called mandates and not colonies?
7. What did the British decide at the Cairo Conference?
8. What happened in Egypt following the conference? What about in Jordan? And Palestine?
9. Where did modernization and nationalism (countries not under European control) thrive in the Arab world?

After answering and discussing the questions as a class, break them into 5 groups, one group to represent each of the following countries/territories: Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, and Egypt. Students are to write and share with their class a 5 minute presentation outlining what happened to those countries following the Cairo Conference of 1921. Tell them to consider the following:

1. Who was now really in charge?
2. What was the response of the people already living in these territories?
3. How does the division of the Arab world in the 1920’s explain some of the problems that plague the region today?

Assessment

Students will need access to a computer lab or additional time outside of school to prepare their presentations, depending upon length and content requirements set by the teacher. Students can be assessed a number of different ways: presentation skills, content/material of presentation, and organization of that material. You can also request they include visuals or maps for a more comprehensive presentation. You can use Rubistar at www.rubistar.com to design a rubric to assess them by. It can be a daily participation grade or even a project grade, depending upon the requirements.

Lesson Plan Two: *Promises* and the future of Israel and Palestine

Objectives

The students will be expected to meet the following objectives, based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for 10th grade World History: TEKS Objective (1) History A, TEKS Objective (2) History A, TEKS Objective (7) History A, TEKS Objective (19) Culture A and B, TEKS Objective (21) Culture A and B, and TEKS Objective (26) Social Studies Skills D.

Materials and Resources

Teachers will need access to the 2001 film *Promises*, by B.Z. Goldberg. Viewing this film will be the basis for the class discussion and project that will take place. Students will also need access to computers for the group work section of this activity.

Procedures and Activities

Have students view the documentary film *Promises*. Ask them to write down any personal thoughts and observations while viewing this film. Ask them to consider the following questions:

- What is the role of religion in this film?
- What about access to arable land and water?
- What are some of the differences in interactions between the Israeli children and the Palestinian children and their families?
- What is similar?
- Are the children's views shaped more powerfully by their environment or their family members?
- What are some of the stereotypes some of the children have about each other?
- What can their exposure to one another mean for other conflicting groups (outside of Palestine and Israel)? For example, Russia and Georgia? Tibet and China?

Students will break into groups and be given time with computer access to begin working on their projects and class presentations. Students are to prepare a 5-7 minute presentation in class reviewing their answers to the above questions. They are also expected to choose two other regions of the world that face similar challenges: conflict over land and displacement of populations. The idea is that we will use the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a lens to examine other regional conflicts and their outcomes.

Assessment

Have students write a 1-2 page reflective essay about what they learned from the research and ask them to evaluate both their performance and that of other group members. Often times I ask students to give themselves a grade, and I find they tend to be much harder on themselves than I would. They often give a grade that is at or below the level of work they have produced.

Lesson Plan Three: The Modern Middle East

Objectives

The students will be expected to meet the following objectives, based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for 10th grade World History: TEKS Objective (1) History A, TEKS Objective (2) History A, TEKS Objective (7) History A, TEKS Objective (19) Culture A and B, TEKS Objective (21) Culture A and B, and TEKS Objective (26) Social Studies Skills D.

Materials and Resources

Students will need computer access, their textbooks, paper/poster board, and markers. Students will also need copies of a SPEC chart. A SPEC chart is just a 4-column or 4-square chart that enables you to organize information into the following categories: social, political, economic, and cultural (cross-cultural). Your students may use their own paper or you can make SPEC charts for them. The format is very informal.

Procedures and Activities

Students should work in pairs to complete SPEC charts for a country in the Middle East region. I assign them countries in an effort to prevent too much overlap. They will need outside class time to complete their charts. Tell them to be sure to fill all parts of the Social, Political, Economic, and Cultural boxes with relevant information from both the past and the present.

Using this information, students will prepare a match card game for their country. They need to have 3 facts or pieces of information from each of the 4 SPEC boxes to share (total of 12). Each fact statement or piece of information must be written legibly on an 8.5x11 sheet of paper. Using the classroom whiteboard, we will assemble a large version of the game Memory (the match card version) to play as a class. The idea is to have the countries listed on the board in the room and to identify and then “hang” (we put our correct match cards under the country’s sign to help us remember) the relevant pieces of information to the correct country. The kids really enjoy the game aspect of it, and they learn a lot because they are responsible for writing the facts used on the match cards.

Assessment

The end goal is to have students function as “experts” on their particular country during the game. Using each student pair’s information will expose the students to information on more than just one country. I split the class into two teams, and put a member of each pair on opposite teams so that they are fairly evenly matched. You can have teams play for bonus points (on a test or quiz) or even for a simple class participation grade. I tell my students that everyone must compete in at least one round in order to earn class participation credit for the day. I also grade their charts after giving them 2-3 days at home to work on them for completion and accuracy (the expectation is 5 pieces of info for each box on their chart – a total of 20 facts in order to earn a 100 on the chart assignment).

Lesson Plan Four: Profile a Modern Middle East Leader

Objectives

The students will be expected to meet the following objectives, based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for 10th grade World History: TEKS Objective (1) History A, TEKS Objective (2) History A, TEKS Objective (7) History A, TEKS Objective (19) Culture A and B, and TEKS Objective (26) Social Studies Skills D.

Materials and Resources

Students will need access to a computer and the internet, as well as library facilities. They will be working independently to write a biographical essay of a modern Middle East Leader. Teachers can arrange to have research time in the library, or assign this as outside work. Teachers may also want to consider using “Turn It In” if plagiarism is a problem. Turn it in software is available for purchase at www.turnitin.com.

Procedures and Activities

For this assignment students are expected to work independently to research and write about a modern Middle East leader. Try to get the students away from a simple recitation of their selected

leader's life events. Have students develop a thesis ahead of time that will give them a blueprint for writing. Since the focus of this overall unit is colonization and the Middle East, ask them to consider how the leader they've selected responded to Western involvement. The focus is modern (20th/21st century), so it might help to set some time limits. For example, only leaders from the 1920's and on should be selected. For some students, the research and writing process can be daunting. It helps to set "check points" up throughout the process: the thesis, the rough draft, a second draft, and then the final, depending upon the length of time given to the assignment.

Assessment

The idea with this last lesson is to round out the unit so that students have examined many aspects of the modern Middle East, from individual leaders, country characteristics, and future challenges. This research essay can be assessed in a number of ways. I will use a rubric based on the standard Advanced Placement World History skills sets, although teachers could design their own rubric for assessment, one that would evaluate content, support argument, development, and organization.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Friedman, Thomas. From Beirut to Jerusalem. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1989. Friedman's personal account of the Lebanese civil war and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Huntington, Samuel J. "The Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs Magazine* (Summer 1993) 72.3. Controversial article that looks at cultural characteristics to explain the divide between the Western and non-western world.
- Qaddafi, Muammar. "The One-State Solution." *New York Times*. 22 Jan. 2009: A33. Libya's political leader offers solutions and insight as to why a one-state solution is the only possibility for easing the violence between Israeli and Palestinian peoples.

Salt, Jeremy. *The Unmaking of the Middle East: a history of Western Disorder in Arab Lands*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008.
Examines alliances between the West and the Middle East, U.S. involvement, The Gulf War, and the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Maps

“Religious and Ethnic Groups in Iraq.” BBC News Online.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/shared/spl/hi/in_depth/post_saddam_iraq/img/religionehtnic_map416.gif>.
Image used to show the ethnic and religious division in Iraq that are still present today.

Films

Promises. Directors Carlos Bolado, B.Z. Goldberg, Justine Shapiro. Cowboy Pictures, 2001.
Documentary that follows children of Muslim and Jewish backgrounds living in Jerusalem.

The Syrian Bride. Director Eran Ricklis. 1 More Film, 2004.
Story of the marriage between two young Arabs whom have never met. The young bride lives in the Golan Heights and must leave the Israeli-occupied area when the new couple elects to live in Syria.

Lawrence of Arabia. Director David Lean. Columbia Pictures, 1962.
Chronicles the life of T.E. Lawrence, focusing on his time as a soldier during the Arab revolt against the Ottoman Turks in World War I.

West Bank Story. Director Ari Sandel. Magnolia Picture, 2005.
Musical about a young Israeli and Palestinian couple who fall for each other despite a lengthy history of feuding between their families.

Supplemental Sources

For Teachers and Students

Sabbagh, Karl. *Palestine: History of a Lost Nation*. New York: Grove Press, 2006.
Sabbagh’s memoir chronicles the removal of Palestinians in the wake of growing Jewish settlements.

Said, Edward. *Covering Islam*. New York: Vintage Books, 1997.
Said explores how Western media often misrepresents Islam and Islamic countries.

Shafir, Gershon. *Land, Labor, and the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 1882- 1914*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
Examines the land divisions and labor struggles among Israeli and Palestinian populations both before and after the creation of Israel.

Sufian, Sandy and Mark Levine. *Reapproaching Borders: New Perspectives on the Study of Israel-Palestine*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008.
A recent look at the challenges associated with the geographic and cultural borders in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Tolan, Sandy. *The Lemon Tree*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006.
Award-winning novel that follows the unlikely friendship between an Israeli woman and a Palestinian man and the house that connects them.

Upshur, Jiu Hwa L. “Three Conflicting Agreements Regarding the Arab World.” *World History Comprehensive Volume*. Belmont, CA: West/Wadsworth, 1999.
An article I assign my students to give them background information on the creation of a mandate system in the Middle East following World War I.