



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for Middle Eastern Studies

Diplomatic History of the Middle East during/after World War I

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As part of a discussion on the impact of World War I on the Middle East, this short, document-based activity can help students understanding the lasting impact of Western (European) diplomacy during and immediately after World War I.

Documents 1-3: Conflicting Western agreements during the War

Have students look at the three famous British-French agreements during World War I. Discuss the potential problems and contradictions of these agreements, especially with regard to Palestine.

Documents 4-6: Immediate Post-War Issues in the Former-Ottoman Arab Lands

- Examine the census figures from Palestine (Document 4). Students can note the problems of ensuring the rights of all peoples in the area and also can foresee how the region's population will change, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s.
- Examine the map of the Mandate System (Document 5). Discuss the issues of artificial borders and foreign control of local populations. What lasting impact might these have?
- Study the map of the Kurdish population (Document 6). The Kurds are the largest group of people without their own country. What impact might this situation have in the short run – and in the long run?

Documents 7-8: Turkey

The implementation of the original Western plan for Turkey led to a Turkish national uprising under Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) and a new treaty. Compare the two treaties: The 1920 Treaty of Sevres (Document 7) and the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne (Document 8).

Additional Resource:

See the overview of World War I in the Middle East, which can be used by the teacher (for further background) or assigned for students to read.