

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Tlemcen**



**Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English
Section of English**

**The Question of Palestine: Britain's
Role in Instigating a Long-lasting
Conflict**

*Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as a partial fulfilment of the
requirements for Master's degree in Literature and Civilization of Foreign
Languages*

Presented by

Mr. BELKHOUANE Walid

Supervised by

▪ Dr. Omar RAHMOUN

Board of Examiners

Dr Daoudi FRID	Prof	President
Dr Omar RAHMOUN	MCA	Supervisor
Dr Souad BERBAR	Prof	Examiner

2023 - 2024

Dedication

This work is dedicated to three of the most important individuals who have greatly contributed to the success of this thesis and to my personal success : To my beloved mother, whose endless support and genuine love have been a comforting whisper in my ear and a driving force in every step of this long journey.

To my beloved brothers, Mounir and Mohammed, thank you for your continuous encouragement and for always standing by my side. You are my constant source of inspiration and pride, and without your support, this achievement would not have been possible.

This work is the fruit of your love and support, and I dedicate it to you with all my pride and gratitude.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have supported and guided me throughout the journey of completing this thesis.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Rahmoun Omar, for his invaluable guidance, insightful feedback, and unwavering support. His expertise and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping this research and bringing it to fruition.

Special thanks to Dr. Kharbouch Ghouti for his inspiration and support throughout this journey. His valuable advice and guidance have significantly contributed to the success of this work.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Daoudi Frid for his leadership and support throughout this process. I also extend my heartfelt thanks to the examiner Dr. Souad Berbar, for her valuable time and effort in evaluating my work.

Abstract

The date of the declaration of the Israeli entity in 1948 marks a pivotal point in the history of the Middle East and the Arab region. Britain was and will remain the first and most significant country to contribute to this declaration through policies and measures that spanned many years to achieve this goal. The aim of this research study is to shed light on Britain's essential role in the establishment of Israel, relying on a range of books and historical sources. This thesis, consisting of two chapters, addresses a historical and analytical study of Britain's role in the occupation of Palestine in 1948. This is done through reviewing the main historical events that significantly contributed to this process and then analyzing them. This study begins by reviewing the historical relationship between Britain and the Ottoman Empire and studying Britain's active role in weakening and dismantling the Ottoman Empire by supporting the most important revolution witnessed by the Arab region during that period, namely the Great Arab Revolt. This study continues to review the British plan, in collaboration with Western colonial powers, aimed at dividing the Arab region, represented by the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916. This thesis also highlights the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which is considered one of the crucial turning points in British policy towards establishing a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine. It further examines the period of British mandate over Palestine and the oppressive policies towards the Palestinians, which paved the way for the ultimate goal of establishing the State of Israel.

Keywords: Britain, the Ottoman Empire, the Great Arab Revolt, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the Balfour Declaration, the British Mandate over Palestine, the Establishment of the State of Israel.

Table of Contents

Dedication	II
Acknowledgements	III
Abstract	IV
Table of Contents	V
General Introduction	1
Chapter 1: The Prelude to the Conflict: A Historical Review	5
1.1. Introduction	6
1.2. Britain and the Ottoman Empire Relationship :	7
1.2.1. Britain's Destabilization of the Ottoman Empire under Sultan Abdul Hamid II :	8
1.2.2. Sultan Abdul Hamid's Reforms Against Western Intervention :	8
1.2.3. The West's Reaction to Sultan Abdul Hamid's Reforms	9
1.2.4. The 1909 Coup against Sultan Abdul Hamid II :	10
1.2.5. The Ottoman Empire under Rule of British and Western Backed Coup Plotters	11
1.3. The Great Arab Revolt :	12
1.3.1. Sharif Hussein's Negotiations with Britain for the Great Arab Revolt	13
1.3.3. British Deception of Sharif Hussein bin Ali	15
1.3.4. The Sykes-Picot Agreement :	17
1.3.5. The Balfour Declaration :	18
1.4. The British Pursuit of a Jewish National Homeland in Palestine	19
1.4.1. The British Mandate over Palestine in 1922	20
1.4.2. The British Policy of Judaization in Palestine :	20
1.4.2.1. The Jewish Immigration to Palestine	21
1.4.2.2. The Transfer of Palestinian Lands to Jews	21
1.4.3. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948	22
1.5 Conclusion	23

Chapter2: Examining Britain’s Historical Involvement in the Occupation of Palestine: A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events	25
2.2. Britain and the Ottoman Empire: Contradictions, Opposition support, and the Overthrow of Sultan Abdul Hamid II	26
2.3. The Great Arab Revolt and Britain’s colonial strategy: unveiling British intentions through the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration	29
2.3.1. The Machinations of British Policy towards the Arabs	30
2.3.2. Sykes-Picot: Britain’s Divide Strategy in the Arab Region :	30
2.3.3. Analysis of the Balfour Declaration, Implications and Consequences	34
2.4. British Mandate Policies : Impact on Palestine’s Demographics :	37
2.5 The Success of the British Plan in Achieving the Zionist Dream	41
2.6 Conclusion	42
General Conclusion	45
References	47

General Introduction

The Palestinian issue is one of the most complex and impactful in history, significantly affecting the Middle East, the Arab region, and indeed the entire world. Over the years, this issue has witnessed the involvement of several countries and colonial powers, as well as the interplay of various political, religious, and social factors. Among the most pivotal and central parties that contributed unprecedentedly to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was the great power of Britain.

The main aim of this thesis is to analyze Britain's role in depth through a detailed historical study of events. It begins with examining the historical relationship between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, the legitimate ruler of the Arab region, and moves through a series of historical events that radically changed the region's history and profoundly affected the political, social, and cultural life of its peoples, culminating in the declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

The importance of this study lies in attempting to understand and analyze one of the most complex issues in the world, the repercussions of which the peoples of the Arab region are still suffering from to this day, by delving into historical events in which Britain played an extremely important role.

Some of the key research questions that this study will address, and attempts to answer after reviewing various historical events, are:

- How did Britain exploit the collapse of the Ottoman Empire to enhance its influence in the region?
- How did the Great Arab Revolt affect the political and social situation in the region?
- What was the impact of the Sykes-Picot Agreement on the Middle East region, and how did Britain divide the spheres of influence in this region according to this agreement?
- What was the impact of the Balfour Declaration on the developments in Palestine?
- How did British policies pave the way for the establishment of the State of Israel, and what were the factors that contributed to achieving this goal?

This Dissertation is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter provides a historical overview and a comprehensive look at the important events that led to the current situation of the Jews in the region. This historical overview begins by examining the relationship between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, which began to disintegrate and collapse in the early 20th century. The Ottoman Empire that controlled most parts of the Middle East, including Palestine. Colonial powers, primarily Britain and France, exploited the Ottoman Empire's entry into World War I to divide and dismantle it, thereby enhancing their influence in the region.

The situation subsequently developed dramatically, with the region witnessing a series of events that significantly altered and shaped its future. Chief among these was the Great Arab Revolt of 1916-1918, heavily supported by Britain against Ottoman rule in the Arab region. The British promised the Arabs independence through this revolt. This was followed by the signing of the most important and famous secret agreement among Britain, France, and Russia, aiming to divide the region into small states controlled by these three powers: the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916. Shortly after, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 was announced, in which Britain officially expressed its support and intention to establish a national home for the Jews in Palestine.

The second chapter of this study provides a detailed analysis of these historical events, shedding light on how British policies over the years contributed to shaping the future and outlining the entire Arab region. This analysis draws on a range of historical sources. It focuses on explaining the crucial role Britain played in paving the way for the Jews to declare the establishment of their state on the ruins of an Arab state, a role that was significantly manifested during the British Mandate over Palestine starting in 1922.

During this period, Britain adopted policies that facilitated and promoted Jewish immigration to Palestine. These policies also made it easier for Jews to settle on Palestinian land, leading to the ongoing conflict and war between Arabs and Jews. The second chapter concludes with the declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, a goal for which Britain had worked diligently to achieve. The

importance of the question arises: how did the fluctuating historical relations between Britain and the Ottoman Empire influence Britain's policy towards Palestine, and what role did Britain play through secret treaties and agreements such as the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948?. Thus, by presenting the significant historical events in the history of the Arab region, this thesis will attempt to answer this question.

Chapter 1

The Prelude to the Conflict:

A Historical Review

1.1. Introduction :

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Middle East saw a number of historically significant events that would influence the future and course of the whole region. With its status as a newly established colonial state and the turbulent relationship it had with the Ottoman Empire, the region's ruling force at the time, Britain became a major actor during this period.

Many conflicts existed between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, which ruled the area during this time. These tensions were mostly caused by British meddling in both the Ottoman Empire's internal and foreign affairs. These initiatives brought about a number of historical occurrences and developments, chief among them the Arab Revolt, in which Britain was instrumental in determining the direction of the revolution and its consequences for the future of the region.

Following this, secret treaties were signed between the Western colonial powers, particularly the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which divided the Arab region into separate Mandates, In addition to the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which is considered the pinnacle of British policy in the region and in which Britain announced its support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, increasing the tension in relations. Britain continued to pursue this goal throughout its Mandate over Palestine until the formal declaration of the state of Israel was made in 1948.

This chapter aims to provide a deep understanding of Britain's significant role in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the displacement of the Arab inhabitants from their homeland, based on a collection of books and historical documents. Starting from this chapter, which will attempt to review various events sequentially, adhering to the chronological order of developments. This approach will allow for an accurate explanation of British policy in the Arab region throughout these years.

1.2. Britain and the Ottoman Empire Relationship :

Throughout history, writers and historians have characterized the relationship between Britain and the Ottoman Empire as nuanced and conflicting¹, emphasizes and makes clear that Britain has been meddling in Ottoman domestic issues since antiquity. The two nations' relationship vacillated between collaboration and rivalry during the Middle Ages, with Britain joining the Crusades against the Ottomans and forging alliances with them against other European powers.

The 19th-century expansion of British meddling in Ottoman domestic affairs, particularly following the Crimean War (1853–1856), in which the British formed an alliance with France and the Ottoman Empire against Russia. In order to stop Russian expansion, Britain's interests in the area coincided with those of the Ottoman Empire, which led to their cooperation during the Crimean War against Russia.

After the Crimean War, British intervention in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire significantly increased. During the reign of Sultan Abdul Mejid, who ruled from 1839 to 1861, Britain began to visibly exert its influence in Ottoman politics, supporting internal reforms and economic changes sought by the Sultan.

Throughout the rule of Sultan Abdulaziz, who ruled from 1861 to 1876, British intervention in Ottoman internal affairs persisted, with increased attempts to influence domestic politics and control economic matters. Sultan Abdulaziz was the first to have the first coup attempt orchestrated against him with the assistance of foreign countries, led by Britain and France. Britain no longer contented itself with intervening through its spies within the Ottoman Empire alone, but grew bolder, even extending to changing the Sultans themselves. What's astonishing in all of this is that they succeeded under the guise of combating injustice and defending freedoms.

British interventions reached their peak during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who ruled from 1876 to 1909, as Britain considered him a threat to its interests in the region².

¹ Emanuel Buttigieg, 2007. *Clash of Civilizations*, Crusades, Knights and Ottomans: an Analysis of Christian-Muslim Interaction in the Mediterranean, (pp. 207-213).

² Orkhan Muhammad Ali, 2008. *Sultan Abdul Hamid II : His Life and Reign Events*, (pp. 65-75).

1.2.1. Britain's Destabilization of the Ottoman Empire under Sultan Abdul**Hamid II :**

Sultan Abdul Hamid took an interest in the idea of uniting Muslims under the banner of the Caliphate, which rattled Europeans, particularly Britain, as it had a significant Muslim population, especially in India, which was known as the jewel in the Crown of the British Empire at the time.

The notion posed a threat of Islamic uprising in Britain's kingdoms and colonies. In an article published in the independent Arab Newspaper *Rai al-Youm* in 2015, by the Palestinian researcher and author Abdul Hay Zaloum who writes about how Britain made efforts to undermine the Ottoman state through various means, including bribery to corrupt the Ottoman administrative apparatus and fostering separatist sentiments within secret societies in the Ottoman Empire¹.

According to Özkan (2022), Sultan Abdul Hamid's Islamic identity became evident upon his ascension to the throne, leading to a coalition of European powers, spearheaded by Britain, opposing him. Consequently, significant parts of the Ottoman Empire were severed. The First Berlin Conference of 1878 saw Bosnia and Herzegovina administratively annexed by Austria, while Romania, Serbia and Montenegro gained independence. France imposed its protection on Tunisia in 1881, and Britain occupied Egypt in 1882².

European powers such as Britain and France worsened separatist tensions within the Ottoman Empire by fueling nationalist movements, and fostering dissent among minority groups.

1.2.2. Sultan Abdul Hamid's Reforms Against Western Intervention :

Sultan Abdul Hamid realized the importance of Islamic unity and the necessity of coordination among all Islamic countries, as well as the need to rise above any disputes in the face of aggressive Western intervention. He was aware of Britain's

¹ Abdul Hay Zaloum, 2015. Fake history for us to stay out of history: the role of Turkish and Arab nationalist secret societies in the destruction of the Ottoman Empire through the occupation of Palestine. <https://www.raialyoum.com>

² Özkan. E, 2022. An Analysis of the Effect of the 1878 Berlin Treaty on Diplomatic Policy Making, (pp. 63-86). <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/2541832>

attempts to instill nationalist ideology in the minds of Arab intellectuals, aiming to undermine Islamic unity and distort its concept of uniting Muslims¹.

Sultan Abdul Hamid employed various means to achieve Islamic unity. Some of the reforms mentioned by Suleiman Juqapash in his book *Sultan Abdul Hamid II : His personality and policies*, Sultan Abdul Hamid began by purging the administrative apparatus of those influenced by western culture and called for adherence to the mantle of the Islamic Caliphate as a symbol of uniting Muslims to support him against western colonial goals. He attempted to Arabize the Ottoman state to bridge the gap between it and the Arab world.

Based on Bahry's (2016) analysis, despite strong opposition from figures within his administration fearing the collapse of the Turkish element, the Arabization step was one of the best moves to foster cohesion with the Arab world. His reforms expanded, as he sought to connect different parts of his empire with railway lines to facilitate the movement of pilgrims, traders and troops. The Sultan also worked on continuing the scientific renaissance initiated by his predecessors and modernizing the state. He continued to adopt western methods in updating education and technical sciences needed by his state².

Sultan Abdul Hamid persisted in integrating western approaches to educational reform while rejecting outright imitation of the western system, instead endeavoring to adapt modernization efforts to fit within the framework of Ottoman tradition³.

1.2.3. The West's Reaction to Sultan Abdul Hamid's Reforms :

The West faced these reforms by all possible means in order to weaken and dismantle the Ottoman state, and to work on thwarting all the plans of Sultan Abdul Hamid, who was perceived as a strategic threat to the West in general and to Britain in particular.

¹ Suleiman Juqapash, 2008. *Sultan Abdul Hamid II : His Personality and Policies*, (p. 442).
noor-book.com/en/zvrpg1

² Bahry. L, 2016. *Baghdad Railway*, (pp. 22-23).noor-book.com/en/5nhgij

³ Fortna, B. C. (2002). *Imperial classroom: Islam, state of education in Late Ottoman Empire*. Oxford University Press, (pp. 45-56).<https://psi424.cankaya.edu.tr/uploads/files/Fortna, Imperial Classroom.PDF>

Sultan Abdul Hamid said in his memoirs that when the Jewish leader Theodor Herzl tried to tempt him during a visit to Istanbul by offering to pay the debts of the Ottoman state and stand by it in its wars in exchange for opening the door for Jewish migration to Palestine and allowing them to buy and cultivate land. The Sultan apologized for not accepting the offer, stating that Palestine is an Islamic endowment and he has no right to dispose of it, which led to the Jews turning against him¹.

Britain and European countries succeeded in attracting secret societies such as *The Turkish Youth Association*, which advocated separatist ideas, and funded them, providing them with meeting places, believing that the path to Palestine passed through Istanbul.

Sultan Abdul Hamid said that he was aware of everything these groups were doing, but he could not do anything because he was alone while these societies were supported by all the powers of the Western countries. He believed that shedding blood was an endless path.

1.2.4. The 1909 Coup against Sultan Abdul Hamid II :

According to Ünal's (2001) research, Britain and Germany showed particular interest in financing, planning, nurturing, and protecting secret societies within the Ottoman Empire. Members of *The Turkish Youth Association Movement*, founded in 1902, successfully liaised with officers from *the Union and Progress Society*, established by military medical students in 1889, coordinating their efforts to tighten their grip around Sultan Abdul Hamid despite Ottoman security forces' pursuit of these societies' members nationwide².

In 1907, revolutionary movements merged into the Union and Progress movement. The Joint Committee convened in Paris, setting the goal of restoring the constitution and disposing of the Sultan, even if violence was necessary. Civil disobedience and rebellion spread throughout the empire.

¹ Salah Issa, 2006. *The Conspiratorial Deed: The Balfour Promise*, (p. 86). noor-book.com/en/exds6a

² Ünal. H, (2001) Britain and Ottoman Domestic Politics: From the Young Turk Revolution to the Counter-Revolution, 1908-9, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 37:2, 1-22, DOI: 10.1080/714004391. <https://doi.org/10.1080/714004391>

In his book *The Wealth of Abdulhamid II*, Kesinkiliç (2020) claimed that the youth of the Union and Progress achieved their aspirations, becoming nationalist heroes, and decisively resolved to rid themselves of Sultan Abdul Hamid. On April 1909, the coup army entered the capital, demanding Sultan Hamid's brother, Mehmed Rashad, assumed nominal power, but real authority lay with the Union and Progress society, which led the Ottoman Empire, now weakened, into the World War I alongside Germany and Austria against the Allies led by Britain¹.

1.2.5. The Ottoman Empire under Rule of British and Western Backed Coup

Plotters :

The Arab East before and during World War I was vulnerable to European colonial expansionist ambitions, especially with the presence of a weakened Ottoman state that attempted through various means to preserve what remained of its legacy. Amidst these circumstances, the Zionist movement emerged under the leadership of Theodor Herzl, seeking to realize its settlement project in Palestine, exploiting Ottoman weakness and British support.

According to Sheikh (2008), the 1908 coup d'etat was considered a dangerous turning point for both the Ottoman state and the peoples it comprised. The Ottoman state, especially during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876-1908), faced the harshest European conspiracies aimed at abandoning the Islamic religion as the core of Ottoman society's culture. For Sultan Abdul Hamid, this principle was non-negotiable, leading to the emergence of numerous anti Ottoman fronts². notably the Committee of Union and Progress. With external support, they managed to overthrow Sultan Abdul Hamid II, leading the coup against him and seizing power, raising slogans based on the pursuit of Turkish nationalism, distancing themselves from religion, and liberating Turkish heritage, language, and culture from all Arab influences.

¹ Kesinkiliç. E, 2020. A Pillage Story: The Wealth of Abdulhamid II, (pp. 47-69).
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351969997_A_Pillage_Story_The_Wealth_of_Abdulhamid_II

² Sheikh. R, 2008. Contemporary Arab History, (p. 11).noor-book.com/en/npg3ed

In the book *The Conspiratorial Deed: The Balfour Promise* by author Salah Issa (2008), Sharif Hussein bin Ali (1854-1931), the Emir of Mecca and the King of the Hijaz, narrates his testimony as someone who lived through those circumstances in all their details and was indeed a part of them due to his status and position among Muslims. Despite Sultan Abdul Hamid's opposition, the Committee of Union and Progress appointed Sharif Hussein bin Ali as the Emir of Mecca. Through this appointment, he was able to gain the loyalty of the Arab tribes surrounding Mecca and govern its affairs independently from direct Ottoman control¹.

When the Unionists took power, Sharif Hussein and most Arabs rejoiced, believing they would obtain a greater share of rights and freedoms. However, days revealed that the situation was not much different from before; in fact, it was worse. The Committee of Union and Progress dissolved all Arab associations advocating for Arabs to manage their own affairs, abandoned the principle of equality among ethnicities, and ruled the state on the basis of Turkish dominance. As a natural reaction to this anti-Arab policy, Arab youths established secret associations and parties to defend their right to independence in their own country. The most notable of these was the Arab Congress held in Paris between June 17 and 23, 1913, which the new Ottoman government attempted to thwart by all means².

1.3. The Great Arab Revolt :

In his book *The Arab Revolution Its Preludes Causes And Consequences*, Dagher (2017) described when the First World War broke out in August 1914, all signs pointed to the Ottoman Empire joining the war alongside Germany, due to German influence, notably through the construction of the Berlin-Baghdad railway line. This raised concerns for Britain, given the threat it posed to its interests and transportation routes between the Arabian Gulf and India. Britain, leveraging the contradictions between the Arabs and the new government of the Ottoman Empire, sought to approach Sharif Hussein bin Ali and his sons Abdullah and Prince Faisal, exploiting them to stand by its side in the First World War. This endeavor evolved

¹ Salah Issa, 2006. *The Conspiratorial Deed: The Balfour Promise*, (p. 90).noor-book.com/en/exds6a

² ZIONISM & ARAB NATIONALISM. https://icsresources.org/wp-content/uploads/ICS_Lesson1_Zionism.pdf

after Britain learned of Sharif Hussein's aspirations for Arab independence from Ottoman rule, through the declaration of an Arab revolt within the Ottoman Empire. Britain offered the Arabs assistance and support during the war in exchange for aiding them in achieving their independence¹.

Britain began supporting several secret Arab societies that emerged on the scene, seeing that the Arabs of the Levant were more politically mature and aware. However, France's presence in the Levant region specifically led the British to overlook this area because France, being present in the region, would reap the benefits of the revolution². Britain redirected its attention towards the Arabian Peninsula for reasons it deemed conducive to the success of its plans against the Ottoman Empire.

According to Yaghi (2011), among the most important reasons that led Britain to the Arabian Peninsula was the Sharif of Mecca and its governor, Sharif Hussein bin Ali, who held a prestigious position among Muslims and Arab tribes. Additionally, Britain exploited the significant disagreement between the government of the Unionists and Sharif Hussein over his position and powers in the Hijaz region in its favor. Another important reason was the containment of the Hijaz region, thereby ensuring the continuation of the Hajj for Muslims in British colonies³.

1.3.1. Sharif Hussein's Negotiations with Britain for the Great Arab Revolt :

Sharif Hussein bin Ali narrates in his testimony about his son Abdullah's confidence in British politics, believing that Britain is the only country interested in assisting them in gaining independence from the Ottoman Empire. The initial discussions took place in February 1914 between Prince Abdullah bin Hussein and Lord Kitchener, the British high Commissioner in Cairo.

¹ Dagher. A. K, 2017. The Arab Revolution Its Preludes Causes and Consequences, (pp. 185-187). noor-book.com/en/czlfs8

² Schneer. J, 2011. The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, (pp. 16-25) https://books.google.dz/books?hl=en&lr=&id=YtSCkDqr-ZMC&oi=fnd&pg=PR13&dq=The+Balfour+Declaration+Jonathan+Schneer&ots=ACHoeXdmOW&sig=onSlzRmKUirU5dHYwIlEL9U2_5E&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=The%20Balfour%20Declaration%20Jonathan%20Schneer&f=false

³ Yaghi. I. A, 2011. History of The Contemporary Arab World, (p. 11).noor-book.com/en/ieqv0b

Prince Abdullah detailed the tense relations between the government of the Unionists and the Sharif of Mecca, explaining his father's concerns about the arbitrary policies of the new government towards the Arabs, indicating the possibility of a revolution in the Hijaz region if the Turks decided to join Germany in the war against the Allies¹.

Prince Abdullah also requested assistance from Lord Kitchener for Britain in terms of equipment and weapons in case of a conflict between the Arabs and the Turks. According to Sharif Hussein bin Ali, this meeting was considered the first step in his correspondence with Henry McMahon. Those letters, which intrigued historians after the First World War, promised the Arabs independence in explicit and written terms by Britain.

Sharif Hussein bin Ali was clear in his first letter to McMahon, stating: "All Arabs, without exceptions, in recent years have aspired to live, to win their absolute freedom, and to take control of governance themselves. It is appropriate for the Arab people to collaborate with the British government in achieving these objectives."²

Negotiations between Sharif Hussein and Britain, specifically with Sir Henry McMahon, continued and included ten exchanged letters between the two parties. These negotiations culminated in the outbreak of a revolution known as the Great Arab Revolt against Turkish rule, which required lengthy preparation. However, the idea of revolution filled the Arab world due to the injustice of the new Ottoman government towards the Arabs, leaving Sharif Hussein no choice but to trust the British promises to the Arabs.

1.3.2. The Outbreak of the Great Arab Revolt :

Said (2015) writes in his book "The Great Arab Revolt" about the spark of the Arab Revolt that began on Monday, July 5, 1916, declaring thereby the independence of the Arabs from Ottoman rule. This revolt was considered a direct factor in the Allies' victory in the Eastern front of the First World War, through the military effort provided to Britain there, especially in terms of human support. Without the presence

¹ Salah Issa, 2006. *The Conspiratorial Deed: The Balfour Promise*, (pp. 80-92).noor-book.com/en/exds6a

² The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence 14 July 1915. <https://www1.udel.edu/History-old/figal/Hist104/assets/pdf/readings/13mcmahonhussein.pdf>

of the Arab army facing the Ottoman forces on a battlefield spanning over a thousand kilometers, Britain would not have been able to achieve victory and reach the heart of the Arab lands.¹

On the day Sharif Hussein declared the revolt against the Ottoman Empire, he indirectly announced the the Hijaz region was an independent entity from the Ottoman state. Thus, it was considered the first fully independent Arab state established in twentieth century. Therefore, it can be said that the Arab Revolt played a significant role in the Allies' victories over the Ottomans in the First World War.

Said (2015) continues to present some statistics, claiming that the Arab Revolt inflicted significant losses on the Turks, with the Turks losing approximately 4800 killed, 1600 wounded, and 800 captured in the battles fought against them. These victories were just the beginning. Thanks to the efforts of the Arab forces, General Edmund Allenby managed to enter Jerusalem on December 9, 1917, capturing it and ending the war against the Ottomans.

In his book *The Conspiratorial Deed: The Balfour Promise*, Issa (2006) narrates Sharif Hussein's testimony about the developments during the period of Arab participation in the war alongside British forces between 1916 and 1918. He reveals two important events that struck him personally like lightning bolts in contrast to the British promises to him regarding the Arabs' attainment of their independence. These events are the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration².

Faced with these realities, Sharif Hussein had no choice but to confront the Arab people with these bitter truths, expressing his sorrow when he said, "I walked in the opposite direction completely against my people, hiding these two matters from them, softening their impact on them. I felt deep inside me the conspiracy being woven in London, Paris, and Washington, deceiving them and deceiving myself as well."

1.3.3. British Deception of Sharif Hussein bin Ali :

In December 1917, while military operations between the Arabs and the Turks were at their peak, a message reached Prince Faisal from the Ottoman governor of

¹ Said. A, 2015. *The Great Arab Revolt*, (p. 146).noor-book.com/en/cbsuv5

² Salah Issa, 2006. *The Conspiratorial Deed: The Balfour Promise*, (p. 93).noor-book.com/en/exds6a

Damascus, Jamal Pasha. It contained momentous news that would change the region's history. The message stated that the revolution led by the Russian people against the Tsarist government, known as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, had led to Russia's withdrawal from the First World War alongside Britain and France.

In an article titled, *A century on: Why Arabs resent Sykes-Picot*, the revolutionaries had publicized secret documents found in the Tsarist Foreign Ministry, including a document signed by three delegates: one representing Britain, Mr. Mark Sykes; the second representing France, Mr. George Picot; and the third representing Tsarist Russia. Jamal Pasha literally implored Sharif Hussein and his sons to return to the embrace of the Ottoman state, urging them to pursue their legitimate demands and not to be swayed by false British promises¹.

Sharif Hussein rejected this reconciliation request, believing firmly and confidently in the honor of Great Britain and its promises. According to Sharif Hussein, a great military leader like Lord Kitchener could not lie or deceive in his promises.

According to Schneer (2011), despite British assurances to Sharif Hussein, things began to become clear to him gradually. Lord Kitchener's insistence on making Palestine a shield to protect the British position in Egypt from any vacuum became apparent. Britain considered Palestine as a crucial land bridge connecting it to its eastern colonies. This explains British concerns regarding the French insistence, during the Sykes-Picot negotiations, on gaining control over the entire Levant, including Palestine. Perhaps this is what prompted Britain to issue the Balfour Declaration, which entails giving Palestine to the Jews, thus standing against French ambitions and placing Palestine temporarily under British mandate until Britain fulfills its promise to the Jews and grants them the land of Palestine².

¹ A century on: Why Arabs resent Sykes-Picot.

<https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2016/sykes-picot-100-years-middle-east-map/index.html>

² Schneer, J, 2011. The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, (pp. 16-25).

https://books.google.dz/books?hl=en&lr=&id=YtSCkDqr-ZMC&oi=fnd&pg=PR13&dq=The+Balfour+Declaration+Jonathan+Schneer&ots=ACHoeXdmOW&sig=onSlzRmKUirU5dHYwIIEl9U2_5E&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=The%20Balfour%20Declaration%20Jonathan%20Schneer&f=false

1.3.4. The Sykes-Picot Agreement :

Reported by Loevy, since the beginning of April 1915, Britain had been formulating its future policy, especially in the Arab Mashreq region, after the end of the First World War. The British government deemed it necessary to engage in treaties and agreements to define its objectives in the Middle East. Thus, Britain under the leadership of the Prime Minister David Lloyd George, decided to establish a ministerial committee to explore Britain's demands from the Ottoman Empire's territories. Initially, the British government tried to delay negotiations with its ally, the French government, regarding the Ottoman Empire's properties. However, actual meetings between them began in November 1915. Representing the French government in these negotiations was Georges Picot, the former consul in Beirut¹.

These negotiations resulted in the signing of an agreement known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement, or the British-French-Russian Secret Agreement, regarding spheres of influence in the Asian East and their division to serve their colonial schemes.

Palestine was considered the focal point of contention in these negotiations. On one hand, France sought control over Syria, including Palestinian territories. On the other hand, Britain opposed the presence of any major competing state near the Suez Canal, especially in Palestine. Even Russia expressed its claim to the land of Palestine for religious reasons.

These negotiations concluded, according to Antonios (2018), with the signing of a secret agreement in 1916 known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Perhaps the most prominent outcome of this agreement was Britain's breach of its treaties with the Arabs and its violation of international laws, principles, and values in international relations with Sharif Hussein².

¹ Loevy. K. The Sykes-Picot Agreement's Regional Moment: Drawing Lines of Development in a New and Open Space.https://www.law.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/upload_documents/Loevy%20-%20Part%202_10-19-16.pdf

² Antonios. G, 2018. Arab Awakening, (p. 350).noor-book.com/en/ngpz7e

The primary objective of this agreement was to divide the inheritance of the Ottoman Empire and its properties among Britain, France and Russia.

1.3.5. The Balfour Declaration :

The Balfour Declaration of November 6, 1917, is considered the third document issued during World War I regarding the fate of the Arab region. Unlike treaties or agreements between two states like the Sykes-Picot Agreement or even the correspondence between Sharif Hussein and Henry McMahon, this document was specific to depriving a people of their land and granting it to the Jews. Here, Palestine became the focus of the British.

The Balfour Declaration was not the beginning of the path pursued by the Jews to take control of Palestine; these ambitions date back years before that. In 1897, Theodor Herzl's book *The Jewish State* appeared, outlining the broad lines of Zionist policy to realize the idea of a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine¹.

Over the years, the efforts of the Jews to achieve their goals progressed. After Lloyd George's government came to power, negotiations took place between Zionist leaders and Mark Sykes on February 7, 1917, and the first Zionist British meeting was held, attended by Lord Rothschild and Herbert Samuel.

The basic desires of the Zionist leaders in this meeting were represented by the international recognition of the Jews' right to Palestine, the creation of a legal nationality for the Jewish community in Palestine, and the establishment of a Jewish joint stock company in Palestine that would grant land ownership rights. Abdulaziz (2008) mentioned in his book *History of the Arab Mashreq* that Britain sought, amid all these developments and negotiations, to fulfill the Jews' desire by making Palestine part of it to protect its interests in Egypt and ensure overland communications with the East².

On November 2, 1917, British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour sent a declaration to Lord Rothschild, one of the most important leaders of the Zionist

¹ Theodor Herzl, 1917. *The Jewish State*, (pp. 6-12).

<https://ia601303.us.archive.org/4/items/cu31924028579781/cu31924028579781.pdf>

² Abdul Aziz. O, 2008. *History Of The Arab Mashreq*, (pp. 500-505).noor-book.com/en/4mkyve

Committee, stating: "I am deeply pleased to inform you that His Majesty's government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."¹

1.4. The British Pursuit of a Jewish National Homeland in Palestine :

The signs of weakness began to appear in the Turkish fronts during World War I since 1915. Undoubtedly, thanks to the Great Arab Revolt led by Sharif Hussein bin Ali, the British forces, moving from Egypt towards southern Palestine, were able to occupy it.

They then continued their campaign towards the city of Jerusalem and occupied it on December 9, 1917, under the command of General Edmund Allenby. Allenby issued a statement to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the surrounding villages, reassuring them that there was no fear for their city and holy sites. He urged them to continue their activities and work in accordance with the law without fearing any interference.

This statement did not mention the main goal for which Britain occupied the land of Palestine, which was to prepare Palestine to become the national homeland for the Jews, as stipulated in the Balfour Declaration, officially published a few weeks before Britain's occupation of Jerusalem. Undoubtedly, there is a strong connection between British colonialism and Zionism, as Zionism is a global movement that serves colonialism, especially British colonialism.

The British, thanks to the Zionist movement, were able to assert their colonial presence in the East. This was clearly expressed by Winston Churchill during a British Cabinet meeting convened to discuss the Balfour Declaration and its signing. Churchill pointed out the great benefits that Britain would achieve once the Jewish national homeland was established in Palestine. Therefore, the Zionists sought to have Palestine under British mandate as an essential stage in the formation of the Jewish national homeland in Palestine at the expense of its Arab inhabitants. Without delay, the British government established a civil administration in September 1920 to govern

¹ https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/125415/8008_Balfour_Declaration.pdf

Palestine, appointing Sir Herbert Samuel, a well known British Jew with Zionist leanings, as its first High Commissioner to implement British Zionist colonial schemes.

1.4.1. The British Mandate over Palestine in 1922:

On the 24th of June, 1922, the British government submitted its jurisdictional claim on Palestine to the League of Nations, a submission that was subsequently endorsed by the League of Nations on the 22nd of July in that identical year.

The British Mandate for Palestine was comprised of a preamble and twenty-eight clauses. The preamble encompassed the content of the Balfour Declaration and the accord of the Allies to institute a territorial abode for the Jewish population in Palestine. Additionally, it recognized the profound historical affiliation of the Jews with the territory of Palestine and the imperative nature of erecting their national homeland there.

Based on Terry's (2017) analysis, the British Mandate over the Land of Palestine was the first step in the establishment of a Jewish national homeland in the Land of Palestine. The Balfour Declaration, as the first step in establishing the Jewish national homeland, guaranteed that the Jewish people would have the support of the colonial powers. With the issuance of the Mandate over Palestine the Zionist movement gained a great advantage¹.

1.4.2. The British Policy of Judaization in Palestine :

The British Mandate government in Palestine implemented several measures and decisions aimed at Judaizing Palestine despite the strong Palestinian resistance against it. Despite opposition and revolution in the Arab and Islamic worlds against British colonialism, Britain employed several methods to carry out the process of Judaizing Palestine. Some of the most important ones include:

¹ Terry. P. R, 2017. Britain in Palestine (1917-1948) - Occupation, the Palestine Mandate, and International Law, (pp. 191-202).
file:///C:/Users/USER12-2023/Downloads/7663-Article%20Text-23221-1-10-20180103.pdf

1.4.2.1. The Jewish Immigration to Palestine :

Britain initially realized that the Jewish national homeland in Palestine depended on the immigration of Jews from around the world to Palestine on one hand, and on attempts to displace the legitimate Arab population of Palestine on the other hand. Based on this principle and in cooperation with the Zionist movement, organized Jewish migration to Palestine took place, intensifying after the issuance of the Balfour Declaration in line with Britain's policy to fulfill this promise. The Zionist movement prioritized the immigration of Jews worldwide to Palestine and mobilized its resources for this purpose¹.

There is no doubt that Jewish immigration to Palestine was not solely a result of the Balfour Declaration; rather, the goals of the Zionist movement date back to the 19th century. Its colonial projects aimed at settling Palestine preceded the Balfour Declaration by a long period. The number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine increased in the 20th century, marked by several historical events that facilitated the World Zionist Organization's orchestration of Jewish immigration to Palestine. This led to an increase in the number of Jewish immigrants and their proportion among the Arab population.

The most prominent of these historical events include the Balfour Declaration, which established the Jewish national homeland in Palestine, as well as the victory of the Allies led by Britain in World War I and the persecution of Jews in Eastern European countries. These circumstances helped the success of Zionist colonial plans.

1.4.2.2. The Transfer of Palestinian Lands to Jews:

According to Stein (1984), Britain has diligently worked towards the practical implementation of the Balfour Declaration on the ground, which stipulates that Palestine represents the national homeland for Jews, as stated by Balfour. It employed several methods to forcibly seize land from the Palestinian people and give it to the Jews without rights.

¹ Migration of Jews to Palestine in the 20th Century.https://media.nationalgeographic.org/assets/file/jews_MIG.pdf

Britain pressured the Arab population by imposing high taxes on lands, making it impossible for them to pay, thus effectively controlling vast areas of land and later offering them to Jews for nominal amounts. The Zionist Organization was aided financially by the Jewish National Fund established By Theodor Herzl since 1901 to support the process of seizing Palestinian land and buliding settlements on it.

Although Britain, as the mandate power over Palestine, had no legitimate or legal to dispose of the lands of the Palestinians and Arab residents, it enabled Jews to control large areas of land throughout its mandate over Palestine, citing several flimsy reasons¹. The Palestinian people rejected the Zionist projects supported by the mandate government and resisted Jewish immigration to their country despite the injustice and arbitrariness of the British towards the Arab population, who were stripped of their weapons and basic tools of resistance.

1.4.3. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 :

The process of Jewish control over Palestinian land by force escalated even after the gradual departure of British forces from Palestine following the end of the mandate period. Britain withdrew from Palestine on May 14, 1948, with Jerusalem being the first Palestinian city from which British forces withdrew.

After the 1948 war, which saw Jewish armed groups effectively militarily controlling all parts of Palestinian territory with the assistance of the mandate state, the Zionists spared no effort in deporting and evacuating the Arab population who remained clinging to their land.

The United nations officially declared the establishment of their state in Palestine on May 14, 1948, with recognition first coming from the United States followed by the Soviet Union, followed by subsequent recognitions from Western

¹ Stein. Kenneth W, 1984. LAND QUESTION IN PALESTINE: 1917-1939.<https://ismi.emory.edu/documents/stein-publications/lqpconclusion.pdf>

countries of this modern state established on the ruins of the Palestinian people who were forcibly displaced from their lands¹. Thus, Britain fulfilled its promise, mobilizing all its efforts and resources to implement it. It opened the door to Jewish immigration to Palestine, handed over Palestinian land to Jews, deprived Arab residents of the most basic means of resistance, aided Jews in their war against Palestinians and Arabs in 1948, and assisted them in occupying Palestinian land and forcibly displacing its inhabitants.

1.5. Conclusion:

This chapter has provided a historical overview of Britain's significant role in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. It reviewed the chronological sequence of major historical events that contributed to this outcome, starting with an examination of the historical relationship between Britain and the Ottoman Empire. It revealed the extent of British intervention aimed at weakening and dividing the Ottoman Empire by all possible means, the most notable being support for the Great Arab Revolt led by Sharif Hussein bin Ali, with a focus on the Arab region where Britain sought to assert its dominance and protect its eastern colonies from this strategic area.

This chapter then moved on to highlight the key secret agreement between Britain and France, represented by the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, which divided the Arab region between these colonial powers. This was followed by the unveiling of one of the most significant declarations issued by a major power like Britain, which drastically altered the political and social landscape of the region: the 1917 Balfour Declaration by British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour, calling for the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine.

The chapter then examines the period of the British Mandate over Palestine, which laid the groundwork for the establishment of a Jewish state through immigration policies and the allocation of Arab lands to Jews. It concludes with the official declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, marking a

¹ ISRAEL Declaration of acceptance of the obligations contained in the Charter of the United Nations. 29 November 1948. <https://treaties.un.org/doc/source/docs/israel.pdf>

pivotal moment in the history of the Middle East. With this, the first chapter sets the foundation for understanding Britain's role in the establishment of Israel, paving the way for the second chapter, which will provide an analysis of these historical events.

Chapter2

**Examining Britain's Historical Involvement in
the Occupation of Palestine: A Comprehensive
Analysis of Key Events.**

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

2.1. Introduction:

The Middle East and the Arab region witnessed political and social transformations from the 19th century to the mid-20th century that changed the course of the history of its peoples to this day. This geographical area, once under the Ottoman Caliphate, became a battleground for Western colonial powers, which used various means and methods to extend their influence and control every inch of it.

The competition was fierce among Britain, France, and Russia, each with its own justifications. However, their common goal was to end Ottoman dominance over the Arab region and protect their interests at any cost, even if it was at the expense of the peoples of that region. These peoples were already divided and lacked the means to defend themselves against the major colonial powers.

This chapter aims to shed detailed light on Britain's significant role in a series of events that reshaped the region, starting with the destabilization of the Ottoman Empire and its unwavering support for parties and organizations that contributed to the division and disintegration of this state. Additionally, it explores Britain's support for uprisings, most notably the Great Arab Revolt, and secret agreements that helped the Zionist organization gather dispersed Jews from around the world and grant them a state that was never rightfully theirs, Palestine.

This chapter aims to provide in depth an analysis of the historical events mentioned in the first chapter, focusing on Britain's crucial role in shaping the future of the Middle East and the Arab region. This culminated in the establishment of a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine and the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948.

2.2. Britain and the Ottoman Empire: Contradictions, Opposition support, and the Overthrow of Sultan Abdul Hamid II:

The relations between Britain and the Ottoman Empire since the 19th century have been marked by a series of fluctuations that significantly shaped the Arab region

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

and determined the future of its peoples. Starting from Britain's alliance with the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War against Russia (1853-1856), which aligned with Britain's interests in countering Russia's expansionist ambitions in the region, to Britain's internal and external interventions in Ottoman affairs that greatly contributed to the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire, especially during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II.

However, the Berlin Conference and Treaty of 1878, which we discussed in the first chapter is, in my opinion, a pivotal point in the history of British Ottoman relations. During this period, successive British governments abandoned their policies of supporting the stability and unity of the Ottoman Empire and instead became contributors to the occupation and partition of the empire.

This conference resulted in the signing of what became known as the Treaty of Berlin, where large parts of the Ottoman Empire were carved out. Ottoman rule over Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro was ended after centuries, in addition to losing control over Bosnia, which effectively came under Austrian influence.

Consequently, Sultan Abdul Hamid II began his reign in 1876 with a series of setbacks, most notably the defeat in the Russo-Turkish War. The Berlin Conference thus epitomized the title *the sick man* given to the Ottoman Empire, which was forced to make numerous concessions, making it susceptible to the ambitions of European colonial powers, chiefly Britain.

This shift forced the Ottoman Empire to turn towards Germany and Russia in search of alliances, marking the beginning of mutual hostility between Britain and the Ottoman Empire. During this stage, Britain began to support everything that would lead to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the disintegration of its territories, and the occupation of its lands. This included supporting minorities, demanding reforms that would destabilize the internal conditions of the state, and backing opposition both domestically and abroad against the government and the highest authority, represented by Sultan Abdul Hamid II.

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

Perhaps the most significant evidence of the danger of British support for these opposition parties, led by the Committee of Union and Progress, is what Harb (2010) wrote in his book *The Ottomans in History and Civilization* about their hosting of the first conference held in Paris in 1902.

This conference was attended by major leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress, who were united by a single goal: the overthrow of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. The conference resulted in decisions, the most important of which were the division of the Ottoman Empire into autonomously independent governments based on ethnicity and nationality, as well as European intervention to end Sultan Abdul Hamid's rule and depose him from the throne¹.

The unique geographical and strategic location of the Ottoman Empire held immense importance for Britain, as it lay along the route between Britain and its colonies in India, and due to the presence of millions of Muslims in these colonies. This compelled Britain to make every effort to destabilize the Ottoman Empire and tighten its control over its vital points.

British support for opposition parties within and outside the Ottoman Empire was considered the most effective weapon for protecting its colonial interests, rather than direct military intervention. Britain provided material, political, and diplomatic support to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), which opposed Sultan Abdul Hamid II and his policies. Britain gave them the opportunity to operate in Britain, France, and the regions under its control, such as Egypt. The CUP gained greater international legitimacy through British promotion of their reformist goals within the Ottoman Empire.

British support for the CUP significantly weakened Sultan Abdul Hamid's rule and increased the pressures on him. Despite the internal reforms he implemented to unify the internal structure of the Ottoman Empire and save what could be saved, these efforts were insufficient in the face of the substantial support from the British colonial power, which sought by all means to dismantle all aspects of the Ottoman State.

¹ Harb. M, 2010. *The Ottomans In History And Civilization*, (p. 48).noor-book.com/sgz8hl

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

Through these events, Britain was the mastermind behind most of the coups within the Ottoman Empire. The most notable example is what it mentioned in the first chapter regarding Britain's significant role in the coup against Sultan Abdul Aziz (1861-1876). Here again, Britain successfully deposed Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909) through its unwavering support for the members of the Committee of Union and Progress.

2.3. The Great Arab Revolt and Britain's colonial strategy: Unveiling British intentions through the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration:

Through in depth research and reading of various historical books, whether from the perspective of Arab authors or some Western writers, two important questions emerged. Firstly, why did the Western colonial powers, led by Britain, strive so hard to partition and dismantle the Ottoman Empire?

Initially, although many sources attribute this conflict to purely religious reasons, portraying it as a struggle between the Christian West and the Islamic Ottoman Empire, whose Sultan called on all Muslims to unite under the banner of the Islamic Caliphate, these religious reasons alone were not sufficient.

The second question, which is considered even more crucial, is whether the Jews in general and the Zionist movement led by Theodor Herzl in particular, were so skillful their dream of establishing a national homeland for Jews in Palestine after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Was this solely from a humanitarian perspective, addressing the needs of persecuted Jews in Europe?

Based on the study of numerous sources and an analysis of the historical events mentioned in the first chapter, it becomes clear that the Western colonial powers' intention to fragment the Ottoman Empire predates the commencement of Zionist activities by a significant margin.

The plan to carve out Palestine and settle European Jews there is an old scheme that significantly gained momentum in the 19th century. This observation underscores that the Balfour Declaration, which called for the establishment of a national homeland

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

for Jews in Palestine as the first official statement by a major power like Britain, was merely the culmination of many years of groundwork preceding the realization of this dream.

2.3.1. The Machinations of British Policy towards the Arabs:

The Ottoman Empire was considered a cornerstone for Britain, as it served as a vital juncture between Britain and its colonies in the East, most notably the crown jewel of the British Empire, India. British ships began navigating the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea through the Suez area to reach India, instead of taking the longer route around the Cape of Good Hope.

In this context, after the removal of Sultan Abdul Hamid, Britain sought by all possible means to support Arab tribes, particularly those ruled by Sharif Hussein bin Ali in the Hejaz region, to launch an Arab revolt that would completely end Ottoman control over these areas. The British deceived the Arabs with promises of independence from the Ottoman Empire and self-governance of their region. The primary goal of these false promises, was to gain the trust of the Arab tribes and armies led by Sharif Hussein and his sons, securing their support in fighting and eliminating the remaining Ottoman forces, which were already weakened.

By doing so, the British aimed to achieve their goal of controlling the Arab region, particularly Palestine, despite the intense competition with France, which had a foothold in the Levant, and Russia which also had ambitions in the region.

The revelation of agreements and conspiracies, most notably the Sykes Picot Agreement, following the success of the Arab revolt against Ottoman forces, was just a glimpse of the plans being devised by Britain, France and Tsarist Russia.

2.3.2. Sykes-Picot: Britain's Divide Strategy in the Arab Region :

There is no doubt that if were not for the Bolshevik Revolution, which overthrew the Tsarist regime in Russia in 1917, the most significant and crucial

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

agreement made behind closed doors, the Sykes Picot Agreement of 1916 between Britain, France and Russia would not have been revealed.

As mentioned in the first chapter, the foundation of this agreement was the division of the Arab region among the three powers. However, the main point of contention was Palestine, which is the focus of this research from the British perspective. France insisted on incorporating Palestine into the Levant, considering it an extension of the region. Russia found a pretext for its intervention in Palestine through the presence of Orthodox Christians, naturally posing the greatest threat to British interests. Britain lacked the justification to control Palestine but found its opportunity in the Jews, who were a persecuted group in Europe.

Britain framed its intervention as fulfilling the humanitarian need to establish a national homeland for Jews in Palestine. By doing so, it could control Palestine and the Arab region, which served as the main artery to its colonies in the East, while simultaneously fulfilling the Zionist movement's aspirations to establish a national homeland for Jews in Palestine.

This helps in understanding precisely why Britain insisted that Palestine be under British protection. This is confirmed by documents from the British Foreign Office, including a memorandum written by British minister Herbert Samuel in March 1915, in which he stated: "The Turkish Empire will collapse in the war, and we will have to choose between several possibilities for the future of Palestine. France will annex Palestine to the Levant, posing a threat to British interests. The second possibility is that Palestine returns to Turkey. The third possibility is that it is placed under the protection of several European countries, which is a dangerous option because Germany will exploit it to make Palestine a German protectorate. The only remaining option is to give Palestine to the Jews, on the condition that it first becomes a British protectorate."¹ (translated from Arabic).

¹ Salah Issa, 2006. The Conspiratorial Deed: The Balfour Promise, (p. 8).
noor-book.com/en/exds6a

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

This section will present the Sykes-Picot Agreement map, which is a pivotal document in the history of the Middle East, this agreement laid the foundation for dividing the region into British and French spheres of influence following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of World War I.

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.



Figure 2.1: The Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 for the Partition of the Middle East.

<https://icsresources.org/map/03-sykes-picot-agreement/>

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

This map represents the actual shape of the division project that underpinned one of the most famous secret agreements, which completely altered the history of the Arab region: the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916.

The map clearly shows the division of territories and spheres of influence among Britain, France, and Russia.

France obtained the largest portion of this area, as indicated by the blue color, which represents actual control and direct administration over what is known as the Levantine coast. Additionally, the green color represents the areas of French influence over vast regions, including Syria and Lebanon, reaching Mosul in Iraq.

Meanwhile, the areas under British control extended over the southeastern edge of the Levant, as shown in red. Britain controlled vast areas of Iraq, stretching from Baghdad in the north to Basra in the south.

Initially, Palestine was placed under international administration to be agreed upon in consultation among the three powers. However, the situation later developed in favor of Britain, which succeeded in imposing its protection and administration over Palestine despite strong opposition from France, which wanted Palestine to be an extension of its territory in the Levant. Additionally, Russia which had controlled vast areas extending from Constantinople (now Istanbul) to the southern borders of Syria, also had ambitions and desires to extend its influence to Palestine.

2.3.3. Analysis of the Balfour Declaration, Implications and Consequences :

The secret British French Russian agreement to divide the Arab region, which was finalized at least a year before the Balfour Declaration through what is known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement, undeniably refutes the narrative presented by some Jewish and Western historians. These historians have emphasized that the Balfour Declaration, officially announced on November 2, 1917, was the result of their efforts and determination to fulfill their aspiration of establishing a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine, gathering all persecuted Jews in Europe. They overlook the

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

premeditated intention to partition the Arab region following the complete collapse and withdrawal of Ottoman rule.

In other words, the Balfour Declaration was not issued to appease the Jews or under their pressure but was part of a prior plan among Britain, France and Russia. The declaration was not merely a statement but a strategic blueprint by the great powers, insisting that Palestine be under their protection, which materialized in the British Mandate for Palestine in 1922. This was a prelude to the larger plan of establishing a national homeland for the Jews on the ruins of this dispossessed state. Therefore, it can be said that the Balfour Declaration represents the actual birth of what is called the Jewish state.

Below, an examination of the Balfour Declaration document, issued by the British Foreign Secretary, which laid the foundation for the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

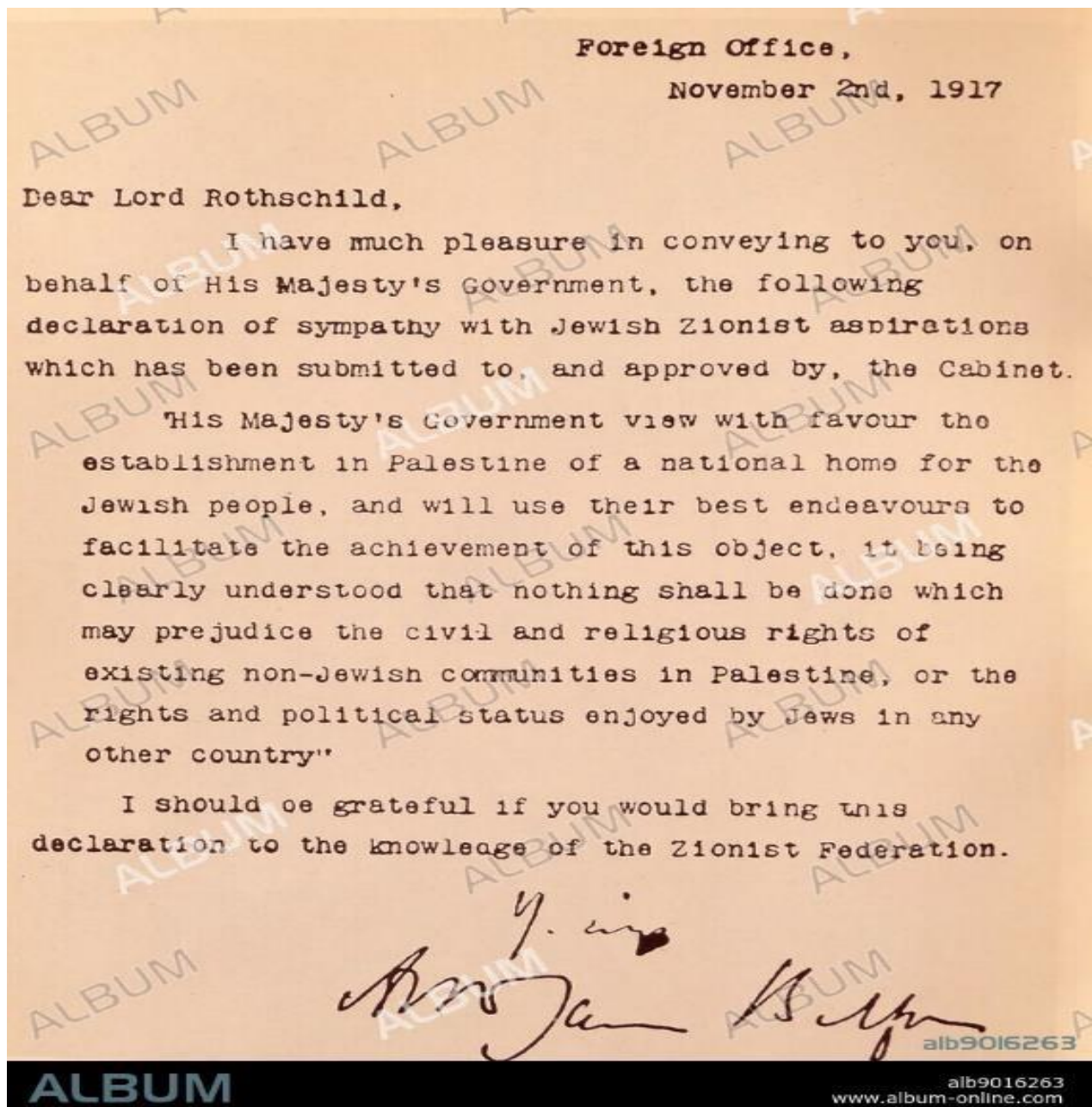


Figure 2.2 : Copy of the Balfour Declaration

<https://www.album-online.com/detail/en/MDRhMDEyMA/copy-balfour-declaration- public-statement-issued-1917-british-government-one-alb9016263>

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

By analyzing the text of the Balfour Declaration, the words chosen by the British Foreign Secretary James Arthur Balfour in his expression and in his letter to Lord Rothschild were not arbitrary but carefully selected. British Foreign Secretary Balfour began his statement by describing His Majesty's Government view as one of favor towards the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine.

To fully understand this, it's necessary to go back a little before the Balfour Declaration. In an article written by Dr. Taha Abdul Nasser Ramadan, it is mentioned that Herbert Samuel, a British Jewish politician and member of Parliament, introduced the idea of establishing a national home for the Jews in Palestine to his fellow members of Parliament. This occurred during World War I, leading to a great wave of sympathy for the Jewish cause and the Zionist organization¹.

The Zionist organization, led by Chaim Weizmann, who became the first president of Israel, took advantage of the Ottoman entry into World War I and exerted pressure through various means to convince the British Parliament to create all the favorable conditions for establishing a national home for the Jews in Palestine.

This helps in understanding the phrases of British Foreign Secretary James Arthur Balfour, who was expressing the viewpoint of most British politicians. They believed it was Britain's best interest to achieve this goal, thereby securing its main route and lifeline to its colonies in the East, with Palestine serving as a crucial point of connection between Britain and these colonies.

2.4. British Mandate Policies : Impact on Palestine's Demographics :

After the League of Nations approved the British Mandate for Palestine on July 22, 1922, this mandate effectively gave international legitimacy to the Balfour Declaration. This is perhaps the clearest evidence of Britain's manipulation of all the

¹ Ramadan. T, 2023. The Balfour origin of the tale. <https://www.alarabiya.net>

A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

promises and commitments it made to the Arabs, most notably the series of correspondences and negotiations between Sharif Hussein bin Ali and Sir Henry McMahon, promising freedom and independence in their lands after the end of World War I.

British deceit and cunning did not stop there. The Mandates terms regarded the Arab and Palestinian people, who constituted more than 90 percent of the population of Palestine, merely as a community and a minority, while recognizing the Jews as the legitimate owners of the land.

What is important now, and constantly, is the question: were the Arabs, represented by Sharif Hussein and his sons, so naive to believe and trust a colonial power like Britain, or was their strong belief in victory over the Ottoman forces and the attainment of their independence through the creation of their Arab state worth all this risk and sacrifice?.

What the Arab people in Palestine experienced during the British Mandate displacement and the seizure of their lands and properties was nothing but the actual implementation of the British plan to establish a national homeland for the Jews and fulfill the Balfour Declaration.

Below, a table illustrating the number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine from 1919, which continued throughout the years of the British Mandate over Palestine.

Chapter2 Examining Britain's Historical Involvement in the Creation of Israel: A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

Number of immigrants	The year	Number of immigrants	The year	Number of immigrants	The year	Number of immigrants	The year
4547	1940	30327	1933	13081	1926	1806	1919
3667	1941	42359	1934	2713	1927	8623	1920
2194	1942	61854	1935	2178	1928	9149	1921
8507	1943	29727	1936	5249	1929	7844	1922
14464	1944	10536	1937	4944	1930	7421	1923
12032	1945	12960	1938	4075	1931	13856	1924
		16405	1939	9553	1932	33801	1925

Table2.1: A table showing the number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine from 1915 to 1945

Ismail Ahmed Yaghi, 2015. Modern And Contemporary History, (p. 37).

noor-book.com/en/cvgp6b

Chapter2 Examining Britain's Historical Involvement in the Creation of Israel: A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

According to analysis and based on the table illustrating the increasing number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine over the years, Jewish migration began in a significant and organized manner before 1920. This was driven by a set of factors and historical events that contributed to the rise in the proportion of Jewish immigrants.

These factors that have been analyzed through this study, include the Balfour Declaration and its establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine, as well as the significant Western support it received. Additionally, the victory of the Allied powers in World War I helped facilitate and succeed in Zionist colonial plans.

Here, highlighting the most important stage and factor that greatly contributed to Jewish migration to Palestine: the period of British mandate over Palestine. It can be observed in the table a steady increase in the number of Jewish immigrants from 1919 until 1922, which marks the beginning of the British mandate over Palestine officially.

Starting from 1922, a significant increase in the number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine over the years. This, if anything, indicates the major role played by Britain in organizing Jewish migration to Palestine in cooperation with the Zionist organization.

The proportion of Jews among the Arab population increased significantly, especially between 1932 and 1936. This was due to the rise of Nazism in Germany during that period, leading to the persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe. Consequently, this served as a justification and incentive for Jews to increase immigration to Palestine.

Despite the decrease in the number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine from 1941 to 1943, which was naturally due to the outbreak of World War II, Jewish migration resumed vigorously, especially after the Allies, led by Britain and the United States, emerged victorious in the war. The Jewish immigration reached its peak during the years 1946, 1947, and 1948 which coincided with the official declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel.

2.5. The Success of the British Plan in Achieving the Zionist Dream :

During its mandate over Palestine, Britain had all the favorable conditions to achieve and establish a national homeland for the Jews. Palestine was entirely under their administration and control, except for the population that Britain wanted to make the legitimate owners of this land, the Jews.

This goal was pursued diligently throughout the mandate years, as mentioned in the first chapter, focusing on two main strategies: facilitating the immigration of as many Jews as possible from around the world to Palestine, and forcibly displacing Arab and Palestinian inhabitants by confiscating their properties and lands and illegally transferring them to Jewish ownership.

Throughout those years, Britain succeeded in this endeavor through oppressive policies against the Arab and Palestinian population, despite all forms of protest and resistance, which proved insufficient against a colonial power like Britain.

History will record that Britain practiced all forms of oppression and injustice against the Palestinian Arab people. Throughout its years of mandate over Palestine, Britain spared no effort in transforming everything that was Arab and Palestinian, granting it without any justification to the Jews, who found in Britain the greatest supporter of their plans, for which they had strived for years.

Britain's policies culminated in realizing the Jewish dream, with the official declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. This declaration came immediately after the withdrawal of British forces from Palestine and the end of their mandate.

Naturally, this new state's legitimacy was soon recognized by the victorious United States in World War II, along with the Western colonial powers represented by Britain and France.

2.6. Conclusion

In the early 20th century, Britain sought to extend and strengthen its colonial influence in the Middle East and the Arab region. Its relationship with the Ottoman Empire was marked by periods of alliance at times and conflict and rivalry at others.

Britain played a decisive role in destabilizing the Ottoman Empire by supporting various opposition movements and engaging in colonial conspiracies, especially during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. Sultan Abdul Hamid attempted to implement internal reforms to consolidate his power and strengthen his state. However, Western reactions, particularly from Britain, were negative, viewing these reforms as a threat to their strategic interests. This led to the 1909 coup that overthrew Sultan Abdul Hamid II, a coup that was supported by Britain.

During World War I, Britain promised the Arabs the establishment of an independent Arab state through extensive negotiations with Sharif Hussein bin Ali, who held a prestigious position among the Arab tribes as the ruler of the Hejaz and the custodian of the holy sites for millions of Muslims.

This promise was in exchange for ensuring the participation of the Arab tribes in the revolt against the Ottomans. It later became evident that these promises were merely a British strategy to control the region, as demonstrated by the signing of the Sykes-Picot Agreement between Britain and France after the outbreak of the revolt. This was followed by the issuance of the Balfour Declaration in 1917, which promised the establishment of a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine, revealing Britain's true intentions.

At the end of World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Arab region entered a new era, particularly Palestine, which officially came under British mandate in 1922. Britain began implementing policies aimed at facilitating Jewish immigration to Palestine, in addition to illegally transferring the ownership of Arab lands to the Jewish immigrants.

These measures naturally led to significant demographic changes and increased tensions between the Arab inhabitants and the Jews, who were supported by Britain in

Chapter2 Examining Britain's Historical Involvement in the Creation of Israel: A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Events.

all forms. This Britain support ultimately culminated in the official declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

Studying this historical period reveals that British interventions were not merely transient colonial actions but part of a comprehensive strategy aimed at reshaping the political map of the Arab region to serve British interests. Moreover, Britain's role in the establishment of the State of Israel highlighting the extent to which great powers can influence and determine the destinies of nations.

General Conclusion

In this research study, a fundamental topic was addressed, namely the role of a major power like Britain in the establishment of the State of Israel. It is safe to say that this topic had an unprecedented impact over many years on millions of people in the Middle East, the Arab region, and indeed the world as a whole. The role played by Britain in implanting a foreign entity in a region predominantly inhabited by Arabs and Muslims remains deeply rooted in history, as its catastrophic repercussions on the peoples of the Arab and Islamic nations unfortunately continue to be felt to this day.

The two chapters delved into the study and analysis of a series of historical and political events that undoubtedly played a significant role in paving the way for the Jews, with British support, to realize their plan to establish a state for the Jewish people in Palestine. It was necessary to go back in time to the mid nineteenth century to shed light on the historical relationship between Britain and the Ottoman Empire as the legitimate ruler of the Arab region at that time. Light has been shed on Britain's role and its plans to weaken and divide the Ottoman Empire in various ways in order to protect its colonial interests in the Asian East. This thesis went through a series of events that contributed to the fragmentation and end of Ottoman rule in the Middle East specifically, through Britain's alliance with some Arab tribes, represented by the most influential figure in that region, Sharif Hussein bin Ali. Despite the Arab Revolt supported by Britain achieving its overall goals, the Arabs discovered the British deceit after it was too late.

The British strategy was premeditated in alliance with other colonial powers such as France and Russia, embodied in secret agreements, notably the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, aimed at dividing the Arab region among the three powers. Additionally, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 came as a shock to the Arabs, as it aimed to establish a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine with British support. Britain manifested its efforts throughout its mandate years in Palestine to achieve this endeavor. It was evident how Britain diligently worked to implement its policy aimed to Judaizing Palestine in various ways, leading to the official declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 on the ruins of an usurped Arab land.

Here, it is necessary to address the research questions that form the basis of this topic. Britain played a significant role in the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and was

one of the main beneficiaries of its partition. This was notably evident in its extensive support for the Arab Revolt led by Sharif Hussein bin Ali, which contributed to the expansion of British influence in the region. The Sykes-Picot Agreement, which significantly impacted the political landscape of the region, was then revealed. Under this agreement, Britain, along with France and Russia, worked collectively to divide spheres of influence among themselves. As for the impact of the Balfour Declaration, it was nothing short of a seismic event in the Middle East. Through this declaration, Britain decided to establish a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine. Its policies during its mandate over Palestine supported and facilitated the settlement of Jewish communities that migrated to Palestine.

From this research study, it can be concluded that Britain played a pivotal role in the establishment of the State of Israel by supporting the Zionist organization and providing conducive conditions to achieve this goal throughout these years, despite Arab and Palestinian resistance. Recommendations through this research include delving deeper into British policies regarding the Arab Israeli conflict and to attempt to understand accurately the role Britain played during this period in shaping the future of the entire region and its impact on future generations, evidenced by the suppression and injustice suffered by the Arab Palestinian people in our unfortunate days.

It is worth mentioning that this dissertation focused extensively on the period from the beginning of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire until the declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. This study did not delve into the detailed repercussions post 1948. The main goal was to highlight Britain's role in establishing a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine throughout this period.

In conclusion, it can be said that the British role in the establishment of the State of Israel was pivotal. Britain contributed to realizing the dreams and goals of the Jews on one hand, while being the cause of the displacement of an innocent people and the usurpation of their land on the other hand.

References

- A century on: Why Arabs resent Sykes-Picot
<https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2016/sykes-picot-100-years-middle-east-map/index.html>
- Abdul Hay Zaloum, 2015. Fake history for us to stay out of history: the role of Turkish and Arab nationalist secret societies in the destruction of the Ottoman Empire through the occupation of Palestine.
<https://www.raialyoum.com>
- Abdul Aziz. O, 2008. History Of The Arab Mashreq.
noor-book.com/en/4mkyve
- Antonios. G, 2018. Arab Awakening.
noor-book.com/en/ngpz7e
- Bahry. L, 2016. Baghdad Railway.
noor-book.com/en/5nhgij
- Dagher. A. K, 2017. The Arab Revolution Its Preludes Causes And Consequences.
noor-book.com/en/czlfs8
- Emanuel Buttigieg, 2007. Clash of Civilizations', Crusades, Knights and Ottomans: an Analysis of Christian-Muslim Interaction in the Mediterranean,.
- Fortna, B. C. (2002). Imperial classroom: Islam, state of education in Late Ottoman Empire. Oxford University Press, (pp. 45-56).
<https://psi424.cankaya.edu.tr/uploads/files/Fortna, Imperial Classroom.PDF>
- Harb. M, 2010. The Ottomans In History And Civilization.
noor-book.com/sgz8hl

- ISRAEL: Declaration of acceptance of the obligations contained in the Charter of the United Nations. 29 November 1948.
<https://treaties.un.org/doc/source/docs/israel.pdf>
- Kesinkiliç. E, 2020. A Pillage Story: The Wealth of Abdulhamid II, (pp. 47-69).
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351969997_A_Pillage_Story_The_Wealth_of_Abdulhamid_II
- Loevy. K. The Sykes-Picot Agreement's Regional Moment: Drawing Lines of Development in a New and Open Space.
https://www.law.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/upload_documents/Loevy%20-%20Part%202_10-19-16.pdf
- Migration of Jews to Palestine in the 20th Century.
https://media.nationalgeographic.org/assets/file/jews_MIG.pdf
- Orkhan Muhammad Ali, 2008. Sultan Abdul Hamid II : His Life and Reign Events.
- Özkan. E, 2022. An Analysis of the Effect of the 1878 Berlin Treaty on Diplomatic Policy Making, (pp. 63-86).
<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/2541832>
- Ramadan. T, 2023. The Balfour origin of the tale.
<https://www.alarabiya.net>
- Said. A, 2015. The Great Arab Revolt.
noor-book.com/en/cbsuv5
- Salah Issa, 2006. The Conspiratorial Deed: The Balfour Promise.

noor-book.com/en/exds6a

- Schneer. J, 2011. The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict.
https://books.google.dz/books?hl=en&lr=&id=YtSCkDqr-ZMC&oi=fnd&pg=PR13&dq=The+Balfour+Declaration+Jonathan+Schneer&ots=ACHoeXdmOW&sig=onSlzRmKUirU5dHYwIleL9U2_5E&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=The%20Balfour%20Declaration%20Jonathan%20Schneer&f=false
- Sheikh. R, 2008. Contemporary Arab History.
noor-book.com/en/npg3ed
- Stein. Kenneth W, 1984. LAND QUESTION IN PALESTINE: 1917-1939
<https://ismi.emory.edu/documents/stein-publications/lqpconclusion.pdf>
- Suleiman Juqapash, 2008. Sultan Abdul Hamid II : His Personality and Policies.
noor-book.com/en/zvrpg1
- Terry. P. R, 2017. Britain in Palestine (1917-1948) - Occupation, the Palestine Mandate, and International Law, (pp. 191-202).
<file:///C:/Users/USER12-2023/Downloads/7663-Article%20Text-23221-1-10-20180103.pdf>
- Theodor Herzl, 1917. The Jewish State, (pp. 6-12).
<https://ia601303.us.archive.org/4/items/cu31924028579781/cu31924028579781.pdf>

- The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence 14 July 1915
<https://www1.udel.edu/History-old/figal/Hist104/assets/pdf/readings/13mcmahonhussein.pdf>
- Ünal. H, (2001) Britain and Ottoman Domestic Politics: From the Young Turk Revolution to the Counter-Revolution, 1908-9, Middle Eastern Studies, 37:2, 1-22, DOI:10.1080/714004391.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/714004391>
- Yaghi. I. A, 2011. History Of The Contemporary Arab World.
noor-book.com/en/ieqv0b
- ZIONISM & ARAB NATIONALISM
https://icsresources.org/wp-content/uploads/ICS_Lesson1_Zionism.pdf