

History
UNFOLDING

THE RISE OF THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST



MindSparks
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

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Introduction

The Middle East in the Modern World

This MindSparks set is the third and final set in our series on the history of Islam and the Middle East. The first set is *The Rise of Islam* (HS819); the second is *Islam and the West in the Age of the Ottomans* (HS835).

This final set focuses on several key themes in the history of the Middle East since the end of the Ottoman Empire during World War I. That demise left behind more than a political vacuum—the Ottomans had ruled the last of the great unifying Islamic empires. Their passing left the region spiritually and culturally disoriented as well as politically fragmented.

Into that vacuum stepped the Western imperial powers who had triumphed in World War I. The nations assigned to them as “mandates” by the League of Nations all won independence within 20 years or so. But in the meantime, Western control reinforced a sense that the very heart of Islam was at the mercy of outsiders—a sense soon to be focused on the new Jewish state of Israel. Pan-Arab nationalism and Islamic radicalism each offered a dream of renewal. And the factor adding to the high-stakes nature of the region’s turmoil was petroleum.

This set uses 12 visual displays to focus on all of these themes in this complex story. Each lesson uses three visual displays to explore one broad topic. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

From the Ottomans to the Turkish Nation

Under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (later Kemal Atatürk), the Ottoman empire was buried and the new, secularized nation of Turkey emerged. To this day, Turkey still offers one viable option for the rest of the Islamic nations of the Middle East.

Decolonization and the Pan-Arab Dream

Two of the three illustrations here focus on Egypt’s Gamal Abdul Nasser. However, he was only the most prominent and important in a line of key figures who offered Arabs a new dream of empire as a substitute for the fragmented societies left after the demise of the Ottomans.

Israel: Big Issue or Big Distraction?

The founding and building up of Israel is a story of heroic triumph. It also engendered lasting grievances on both sides of a huge divide. But has it also been a big distraction for other Arab leaders, a way to divert the attention of their people from more pressing problems at home? That’s the issue raised in this lesson.

Islam and Islamic Radicalism

The failure of pan-Arab nationalism created another vacuum in the Middle East, especially after Arab defeats in wars with Israel in 1967 and 1973. Since then, a bitterly anti-Western form of Islamic radicalism has grown in strength. It is opposed, often courageously so, by moderate Muslims in the region. It poses a challenge to the Islamic world and to the West alike, and it will undoubtedly do so for some time to come.

Using Photos, Cartoons, and Other Visuals to Teach History

Many textbooks are full of colorful visuals. However, all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. Only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

How to Use This Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

DIGITAL IMAGES The booklet's PDF allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions.

DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while using the projected images. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments. Others will work best as small-group or all-class activities.

OBJECTIVE

1. Students will understand the drastic changes made by Mustafa Kemal in founding the modern nation of Turkey on the ashes of the Ottoman Empire.

From the Ottomans to the Turkish Nation

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustrations 1A & 1B**

By the eve of World War I, in 1914, the once-mighty Ottoman Empire had already lost most of its European territory. Egypt had fallen under British control. Much of North Africa was in French or Italian hands. During the war itself, the British helped other Arabs rebel against their Ottoman Turkish rulers, thereby taking much of what was left of that empire outside of Anatolia. Illustration 1B shows British General Edmund Allenby's forces entering Jerusalem in 1917. The Ottoman sultans had long claimed to be caliphs as well—i.e., the heads of all Islam. The Ottoman Empire was the last to provide Islam this kind of political unity. Its collapse created a spiritual as well as political crisis for all of Islam.

Illustrations 2A & 2B

After World War I, Greece, backed by the major Western allies, sought to take over much of the Ottomans' Turkish homelands in Anatolia. But army officer Mustafa Kemal rallied the Turks, drove out the Greeks, and founded a new Turkish nation. Kemal, seen in both photos here, was a remarkable leader. His goal was to transform his country totally. He ended both the sultanate and the caliphate, replacing them with a Turkish republic. Religion and government were strictly separated, a radical step in any Islamic land. Many aspects of Western culture were adopted, including a Western alphabet. This alphabet, it was believed, would make spreading literacy to the masses much easier. In Illustration 2B, Kemal himself is seen teaching the new alphabet in an Istanbul park.

Illustrations 3A & 3B

The changes Kemal worked for were meant to make Turkey a modern, Westernized nation. Some were major changes for an Islamic land, such as allowing women to remove the veil, vote, hold public office, and take on other new roles—as both illustrations here show. Other changes only seem small, such as adopting Western-style dress or hereditary family names. Kemal himself took the name “Atatürk” (or “Great Turk”). But Kemal did not submit to the West slavishly. For example, he imposed high tariffs to keep out Western imports and encourage his nation's own industries. He sought to use the West's knowledge and cultural heritage to strengthen Turkey, not to make it more dependent on the West.

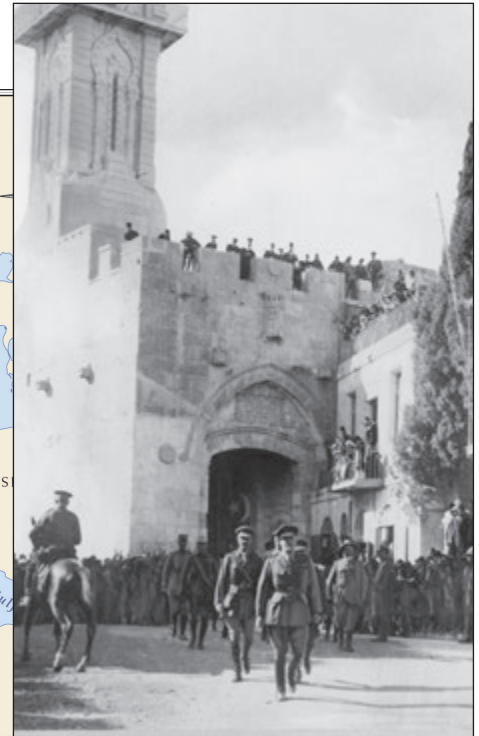
Illustrations 1A & 1B

1B

1A



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Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustrations

1. This map tells the tale of the last centuries of the Ottoman Empire. Using the map and your knowledge of history, explain what the Ottoman Empire was and approximately when it was at the height of its power.
2. At its height, the Ottoman Empire was feared by all of Europe. But by the 1800s, it was called the “Sick Man of Europe.” Using the map, explain this change.
3. As one historian put it, “World War I was the end of the road for the Ottomans.” What did he mean?
4. Illustration 1B shows British General Edmund Allenby entering Jerusalem victoriously during World War I. The British and French fought the Ottomans mainly in Arab lands still under Ottoman control. Can you name some current Arab nations located in lands under Ottoman rule in 1914?
5. How does the photo convey the spirit of triumph the British must have felt when the photo was taken?

Follow-up Activities

1. In 1914, the Ottomans decided to enter the war on the side of the Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary) against Britain, France, and Russia. Why? What if the Ottomans had remained neutral in the war? Read more about the Ottoman decision to enter the war. Pretend you are a former advisor to the sultan who favored joining the Central Powers. It is now 1925; you are in exile in France. Write a long letter to another advisor, also in exile, explaining why you advised the sultan as you did, as well as your views now on that fateful decision.
2. The map (Illustration 1A) shows the Ottoman decline up to 1914. Create a second map showing the results of World War I itself. Show key battles during the war, and draw boundaries for the region as they were finally fixed by the various treaties in the years after the war, especially the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Use your map along with a copy of the above map in bulletin-board display called “From the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Nation.”

Illustrations 2A & 2B

2A



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

2B



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Discussing the Illustrations

1. After World War I, the Anatolian peninsula was nearly the only land left in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman sultanate was soon abolished, and an entirely new nation formed out of this remaining territory. Can you name this new nation?
2. For a time, Greece and some of the key Western allies in World War I tried to divide up what is modern-day Turkey. But the figure in both photos here led his people to fight back and secure their new nation. Can you name him?
3. Mustafa Kemal, or “Atatürk,” as he later named himself, launched a social revolution in which many aspects of Western culture were adopted. How do these two photos suggest what some of these changes were? Illustration 2B shows Kemal teaching a new, Western alphabet in a park in Istanbul. What is meant by the phrase “Western culture”? Why do you think Kemal felt his nation needed to introduce Western culture, even including its alphabet?

Follow-up Activities

1. A key success for the Ottomans in World War I was the battle of Gallipoli in 1915. Mustafa Kemal played a crucial role in that battle. Create a map showing key aspects of the battle. Use the map in a brief talk to the class in which you explain what made this battle a turning point. Also, speculate about how the war and the Middle East today might be different had the British won the battle of Gallipoli.
2. Another change Kemal made in Turkey after the war had to do with headgear. He banned the fez and required men to wear Western hats instead. The fez itself had been a departure from Islamic custom when it was introduced in the 1800s. But Kemal’s banning of it was still controversial. Like many other changes he made, this “small” one was not as small as it seems. Find out why. Read more about Kemal’s reasons for getting rid of the fez. Give a report to the class on headgear for men in the Ottoman Empire and the new Turkish republic. Explain why this issue was important, given what Kemal was trying to do.

Lesson 1—From the Ottomans to the Turkish Nation

Illustrations 3A & 3B

3A



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

3B



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Discussing the Illustrations

1. These photos suggest how dramatically life changed in Turkey after Kemal Atatürk's reforms took hold. Illustration 3A shows girls marching in formation. Illustration 3B shows a female judge holding court. What details in these photos provide dramatic evidence of change for an Islamic society?
2. Kemal urged women to remove the veil, adopt Western dress, vote, take part in government, and participate in public life in other ways. He said this was important if Turkey was to be able to modernize. Why do you think he felt so strongly about this?
3. In many other ways, Kemal acted to limit Islam or remove entirely its influence over public and political life. Was he right to do this? Why or why not?
4. The Ottomans ruled an empire of many national and ethnic groups. Kemal acted forcefully to unify his nation around a single ethnic Turkish identity. What in the last century of Ottoman rule might have led him to see this as necessary?

Follow-up Activity

1. **Small-group activity:** Kemal Atatürk summed up his efforts in a famous six-day speech in 1927 to Turkey's parliament. Read and select parts of this speech to share with the class. A Web site with key portions of it is here:

http://socialscience.tyler.cc.tx.us/mkho/fulbright/1998/PatrickHotle/mustafa_kemal_ataturk.htm

Try to balance Kemal's own version of events with other, less flattering views of him. A good account, which is both admiring and critical, is an article by David Fromkin called "Atatürk's Creation" (The New Criterion, Vol. 18, No. 8, April 2000). This is basically a review of a book about Kemal called *Atatürk: The Founder of Modern Turkey*, by Andrew Mango (Overlook Press, 2000). You may also want to read and discuss parts of this book itself. Use passages from all of these sources to guide a full-class debate defending or criticizing this statement: "Atatürk provided a model for modernization that all of the Middle East today should try to follow."

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand how World War I led to a complete reorganization of political life in Middle East.
2. Students will think about and discuss the appeal of pan-Arab nationalists in recent Mideast history.

Decolonization and the Pan-Arab Dream

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

After World War I, the British and French held most of the Arab lands of the former Ottoman Empire. The League of Nations gave them these lands as “mandates,” territories to be controlled but also to be readied for independence. The British and French mainly ruled indirectly, through kings, tribal leaders, or parliaments. This photo is of Abdullah Ibn Hussein and some of his warriors. Abdullah, his brother Faisal, and their father Hussein Ibn Ali had all aided the British by stirring up an Arab revolt against the Ottomans during the war. After the war, the British installed Abdullah as king of Transjordan and Faisal as king of Iraq. By World War II or soon after, all the mandates had become independent nations.

Illustrations 2A & 2B

Also after World War II, oil became a huge factor in Mideast political and economic life. The gusher in Illustration 2B is in Iraq, one of several Mideast nations with huge oil reserves. Oil added greatly to European and U.S. desires to influence the region. But it also gave hope to many Arabs who longed for a wider pan-Arab empire strong enough to stand up to the West. Hussein Ibn Ali and his sons had hoped for such an empire. In the 1950s and '60s, Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt was the key figure trying to realize this pan-Arab dream. Nasser was widely admired by Arabs, but he was also a dictatorial ruler who did little to solve his own nation's problems. Was the dream of a wider pan-Arab empire realistic? Or was it a substitute for the work of solving the huge social, economic, and political problems within each Arab state?

Illustration 3

The new Mideast states were highly unstable. Many lacked nationwide unity and strong, democratic institutions. As a result, military takeovers and dictatorships were common. After World War II, some insecure Mideast rulers turned to the U.S. for support. Others, including Nasser, looked to the Soviet Union during its long Cold War rivalry with the U.S. In this 1959 cartoon, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev tells Nasser that the U.S. is watching—that is, worrying about Soviet aid to Nasser and Nasser's threat to Israel. During the Cold War, the rulers of many Mideast nations played the U.S. and the Soviets off against one another. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, they could no longer use this tactic.

Illustration 1



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. After World War I, many formerly Ottoman Arab lands were given to Great Britain and France to rule, not as colonies but as so-called “League mandates.” Can you explain what these were?
2. On the ground here is Abdullah Ibn Hussein. He, his brother Faisal, and their father Hussein Ibn Ali were Arab leaders who helped the British by leading an Arab revolt against the Ottomans in World War I. What can you infer from this photo about the Arab societies just after World War I?
3. The British rewarded Faisal by making him king of Iraq. What nation did they give to Abdullah to rule?
4. Hussein Ibn Ali and his sons had hoped to win a huge Arab empire from the British. They were disappointed with the League mandates, even though both sons received nations of their own. What else do you know about Hussein Ibn Ali and his sons? Were they right to be upset about how they were treated after World War I? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. Abdullah’s father, Hussein Ibn Ali, is described by one source as the

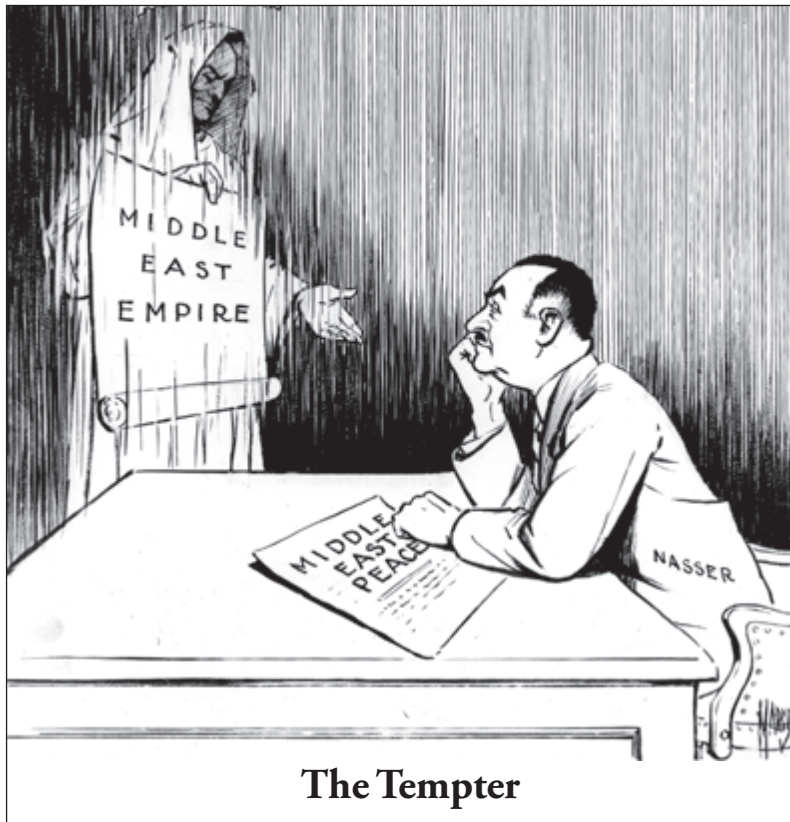
“grand sharif and amir of Mecca, the hereditary custodian of the Muslim holy places and head of the Hashemite branch of the Quraysh tribe.”

Learn more about Hussein Ibn Ali. Give a brief talk in which you explain each of these phrases from the above quote: “grand sharif and amir,” “hereditary custodian of the Muslim holy places,” and “Hashemite branch of the Quraysh tribe.” Also explain why a leader with these characteristics would have been useful to the British in their war with the Ottomans.

2. A key figure urging the British to back Hussein Ibn Ali and his sons was a legendary British official named T. E. Lawrence, better known as “Lawrence of Arabia.” Read more about him, keeping this question in mind: “Did Lawrence help or hurt the Arabs in the long run as a result of his activities during and after World War I?” Write a brief essay answering this question.

Illustrations 2A & 2B

2A



The Tempter

Edwin Marcus, courtesy of the Library of Congress

2B



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

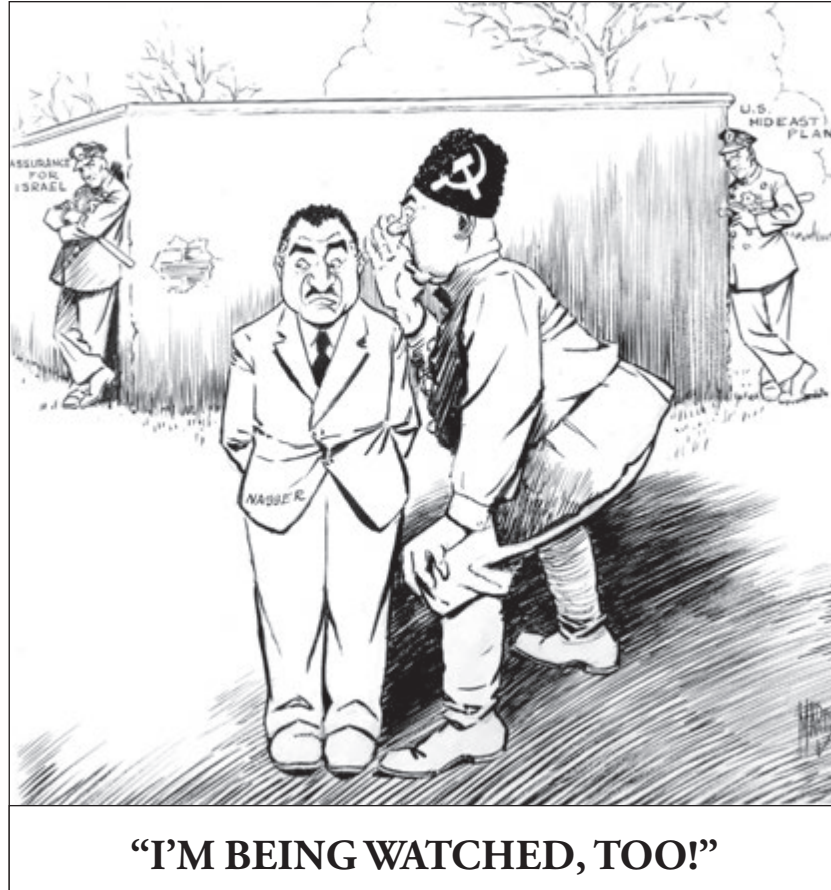
Discussing the Illustrations

1. The League mandates all become independent nations before or shortly after World War II. As they did, the Middle East began to produce a resource that in time would give the region great wealth and power. Illustration 2B, a photo from Iraq, should help you name that resource. Can you name some other Middle East states with a great deal of this resource?
2. Hussein Ibn Ali and his sons hoped to rule a large empire. After the war, petroleum made it easier for some Arab leaders to dream of a mighty Arab empire. Illustration 2A is a cartoon about such a leader. Can you name him, his nation, and the approximate years of his rule?
3. Egypt is the most populous Arab nation. It is also very poor. Nasser hoped to unite other nations with his in a huge empire. He also hoped to lead the Arabs in their struggle against one small Jewish nation. Which nation is that? What point does this cartoon seem to make about Nasser's dream of empire and conquest. Do you agree with that point? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activity

1. **Small-group activity:** The cartoon in Illustration 2A doesn't overtly refer to a particular event. Given that it was published in the late 1950s, try to determine what specific events inspired the artist to create it. First, read more about Nasser, his rise to power and his main actions as Egypt's ruler in the 1950s and early 1960s. Decide on an exact date for the cartoon. Now, pretend your group is the editorial board of a major newspaper. You are planning to run this cartoon on your newspaper's editorial page the next day, and you want the cartoon to accompany a lead editorial and two other columns on the latest developments in the Middle East. Assign the editorial and the two columns, and decide in general what each of them will focus on. Write the editorial and the columns. Design your editorial page, and place the cartoon in it. Be sure to include snappy headings that dramatically capture the key points you wish to make about Nasser and the Middle East at the time you have chosen.

Illustration 3



Edwin Marcus, courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. Nasser helped Egypt to become a fully independent nation. For example, in 1956, he fought a war with Great Britain, France, and Israel after he had taken full control of a very important transportation facility. What facility? Why do you think Britain and France were willing to fight a war over this facility?
2. Nasser was a powerful ruler, but in a way he still depended on outsiders. The Cold War provided him with an outsider who was more than willing to help establish him as the leader of the Arab world. From this late 1950s cartoon, can you explain?
3. What view does the cartoon take of Nasser, and of U.S. and Soviet plans in the Middle East?
4. Several Arab leaders looked to the Soviet Union for help against the U.S. and Israel. But in 1991, this no longer became possible. Can you explain? From what you know of Mideast history since, what effect if any has the collapse of the Soviet Union had on the pan-Arab dreams of leaders like Nasser?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Read the instructions for the activity for the previous illustration (page 10 in this teacher’s booklet). Do exactly the same activity, except substitute the above late-1950s cartoon for the cartoon that is the focus of the previous lesson.
2. **Small-group activity:** What was the impact of the Cold War on the history of the Middle East? To find out, have each group member learn more about one of the following Mideast nations: Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, and Turkey. Learn more about that nation’s history since 1950, and look in particular for information on the way the U.S.-Soviet Cold War rivalry affected it. Based on what you learn, pretend to be a knowledgeable citizen in the nation you researched. You have just come across the above editorial cartoon in a book you are reading. Write a letter to a friend commenting on it and its relevance to the history of your own nation during the Cold War. Post the letters and the cartoon on the bulletin-board.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will better understand the origins of Israel and some turning points in its history.
2. Students will think about and debate the causes of the long-standing Arab-Israeli conflict.

Israel: Big Issue or Big Distraction?

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustrations 1A & 1B**

Jews have lived in Palestine since Biblical times, but starting in the late 1800s, a new movement of Jews back to Palestine began. Its goal was a Jewish homeland there, a place where Jews could finally live safely in a nation they controlled. After WWI, the British authorities in Palestine backed this “Zionist” dream. Some of the land was little more than desert. Still, Jewish immigrants such as the settlers in Illustration 1A kept arriving, improving farmland, and building a strong, modern society. It was also a democratic society, as shown by Illustration 1B: a photo of Israel's parliament, the Knesset.

Illustration 2

Arabs willingly sold land to Jews in Palestine, but in the 1920s and '30s, many Arabs there began to protest against Jewish immigration to British-controlled Palestine. After Hitler's rise to power, Jewish pressure to admit thousands more Jews was met by growing Arab anger. In 1947, Great Britain turned the matter over to the new United Nations. The map on the left is of the UN's partition plan, which gave both Jews and Arabs separate states of their own. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs did not. The Jewish state of Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948. The next day, several Arab nations attacked and tried to destroy it. Instead, Israel fought back and seized more land. In the chaos of battle, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled. Ever since, their fate has been at the heart of the dispute between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Illustration 3

In 1967, several Arab nations again mobilized to attack Israel; Israel struck first. In this “Six-Day War,” it seized lands containing a million Palestinian Arabs. Since then, as this cartoon suggests, the “Gordian Knot” of the Arab-Israeli conflict has been Israel's security vs. the need of Palestinians for a land and future of their own. In 1979, Israel did trade some land for a peace treaty with Egypt. But a similar deal has been far harder to reach with Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Clearly, this issue is central to Palestinians and Israelis. Other Arabs say it is also central to them. But is it? Or is it just a distraction—a way for Arab dictators to deflect their people's anger about problems at home? That may be the key question at the heart of this particular Gordian Knot.

Lesson 3—Israel: Big Issue or Big Distraction?

Illustrations 1A & 1B

1A



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1B



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Discussing the Illustrations

1. These two illustrations tell an amazing success story. Illustration 1A from the early 1900s shows Jewish settlers on land that would become part of a Jewish homeland and, in 1948, an independent nation. Which nation?
2. The early settlers in Illustration 1A bought land and settled what was then a British mandate. What name did the British give to this mandate?
3. In a document called the “Balfour Declaration,” the British made a promise to the Jews already in Palestine and to Jews all over the world. What was it? Why do you think they made this promise? Were they right to make it? Why or why not?
4. As more and more European Jews poured into Palestine, they began building a new society. It became a democratic society, as Illustration 1B of the Knesset makes clear. What is the Knesset? What types of things can you tell from these photos alone about this society? What can you not tell?

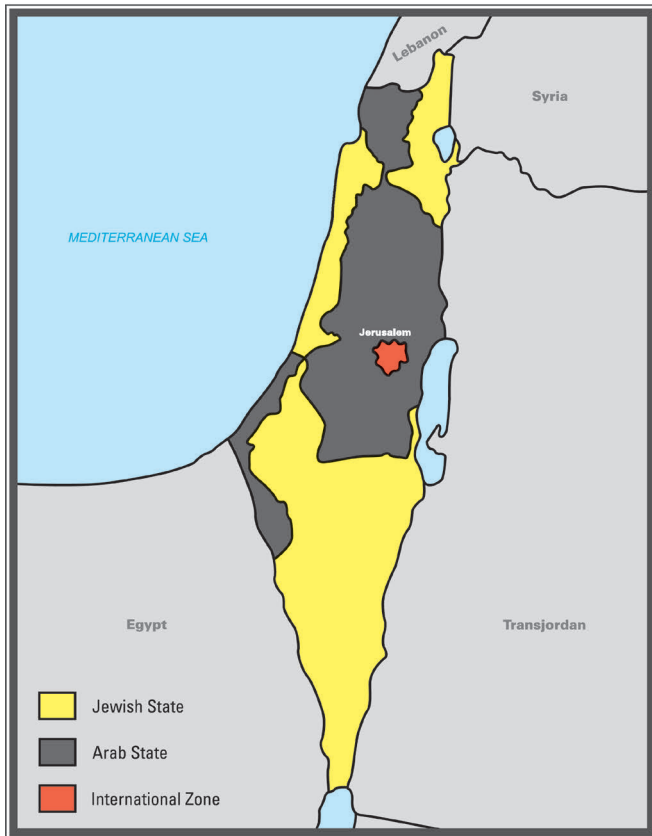
Follow-up Activities

1. In 1909, Jewish residents of Jaffa decided to leave their crowded and noisy city and move to 12 acres of sand dunes north of it. Read more about the founding of Tel Aviv. Now, pretend you are a modern-day resident of Tel Aviv whose grandparents were among the settlers in Illustration 1A and later moved to Tel Aviv. Based on what you know, write a brief made-up history of your family and its life in Israel from the early 1900s to the present. Be imaginative in inventing turning points in the history of your “family,” but make these events believable, given what you know of Israel’s history.
2. The Jewish National Fund played a major role in helping Jews buy land and emigrate to Palestine. Learn more about it. Based on what you learn, write a brief report about it. In your report, offer your own opinion about its long-term impact on Israel and on both Jews and Arabs inside Israel.

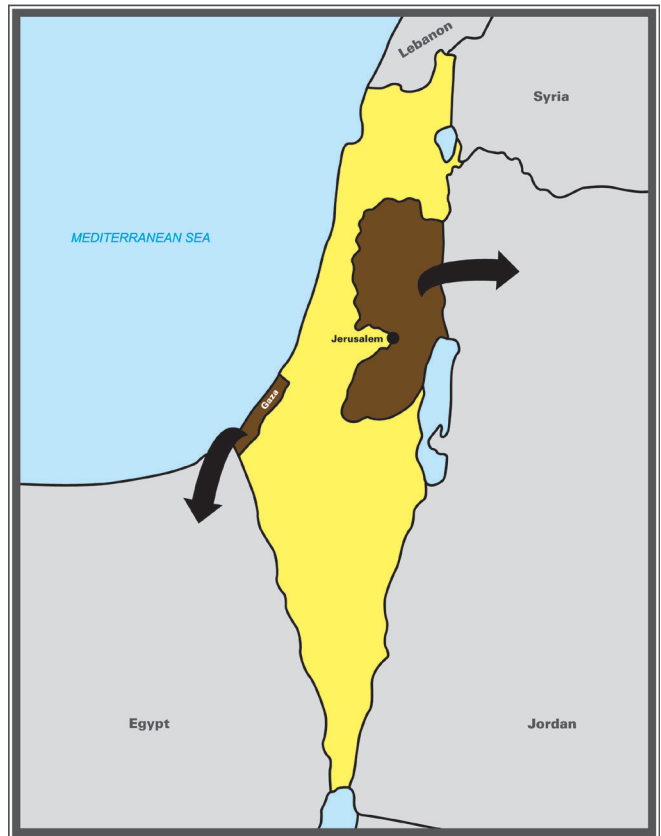
Lesson 3—Israel: Big Issue or Big Distraction?

Illustration 2

Partition, 1947



Armistice Lines, 1949



Discussing the Illustrations

1. The Balfour Declaration was issued in 1917. Almost from the start, Arabs in Palestine were against it. And even though the Jews for the most part purchased their lands from Arabs in the 1920s and '30s, most Arabs opposed giving the Jews their own homeland in Palestine and often rioted against them. Why do you think they felt so strongly about this?
2. In 1947, Britain turned the problem of Palestine over to the United Nations. The UN came up with a plan, which the map on the left shows. What did this plan offer to do about Palestine?
3. The Jews were not happy about the lands offered to them by the partition plan. But they accepted it. What do you think they did not like about the plan?
4. Arabs in Palestine and the Arab nations near it refused to accept the plan. Using the map on the right and your history knowledge, explain briefly what then happened. Were the Arabs right to reject the state offered to them in the partition plan? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Tell the story of Israel in maps. First, as a group read more about the history of Palestine and Israel. Then, create the following maps:

- "Palestine Under the Ottomans"
- "The British Palestine Mandate"
- "The 1967 Cease-Fire Lines"
- "Israel and the Territories After 1982"

Write a detailed description for each map. Post these maps, the two above, and your written descriptions in chronological order on the bulletin-board.

2. Create two more maps:

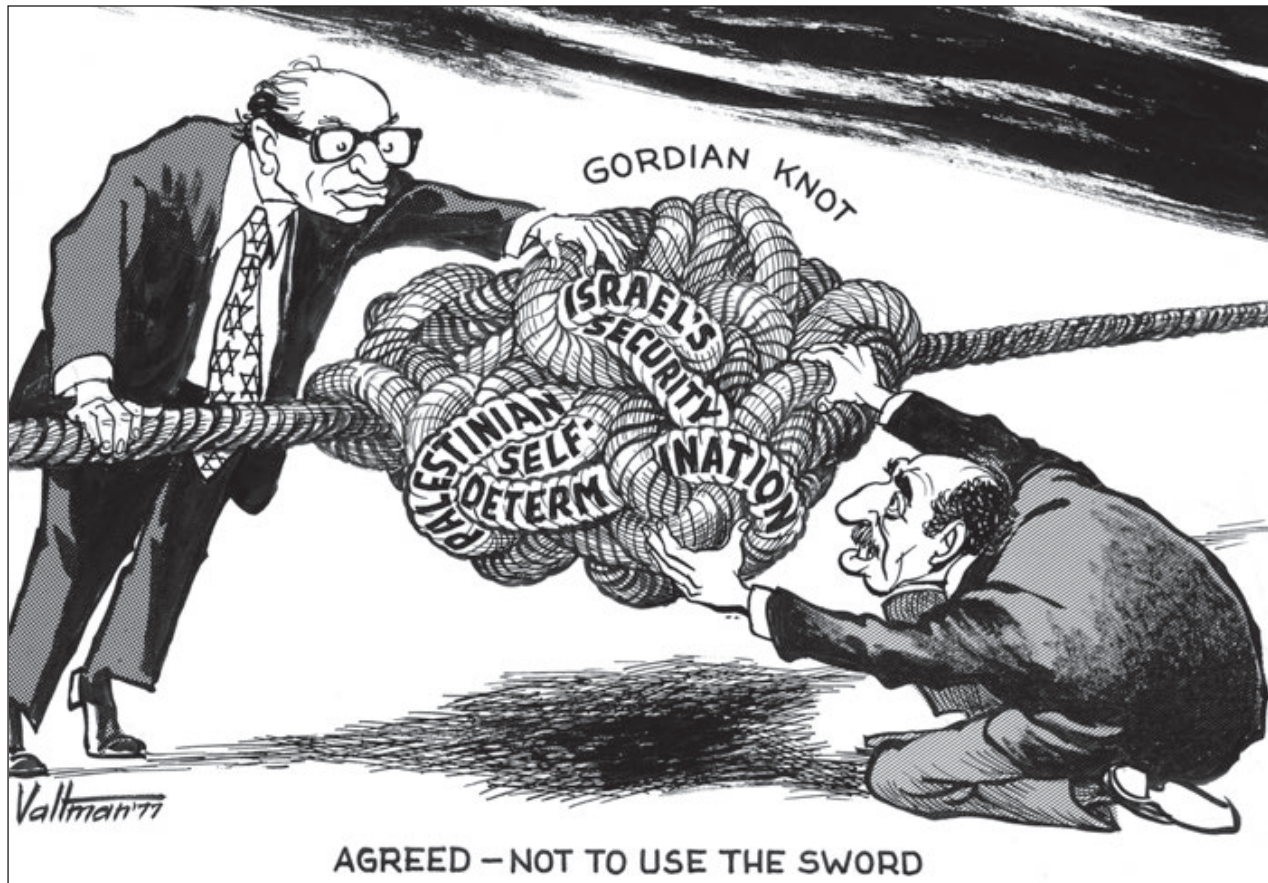
- "Arab Refugees From Israel After 1948"
- "Jewish Refugees Into Israel After 1948"

A good Web site for these maps is:

<http://www.jajz-ed.org.il/100/maps/>

Read more about these two refugee movements and their fates since 1948. Use your maps in a brief talk to the class on what you have learned.

Illustration 3



Edmund S. Valtman, courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. The key to the Israeli-Arab conflict has always been the fate of Palestinian Arabs displaced in 1948. That's what this 1977 cartoon is about. But to understand the cartoon fully, you need to know how, in 1967, another war affected the problem of the Palestinian Arabs. How did that war affect the problem?
2. The cartoon shows Israeli leader Menachem Begin and Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat working to untie a huge "Gordian Knot" peacefully. Explain the phrase "Gordian Knot." What two tasks seem to be involved in trying to untie this particular Gordian Knot?
3. It could be said that Begin and Sadat only loosened this knot a bit, but couldn't untie it. Can you explain?
4. Some say the Palestinian problem explains all the seething anger felt in the Middle East toward Israel and its main ally, the United States. Others say this problem is just a distraction, a way to avoid dealing with the much deeper causes of anger in the region. With which of these views do you agree more? Why?

Follow-up Activities

1. Learn more about the lives and political careers of Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat. Also, find out what key events in the history of Israel and the Arabs were taking place in 1977, when the above cartoon was created. Keeping what you have learned in mind, write a detailed editorial column to accompany the cartoon on a newspaper editorial page. Title your column "Two Unlikely Peacemakers." In the column, explain why the two men could reasonably be called peacemakers and why they might also be seen as rather unlikely peacemakers.
2. **Small-group activity:** The Oslo Accords (1993) began a series of efforts by Israelis and Palestinians to solve the problem of the territories of the West Bank and Gaza. Learn more about the key steps in the Oslo peace process. Create a detailed timeline from September 1993, to the present. Include key talks and agreements, as well as other important events. Also indicate increases in terrorism and other violence. Use the timeline in a talk to the class. In the talk, express your own views as to what kept this peace process from leading quickly to real peace.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will better understand the views of Islamic radicals who view the West as Islam's enemy.
2. Students will better appreciate the deep differences between Islamic radicals and moderates in the Middle East.

Islam and Islamic Radicalism

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustrations 1A & 1B**

Pan-Arab nationalists such as Nasser did not look to Islam as a guide to political or economic reform. But others in the Middle East have looked to Islam this way, and since the 1970s, they have grown much stronger. Saudi Arabia had long based its rule on a strict form of Islam known as "Wahhabism." Oil soon made Saudi Arabia rich, as Illustration 1A suggests: it shows Jiddah, a Saudi port city on the Red Sea. The photo is evidence of rapid urbanization in the Middle East. However, Illustration 1B shows that oil wealth has not benefited very many Arabs, either in oil-rich nations like Saudi Arabia or especially in Arab nations with little oil, such as Egypt. This is a slum outside Cairo in 1979, in which residents go through refuse looking for anything of value.

Illustration 2

Today, many groups of Islamic radicals seek to establish political systems based on strict Islamic law. They also see the West as Islam's mortal enemy and call for war against it. One early group with this view was Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, founded by Hassan al-Banna. His words here suggest how starkly Islamic radicals view the conflict between Islam and the non-Islamic world. In 1979, followers of another brand of Islamic radicalism came to power in Iran. There, Shi'ite Islamic leader Ayatollah Khomeini led a revolution that ended the rule of the pro-Western Shah, who had tried to modernize many aspects of Iranian society. Khomeini's Islamic regime immediately challenged the U.S. when Iranian militants seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran. The photo shows Iranians outside that embassy holding up a poster mocking U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

Illustration 3

Islam is not the same as Islamic radicalism, and moderates favoring a more tolerant form of Islam exist throughout the Middle East. Nobel Prize-winning novelist Naguib Mahfouz is one. He probably speaks here for millions of Muslims. Yet those with views like his have often been treated harshly, and not just by extremists, but often by government officials and broad sections of the population. In 1994, an Islamic radical stabbed Mahfouz in the neck, seriously wounding him. His books are still unavailable in many Mideast countries. Clearly, a struggle for the soul of Islam is underway in the Middle East, with an outcome as yet uncertain.

Lesson 4—Islam and Islamic Radicalism

Illustrations 1A & 1B

1A



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1B



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Discussing the Illustrations

1. Arab nationalists like Nasser did not base their ideas strictly on Islam or make Islam the sole guide for all political and social life. However, other Mideast nations have given Islam a much more central role. One is the nation whose port city of Jiddah is shown in Illustration 1A. Can you name that nation?
2. In what ways does Illustration 1A suggest that Saudi Arabia is a modern, fairly wealthy nation? What is the basis for Saudi Arabia's great wealth?
3. A strict form of Islam known as "Wahhabism" still guides the Saudi state. It exists alongside Saudi Arabia's wealth and modernization. What problems do you think this contrast poses for the Saudi rulers?
4. Even the richer oil states of the Arab Middle East are home to many poorly educated and impoverished people. In Arab states with little oil, these problems are enormous, as the photo of Cairo shown in Illustration 1B makes clear. How does this illustration make this clear? Why do you think these problems persist in the Middle East?

Follow-up Activities

1. Since September 11, 2001, Americans have argued about whether Saudi Arabia aids or helps to limit Islamic radicalism and terrorism. Look for articles on this issue since September 2001 in the following magazines: *Newsweek*, *Time*, *The Nation*, *The Weekly Standard*, and *Commentary*. Use what you find to guide the entire class in a debate on this issue.
2. **Small-group activity:** Saudi Arabia has strict rules limiting the rights of women, rules it says are based on the Qur'an. What are these rules? How do they differ from those in other Islamic societies? Have each group member learn more about the role of women today in one of the following nations:

Egypt	Saudi Arabia
Turkey	Pakistan
Iran	Iraq

Present your findings to the class in a discussion of the lives of women in the Islamic world today

Illustration 2

In this Tradition, there is a clear indication of the obligation to fight the People of the Book [Christians and Jews], and of the fact that God doubles the reward of those who fight them. Jihad is not against polytheists alone, but against all who do not embrace Islam. . . . Today the Muslims, as you know, are compelled to humble themselves before non-Muslims, and are ruled by unbelievers. . . . Hence it has become an individual obligation, which there is no evading, on every Muslim to prepare his equipment, to make up his mind to engage in jihad, and to get ready for it until the opportunity is ripe and God decrees a matter which is sure to be accomplished.

Hassan al-Banna, 1906–1949
Founder of the Muslim Brotherhood



The Granger Collection, New York

Discussing the Illustrations

1. A different form of strict Islam fueled a revolutionary uprising in another Mideast nation in 1979. Can you name that nation and the leader of that revolution?
2. This photo is of some young Iranians in 1979. What does it show them doing? How does the poster help explain what they are doing? Who is the president in the poster and what happened at the U.S. embassy where this photo was taken?
3. The phrase “Islamic radicalism” has been used for extreme and often violent political movements acting in the name of a strict understanding of Islam. In what other areas in the Middle East has Islamic radicalism been a powerful force in recent years?
4. Ayatollah Khomeini’s revolution led to a huge increase in Islamic radicalism in the Middle East. An earlier version of Islamic radicalism was promoted by the Muslim Brotherhood, which arose in Egypt in the 1920s. How do the words here from its founder help explain the ideas of Islamic radicals?

Follow-up Activity

1. In 2002, one U.S. college made the news by requiring freshmen to read a book on Islam called *Approaching the Qur’an: The Early Revelations*, by Michael Sells (White Cloud Press, 1999). The three broad reactions to this decision were as follows:
 - Those in favor of it said students needed to understand and become more tolerant of Islam
 - Some critics of the decision said it was wrong to teach about a religion at all
 - Still others said the book is too one-sided and partial in its description of Islam and the Qur’an

As a group, read Michael Sells’s book. Also read *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction*, by Michael Cook (Oxford University Press, 2000). Use these books to prepare a debate in front of the class. You may also wish to look at the Qur’an itself and at some of the suras not in Sells’s book. Organize your debate to defend and/or criticize each of the three views described above.

Illustration 3



Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate

I have condemned Khomeini's fatwa to kill Salman Rushdie as a breach of international relations and as an assault on Islam as we know it in the area of apostasy. I believe that the wrong done by Khomeini towards Islam and the Muslims is no less than that done by the author himself. As regards freedom of expression, I have said that it must be considered sacred and that thought can only be corrected by counter thought.

Naguib Mahfouz,
Egyptian novelist and winner of
the 1988 Nobel Prize for Literature

Discussing the Illustrations

1. Islamic radicals see themselves in a war with the non-Islamic world. But in a way, they are also in a war inside the Islamic world. That seems to be the message of this cartoon. Can you explain how the cartoon makes this point? Why do you think the artist choose to make the point in this dramatic way?
2. It is often stressed that Islam itself is not the same thing as Islamic radicalism. The views here of Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz are solid evidence of this. How do these words show that moderate Muslims such as Mahfouz differ from Islamic radicals such as those in the Muslim Brotherhood?
3. How widely held do you think Mahfouz's ideas are among Muslims compared with views of people like Khomeini, Osama bin Laden, and others? Explain your answer. Can the clash between moderate and radical versions of Islam be settled soon? How do you think it will be settled?

Follow-up Activity

1. Another Islamic moderate is Dr. Nasr Abu Zayd, a professor of Islamic studies who fled his native Egypt for the Netherlands in 1995. Here is a comment of his on interpreting the words of the Qur'an:

Since language develops with the development of society and culture, . . . then it is necessary and only natural to re-interpret texts in their original historical and social context, replacing them with more contemporary interpretations that are more humanistic and developed, while keeping the content of the verses stable.

Read more about Abu Zayd. One article on him is "Revolution by Stealth," by Mary Anne Weaver, in *The New Yorker* magazine (June 8, 1998). Prepare a talk to the class about Abu Zayd. First, put the above quote on the board. Then give your talk on Abu Zayd, his ideas, and the court case against him in Egypt. Finally, discuss Abu Zayd's words here and the challenges facing moderate Muslims today.

Image Close-ups

From the Ottomans to the Turkish Nation

Illustrations 1A & 1B

1B

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



1A



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From the Ottomans to the Turkish Nation

Illustrations 2A & 2B

2A



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

2B



Stock Montage, Inc.

From the Ottomans to the Turkish Nation

Illustrations 3A & 3B

3A



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

3B



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Decolonization and the Pan-Arab Dream

Illustration 1



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Decolonization and the Pan-Arab Dream

Illustrations 2A & 2B

2B



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

2A

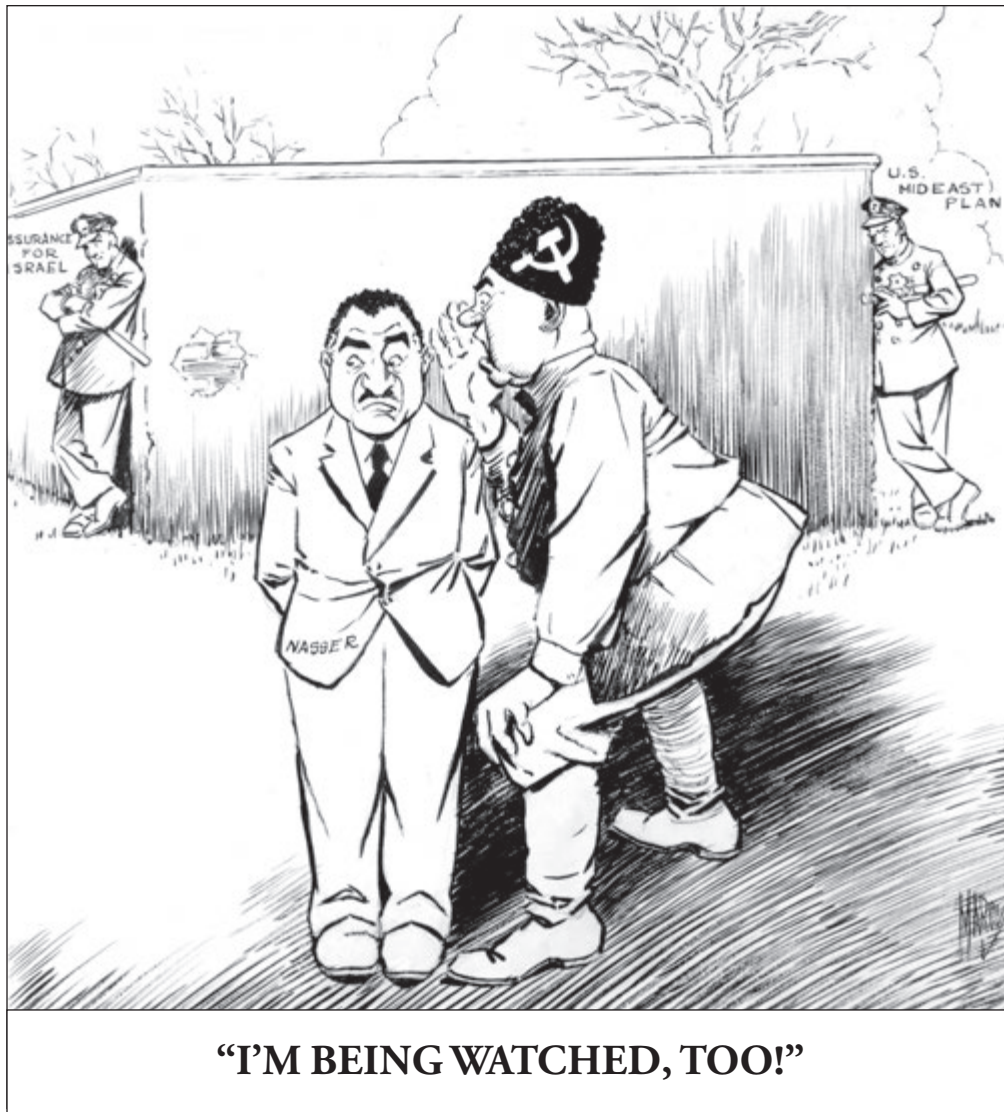


The Tempter

Edwin Marcus, courtesy of the Library of Congress

Decolonization and the Pan-Arab Dream

Illustration 3



“I’M BEING WATCHED, TOO!”

Edwin Marcus, courtesy of the Library of Congress

Israel: Big Issue or Big Distraction?

Illustrations 1A & 1B

1A



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1B



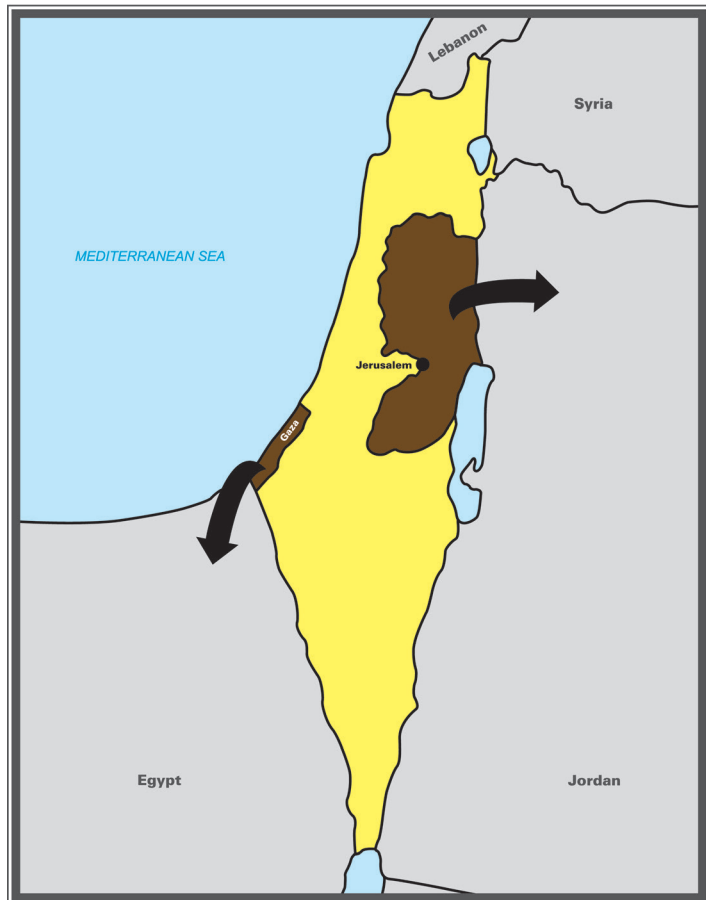
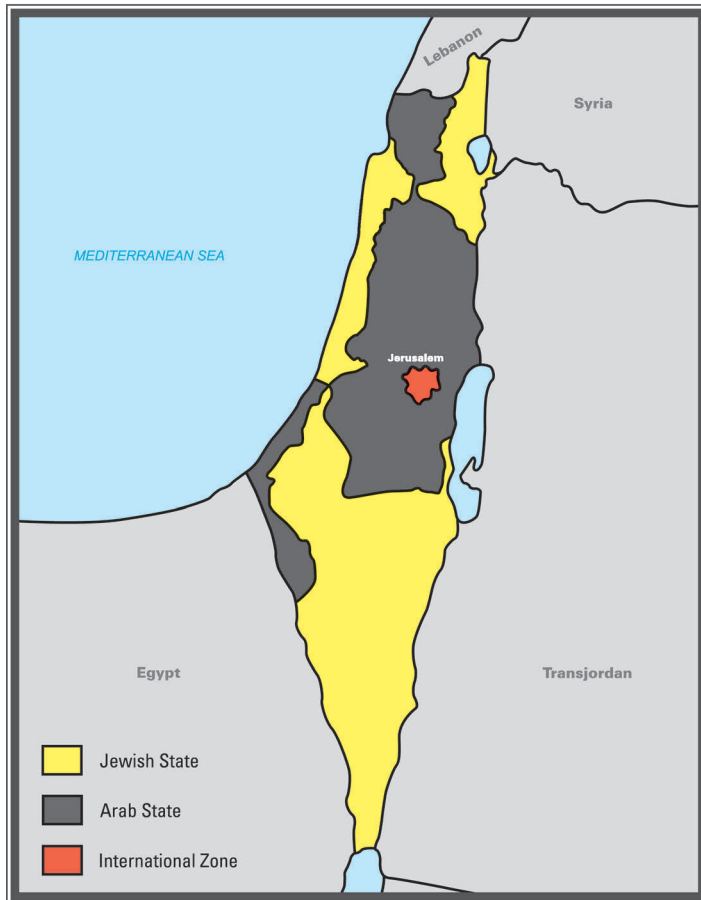
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Israel: Big Issue or Big Distraction?

Illustration 2

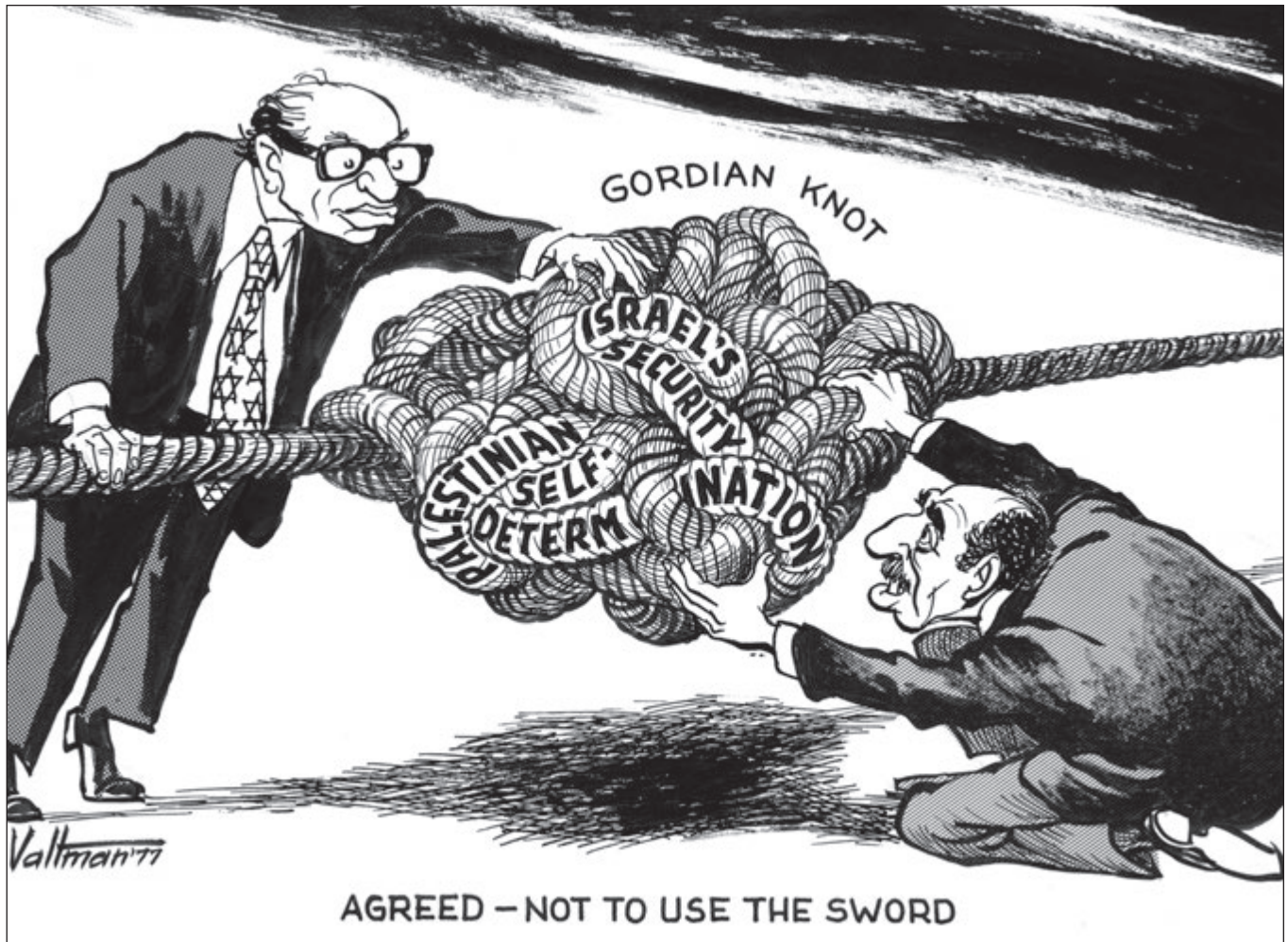
Partition, 1947

Armistice Lines, 1949



Israel: Big Issue or Big Distraction?

Illustration 3



Edmund S. Valtman, courtesy of the Library of Congress

Islam and Islamic Radicalism

Illustrations 1A & 1B

1A



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1B



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Islam and Islamic Radicalism

Illustration 2

In this Tradition, there is a clear indication of the obligation to fight the People of the Book [Christians and Jews], and of the fact that God doubles the reward of those who fight them. Jihad is not against polytheists alone, but against all who do not embrace Islam. . . . Today the Muslims, as you know, are compelled to humble themselves before non-Muslims, and are ruled by unbelievers. . . . Hence it has become an individual obligation, which there is no evading, on every Muslim to prepare his equipment, to make up his mind to engage in jihad, and to get ready for it until the opportunity is ripe and God decrees a matter which is sure to be accomplished.

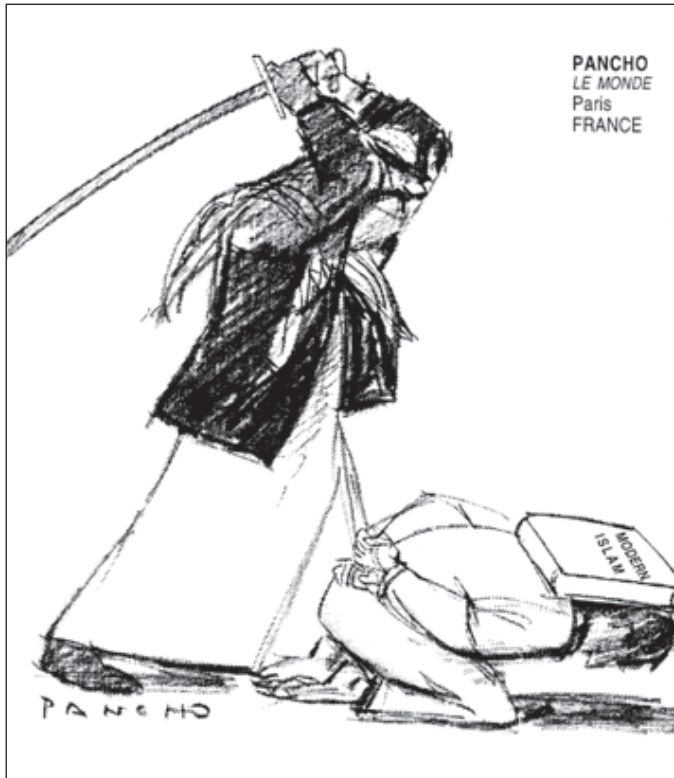
Hassan al-Banna, 1906–1949
Founder of the Muslim Brotherhood



The Granger Collection, New York

Islam and Islamic Radicalism

Illustration 3



Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate

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Naguib Mahfouz,
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