

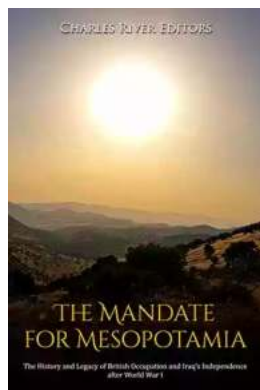
The History And Legacy Of British Occupation And Iraq Independence After World

The history of British occupation in Iraq and its subsequent independence after World War I is an essential period that shaped the country's future. This article delves into the significant events, long-lasting impact, and the legacy left by the British in Iraq.

Background and British Occupation

In the early 20th century, Iraq was still under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. However, during World War I, the British Empire fought against the Ottomans, with the intention of expanding their influence in the Middle East. After defeating the Ottomans, the British occupied Iraq in 1917.

Under the British occupation, Iraq experienced significant political changes. The British established a League of Nations Mandate, granting them full control over Iraq's political and economic affairs. They appointed Faisal ibn Hussein from the Hashemite family as the king of Iraq, leading to the creation of the Kingdom of Iraq in 1921.



The Mandate for Mesopotamia: The History and Legacy of British Occupation and Iraq's Independence after World War I

by Charles River Editors (Kindle Edition)

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British Rule and Independence Struggle

While the British provided a semblance of stability and modernization to Iraq, their rule also sparked local resistance and nationalist movements. Iraqis increasingly felt alienated from their own country due to the British dominance and control of resources.

The independence struggle began to gain momentum in the 1930s and 1940s, led by prominent figures such as Rashid Ali Al-Gaylani and Nuri al-Said. The Iraqi people sought to regain their sovereignty and establish a democratic and independent nation.

The Impact of World War II

World War II had a significant impact on the path to Iraq's independence. During the war, the British sought to maintain control over Iraq's vast oil reserves as a crucial strategic asset. However, as the war progressed, the Iraqi government grew increasingly frustrated with the presence of foreign troops on their soil. In 1941, they declared war against Britain, resulting in an armed conflict known as the Anglo-Iraqi War.

The Iraqi forces were eventually defeated, leading to the removal of the pro-German government and the return of the British with stronger control over Iraq. However, this event further fueled nationalist sentiments, as the Iraqis witnessed the re-imposition of foreign rule against their will.

Road to Independence

The struggle for independence continued after World War II, with Iraqis demanding self-governance and the termination of the British Mandate. In response, the British gradually began to offer concessions, including partial autonomy and the establishment of a constitution-based parliament.

Finally, on October 3, 1932, Iraq gained complete independence from Britain, marking a crucial milestone in its history. However, the legacy of the British occupation left deep scars, impacting political, social, and economic structures.

Legacy of British Occupation

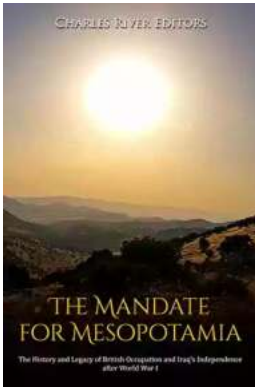
The legacy of the British occupation in Iraq is complex. While on one hand, the British introduced modern infrastructure, educational institutions, and legal systems, their policies also perpetuated divisions within the Iraqi society.

The British influence in drafting the constitution and creating a monarchy led to ongoing power struggles and political fragmentation. This laid the groundwork for decades of instability, including multiple coups and the eventual rise of Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath Party.

The history and legacy of British occupation in Iraq and its subsequent independence after World War I has had a profound and lasting impact on the country. The struggle for independence, the scars left by foreign rule, and the subsequent political challenges have shaped the nation's trajectory.

Understanding this history is crucial in comprehending the complexities faced by Iraq today and the ongoing efforts of the Iraqi people to shape their own destiny.

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- *Includes pictures
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The United Nations is one of the most famous bodies in the world, and its predecessor, the League of Nations, might be equally notorious. In fact, President Woodrow Wilson's pet project was controversial from nearly the minute it was conceived. At the end of World War I, Wilson's pleas at the Paris Peace Conference relied on his Fourteen Points, which included the establishment of a League of Nations, but while his points were mostly popular amongst Americans and Europeans alike, leaders at the Peace Conference largely discarded them and favored different approaches. British leaders saw their singular aim as the maintenance of British colonial possessions. France, meanwhile, only wanted to ensure that Germany was weakened and unable to wage war again, and it too had colonial interests abroad that it hoped to maintain. Britain and France thus saw eye-to-eye, with both wanting a weaker Germany and both wanting to maintain their colonies. Wilson, however, wanted both countries to rid themselves

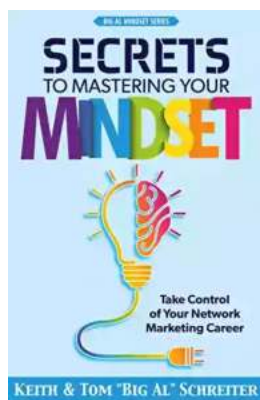
of their colonies, and he wanted Germany to maintain its self-determination and right to self-defense. Wilson totally opposed the “war guilt” clause, which blamed the war on Germany.

Although the League of Nations was short-lived and clearly failed in its primary mission, it did essentially spawn the United Nations at the end of World War II, and many of the UN’s structures and organizations came straight from its predecessor, with the concepts of an International Court and a General Assembly coming straight from the League. More importantly, the failures of the League ensured that the UN was given stronger authority and enforcement mechanisms, most notably through the latter’s Security Council, and while the League dissolved after a generation, the UN has survived for over 70 years.

One of the League’s most lasting legacies was the manner in which it handed over administrative control of land in the Middle East to the victorious Allied Powers, namely France and Britain. The Ottoman Empire quickly collapsed after World War I, and its extensive lands were divvied up between the French and British. While the French gained control of the Levant, which would later become modern day nations like Syria and Lebanon, the British were given mandates for Mesopotamia and Palestine. The British Mandate for Palestine gave the British control over the lands that have since become Jordan, Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip, while Mesopotamia covered modern Iraq.

British interest in supporting Arab nationalist aspirations at the onset of the war were clearly premised on the wider strategic objectives of defeating the Ottomans, and notwithstanding the McMahon–Hussein Correspondence, the concept of a single, unified Arab state under Hashemite rule would never come to fruition. By way of unintended consequences, however, Arab nationalism took root with the fall of the Ottomans, which would sow the seeds of many of the

problems that the British would subsequently face in the Middle East, in particular in Mesopotamia. The British, like so many others since, failed to grasp the full complexity of Arab sectarianism and the cross-currents of internal politics, and with a policy premised on their own broad strategic interests, they simply laid the groundwork of future political catastrophe for Iraq and the Middle East in general. Thus, while the intention of the mandate system was to have the administrators peacefully and gradually usher in independent states, and both European powers eventually attempted to withdraw from the region, anyone with passing knowledge of the Middle East's history in the 20th century knows that the region has seen little peace.



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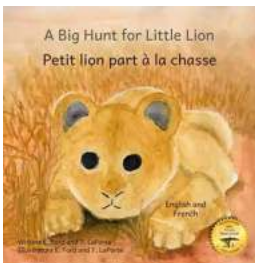
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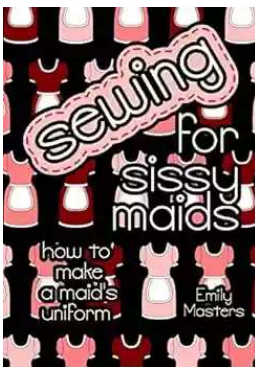
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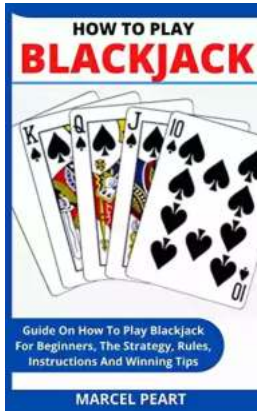
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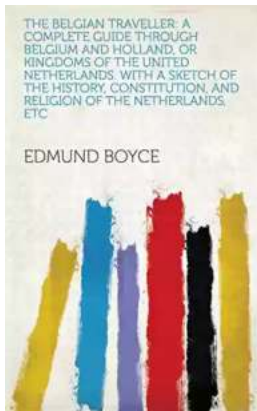
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