

Timothy Ryan
AP Euro
Period C
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Historical Essay Analysis

Title: How the Modern Middle East Map Came to be Drawn

Author: David Fromkin

Author's thesis: After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the modern borders of the Middle East came to be drawn by Britain to preserve peace and protect its interests.

Author's evidence:

- a) The Ottoman Empire had little control in its territories areas
- b) If not for Enver Pasha, the Ottoman Empire might still exist today
- c) The Middle East was divided by the Allies after the Ottoman Empire's fall
- d) British and Arab claims increasingly needed to be considered in the division
- e) Churchill came to the fore in the Middle East's division after two years' of delays and increasing tension
- f) He divided the region to support peace as well as British oil interests

Author's conclusion of the topic's significance:

The middle eastern map was drawn to reflect the influence and desires of post-WWI Britain and France, as well as to encourage peace in the region, but do not respect ethnic boundaries or meet modern issues.

What questions you have about the reading:

1. Would the Ottoman Empire have lasted much longer had it not been dissolved?
2. Why did Churchill not attempt to divide Iraq to respect ethnic boundaries?
3. How has the Middle East situation changed since 1990?

To what extent does your knowledge of the period support or conflict the author's thesis?

My knowledge of the period supports the author's thesis that World War I led to the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, and that the victorious Allied forces were permitted to divide and instate new, British-friendly leaders in the Middle East. I understand the motivations behind Britain's reorganization, as well as the events leading up to the Ottoman Empire's downfall.

Explain the gist of the article, the nature of the evidence, and the significance of the topic:

The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was not a definite, even at the time of World War I. Had it not been for the lone, reckless involvement of Enver Pasha, leader of the Young Turks, the Ottoman Empire may never have entered the war and as a result have lost its territories to the Allied forces. Regardless of this, the Ottoman Empire largely only had control of its territories in name, and by the time it fell to the Allies, many of its provinces were autonomous already. The Allies were able to divide the Arab world into modern nation-states as a result of their victory, which they expected to promote peace. However, the divisions made by Britain were also to support British interests in potential oil fields in the area. This has had a lasting impact that affects the Middle Eastern world even today.