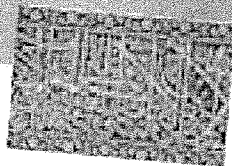


4

Egypt's leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, greets children in 1956.



Islamic ornamental writing from a mosque in Iran

WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

Remembering Nasser

As a young boy in Syria, Nasser Rabbat recalls seeing the Arab leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser.

“One of my earliest memories dates back to the winter of 1960 when I was almost four years old. I remember . . . screaming with the crowd around us ‘Nasser, Nasser.’ . . . I had been taught . . . to be proud of . . . Nasser, ‘the unifier of the Arabs’ and ‘the leader of our new renaissance.’”

—Nasser Rabbat, “On being named Nasser”

Gamal Abdel Nasser's Arab nationalism and other forms of nationalism were among the most important forces to shape the Middle East in the decades after World War II.

Focus Question What are the main similarities and differences among Middle Eastern nations?

The Modern Middle East

Objectives

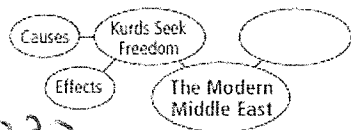
- Analyze the diversity of the Middle East and the political challenges it has faced.
- Explain the region's conflicts over resources and religion.
- Outline the history of nation-building in three Middle Eastern nations.

Terms, People, and Places

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| kibbutz | Anwar Sadat |
| secular | Mohammad Mosaddeq |
| hejab | Ruhollah Khomeini |
| Suez Canal | theocracy |
| Gamal Abdel Nasser | |

Note Taking

Reading Skill: Identify Causes and Effects Fill in a concept web like this one to keep track of events in the Middle East since 1945.



Leaders of Nasser's generation tried to build strong nations across the Middle East. Despite rich reserves of oil and natural gas in some parts of the region, however, internal divisions and autocratic governments hindered progress throughout the Middle East.

Diversity Brings Challenges

The Middle East, as we use the term in this chapter, is the region stretching from Egypt in the west to Iran in the east and from Turkey in the north to the Arabian Peninsula in the south. Though most people in the region today are Muslims, there are also Christian communities and the predominantly Jewish nation of Israel. Most countries have large ethnic or religious minorities.

Mandates Gain Independence You learned in an earlier chapter that Britain and France carved much of the Middle East into mandates, or dependencies, after World War I. During the 1930s and 1940s, these mandates became the independent states of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel.

Kurds Seek Freedom An ethnic group called the Kurds lives in the northern Middle East. Borders drawn mainly after World War I divide their homeland among Turkey, Iran, Syria, and Iraq. In each country, the Kurds are a minority.

Kurds faced discrimination and brutal treatment, especially in Iraq and Turkey. Beginning in the 1970s, Kurdish rebels fought Turkish forces. Thousands of Kurds died in the fighting. In 1999, however, the main Kurdish rebel force gave up the use of violence, though tensions continue. After Iraq's defeat in the 1991 Gulf War, Kurds in northern Iraq rebelled and set up their own governments with British and American military support.

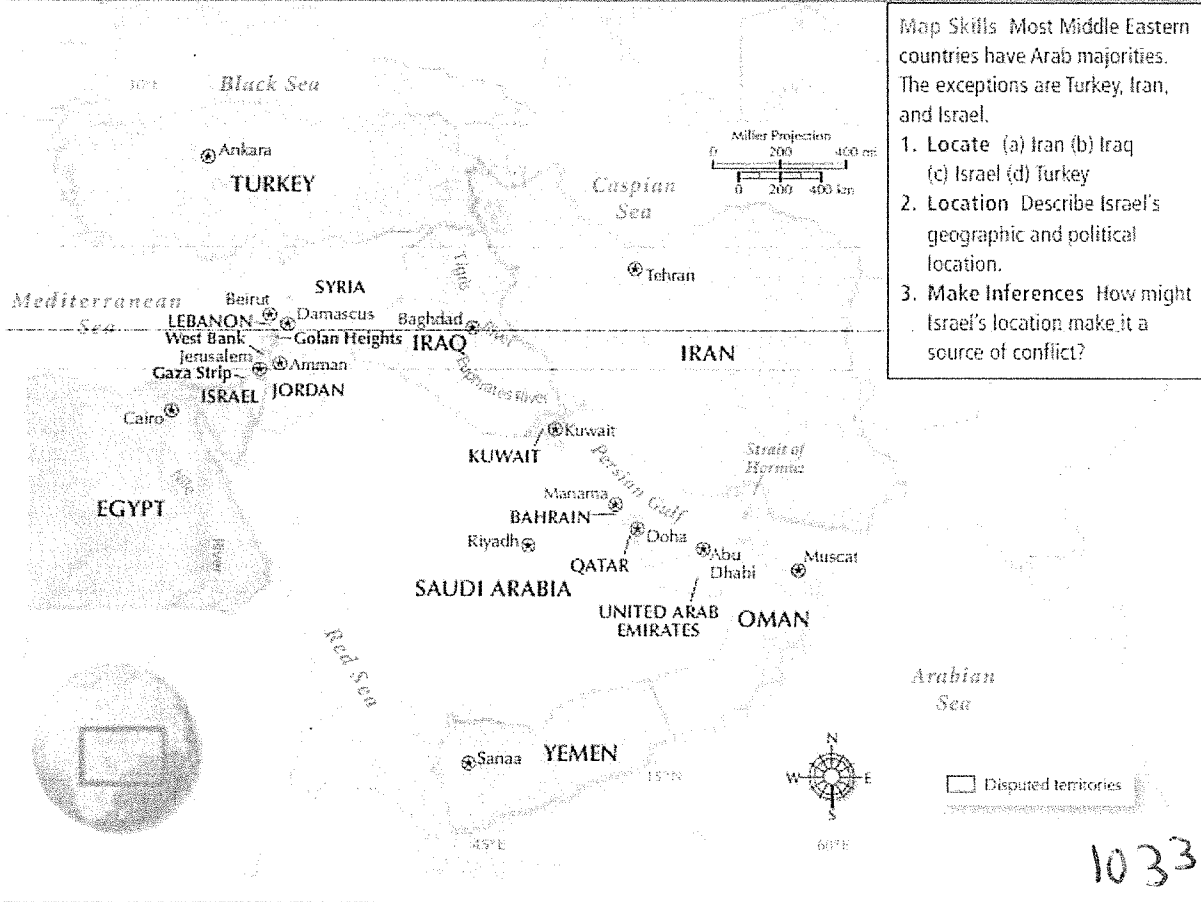
Israel Is Founded As you have learned, Britain supported a Jewish national homeland in part of its mandate of Palestine. The horrific experience of Jews in the Holocaust added to worldwide support for a Jewish homeland. Jews, including many Holocaust survivors, migrated to Palestine in large numbers after World War II. In 1947, the UN drew up a plan to divide Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish state. Jews accepted the plan, but Arabs rejected it. They felt that all of Palestine should belong to them.

After Britain withdrew from Palestine in 1948, Jews proclaimed the independent State of Israel. Arab states launched the first of several wars against Israel but were defeated. Israel developed rapidly. A skilled workforce built businesses. Kibbutzim produced crops for export. A kibbutz (kih BOOTS) is a collective farm. Israel attracted Jews from around the world, including Jews expelled from other Middle Eastern lands.

Geography Interactivity

For: Audio guided tour
Web Code: nap-3141

The Middle East Today



The conflicts of 1948 created enormous refugee problems. As a result of the war, hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs fled their homes in Israeli territory. The UN set up camps in neighboring areas to house them. Hundreds of thousands of Jews from Arab lands were also driven from their homes. Both sides feel embittered by the displacements.

Political Systems Limit Freedom Most Middle Eastern nations have had autocratic governments. In some countries, nationalist military leaders seized power. In other countries, such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia, hereditary monarchs remained in power. Only Israel and Turkey had stable multiparty democratic systems by 2005.

✓ **Checkpoint** Why did many people around the world support a Jewish homeland in Palestine?

Conflicts Over Resources and Religion

Parts of the Middle East sit atop the world's largest oil and gas reserves. Oil-rich nations have prospered, but other Middle Eastern nations have struggled economically. Meanwhile, Muslim Middle Easterners have disagreed over the role of Islam in a modern economy.

Supplying the World With Oil Because the Middle East commands vital oil resources, it has strategic importance to the United States and other powers. Nations with large oil reserves are Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.). These nations are all members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), founded in 1960. In 1973, OPEC's Arab members blocked oil shipments to the United States to protest U.S. support for Israel. This oil embargo

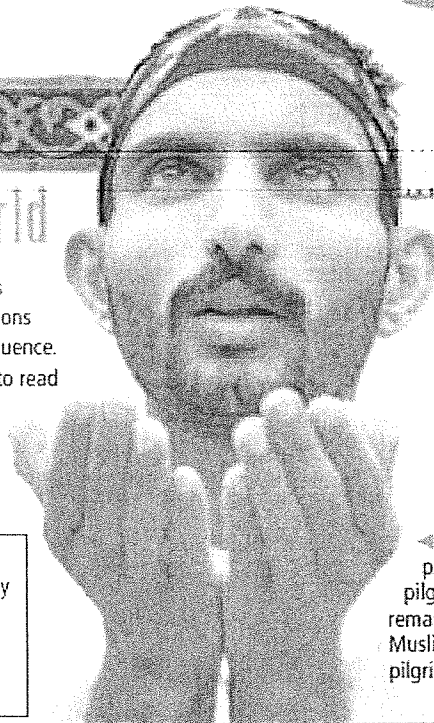
INFOGRAPHIC

Islam and the Modern World

Like other religions, Islam faces the challenge of adapting its traditions to a changing modern world. While religious traditions remain important to Muslims, Western culture has gained influence. Traditionally, in Islamic countries, women were not expected to read or write. Today, Muslim women are pursuing educations and new career opportunities. While Islamists call for a return to tradition, many Muslims embrace a mixture of traditional and modern ways.

Thinking Critically

1. **Graph Skills** Which has risen faster since 1990 in Turkey and Saudi Arabia, men's literacy or women's literacy?
2. **Analyze Visuals** How do these photos and art reflect a mix of Islamic tradition and Western styles?



The Iraqi artist ▲ Hassan Massoudy combines the Islamic tradition of calligraphy, or ornamental writing, with abstract Western styles.

◀ The basic principles of Islam, such as pilgrimage and prayer, remain important to modern Muslims, such as the Iraqi pilgrim to the left.

contributed to a worldwide recession. Since the 1970s, OPEC has focused on regulating the price of oil rather than on taking political stands.

Islam Confronts Modernization Some Middle Eastern nations adopted Western forms of secular, or nonreligious, government and law, keeping religion and government separate. Many Middle Eastern leaders also adopted Western economic models in a quest for progress. In the growing cities, people wore Western-style clothing, watched American television programs, and bought foreign products. Yet life improved very little for many people.

By the 1970s, some Muslim leaders were calling for a return to Sharia, or Islamic law. These conservative reformers, often called Islamists, blame social and economic ills on the following of Western models. Islamists argue that a renewed commitment to Islamic doctrine is the only way to solve the region's problems. The Islamist movement appeals to many Muslims. Some have used violence to pursue their goals. However, many Muslims oppose the extremism of the Islamists.

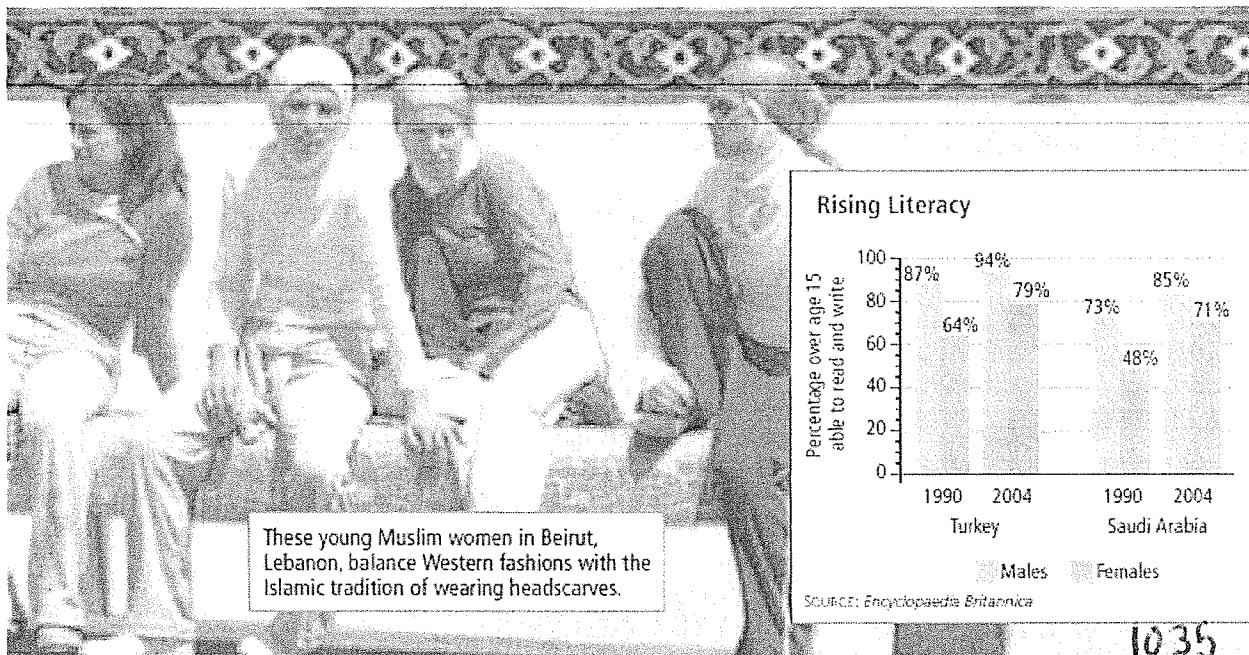
Women's Options Vary Conditions for women vary greatly from country to country in the modern Middle East. Women in most countries have won equality before the law. Some women have entered professions such as law and medicine. In Turkey, Syria, and Egypt, many urban women gave up the tradition of hejab, or wearing the traditional Muslim headscarves and loose-fitting, ankle-length garments meant to conceal.

On the other hand, religiously conservative Saudi Arabia and Iran require women to wear hejab. In Saudi Arabia, women are not allowed to drive. In many Islamic countries, girls are less likely to attend school than boys. This is because of a traditional belief that girls do not need an education for their expected role as wives and mothers. Muslim women have begun to challenge this belief.

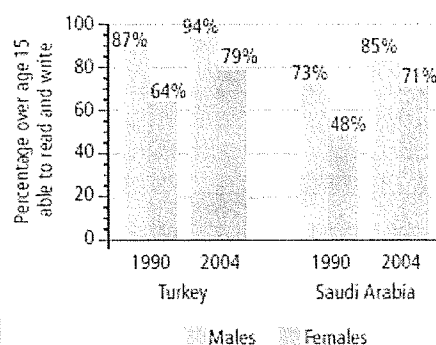
- ✓ **Checkpoint** Why are Islamists opposed to secular government in Islamic countries?

Vocabulary Builder

doctrine—(DAHK trin) *n.* teachings, principles, or beliefs



Rising Literacy



SOURCE: Encyclopaedia Britannica

Building Nations in the Middle East

Across the Middle East, leaders sought to build strong and prosperous nations. However, in the years since World War II, each nation has faced different challenges.

Egypt, a Leader in the Arab World Egypt has the largest population of the Arab nations. While most of Egypt is desert, its large population is crammed into the narrow Nile River valley. Egypt's location is strategically important, because it shares a long border with Israel and controls the Suez Canal, which links Europe with Asia and East Africa.

In 1952, Gamal Abdel Nasser seized power in Egypt. Determined to modernize Egypt and stop Western domination, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal in 1956, ending British and French control. Although Britain and France responded militarily, the United States and the Soviet Union forced them to withdraw. Nasser's Arab nationalism made him popular throughout the Arab world. Nasser led two unsuccessful wars against Israel. To counter U.S. support for Israel, Egypt relied on Soviet aid. Egypt's foreign relations thus took on Cold War significance.

In 1979, Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, became the first Arab leader to make peace with Israel. Sadat also weakened ties with the Soviet Union and sought U.S. aid. However, Islamists denounced the undemocratic government's failure to end corruption and poverty. In 1981, Muslim fundamentalists assassinated Sadat. Under Sadat's appointed successor, Hosni Mubarak, extremists turned to terrorist attacks, and harsh government crackdowns tended to increase support for Islamists.

Iran's Islamic Revolution Because of its vast oil fields, Iran was a focus of Cold War interest. Iran's ruler, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, favored the West but faced nationalist critics at home, led by Mohammad Mossaddeq (MAW sah dek). When Mossaddeq was elected prime minister in 1951, he nationalized the foreign-owned oil industry. With American help, the shah ousted Mossaddeq and returned Iran's oil industry to Western control. This move outraged many Iranians.

Over the next decades, the shah used oil wealth to build industries and redistribute land to peasants. He also gave new rights to women. Opposition to the shah grew, especially among the Islamic clergy. In response, the shah's secret police terrorized critics.

The shah's foes rallied behind Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (ROO hoh lah koh MAY nee). The ayatollah, a religious leader, condemned Western influences and accused the shah of violating Islamic law. In 1979, massive protests drove the shah from power. Khomeini and his supporters proclaimed an Islamic republic.

The new government was a *theocracy*, or government by religious leaders. They ran the country based on Islamic law. Like the shah, they silenced critics. In 1979, Islamists seized the American embassy in the capital and held 52 hostages for more than a year. The new Islamic republic soon

An Islamist Government

Iran's political leaders, who are Muslim clergymen, gather in 2003 to commemorate the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, a religious leader and the founder of Iran's Islamist government. The leaders are seated beneath a giant portrait of Khomeini. *How does promoting the memory of Khomeini help to justify rule by religious leaders?*



faced a long, bloody war with its neighbor, Iraq, and tense relations with the West. The United States imposed economic sanctions and accused Iran of backing terrorists. After the 2003 U.S. occupation of Iraq, American officials accused Iran of providing weapons to Iraqi fighters for use against U.S. forces. Iran was also accused of using nuclear research as a cover for developing nuclear weapons.

Oil, Religion, and Threats to Stability Saudi Arabia, a vast desert land, has the world's largest oil reserves. It also includes Islam's holy land. Since the 1920s, kings from the Sa'ud (sah OOD) family have ruled Saudi Arabia. They justify their rule by their commitment to the strict Wahhabi sect of Sunni Islam.

However, Saudi Arabia's economic development after World War II depended on massive oil exports to the Western world. In return, Saudi leaders relied on the military support of the United States. Although Saudi Arabia joined the OPEC oil embargo in 1973, the nation's rulers quickly returned to their cooperative relationship with the West.

To build support within the country, the royal family backed fundamentalist religious leaders. However, some of these leaders and their followers criticized the kingdom's close ties to the West. They also charged that Western influence in the kingdom violated Islamic principles.

Increasingly, opponents of the kingdom's Western ties adopted violent or terrorist tactics. Attacks on western targets included an attack on a U.S. military compound in 1996 and another on a U.S. consulate in 2004. These attacks threatened to disrupt the Saudi oil industry, which depends on Western expertise. Some feared that growing unrest could threaten the country's ability to supply oil vital to the world's economy.

Other oil-rich monarchies along the Persian Gulf, such as Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, face similar threats. In Kuwait, Qatar, and the U.A.E., foreign citizens are a majority of the population. In Bahrain, there has been growing opposition among the majority of the people, who follow Shi'ite Islam, toward Bahrain's royal family, who follow the Sunni branch of Islam.

- ✓ **Checkpoint** What were Ayatollah Khomeini's reasons for opposing the shah?

Progress Monitoring Online

For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice
Web Code: naa-3141

Terms, People, and Places

1. For each term, person, or place listed in the beginning of the section, write a sentence explaining its significance.

Note Taking

2. **Reading Skill: Identify Causes and Effects** Use your completed concept web to answer the Focus Question: What are the main similarities and differences among Middle Eastern nations?

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

3. **Summarize** How was the Holocaust connected to the birth of Israel?
4. **Identify Central Issues** What changes in government policies did the Islamists seek?
5. **Draw Conclusions** Why did Egypt attract the interest of the superpowers during the Cold War?
6. **Synthesize Information** How has the Saudi royal family's support for fundamentalism made their kingdom more unstable in recent years?

Writing About History

Quick Write: Revise Your Writing When you write a compare-and-contrast essay, combining short sentences can improve your writing. Write a short sentence that states a fact about a Middle Eastern country. Write a second sentence stating a similar or different fact about another Middle Eastern country. Revise your sentences by joining them into a single sentence that compares or contrasts these facts, using conjunctions such as *while*, *whereas*, *yet*, *both*, *and*, or *also*.

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