



2026-2027

Model Arab League

BACKGROUND GUIDE

Crisis Committee

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Original draft by Lukas Tegge, Crisis Coordinator of the Crisis Committee at the Northeast Model Arab League 2026, with contributions from the dedicated staff and volunteers at Northeastern University and the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations

Dear Honorable Delegates,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 Northeast Model Arab League Crisis Committee! My name is Lukas Tegge. I am a fourth year Computer Science and Game Development combined major here at Northeastern University. This is my 3rd and sadly final time staffing NERMAL, but I could not be more thrilled to be the Crisis Coordinator and hopefully provide you all an interesting scenario and weekend. Crisis committees help provide this more dynamic version of debate, where there is a larger emphasis on direction action and dynamic simulations, while keeping the same creativity and diplomatic debate that NERMAL is known for.

Iraq's and Syria's revolutions in 1920 failed historically. I don't mention this to scare you or any other delegates, quite the opposite. The people you will be representing across these 3 days had continuously tried for independence, failed, learned, and tried again for decades. Most, even after their failures in 1920, would go on to hold positions such as prime ministers, kings, or presidents when Iraq and Syria did achieve their independence. I hope in this crisis committee, you all can take that as encouragement. Don't be afraid to try something creative and fail, learn from your mistakes, and earnestly collaborate with your fellow delegates where those before you couldn't. The rest of the crisis staff and I will be here to help you have the best experience possible in this committee, so don't be afraid to ask questions or for guidance. Think outside the box, put your best faith in, and I hope you have a wonderful time.

Sincerely,
Lukas Tegge, Crisis Coordinator

Committee Agenda: Scramble for the Middle East, 1920

I. Committee Mission

Set in 1920, this committee is convened to address the socioeconomic and political issues in western Asia, as part of the larger Ottoman Empire, where questions of independence have emerged. The other members of our committee are representatives of local groups, each with their own interests in the region. The challenges you will address involve not only important figures and events of note to the Empire, but also the presence and, at times, malevolent actions of other Empires. Each of you have different powers at your disposal, interests you intend to pursue, and complex relationships with both other committee members and foreign countries.

The events of this committee will take place post-January 1920. The most immediate issues at hand are anticipated revolts in Iraq and Syria, each meant to finally free the territories of British and French (respectively) from occupation. However, the longer term issue of who will lead Syria and Iraq as you attempt to navigate this crisis and what the two states will look like as a monarchy, republic, or some other form of government is also up to you. Contained in this background guide is some contextual information relevant to the committee's proceedings. As members of the committee, you are also responsible for conducting your own research to understand the conditions which brought us here. And note that, while we now "live" in 2026, there is no guarantee that the decisions you collectively reach will lead to the same outcomes. Your cooperation in the "frontroom" and the personal decisionmaking conveyed through your crisis notes (the "backroom") could in turn alter the course of history.

II. Collapse of the Sublime Porte

Although the Ottoman Empire spanned over 600 years and three continents, by the early 20th century its ability to withstand further challenges came into question. The rise of nationalism led to masses of rebellion in the Ottoman Empire's territories. These uprisings drained the Empire's resources as well, as it lost its soldiers and its financial assets - a financial crisis deepened by outstanding debts to the French, British, and Russians.¹ It also prevented

¹ Şevket Pamuk, "The Ottoman Empire in the 'Great Depression' of 1873–1896," *The Journal of Economic History* 44, no. 1 (March 1984): 107–18, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0022050700031399>.

industrial progress in much of the Empire, leaving only areas like Anatolia and Constantinople (both Turkish-majority regions) to provide growth. Still, it continued to rule over most of the western territory of the Asian continent known today as the Middle East. This included the present-day states of Iraq and Syria who, while experiencing uprisings in urban areas such as Baghdad, Mosul, Aleppo, and Damascus, remained in the control of the Ottomans.

To address the many challenges it was facing, the Empire tried implementing a series of reforms beginning with the Vilayet Law of 1864.² This began a policy attempting to centralize power and law in the empire to the Ottoman government in Constantinople, also known as the Sublime Porte. In doing so, the Empire slowly attempted to erode religious and tribal influence throughout the region in replacement of standard government officials and governors. The establishment of the Hejaz railway in 1913 continued these efforts.³ The purpose of the railway was to enable religious pilgrimage to Mecca by connecting Istanbul to Hejaz through Damascus and Jordan (though it only reached Medina). While it facilitated the ability of pilgrims to make the annual Hajj, it also allowed Ottoman troops and government officials to move quickly into autonomous areas of the empire. Because of this, reception of the railway was not overwhelmingly supportive and opposition arose not only from tribal leaders, some of whom led attacks against the railway during construction, but also other European powers.

Religious tensions further exacerbated shifts in the Empire. The Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 led to concessions by the Empire under the February 1914 Armenian Reform Package.⁴ Under this agreement, signed by the Ottomans and the Russians, what was then known as Ottoman Armenia would be divided into two provinces overseen by European inspectors to ensure the religious and territorial rights of the local communities - the majority of whom were Christian - would not be violated by the Muslim-majority Ottoman leadership. This agreement concerned members of the Ottoman aristocracy (Pashas) who saw the potential for additional agreements with Christian groups in Lebanon and Assyria and anticipated a further weakening of control within the Empire. These decisions angered religious groups in the Ottoman Empire. One

² Kushner, David. "The Ottoman Governors of Palestine, 1864–1914." *Middle Eastern Studies* 23, no. 3 (July 1987): 274–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263208708700707>.

³ 1. Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire: Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

⁴ 1. Taner Akçam, The Initial Phase of Anti-Armenian Policy in *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity the Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (S.I.: Princeton University Press, 2024).

important family that fell under this category was the Hussein Family, who led the Kingdom of Hejaz as one of the largest autonomous states in the empire.

Before the outset of the First World War, Western influence in the Middle East was also on the rise. In Syria, the French sought economic gain through its limited influence, marked by deindustrialization and resource extraction - particularly in the raw cotton industry and expansion of Lebanese Silk.⁵ French influence came in the form of humanitarian or missionary aid by French businessmen, political inquiry into local leadership, and asset seizure in Syria and beyond. These were an addition to their demands to the Ottomans due to the substantial debt the nation owed France, and a corporation known as the Ottoman Public Debt Administration that was used to seize Ottoman assets and goods to help pay off the debt.

France's influence was limited in Syria, but in other areas it was much more influential. As the areas of Lebanon and Lakatia were neglected by the Empire, local support for French influence grew, especially in Christian communities. When confronted with religious marginalization or systemic oversight relative to Greater Syria's Muslim majority, local figures routinely appealed for French intervention, demanding financial stabilization through targeted capital alongside direct military defense against internal threats. French support aligned with its larger objectives in North Africa as well as opposition to the Hejaz railway, as part of a larger initiative to expand its influence in the area.

British influence in Iraq differed from what was happening with the French in Syria, namely because the British were primarily occupied with its territorial interests in Egypt. In 1876, an Egypt that had won its independence from the Ottoman Empire a few decades prior had gone bankrupt in an attempt to industrialize⁶. As a result, the Egyptians gave financial control to two primary western creditors, Britain and France. With a direct financial stake, Britain took charge of economic and political reforms to reshape the country. This came in the form of multiple methods. Firstly, they monopolized trade, thus becoming the destination for 80% of Egyptian exports and a significant source for manufactured imports. Deindustrialization followed, which reconfigured Egypt's economy to one focused not on manufactured goods but raw agricultural materials, especially cotton. Britain also threw out Khedive Isma'il, who was

⁵ Khoury, Philip Shukry. *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920-1945*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014.

⁶ Daly, M. W, M. W. Daly, and Carl F. Petry. *Modern Egypt, from 1517 to the end of the twentieth century*. vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

more secular and sought more democratic reforms in Egypt. This was done by coercing the sultan to use his power in the government to remove the Khedive and instead install a pro-Western cabinet receptive to Western rule. The Egyptian officers launched a counter coup in 1881, using the sultan as a figurehead to maintain legitimacy while attempting to dismantle Western influence. Britain then launched the Anglo-Egyptian war in 1881, leading a three-month campaign to navally bombard the north of the country across the riverways and Suez Canal, with armed landings in Egypt. The Egyptians would soon surrender, falling back into economic domination by the British and having pro-western leaders in power until 1922. Empowered by their success, it seemed Britain would follow the same template for Iraq in the event of full-scale war with the Ottomans or an Iraqi rebellion.

During World War One, French and British debts were nullified and businessmen were expelled from the Middle East. Both nations turned from nominal support of the Ottomans as a buffer to Russia into stark enemies, seeking land and protection for Christians in the Middle East⁷. They believe the Ottomans were weak and would quickly collapse at the start of any large-scale war. Some of the reasons included frequent revolts, military losses across the 1910s, decreased access to critical trade routes that could not be offset by its existing resources and the support it received from Germany (to whom both the French and the British were rivals).⁸

When the Ottomans attacked Russian Black Sea ports in 1914, they again found themselves at war with Western powers who allied themselves with Russia. In the case of Great Britain, focus shifted from Germany to the Ottoman Empire. The British believed that because the Empire was weakened, they could swiftly conquer it, open up supply routes towards Russia, allow millions of troops to move to other fronts, and gain morale due to a swift victory. They also sought the region's rich natural resources, including the oil reserves of the Gulf region (today known as Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates) as well as Iraq, which was used to power their naval fleet.

Seizing the opportunity to begin its occupation in November 1914, Great Britain's Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force began its campaign to seize Iraq by taking the major Persian gulf city of Basra.⁹ They would soon be bogged down, leading to a grinding war of attrition

⁷ Ibid., 5.

⁸ Anderson, Frank Maloy, and Amos Shartle Hershey. *Handbook for the diplomatic history of Europe, Asia, and Africa: 1870-1914*. Buffalo, N.Y: William S. Hein & Co, 2008.

⁹ Barker, A. J. *The bastard war: The Mesopotamian campaign of 1914-1918*. New York: Dial Press, 1967.

slowly pushing through Iraq. As they continued to try to push north in Iraq in 1915 and failed to take Constantinople with the Gallipoli campaign in the same year, the British would need to find an alternative way to winning against the Ottomans.

III. The Arab Revolt

In light of these developments, the British became fearful of future rebellions in the Middle East which would derail their ambitions for Egypt, Iraq, and beyond. The fear of the Ottomans provoking jihad¹⁰, holy war, against Western powers, thus pulling away British troops from their front in Iraq and capitalizing on insecurity in Egypt around the Suez Canal, was enough for British leaders to attempt a negotiation with the Hussein family. Led by the King of Hejaz, Hussein Al-Hashimi, the Hussein family controlled around half of Ottoman Arabia. The Hussein family worried over Ottoman crackdowns on their power, and reached out to the British in the hopes that a partnership would prove mutually beneficial. Though initially rebuffed, continued British failures of eliminating the Ottoman Empire forced them to reconsider. The negotiations, conducted through a series of letters exchanged between 1915 and 1916, became known as the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence.¹¹ The most remarkable outcome of these letters was that, despite unresolved disagreements, the Hussein family and the British would ally to lead a revolt against the Ottomans.¹² In exchange for launching a revolution, the Hussein family were promised most of Arabia under an independent state.

Across 1916, Arab forces were organized into the Arab Regular Army, which slowly received more guns and officer training from the British and launched their revolution against the Ottoman Empire. By the end of 1917, the Arab Regular Army was composed of roughly 50,000 troops. Throughout 1918, assaults on proper Ottoman defenses increased, leading to the fall of cities such as Ma'an, the proper province of Hejaz, and Talfina. As a result, the Ottoman army collapsed in October 1918 after British and Arab Regular Army troops seized Damascus.¹³ At the same time, the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force reached as far as Mosul, Iraq. All major population centers of Syria and Iraq were controlled by the British and Arab force until November 1919.¹⁴

¹⁰ *Jihad and Islam in World War I: Studies on the Ottoman Jihad at the centenary of Snouck Hurgronje's "Holy War Made in Germany"*. first ed., Leiden University Press, 2016. <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/46328>.

¹¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Husayn-McMahon-correspondence>

¹² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Husayn-McMahon-correspondence>

¹³ Ibid, 9

¹⁴ Tauber, Eliezer. *The formation of modern Syria and Iraq*. Essex, England: Frank Cass, 1995. pg 11-30

Faisal Hussein, son of Al-Hashimi, was the primary leader of the revolt, though other members played a key role in leading the fighters through battle. Most of the British support, however, came in the form of supplies distributed unequally; while Faisal received a majority of the material support in the form of soldiers and guns to conduct raids, others saw very little.¹⁵ One of the primary goals was to distract Ottoman troops to prevent them from crushing the revolt and allowing the rebellion to spread, preventing Ottoman troops from being reinforced on other fronts in Egypt and Iraq. Believing his efforts to be the primary reason for the campaign's successes (despite the unequal support from the British across all leadership), Faisal became the frontrunner candidate to oversee any newly created, post-Ottoman Arab state.¹⁶

However, throughout these years of attacks, the British strayed from its negotiations with the Hussein family and also sought arrangements with other European powers. The two most notable arrangements of the time were the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement and the 1918 Anglo-French Modus Vivendi. The 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement was a secret negotiation between the British and French. It outlined a new future for the Middle East where France would be given occupation of the coast at Lebanon, Lakatia, Cilicia, regions around it in Anatolia, and with a sphere extending from the coast towards Mosul in northern Iraq. The British would occupy the city of Acre, eastern Iraq, and a sphere of what would become southern Mandatory Palestine and Jordan. Each sphere would be a nominally independent state, but military, foreign policy, and foreign economic matters would be restricted by France and Britain. Little correspondence of the direct six day private negotiations of the Sykes-Picot Agreement exists, with the full agreement only being released by the Bolsheviks in the end of 1917. These secret negotiations would come to be seen by the Arabian groups within the revolt as a betrayal of prior promises. Sykes-Picot would be the start of unrest of the Arabs, with each subsequent agreement getting pushback and the likelihood of larger revolts increasing¹⁷.

The 1918 Anglo-French Modus Vivendi was an agreement that shifted control of what was held by the Arab-Anglo armies in Syria to the French. This turned what was primarily a British affair for the entire war into more of what was defined within the Sykes Picot Agreement. In October 1918, the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration was set up to cement the

¹⁵ Fromkin, David, and David De Vries. *A peace to end all peace: The fall of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of the modern Middle East*. Old Saybrook, Old Saybrook, CT: Tantor Audio, Tantor Audio, 2018.

¹⁶ Moubayed, Sami. *Steel & Silk: Men and women who shaped Syria 1900-2000*. S.I.: Cune Press, 2012.

¹⁷ "Conference of San Remo." Britannica, n.d. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Conference-of-San-Remo>.

conditions of the agreement. Thus, each of three regions - Southern Iraq based on Basara, Central Iraq based on Baghdad, and Northern Iraq based on Mosul - contained a military chief. With this arrangement, the French oversaw the North and West as outlined in the Modus Vivendi, and the British attempted to wrestle the East and South from local Arab forces. In this arrangement and in light of the initial arrangements via the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence, the British would find their territorial claims competing much more frequently with the Hussein family.¹⁸

IV. 1919: Carving and Consolidating

As a counterweight to the cementation of British and French power, an effort on the ground was made to compromise with the Hussein Family. Famed British Officer T.E. Lawrence would put forward the Sharifian Solution in late 1918, outlining areas of British administration, with an emphasis on delegating each region to a different son of Ali Bin Hussein. Although the plan was never fully implemented, Faisal Hussein was put in charge of Syria as a proxy ruler for the French in 1919. Across the same year, British troops were continuously withdrawn from the region.

Over time, what was initially declared as an independent Syria became fully reliant on French backing. Syrians protested for an independent state, calling upon aid from foreign powers to support them in their struggle to be independent from France. For example, in May 1919 the General Syrian Congress attempted to organize a greater Syrian state. In July 1919, the General Syrian Congress passed a resolution calling for technical and economical aid from the United States.¹⁹ Calls for independence would rise in January 1920 when Faisal returned from four months in Europe and the nationalists portrayed his absence as evidence of deepened connection to the West.²⁰ To compound this, Faisal stated that he would respect French investments and interests in Syria, so long as France would not station troops in Syria²¹. This agreement, later to be known as the Faisal-Clemenceau Agreement, would be taken as the key piece of evidence for no longer putting Syrian interests first.

¹⁸ Hurewitz, J. C. *The Middle East and North Africa in world politics. 2: A documentary record: British-French supremacy, 1914-1945*. New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1975.

¹⁹ Resolution of the syrian general congress at Damascus | Wilson Center Digital Archive. Accessed September 25, 2026. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/resolution-syrian-general-congress-damascus>.

²⁰ Ibid 14

²¹ Allawi, Ali A. *Faisal I of Iraq*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014, pg 230

Within Iraq, consolidation occurred towards the end of World War 1 into 1919. By this time, the three provinces that made up Iraq within the Ottoman Empire were consolidated under a quasi military governor based on replicated policies from British governance in India. Curbing the rising urban unrest in the region, the British attempted to undo recent Ottoman reforms in exchange for empowering Sheikhs as proxies for British rule, ultimately leading to rural unrest. Moreover, the siege of Najaf in 1918 acted as a predecessor for future conflicts. Conflict began after a British officer was assassinated, resulting in the British laying siege to the city.²²

V. What Lies Ahead and the Destruction of an Independent Middle East

Presently, in 1920, the states of Iraq and Syria are both mixes of nationalist guerillas and their respective occupiers of Britain and France. From here there are multiple ways to go.

In Syria, the generally pro-western King Faisal holds executive power and temporary backing by France, while the veterans of the Arab Regular Army and Faisal's councilors call for full severing of ties from France and proper independence. The northern region around Aleppo is already in revolt; however, the truce between the French and Faisal's Syria is holding everywhere else. For Syria, the primary question is when they should declare independence, with benefits and downsides depending on the timing. The secondary question is who should lead an independent Syria to ensure it will not fall back under French domination and could support itself among the various groups seeking a different form of a Syrian state.

Iraq is in arguably a worse position. No organized government exists that is able to turn against the British. However, Iraqi and ex-Ottoman citizens in Baghdad and Mosul call for democratization or general conflict with the British. Britain had thrown out of their prior power during the Ottoman Empire in favor of the tribes and sheikhs of Iraq, along with the more religious sheikhs also sidelined due to more extreme views. Divided into the two main groups of the Kurds and Iraqis, along with the religious divide of the Sunnis and Shi'ites, the nation has to position itself in a fundamentally different way than Syria. For any solution to Iraqi independence, there needs to be some decision on what groups should be included in an independent Iraq's government and how to organize those groups properly to take power in Iraq. Along with this, there need to be a proper answer to what the Iraqi revolution of 1920 is most

²² Rutledge, Ian (2015-06-01). "Chapter 15 - Najaf 1918: First Uprising on the Euphrates". *Enemy on the Euphrates: The Battle for Iraq, 1914 - 1921*

known for: airpower. The British are willing to commit to a war solely by air, making it physically impossible for the Arabs to fight back. Any group that is trying to achieve independence in Iraq would probably need to answer the question of how to properly fight the British if they want to engage in direct war with the British to begin with.

Questions to Consider:

1. How are you going to obtain stability between the disparate groups of Syria and Iraq
2. What form of government will the states take(common state, multiple states in alliance, republic, kingdom)?
3. With the economy of both nations in ruins, how can you create an economy that will best serve your interests, and stop it from being dominated by competing groups or nations?
4. How will you balance the civilian interests of the region with the massive sets of occupying militias and tribes? How much power can you give to either before weakening your own position?
5. What will your relations be with competing powers? With the Soviets, Turks, Greeks, Italians, and Americans all in play at least on a minor level, could you find any leverage to help them to your personal causes?
6. With the overwhelming power of the British and French, you certainly can't go marching on London and Paris or just wait in trenches. How will you convince both powers through cost or coercion to pull out of the region in the end?

Character Dossiers

These dossiers are to give a basic description of your character. There are characters who either have differing powers from the historical record or are invented for the purposes of ensuring a more dynamic room and development. If there is conflict between here and online sources, trust the dossiers; however, please do research around either the characters or mentioned powers and events to spark some inspiration and interest.

Faisal bin Hussein: Head of the Arab Kingdom of Syria, Star of the Husseins

Known for being the primary of the Hussein family supported by the British²³, Faisal oversees the present Syrian State. However, a strong foreign reputation can only get you so far. Balancing the interests of the Muslim majority with nationalists from both Syria and Iraq with the French supporting Christians in mount Lebanon, he has a long way to fall if not careful.

Abudullah bin Hussein: Brother, Son, and Candidate for the Mandates of Iraq and Jordan

Seen as Faisal's lieutenant during the Arab revolt, his initial tensions with T.E. Lawrance and the British army made him a secondary candidate for the head of any Arab Kingdom.²⁴ Though relatively loyal to Faisal and the more anti-British out of the Hussein family, Abudullah is seen as a wonderful backup for any of the British holdings if things with Faisal were to fall through or he were to already be occupied with other regions.

Hussein bin Ali al-Hashimi: Head of the Husseins, King of Hejaz

Head of the Hussein Family, Hussein's position is certainly more steady than his ambitious sons. Rather than being in place for the Mandates, he presently rules the initial King of Hejaz,²⁵ holding Mecca, Medina, and a fully independent kingdom. Rather than contending with British or French armies, his poison of choice is Ibn Saud. With the slow removal of British support in

²³ Ibid, 16

²⁴ Zeidan, Adam. "Abdullah I | Biography, History, & Assassination | Britannica." Britannica, n.d. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Abdullah-I>.

²⁵ Haselby, Sam. "Sharif Hussein and the Campaign for a Modern Arab Empire: Aeon Essays." Sharif Hussein and the campaign for a modern Arab empire | Aeon Essays, n.d. <https://aeon.co/essays/sharif-hussein-and-the-campaign-for-a-modern-arab-empire>.

the face of a possible future conquest, only time will tell how much he can support his sons, lest that weakness comes at his expense.

Elias Peer Hoyak: Patriarch of Antioch, Lebanese Representative

Rather than a man of arms, Patriarch Hoyak holds his sway through being one of the most prominent figures of the Christians of the Middle East.²⁶ Noted for being the head of the Lebanese delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, he seeks to create a safe haven for Christians and Lebanese against demands and initial promises of a greater Arab state. Due to this prominence, the French have seen Hoyak as a central representative and ally to push their agenda into Lebanon and the regions around it. However, if the French falter, a deal with his enemies is always in the cards.

Ja'far 'Abu al Timman: Iraqi Nationalist, Unifier of the Sects

One of the most prominent members of the Independence Guard²⁷ (one of the many groups participating in the Great Iraqi Revolt of 1920), al-Timman and the organization are noted for holding together a broad coalition of different groups in Iraq. This includes attempting to unify the city's nationalistic forces with the tribal leaders of the nation in failure, and the Shi'ites and Sunnis, with great success. How many other groups could be factored into this calculus is up to him; however, above all he desires a free, democratic Iraq without any Western influence.

Fares Al-Khoury: Syrian Intellectual, Minister of Finance

Fares Al-Khoury is the Finance Minister to Faisal's Arab Kingdom of Syria.²⁸ At the beginning of the 1920s, he faces an immense challenge. With the deindustrialization of major cities due to a flight of refugees, increased French economic domination, and the aftermath of the Locust Plague of 1915, Syria's economy cannot afford independence. Along with this, armed bands of what is the Arab Revolt make Syria less of a peacetime centralized state and more so a series of warlords.

²⁶ Mouawad, Youssef. "Hoyek, Elias." *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, September 16, 2016. <https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/hoyek-elias/>.

²⁷ Dougherty, Beth. *Historical dictionary of Iraq*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 16

Mahmud Barzanji: Failed King of the Kurds, Brazen Conquerer

Mahmud is the leader of the failed 1919 Kurdish revolt in Iraq.²⁹ Characterized as both ambitious and greedy, Mahmud desires to become a kingdom of all of Kurdistan, no matter what borders, subordinates, and greed stands in the way.

Salih al-Ali: Leader of the Alawites, Mountainous Rebel

One of the two members actively in war, Salih leads bands of Alawites in a guerilla war in the mountains of northwest Syria.³⁰ Although in stable control of the villages in the area, even repelling French attacks, he is never able to secure the actual populous regions of Lakatia on the coast. Famed for being a rebel against all who try to settle in the region - Ottoman, Turk, or French - his local renown even leads people to follow by his side due to supposed miracles performed.

Armenak Mazlounian: Armenian Pilgrim, Head of the Aleppo Baron Hotel

Originally just a businessman on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the 1880s, he has now instead established the Baron Hotel in Aleppo.³¹ A surprisingly thriving business for being the frontline of three armies in an anarchic city, it is well known for hosting some of the finest members of the middle east such as Faisal Hussein, T.E. Lawrance, and Theodore Roosevelt.

Nazik al-Abid: Secular Advocate, Nurse, and Educator

Nazik Al-Abid is a women's rights advocate, writing under pseudonyms for newspapers.³² Now on the advent of a proper independence movement, she has shifted to balancing priorities.

²⁹ Dana, Charles A., and Joe P. Dunn. "A Death in Dohuk: Roger C. Cumberland, Mission and Politics among the Kurds in Northern Iraq, 1923-1938." *Journal of Third World Studies* 32, no. 1 (2015): 267-267.

³⁰ Ibid, 16

³¹ Cowell, Alan. "Aleppo Journal; a Small Hotel, Its Memories Fading (Published 1990)." New York Times, n.d. <https://www.nytimes.com/1990/02/24/world/aleppo-journal-a-small-hotel-its-memories-fading.html>.

³² Ibid, 16

Alongside continued advocacy for women's right and secular reform, she now has also moved into the independence space, joining delegates to advocate for support from the United States for Syrian independence from France.

Ibrahim Hananu: Revolutionary, Bridge of the Syrians and Turks

As opposed to the uneasy truces of southern Syria, Hananu leads guerilla forces from Aleppo to battle against French forces. A generally solid leader, he has been able to wage a back and forth war to destroy French infrastructure, troop encampments, and even some armored vehicles.³³

However, his points of leverage are more so who he knows, rather than what he knows. Coming from the merchant classes of Aleppo and with Kurdish family, he presently is able to tie both those two groups and Turkish military aid to keep his war alive.

³³ Gelvin, James L. *Divided loyalties nationalism and mass politics in Syria at the close of Empire*. S.I.: University of California Press, 2023.