

# The Truce (Abacus Books)

## Christmas truce

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The Christmas truce (German: Weihnachtsfrieden; French: Trêve de Noël; Dutch: Kerstbestand) was a series of widespread unofficial ceasefires along the Western Front of the First World War around Christmas 1914.

The truce occurred five months after hostilities had begun. Lulls occurred in the fighting as armies ran out of men and munitions and commanders reconsidered their strategies following the stalemate of the Race to the Sea and the indecisive result of the First Battle of Ypres. In the week leading up to 25 December, French, German, and British soldiers crossed trenches to exchange seasonal greetings and talk. In some areas, men from both sides ventured into no man's land on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to mingle and exchange food and souvenirs. There were joint burial ceremonies and prisoner swaps, while several meetings ended in carolling. Hostilities continued in some sectors, while in others the sides settled on little more than arrangements to recover bodies.

The following year, a few units arranged ceasefires, but the truces were not nearly as widespread as in 1914; this was, in part, due to strongly worded orders from commanders, prohibiting truces. Subsequently, soldiers themselves became less amenable to truce by 1916; the war had become increasingly bitter after the human losses suffered during the battles of 1915.

The truces were not unique to the Christmas period and reflected a mood of "live and let live", where infantry close together would stop fighting and fraternise, engaging in conversation. In some sectors, there were occasional ceasefires to allow soldiers to go between the lines and recover wounded or dead comrades; in others, there was a tacit agreement not to shoot while men rested, exercised or worked in view of the enemy. The Christmas truces were particularly significant due to the number of men involved and the level of their participation—even in quiet sectors, dozens of men openly congregating in daylight was remarkable—and are often seen as a symbolic moment of peace and humanity amidst one of the most violent conflicts in human history.

## Pope Sylvester II

*the abacus, armillary sphere, and water organ, which had been lost to Latin Europe since the fall of the Western Roman Empire. He is said to be the first*

Pope Sylvester II (Latin: Silvester II; c. 946 – 12 May 1003), originally known as Gerbert of Aurillac, was a scholar and teacher who served as the bishop of Rome and ruled the Papal States from 999 to his death. He endorsed and promoted study of Moorish and Greco-Roman arithmetic, mathematics and astronomy, reintroducing to Western Christendom the abacus, armillary sphere, and water organ, which had been lost to Latin Europe since the fall of the Western Roman Empire. He is said to be the first in Christian Europe (outside of Al-Andalus) to introduce the decimal numeral system using the Hindu–Arabic numeral system.

## United Kingdom and the Vietnam War

*member of MI6. The Wilson government made efforts to mediate a peace between the US and North Vietnam in 1967. During the four-day Tet truce in February*

Although the United Kingdom did not officially participate in the Vietnam War, it provided de facto diplomatic support for the United States' war aims and it participated in international talks concerning the

ongoing conflict. The UK co-chaired the 1954 Geneva Conference with the Soviet Union, overseeing the creation of the sovereign states of North Vietnam and South Vietnam in the final stages of the First Indochina War. Prior to the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, the United Kingdom began providing support to the South Vietnamese government in the form of advice on the use of police and paramilitary forces to combat a communist insurgency.

After the 1964 escalation of American military involvement in Vietnam, the governments of Prime Ministers Harold Wilson and Edward Heath provided differing degrees of rhetorical support for the USA's war effort, but both refused to commit British troops to the conflict in spite of American pressure. The prospect of British military intervention in Vietnam was deeply unpopular among the general public, with a strong anti-war protest movement flourishing throughout the 1960s. Despite Britain's refusal to commit troops to conflict, it continued to receive substantial American financial support.

## Umayyad Caliphate

*Holland, Tom (2013). In the Shadow of the Sword The Battle for Global Empire and the End of the Ancient World. Abacus. ISBN 978-0-349-12235-9. Johns*

The Umayyad Caliphate or Umayyad Empire (UK: , US: ; Arabic: ?????????? ??????????????, romanized: al-Khil'fa al-Umawiyya) was the second caliphate established after the death of the Islamic prophet Muhammad and was ruled by the Umayyad dynasty. Uthman ibn Affan, the third of the Rashidun caliphs, was also a member of the clan. The family established dynastic, hereditary rule with Mu'awiya I, the long-time governor of Greater Syria, who became caliph after the end of the First Fitna in 661. After Mu'awiya's death in 680, conflicts over the succession resulted in the Second Fitna, and power eventually fell to Marwan I, from another branch of the clan. Syria remained the Umayyads' main power base thereafter, with Damascus as their capital.

The Umayyads continued the Muslim conquests, conquering Ifriqiya, Transoxiana, Sind, the Maghreb and Hispania (al-Andalus). At its greatest extent (661–750), the Umayyad Caliphate covered 11,100,000 km<sup>2</sup> (4,300,000 sq mi), making it one of the largest empires in history in terms of area. The dynasty was toppled by the Abbasids in 750. Survivors of the dynasty established themselves in Córdoba which, in the form of an emirate and then a caliphate, became a world centre of science, medicine, philosophy and invention during the Islamic Golden Age.

The Umayyad Caliphate ruled over a vast multiethnic and multicultural population. Christians, who still constituted a majority of the caliphate's population, and Jews were allowed to practice their own religion but had to pay the jizya (poll tax) from which Muslims were exempt. Muslims were required to pay the zakat, which was earmarked or hypothecated explicitly for various alms programmes for the benefit of Muslims or Muslim converts. Under the early Umayyad caliphs, prominent positions were held by Christians, some of whom belonged to families that had served the Byzantines. The employment of Christians was part of a broader policy of religious accommodation that was necessitated by the presence of large Christian populations in the conquered provinces, as in Syria. This policy also boosted Mu'awiya's popularity and solidified Syria as his power base. The Umayyad era is often considered the formative period in Islamic art.

## Arab–Israeli conflict

*Fraser, T.G. The Middle East: 1914–1979. St. Martin's Press, New York. (1980) Pg. 2 Segev, Tom (2000): One Palestine, Complete, pp. 48–49, Abacus, ISBN 978-0-349-11286-2*

The Arab–Israeli conflict is a geopolitical phenomenon involving military conflicts and a variety of disputes between Israel and many Arab countries. It is largely rooted in the historically supportive stance of the Arab League towards the Palestinians in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, which, in turn, has been attributed to the simultaneous rise of Zionism and Arab nationalism towards the end of the 19th century, though the two movements did not directly clash until the 1920s. Since the late 20th century, however, direct

hostilities of the Arab–Israeli conflict across the Middle East have mostly been attributed to a changing political atmosphere dominated primarily by the Iran–Israel proxy conflict.

Part of the struggle between Israelis and Palestinians arose from the conflicting claims by the Zionist and Arab nationalist movements to the land that constituted British-ruled Mandatory Palestine. To the Zionist movement, Palestine was seen as the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people; while to the pan-Arab movement, Palestine was seen as historically belonging to the Arab Palestinian people and thereby also constituting Muslim land in the pan-Islamic context. By 1920, the opposing national aspirations of these two movements triggered the outbreak of a Jewish–Arab sectarian conflict within the British Mandate's territory, eventually escalating into the 1947–1948 Palestinian civil war following the unveiling of the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine, which sought to divide the territory into a Jewish state and an Arab state. In May 1948, one day after the Israeli Declaration of Independence, the Arab League militarily intervened in the civil war by invading the by-then former British Mandate territory to support the Arab Palestinians, sparking the First Arab–Israeli War.

Large-scale hostilities mostly ended with ceasefire agreements after the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Peace agreements were signed between Israel and Egypt in 1979, resulting in Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula and the abolition of the military governance system in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in favor of Israeli Civil Administration and consequent unilateral annexation of the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem.

The nature of the conflict has shifted over the years from the large-scale, regional Arab–Israeli conflict to a more local Israeli–Palestinian conflict, which peaked during the 1982 Lebanon War when Israel intervened in the Lebanese Civil War to oust the Palestinian Liberation Organization from Lebanon. With the decline of the 1987–1993 First Intifada, the interim Oslo Accords led to the creation of the Palestinian National Authority in 1994, within the context of the Israeli–Palestinian peace process. The same year, Israel and Jordan reached a peace accord.

In 2002, the Arab League offered recognition of Israel by Arab countries as part of the resolution of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in the Arab Peace Initiative. The initiative, which has been reconfirmed since, calls for normalizing relations between the Arab League and Israel, in exchange for a full withdrawal by Israel from the occupied territories (including East Jerusalem) and a "just settlement" of the Palestinian refugee problem based on UN Resolution 194. In the 1990s and early 2000s, a ceasefire had been largely maintained between Israel and Syria, while limited warfare continued in Lebanon against Iranian proxy militias. Despite the peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, the interim peace accords with the Palestinian Authority and the generally existing ceasefire, until the mid-2010s the Arab League and Israel had remained at odds with each other over many issues.

The Syrian civil war reshuffled the situation near Israel's northern border, putting the ruling Syrian government, Hezbollah and the Syrian opposition at odds with each other and complicating their relations with Israel upon the emerging warfare with Iran. By 2020, the Israeli normalization with Gulf states was marked by some as the fading of the Arab–Israeli conflict, but Israeli-Palestinian issues remained unsolved. October 7 attacks in Israel were followed by the Gaza war, both of which resulted in large-scale loss of life. Israel has potentially committed

genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza.

## Scramble for Africa

*London: Abacus. ISBN 978-0-349-10449-2. OL 9863165M. Robinson, Ronald; Gallagher, John; Denny, Alice (1961). Africa and the Victorians: The official*

The Scramble for Africa was the invasion, conquest, and colonisation of most of Africa by seven Western European powers driven by the Second Industrial Revolution during the late 19th century and early 20th century in the era of "New Imperialism": Belgium, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Portugal and

Spain.

In 1870, 10% of the continent was formally under European control. By 1914, this figure had risen to almost 90%; the only states retaining sovereignty were Liberia, Ethiopia, Egbá, Aussa, Senusiyya, Mbunda, Ogaden/Haud, Dervish State, the Darfur Sultanate, and the Ovambo kingdoms, most of which were later conquered.

The 1884 Berlin Conference regulated European colonisation and trade in Africa, and is seen as emblematic of the "scramble". In the last quarter of the 19th century, there were considerable political rivalries between the European empires, which provided the impetus for the colonisation. The later years of the 19th century saw a transition from "informal imperialism" – military influence and economic dominance – to direct rule.

With the decline of the European colonial empires in the wake of the two world wars, most African colonies gained independence during the Cold War, and decided to keep their colonial borders in the Organisation of African Unity conference of 1964 due to fears of civil wars and regional instability, placing emphasis on pan-Africanism.

List of films with post-credits scenes

*Umberto (2 November 2017). "‘Thor: Ragnarok’: Marvel Boss Kevin Feige Explains That Mid-Credits Scene”. TheWrap. Archived from the original on 7 November 2017*

Many films have featured mid- and post-credits scenes. Such scenes often include comedic gags, plot revelations, outtakes, or hints about sequels.

Primo Levi

*Italy, and his books were translated into many other languages. The Truce became a standard text in Italian schools. In 1985, he flew to the United States*

Primo Michele Levi (Italian: [ˈpriˈmo ˈlɛˈvi]; 31 July 1919 – 11 April 1987) was a Jewish Italian chemist, partisan, Holocaust survivor and writer. He was the author of several books, collections of short stories, essays, poems and one novel. His best-known works include: *If This Is a Man* (*Se questo è un uomo*, 1947, published as *Survival in Auschwitz* in the United States), his account of the year he spent as a prisoner in the Auschwitz concentration camp in Nazi-occupied Poland; and *The Periodic Table* (1975), a collection of mostly autobiographical short stories, each named after a chemical element which plays a role in each story, which the Royal Institution named the best science book ever written.

Levi died in 1987 from injuries sustained in a fall from a third-storey apartment landing. His death was officially ruled a suicide, although that has been disputed by some of his friends and associates and attributed to an accident.

Joseon

*koreajoongangdaily.joins.com accessed November 2, 2023 Duus, Peter (1998). The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea. University of California Press*

Joseon (English: CHOH-sun; Korean: 조선; Hanja: 朝鮮; MR: Chosŏn; pronounced [tʰo.sʰʌn]; also romanized as Chosun), officially Great Joseon (대조선; [tʰe.dʰo.sʰʌn.ʌkʰ]), was a dynastic kingdom of Korea that existed for 505 years. It was founded by Taejo of Joseon in July 1392 and replaced by the Korean Empire in October 1897. The kingdom was founded after the overthrow of Goryeo in what is today the city of Kaesong. Early on, Korea was retitled and the capital was moved to modern-day Seoul. The kingdom's northernmost borders were expanded to the natural boundaries at the rivers of Amnok and Tuman through the subjugation of the Jurchens.

Over the centuries, Joseon encouraged the entrenchment of Confucian ideals and doctrines in Korean society. Neo-Confucianism was installed as the new state's ideology. Buddhism was accordingly discouraged, and occasionally Buddhists faced persecution. Joseon consolidated its effective rule over the Korean peninsula and saw the height of classical Korean culture, trade, literature, and science and technology. The kingdom was severely weakened by failed Japanese invasions in 1592 and 1598, which were followed by invasions by the Later Jin dynasty in 1627 and the Qing dynasty in 1636–1637. The country pursued an increasingly harsh isolationist policy, becoming known as the "hermit kingdom" in Western literature. After the end of these invasions from Manchuria, Joseon experienced a nearly 200-year period of peace and prosperity, along with cultural and technological development. What power the kingdom recovered during its isolation waned as the 18th century came to a close. Faced with internal strife, power struggles, international pressure, and rebellions at home, the kingdom declined rapidly in the late 19th century.

The Joseon period left a substantial legacy. Modern Korean bureaucracy and administrative divisions were established during it. The modern Korean language and its dialects derive from the culture and traditions of Joseon, as does much of Korean culture, etiquette, norms, and societal attitudes.

## Battle of Agincourt

*Agincourt: The King, the Campaign, the Battle [US title: Agincourt: Henry V and the Battle that Made England] (revised and updated ed.). London: Abacus. ISBN 978-0-349-11918-2*

The Battle of Agincourt (AJ-in-kor(t); French: Azincourt [az??ku?]) was an English victory in the Hundred Years' War. It took place on 25 October 1415 (Saint Crispin's Day) near Azincourt, in northern France. The unexpected victory of the vastly outnumbered English troops against the numerically superior French army boosted English morale and prestige, crippled France, and started a new period of English dominance in the war that would last for 14 years until England was defeated by France in 1429 during the Siege of Orléans.

After several decades of relative peace, the English had resumed the war in 1415 amid the failure of negotiations with the French. In the ensuing campaign, many soldiers died from disease, and the English numbers dwindled; they tried to withdraw to English-held Calais but found their path blocked by a considerably larger French army. Despite the numerical disadvantage, the battle ended in an overwhelming victory for the English.

King Henry V of England led his troops into battle and participated in hand-to-hand fighting. King Charles VI of France did not command the French army as he suffered from psychotic illnesses and associated mental incapacity. The French were commanded by Constable Charles d'Albret and various prominent French noblemen of the Armagnac party. This battle is notable for the use of the English longbow in very large numbers, with the English and Welsh archers comprising nearly 80 percent of Henry's army.

The Battle of Agincourt is one of England's most celebrated victories and was one of the most important English triumphs in the Hundred Years' War, along with the Battle of Crécy (1346) and Battle of Poitiers (1356). The battle continues to fascinate scholars and the general public into the modern day. It forms the backdrop to notable works such as William Shakespeare's play *Henry V*, written in 1599.

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